SoulDance Newsletter

Volume 3 February 2010

AHLAN WA SAHLAN

Welcome back to SoulDance Newsletters - sprinkled with recipes, history, bellydancing on a budget, culture, funny anecdotes, quotes, costume tips, links, performance hints and advice and much more. By now you would well and truly have your shimmies back after the Christmas break. Good to get going again isn't it?

I would like to welcome all of you, our students; the reason we exist, to a fabulous 2010! This year we have all the usual events on our calendar such as the Abbey Medieval Festival, Pyramid Pulse and First Settlement Festival plus all the concerts and events run by our sister schools around Brisbane. All the Bellydance you can eat!

In this newsletter is a calendar of events for the year ahead but it is always being added to so always update your diaries as each newsletter comes out.

There is a big difference to the newsletter this year as Shona Hall has taken over the role of editor. She is one of those really efficient, computer wizz types (as well as being a diva of dance) so hopefully things will run smoothly without the technical difficulties we had last year with yours truly trying to put it all together. (I am neither efficient or a computer wiz but I am a bit of a diva!)

There are some exciting things happening in the school already. New beginners classes have started and it's always so wonderful to have new Goddesses-in-training amongst us;- welcome ladies and I pray you grow to love bellydance as we do. I am starting up a new troupe in the Gothic style which is shaping up to be spectacular (see later in this newsletter). Also, word has it we are definitely in the new grounds for the Abbey Medieval Festival this year which will be so exciting. Finally, the SoulDance website is 80% complete with just a bit of tweaking to do – it's looking gorgeous!

I am often asked these days about the prospects of a new studio. The managers of Old Petrie Town have been in touch with me this year and are "doing their best to get us a building". So I am really hopeful that we will end up there in the not too distant future. Ladies, keep putting those visualizations out there! I think it's working!

For those new students who may not have had the chance to get to know me yet. I thought I would re-publish a story I contributed to one of the newsletters last year saying a few words about what drew me to bellydance and why I do what I do….

Going to my first Bellydance class wasn't my idea!

My best friend had mentioned bellydance a few times and I thought it might be fun so I went with her at her urging.

Sasha was so unlike me – she was a bit of a hippy, wore clothes from alternate shops, had piercings & tattoos and was into the 'spiritual' facets of life.

When we met this was my life to date:- I did well at school, went to uni, became a teacher, got married, had my baby boy, was a housewife and home maker.

After I met Sasha, something began to change within me - that mystical, succulent, spiritual feminine spark (that all women have inside them) was demanding to rise to the surface. She awakened a part of me that, to date, had gone unnoticed.

From the very first class I was hooked. It was like being a woman finally made sense –like the last block had finally fallen into place - the spark was finally able to shine. The feelings associated with my discovery of bellydance (the sudden obsession with sparkles, the calling of that exotic music, the feeling of moving my body in this new and yet familiar way, the almost magical sound of jingling coins) I still carry with me today.

I am so blessed that I have been chosen to help awaken the Bellydancer within other women. What an honor. What a privilege. I want every woman in the world to discover this incredible art form which goes so far beyond the scope of simply "an art form"

….and that is why I do what I do.

Enjoy the rest of the newsletter and please remember that we would be so wrapped if you were to contribute in any way (you can have your own column if you like!)

Masalama

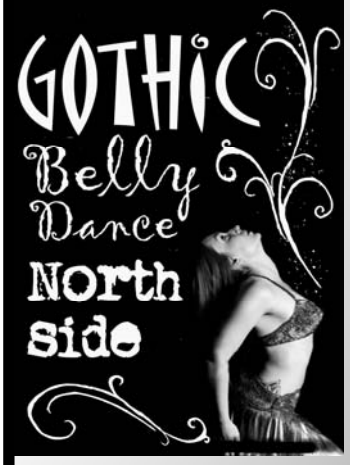
Margaret

School Registrations and Enrolment

It's that time of year again when the annual Registration Form and Fee is due. If your teacher has not yet given you a Registration Form to fill in, it will be coming soon. These should be finalized by the first lessons in March.

Your Registration contributes to the various Music Industry, Copyright and Insurance fees the school pays each year. With this, you are covered if your zills fly off your fingers and knock someone's false teeth out and the Music Industry fees ensure the artists who provide us with our beautiful music get something back when we use their songs in our concerts and on our class CDs.

You may hand your Registration to your class teacher who will deliver it safely to the chief bill payer and, hopefully, will not run off with it.



This year I am starting up a new class in the Gothic style of bellydance open to intermediate and advanced students.

So what is Gothic Style?

It's edgy, left of centre, dramatic, experimental, always powerful and often mysterious. The sound and look is heavier than the dance we are used to and the costumes are black and blingy. As it is a new genre, it tends to lack strict definitions which is not a bad thing, as I hope to create a look and feel that has never been seen before with this troupe, La Boheme.

The name, La Boheme is taken from the Bohemian movement; the non-conforming artists, musicians and free-thinkers who formed there own underworld sub-culture in Europe early last century.

I hope you will enjoy the dark offerings which emerge from this new venture!

Margaret x

BELLYDANCE HISTORY/TRIVIA

1. In 1893 which dancer claims to have danced at the Chicago Worlds Fair?
2. In 1910 Mary Garden does what dance in the opera Salome in Chicago?
3. What Lebanese singer, dancer, and actress is credited with the adoption of a new costume, which in Arabic is called *bedlah*?
4. In 1927 Badia Masabni opens Casino Opera in Cairo featuring which two well know belly dancers in the show?
5. In which year did the Egyptian government require dancers to cover themselves from shoulders to ankles?
6. During the Golden Age of Egyptian Oriental Dance which dancer was known as the "Isadora Duncan of the East"?
7. In 1970 a women's liberation group pickets a performance by what well know US instructor's students in Berkeley, CA on the grounds that belly dancing treats women as sex objects?

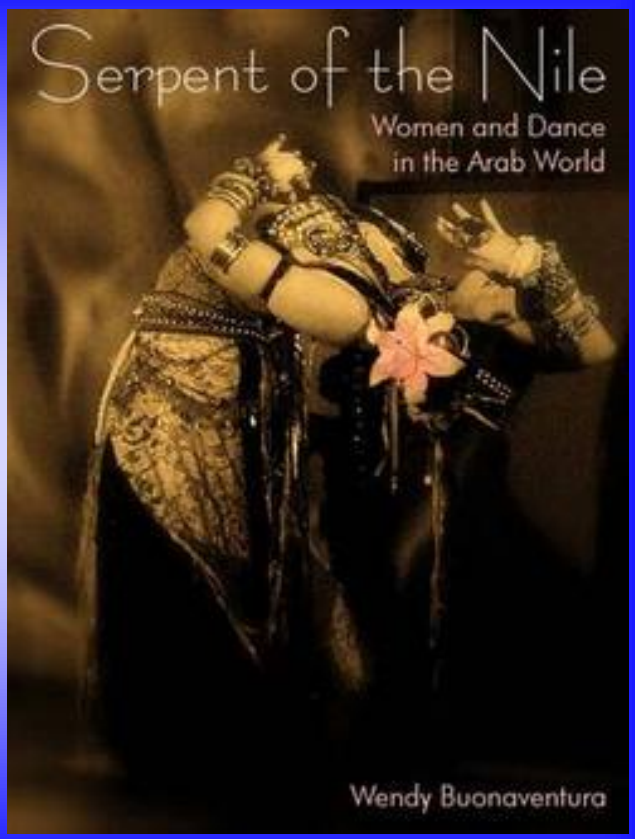
8. In 1978 the TV show 20/20 estimated that were how many belly dancers in the United States?
9. In 1987 what American born dance style was created in San Francisco and by whom?
10. In 2003 belly dancers performed with what traveling musical tour which Miles Copeland created Bellydance Superstars?

ANSWERS 1. Little Egypt 2. Dance of the Seven Veils 3. Badia Masabni 4. Tahia Carioca and Samia Gamal 5. 1955 6. Naima Akef 7. Jamila Salimpour 8. 1 million 9. American Tribal Style, Carolena Nericcio 10. Lollapalooza

"BESIDE THE FIRE, AS THE WOOD TURNS BLACK..... A LAUGHING DANCER IN VEILS OF LIGHT..... WHOSE DANCE TRANSFORMS THE DARKNESS TO GOLD "

*QUOTE FROM ABU ABD ALLAH BEN ABI-KHISAL – EXCERPT FROM *THE SERPENT OF THE NILE* by *WENDY BUONAVENTURA*

*** By the way, if you hop onto the website **Fishpond.com.au** you can find out about ordering the latest release of the abovementioned book. (available June 2010). This looks to be a beautiful book packed with stunning images of dancers



GAMILA RUH CLASS NEWS

by Helen

After what seemed like an age of "inactivity" we have finally recommenced classes for 2010. Heartfelt thanks go out to the lovely ladies of Gamila Ruh and Soul Dance who forwarded messages of support late last year when my Dad underwent surgery. I sometimes feel the whole emailing and texting phenomenon can make people disconnected but in this instance seeing some of those messages really lifted my spirits and gave me faith...

After dancing on my deck since vacating the Kallangur studio we have had to "spread our wings" and move to Wednesday nights at the Glenwood Community Hall in Kallangur. I have really enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere of dancing sheltered....but still open to nature and hearing the kookaburra's singing during our warm up was priceless.....nonetheless we needed somewhere with a little bit more room.....if only to ensure we can include some travelling moves in our next choreographys LOL (good grief there's that texting/email lingo again)!!

Dancing on the different surfaces at the various new class locations has been a challenge for us all....I have been trialing some custom dance sandals (roman style) from www.gypsyden.com.au and notice some ladies have been wearing sockettes, jiffies etc.

It usually feels so natural to dance barefoot but don't be afraid to be kind to your feet and ankles and try other options while we are "in between" studios.

On that note, no doubt you have noticed that email is certainly the most efficient method of getting the Soul Dance news and Middle Eastern Dance event details to everyone. If you have so far resisted the urge please consider being available by email so that we can all give and receive information easily particularly as we no longer have the studio noticeboard to help us!

By the way if any of the teachers in our midst would like to utilize my deck & mirrors to put a class choreography onto DVD for your students please don't hesitate to ask.

I hope everyone is looking forward to an exciting year ahead with Soul Dance.

PS: A big hug and congratulations to our "Soul Sista" Katie Charles who has a big event planned for 2010 which I am sure you will hear more about in upcoming newsletters!

Seh Ha (Cheers)!

Sandie, Jayde, Deb, Bronwen, Kiannah, Jenelle, Marilyn, Sharon

TIOR ALBAH

From the Teachers

Happy New Year from Tior Albah! I know it's a little late, but now that we have started dancing again it feels like we should be celebrating all over again!

After a much needed break over Christmas we have all come back feeling refreshed and ready for a fantastic year of dancing.

In our beginners class we have started with another fun choreography, and once again the music is far from a 'traditional' belly dance style! I would also like to welcome our new beginners to belly dancing and hope that you have as much fun learning as we do teaching!

In our advanced class we are already looking at costumes for the end of the year. We are aiming to avoid the end of year panic "I don't have my costume sewn up yet" that we all seem to put ourselves through! It's also wonderful to see some of last year's beginners joining the advanced class and having a giggle with the rest of us!

That's all the news we have to report so far, so happy shimmying

From Debbie, Jayde and the laughing ladies of Tior Albah

From the Students

I have been asked to write a short piece about what belly dance means to me. It has been the most amazing journey over the last 4yrs, of building self-confidence and self assurance as well as building and forming life lasting friendships.

As I get dressed in my belly dance costumes I feel the excitement and warmth that builds inside knowing I am going to my class - it is my happy place.

I watch my daughter have pride in her mother for doing something that she loves, and know that I am instilling in her the values of self respect and everything that goes along with that.

Kind regards
Sandie Baker, Tior Albah

The Mayonnaise Jar & The Coffee

When things in your life seem almost too much to handle, when 24 hours in a day are not enough, remember the mayonnaise jar and the coffee….. A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, wordlessly he picked up a very large empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

The professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed it was.

The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous "yes".

The professor then produced two cups of coffee from under the table and poured the entire contents into the jar, effectively filling the empty space between the sand. The students laughed. "Now", said the professor, as the laughter subsided, "I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things….Your God, family, your children, your health, your friends and your favourite passions – things that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full. The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, your house and your car. The sand is everything else – the small stuff.

"If you put the sand into the jar first", he continued, "There is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you.

Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Play with your children. Take time to get medical checkups. Take your partner out to dinner. Play another round of golf. There will always be time to clean the house and put the rubbish out. Take care of the golf balls first, the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand".

One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the coffee represented. The professor smiled. "I'm glad you asked. It just goes to show you that no matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for a couple of cups of coffee with a friend".

*** This article was spotted in a old edition of a Belly Dance Magazine and was worth sharing ****

Nouktar Kiteer News

We have been back at class now for almost a month with only 1 week being cancelled due to that horrible sticky Monday…we all miss the air conditioning of the studio! The garage is lined with fans but it's not the same, I'm currently working on it though.

We've had a change of night from Tuesday to Monday because this year I've enrolled at TAFE to become an AUSLAN (Australian Sign Language) Interpreter. Of all the nights classes are held it had to be Tuesdays and Thursdays! I would like to add my thanks to my ladies for accommodating me and making it such a smooth transition.

The ladies of Nouktar Kiteer (To joke often) are currently learning a new veil dance which they hope to perform at the upcoming Mini Hafla. Oh, have I told you all that yet? ;) Of course! They are also excited about the opportunity to once again perform dances from last year's Hafla so we're readdressing those also.

We've had a few student changes this year with 1 loss due to a foot injury, 1 return from a 12 month break and 1 'transfer' from another class. Welcome and Welcome Back to my ladies to another exciting year and remember when you hear those words "…I've had an idea…" to keep your mind open ☺ Mell

MELL'S COSTUME CORNER

CUSTOM MADE CIRCULAR SKIRT

I have the magic formula you can custom make your own circular skirt pattern. Give yourself at least a fortnight to finish this project. A circular skirt needs at least 10 days to 'hang' for the hem to STAY even. It works particularly well if you hang it somewhere in the bathroom, the steam from showers do wonders. I also give it a bit of a 'yank' whenever I think of it along the bottom edge to help things along.

YOU WILL NEED...

Measuring Tape (with a hole in the end), ***Calculator***, tailors chalk, Pin (with a large head or a normal pin plus a single sequin and seed bead – thread the bead then sequin onto the pin in that order, that will act as a large head which will stop the measuring tape from moving), Satin/Cotton/Chiffon (nothing too heavy, it may fall down around your knees!), Pins, Matching Thread, etc.

MEASUREMENTS NEEDED...

A = Hip to Ankle or Floor

Measure from where you like to wear your skirts down to your ankle or if you like a really long skirt, down to the floor. It's always handy to allow a bit more, it's easier to remove, harder to add!

B = Hip Measurement

(----------) + 5cm

# of ½ circles in Skirt

(For those of you who may know a bit about math formulas, the brackets mean whatever is inside of it needs to be worked out 1st. Having said that, measure your hips, yes widest part ladies, you don't want to be putting a skirt up and over your head, hair pieces don't tend to like that too much. I'm not sure why this measurement is necessary, it can be used as a check point I guess.)

Hip Measurement divided by the number of ½ circles (a circular skirt has 2 half circles, a double circular skirt has 4 half circles etc). Then add 5cm to your result.

C = Hip Measurement

(----------) x 2

# of ¼ circles in Skirt

3.14

Hip Measurement (again) divided by the number of ¼ circles (double of what you have for your ½ circle amount), times that by 2 then divide that result by 3.14 (PI).

HOW MUCH FABRIC IS NEEDED...

With these results, you can now work out how much fabric you will need.

(B + C) x 4 NB: make sure your fabric is wide enough!

B measurement plus C measurement, then times the answer by 4.

LAYING OUT AND CUTTING...

Next edition of our newsletter. I need to draw diagrams but I'm not too sure HOW to get that onto the computer as yet!

Any questions please email me on bellybabe33@hotmail.com. I try to check my emails daily (late pm) and will attempt to get back to you within 2 days.

Greetings from Jewels of Arabia

Welcome to another Community Troupe Year. 2009 was once again a busy year for us with an end of year highlight of winning the Scarborough Xmas Lights Parade.

Our year ended well after most shimmy belts were hung up for the year.

Our name is now becoming well known in the community with some of our members being recognized in shopping centres when they are not in costume.

We have started taking bookings for 2010 with our first being Harmony Day at Redcliffe on the 21st March. We performed there for the first time last year and have been asked to perform again this year.

We are presently looking for some new members. If you have the time to commit to fortnightly Saturday practices and you would like to have the opportunity to do more dancing, then I have a costume waiting for you. Our next practice is on March 6th.

Marilyn

Costume Tip

To keep overskirt looking fresh for a performance, it's a good idea to use spray starch when you iron. I have found by using the spray starch, and ironing across the fabric, this give the overskirt a fullness and covers the black skirt underneath. Of course some crushing will occur while driving but it will still look 100% better then if not ironed at all.

What's in Store

Hello & Welcome to this edition of What's in Store.

I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas & enjoyed some time off over the Christmas break. I cannot believe how fast the year is going already.

I have some new tie tops from India in stock. Made of chiffon, they are quite roomy & comfortable.

Sizes: small & medium
Colors: black, red, pink, green, blue, purple
Price: $35.00

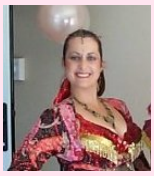
Another shipment of these tops are on their way. The new ones will be chiffon with a paisley pattern in similar colors, hopefully, as that is what I have ordered. I will have a picture of these on the website, soon.

Silk veils will be here soon. I have sourced a new supplier in India for these & have placed a sample order. They will be a bit more affordable & because of this, I am hoping the quality is still good. Unfortunately, as with all the overseas suppliers, I have to order & pay for the stock before I see it. Fingers crossed!

If you have any queries about products please contact me on 0439439852 or email at tobellydance@gmail.com. My website address is templeofbellydance.com.au.

See you in the next edition.
Sonya

I Love Bellydance because...



Is a brand new column for this year. We would love our Souldance Divas' to tell us how they feel about Bellydance. We are all individuals & all have different reasons for coming together in dance.

Do you remember the first dance class you went to? How did you feel? What made you go back? Why is it, when you walk into a shop, that you are immediately drawn to the sparkly or sequined things?

It may be a quote, a poem or just one word, that sums it up for you. You might want to tell us about the wonderful friends you have made, how you feel about performing, the costumes or your teacher. Your letters can be anonymous if you wish. We will only publish what you want us too. We might change the column slightly as different things happen throughout the year. For example, I Love Haflas because… etc.

So, I guess I should start:

I Love Bellydance because...

I can be myself. Not a mother, not a wife, just me. I don't feel like I'm being judged & I love that we all have fun. I have that 1.5 hrs a week where I am just Sonya. It's just me, the music & the class.. I don't have to think about what we are having for dinner, what I need to do when I get home or what bills I have to pay etc . It's a welcome escape from my day to day routine & I LOVE IT.

There, that wasn't hard at all.

So if you would like to share your feelings or thoughts with the rest of our Souldance family, please forward an email to Sonya at tobellydance@gmail.com

Don't forget ladies, we need your contributions to keep this column going. I know you are not shy, you are Bellydancers!

See you in the next edition.
Sonya

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Updated every newsletter as events arise

March 27/28	Raks Workshops in Brisbane
April 17	Mini Hafla for SoulDance
April/May 30 / 1 / 2	Sydney Middle Eastern Dance Festival
July 3-9	Winter WarmUp Workshops & Teacher Training (Brisbane)
July 10/11	Abbey Medieval Festival (Caboolture)
August (tba)	Whats Cooking in the Gardens (Redcliffe)
August 29	Extravaganza (RNA Showgrounds)
September (tba)	First Settlement Festival (Redcliffe)
October 3 – 24	Tour of Egypt with Margaret.
October 9 & 10	Kizmet Concerts (Redcliffe)
October 21-25	Bahar Bayram BAMEDAM music and dance camp (Springbrook)
October 31	Pyramid Pulse concert and markets (Holland Park)
November 27	SoulDance end of year HAFLA
December (tba)	Christmas Parades/ Concerts (Scarborough and Pine Rivers)

Kidz News

Hello & welcome to

It's official! Classes will be held on Wednesday afternoons starting March 10, at the Woodside Community Hall, Discovery Drive, North Lakes. I am only able to have 2 classes on the Wednesday, but the hall is also available on a Friday afternoon until 5pm.

At this stage I have the Tinyz class (4 - 6 yrs) starting at 3.45pm.
Once I get numbers for the Midz class (7 – 10 yrs), times will be as follows:

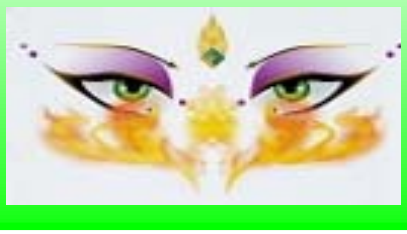
Tinyz	Wed	3.40pm – 4.10pm	
Midz	Wed	4.10pm – 4.55pm	(As the hall is booked from 5pm)

That leaves the Bigz class (11 + years) on Friday afternoons – TBA.

I have some fantastic ideas & can't wait to get started. We are going to have a wonderful year, full of dancing, laughing , lots of shimmies & learning. First lesson is FREE. Bring the kids along & see if they like it.

My mobile is 0439 439 852 or email tobellydance@gmail.com. Please give me a call if your child is interested and I can give you more details.

Until next time, Sonya



Abbey Medieval Festival

Each year our school participates in the festival by performing traditional, historic Gypsy dancing and setting up a mini Gypsy village where we carry out traditional Gypsy crafts and pastimes.

All students are welcome to take part, as are their families. You may like to simply be a village member without being in the dance troupe. For those keen to be part of the dancing, we usually hold several workshops (like a class but longer) to teach some of the dancing so you can join in.

The costumes we wear are gorgeous and look complicated but are actually very simple. We have costumes you can borrow for the first year so all you have to worry about is showing up and having fun. If you love the experience then the following year we can help you make your own costume (if you don't sew, we have others who can.)

So stay tuned and more info will come to light as the next few weeks role on....

Here are a few photos to whet your appetite....