

Keryn Evely

I was introduced to circle dance in the summer of 1994. It was a beautiful day, we danced outside at least some of the time and I felt I had at last found a type of dance I was at ease with. The dances that day were taught by Caroline Cuthbert and Patrick MacManaway.



I continued to dance with both of them in Balfron and Strathmiglo respectively over the next few years. During that time Patrick started a three weekly class in Auchterarder and Caroline organised for Anna Barton to come down from Findhorn, taking a small group of us deeper into the dance over several weekends.

In 1998 Patrick left for America and I 'inherited' the Auchterarder group along with my small, but growing, repertoire of dances. The following year Judy King's leaflet about her very first Circle Dance Teachers' Training Course came with my copy of Grapevine. Just what I needed. I travelled down to Oxfordshire for four long weekends, emerging with more awareness of the skills required and practicalities of teaching, as well as a broadening of my dancing experience.

Over the years since I have continued to dance and learn from Judy King and Mandy de Winter and through them Nanni Kloke. I also love to dance with Laura Shannon at least once a year - to be grounded in traditional women's dances from the Balkans and enriched by the accompanying stories and customs. I enjoy learning from different dance teachers and encountering many different types of circle dances ranging from the traditional through to choreographies to both classical and contemporary music.

In my teaching I like to mark and celebrate the seasonal turning points of the year and other special days and themes by putting together a programme of dances. These may be accompanied by a poem or quotation or a visual image and the dances will be drawn from those that I am especially attracted to at that time. At one time we used to have the occasional, separate, session of 'armie' dances - those, often to classical music, where the upper body and arms are more involved. Now these are usually integrated into the regular sessions.

Evening classes are held most Fridays and we also dance on alternate Sunday afternoons in a beautiful five sided hall at Ochil Tower School in Auchterarder.

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