

Behind the Scenes

Wellington Branch Newsletter

September 2010

President's pointe



Dear Friends

I wish to introduce you to Wellington Branch Committee.



Back: Pete, Glenda, Ingrid, Lindy, Valerie
Front: Pam, Helena. Absent: Angela

It is with great pride that I can say I am fortunate to have such a dedicated group of hard working volunteers, who arrange especially for you Friends Events and Fund-raisers.

We are delighted to tell you that this financial year we have donated \$10,000 to the Royal New Zealand Ballet to help keep the dancers on their toes.

Wellington Branch's unique history continues below.

Ingrid Witkowski

Wellington Branch history A-Z

E - EVENTS (continued)

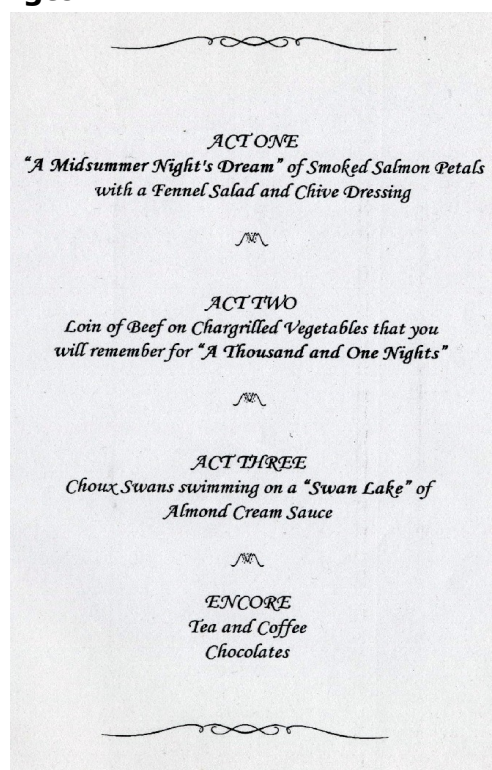
Please note I have only listed dance seasons and events where Wellington Branch were involved.

1995

Friends Dress Rehearsal Night

This was the year that the Wellington Friends Dress Rehearsal Nights were officially started, which continue to date.

Dinner Auction at The Park Royal Hotel, Wellington



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**Our website is wn-friends.org
or ... balletfriends.org**

Gary spoke about the history of this version of the ballet, which was created about 10 years ago by the UK's Northern Ballet Theatre and which has been described as "pure dance theatre". Set in modern-day Rio de Janeiro, with Escamillo as a rock star, rather than a bullfighter, he said its appeal across the UK and Europe showed that it was reaching a wider audience than the usual ballet fans. Christopher echoed this with a personal note saying it was a performance that his father and his friends at the local pub were more interested in this type of production! Christopher, who is English, also spoke about how happy he was to have joined the company.



Christopher Hinton-Lewis and Abigail Boyle, RNZB artists.
Photo: Angela de Bres

Abigail spoke about what it was like to play Carmen. She said what a complicated character she was (and quite unlike herself!), but how she enjoyed portraying all the intricacies of her personality and liked her feistiness!

Tom spoke about how the opera score had been adapted and modernised (e.g. with rock music in some parts) but without steering too far away from the original, so that it was fully recognisable to those familiar with the opera. Tom also answered general questions as to how conductors manage to follow the different pace and timing of each individual dancer dancing the same role. There was much laughter, as he explained how difficult this can be for a conductor, when they first start working with dancers.

Gary added an hilarious story of his own experience with this, when he was a dancer! All in all, it was an informative, fun-filled forum.

Ghosts on Parade

Wellington Friends, in collaboration with the St. James Theatre, recently held a very successful and informative "behind the scenes" tour of the St. James Theatre followed by afternoon tea.



Kathiy Watson from the St. James explaining some of the interesting aspects of the St. James. Photo: Angela de Bres

The theatre is supposed to have a ghost dancer - a Russian ballet dancer named Yuri is said to have died falling off the fly floor. For more than 60 years afterwards, people have reported strange occurrences believed to be the work of Yuri, roaming the corridors and stage of this historical Theatre. I'm not sure if anyone actually saw Yuri, but either way everyone seemed to find the tour very informative and interesting because it covered all those parts of the theatre operation that most people never get to see.



After the tour, tea and scones! Photo: Angela de Bres

The afternoon tea was enjoyed by all - what better after being on your feet, peering into dark corners, than a cuppa, scones and a chat with your friends!

Fund-raising Garage Sale

Our next fundraising garage sale is to be held on 13 November 9am – 12 pm.

We are still looking for good quality items to sell. If you have anything to contribute then please drop off at 2/56 Ira Street, Miramar or call Pete on 934-6224 to arrange collection.

Obituary: John Ashton

The Friends note with regret the recent passing of John Ashton. John was a well known photographer and took many of the early photographs of the original NZ Ballet company performances. His photographic collection is now held by the NZ Archives in Wellington.

2011 TOWER Tutus on Tour

Saturday 26 February

The 2011 TOWER *Tutus on Tour* programme will appeal to both families and classical ballet lovers when the RNZB performs the famous children's story of *Pinocchio*, and a classical show-piece, *Verdi Variations*, set to Verdi's *The Four Seasons*.

We have secured some of the best seats in the house for the Saturday night performance. We have preferential prices for both Young Friends (\$20.00) and Adults (\$39.50) and this includes the booking fee and a Friends book-mark. Note: There is no dress rehearsal for TOWER *Tutus on Tour*.

The booking form is included with this newsletter.

Advertisements

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