



## President's Report - February 2021

### A few words from your President...

Happy new year to all, hope you had a wonderful Christmas and New Year. Welcome back to the dance floors too! Yes, we are finally able to run classes and it's been a great start to the year. There are lots of Covid Safe rules and regulations that the local councils have implemented in order for us to be able to hire the halls to run classes but it's been a small price to pay. I'm also aware that there are some instructors who haven't been able to resume classes for various reasons, one of them being the Councils are not hiring the halls yet, and I understand your disappointment and frustration and hope that this can be resolved soon.

There is still the issue of only having 50 people on the dance floor, and this has been a point of contention for many. DHHS has clearly informed me that this includes all sorts of dancing and not just limited to weddings as per their website. Sadly, lack of clarity on their part and confusion with local councils has thrown our planning for Portarlington into a state of disarray. Even Geelong Council initially said we could proceed with Portarlington with a maximum hall capacity of 186 people but upon further questioning, they have now escalated our query with their legal department, just to be sure. With that ruling, it would seem like Portarlington is a no-go. However, I have now applied for a permit from Events Victoria to run the event at the maximum hall capacity of 186 people and am still waiting to hear from them. The permit unfortunately excludes any interstate visitors including Gordon Elliott. I've spoken to Gordon about this and he has been so supportive of our decisions and has given us his blessings to run the event. At this stage, it's all very much a wait and see situation. If the permit is approved, the Saturday workshops will be conducted by our Victorian Instructors. We are also hoping to get a blanket exemption from Events Victoria for all Victorian Instructors to run classes and socials and not be limited by the 50 rule so fingers crossed this happens. A huge thank you to Stephen Paterson for coming up with this idea and taking the lead, we all wait with bated breath.

The Crystal Boots Awards, the Academy Awards of line dancing, will be held on 28<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> January 2021 in the UK and I'm so pleased to say that Stephen Paterson has been nominated in 4 categories: Male Personality / International Choreographer / International Instructor / Wild Card entry for I Called Mama!

We wish you all the very best and will be rooting for you.

On the local front, the LDAA unfortunately - like so many events in the past 10 months - needed to cancel their Annual LDAA Awards, Charity Dinner and Line Dance Ball which was to be held in Tamworth on the 15<sup>th</sup> January. So that the chosen awardees would receive their awards at a similar time to previous years, an Online Event and Awards ceremony was quickly planned to take its place. The LDAA held their online Charity Social - supporting Dolly's Dream - and LDAA Awards on 23<sup>rd</sup> January. Stephen Paterson and Lu Olsen were part of the panel of guest instructors and it was a great afternoon. Congratulations to Stephen for winning the Opal Boot Award for Instructor of the Year and the Joe McManamon Award!

Congratulations also to Oz In Line magazine and in particular Cynthia Rennolds and Darren Mitchell for winning the Group Award!

Go Victorians... we are all so proud!!

It's been a busy January and I look forward to what the next few months will bring. It's been wonderful being back on the dance floor and catching up with friends, most of whom we only connected online for most of 2020! Continue staying safe and enjoy your dancing!

*Sumi Sivalingam*

VLDA President

