

Getting the boot from Grrowler

Boot Camp is John Grrowler and his lovely wife Maureen's well known event and this year the guest choreographers were Alan Birchall and Jonathan Williamson. Jacqui sends us her report on this annual funfest.



John and Maureen are the best hosts and welcomed us as they always do, warmly and effusively. Maureen who was whizzing around on her 'state of the art - aeroplane friendly' wheels was cheering everyone up and John tried to keep up with her! The Boot Camp was held in February at the Clifton Hotel Scarborough and the warmth of this fantastic couple more than made up for the cold weather. The event started on Friday night with a pyjama party. I, like all the other girls, particularly appreciated Grr's pink night attire. But as we all relaxed in our comfortable pj's we danced until the early hours, well past our usual bed time.

The following day was a totally different affair with combat fatigues worn for all the workshops. There was a minor scuffle when Alan accepted somewhat reluctantly to have his legs shaved for charity AND recorded for posterity. Fortunately, someone had taken pity on his masculinity and left the cover on the razor...but he did look worried!

The day started in total silence, and proved somewhat quite emotional, after Grr's had blown his whistle. Then as he blew a second time, we all started to march, changing direction at each whistle's command. Maureen took centre position and prompted us (novices that we were) with commands to avoid collisions! These will be treasured memories for us all.

She continued her stirring work by assisting on the workshops. She had to remind Alan which foot to start on for his classic dance 'Wave On Wave', perhaps he was still in shock at the thought of his legs being shaved...

Then, he and Jonathan taught a mix of Improver/Intermediate dances on Saturday, Alan had saved his Advanced dance 'What A Life!' until Sunday. This was a nice surprise for both he and Grrowler as the floor was full and remained full throughout the teach.

It is never easy to introduce a new dance as one never knows how it will be received but on that day, the response exceeded both men's expectations.

In fact, most dancers returned to the floor after a quick break to dance it again to the alternative James Morrison track.

Then Grrowler, Alan and Jonathan re-capped all their dances and Jonathan completed the workshop with his final teach.

We also had a taste of Zumba thanks to Alex and her friends, Alan survived a couple of routines then opted to watch while Grr, myself and a few others made it to the cool down before collapsing in a heap of sweaty combats. We all agreed that we loved Grr's Zumba Wobble.

Saturday evening's theme was Professions... we quickly got into character on entering the ballroom, which was buzzing with excitement. When a drink was spilt at our table (Alan and I were dressed as waiter/waitress) I quickly removed the soggy table cloth and found a replacement from... the next table. I am not sure I would be cut out for a catering career but it was fun!

We were honoured to be asked to judge the fancy dress – only then did it hit us what a difficult job it was going



Dances taught over the weekend were:

I SAW LINDA YESTERDAY

(Grr) – Derek Robinson (Imp)
– Blackjack

I DIDN'T KNOW

Alan Birchall (Imp)
– Shane Stockton
(Alternative track Taio Cruz ft. Tracie McCoy)

CARE

Alan Birchall (Inter)
– Kid Rock, Martina McBride & T.I.

IT'S OVER

Jonathan Williamson (Imp)
– Tara Oram

LATE IN THE EVENING

Alan Birchall (Inter)
– Paul Simon (Alternative track Bon Jovi)

STUTTER

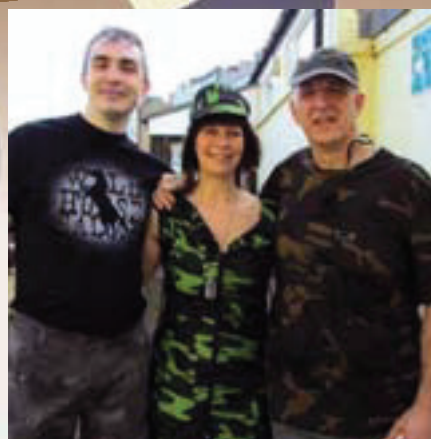
Jonathan Williamson (Inter)
– Maroon 5

WHAT A LIFE!

Alan Birchall (adv)
– Noel Gallagher
(Alternative tracks James Morrison,
Tears For Fears)

DONE THIS BEFORE

Jonathan Williamson (Imp)
– The Brilliant Things



to be. There were so many amazing costumes... eventually we made our choices 'in no particular order'... Grr's United - who surprised their Coach with a complete matching kit,

Painter and Decorators - we even suggested they got in touch with that big hotel in Blackpool if they were looking for work

The Jockey's - one of whom demoed her saddle position gracefully across the room on Alan's back complete with whip

And finally the Midwife, who seemed to have stepped right out of the TV series, complete with ethnic baby.

Inventive folks or what?

So they did it again.

An event like this is hard work on the organisation side of things but both Maureen and John are masters at what they do and we all had an amazing time.

This is one event well worth going to...

*Jacqui and Alan B
(Nuline Dance)*

