

## **CIRCLE DANCE by Anne Greenshields**

As a newcomer to Auchterarder, I was keen to meet people and find new interests. I had always been interested in dance and before moving to Auchterarder, had enjoyed many different types of dance class – my highlight was dancing with Wayne Sleep who was taking a tap dancing class!

So when I spotted a poster in the local Co-op – “Enjoy Dancing?” “Like World Music?” and the answer to both questions was “Yes”; I made a note of the phone number and contacted Keryn who explained a bit about Circle Dancing.

I decided to give it a try and went along to my first session – not quite knowing what to expect as I had never heard of Circle Dance before.

The group gave me a very warm welcome, everyone was so friendly. As I had joined the group a few weeks into the term/session I was a bit concerned that I might have had to play “catch up” with other members who had already learned the steps and dances, but I need not have worried.

Both Keryn and Elke, the teachers were (and still are!) so helpful and the other dancers also showed me the steps. Although at first I really did have to concentrate, never able to take my eyes off Keryn’s feet, after a few weeks I found I was able to start enjoying the rhythm of the dance and music.

So what types of dance and music are involved?

They originate from countries and cultures around the world encompassing a rich and diverse range of dances and songs some of which celebrate special occasions in the community.

The music can literally be from anywhere in the world; European countries, Africa, Russia, India, South and North America ...

It ranges from traditional folk, classical, Latin-American to contemporary and lots in between!

For instance I have recently danced to music from 13<sup>th</sup> century Spain, to an African peace chant, a thanks giving dance from Israel as well as to music by Capercaillie, JS Bach and John Denver.

Most of the dances we do in a circle with hands joined, some we dance with hands un-joined. You don’t need a partner although partners are welcome to join in. Other than comfortable shoes no special dress required.

Circle Dance is lovely gentle exercise and I always leave the class with a feeling of well being. When I get home my partner always comments

“You look happy, “which is how I always feel after Circle Dancing.