

SURREY INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCERS | Celebrate the Old and the New at October Retreat



It was an evening of magic, with music and dance transporting Surrey Folk Dancers and visitors to a European village square. After a day of workshops at Camp Alexandra in Crescent Beach, Retreat 2022 participants welcomed the folk bands Balkanski Melos and Savoir Faire, to return to the roots of folk dance with a partnership of musicians and dancers for an evening of unmatched fun.

The weekend retreat was designed to introduce those who are new to folk dancing to its history as well as to the vibrant international repertoire now available. Six teachers taught 18 dances from 17 different countries and cultures, including eastern European countries, Norway, England, Taiwan, Japan, Indonesia and the Philippines. Two workshops gave an in-depth look at the patterns of footwork that make a common thread through many of the older traditional folk dances. Do you know how many dances can be distilled down to “uneven walking”?

Overall, the Retreat was a leap of faith for Surrey Folk Dancers into the post-pandemic world of new risks and challenges, which all small non-profit arts and social groups are now experiencing. Many hours of planning and researching the experiences of other folk-dance event organizers were needed in order to allay the fears of potential participants and to do our best to keep everyone healthy. Looking back, Retreat 2022 was a success, ending with happy, tired dancers and no reported new cases of Covid. Looking forward, it was a kick-start of fresh energy for a new season.

Surrey International Folk Dancers are looking to build membership, welcoming anyone who is looking for a weekly (Thursdays) social group that combines healthy movement

and brain challenge with the celebration of an art form that crosses cultures. New dancers are welcome any time, free for the first time, \$5 drop-in after that. If you want to try out folk dancing on an evening with a program geared to newcomers, join us for our Open House on March 2, 2023, 7:15 pm at Walnut Road Elementary School in Fleetwood.

To find out more, see...
www.surreyfolkdance.org



PHOTOS: Sam Chung

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