

Bush Dance Group Report 2022-23

Following the shutdown of all activities at the end of June 2022, the Bush Dance Group started up again with Dancing in the Park (DITP) in December 2022. Numbers gradually increased and in January 2023, when Stage '88 was not available for 2 evenings, we held indoor dances to keep the series going, before returning back to outdoors until mid-March 2023.

While numbers were not as healthy as pre-Covid, they were sufficient to make us believe that Workshops may be viable again and so we recommenced Monday dancing indoors in March 2023. In a change from previous years, we decided to adopt an early start (previous feedback indicated that 8 to 10pm was felt by many to be too late). This necessitated finding a new venue, with the Turner Church Hall used by other groups eventually being hired. Wanting to keep the dancing on Mondays, we took a 6 to 8pm slot prior to the Set In Their Ways (SITW) practice session.

We decided to change the way we refer to these evenings from “Workshops” to “Monday Evening Bush Dances”. From March to the end of June 2023 we averaged 11 dancers (numbers being between 9 and 17), which was an improvement from our two previous post-Covid re-starts when we only averaged around 6 or 7. We also decided not to stop for school holidays, only for public holidays. This avoids the fragmented stop/starts of previous years, and may improve our chances of attracting families.

The “open stage” for musicians and callers has attracted an average of 8 musicians, plus 2 or 3 callers each night.

We did not attempt to restart Saturday dances, instead leaving these to the End of Month committee. Also, no Kids' Dances were held during the year.

One other dance was held in February as part of our promotional activities – a free St. Valentine's Day bush dance, also at the Turner venue. This was successful in attracting over twenty people and gave us further confidence that we could resume indoor dancing after DITP.

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Overall, the lower than hoped for numbers at DITP and Monday Evenings saw the BDG make a small profit of \$127, but this does not include the hall hire fee for June (paid in July) and taking this into account we actually made a loss of \$82 for 2022/23. However, given that the free dance in February cost \$105 for the hall, and that we spent \$33 printing posters and flyers to advertise at the NFF, this was a reasonable outcome and gives us confidence that we can run profitably in 2023/24.

Our thanks go to SITW for agreeing to our use of the hall before them, allowing us to pack up while they set up for their 8pm session, and for putting up with the teething issues we encountered on the first couple of evenings of the new arrangement. Also thanks to President David for putting our events onto the Society's Facebook page.