

# Dance Travel & Art with Gordon Elliott

## Off The Floor ...

Gordon started line dancing in 1989 so he has seen many changes and been there for all the ups and downs.

He first went with a friend from a school he was teaching at – he loved it and she never went back.

“I have always liked music I can hear the words to and I enjoy the more contemporary country music,” said Gordon.

“I don’t really have a club as such. I just have classes and people who dance with me.”

“I don’t run it like a club but rather as a teacher who offers classes and events and just invites people to come along for the fun. I run it the way I think is best for everybody.

“But it is my business and the way I make my living, so I have to be aware that I need to make some money too. I like to think I offer people a good service and they will come back.

“I enjoy taking someone that cannot dance and teaching them how to, as well as teaching harder dances to those more experienced. I was a teacher by profession, so teaching line dance seemed to be a natural extension of that for me.

“Quite early on I noticed that nearly all the dances we did were from the US, while we had our own great country music that no one was using. So I started choreographing dances to Australian music.”

And of course many of these have become Australian classics and are still danced today. While Gordon continues to choreograph exciting new dances such as *Africa* and *Coming Back*.



Gordon also created an **Instructors’ Beginner Program** which has been extremely successful and welcomed by many Australian instructors.

“I have been teaching beginners right through my dance career. And I thought why are we ALL trying to do the same thing each time. As most instructors work as well as teach, they have very little time to do the research.

“So I just thought it easier for all to share the work I do. I send them regular packs of dance sheets and music with their name and logo on the books. By offering it to others, it saves them so much time and effort and it allows some dances to be taught at more classes throughout Australia.”

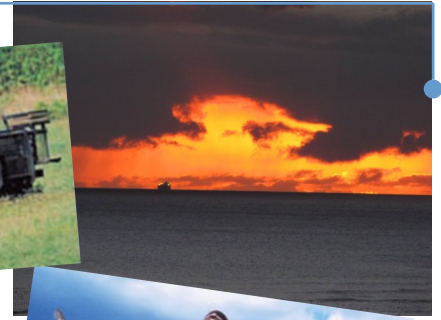
Michelle Palmer of Northern Riders teaches two classes a week at Yagoona and also works full time.

“I use Gordon's CDs and sheets because they are just so easy to read,” said Michelle. “And it certainly does saves me a lot of time when looking for new dances to teach.”



# Travel

“The first trip I took with a group of dancers was to Fiji in 1999. It was a hard trip as it was only a few months after my partner passed away. But it was also good as I had 91 of my line dance family with me.



“I generally take one trip away each year but I do travel overseas instructing each year as well. I always get in at least one trip to New Zealand. And I have also been to Singapore and the US to teach on numerous occasions.



“The two best trips have been to Africa in 2004 and Canada/Alaska in 2009. They were both excellent and everyone had the time of their life.

“Africa was so good I have decided to go back this year in September and take a bigger group this time. So if any linedancers want to join us, please get in touch.” You will find the details on Gordon’s website at <http://www.dancewithgordon.com>

Gordon also averages two trips a month out of Sydney. “They are all good fun and it allows me to maintain contact with the same people each year.”



# Art

“I have been interested in art for a long time. So when my partner and I decided to have only original art at home, we began collecting. It started slowly and so did my knowledge. But I am now more confident in my art appreciation and the quality of the art I buy. Generally I stick to Australian contemporary art, but I also have works by some NZ artists.

“When I was approaching 50, I decided I would like to go back to university to study for my Masters. I found a course at RMIT in Melbourne called Masters of Art which specialises in public art. As I live in Sydney, this meant travelling to Melbourne for lectures, but I found it fascinating. As part of the course, I undertook an audit of art in public spaces in Sydney.



“So then I had all this information and I wanted to do something with my love for art,” said Gordon. “I just needed to work out how to use it!”

## ***Gordon now runs Sydney Art Walks & Tours.***

He established and runs *Sydney Art Walks & Tours*, a series of walks for people who are interested in art. “I like taking people around and showing them what I have found. I contacted as many artists as I could and got stories about their works that no-one would know,” he said. “It is this information that provides the best insight into their works.”

