



Alan Haywood

You know you are addicted to Line dance when you call your cat Jazz and can be caught dancing around the mobile library...

When you began – what dances gave you a taste for Line dancing?

Like lots of people, Electric Slide and One Step Forward were my first attempts and I could not believe how much I really enjoyed them. I watched dancers then do Flying Eights and promised myself "One day, I'll dance like that".

How did you begin choreographing dances?

The first one was in December 2003 and was written for a local competition organised by Dee Musk for unknown choreographers. The track we were given was I've Had The Time Of My Life by Jennifer Warnes and Bill Medley (Dirty Dancing). Although I did not win, I really enjoyed the experience

Did you get instant recognition?

I remember hearing the tune When You Walk In The Room by Cliff Richard and I thought it would make a fabulous dance. I wrote New Feelings, to my absolute amazement it went straight into *Linedancer* Magazine March 2004 edition. Subsequently, we received emails from Wales, Spain and America telling us how much people loved the dance.

Who keeps you on your toes at home?

Fiona, of course! We also have a cat called Jazz who costs us a small fortune in cattery fees when we go on our travels but she's worth it.

Do you have a personal favourite dance?

I would say that Building Our Memories is my favourite. It was written for *Memories Of Us* by Keith Urban. I simply love the tune and its lyrics.

Choreographers often hit the European scene or go global – do you have similar plans?

I have travelled a bit last year, you probably heard about my dance Spooky coming in second place at the Chicago event – Windy City. I enjoy travelling and have been invited to Munich in May 2007 and another major Line dance event in Spain in December. I hope this year will be busy.

Building Memories

On a typical day, I work driving a mobile library going around schools in the Cambridgeshire area. I'll give my secret away... the library also doubles up as a dance studio. When I can I grab a moment – of course I check that no one can catch me first – then I play music and practice some of the latest dances. If there is a song around that I have fallen in love with I also write new dances at this time.

I started Line dancing after seeing a card in a local newsagents window advertising a class. That was around ten years ago, at the time I was looking for a hobby that could involve just me and Line dancing doesn't require a partner. After going along to a few classes I soon learned how welcoming Line dancers can be and instantly I was made to feel at home.

After a couple of years, I started helping out my friend Annie at her class and I loved it. I was hooked! After taking my CWDC qualifications for teaching, passing with distinction in 2001, I have been teaching in a village called Yaxley, near Peterborough. I have a great band of class members and our priority and key word is fun.

I try to teach interesting dances both new and old but I find it is important to keep the laughs coming. I love writing too and when deciding what to choreograph I always relay

on a good track of music. It is hard, near impossible, but I always try to make sure it has not been used by someone else. I see little point in spending the time writing a dance if the track has already been used.

I met my new wife Fiona in 2000 at Annie's class and we married in May 2004. Fiona supports me every step of the way and has even built our website. I also have three grown up sons one at The Royal School Of Music in Manchester, the other two work and still live with their mother. I also have a grandson. Fiona doesn't have any children but has adopted mine so has become Granny Fi.

Meeting new people and going to socials is something Fiona and I really love to do. We are always made to feel so welcome which has to be the best part of Line dancing. As a choreographer, I still get a huge buzz seeing my dances fill a floor with people I have never met.

I do like to do demonstrations of my new material and feel very privileged when I am asked to do so. My big ambition is to be invited to a large British event and for one of my dances to be recognised and danced on the circuit. First breaks are hard to get but I do hope that 2007 will offer me that opportunity.