

WARKWORTH BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL WOMEN'S CLUB APRIL MEETING.

The members of the Warkworth Business and Professional Women's Club were not only entertained but were informed and even took part in trying to dance the 'Belly Dance' during the April meeting at Salty Dog. This art form was introduced by Eleanor Trueman, to the members and their 15 guests during this evening. She gave everyone a fascinating glimpse into the development of the dance and how the variations related very much to the cultures of the many countries where women practiced this dance form.

The peoples of North Africa, the Middle East, Iran, India, Turkey and Spain and the trade routes all exchanged information between each other and this included the types of dancing and allowed different interpretations of the technique of belly dancing. For example North Africa and the Middle East used their bodies, Iran their body and hands, and India emphasised the use of their hands. In the Egyptian style of 'Baladi' the women are fully covered and tend to dance for themselves. A region of Egypt the 'Saaidi' is the dance where the women use sticks very skillfully to playfully mimic the men fighting. 'Khleegi' is found in Iran where the women are conservative and use their long hair to flick. The movements of their bodies are large and tend to be a bobbing motion with their hands movements smoother in style. The 'Modern/Classical/Oriental' type of belly dancing is very showy where the veil is twirled and swung and the shake of various parts of the body definitely shows a wonderful control of the muscles. This is the dance that many people regard as the 'belly dance'.

Eleanor emphasized the importance of being fit and developing a control over individual muscles and to be able to combine body language such as smiling, shimmies, and posture with the actual dancing. This helps the audience to enjoy the whole performance such as the members did at this meeting.

At the end of the meeting the nine people who attended the three day National Business and Professional Women's Conference and the Asia-Pacific Regional Conference held in Auckland gave their impressions and commented on what they had learned at this event. Sally Smith our President, was awarded the 'NZ President of the Year Award' and was also elected onto the NZ National Executive as 2nd Vice President. Our Club is pleased that her hard work and efforts were rewarded with this acknowledgment.

Women's

Mona Townson