

## Hi there!

Happy New Year to all Young Friends! We have a great year of dance ahead of us. The ballet company is very busy rehearsing the pieces for their triple bill season, Saltarello. Then the company is off to the United Kingdom with Romeo and Juliet, which you may have seen last year. When they return they will be performing Madame Butterfly and at the end of the year, Coppelia. If you can only get to one performance during the year - try to make it that one!

This newsletter has a lot of information for you about pointe shoes because they are one of the things that make ballet so unique amongst the performing arts, and also because The Friends of the Royal New Zealand Ballet has a special connection with pointe shoes? Did you know that we help to pay for most of the pointe shoes that the ballerinas in the company wear? Or that the company buys about 1000 pointe shoes each year!

Our profiled dancer in this issue is Rowan Cann, our new sponsored dancer. He's great fun - enjoy reading his message to you.

## Have a giggle...

Q. *How do you make a Kleenex dance?*

A. Put a little boogie in it!

Q. *What is a frog's favourite ballet?*

A. Swamp Lake!

Q. *What do dancers say when they give up?*

A. What's the pointe?

Q. *Why did the dancer cross the road?*

A. Because she had to do it on the other side!

***"The ballet toe shoe is one of the few instruments of torture to survive intact into our time." Anon***

## DANCER PROFILE

### Rowan Cann

Our featured dancer in this issue is Rowan Cann.

Rowan is the dancer sponsored by the Friends of the Royal New Zealand Ballet.

You may have seen him in Peter Pan - he played the part of Michael Darling.

Rowan is a keen supporter of the Blues and loves motorbikes.

See over the page for a letter from Rowan to you.



# Pointe shoe Wordfind

S B F O L S Z D F B E E Q K U  
A A V X K C F D R M K Q B X X  
C H T I E L N M W Y C U Y R D  
G H X I T Y P A O T B C Y S Z  
E P H U N J M U K N F E Q T Y  
G B Y A I V X K A J L J V Q D  
F S X N O L N H U C G T J H X  
M B G E P A B T S G F O S P N  
A X R T H C A L X N Q E W E P  
X I F S J G E A D H O S V Z O  
C H K F L R J C S W A B J A O  
K I C I S R E T S I L B B S X  
C P O F P M A J E Z O A Z I Q  
W N Z T Q K X O V X I L X Y R  
I V O W K R E S I N O I Z B Z

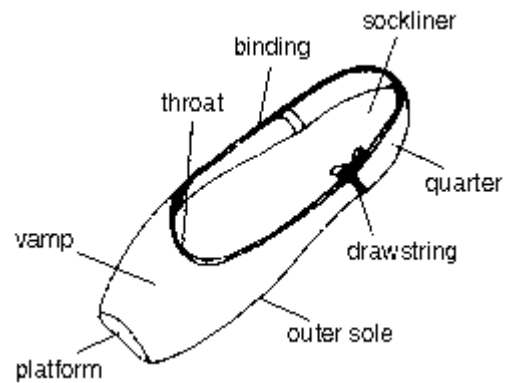
BLISTERS  
BOX  
POINTE  
RESIN  
RIBBONS  
SATIN  
SHANK  
TAGLIONI  
TOES

## Pointe Shoes

Marie Taglioni, an Italian ballerina, often gets the credit for being the first to dance on pointe but no one knows for sure. We do know that in 1832 Marie Taglioni danced the full length La Sylphide on pointe.

It was Taglioni who developed the technique and changed classical ballet as a result. What had merely been a stunt and a kind of circus trick became a means of artistic expression. Her grace, lightness, elevation and style earned her a brilliant career. In Russia, her fans loved her so much that they cooked her slippers and ate them with a sauce!

In a pointe shoe the foot is supported from underneath the arch by a stiff insole or shank made of leather and cardboard lined with canvas. The toes of pointe shoes are made of layers of burlap and canvas dipped in glue. This box tightly encases the toes so that the dancer's weight rests on an oval-shaped platform. The outer material is usually pink satin.



A new pointe shoe is very stiff and needs to be broken in before the dancer can dance in comfort. Dancers may jam them in a door, jump on them, bash them with a hammer, and cut pieces of the sole away. After all this they might only last for one performance!

The shoes must look sleek and snug, flattering the foot and enhancing its natural arch. The upper should be smooth and pretty but not so tight that bumps, bunions or the shoe's internal structure are visible.

## A letter from Rowan Cann

Dear Young Friends

I am the dancer the Friends of the Ballet sponsor as a way of supporting the ballet company. This is my second year in the company and I love every minute of it. It is awesome to have achieved my childhood dream.

At the moment we are rehearsing the first season this year of three contemporary works. One of the pieces is new so it is choreographed as we go. It is a challenge to have to quickly learn the new steps and then remember them.

Soon we will be rehearsing for our trip to the United Kingdom so we are getting really excited.

So, best wishes with your dancing and I hope you enjoy watching the company this year.

Rowan