

# Ballroom Icons: By Britt Mayer

The Launch Party by Jack Reavely

It's time for the big launch of the big book ... Poor Britt Mayer ... she will be a bundle of nerves having taken the opportunity to do what she felt was a necessity to her life and that was to write a book, based on the people whom she considered to be Icons of Dance ... Spanning many generations and when it was eventually produced it came out as an utterly fascinating, magnificently presented book which would grace the bookshelf of any fervently Interested In how the dance of today was so Influenced by those of yesterday ... and those of today as well. Harry Smith-Hampshire, Nina Hunt and Dimitri Petrides, Len Colyer, Bobby Short, Gillian MacKenzie, Peter Eggleton, Espen Salberg, Henry Jacques, Rudi Trautz, Anthony and Fay Hurley, Len Scrivener, Victor Silvester, Phyllis Haylor, Walter Laird ... etc etc so many of the Icons stripped of their tail suits or Latin gear . laying bare their Inner thoughts and feeling for dance, showing how many handle their "normal" life away from the spotlight which usually illuminates them.



Some dressed casually in the photographs within the book and seeming to be so relaxed, as they transmit to us, the information on their thoughts, and how their life in dance has evolved over the years of participation. I found it particularly interesting to read the comment towards the end of the book by famed exponents talking about other famed exponents, many of whom are no longer with us ... The insight gained into the historical aspects of dance enable us to almost feel that those who are no longer within today's world, are in fact talking to us from beyond deeper horizons.



Ron Gunn, the tailor extraordinaire who is featured within the book, tells me that he tells wee white lies at times. ... especially about his age and with fingers crossed behind his back he assures me that he is thirty years younger than the date given in the book. All I can say is that he certainly looks young but never foolish. There is absolutely no truth in the rumour that his "Gunn" is loaded and pointed towards Big L Wt for telling truth. Ron tells us in the article that he made clothes for the King of Greece, TorVIII and Dean and a great tailor called

Rube Scobie worked with him and his daughter danced with Michael Barr in his early days, which is why Michael was so well dressed presumably. Ron made an overcoat for Douglas Fairbanks the famed film star and once, when sitting in a theatre watching the show Ron spotted Douglas in the audience and, during an interval took the opportunity of telling Douglas that he had made the coat. W Douglas was delighted and gave Ron a large Cigar. I could of course go on and on about the book ... I commend it to your eyes and I tell you this, if your eyes are not glistening, when reading, then you are indeed not human or not a true dancer. . W is geared to people know of the tremendous input these gents and ladies had to dance and to dancers. It fulfills Britt's dream and when she was introduced at the launch within the Winter Gardens, tears were flowing down her cheeks and it was so understandable .

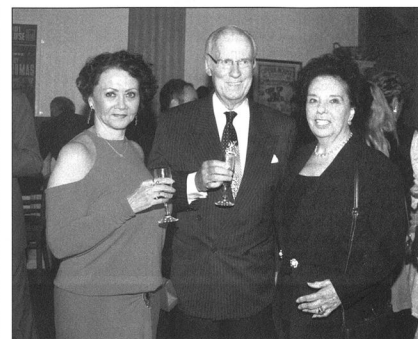
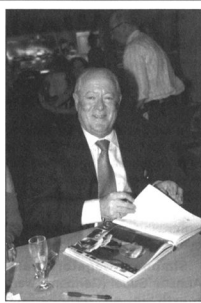
The relief and undeniable pride in her personal achievement must have induced such emotion, when she saw all the people wishing her well, as they scooped champers and goodies... it was, like the book, a sophisticated and educational moment in time which she will remember forever.

The book's title is Ballroom Icons and is available for £105 in its present luxurious form with each one being numbered and



cover to cover, and her head will be nodding with sheer pleasure, as she was herself a fanatic who contributed so much because of her Jenerosity within sponsorship, which was rewarded with the thanks of so many whom John and herself had assisted. You can read within the book of her story in dance. Many surprising anecdotes crop up within its pages ... You will find it difficult if not impossible to put down .. I commend it to your gaze, especially if you wish a chuckle, a tear or two and a warm feeling of the utter conviviality of the world of dance which is transmitted beautifully from this book.

DanceSport International's advertisement can be found below for details of how to obtain this beautiful book.



Pictured: Column one, from top to bottom: Doreen Freeman, Kristi and Brian McDonald with Rita and Robin Short, Peter R ... Column two, from top to bottom: Barbara Ambroz, Wendy Johnson, Meryem Pearson and Ann Harding. Column three, from top to bottom: Britt Mayer, Julie Laird, Oliver Wessel-Therom and Peter Eggleton. Column four, from top to bottom: John Kimmins, Peter Dobner and Malene van Hauen, Alan Fletcher, Gillian MacKenzie, Hazel Fletcher and Ann Harding. Column five from top to bottom: Bryan Allen, Ann Baker, Sandra Wilson and Rita Short, Lorraine, Gunnar Rohdin and Doreen Freeman. Column six: Heinz Spaker and Rudi Trautz.

Photographs by Ron Self.



## DSI

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