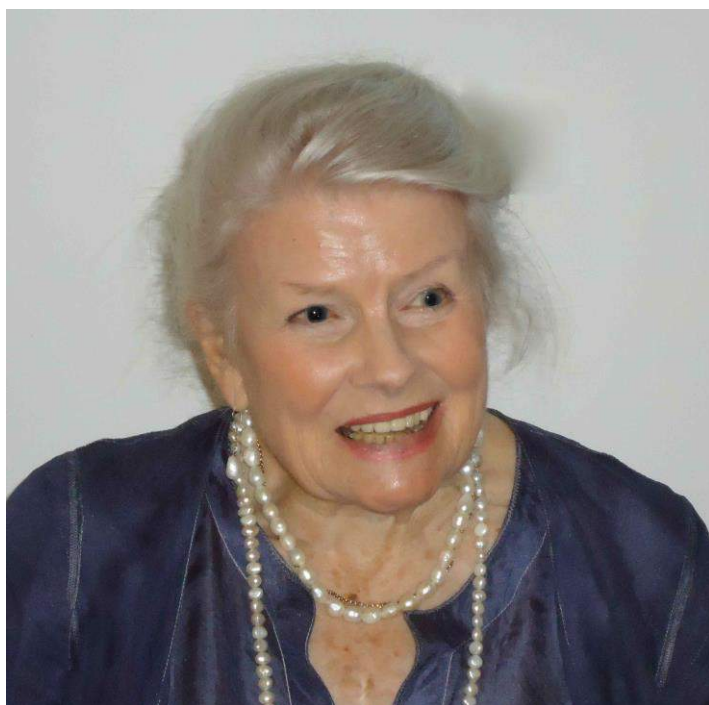


## An Australian Pioneer - dancing on .....



*Jenny Czulak Riley, Grad. Dip. Movement and Dance (University of Melbourne), Grad Cert. Dance Therapy (University of Melbourne), founding and still very active Member of the Dance-movement Therapy Association of Australia (DTAA), born in 1924, is still dancing on!*

*Her love of dance, her involvement with dance-movement therapy, and the Association, go back to well before the DTAA's formation, when she says she was coerced onto the committee of the Australian Association of Dance Education (AADE). The AADE became Ausdance and the DTAA emerged from being initially a dance therapy interest group under its umbrella, prior to becoming incorporated as an Association in its own right in 1994. Jenny moved with it through this whole process and holds the history of the beginning of dance movement therapy in Australia, and pathway to the inception and development of the DTAA (over a period of more than 30 years), in the palm of her hand.*

*Jenny's loyalty to dance as a therapy and to the DTAA was honoured by the Association in 2007, when she received an Honorary Professional Membership of the Association, an honour more than well deserved, and we are honouring her achievements again by making them a focus in this issue of Moving On. Apart from the fact that her 'innings' has been remarkable, to say the least, she has also just had yet another honour bestowed upon her – that of being the recipient of*

*the Hanny Exiner Memorial Foundation Annual Achievement Award for 2010. Again we can only say that this is more than well deserved (see HEMF News p.61).*

*We know that prior to becoming a DMT Jenny was an educator in radio and in the early days of television with the Australian Broadcasting Commission (as reported in Moving On, Vol, 6, no's 3 and 4, p.59). In the 1970's Jenny conceptualised and wrote 'Free To Move', for the ABC, a weekly program designed for the active participation of primary school children, and broadcast on a national basis for over three years. Of interest to many readers will be the fact that children from Hanny Exiner's<sup>1</sup> school of dancing took dance roles in some of Jenny's television productions for schools and it was Hanny who persuaded Jenny into volunteering her services to the AADE, which led to Jenny's long dedication to dance, and dance-movement therapy.*

*(A Conversation with Jenny Czulak Riley is followed by a short section of 'snippets' under the heading Reminiscences of early days of television at the ABC, which includes the TV Spectacular - Waging War on the White Monoliths! [Editor's title!! p.10]. It is wonderful to listen to some of Jenny's extraordinary stories of her early television days. We thought our readers would be interested in these [although Jenny is doubtful about that!]). This is followed by Shimmering from within: The transformative experience of creative dance at Mangala, a recording of another conversation: this time between Jenny Czulak Riley and Peter Hockey, led and written by Elizabeth Mackenzie. This touches on the influences that creative dance at Mangala studios in Melbourne has had on Jenny and her work.)*

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<sup>1</sup> **Hanny (Johanna) Exiner (nee Kolm, 1918 – 2006)**, born in Vienna, studied dance with Gertrud Bodenwieser and was a pioneer dance educator and therapist who believed implicitly in the aesthetic experience of the dance itself as a powerful and healing tool. She was responsible for the planning for Melbourne's Graduate Diploma of Movement and Dance which commenced in 1977, the first course to relate dance subjects to therapeutic application in Australia. Once retired from her academic teaching role, Hanny's energies were devoted to the development of the DTAA.

Also, many years ago, Jenny won an Imperial Relations Trust Scholarship in Australia which allowed her to visit Britain and study Peter Slade's<sup>2</sup> 'body movement' approach to drama at the University of Newcastle-on-Tyne. This fuelled her dedication to body-mind unity, and this is still a consuming interest for her.

Jenny is also in demand for her enviable command of the English language, both in spoken and written word. She was assistant author of *Dance Therapy Redefined – A Body Approach to Therapeutic Dance* by Hanny Exiner and Denis Kelynack<sup>3</sup>, and still conducts participatory workshops based on her own book *Growing Older Dancing On* (pub. COTA Vic, 2003). She is a member of the editorial team of *Moving On*, the DTAA's journal, and since a recent slight change in the focus of this publication, she has been dedicated to introducing 'lighteners', very much in line with who we are and how we want to represent ourselves, maintaining it as a newsy interactive publication rather than a more formal Journal. The outcome of this, very much due to Jenny's influence, is a publication with significant content, but at the same time, easy to read.

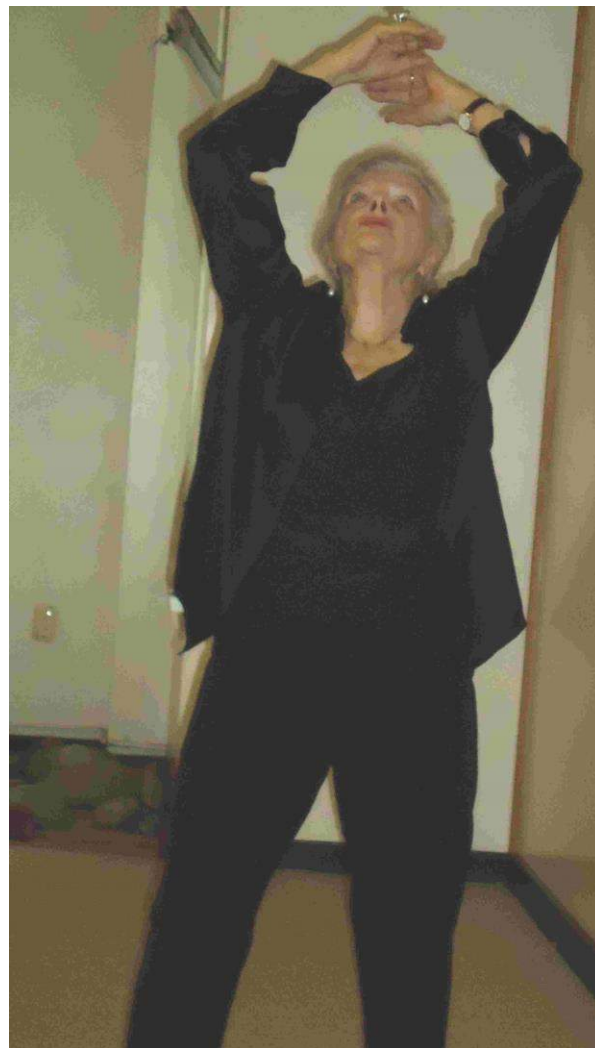
As a DMT and an experienced dance group leader for older adults, Jenny's work with this population is beautiful – using an array of colours and sound, to enhance and deepen the movement process. And Jenny still dances for her own pleasure at the Mangala Studios in Carlton!

What she has given to the DTAA is beyond price, although in the 'conversation with Jenny' that follows, she is almost dismissive of her contribution to the field. And she is still extraordinarily willing to give generously of her time and energies to support the dance-movement therapy profession in so many ways as well as being totally devoted to dance herself.

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<sup>2</sup> Peter Slade's first book of *Child Drama* (1954) is said to have shaken the British educational field by suggesting play is learning and that children should play in schools rather than continue with what was known as 'desk and chalkboard education'. He said "Education is concerned with individuals; drama is concerned with the individuality of individuals, with the uniqueness of each human essence". Retrieved from: *Drama in Education*, [www.osi.hu/esp/rei/multicultural\\_teaching\\_techniques.pdf](http://www.osi.hu/esp/rei/multicultural_teaching_techniques.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Exiner, J. and Kelynack, D. (1994). *Dance Therapy Redefined – A Body Approach to Therapeutic Dance*, pub. Charles C, Thomas, Springfield, Illinois, USA.



Jenny dances on .....

".....creating a vigorous attitude in the body/mind; making it receptive to the possibility of healthy change."

Czulak Riley, J. (2003), *Growing Older Dancing On*. p. 6.

We are pleased to be able to publish the following conversation that took place recently between Naomi Aitchison and Jenny Czulak Riley.