

VRRDA Hall of Fame 2017

ADRIAN SPADARO

Adrian Spadaro has made a considerable contribution to the Melbourne rock'n'roll scene over the past 25 years, firstly as a dance competitor, then as a dance teacher and dance promoter.

Adrian started teaching rock'n'roll in 1991, and continued to teach each week in many areas around Melbourne, including Camberwell, Burwood, Coburg, and Wantirna. **In the early 1990s, Adrian and Chris Black were a well-known competition couple, and together built up one of the biggest Rock'n'Roll dance schools in Melbourne.** Adrian won the 1992 South Pacific Triples, and 1993 VRRDA Open Doubles with Chris Black and Terri Moon, and the 1993 VRRDA Open Teams event.

Adrian was passionate about his dancing and was keen to expand into other areas. **Did you know that Adrian was instrumental in introducing Lindy Hop to Melbourne?** On 20 August 1995, the first Lindy Hop workshop was held in Melbourne at Two's Company, with dance teacher Rob Bloom (who had moved from London to Sydney). **This workshop was organised by Adrian and Chris, kicking off Melbourne's swing revival.**

Adrian also hosted Catrine Ljunggren, from Sweden's dance company 'The Rhythm Hot Shots' in December 1995, when she taught workshops with Rob Bloom. Next came a workshop and dance with Sylvia Sykes from California. **In March 1996, Vic Lindy Hop was formed, run by Melbourne teachers and dancers, including Adrian, Pat Noakes, Claudia Funder and Steve Octagon. Adrian's initial contribution to the swing dancing world in Melbourne was an important step in establishing this dance style.**

Do you realise that within our rock'n'roll dance community, many of the current dance instructors started their teaching careers with Adrian? He was very good at spotting people with the potential to teach. He mentored them, encouraged them to teach and also employed some of them. Jonathon Hannon of Alley Catz, Debbie Krause of Swing Dance with Debbie, Pat Noakes of Swing Central, Rhonda Watts of Renegade Rockers, Dave Dooley, Wendy Gapper and Gavin Preston are all well-known teachers in the rock'n'roll scene who were encouraged or mentored by Adrian.

Adrian went on to run his successful Red Hot Rockers dance classes and social dances, working with many people over the years. Some people, like

Little Maria, Debbie, Angelo and Jonathon, helped him run his dances, and then went on to run their own successful dances.

Did you know that a few years ago, there was an event held at the Victorian Championships called the Fast Foot event? This was lightning fast, and tested the survival skills of the best! Adrian was crazy enough to enter this event with yours truly! Not only did we win, but Adrian literally finished that event lying on the floor! This was either a testament to his great attitude to try everything at least once!! ... or sheer stupidity on both our parts!!

Adrian has continued to run classes and social dances all over Melbourne for many years, currently holding classes in Surrey Hills, Coburg, and Forest Hill, making sure dancers have somewhere to go, and bands have somewhere to play.

Over a period of 25 years, Adrian has taught thousands of people to dance, not only rock'n'roll, but also swing, jive, salsa, cha-cha, westcoast and line dancing. He has enabled thousands of people to enjoy a love of dancing, and has encouraged people from many walks of life to get up on the dance floor, and have fun!

Some of Adrian's greatest achievements:

1. Running workshops in regional areas to introduce four-step Rock'n'Roll, Westcoast, Lindy and other styles, and providing the instructors with teaching videos and notes to help them teach four-step rock'n'roll.
2. Organising the first Lindy Hop workshops in Melbourne, with his partner, Chris Black.
3. Being able to bring enjoyment to so many people, demonstrated by the size of his dance classes on Wednesdays, with over 200 people attending.
4. Starting the first Rock'n'Roll dances at Coburg Town Hall, and the Whitehorse Club, and holding other dances at the Furlan Club, Glen Eira Town Hall, West Coburg Bowls, and many other venues.

Ladies and gentlemen, the VRRDA is honoured to induct Adrian Spadaro into the 2017 Hall of Fame...

Annette Niven
VRRDA Secretary