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AMERICAN

Happy
New
Year

Vol. xiv
No. 5

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SQUARES

Happy
New
Year

The Magazine
of American
Folk Dancing

Happy
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January
1959

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AMERICAN *Squares*

THE MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN FOLK DANCING

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FADS AND FANCIES

To judge from contemporary publications and letters received, matters of life and death importance to the future of square dancing must be decided in high solemn conclave without further delay. High on the priority list are such questions as: "Should 'The Idiots' adopt a name less liable to literal interpretation?", "Is 'Knot-heads' too undignified a term for a square dance group?" and, "Should Samba, Mambo and other Latin steps be barred from American Round Dances in order to keep 'our precious heritage' completely, 100% U.S.A.?"

As this is the first issue of a new year, we can look back on twelve months of discussions of many things connected with square, round and folk dancing: the perennial high level vs. low level debate, the "too many new basics" hassle, the squaw dress vs. evening gown question, etc., etc., etc. Of course all these things provide subjects for conversation among dancers, enable dance publications to fill their pages, and perhaps indicate a wide and avid interest in square, folk and round dancing.

I say "perhaps" in bold face because there are two ways to regard all this concern over matters not entirely indispensable to the enjoyment of an evening of dancing. Firstly, you can consider the whole picture as an ebullient overflowing of interest in people who are sold on dancing that they are "making a way of life" of this hobby. This is probably true for some. But, on the other hand, how much of this "fringe" activity represents a flight from "just dancing" by bored, restless butterflies who must have constant novelty to keep their jaded interest? Could the "Knot-heads" have had more dancing fun right in their own town if they had used the extra time consumed by their 100-mile or more "qualifying trip"? Would the "Idiots" have had better dancing if they had arranged a more conventional date with their caller instead of dragging him out of bed half awake? How many possible new recruits to square dancing have been discouraged from coming in to the fold by the impression that they needed to invest in fancy costumes to "belong"? And so on.

Not that we are against, fads, fancies, novelties, etc. Heaven forbid! Gimmicks and gimcracks are fine, amusing things . . . once in a while . . . and there are people whose idea of a lemon meringue pie is a thin film of lemon topped by three inches of fluff!

BUT, just to make a local comparison, callers' associations and dance federations in this area find it a difficult matter to fill a really big hall for a jamboree or festival, while dozens of Saturday and Sunday night rock 'n roll sessions, Polish Hops, Latin Rhythm Nights and similar events pack them in to the doors. Peek with me at the nearest Polish Hop. The Place is **Jammed**, and only about 20% of the crowd is Polish. They **dance**; some of the frisky set have all kinds of fancy steps, but the majority put in a four or five hour stretch of straight polka and oberek. Deadly monotonous? No, because they give themselves to the dance and need no extraneous activity to entertain them.

I remember travelling miles of mountain roads to a tiny Transylvanian village to dance with the shepherds. The entire evening's program (aside from a couple of waltzes) consisted of swinging your partner until you were too dizzy to continue and then walking a few steps to recover and resume. No fun? I had the time of my life. Stupid people? They beat the pants off me at chess and discussed literature and opera much more knowingly than the average American. Too strenuous and exhausting? Well, maybe that's what we really lack: stamina. Get out your vitamin bottle and let's **dance** more!

Red

HOW TO ENJOY YOURSELF at a square dance

By Lester Garrick, Stroudsburg, Pa.

To those of you who are already square dance fans, this may sound like unnecessary advice. People who attend real, country-style square dances as a regular recreation know it is practically impossible **not** to enjoy yourself. But these days there are several varieties of "square dances" around besides the old-fashioned, rural gathering of congenial neighbors . . . some of which may rather dismay the person coming in contact with them for the first time.

Dividing them into the main categories we have the barn dance, the one-night stand, the club dance, the jamboree (or festival) and the country-style dance. Obviously there must be people who enjoy each of these types or they would not continue to exist; but the same people seldom enjoy all the varieties. A brief description may enable you to determine whether it is possible for you to pass an enjoyable evening at one of the affairs.

(1) The "club" dance. This is the latest arrival on the field. The term "club" does not necessarily imply an organized group with membership requirements, officers, etc., although this is the most frequent set-up. Rather the name is applied to the type of dancing; "Western" dancing characterized by complexity of figures, and, in most places, danced entirely to recorded music rather than to a live orchestra. Usually such groups also dance "rounds" . . . couple dances with special sequences set to modern dance music, most often waltz and fox-trot rhythms. It is very difficult (I wouldn't say impossible) for a beginner to walk in cold to an evening of dancing with such a group and

enjoy himself. Because of the complexity of the square dance figures involved, and the fact that the sequences of the rounds must be learned, it is almost imperative that anyone taking up this type of dancing as a hobby should first take a "beginners" course. As a matter of fact, in most areas where "club" dancing is popular, the local groups are divided into beginners, intermediate and advanced; it takes quite a bit of time in the first two divisions before the aspirant is admitted to the ranks of the "high-level" dancers. Thus the answer to how to enjoy yourself here is to start by attending a **beginners** class.

(2) The "barn" dance. Originally this was merely a square dance held in a barn. There are a few places where this tradition is still preserved, and quite a few square dance halls are coyly designated as barns and decorated with bits of farmyard equipment. However the term nowadays generally refers to an affair held by some local organization in any kind of a hall. At its worst, this may be merely a noisy hullabaloo, with "jails", games, mock weddings, cake auctions, and sometimes even bingo, during which session a square dance caller sometimes tries to get a few possibly intoxicated patrons to go through the motions of a simple square dance or two. Sometimes he succeeds . . . after a fashion. At its best, a "barn dance" will be an evening of mixed square and modern ballroom dancing, with the caller scaling the level of the squares down to meet the needs of crowd. How low or high this level may be depends on the status of square dancing in the area; in sections where square dancing is a popular recreation for most of the community the affair will be almost

identical with the "country-style dance"; where square dancing is a once-a-year event the evening will rather resemble a class in square dancing. Barn dances generally utilize a live orchestra, and city night clubs that advertise "square dancing and country games" can be classified as barn dances . . . whether the "best" or "worst" variety depending on the resort. How to enjoy yourself at a "barn dance"? Simply join the crowd and **listen to the caller**. If you know nothing at all of square dancing, try to take the fourth couple position; this gives you a chance to watch the other three couples dance first and to profit by their mistakes. If you want to be **sure** of an enjoyable evening, try to pick a barn dance that has engaged a caller with both long experience and a solid reputation for handling the dancers. A caller can build up quite a reputation as a **caller** and be completely helpless when confronted with a crowd of tyros looking for an evening of fun.

(3) The "one-night stand." We list this as a separate item in order to divide it into two categories. The first would be a "barn dance" without the barn atmosphere, games, etc., featuring a more or less well-known local caller. Such an evening would be devoted primarily to square dancing, with perhaps mixers, simple round or folk dances, and, if presented with live music, modern ballroom dancing interspersed between the squares. This can be a lot of fun, even for rank beginners. There are usually helpful committees around to aid beginners, and the dancers are generally experienced enough to help puzzled strangers. The second kind of event often referred to as a one-night stand is the appearance of some nationally-known caller, sponsored by a local club. We can classify this as a club dance de luxe. The caller is expensive, imported specially for the event, and if he doesn't give his "all", the committee will be outraged. This makes

such an affair impossible for a beginner. How to enjoy such a wingding? If you're a beginner, go as a spectator; you'll see all the new square dance fashions. If you're a club dancer, you'd better make sure you know all the latest figures and variations!

(4) The "Country-style" dance. This is a weekly (or occasionally a monthly or twice-a-month arrangement, with the caller and band making a circuit of two or three communities in rotation) featuring live music and robust dancing. The majority of resorts featuring this type of dancing have been in operation for a long time, and although the original patronage was predominantly local, most such places now attract a fair percentage of "city folks" seeking this type of fun. This usually means that the caller is a competent enough instructor to talk through a square dance on a learn as you dance basis, and that the dancing is at a level possible to the average beginner **with one important proviso**: a set composed **entirely** of beginners would require such detailed instructions that the entire floor would be held up endlessly. As many of these old-time places are out in the rural areas, visitors often arrive in parties, and tend to dance together. This is fatal. If you are a beginner and go to such a resort in a party, **break up your group for the dancing**. Mix with the other people; an experienced set of square dancers can pull one couple of beginners through all but the most complicated squares. They don't mind either as a rule (once in a while there are a few sour-pusses, but they usually make up their set in advance, so you would be unlikely to get into such a group) and besides it gives them a chance to show off to the city slickers! If you are an experienced square dancer and are still (heaven only knows why) reading this you know that at most rural resorts the dancing is lusty rather than complicated; but even dedicated high-level club dancers

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PLEASE - WRITE

We have discussed publicity for square dance clubs (*American Squares*, November, 1957) and for one-night stands (*American Squares*, December, 1958) as applied to local newspapers, radio stations, television stations, etc. If you missed these previous articles, the whole series (including the present item) is available as a reprint in booklet form. It's free . . . just send for it.

A great deal of what we have said about news values for newspapers applies also to articles intended for publication in *American Squares Magazine*, especially with regard to timeliness, novelty and general interest to the readers. However remember that *American Squares* is a specialized publication; an intelligent discussion of technical dance points or trends in dancing might very well be of interest to a journal whose readers are mostly dancers and dance leaders, although the average newspaper would hardly find this a suitable item to print.

Try to view the average reader of *American Squares* as an average square dancer or caller in your own section. They are interested in such things as the latest fads and fancies, ways to build up their club memberships, new dances and records, "big" doings in the square dance world and articles that will increase their knowledge of dancing in general or improve their technique.

On the whole, a dancer or leader in Suffern, N. Y. has not the slightest interest in the names of the officers just elected by the Belly Beaux in Laredo, Texas, nor does the reader in Tacoma, Washington give a darn that the Jacksonville, Florida Square Gnotts now dance on Friday instead of Thursday. These are quite proper news items for local papers and regional

square dance bulletins, but *American Squares* is a national publication. If we started to publish lists of this kind we would have a publication the size of *Popular Mechanics* . . . but without the circulation and advertising of that magazine to foot the bill.

We do like to publish coming attractions if they are of sufficient importance and interest to attract dancers from a wide area. The visit of a "name" caller to some club is not in that category. (Unless he robs the local bank or does a pistols-at-sunrise act with a local rival while there.) A jamboree to raise money for some well-known charity is worth mention . . . on the grounds that others may be inspired to do likewise, and thus keep square dancing on the credit side of the social ledger in the eyes of the community.

However we do like to receive notices of new club officers and schedules of dance nights . . . not for publication, but to satisfy the occasional reader who is travelling and would like to drop in at a square dance in some town he is visiting.

One item that we would very much like to keep before our readers is a schedule of radio and television programs featuring square and/or folk dancing. To be of the fullest value, this should be sent in well in advance of our publication deadline (10th of the month preceding publication, but we would also be happy to know of groups that have appeared on such programs even when the news arrives too late for us to tell our readers to tune in.

You don't have to be a wonderful writer to be a correspondent for *American Squares*; you don't even have to know how to spell or punctuate. If the news is interesting to our readers, we will cheerfully re-write it. All we ask is send it early.

LETTERS from our READERS

Dear Editor:

Enjoyed all the Regular Features in your November issue. Am in thorough accord with Yvonne Doumergue about "Happier Dancing," and also appreciate what McIntosh had to say about "The Backbone," and was thrilled about all that free information—that I didn't have to delve for—about La Russe, one of my most favorites. In other words, I enjoy reading your magazine.

Mildred Martin, Richmond, Va.

Gentlemen:

I'm surprised that you can find anything good about Bill Castner's record "Oh, Lonesome Me." It's obvious that your reviewer did not try dancing to the record. It can't be done, the way Bill calls it. He forgets to say "around one" and that spoils the whole dance. Put an intermediate set on the floor and try it. We have a platter club and usually take your advice on records with calls, but after this, I'm wondering.

I would like to add how much we did enjoy "Gnats in My Bouillabaisse" by Yvonne Doumergue in your September issue. We agree with her 100%. Maybe she should review your records.

E. A. Lasson,
Downers Grove, Ill.

Dear Frank,

Received the three records yesterday. Thank you. Red River Valley Square is my party piece; Northern Lights I have called for some 4/5 years, but Floyd really makes something of it; I shall try it out on my dancers tonight and see how they fall for it. The Rose of San Antone I fell for when 'Mom' first sent me a tape

with Joe Lewis calling. Unfortunately the record I first bought was an Imperial and I couldn't keep the pitch. Later our band played it and I still found difficulty in keeping in pitch right through. Then I got hold of your record with Gray Eagle on the back and I have called it ever since in comfort. The new record is a similar recording so I can use both sides. I like a called record now and then as it opens up possibilities for my dancers although it has its setbacks. My wife thinks Bruce Johnson 'simply wonderful' and I come second on the list.

A caller 'Lucky' Beason who was over here with the A.F., returned home the other month and I heard from 'Mom' that he called on her and for her in Phoenix the other week. As we had sent 'Mom' a new blouse (waist you call them, I think) they had a real party. She was really thrilled. I am now waiting a tape of the party.

The boys are rehearsing like mad to send a longer tape although they take some filling up. I just completed a 3/4 hour's conversation with Ed Durlacher. He sent me a tape telling us about himself and square dancing from 'his' angle and rather than return it as received I decided to get a friend along and tell Ed what we felt about his comments. Sort of two-man brain trust. Believe me it took some filling up.

My caller's course starts on the 14th, and I am hoping to make it as complete as possible with no accent on any particular variation or form. I hope to run a complete course; history, regional differences, music, calling techniques, equipment, planning, leading, squares, rounds, contras, circle dances etc. With all the books I have I am well equipped and I have letters

and tapes with all sorts of remarks. I am **stressing** your records. I do not know of any others which so completely fills the bill for what we want! 'Folk dancer' maybe but I haven't seen many of these. Where else can one get a decent recording of Portland Fancy, Fireman's Reel, contra music unless they buy Folkraft; and what about party games? O yes I am pushing your records at this course and as I understand that the B.O.T. are making an allocation to our Association orders will be coming through 'on the level' — I am awaiting confirmation of methods although I dare say the order will have to come to you via Viv Cannon. We will know very soon.

You know Frank, squares over here have a similarity with yours over there. We have the 'know alls' who form associations and tell the world how good they are and how good square dancing is etc., etc., and we have little clubs all over the place just dancing and nothing heard of them; they can be developed but I shudder to think what would happen to them if they developed along Association lines. I am reminded of the story of the college professor who was asked to recite the 21st Psalm. He did it beautifully and was followed by an old minister who brought tears to the eyes of the students with his rendering. Afterwards it was said "Ah the professor knows **all about** the Shepherd but the minister **knows** the Shepherd!" These big clubs know all about square dancing but the small clubs know how to dance and have fun together. One meets up with them in newspaper articles etc.; a report on a person and their hobbies might include: "She/he is a keen square dancer" in an area where no club exists as far as we know. When contact is made they have a thriving folk dance club which does American square and our own dances. In Nottingham I go along to our University and dance with the Folk Dance Society there. In fact I am the Vice President but they

are not attached to any association; they just dance. Many of my 'hot rods' are disgusted with the programme when we visit. They do "English stuff" but many more of us have fun and recreation. I shall have to seek out some of these clubs for you when you come and let you meet both sides.

Again, thank you Frank, and every good wish. By the way; at Derby just outside Nottingham their Annual Carnival Committee is putting up a Silver Cup (value 150.00 dollars) for a Square Dance Contest! Each year they are going to offer more cups! And cash prizes to 300.00 dollars; it will be an annual event. We are off! Any hints on how to set about such a contest with teams of many shades of experience is, needlessly to write, appreciated.

Sincerely,
Jim Lees,
Nottingham, England

Dear Frank:

I like your "Rig-a-jig-jig" dance mixer very much and the recording is excellent. I only wish that there were a few more measures of music on it, as it is a good 6/8 tune for square dancing and would be enjoyed by the dancers.

In my opinion your sales of a record like that one would be increased greatly if you could advertise it as "suitable for squares" as well as the dance for which it was made. Also, I believe that other records which are made for a certain patterned square dance call should be advertised as "suitable for other squares" provided there is sufficient music on them.

It seems to me that other recording companies could increase their record sales also if they would cease limiting the music to only the given call.

Al MacLeod,
Baldwinsville, N. Y.

HERE AND THERE

ARTHUR KATONA

Readers of American Squares will be saddened to hear of the death of Art Katona, who in the past contributed so many interesting articles to our publication. Mr. Katona, an avid folk dance enthusiast, died of a heart attack at his home in Golden, Colorado.

Richmond, Va. Mildred Martin tells us that Richmond's 3rd Fall SD Festival was a big success; attendance 778. Also the date of the 1959 (4th Annual) Festival will be Oct. 23rd and 24th, at the Hotel John Marshall. This is how we like our coming events dates . . . a long ways in advance. As a reward we are putting it in this issue to continue until October 1959.

Columbus, Neb. Verona Ebel reports a whirlwind of square dance activity in her sector. Starting with zero square dancing 4 years ago **Harolds Squares** now have 80 couples and another club in town boasts 32 couples, with dancing the year around. The first named club recently held a Night Owl Dance (dancing all night). Guests came from California and Kansas, as well as the far corners of Nebraska, and all who stayed until dawn were given Night Owl Badges. (Here's another badge to pin on your chests folks, get busy!) They are planning their big Mid-State SD Festival for May, but since the last one overflowed the Armory, they are trying to get a bigger hall, so the exact date is not yet available. Also on their books is a Trail Dance for the National Convention goers. Date is May 26 at the City Auditorium in Columbus . . . an easy day's drive from Denver. Dancer's info: write Mrs. Ebel at 2065 - 32nd Ave., Col-

umbus, Neb. Callers who would like to stop and call a couple at this affair write Harold Bausch, Leigh, Neb. (He's the caller for Harolds Squares.)

Waltham Cross, England. The monthly bulletin of the British Assn. of American Square Dance Clubs carries an article pleading for simplicity at public square dances, regardless of what high-level challenge material they indulge in at their closed sessions. Looks like some of our British friends are seeking the angels too!

Florida. A Florida SD publication doing a poll on the reasons that so many dancers there drop out of the picture came up with such mutually contradictory answers as "We can't attend regularly and find it difficult to keep up to the progress made by the other dancers" and, "We're tired of dancing the same old things, our caller never brings us anything new." (From **Bow and Swing**) Just no pleasing those serpents, eh?

Valley City, N. D. Station KXJB-TV is broadcasting a square dance program every Saturday night. Tune 'em in if you are in range.

Charlottesville, Va. The Virginia Reelers will sponsor the Fifth Virginia Folk Festival in Charlottesville on April 4th. We'll give the place as soon as they announce it.

Late. Late. Late. Since the December issue has long ago been mailed and this issue won't be out until Jan. 1, we weep sadly over all the announcements of square and folk dance New Year's Eve parties that are still arriving in the mail.

National Convention. The publicity Committee is begging for photographs to use for publishing the big Denver shindig. If you plan to appear on the

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SATURDAY NIGHT DANCE

Northern Vermont Style

By Dr. Winthrop Tilley, Burlington, Vermont

This account is sent in the hope that similar reports may come in from other parts of the country.

—Win Tilley

Milton, Vermont, is a town of less than 1000 about twenty miles north of Burlington and 25 south of the Canadian border. The dance was in the hall of the Milton Grange and under their sponsorship. Such dances have been held regularly since the hall was erected in 1949 and have helped pay for the hall, which is now owned free and clear by the Grange.

Attendance averages 150 to 200, mostly teen-agers, with a few younger and only three or four couples of middle age. Three policemen keep order. The music is live—banjo, fiddle, two guitars, one Spanish-electric, one electric. The musicians wear Western costume, as does a fifth man, who is both ticket-taker and caller. (Nobody else dresses Western.) One of the guitarists also calls and sometimes the two call in harmony or swap calling chores in the middle of a number.

The youngsters go there to swing. They do so enthusiastically, energetically and skilfully. Mostly the swinging is smooth and fast. There was little backhand swinging (one boy did it so with every girl but his partner. Did she refuse to swing so?), no jitterbug swinging. Four or five times around seemed about a normal swing. Some enthusiasts managed more in the same time. Promenade was done as in star promenade position, but without the star. One couple did a promenade-swing around the set.

The program from the first square to the intermission was this: Square 1: (a) a version of lady round the lady,

gent round the gent. Hoedown music; (b) Darling Nellie Gray music. Figure—1st gent swing 2nd lady, then 3d then 4th, everybody swing. Promenade; (c) Hoedown music. The figure, a version of cut away 6, 4, 2. Eight minutes of slow foxtrot and five minutes of bop. Square 2: (a) Hoedown music. 1st cpl to the R, 4 hands around, R hands across, L hands across (not a tight, organized star), R hand round partner, L hand round corner. Swing. Promenade; (b) Music Spanish Cavaliero. The old swingeroo figure, with one visitor at a time; (c) Hoedown music, First couple to R, four hands around. Swing opposite, swing own. Promenade. Next a slow foxtrot, then a polka, with several versions being danced, from couples doing a basic to lines of six or seven persons doing the heel-and-toe polka; a slow waltz; a bop number. Square 3 (a) Duck for the Oyster to tune Bully of the Town; (b) Red River Valley, visiting couple swinging opposite, own, etc. (c) Lady Round Lady as in Floyd Woodhull figure. At end of each couple's visit, couple swing in center and kiss while six hands circle round. The kisses were not bashful! Intermission.

Some miscellaneous notes. The figure new to me was the sort of reverse do paso which appeared in two dances. Active couple, after a separation, meet at home position with right hands around, then each of these does a L hand round corner, then active couple (and the others too) swing. This was done only as a two-couple figure.

The youngsters seemed to like the squares best of all. The hoedown music was not familiar to me. The fiddler told me he played Canadian

(Continued on page 18)

Social Dancing in America

A history by Rod La Farge

From the early 1950's up to the present time we have witnessed a great rise in the popularity of square dancing as an urban, as well as a rural recreation. A part of this may be attributed to the modern highways that have brought rural rendezvous within painless reach of the cities, but the largest influence has been exerted by the small record companies, specializing in square dance music, who provided amateur callers with a source of music inexpensive enough to make small clubs and groups practical. Even those who disparage the activities of the individual who memorizes a couple of calls from a record and sets himself up as an expert must admit that the activities of these "platter leaders" have done much to spread square dancing throughout the country. Some of them have gone on to really become callers, and today the total number of square dance callers in the country is in the thousands. The actual number of square dancers is subject to much statistical debate, but attendance at regional festivals runs to a national total of several hundred thousand, and enthusiasts come from all parts of the country to attend the National Convention. The character of square dancing however has undergone considerable change in this period. Although in rural resorts and open public dance halls they still dance fairly simple figures to more or less traditional music played by a live orchestra, the majority of small square dance "clubs" and organized groups tend towards more and more intricate patterns dances to popular "juke box" tunes of the day, generally using recorded music.

Another phenomenon on the scene is the "round" dance. Originally this term referred to the waltzes, fox trots and other "ballroom" dances as distinguished from the square dancing.

At many square dance resorts such "old-fashioned" dances as the Varsouvienne and Heel and Toe Polka were danced between the square dance tips. As the new crop of leaders and callers appeared in the field, some tried reviving other old dances from the late 19th Century. As the supply of these numbers soon proved inadequate for the continuous demand for novelty, some leaders began to arrange set sequences to popular fox trot and waltz melodies . . . and to call these concoctions "folk dances." As they soon also began to adopt some of the sequence dances from the repertoire of the "Old Tyme" dance groups of Great Britain, the situation became rather confused, and disregarding the fact that the term "sequence dance" was already in use to describe this division of choreographic activity, settled on the designation of "American Rounds."

At the time of this writing "Round Dancing" is quite a flourishing activity and shows definite signs of divorcing itself entirely from the square dance groups that incubated it. This type of dancing is almost invariably dependent upon records rather than live music.

To turn aside from the square, folk and round dance division, the public ballroom of today seems to have taken a definite Latin trend; although "jitterbugging" and slow fox-trots are still in the majority, most public dance programs feature a goodly share of Cha-cha-chas, Mambos and Rhumbas. The Samba is maintaining a tenuous hold on life in many quarters and among more sophisticated groups, the Tango is still popular. Another South-of-the-border item striving for recognition is the Meringue. We are a little too close to the wheels to try for an analysis of the reason for this trend,

but it seems to be a combination of top-flight orchestras available and pushing by both the big recording companies and the "chain store" dance studios, although the increased tendency of Americans to vacation in Latin countries probably also helps.

The last dancing item to report in our history is the current rise in popularity of the polka. In spite of the demands that this dance makes on the stamina of the performer, there has been a steady increase in the number of polkas on the top sales listings of records. True, many dancers do not take to the floor when a polka is played at a public dance, but on the other hand there are many resorts that feature polka music as the main at-

traction, and top polka orchestras tour the country with bookings that would make some of the "big name" bands of the Twenties envious.

This brings us to the end of 1958 . . . and to the end of our dance history; we have an extensive bibliography for a finale and will publish this in the next issue or two. We have answered many inquiries as to whether we intend to publish this in book form; the answer is yes . . . July, 1959 will probably be the publication date. Thank you readers, for wading through such a long article in serial form.

Rod LaFarge



Happy New Year!



RECORD REVIEWS

MacGregor Records, 45 or 78 rpm

Price \$1.25

#826 Blue Bell (128)//Walkin' My Baby Back Home (128)

Square Dance with Calls by Bob Van Antwerp

"Blue Bell" is a well delivered singing call . . . simple figure . . . nothing new or startling . . . good solid fare.

"Walkin' My Baby Back Home" is a very simple direct approach to teaching callers and dancers that square dancing is done to a musical phrase. It is rather ironic that after ten years of pleading by the editors of this magazine, and we do mean pleading, with the callers in the West, to recognize that square dancing is a musical idiom, MacGregor finally takes the bit by the teeth and says: "Now look here, this is the way it should be done." Of course all Eastern square dance records have always been prompted in rhythm and correct phrase. If any caller cannot learn to call in phrase and rhythm with this record, we suggest that he quit calling and go back to chicken plucking.

#825 Instrumental of the above (128)

Excellent instrumental.

#828 Mary Lou (128)//It Ain't Gonna Rain No Mo' (128)

Square Dance with Calls by Fenton "Jonesy" Jones

"Mary Lou" has the usual club style square dance glossary figures adding up to an ordinary number. On the other hand, "It Ain't Gonna Rain No Mo'" shows real promise of becoming a standard. It is good simple fare which is fun to do.

#827 Instrumental of the above (128)

Excellent instrumental.

Blue Star Records, 78 rpm only

Price \$1.45

#1519 She Likes Swinging//Instrumental (132)

Square Dance with Calls by Mack McCoslin

"She Likes Swinging" is a rather poor presentation of a club dance. The diction is poor and the calling amateurish. The instrumental on the

other hand, is well played, and if anything is to make this dance popular, it will be the instrumental side.

#1520 What's The Reason//Instrumental (132)

Square Dance with Calls by Andy Andrus

"What's The Reason" is another square dance song that square dancing could very well get along without. This is a Texas imitation of California singing-calling. It is the usual glossary type call with nothing to distinguish it. The instrumental side is well played with good tone quality.

S.I.O. Records, 45 rpm only

Price \$1.45

#X1106 Blue Gold (128)//Spanish Square Dance (128)

Square Dance with Calls by Bob Wright

"Blue Gold" has rather uninspired calling and a poorly contrived figure which adds up to a completely dull side.

"Spanish Square Dance" . . . is just as dull as the other side and the caller has not improved any.

#X2109 Instrumental of the above (128)

Both sides of this recording are fine . . . good commercial production.

Old Timer Records, 45 or 78 rpm

Price \$1.25

#8135 Left Over Hash (128)//Johnny's Goulash (128)

Square Dance with Calls by Johnny Schultz

Hey! Hey! with a Rip and a Snort! . . . Johnny Schultz is breathing fire . . . really a nice job, all of which means we really like this record very much. Club dancers will be delighted with it. It is just a great big collection of extemporaneous hash calls which have been carefully written down. It should prove much more popular with the dancers than with the callers who will have a hard job memorizing these.

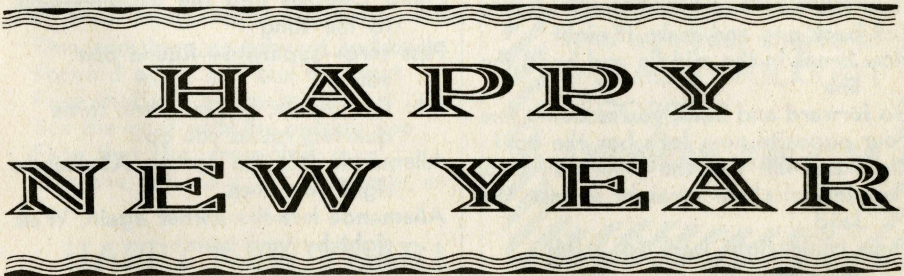
Benz Records, 78 rpm only

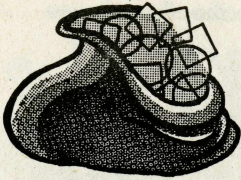
Price \$1.45

#1202 Squarehoma//Instrumental (132)

Square Dance with Calls by Ben Baldwin, Jr.

A complex figure with incorrect phrasing, called with bad diction results in a poor record.





GRAB BAG



TAKE YOUR PICK OF THESE SQUARES AND ROUNDS

ROLL BACK ONE

By Fred Bailey, North Las Vegas, Nev.

All four couples a half sashay
 Swing the girl that comes your way
 It's twice around you're gonna whirl
 The two head gents, new corner girl
 Star by the left, go round the town
 Star promenade new partners round
 The outside four roll back one
 The same old sex ain't too much fun
 Roll back again and hang on tight
 Turn that star in the middle of the night
 The sides back-track and pass thru
 On to the next, square thru
 Three-quarters round, don't just stand
 Corners all, left allemande, etc.

DIMINISHING STAR

By Fred Christopher,
St. Petersburg, Fla.

The heads to the center and back to the bar
 Forward again, make a right hand star
 It's a right hand star in the middle of the town
 Back by the left and don't slow down
 Take your corner with an arm around
 Star promenade, go around the town
 The inside out, the outside in
 Go once and a half, put the other folks in
 Now just the head two gents don't try no tricks
 Roll back one and make it six
 Then the side two ladies don't be late
 Roll back one and make it eight
 Now break in the middle and bend the line
 Go forward and back, you're doing fine
 Your opposite now, let's box the gnat
 Right and left thru the other way back
 Two ladies chain straight across the land
 Then chain right back to a left allemande.

QUARTER IN AND OUT BREAK

By Fred Bailey

One and three, you bow and swing
 Sides to the middle and back again
 Heads, pass thru and $\frac{1}{4}$ in
 Join four hands and form a ring
 Circle left, go round the floor
 Just once and half and then no more
 Now $\frac{1}{4}$ out, go round another
 In the middle, pass thru, brother
 And allemande left, etc.
 The head two couples swing you do
 The side two couples right & left thru
 Now swing your corner, you're not thru yet
 Original head ladies and your corner gents
 Go forward and back, then pass on thru
 $\frac{1}{4}$ in and pass that Sue
 To a left allemande, etc.

COMIN' ROUND THE MOUNTAIN

Original by Marty Winter

Record: Balance #203B

Introduction:

Allemande left the corner, - Grand right and left you go
 Hand over hand—meet your girl—
 Do sa do around
 Take her by the hand Promenade—
 Take her home with you
 Promenade the mountain, promenade.
 Figure:
 Head Couples into the middle—Back to the Ring
 Pass thru—separate—Round one you go
 Into the middle, Square Thru, three quarters round you go
 Allemande left the corner, Allemande right your own
 Allemande left the corner again, Walk right by your own

(Next page, please)



AND THE NEW LINE



Write for list of TNT instrumentals — recommended by schools for dance instructions. We carry all Square and Round Dance labels. Write us if your dealer cannot supply you.
MERRBACH RECORD SERVICE
 323 West 14th Street, Houston, Texas



- *BLUE STAR 1519: She Likes Swinging. Caller, Mack McCoslin. Flip, Inst.
- *BLUE STAR 1520: What's The Reason. Caller, Andy Andrus. Flip, Inst.
- *BOGAN 1107: Your Lips Tell Me No-No, But There's Yes-Yes In Your Eyes. Caller, Chuck Goodman. Flip, Inst. Key of D.

BENZ 1202: Squarehoma. Caller, Ben Baldwin. Flip, Inst.

**Swing and Whirl the right hand girl,
 take her home with you**

Promenade the mountain—promenade.
 (Repeat figure for the heads—then twice for the sides)

Final Closer:

Four Ladies Grand Chain—Chain across the Hall

Turn 'em boys chain 'em back, send them home once more . . .

Do sa do the corner —See Saw round your tau

Four gents star right—go once around that Hall

Allemande left the corner—Grand right and left you go . . .

Hand over hand till you meet your girl
 Promenade her home, promenade around the ring

Take her home with you, Promenade the mounain, promenade.

A BREAK

By Fred Bailey, North Las Vegas, Nev.

One and three go forward and back

Forward again and box the gnat

Face that two and pass thru

Box the gnat with the outside two

Face that two, cross trail, man

Skip one girl, do a left allemande, etc.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

TUMBLEWEED

By Fred Bailey, North Las Vegas, Nev.

The two head couples gonna bow and swing

Lead on out to the right of the ring

Circle up four, don't take all night

Side gents break with a line to the right

Go forward eight and square on thru

Three-quarters round is all you do

Bend the line and do it again

Square thru three-quarters, then

Bend the line and do it again

Square thru three-quarters, then

Bend the line and listen, man

Cross trail thru, left allemande, etc.

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B/W

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Called by

Johnny Schultz

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Books and Magazines

SETS IN ORDER, the national square dance magazine, \$2.50 a year, or \$3.70 for the special Caller's Edition. Sets in Order: 462 North Robertson Blvd., Los Angeles 48, California.

BOW AND SWING. The magazine of Square Dancing in Florida. Published six times a year . . . featuring complete directory of clubs and open dances . . . official publication of callers and dancers groups . . . subscription price \$1.00 per year. **BOW AND SWING**, Box 891, Kissimmee, Florida.

THE FOLKLORIST incorporating **THE FOLK DANCER** and **THE FOLK MUSICIAN & SINGER**. Published in Manchester, England. \$1.50 per year quarterly. American subscription agent: Frank L. Kaltman, 1159 Broad St., Newark 2, N. J.

Equipment for Sale

SELL YOUR OLD P.A. or record player with an ad in this column. You'll put enough in the piggy bank to start thinking about a new **BOGEN**.

Saturday Nite Dance

(Continued from page 11)

reels mostly, and named the Bayside Reel and the Montreal Reel as two he had used that evening.

The round dance music was hillbilly stuff (e.g. Blackbobard of My Heart and Lonesome Me). The calling was jjust part of the process and kept the dancers together, though the dancers obviously knew the dances by heart. Every dance called was of the visiting couple variety. (Nobody could swing like that in all-work dances.) The floor was noisy and enthusiastic, but not disorderly. There was quite a lot of pleasure-screaming. The twirl-under in the Grand Right and Left was universal. The program is basically the same week after week, but there was no evidence of boredom or disinterest. The admission charge was 60c, with the take being split between orchestra and Grange.

PATTER

Fiddle is a-playin'
Little Brown Jug
Step right up
Give your baby a hug.

All promenade now
Everybody walk
Bump your chicken
Hear her squawk.

Pass right thru
Then the lines divide
On off the floor
It's the end of the ride.

Sheep's in the pen
Dip 'em in the vat
Meet your partner
And box the gnat.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Here and There

(Continued from page 10)

program or in the Pageant get the pics to Rae and Ruth Hope, 727 Geneva, Denver 8, Colo. Just in case you are not on the Convention mailing list (that's almost impossible!) the Pageant is "One Hundred Years of Dancing" and will be directed by Dorothy Shaw. Send for your registration form now.

Ohio. Joe 'N Ginger Hritz, those indefatigable enthusiasts (3010 Victor St., Cleveland 27) have mimeographed an eight-page directory of square, round, old time and folk dances in Ohio.

Australia. We note in the Australian "Square Dance Digest" that two radio stations there feature square dance programs. Does your local station?

Indianapolis, Ind. Ruth Moody writes that SD activity there is at rip-tide, with a great many benefit dances being sponsored for local charities. They have already set the date for the Indiana State SD festival for Sept. 26 (1959) at the State Fair Grounds.

Kentucky. Info on the Spring SD Festival (April 11) in Louisville may be obtained from Fred and Ruth Burkle, 3600 Lexington Road, Louisville, Ky.

Round Dance Collection. Dr. Roger Knapp, whose latest supplement to his "Collection of Round Dances" we commented on recently, tells us that there are 366 dances in the complete collection. He will wind up the project in April after nine years of collecting. If you wish the complete collection, Books I and II are available at \$2.00 as long as the supply lasts; Book III is also \$2.00 now, but will cost \$3.00 after April. Write to Dr. Knapp at 621 Ohio Ave., Corpus Christi, Texas.

Happy New Year!

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THE CONTRAS ARE COMING!

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THE CONTRA BOOK

by Holden, Kaltman and Kulbitsky. The largest collection of contra dances (way over 100) ever published, complete with instructions, teaching aids, bibliography and cross indexing. Spiral bound \$3.50; hard cover \$4.50. Order direct from AMERICAN SQUARES, 1159 Broad St., Newark 2, New Jersey.

Dear Sirs:

This letter, if written on time, would have ended my subscription to *American Squares*, but I will give it another trial for six months, through April, 1959. My activity is now limited to Sunday afternoons and evenings with nothing available here. My interest has been lower. "Record Reviews" in *American Squares* has been its only interesting section and only when it had something about old fiddle tunes and square dance music. The many arguments and new calls to popular tunes are beyond me.

But I have taken new hope since reading the November issue which you kindly advanced to me. The article about Hugh Thurston made me think that there are some who are still interested in music and the origins of our folk and square dance music. Perhaps he will give us some very interesting articles. I was delighted at the way Mr. Thurston decried "La Russe". He told facts about the dance

and told of the various versions without a single argument as to which is right. He credited all of those who use the dance and discredited no one. This is one of the most unselfish dance descriptions that I have seen in a long time. May he keep up the good work!

My payment for the trial subscription accompanies this letter.

Yours very truly,

Willis L. Mayo

"Our ancestors possessed very little notion of what is termed 'rosewater morality' and they had no scruple whatever about calling a useful garden impliment by its proper name."

—Scott: "Dancing in All Ages"

HAPPY NEW YEAR!



DECCA

RECORD #9-30363 45 RPM only

White Silver Sands

POSITION: Open, facing LOD. Opposite footwork for lady.

INTRODUCTION

Acknowledge and wait 8 measures.

DANCE PATTERN

Measures

- 1-4 WALK, 2, 3, TURN; BACK UP, 2, 3, 4. Walk fwd LOD 3 steps, turning in towards partner to face RLOD on 4th step. Walk bwd 4 steps in LOD.
- 5-8 REPEAT MEASURES 1-4. Starting RLOD and end facing LOD in open Pos.
- 9-12 BALANCE AWAY, BALANCE TOGETHER, BALANCE AWAY, BALANCE TOGETHER. Balance away from and toward partner in open Pos. facing LOD.
- 13-16 TURN AND CHANGE PARTNERS; BALANCE L, BALANCE R. Lady does R face turn in place while man walks in a small circle to the L, moving to the lady behind him and assuming butterfly Pos., man's back to COH. Balance L and R.

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#577 Wheelbarrow/Allemande Breaks #2
Marvin Shilling, caller

Western Jubilee Record Co.

3703 N. 7th St. - Phoenix, Arizona

Happy New Year!

Cowboy - Go Home

Pat Pending

He says he's a Western Caller
Admits he's just the best
But he ain't been west of Podunk

(or Jersey or Newark or Boston)
you name it

And that's not so far west.
Ties ankles into bow knots
With arms he twists a cruller
Leaves you bewildered — panting
Thinks he's a right smart feller.
He should go to the West Coast.
With La-de-dah Terrific
True Western boys would get him
To dunk in the Pacific.
I've met you pleasant folkses
With you I've broken bread
Cemented one more friendship
For the years that lie ahead.
Will spring your "cross-cut" contra
Next Sunday is the date
For N. H. Federation
And 'Sir Procrastinate.'
So here's two pats for Nozey
And best regards to Rod
When inspiration hits me
You'll get results — by God.

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5

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10

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15

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25

An Electro-Voice 951 Cardoid microphone, list price \$49.50. Or a Radax 15" speaker model SP15B. List price \$43.

50

A Bogen VP12 (Lady Bogen), list price \$135.00. Or an Electro-Voice dynamic lavalier mike #629, list price \$115.00.

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A Bogen VP17X, list price \$186.50. Or a Wollensak 1500 high fidelity tape recorder, list price \$199.50.

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#8293 same as #829

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and the

Country Ramblers

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Los Angeles, California

Enjoy Yourself

(Continued from page 6)

can get quite a kick from a country-style square dance if they just let their hair down!

(5) The "Jamboree" or "Festival." Originally this was a get-together by several callers to help out some brother in distress or to raise funds for a local charity. All donated their services, and perhaps a musician or two, or sometimes the band was paid from the admissions. In any event the callers took turns at their task, and the affair was not too different from a normal country-style Saturday night dance, except that there was more dancing and a much larger crowd; all of each caller's following came to support their favorite with applause.

This type of jamboree is still popular in many sections, but in addition, the "club" dancers now also hold jamborees. The same set-up is used; callers from the various clubs take turns at calling, but we quite often find live music absent from these jamborees. Many club callers can not work with an orchestra, and prefer records. A high-level jamboree or festival is definitely not a place for a beginner; it can even be a pretty grim affair for an experienced club dancer if the committee rewards a collection of fledgling callers with a place on the program because "they worked so hard" for the event. Such callers most often grasp this shortcut to fame by memorizing the latest, fastest and most complicated call they can find a record of; comes the fatal hour of delivery they explain the dance backwards and then boast they "stopped the floor." How to enjoy a club dance jamboree? If you are an experienced club dancer make sure the committee puts on their best callers, not the ones "who deserve a chance." If you're a beginner or country-style dancer, go and watch the show . . . the gals are wearing the prettiest petticoats and ruffled pantalettes this year!

To The Girls

By MILDRED MARTIN

The people who are square dancing today are no doubt sold on the activity, appreciating its worth all the way from the health aspect to its wholesomeness as a recreative form. I am one of these people. As folk dance specialist for our Recreation Department in Richmond, it is part of my job to promote square dancing. I'm trying to do just that with all my might and main. This, I think, is the object of most dancers too.

Unfortunately we, as square dancers and promoters, are going to be in for some strong criticism, or just simply will we have some potential dance individuals and groups turn their backs and diverge altogether. My remarks up to this point are provoked from a picture taken at our recent festival by a local newspaper photographer. We in Richmond can be very grateful to the newspaper for not printing this picture. We can only attribute this good fortune to our paper's cooperation with our Department and its thorough appreciation of what we are trying to do for the citizens in this area. Accepted square dance attire for the female is bushels of petticoats and full skirts; well and good—we all agree they are beautiful. The whirls are fun. But, unless we girls are going to be properly attired underneath, using "regular" undergarments to accompany their intended attire, we, my pals, will ultimately defeat our aim in giving the good impression we hope to give to all our prospective participants and spectators.

Happy
New
Year

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COMING EVENTS

- Jan. 10 **Winnipeg, Canada** Weston School. FDFM dance.
- Jan. 10 **Wyckoff, N. J.** Grange Hall. Russian New Year Party.
- Jan. 10 **Columbus, S. C.** Carolina Capers SD Festival.
- Jan. 10-11 **Columbus, Ohio** Buckeye State SD Convention.
- Jan. 11 **New York, N. Y.** Stuyvesant Casino, 140 Second Ave. Nationality Evening (N. Y. Folk Festival Council).
- Jan. 16-17 **Tucson, Ariz.** Square Dance Festival.
- Jan. 31 **Grand Blanc, Mich.** High School. 2nd Annual Squarama.
- Jan. 25 **Camp Hill, Pa.** Danceland Ranch. Caller's Roundup. Afternoon and evening.
- Feb. 1 **New York, N. Y.** Stuyvesant Casino, 140 Second Ave. Nationality Evening, N. Y. Folk Festival Council.
- Feb. 14 **Winnipeg, Canada** Weston School. FDFM dance.
- Feb. 14 **Wyckoff, N. J.** Grange Hall. 10,000th Square Dance Celebration.
- Feb. 14 **Savannah, Ga.** Savannah Square-Up.
- Feb. 28 **Durham, N.C.** N.C. Folk Dance Federation Festival.
- March 1 **New York, N. Y.** Stuyvesant Casino, 140 Second Ave. Nationality Evening, N. Y. Folk Festival Council.
- March 7 **Wyckoff, N. J.** Grange Hall. German Night. Square and folk dancing.
- March 14 **Winnipeg, Canada** Weston School. FDFM dance.
- April 4 **Charlottesville, Va.** 5th Virginia Folk Festival.
- April 10-12 **Echo Lake, Pa.** Squared Holiday. Write 62 Beach Terrace, Pines Lake, Wayne, N. J.
- April 11 **Winnipeg, Canada** Weston School. 8th Spring Jamboree of the Folk Dance Federation of Manitoba.
- April 11 **Birmingham, Ala.** Alabama Jubilee.
- April 11 **Louisville, Ky.** Fair and Exposition Center. SD Festival.
- April 11 **Wyckoff, N. J.** Grange Hall. Gaslight Cotillion.
- April 26 **Indianapolis, Ind.** Indiana Roof Ballroom. Caller's Assn. 7th Annual Jamboree.
- May 2 **Wyckoff, N. J.** Grange Hall. Spring Folk Dance Festival.
- May 2-10 **Fontana Village, N. C.** Swap Shop.
- May 3 **Arden, Del.** Spring Jamboree.
- May 23 **Wyckoff, N. J.** Grange Hall. Polish night.
- May 26 **Columbus, Neb.** City Audit, Trail Dance.
- May 28-29-30, 1959 **Denver, Colo.** 8th National SD Convention.
- Oct. 23-24 **Richmond, Va.** Hotel John Marshall. Fall SD Festival.

Happy New Year!



There's a brand new pet in the WINDSOR household and we'd like to share her with every square dancing family in the land. Her name is "PUSSY CAT" and she was brought to us by a kindly little lady from Arcata, Calif., by the name of RUTH STILLION. To make sure that Pussy Cat would be a strong, healthy kitten we called on a highly skilled vet, DR. BRUCE JOHNSON, to give her special treatment to make her eyes shine and her voice silky smooth. You are sure to love this cute little pet and your favorite record dealer will gladly explain how you can get her. Her license tab numbers are 4473 (with a voice) and 4173 (without a purr).

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