NORTHERN JUNKET

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Traditional dances from the United States and many other countries around the world will be performed and taught at the Heritage Dance Festival on Saturday, September 29 and Sunday, September 30 in Central Bucks West High School near Doylestown, Pennsylvania.
TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT

Here is the special issue of the Junket we promised the last time around. Naturally we hope you like it.

Replies to our request for articles exceeded our fondest hopes and expectations. Not one person officially refused, though a few did not bother to reply! Space limitations prevented including four very fine articles; sorry Stan, Penn, Ted & David. It could not be helped.

Northern Junket began like this. It was late winter of 1949 when, at one of the Tuesday night Y.W. square dances, Joe Blundon and Gil Daniels, students at Harvard Law School and M.I.T. respectively, came running up to me saying "Ralph, you've GOT to start a square dance magazine. We'll help!"

It sounded like a good idea and after thinking it over a few days decided that they were right.

How naive can one be? I had never cut a stencil in my life - never seen one in fact! Had never run a mimeograph. But fools rush in you know. At first there was the idea that it could be a monthly. It didn't take long to get over that hope because I was working four or five nights a week, frequently not getting home until 5:30 a.m. That doesn't leave much time for writing.

From the very first issue I was determined that it would be done as a hobby and the issues printed as often as my dance schedule permitted. It still is a hobby. Because of that I can say what I like in its pages, especially in "TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT" without fear of losing the account of a big advertiser. If dancing is indeed a hobby then why aren't there more dance magazines operated as a hobby?

This page is mine! I say what I think on its page. Often it draws irate letters and an occasion refusal to renew! More often it draws subscrip
tions so things sort of even out. Sometimes it felt as if I were tilting at windmills! The only good that it did was to relieve my own feelings over the stupidities being foistered upon all square dancers.

haven't done too much of that lately. No, I haven't mellowed! (Read on and find out!). It's just that hundreds of leaders are truly trying to return to smooth dancing and all it stands for.

Now, there is a real kooky idea going round to make square dancing The American dance. They mean that modern club style square dancing should be The American dance. To me that is inanity raised to the nth degree. Modern club-style square dancing is outnumbered by the traditional dancers of the country by 10 to 1. They've even tried to get Congressmen to introduce a bill to the effect. How self-centered can you get? With all the troubles in Central America, the Near East, and talks with the U.S.S.R over nuclear warheads et al, it seems to me that the U.S. Congress has far more important matters to discuss than to decide what is The American dance! If you think otherwise then you are ready to believe that the Ayatollah Khomeni is next in line for the Papacy:!!

New England contras, Appalachian Clog Dancing, Kentucky Running Sets are far more worthy of consideration to be named The American dance that has modern club-style dancing.

And, if you care to stretch a point the only true American dance is an Indian dance - but which tribe and what dance?

So why not use your energies toward becoming a better and smoother? One who dances in time to the music and insist that your callers/leaders know what is a musical phrase. Along with refusing to go along with all the latest and newest simply because it is new and up-to-date.

And there you have it my friends: TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT!

Sincerely

Ralph
The longer I live the more I am convinced that all things go in a circle, whether it be the seasons of the year, fashions, history, dance, life, or whatever. It has been said that if we don't learn from history we are bound to repeat ourselves.

As a school principal for many years I observed that the very bright and the dull student many times exhibited very similar behavioral patterns. In dance, frequently the little routine that brings great joy to the pre-school child also makes quite a hit with the aged senior citizens.

Going in circles usually accomplishes very little. However, if one can travel in a spiral he can see where he has erred previously and therefore has the opportunity to improve on what went on before.

In the American dance picture as I see it today, I observe three forces in action. One is to try to define the dance patterns or figures which are called "traditional". Another is represented by a group of our dancers who want to surge ahead with new or newly revamped basics creating a continuum which I feel is self-destructive. And the third group which is desperately trying to get back to the "roots" of our American dance culture.
How far in this dance circle do we really want to go?

As a child I was taught that dancing was sinful, as was card-playing . . . especially on Sunday, so my early reference to the activity was not dancing at all, but instead participating in Play-Parties. We sang our little songs and moved in memorized rhythmic patterns with no instrumental accompaniment. After all, we were taught that the fiddle was a tool of the devil. As I matured in my teens I didn't realize how much I was beginning to love the devil and it wasn't long before I was breaking apron strings and beginning to enjoy jitterbugging and all the dance steps of the day. Those play-parties were to be the start of a life filled with the joy and beauty of the dance.

Being in military service during World War II gave me greater exposure to dancing, not only in the north, but in the southeastern states as well as overseas and my appetite grew.

Returning to civilian life, I not only danced, but began calling square dances and found a great deal of pleasure in watching others discover the joy I had found in moving to the rhythmic beat.

Some twenty years after I had learned to dance, history repeated itself, but in a milder form. I was calling a dance for a church youth group and in the assemblage were four students of theology. We had danced several circle mixers and a few squares when I announced that the next dance would be the "Jessie Polka". The floor emptied completely as I put the record on the turntable. Even with much coaxing no one stepped forward to dance. I asked one of the young theological students if I had offended anyone or said something wrong. He replied that "they weren't allowed to dance or do polkas, etc. in their church", at which time I announced that we would do a "Jessie Play-Party" and
everyone came forth and danced. What is in a name? At least we were a little higher on the spiral!

Having served as the traditional chairman of an international committee for several years, one of the objectives was to define the word "traditional" as it applied to dance. I left the chairmanship with no clear cut definition, and the three chairmen who have succeeded me have never been able to solve the dilemma either and I am certain that there never will be a definition acceptable to all.

As far as the modern Western square dance movement is concerned, it is my hope that the current freeze on the proliferation of new or combined basics that has been so evident for the past thirty-plus years will remedy the self-destructive course that it has been on. Again, in learning from history, forty seems to be rather a magic number. Moses led the children into the wilderness for a forty year period to clear their minds of what he felt was not good or needed. The Lancers appeared about 1860 and by 1900 had become so complicated and over-styled that they met their demise. The Western square dance movement began about 1945, give or take. I certainly hope that we have spiraled again to the point where we can profit from previous mistakes. As you climb in a lighthouse you travel in a circle, but you can see a little more and a little further as you look out of each window at a higher level.

In regards to those who are currently trying to return to our very basic roots, I hope that they can make the dances interesting enough to gather a current following.

I have had the privilege of working with the Commission On Aging in many communities for several years and I find the simplicity in movements and patterns make dances more enjoyable for older people. This gen-
eralization is quite dangerous as I made a similar remark in a hotbed of Western square dancers in Florida and those seniors let me know that I was not referring to them. Frequently I do dances and parties for Golden Age groups and I find that by using routines that are simple from the aspect of a "quick-teach" technique are the most successful. I refer myself back to the play-party activity that I too had danced in my youth and try to use uncomplicated movements with as little twirling or turning as possible (due to the problem of vertigo in aging). The old traditional squares with repetitive patterns, called and danced on phrase, bring back a great deal of nostalgia. Familiar tunes of yesteryear set toes to tapping.

(-)

If all of us could "Kid" ourselves and in turn teach our children and grandchildren to remain "Kid", we'd all live a healthier, happier life. As any oldtimer will tell you "the greatest time in life is in your childhood." Being a Kid is fun. Make it last as long as you can.

(-)

I have begun and concluded every one-night stand dance, every club level dance, every party, weekend festival and week-long dance session that I have ever called with a circle. It is basic to human existence and the joining of hands in a circle unites any group no matter what the differences in philosophy (political or intellectual), wealth, social standing, race, color or creed. It is a great leveler.

All join hands and Kid yourselves!

A good supervisor, they say, is someone who can step on your toes without messing up your shine.

Nothing is quite so annoying as to have someone go right on talking when you're interrupting.

You never get a second chance to make a good first impression.
I am very pleased at the opportunity to participate in the 35th Anniversary of Northern Junket. My own square dance experience began a couple of years before this publication but my first attempts at calling occurred at nearly the same time in the summer of 1949 at the Bell Studio in Peterborough. I was working in Dublin that summer and took time off to attend a course for callers that Ralph and Gene Gowing included in a dance camp they were running there. It was an enlightening experience and I shared the discovery that everyone makes during the first time behind the microphone - it's not as easy as it looks. I had danced to Ralph at least once a week for the past two years and thought I had the dances memorized but with the orchestra playing and the people dancing, the same calls that rolled so easily from the tongue in the privacy of my room escaped my memory entirely!

Square dancing has changed a great deal since those days, both in the Traditional form and in the modern club form which was just getting started as I was learning to call. I have been a part of the change and it has been exciting all the way. I was fortunate to have been introduced to square dancing by Ralph who assured that I would always appreciate the movement to music as an essential part of the experience. Such is not always the case for people learning square dancing now. I would love to ramble on over 35 years of experience but I could surely fill this issue by myself if I did. Let me, instead, comment on the changes that I have observed. I share with Ralph a willingness to ex-
press my opinions on any subject even if I step on some toes in the process.

I love square dancing in ALL its forms. I haven't done any Traditional dancing recently but I've danced some good Contras - and called a few too in the past year. I have also called well over a hundred dances including non-danser parties and club dances from the CLASS to the ADVANCED programs. I've danced a bit in each of these programs and I believe that makes me part of a very small group of people who have that range of experience in the recent past. As a consequence I feel reasonably qualified to comment on where we've been and where we're going.

I see the whole of square dancing as a continuum from Traditional to Challenge. (For those not familiar with the term, Challenge refers to a form of square dancing in which the dancers have a vocabulary of 200 or more calls). In all its forms, square dancing has the potential to serve well the recreational needs of many people. While it is certainly true that no one form of the activity will serve everyone's need, I think it is fair to say that, taken as a whole, square dancing will serve the needs of a very broad spectrum of our society. Unfortunately, a substantial part of this potential is being wasted by bickering between the various factions within the activity. It's almost as if we didn't want people to square dance if they didn't do it exactly the way we do it.

Modern club dancing includes many people who can not "dance" in the sense that most people understand by that word. They do not move easily in time with the music and are not graceful in their movements, but they have a great time at the dances their club runs. They enjoy the company of their friends and the geometric interest of the dance patterns. They even enjoy the music if their caller plays it loud enough to be heard. If they are fortunate enough to dance to one of the good club callers they can take their steps in time
with the rhythm of the music and never have to hesitate or rush their steps. The patterns they dance will be interesting and they will accomplish most of them without a mistake. Only rarely will they be snubbed and they will be welcomed into most squares even if they are not very good dancers. (It has been said that Traditional dancers welcome first timers but my experience suggests that unless you can swing pretty well you may find good squares hard to join).

It seems to me that Traditional and club dancing have more in common than they have different. They both offer music, movement, social interaction and callers who are sometimes good and sometimes not. There are two principle differences. Traditional dances are likely to be operated by the caller, while modern square dance clubs operate by executive committees. The other difference is that in Traditional dancing the patterns tend to be fixed and repeated in the same way while modern club dancing derives much of its appeal from the constant variety of changing patterns. People who dance in modern square dance clubs usually dance more frequently than the Traditional dancers and regard their dancing as a hobby expecting it to involve them more than occasionally. The difference between these two groups seem to me to be largely superficial. I see no reason for them to be suspicious of each other.

In fact, it seems to me that there is much to be gained from a combined approach to the presentation of square dancing that emphasizes the broad range of involvement we can offer to anyone who would participate. I dream of a program that provides Traditional, easy club (BASIC for those who know the CALLERLAB programs), and more complicated club dancing for those who really want to make it a hobby and devote several nights each week to it. Such a program would make the transitions in either direction easy and dancers would be encouraged to change groups if their interests changed. With
a range of square dance involvement to offer we could meet the recreational needs of anyone who came to us by helping them to find the right group. Some communities are too small to support the full range of programs of course, but those who want greater involvement are usually willing to travel a little more. It is clear that the most common offering should be the easiest form of square dancing to learn. In the past couple of months I have been told by a couple of people that they tried square dancing and found it too complicated and too much like close order drill. I have also been told by some other people that they tried Traditional dancing and found it boring. Wouldn't it be wonderful if the leaders of both groups had been able to refer these people to a group that would serve their needs better. It's a dream but I hang on to it.

Modern and Traditional are not that different. All square dancing involves rhythmic movements and patterns that require some understanding and experience to negotiate successfully. The easier, earlier forms of square dancing offer more rhythmic movement and repetitive patterns. The more recent variations of square dancing emphasize the pleasure of successfully negotiating changing patterns over the rhythmic pleasures. They're both fun. Can't we join together in offering this fun to a society that desperately needs such a perfect, cooperative social recreation?

From 1918, when I was 4 years old, until 1965, when I was introduced to Modern Western Square Dancing, I square danced several times each year at public dances, Church benefit dances, house parties, "kitchen hops", weddings, street dances, in barns (on the clean barn floor), on the grass, on the beach, on porches, on pavements, in basements, in hotels, in town halls and at Dude Ranches. Anywhere there was square dancing. I enjoyed square dancing (I met my husband, Bill, at a dance!).

In June 1933, at my Grandmother Flynn's wake, we didn't square dance, but I'm sure all five of us kids danced for joy - for now we'd finally have a "real" parlor and "parlor bedroom" which had always been used as "Grandma's Part". We'd have more room in which to dance and entertain our friends! We'd even have a
third (outside) toilet to use, so there'd be shorter waiting lines! "Tis an ill wind that blows nobody good". God rest her soul!

Prior to 1965, when we learned Modern Western Square Dancing from taped lessons, we danced only to live music - usually a five, six or seven piece band but sometimes only a piano, fiddle and banjo or guitar.

We danced "Duck for the Oyster", "Birdie In the Cage", "Honest John", "Around That Couple, Take A Little Peek", "Head Two' Ladies Cross Over", "Lady Round Lady, Gent Around Gent", "Cut Off Six", "Make A Basket", "Chase the Snake", "Adam & Eve", "Cheat or Swing", and so many other good dances that are danced in our area today.

The singing calls were great, and I knew the figures that went with each tune so well that as soon as the music "struck up", I knew what the figure would be. "Red Wing" was for "Duck & Dive Six" for example, "Climbing Yp the Golden Stairs", "Bell Bottom Trousers", "Darling Nellie Grey", "Solomon Levi", "Spanish Cavaliere", "Marching Through Georgia" (at least 3 figures were called to that tune and we had to wait and see which would be called). "Buffalo Girls", "Hinky Dinky", "Comin' Round the Mountain", "Red River Valley", "The Girl I Left Behind Me", "Captain Jinks", "Golden Slippers", "Irish Washerwoman", "Little Old Log Cabin In the Lane", "Ocean Wave", "Pop Goes the Weasel", "Wait For the Wagon", "Hot Time In the Old Town Tonight", "Wabash Cannonball", "Rose of San Antone", "MacNamara's Band", are a few of the singing calls we danced.

We did not attend dances where there was drinking or where liquor was served at a bar in the dance hall.
My father taught us kids to square dance and we taught our children (and so far one Grand-daughter) to dance. My Dad was my first partner and was my partner at many dances. Since May, 1938, Bill has been my partner and we sure enjoy square dancing both traditional and contemporary, and hope to continue dancing for many years to come.

When I was a young 19-year old school marm, the family with whom I boarded had a dance at their house, every Saturday night. We'd have an early supper so we could let the fires out and take down the stoves in the kitchen and parlor to make room for the dancing. A fiddle and guitar was the music. Because of the great number of men attending, they were given numbers and took turns dancing with the ladies. The "young school marm" just stood in one spot and her partners came to her "spot" to claim the dance! Dances started at 7 o'clock, at midnight a lunch was served, and we danced until 5 or 6 a.m."

I well remember the benefit dances we had for our Church - Easter Monday Night, St. Patrick's Eve, or night, and the 15th of August. All members of the families attended. These dances were held at Mag Bradley's Hall, which was upstairs and had a "swinging floor" especially for dancing, and at Tommy Murphy's Hall - a large dance hall with a beautiful wood floor. Both were heated by huge round woodstoves. A big supper at midnight was served at Callahan's Hotel and NeeSweeney's Hotel, within walking distance of the dance halls. Ham, potato salad, baked beans, cabbage salad, pickles and rolls; pies and cakes were always on the menu. After supper we went back to the hall and danced until 2 or 3 a.m. This evidently wasn't a local custom, as many residents of Nursing Homes, where we do square dancing in wheel chairs, tell us about similar dances and suppers where they lived in their younger days. I have explained to the much younger nurses, aides and volunteers when residents say they are hungry, that it is
the music and calls that are reminding them of square dances when these midnight suppers were served. When someone says "I'M hungry", or "When do we eat?" I ask this person "What did you have for the midnight supper at the dance?" Usually the first thing mentioned is baked beans and ham. Often beet pickles and mustard pickles are included. Some have said "chicken and biscuits". They can't remember what they had to eat an hour ago, but well remember the suppers many years ago:

Since 1966, when we finished lessons taped by Tom Trainer, then of Rochester, we have enjoyed both traditional and Modern Western Square Dancing in many states and Canada.

I am writing this article between dance sessions at Copescost a beautiful square dance resort in Dillard GA. (Actually in the mountains of North Carolina - just over the border). This has been a week of Traditional and Contra Dancing conducted by Bob Howell and Jerry Helt, both from Ohio. What a delightful week with all the good dancing and great hospitality of Becky and Jerry Cope and their staff!

DO YOU REMEMBER? When Spanish salted peanuts cost only 19 cents a pound? When fresh strawberries sold for 2 qts at 21 cents? And string beans at 4 qts for 25 cents? 2 pounds of the best tub butter cost but 17½ cents per lb? Really, it wasn't so long ago!
Years ago, when I first started dancing there was a collection of singing calls that were used by nearly all the callers I danced to. They were well phrased and the great majority of the dancers knew them by heart. One year, at a large fair, Paul Hunt was calling when the electricity failed. "Paul announced that the next dance would be *My Little Girl*. "You all know it, so sing the calls," he said, and the band began to play. Nine or ten sets sang and danced and we did a number of calls this way until the power was restored.

The point of all this is, that the dancers were dancing and singing and doing the calls at the same time. Even when the caller called the dancers were doing what he was directing while he was calling. Because they knew the dance. So everything fit the phrase and it simply appeared that the caller was directing the dancers. This is much the same as dancing Chorus Jig.
when called by an incompetent caller. The dancers simply ignore the calls and dance to the music. (Which is what dancing is all about, of course).

\[\text{[Instructions for presenting singing calls]}\]

When the "western" dance became the rage all this changed. Since the dancers didn't know what was coming they had to wait until the leader gave the call before they could move. If the caller continued to call on phrase the dancers were put off the phrase. A few years of this and soon the dancers didn't even know there was such a thing as phrased dancing. But that's another story and someone else's problem.

\[\text{[Example of a working quadrille]}\]

There is a way to present singing calls so the dancers are on the phrase and I'll use Jerry Helt's well-known Queen's Quadrille as a working example. It goes like this:

A1 Heads half R & L; same ladies chain half
A2 Sides the same.
B1 All circle L half; swing corners
B2 Promenade full around.

I don't use the notation system as I find it confusing and it won't help anyone learn to hear the phrases.

As you know, in order to put the dancers on the phrase, the calls must come at the end of the phrase preceding the action. Anywhere from two to four beat (or more) depending on the dancer's skills.

To convert this quadrille to a singing call one simply fills in the blanks, between commands, with words. Put to the tune Red River Valley the words might come out this way:

(At the end of the phrase) Heads Right and Left through
(The tune starts here:) Straight across, and when you're done, the same two Ladies Chain Doen the middle, then the sides do a Right & Left through. Cross the set and you turn and the side two Ladies Chain. And when you're done all join hands and Circle Left. Move along and then Swing your Corner, Round and round and you all Promenade. Just remember the Red River Valley. And the one that has loved you so true. (Spoken): Heads right and left through.

To the tune My Old Kentucky Home the words might come out like this:

(At the end of the phrase): Heads Right and Left through.

(Tube starts here): Straight across the ring, Turn around and the Ladies Chain. Down the middle, now the sides do a Right and Left through. Across the set and then the Side Two Ladies Chain. Down the center and all join hands and Circle Left. Move along and Swing the Corner. Round and round and all Promenade. Oh, I'll sing you a song of my old Kentucky home, Oh, my old Kentucky home far away.

(Spoken): Heads Right and Left through.

Now while the principle is basically quite simple, there are a number of points to consider. Some tunes have melody lines that won't allow you to speak the command for the beginning of the next figure without cutting off part of the song. And you must pay careful attention to the meter of the tune and choose fill-in
words and commands that fit the melody just as though they were written for the song. This means that some tune and dance combinations will work and some won't.

By now some of you have figured out that this principle works equally as well for patter calling. Going back to our original figure you might call it to a southern mountain tune this way:

(At the end of the phrase:) Head two Couples Right and Left through
Well a right and left through with might and main,
then you're done some Ladies Chain.
Straight across on the inside track,
and the side two Couples Right and Left back
Across the inside and keep it straight,
Then all join hands and Circle Eight,
Eight hands up around the ring
then break it up with a Corner Swing.
Swing on the corner and don't be afraid,
And when you're done all Promenade.
Two by two and hand-in-hand
All dance around to the rhythm of the band,
Right back home and when you're through
Well the head two couples do a right and left through.

Being able to hear/sense phrases makes all this a lot easier. If you have trouble in this area practice dancing solo to records in the privacy of your home using only phrased figures. It may take time, but when the phrase is part of your inner being the rest is easy. As I mentioned earlier, just make sure the words fit the tunes you're using so you don't end up 'fighting the music'.
I've presented the exact same dance four different ways. (A quadrille, two different singing calls and a patter call). The relationship of the figure to the phrases is exactly the same each time. Because of the different tunes and presentations, along with slight differences in tempo, each dance will have a different feel.

What tunes to use is up to you. What you might do, and how you might do it, would make another whole article. In the end you'll find that a lot of the best choices are made from intuition based on a lot of experience.

THANKS TO:
Rachel Boone - Statewide 1984 Festival program
Ira Laby - Dance item
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M&M Joe Hritz - Dance items & polka cassettes
Rich Castner - Program & memorabilia of Vintage Dance Week in Cincinnati., 1984, Ballroom dance programs circa 1880's
Kate Keller - Bibliography of Early American Dance Sources

DO YOU REMEMBER - When everything started with a crank instead of a push-button: the car, the telephone, the phonograph and the ice cream maker?

Native turkeys at 28 cents a pound; roasting chickens at 23 cents a pound; smoked ham at 12½ cents a pound?

When the ladies could buy a new silk dress (on sale) at $16.50 each? Really, it wasn't so long ago!

It doesn't do any harm to say "Good morning", even if it is raining.
It's difficult to remember just when I was first bitten by the American dance bug but some images remain loud and clear. 1938 - Perhaps my earliest recollection of actually "taking part" was at a combined YMCA-YWCA college conference on the Asilomar conference grounds near Carmel, in Northern California. Some 500 of us, students from 20 or more colleges out here in the West, had gathered for the week between Christmas and New Year's. We had come to hear speakers on all topics of the day, philosophers, religious leaders and others and it was in a break of one of the rather heavy sessions when walking from the classroom to the living area, that the sounds of a schottische somewhere up on a hill behind a stand of pines nicked my curiosity. I followed the sound up into the large hall and there, some 200 of the students were doing some of the strangest dances I had ever seen. The music (and I can still remember the title) "Ball in Karlstad" (hope the spelling is almost correct!) was winding to a close and some man up on the stage told everybody to get into large circles. With a crowd that size, there were at least three rings, one inside the other and without knowing what I was getting into, there I was right along with everybody else fol-
lowing the singing of the leader. If I remember correctly, it was something like Captain Jinks and the Horse Marines.

In that first taste, we did some simple quadrilles and two or three other dances in a circle. The caller, I learned later, was paid by the WPA or some such Federally funded organization.

It was a long time ago, and I can't be sure of much that happened, but I do know that coming away from that week, I had found something special. What I didn't know at the time was the part the music and dance of America would play in my life in the years to come.

1940 - Heading down the coast from Oregon into the Northern part of California, I stopped for the night in a small town and asked the motel owner if he knew of a square dance anywhere in the area. By this time, I was truly enthusiastic about square dancing and hunted down a dance wherever I happened to be.

Told there was a country dance that evening, I headed out on the highway and then cut off on a dirt road. As I drove, the road became a pair of ruts and what little I could see of the countryside from the lights of the car, made me wonder if I were on the wrong track. Eventually, around a bend and down a slight grade, there was the hall. A couple dozen cars pulled up outside and a couple more just unloading at the door.

The dance was already in progress. A four or five piece band, while not polished, was making good dance music and, after a free style waltz, everyone got into squares and the orchestra started. Wondering where the caller might be, I realized that the fiddler had that responsibility, and though the calls were mostly short
and a few singing calls tossed in, everybody seemed to understand the familiar calls and to have a good time.

All during the evening - the early part that is - the doggonedest smells came from one corner of the hall, and I soon found out that the supper break, which would come later, would feature hot apple pie "baked on the premises". I noticed over by the piano lots of jars of jellies and jams, covered dishes and a pie or two. I found out that this was the orchestra's paycheck. Once the dance ended, the band members simply split up the loot, taking home a portion as their reward for furnishing the accompaniment. It was a warm and wonderful evening, but if you were to ask me where it all took place, I'm afraid that's all long since passed from memory.

Once I start thinking back to those early (for me) days, one set of recollections seems to bring on another. Enrolled in a college of business administration, in downtown Los Angeles in 1940, it bothered me to find there was no effort made to bring the two thousand members of the student body more closely in touch with the other. The business school was all that, pure business, but because the students came from 20 or 30 different states, and several countries overseas, it was difficult for those not native to Southern California to make friends quickly. Having joined a fraternity, I spent my first summer vacation with one of my fraternity brothers at his family's cabin in the Tonto National Forest in Arizona, and I can remember one day going into the small grocery store where a wedding had just taken place, members of the old time families in the area had gathered for a reception. The storeroom of the general store was cleared, bales of hay had evidently been dragged back and forth against the rough planks so they could be moderately danceable and some 40 or 50 people, including a few curious onlookers joined in.

I especially remember a couple of things about the dance. When there were several squares up on the floor
and the hall probably reached capacity with three) each square had its own caller. There were two musical instruments; an old upright piano, whose ivories had long since disappeared from the keys, and a violin. The fiddler sat on a bench facing the opposite direction to the pianist. The old fiddle lay across his lap, and he bowed it. Seated on a small stool and facing him was his elderly mother, a knitting needle in each hand. She tapped away on the upper strings as the son did the bowing and the piano player kept busy on the keys. Later I heard this form of dual violin work referred to as "playing the straws".

One other thing I remember about that afternoon. At one point, the bride and groom were pushed out onto the floor and as the orchestra played a waltz, the men in the congregation would cut in on the couple by pinning a piece of paper money to the bride's gown. The ladies in the crowd could dance with the groom by dropping a silver coin in the cup he had been given to carry.

(==)

Don't think I've forgotten what I started out to tell about college and the absence of some method to encourage friendliness among the students. Coming back from this Arizona experience, I was fired up to try some of the simple dances and mixers I had been collecting. And so, the following fall, the opportunity came and at the traditional Howdy Dance, which was usually lucky if it attracted a half-a-dozen couples, we tried some of these circle dances, mixers and others, and found that they were the magic elixir that could and did turn a large group of shy individuals into a friendly student body.
Those were some of the beginnings. During the war years square dancing became an invaluable tool in bringing service men heading overseas into a warm and friendly "home away from home." Perhaps during those war years, the strangest square I had yet encountered was on a transport loaded with marines heading for the South Pacific. Time weighs heavy on shipboard, particularly when the pace is held back by convoy precautions. Recreation was sometimes difficult to plan but there were boxing matches and impromptu bands and amateur shows. One group of marines decided that they wanted to do a square dance so, being the only one who had ever called, I had the rare opportunity of facing eight marines, four of them with handkerchiefs knotted around their waists to let others know they were playing the part of lady dancers. If I do say so, it was a memorable square dance demonstration.

Oh yes, one other thing. We've always been enthusiastic out here in the West with contra dances and quadrilles, though it wasn't until the early 1950's when Ralph Page came to folk dance camp in Stockton, California that I had a real chance to get acquainted with the longways dances and New England squares that won me over to this form of dancing. A short time later, possibly in 1952 or 1953, I was called in by MGM Studios to do the square dance sequence in a movie called "Summer Stock" starring Judy Garland and Gene Kelly. "What we want" the director said "is a typical New England square dance as it might be enjoyed in New Hampshire or Vermont." Fine. I'd never been to New Hampshire and Vermont. As a matter of fact, I had never been in Massachusetts, upstate New York, Maine, or any of the other states in that area, and here I was supposed to put the actors through something that would pass as authentic!
Thinking back to those early mornings with Ralph in the quonset hut on the campus of the college, I pulled the Portland Fancy out of the bag, explained the dance and taught it to the dancers, showed actor Ray Collins how to do the prompting and went over the musical score with the studio orchestra. The final result wasn't too bad. At least Ralph and others up there in New England were nice enough not to be too critical!

TRIVIA

Folk dancing, now very much in vogue, was the chief recreational device in medieval Europe. There were few commercial amusements so whole communities turned out for the dances.

A majority of the popular folk dances began with all participants holding hands in a circle. At a signal it was broken, and one person or couple would lead the rest of the ring through traditional figures. A skillful ringleader had a place of honor and was very much in demand at social functions of all sorts.

Since he was the mastermind of the dance, the title came to be applied to any person directing a group. Only in recent centuries has ringleader come to suggest the head of an enterprise less innocent than a country frolic.

The story was told in Victorian England of the removal to another area of a graveyard which lay in the path of industrial progress. In the moving, the graves of the four deceased wives of a certain gentleman became mixed. The honest man had a new tombstone placed:

Stranger, pause and drop a tear,
For Susan Sparks lies buried here;
Mingled, in some perplexing manner,
With Jane, Maria, and portions of Hannah.
It was in the winter of 1947, and the young red-headed village school principal in Grand Ridge, Illinois, decided that the school buildings should be open to the community during the evenings. Two of the activities high up on the survey sent out to the citizens in the district were a community chorus and a square dance group under the aegis of the music teacher. When a newcomer family from Pennsylvania with two teen-aged daughters, experienced in square dance signed up, that activity was off to a flying start, and proved to be the nucleus to a family-oriented recreational organization known as Folk Valley in north-central Illinois, now in their 37th year.

The next year three of the group attended the National Folk Festival in St. Louis, and were mesmerized by the dynamic dancing of the Cheyenne Mountain School
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The FOLK ARTS CENTER OF NEW ENGLAND has a complete Folk Dance Record Service. Information from Marianne Taylor, 62 Fottler Ave. Lexington, Mass. 02173
Dancers under "Pappy" Shaw of Colorado Springs. One young man in the delegation was so enthralled that he presented himself on Pappy's doorstep that summer to receive the equivalent of a pitcher of cold water: "Sorry, young fellow, but the summer classes are all full". The, Pappy, continued, seeing the crushed look on the face before him, "But why don't you take some weekly private lessons from one of my high school dancers?" That was quickly arranged, and also a summer job counselling at a boys camp in the Rockies.

Back in the mid-west, the Folk Valley dances drew large crowds to the fiddling of Grandpa Michaels who played for them through his 93rd birthday until his death in 1959. In the meantime, five of the group bought a parcel of land, wooded and hilly, on the north bluff above the Illinois River, not too far from Mar-seilles, where they could have picnics, wiener roasts, campfires, hikes. A non-profit corporation, Folk Valley, Inc. was formed in 1952, which bought out all the land from the individuals involved. According to the by-laws the officers could volunteer for their jobs, and the members were non-voting members. To this day the group has never voted, choosing to make decisions through the Quaker method of assent which saves a lot of arguing and provides more time for dancing.

That same year, 7 1/2 acres adjoining the original 40 were picked up for back taxes and 8,000 pine seedlings planted in a Christmas tree plantation. Four years later a tradition of opening the plantation to the public to come "cut your own" was initiated on the first Sunday in December. The day starts at 6 a.m. with a pancake and sausages breakfast for the members who arrive first. The Folk Valley cooks have donated a hundred dozen or so Christmas cookies and are in a bustle of making and serving free coffee and punch with cookies at a candle-lit table in the Cabin (the home since 1956 of Kirby Todd, who is the founder, president, and one of
the callers). The income from the one-day tree cut keeps the organization in the black and provides many useful improvements: gravel for the lanes and parking, small pond, picnic shelter with concrete slab for six sets, 14 electrical plug-ins for campers, outdoor sanctuary.

During January-February an Uno Tourney is held with around 30 signing up to come to the Cabin once a week to cure the winter doldrums. Several winter work days are held on Sunday afternoons to clean up the plantation, cut wood for the Cabin, build holtz-haufens (circular wood piles six feet in diameter and 13 feet tall). 1,000 pine seedlings are planted in the Christmas tree plantation each March. There's an annual picnic on the 1st Sunday in May when the wild flowers are at their height. Three campouts are held each summer over Memorial Day, 4th of July, and Labor Day with square dances at each one.

The fall season starts with a monthly square dance of squares, quadrilles, contras, mixers, rounds which provides an exciting variety, for a moratorium on new figures was declared in 1972 and it has not been necessary to lift it. A Christmas Party is one of the big events of the year, although every five years a birthday celebration is held with Bob and Phyllis Howell, leaders, and they are booked for the 40th on the 3rd Saturday in October, 1987. Central School, Ottawa, is rented for the big dances.
The Whispering Feet Round Dancers meet each month in the Cabin, and so does the Cabin Contra Club. There is no over-lapping in these clubs to provide more members maximum dancing.

Since children always have been welcome at Folk Valley dances, there are always several wedding festivals to attend each year. And there are 3-10 new babies arriving each year to be welcomed into the surrogate Folk Valley family. Yes, it's a family—and it's a good life.

TRIVIA

Midwest Oriverbs:
A handful of mother wit is worth a bushel of learning.
A mule that whinnies and a woman who talks Latin never come to any good.

Wait til the pie is cut before you say whether they're blackberries, or elderberries, or "pizen" poke-berries inside.

Celery seed tea was an old-fashioned remedy for rheumatism. The seed was boiled in water, then the tea strained and taken in small amounts daily.

The yucca plant of the American Southwest has roots that can be used as a substitute for soap. Some Indians report that yucca, used as a shampoo, makes the hair grow.

They say garbage can be made into gasoline. And why not it's already being made into movies, books and TV shows.

You can catch a terrible chill waiting for somebody else to cover you with glory.

Nothing succeeds like inheritance.
ANNIVERSARIES

by ED BUTENHOF

Anniversaries are times to remember and thirty-five years of Northern Junket brings my mind back to my days as a college student at Berkeley. It was there I learned dancing from Lucille Czarnowski at the University of California folk dancing, rounds, mixers, contras and squares, we did them all. For contras Lucille's authority was a New Hampshire caller named Ralph Page. As I learned some of Ralph's contras thirty-five years ago, I visualized him as a tall, slim Yankee farmer. (Twenty years later when I first met Ralph personally I discovered my visualization had been a bit off the target!).

Some of the things I miss about those innocent days 35 years ago is that we loved dance so much we danced everything. Squares, contras, rounds and international dances were all part of the mix. Most of them were fairly easy to do, at least they didn't require a long series of lessons. The variety was in the music and the style, not in the complexities of figures or steps. Today there seem to be too many specialists who do only their own "thing" and do it so seriously that the newcomer is shut out without a lengthy apprenticeship. It's true of square dancing with the "advanced" and "challenge" people; it's true of waltzes with ever more complex patterns and movements; it's true of folk with its experts in Balkan, English, Israeli - whatever, and it's true of contras too. My own contra group in Rochester increasingly insists on doing more complex figures and is less and less accommodating to newcomers. The "experts" seem to derive more satisfaction from the
technical accuracy of the movements that from the joy of movement itself or from sharing of that joy with others.

Competition, while valuable in many pursuits, does not serve dancing well. Variety is possible by mixing heritages, tempi, styles, formations, etc. without making things too complex for enjoyment.

Ralph Page has tried very hard to preserve that variety of dance and that element of sheer enjoyment without complexity in both his magazine and his camps over the years. He has followed that tradition for over 35 years and in so doing has become a tradition himself. A whole generation of New England callers (and some non New Englanders like me) have profited under his tutelage.

Ralph once told me he considered himself a "traditionalist", but not a "purist". By that I understood him to mean that he saw the desireability and necessity for tradition to change and grow, not to remain frozen in the past. To illustrate this, he told a story.

It seems that Ralph was invited some years ago to teach a square dance to Ada Dziewanowska's Polish dance group in Boston. The group was planning a trip to Poland and wanted to include an American dance in their repertoire. He taught them his original square "Halfway Round", an easy but different square and, being excellent dancers, they caught on quickly. Especially they liked the tune he used since "Buffalo Gals" - his choice - turned out to be a variation of a Polish folk tune "Cracovienne". The group danced it to that tune all over Poland; the radio stations played it over and over
as their trip continued and they continued to dance it. "Who knows?" said Ralph, "perhaps in 50 years it'll be a "traditional Polish dance!"

Ralph, in the many years he has taught, called and helped others, has been both a preserver and an originator of tradition. He has influenced innumerable dancers and callers to the thrill of dancing to the phrase of music in true New England style. For all of us, I want to thank and acknowledge him. Congratulations for 35 years of Northern Junket and best wishes for many more.

SUMMER DANCES

July

9 - Contra Dance. Rockport (Mass.) Art Association, 8:00 p.m. David Smukler, caller; music by Two Penny Loaf.
21 - Regional Dances of Spain. First Unitarian Church, 404 Concord Ave. Belmont. MS. 10:30 - 1:30 & 2:30-5:00. Workshop by Hilary Bates.
27 - Contra Dance. First Congregational Church, 1070 Pleasant St. Worcester, Ms.
28 - English Country Dance. Barnstable Unitarian Church, 8:00 p.m. Francis Worrell, leader; live music.

KITCHEN SNOOPING

Bananas and the white of an egg, whipped until stiff, makes a wonderful topping for any dessert.
A great baste for duck is half orange juice and half port wine.
To prevent breaded veal cutlets from curling, which breaks off the breading, pound the meat with a dull object or a hammer.
THE BICENTENNIAL DANCERS
PRESENT
THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF NEW ENGLAND IN A SERIES OF
DANCE PROGRAMS

by BROWNLOW & DOROTHEA THOMPSON

Program 1 (1750 - 1780). In the costumes of the Colonial and Revolutionary Periods, they dance the contras of the 18th Century.

Program II (1790 - 1890). Dressed in the fashions of 1850, the dancers show the transition from the 18th Century through the 19th Century with the Cotillions, Lancers, quadrilles and contras.

Program III (1890 - 1930). Attired in the "Turn of the Century" styles, the dancers show the transition of the formal quadrilles of the city folk to the more informal and enjoyable dances of our Barns, Granges and Town Halls with the local prompters introducing patter and singing calls.

Program IV (1931 - 1950). In the long skirts, petticoats and blouses for the women and street wear for the men, the dancers present the revival of traditional square and contra dancing in the 'Post War Years' with popular dances of that period.
Program V (1950 - the present). In square dance costumes ranging from the early 1950's to the present, the dancers present examples of the best of traditional and modern square and contra dancing.....

Such is the publicity on the brochure going out this month to Historical Societies, Women's Clubs, Rest Homes, Convention groups, AARP Chapters, Fraternal Organizations, Granges and other groups who are always looking for new programs.

Who are the BICENTENNIAL DANCERS? We are retirees who have been dancing together since 1974. We dance every week on Monday afternoons and we perform no more than once a month. There are 30 dancers in the group but we are seldom together at one time. The number who perform at a program may vary from six to 12 couples but we, the dancing master and the narrator are always there.

Brownie, at the beginning of the program, assured the dancers there would be no hassle about attending every session and they would not be penalized for absences. There would be no pressure in learning basics or levels. The main purpose was to learn to dance and have fun at the same time.

Where Do We Dance? We dance in our hobby room which we added to our home in 1965 in preparation for our retirement. We settled for a room which would accommodate two sets of squares or one contra line. Sometimes the walls bulge and we have to take turns but every Monday afternoon the dancers gather for three hours
of dancing. Refreshments are in the kitchen at 3 o'clock. Another hour of dancing and the dancers are on their way again. These sessions are kitchen junkets without a fiddler, a dry sink or a privy!

Recently we have started a second group on Friday nights for people who are interested but have to work for a living. The same policy holds with them — no pressure, come when you can and perform when you can. Like the afternoon class this is slow growing but enthusiastic.

Then the Bicentennial came along. Brownie and I became participants in the Reenactment of Benedict Arnold's Expedition to Quebec in Sept. - Oct, 1975. As we talked with other members of the Expedition and spectators along the trail, we discovered it was a very rare person who knew anything of the history of dancing in America. That knowledge was but a vague memory that Americans had once danced the Minuet and the Virginia Reel.

An idea came to us. Why not introduce our dance group to Colonial and Revolutionary Period dances? Our dancers responded enthusiastically to the proposal and we costumed ourselves in the colorful clothing shown in the paintings of the prosperous Portsmouth merchants of 1770.

As the dance program covering the Colonial Period developed Brownie asked me to prepare a narrative to be used between the units of the program. From my notes of over twenty years' research in the colonial history of New Hampshire I began to gather information about the who, what, when, where and how of social dancing. Most of this material came from diaries, letters and news-
Papers, not from history books.

We launched our program in 1976 and during that year helped 19 towns and organizations with presentations of the Colonial Program. By the time of the Reenactment of the Surrender at Yorktown in 1981 the group had presented this program forty-eight times.

Fifteen years ago, if a friend or fortune teller had told any one of the Bicentennial Dancers that in his retirement he would become a member of a performing dance group, the response would have been, "Are you crazy?"

With 48 performances behind them, the new friendships and their growing love of dancing, they were "pushovers" when it was suggested that we design four additional programs which would portray "The Social History of Dancing in New England from the Colonial Period to the Present" in five episodes. The first presentation of our 4th program occurred in March and the 5th is scheduled for 1985.

What Do We Charge For Our Appearances? We charge nothing but we do ask help on our transportation because we are all on fixed incomes. This is our recreation and the dancers feel, as we do, that if we charged a fee it would put stress on us and take the fun out of performing. Our headquarters is in Conway, N.H. but our dancers live in Intervale, Kearsage, North Conway, Conway, Madison and Silver Lake, N.H. and in Fryeburg and Bridgton, Maine.

They are among the busiest members of their communities as they serve on community committees and pro-
jects. They play golf, bridge, cross country ski, take exercise classes and attend elder hostels and adult education classes. They follow many hobbies and many cut their own wood for stoves.

Who are the Thompsons? They are retired school teachers who have been involved in dancing most of their lives. Dorothea began country dancing in 1921 in rural Alberta, Canada, and has had dance instruction in one form or another from kindergarten through college and show business. Brownie taught himself to foxtrot in the litchen of a Methodist parsonage in 1933 and experienced his first country dancing in Bristol (N.H.) Town Hall in 1926, when Mellie Dunham, Maine's Champion Fiddler, came to town and played for a ball. Both the Thompsons danced their way through high school and college.

In 1940, while working with Jimmy Clossin, Dorothea learned to call and teach square and couple dancing professionally. At that time they were both recreation supervisors with the WPA in Texas. She went on to create the revival of square dancing in the amarillo area with a WPA orchestra and taught a callers' class of 18 men to take her place when she was transferred in 1942.

When B. and D. returned from Italy after World War 11 in 1947, they began to call in Central N.H. They became Chairmen and Dance Chairman of the N.H. Folk Festival in 1949 and 1950, and implemented the organization of the N.H. Folk Federation and together edited the first year of the N.H. Folk Federation Bulletin.
They have taught square and contra dancing to hundreds of elementary, junior and high school students in their teaching assignments.

After all these years of dancing and calling they enrolled in a beginners' class in a modern square dance club and in 1971 earned diplomas which qualified them for the first time in their lives as "dancers". They hope to dance traditional squares and contras and the squares and rounds of the modern club program for many years to come.

KITCHEN SNOOPING

Place a bay leaf on each fish steak when broiling for a unique flavor.

Whirl partially thawed frozen raspberries in a blender until thick. Serve over peach halves.

Add fresh peach halves to baked chicken for the last 20 minutes of cooking for an exotic flavor.

Add a little chutney and curry powder to a garlic salad dressing for a zestier taste.

Add a touch of Hawaii to your tuna salad by adding drained canned pineapple tidbits and water chestnuts.

Next time, try whipping potatoes with orange juice for a delightful flavor.

Try making French toast with raisin bread for a different taste.

There is a line on the ocean where you lose a day when you cross it. There's a line on most highways where you can do even better!

The trouble with people who talk too fast is that they often say something they haven't thought of yet.

You can frequently be helpful by not giving advice.
35 YEARS - SO FAR!

by ROGER WHYNOT

Can you imagine a small publication put together several times a year on dates suited to the editor's schedule and current topical matter to fill its pages, surviving and growing for 35 years? Can you also picture the topics, ranging from the sometimes acidic, always to the point, "Take It Or Leave It", through dance directions, tunes, learned essays, Yankee humor, "Pat Pending", Book and Record Reviews, recipes, newspaper accounts of dances and days gone by; and more? If you can, you have been reading "Northern Junket" published by Ralph Page of Keene, N.H. for the past 35 years. If you can't, that's how long you have been denying yourselves of this remarkably provovative and informative magazine.

No matter if you are a scholar of dancing, a frustrated cook, a caller, a dancer, a devil's advocate, or just a plain reader, there is plenty to whet your appetite within the pages of the Junket.

Way back when I began to think I was a caller, The Junket was a source of information eagerly awaited and devoured with savour. The down to earth style made readers feel they were there, that Ralph was talking to
them. In Nova Scotia, my former home, there were not many dance leaders with whom to "chew the fat". Ralph, well known there as a staff member of "The School of Community Arts", seemed near at hand through the pages of his Junket.

When I moved to New England I was delighted to be able to establish a relationship with the editor which, over the years, has developed into that of teacher-mentor-critic and, most importantly, of friendship which has had a very rewarding influence on me as a person as well as a dance leader.

Ralph has remained steadfast in his adherence to his strong love for good dancing at reasonable tempos to excellent music. There is no need for me to even attempt to list his accomplishments, accolades, triumphs and, yes, disappointments which have come his way. Enough to say that he alone stood and decried the self-destructive direction in which our square dance movement was headed. Alone, he offered sensible suggestions for improvements. He very strongly urged leaders and dancers alike to take a good look at what was happening before there was nothing left of which we could be proud. There were long years when his ideas were scorned and ridiculed, long years when the Junket was the only national magazine truly dedicated to preserving and promoting traditional values in the square dance field. They were not in vain.

Now that we are experiencing a welcome trend towards traditional squares and contras and excellent live music, we should stop and pay tribute to one man and his Junket. Ralph would be the last one to take all of the credit yet, I'm sure, he must enjoy the occasion al smile and warm feeling for justly earned.

Contras, his great love and the subject of his greatest efforts, have never been more popular. Everywhere you travel in the dance world they are being call
ed and danced. (I've called them in England, Spain, Germany, Poland and Yugoslavia as well as here in New England and the Maritimes.

<<->>

In recent years I have seen a change in Ralph. He has mellowed a bit. While in no way departing from his stringly held beliefs, he has accepted that some of the changes we are experiencing in the dance world are good.

He says (Vol. 14, No. 7) "...which is not to say that I am against progress or against the introduction of a few of the contemporary figures...while personally I might not use them I believe that they work well..." Now it is up to us to sustain that trust in our good sense.

<<->>

Ralph likes to say "With your permission, or without it....", whenever he has a point to make. If I may be bold enough to take the same liberty, here are a few reminiscences which highlight the years I've known him.

Nearly 30 years ago, when I brashly announced to him that I was a caller, he invited me to call my meagerrepertoire. His comment, "You'll do. You've got rhythm", sounded good to me. Being on staff at his November weekend for many years has been an honour. We took a trip to Montreal where we both had the pleasure of calling to the gorgeous fiddling of Jean Carrignan, no novelty to Ralph, but a thrill for me. I remember the feeling when I opened the Junket to see my first dance listed in the index. Through it all - the priceless advice and counsel which were never intrusive yet always available, make me proud of my friendship with Ralph, and my acquaintance with The Junket.
It has been a long time since the Junket was the new kid on the block! 35 years! Just to reach this amount of time shows me that the Junket has enough in it to sustain reader interest throughout the many changes that have occurred since its beginning.

This reminds me also that it has been some time since I was a new kid on the block, so to speak.

The days are still in my mind when the only connection I had with dancing was my wife Sue and her mother, Helen Durfee, of the Durfee Orchestra that was a well-known team and played for countless dances in their area of Massachusetts and Rhode Island. In those days I was their transportation to and from the square and round jobs they had.

At first I felt that it was a complete waste of time to drive them there and sit around all night waiting to drive them home.

However, it wasn’t too long before someone dragged me onto the floor to fill in a set. When I say dragged I mean dragged!! Despite myself I did enjoy it even though I knew nothing about what I was doing. It became more enjoyable with each dance I attended.

I can still remember dancing with the Old Timer’s Square Dance Club of Swansea, Mass. They had live music for the Loomis Lancers. This was always the dance that was done right after intermission. For people who
did not know the Loomis Lancers, it was even a treat to watch. I watched it many times before trying it. Getting through all four parts of the Lancers was a thrill I still cherish.

Some of you may remember that this was the exhibition dance that was done by my home club, the Rhody Merrymakers at the 1976 New England Square Dance Convention in Portland, Maine. I was very proud of the dancers who really did the dance justice. The only thing missing was the Live Music!

Bob Osgood, publisher of Sets In Order from California wrote a beautiful letter stating that for he and Becky to see that dance in person was worth the whole trip to New England. I know that he meant it.

It is things like that that shows me how lucky I was to be around when I could do this dance every other week - LIVE! It also gives me hope that maybe - just maybe, some of this beauty of dance will find its way back. The Junket is certainly doing its job reminding people from time to time of the real beauty of dance.

Congratulations, and may there be many more years!

Leaders have two important characteristics: first, they are going somewhere; second, they are able to persuade other people to go with them.

The goal of criticism is to leave the person with the feeling that he or she has been helped. Temper is what gets most of us into trouble. Pride is what keeps us there.
It was not very long ago that I received a letter from 'Uncle' Ralph requesting some recollections of my earliest venture as a square dancer for the 35th anniversary issue of Northern Junket. Naturally, I was flattered by the invitation; 'Uncle' Ralph even offered to preserve our friendship should I decline the honor. So, while my right arm was recovering from the twisting administered I (mentally) turned back the clock and began to think how I discovered square dancing. It turned out that I had been dancing almost as long as there has been a Northern Junket.

I relocated in Madison, Wisconsin during the summer of 1950 following my graduation from Rutgers University in New Jersey. I had lived on my parent's farm during my student days at Rutgers in order to help them with the farm chores. When the University of Wisconsin offered me an assistantship, I did not hesitate to ac--
cept and moved to Madison and life as a graduate student.

In addition to attending classes I had my experimental animals to look after each day. I found myself with free time on my hands as did the other graduate students and we all began searching for a way to fill time with the three R's - recreation, relaxation and rest (of the mental kind.

The graduate school, in cooperation with the student union association, was sympathetic to this situation, particularly on Sunday afternoons and evenings. (Very few graduate college students owned cars in those days). The University made available a comfortable room with tables and chairs, as well as free refreshments in the Student Union building every Sunday afternoon. Usually, more than 100 graduate students dropped in to visit and to chat. One afternoon I was sitting with a group of 'old timers' who were reminiscing about a student activity called 'Folk Fiesta', which was on the program schedule every Sunday evening. It developed that this weekly event featured square dancing and easy folk dancing.

From the conversation I gathered that everyone had had a good time. Some timid questioning on my part told me that the program was free; there were instruction for every dance by one of a number of teachers; one did not have to come with a partner; and every third or fourth dance was a change-partner, or a no-partner dance to permit graceful exits.

The dance took place in a large hall with a wooden floor; there were lots of windows and fans (air conditioning had not yet arrived). To end the evening there was
a restaurant just off campus which was known for its excellent pizzas.

Most of the 'old timers' liked the Folk Fiesta so well that they attended regularly. The conversation at my table had been going on for quite some time when one of the persons turned to me and said: "I don't believe I have ever seen you at Folk Fiesta. I have been going regularly for over a year and I still enjoy every minute of the program. Why don't you come with us tonight? All of us here at this table are planning on going. You will not be alone, and you will be among friends". I was caught off guard and began making excuses. First, I claimed not knowing how to dance and not wanting to spoil the fun for my partner. This approach failed at once when one of the girls volunteered to be my partner for the first dance. Then I tried excusing myself because of improper attire and unsuitable shoes. That approach was vetoed by everyone at the table since all were planning on attending just as they were dressed at the moment. So, after some additional thinking I accepted for one dance, and one dance only. But I still could not get myself to say that I would try it that night.

Finally, in desperation, I made one last attempt to avoid the dance. I remembered that my animals had to be watered and fed before nightfall, and that would permit me to leave gracefully without returning. However, when my friends heard that I was conducting research with chickens, they all asked to be taken to the barn to meet my 'feathered friends'. I was trapped, and finally agreed to come dancing after I'd taken care of my chickens.

After finishing our cups of coffee all of us headed for the chicken barn. After completion of my chores I conducted the promised tour of the premises, then returned to the Student Union building for supper and, eventually, 'Folk Fiesta'. My confidence was returning, gradually. By now I was actually looking forward to 8
o'clock to see for myself what this Folk Fiesta-thing was all about.

We entered the dance hall a few minutes early but already there were lots of people milling around; someone was playing phonograph records on the stage, and there were a few brave souls performing some very involved dance steps in the center of the dance floor. I knew that I could not possibly do such dances with such complicated steps. However, I was assured that what I was seeing was not a part of the regular program. I liked the music which accompanied these dances, but since the program was about to begin I turned attention to it.

Once the music ended, one of the leaders invited everyone to come on to the floor and join hands in one big circle. My partner, true to her promise, took my hand and rather firmly walked me out into the circle. All of us joined hands and followed the instructions. We walked to the left and then we repeated it to the right. After a few more calls the girls were asked to form a circle on the inside, while the fellows closed ranks on the outside. Naturally, I lost my partner in the shuffle. What was I to do now? I felt that I could not leave the circle at this point, so I swallowed hard and listened for further instructions. Pretty soon the caller arranged for all of us to have a partner, and as we promenaded around the floor he announced that the first dance would be a change-partner dance called 'Glow Worm'. My new partner did not know the dance either, but she was willing to give it a try. So we stayed in the circle and waited to see what would happen next.

I had no problem differentiating between my left or right hands, nor between my left foot and my right one, but when the caller asked us to 'swing your new
partner', trouble began. Somehow, my feet did not know what to do. At partner's feet were also frozen in place. So we stood there, and looked rather perplexed at each other. When I looked over one of my shoulders I noticed that a lot of other couples experienced problems too.

The caller was very patient in his explanations, and eventually we all learned to turn around our partners when we were told to 'swing' the next time. Finally, we were ready to dance to the music. The caller placed the needle on the record, and off we went. I stayed for the entire record. I met many different partners but had no time to get acquainted since I was concentrating on learning the dance.

After the record ended we were asked to keep our partners, and to find three more couples to form into squares. After things settled down recognizable squares were scattered over most of the dance floor. A few sets of couples were creating a commotion because they needed 'one more couple'. I had let my new partner take charge since she seemed to know what was going to happen next; I was thoroughly confused:

At last the caller began his explanation of what was about to take place. We were going to do something called 'Texas Star'. Then followed a lot of talking and a dry run or two. The caller said we were ready to do the cance to music and he would call it for us. In other words, we should listen to him.

Surprisingly enough I felt quite comfortable in the dance; I could even 'swing' my partner without stepping on her toes. More squares followed; one involved a figure called 'ladies chain'. After a few demonstrations all of us could do it without getting lost in other sets. The time just flew by. At 10 o'clock the caller ended the program with an invitation to return 'next week' for another Folk Fiesta.
My coffee-hour friends appeared almost at once, and asked for an evaluation of the evening. There was no doubt in my mind where I was going to spend the next Sunday evening. We reassembled at the pizza restaurant to talk about the dance—so many questions that I wanted answered; it got later and later until finally the owner told us that he was closing up in 15 minutes. We realized that another week of studies was about to begin for all of us; it was necessary that we turn our attention to other matters.

As we parted I was very proud of myself. Somehow I had found the courage of venturing on to a dance floor without the feeling that the floor would open up and swallow me; I had discovered a new way to fill my free time and could barely wait for the following Sunday to come around to have a chance to practice the steps of my new found hobby. After all, there were a few calls that I had not mastered even after I had heard them a few times. There were also those dances with the involved steps which I had noted as I entered the dance hall, and which seemed to be repeated after the official program ended. I just had to learn those steps, too. I made a mental note to be sure and be in the dance hall a few minutes before 8 o'clock next week...if my friends could learn those dances, so could I.

Faithfully I returned to Folk Fiesta every Sunday for the remainder of my stay in Madison. Eventually I discovered that there were square dances held off campus as well. Pretty soon I attended these dances regularly. Naturally, I had to revise my study schedule since it interfered with my dance schedule. After a while I did learn the dances with the involved steps which had caught my eye on the first visit to Folk Fiesta. Oh, yes, I completed my research studies too, but the discovery and mastery of square and folk dancing brought me a lot more enjoyment.
I first met Ralph Page in June of 1943 in Boston. I was working at the time for the University of California in Berkeley, California, on the Manhattan Project. I was sent to Boston to do some work at the headquarters of an engineering firm which was in the process of constructing a plant for the separation of uranium isotopes in Oak Ridge, Tennessee.

Since Marjorie and I had been folk dancing for about two years, I was eager to find some dancing in Boston. I did, but the group I first found was something of a disappointment, except for the music. I believe the pianist's name was Beth McCullough and she played like an angel. On about my second visit to that group she asked me if I liked to square dance. To my "yes" answer she told me about a square dance held at the Boston Y.W.C.A. each Tuesday night for which she and other musicians played. She said that the caller was very good and felt sure that I would enjoy the dancing.
I went to the "Y.W." the next Tuesday. I was much impressed with several things: first, I had never seen a contra before, much less danced one; second, it was my first hearing of live music for square dancing, (and such lovely tunes); third, neither had I ever danced to a real professional caller before. I was immediately impressed with Ralph's style and his smooth melodious voice. It is no mystery to me why those weekly dances continued for another twenty-five years. After the dance that night, I introduced myself to Ralph, told him I was from California and that I was fascinated by the contras and the way he called them. Ralph, always the gentleman, invited me to join him and some other people for coffee, explaining that he had a two-hour wait for the train back to Keene.

Thus began a long, and to me, a very rewarding friendship. During my stay in Boston, at one of these late coffee hours, Ralph showed me how to call Lady Walpole's Reel "Cook-book" style. When I returned to Berkeley six weeks later I called that dance for the Berkeley Folk Dancers. (They were "polite" but I fear, not impressed with this budding caller).

It was not until about 1952 when Ralph and I next met. This was at Kezar Lake in Maine. It was the first folk dance camp Marjorie and I had ever attended. One of several high points for me at that camp was the first hearing of Ralph's new series of contra dance music, with and without calls. After over thirty years these records are still superior and are still being used by many callers.

Following the war, I went to work for Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. Ithaca is still our home and we feel fortunate in being close enough to the "fountain of contra dancing" area, that it is now possible for us to frequently attend one of the fine dance camps run by Ralph and Ada Page in New Hampshire or Michael and Mary Ann Herman in Maine. These are the people who provided the principal inspiration for me to go ahead and teach folk and square dances. I have been rewarded by watching my dancers doing the dances in the
joyful and hopefully correct manner they were taught us. Thank you Ralph, Mary Ann and Michael for adding this dimension to the lives of many people, especially for Marjorie and me.

A word of tribute to Ada Page who really runs the Page's New Hampshire camps. Sure, Ralph takes care of the dancing parts, with himself and other capable people keeping the dance floor happy, but it is Ada who to all the little (did I say LITTLE?) details like feeding us, housing us, and everything else for us. I do not believe there are many people who can do this kind of thing as successfully as she does and her expertise must be of great help to Ralph.

Here I have rambled on about a lot of things but hardly a word about "NORTHERN JUNKET". After all, it was to celebrate the 35th year of publication of this fine journal that its editor asked some of us to write articles to be included in this special edition. I am honored to have been included in this group.

Subscribers to "Northern Junket" do not part with back issues, especially if one is a dance leader and wants to check up on how a dance should be done. I think we all have benefitted from Ralph's philosophy about the American Dance. I, for one, am grateful for his sharing that with us. Also the articles on various dance subjects, recipes, jokes, old sayings, etc. etc. are some of the ingredients that make so many of us loyal subscribers. The JUNKET is truly a labor of love, and we thank you for it, Ralph.

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Ralph Page
117 Washington St.
Keene, N.H. 03431