

July 1988

Now, where were we....?

It's been some time since our last newsletter, what with the Phoenix convention and summer travel, etc. As our thoughts begin to turn towards Fall, and new levels of dancing, let's see what's been happening and what we'd like to have happen.

"Yes, I remember it well..." (by Barry Caven)

Cross Trails in the Desert - Phoenix '88

On May 21, 1988, the name Triangle Squares was etched into the annals of gay square dancing history. At a meeting attended by delegates Chris Homer and Barry Caven, we were unanimously voted into the International Association of Gay Square Dancing Clubs. (Mind you, we'd bribed them with membership fees and promises of wonderful weekends in exotic Toronto, so we weren't really worried about the outcome of the vote.)

This meeting was undoubtedly the highlight of the 1988 convention. Here our intrepid delegates sat for four hours in a windowless convention room, packed with about sixty confederates, sipping coffee, making speeches, listening to speeches, making motions and seconding motions.

Do you think our staunch delegates were tempted to sneak out into the ballrooms and join their friends who were gleefully squealing and kicking up their heels in the workshops? No way! Or could their minds have wandered just outside the convention room walls to the swimming pools, where dozens of steaming, lacquered bodies lounged about, sipping pina coladas in the brilliant sun? Not on your life! There were amendments that had to be made to that constitution! There were battles to be fought over who would host the 1991 convention! There were twenty pounds of paper for each of them to sift through! It was just like being back at work in T.O.!

Sure the convention had a few other good moments: seven hundred square dancers singing "Happy Birthday" to Todd Uebelacker; twenty outrageous drag queens baring their bums in the Honky Tonk Queen Contest; warm, fragrant nights sitting and chatting around the pools while watching the stars suspended above the distant line of mountains surrounding Phoenix; the frenzied faces of hordes of dancers in the giant hall on the final night surrendering themselves to the onslaught of all five callers who join forces on stage; feeling really proud when Anne gets a big, warm, standing ovation.

But it's the memories of making history in that convention room that really stand out. So do we have any volunteers for delegates to the annual meeting of the New York Convention in '89? They need at least two!

Speaking of New York....

People are already registering for the 1989 Convention, called "Peel The Apple", to be held during the July 4th. weekend in New York next year. In the meantime, there is to be a Fly-In there the weekend of October 28 - 30, with dancing Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

A number of Triangle Squares' dancers are already committed to go, which, since it falls on the festival of Halloween promises to be a lark! Don't forget to pack your heels. More information later.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch....

Our own plans for the Fall are firming up, as it were. We have already received the first reservation for our Anniversary Dance on September 10th. at the 519, 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.

This is also the evening of the GCDC dance, but, what the hell! They changed their date, and you've certainly got the energy to rush home, shower, and get to their dance, too, haven't you? After all, that one won't get off the ground until about eleven, anyway.

Our own dance that night will cost \$6.50 and we're going to need help on organization, decoration, taking money at the door, selling cold drinks, etc. So we'd appreciate hearing from you. Let all your friends know about this event; you can tell them there'll be instruction for Beginners so they should come on out.

By the way, there's going to be a major surprise at that dance, which I don't think you'll want to miss. To reserve a place, please tell Chris that you plan to be there.

And after that....

After the Anniversary Dance we're sure there'll be enough enthusiasm for a new Basic course to begin on the Thursday, 15th. of September. We will continue to have the 519 as our dance space for that evening again and Anne is still able to teach us on Thursday nights.

In order to have a little more flexibility and to increase our prowess through practice, we have applied for a Permit to use the gymnasium at the Church St. Public School (corner of Alexander St.) on Monday nights as well, starting in September. At the moment the Board of Education can't tell us whether our application has been successful. There is also a debate going on as to whether that space will be free or will cost all applicants about \$20 per use!

Our Summer Basic class and our Mainstream class will graduate at the end of August. If we get the Monday night space as well, we would then have some options.

For instance, in order to make the most of Anne's teaching (she's not available on Mondays) we could continue with two classes on Thursday, a new Basic for this September's Beginners, followed by a combined Mainstream class of Summer dancers. This class could review Mainstream and add in some Plus moves (those that go to the convention in 1989 should aim to be at the Plus level by then). Monday night

could be a practice night when you got the chance to review the Thursday night moves.

Another option would be for a new caller to take the Basic class on Monday nights (helped by "angels"), followed by some Mainstream/Plus dancing to records. This would leave Thursday for separate Mainstream and Plus classes to be taught by Anne.

What do YOU think? We'd like to hear from you.

We are so lucky....

When I think of the first dancers of the Triangle Squares staggering around the 519 on 17th. of September 1987 and then I look at us now, well there's no comparison. Also the speed at which the Summer Basic class has moved shows what a help it is to have "angels" dancing along, too. Some of us have also learnt the other role, thus providing more flexibility when squaring up.

However, first and foremost, we have to thank Anne and Joe for their great patience and clear teaching and calling for getting us through this first year.

I thought you might be interested in an extract from the April 1987 issue of Pacesetter, a magazine which serves the advanced level and challenge community of square dancing.

Speaking of Anne they write: "This is a person of outstanding ability and achievement as a Challenge square-dance caller - a person who has reached top recognition in this field that is almost exclusively dominated by men. She has made history in the annals of square dancing as the first woman to be selected on the staff of both the National Challenge Convention and the Canadian Challenge Convention, the first woman to attain full, equal status among the leading callers of North America."

We are certainly lucky to have that quality of teaching and personality available to us. Thanks, Anne and, thanks, Joe for filling in when she's away.

Well, noone yelled, anyway....

On July 7th., there was an announcement about an annual membership fee, payable after graduation from the Basic level, for those that wish to belong to the Triangle Squares. This doesn't mean that you couldn't dance at any session if you declined to pay the fee (\$15.00). But what you will get for the fee is the newsletter, a free dance manual at your level, and access to all the resources that come through the IAGSDC. For the club badge and/or any matching outfit that represents the Triangle Squares as a group, there will have to be a nominal charge.

An annual membership fee will build up the bank balance for future expenses such as advertising or resources like records, tapes, or cassettes, and, perhaps, equipment. We can't rely indefinitely on Anne to provide her own equipment as part of the club's operations. A membership fee will also help strengthen us as a group.

If this meets with approval, then the fee will be payable in September. Let's hear from you.

And if you're travelling....

Don't forget that since the Triangle Squares is now a member of the IAGSDC, you are encouraged to dance with any of the groups in the Association, if you are at the right level, when you travel around this continent. One of us recently had the pleasure of dancing with the South Florida Mustangs and one of our number was recently in California and danced there.

Dancing with other groups is a great education and morale-builder. It's always interesting to dance to someone other than your own regular caller. Finding that, yes, you do know that step, definitely helps build the ego. So, if you're travelling, be sure to look in the Gay Square Dance Guide which is usually out on the newsletter table on Thursday nights.

Calling All Ottawans...

Have you got friends in Ottawa? Have you told them you're square dancing now? Why don't you invite them down for the weekend of September 9 - 10 and bring them along to the Anniversary Dance?

On July 21st. we were delighted to receive a visit from Alton Deslandes, who was spending his vacation cycling around Lake Ontario! Despite having travelled over a hundred kilometres that day, Alton danced in our Mainstream class in the evening. He told us that there is some gay square dancing activity in the Ottawa area, but the numbers are pretty small at the moment with the caller joining in the dancing to make up the square.

We'd like to encourage a third gay Canadian club to square its sets, so we're looking forward to welcoming some of the members of the Club Moustache here on September 10th. If you have other friends who are not in that club, call them up and get them down here to join in the fun and get enthused.

STOP THE PRESS! STOP THE PRESS....

Our application for permission to dance in the gymnasium at the Church St. Public School on Monday nights starting in September, has been provisionally accepted, pending the final nod from the Principal.

Hours would be 8:00 - 10:15 pm. This is exciting news (even though we'd have to pay for the space). Please read over the options that gives us (page 2) and express your opinion about how to make use of the facility.

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