



METRO MATTERS

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METRO SQUARE AND ROUND DANCE ASSOCIATION

Edited by
DOTTIE WELCH



PAST - CELEBRATING FORTY YEARS

Metro Association has been in existence since 1968. It has been the coordinating body for the local clubs during all of that time consistently encouraging cooperation between its member clubs. Each season brings special memories from times past.

For several years the first special of the New Year was the January Jig sponsored by Metro and featuring all available local callers. Its most memorable location was at the Dalhousie University Club with its high ceiling laced with dark beams and banners. During the Dartmouth Winter Carnival, the Stardusters organized dancing on the ice or in the snow at Graham Grove Park immediately followed by their Bean Bash. This later evolved into the Sweetheart Dance. In March the Hal Dar Swingin' Stars held their 3/4's Dance on Saint Patrick's. One year we came out to find a foot of snow had fallen during the dance. April brought the Scotia Dancer's Spring Fling at Charles P. Allen High School with an afternoon workshop, supper and evening dance which filled the gym with 35 squares. Metro organized the First Year Roundup and Atlantic Jamboree in May with a few memorable visiting callers: Earle Parke broke his ankle when he jumped off the stage to demonstrate a move and was back later to call, Stan Burdick was editor of American Square Dance and the artist of Do-Ci-Do Dolores, Vaughn Parish came from Colorado with his smooth western style, Dick Fleming and later Don Moser both came from Quebec. The round dancers combined forces for a Parade of Rounds often featuring an Easter Bonnet competition. Later the Fun Squares Apple Crisp and Coordinators Sail Into Summer Plus dances occupied the late Spring weekends.

Metro has sponsored Summer Dances for years attempting to maintain the interest of new dancers. The early dances were held in front of Eaton's in the Halifax Shopping center. A highlight was dancing to Dick Leger from Rhode Island calling and playing his guitar.

Autumn came with the Tartan Twirler's Fall Round Up at Southdale School to various visiting callers, and later the Lake City Swingers' Swing Into Fall with Stu Brink, then Gerry O'Hara, and recently to live music with Dottie Welch. Many Maritime Conventions were held in Halifax – 1000 dancers filling all the ballrooms at the Lord Nelson, later the Port Royal and Mariner rooms at the World Trade and Convention Centre, and then at the Nova Scotian Hotel. For several years the Bee Square's held a Christmas Dance for class and club with Herb Muir calling in the cafeteria at NSIT. Metro New Year's Eve Dances have been held in many locations including St. James Church, Cole Harbour Place and St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, but the most memorable were those in the early 1970's held in the ballroom of the Lord Nelson Hotel under the crystal chandeliers.

In 1982 the 3rd Canadian National Square and Round Dance Convention was held in Halifax and its sponsoring body was Metro because the Provincial Federation had not been formed in 1978 when the bid was made. With over 5000 dancers this was definitely a highlight of Metro's 40 years. We also assisted admirably with the National in 1994 when we "Danced By the Shore". In the summer of 1987 and again in 1999 Metro hosted the Provincial Festival at Mount Saint Vincent University. Festival 2007 was held at Cole Harbour Place as a fund raiser for Halifax National Festival 2010.

Dance attire was available locally from the Grand Square Shop run by Ches and Ferne Knowlton, followed by John and Fran Essex, and then Ed and Lil LeBlanc. Later Debbie and Harry George ran George's Western Wear.

All of this was made possible by many hours of work by dedicated local leaders: Jim & Pat Alguire, Barry & Dyanna Bendle, Art & Marg Blumsum, Stuart & Debbie Brink, Vern & Mildred Carmichael, Kevin Cassidy, Larry & Margie Clark, Lionel & Janet Crowe, Vicky & Harold Elliott, John & Fran Essex, Kerry Fletcher, Ken & Donna Gibson, Marven & Gwen Hartlen, Marg & Tom Keighan, Ed & Lil LeBlanc, Harry & Betty Lofgren, Gerry & Bev O'Hara, John & Valerie Pinks, Wade, Mark, Susan, and Bruce Savage, Bennie & Norma Slade, Cecil Smith, Alex Ritchie & Bernice Thurber, Lorne & Audry Tyler, Dottie & Gary Welch

PRESENT – CLUBS, LEADERS, AND CONTACTS LIST

- Fun Squares**, St. Luke's Church Hall, Veterans Avenue, Dartmouth, Sat. Eve, 8 pm,
Mainstream and Phase II Rounds, Callers: Bruce and Mark Savage, 431-8269 or 434-3867;
Contact: Forbes & Marlene Keating, 465-7057
- Lake City Swingers**, North Woodside Community Centre, 230 Pleasant Street, Dartmouth,
Thurs. Eve, 7:30 pm, **Mainstream, Mixers, Contras**, Caller: Dottie & Gary Welch, 435-4544;
Contact: Mary Sargeant, 463-3170
- Stardusters**, South Woodside Community Centre, Dartmouth, Thurs. Eve, 8 pm, **Mainstream**
Caller: Kerry Fletcher, 433-3164; Contact: Jim & Pat Briggs, 434-4595
- Timberlea Twirlers**, Lakeside Fire Hall, HRM, Mon. Eve, 8 pm, **Mainstream**
Callers: Barry & Dyanna Bendle, 876-2266 and Pat & Marilyn Matheson
Contact: Bernard & Betty Conrad, 876-2469
- Coordinators**, North Woodside Community Centre, 230 Pleasant Street, Dartmouth, **Plus**,
Mon. Eve, 8 pm, Caller: Dottie & Gary Welch, 435-4544; Contact: Mary Sargeant, 463-3170
- Metro Merry Makers / Ocean Waves**, Bloomfield Centre, 2786 Agricola Street, Halifax,
Tues. Eve, 8 pm, **Plus**, Callers: Mark or Wade Savage
- Sail Sets**, Grosvenor Wentworth Park School, Downing Street, Rockingham, **Advanced**,
Tues. Eve, 8 pm Caller: Dottie & Gary Welch, 435-4544
- Tidal Waves**, Bloomfield Centre, 2786 Agricola Street, Halifax, Fri. Eve, 8 pm, **A-1**
Callers: Kerry Fletcher, 433-3164
- Fun Time Rounds**, Bloomfield Centre, 2786 Agricola Street, Halifax, Mon. Eve, 7 pm, **Rounds**
Cuers: Lionel & Janet Crowe, 829-2643 (No dancing in January & February 2010)
- Contra Time Dancers**, St. Matthias Church Hall, Corner Chebucto & Windsor, Halifax, 8 pm
Live Music, **Contras and Related Dances**, Prompter: Dottie & Gary Welch, 435-4544
One dance per month on Saturday (2010: Jan 9, Feb 6, Mar 6, Apr 3, May 1, May 29)

FUTURE – HALIFAX NATIONAL CONVENTION 2010

The coming Halifax National Festival in 2010 presents an opportunity for the Metro Area to recruit new dancers. There will be publicity associated with the event and local people will see dancers along the waterfront and as spectators. It is up to the local clubs and leaders to find creative ways to entice those who might be interested to try square, round or contra dancing next fall. Please put your thinking caps on and plan some new marketing approaches.

Also, we strongly encourage all dancers in the Metro Area to attend this coming National Convention. Yes, it does cost more than an ordinary dance, but it is much more than an ordinary dance. This kind of local opportunity to dance to callers and with dancers from across North America and around the world may never come again during your dancing years. Join the active volunteers working on committees, help us welcome our visitors, and plan to enjoy every moment of this very special event.

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL !!