

# Square Dancing Ranks High As Recreation

## Millions Take Part In Popular Revival

By RUTH KING and JEAN WALKER  
One and three, here's what you do,  
Wheel around and Susie Q,  
Opposite lady a right hand 'round,  
Partner left when you come down.

Then you promenade two by two,  
Get along home like you always do.

With the call of "do-si-do" echoing from recreation halls, school gymnasiums, ranch barns and lodge halls, from New York to Pensacola, from Boston to San Diego and the last outpost on the Canadian line to the Mexican border, the term "Square Dance" is becoming a household word.

An estimated 30 million people of all ages in this country now trip to the tantalizing tunes and the bewitching coaxing of callers or to phonograph records. Statistics show that every city, town and hamlet across the United States, has at least one club or group of square dancers.

That square dancing is not a fad or a craze, that blazes up then dies, is proven by the many years that this form of recreation has been popular.

Some say that a general in the Foreign Legion, watching his soldiers drill back in the 16th century, tapped a booted foot and from there came the "Quadrille."

The bewigged gentlemen and corseted "grand dames" of the royal courts got into the swing and court jesters were often called upon to add spice to the calls.

Each century and each country has given some colorful bit to the dances. Calls have been passed from father to son.

The New England and the Virginia colonists brought with them to the shores of the new America, the music and the stanzas of the countries from which they came. In some regions where dancing was frowned upon, boys and girls satisfied their yearning for keeping time to tunes by dancing "Skip to m' Lou" and "Drop the Handkerchief."

Perhaps the earliest style of American folk dancing is the "Country" or Costa Dance, in

which the dancers swing from a line rather than in the square of eight performers. These line dances still crop up frequently at square dances and a few clubs exist that are devoted entirely to the line figures.

As covered wagons rolled westward, the biting tunes of the old southern hoedowns and the farther north corn husking rhythms, were sung to the creaking of wagon wheels across the rutted prairies and many was the night beneath a mellow moon that boy swung girl to the twang of a Jew's harp, in a square dance figure.

They were danced in the towns where Mother Lodes made fortunes in gold, and in the towns that fringed the vast lumbering industry of the Northwest. They were danced in the gas-lighted ballrooms in the cities and even upon the white sands where the Pacific rolled to shore.

### TAP-ROOMS

They were danced too, in the tap-rooms of the sprawling new towns but the beautiful patterned dances of today are not to be confused with stomping circle dances performed before the bars by the miners and the woodcutters and their lady "podners" during those days when men came to town to spend a well-filled gold dust poke.

Contrary to belief, square dancing is not a form of entertainment to be enjoyed only by "country folks." Doctors, lawyers, merchants, chiefs, teachers and many a housewife welcome the opportunity to "whirl away and half sashay," where they meet their neighbors relax and "let go." There is no cast system in the square dance world. Few religious groups disprove.

Square dancing is encouraged for therapy in many hospitals where the patient needs to learn or regain muscular coordination and in many mental hospitals to develop self reliance and to renew a tie with the outside world.

The late Henry Ford was an enthusiast and late in his lifetime whirled about a dance floor. His book on square dancing, "Good Morning," is now a collector's item. Another notable figure who



"PULL UP YOUR PANTS and Tighten Up Your Traces. All Join Hands and We're Off to the Races," goes the call for this group of dancers at Twyla Ferguson School. Beginners are called "Greenys" but a few nights on a polished floor under the tutelage of a good caller and unless the dancer has lead in his shoes he can "Chase the Rabbit, Chase the Squirrel, Chase the Pretty Girl 'Round the World."

can do the "Double Elbow," is Dr. Lloyd Shaw of Colorado known as, "The Grand Old Man of Square Dancing."

### REASON

His following quotation puts into words the reason that square dancing has lived through the centuries and has had such a tremendous revival in the last dozen years.

"Square dancing is man's turning back again to the primitive and to the simple, and to the sure methods that have saved our souls again and again when they were threatened with too much of the new. To leave the confusion and the half-done appeals of our television and radio, to join in the spontaneous and friendly and natural activity seems to restore our souls. A bit of color in our costume, laughter again on our lips, natural friendliness in our gesture seems to restore us, to lift us again so we are the nice people we would like to be."

## Costumes Add Local Color

Much of the color and the spirit of the square dance is captured in the costumes worn by the dancers, many of them reminiscent of the early days of America.

Pantaloon peep cooly from beneath ankle-length full skirts, the frocks flutter with ruffles that swirl above ballet slippers, bound about slim ankles with criss-crossed ribbons and an occasional sunbonnet of the 1890s is tied beneath a pert feminine chin.

Men partners are just as colorful, in authentic Western blue jeans or Western style trousers, western shirts and string ties, cowboy boots and fancy belts.

Although a costume that fits the dance is not necessary, they do add life and color to the festivities. That such costumes are preferred by the dancers is proved by counters and clothing racks in retail stores and specialty shops where square dances garments are sold exclusively.

The pretty old calico prints of earlier days are being re-produced by the thousands of bolts by textile manufacturers, brightly colored Squaw Dresses from the Southwest are showing up in every store in the union and sewing machines hum from shore to shore as nimble fingers turn out individual frocks.

But don't stay home, say the enthusiasts, if no "proper" duds are on hand. 'Tis just as much fun to "Shoot That Star is a Wrong Way Wheel," in an imported tweed or satin 'n' sables.

### HAY BALER

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THIS SET OF FOUR COUPLES was ready for a whirl in the hay-scented barn on the Joe Gladowski Ranch on Hilyard Avenue. Many a haymow in the Klamath country has rung to "Allemande left," both in the early days of settlement of the valley along Lost River and since the upsurge of interest in the old square dances back about 1947. Back to camera, Loren and Sylvia Stroud, others, clockwise around, Shirley and Bill Mayhew, Jean Walker, Clarence Hundley, Ralph and Buelah Brisbon of the Merry Mixers Club.

### The Cover

This week's Herald and News Magazine Section of Klamath Basin Living cover picture was taken by Don Kettler with a 4 x 5 Speed Graphic camera set at a hundredth of a second and f 22 using tri X film. The fiddler is Clarence Hundley of Tulelake, a square dancer of long standing.

### POSTS

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