

## Highlights

- 1 **President's Report**
- 2 **The Fall & Winter Dance Reports**
- 3 **The Callers Corner**
- 4 **Get to know The Past**
- 5 **Membership Dues**
- 6 **Web Sites of Interest**

# The Olde Tymmer

*The Newsletter of  
Canadian Olde Tyme  
Square Dance Callers  
Association  
March 2024 Issue 73*

**Website:** <http://sca.uwaterloo.ca/cotsdca>

## President

**Calvin Everitt**

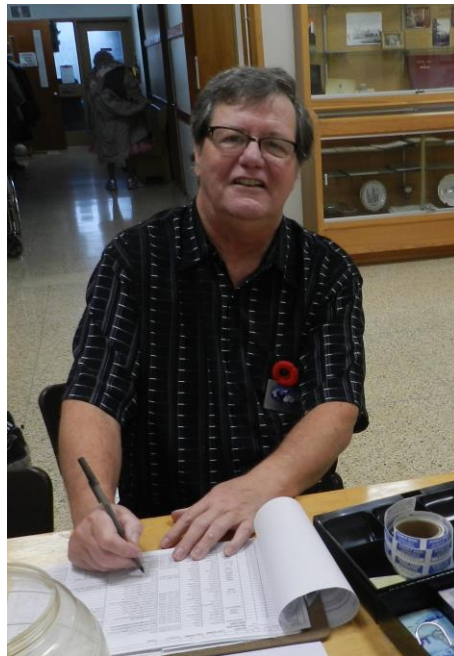


My email address is [calvin.everitt1051@gmail.com](mailto:calvin.everitt1051@gmail.com)  
With everyone working together as one there is no limit to what can and will be achieved.

We need your feedback, so let any of us on the Executive know what you are thinking.

## Vice-President

**Gerry Gregoire**



Gerry was looking after the admission table and the 50/50 ticket sales at the fall dance.

Gerry is thinking that those who would like to go to dinner after the April dance at the Perkins Family Restaurant on Dixon Road beside the Holiday Inn. They have entrees special priced for the 55 + years.

Beautiful pies to chose from.

Please let Gerry know if you plan on attending: 647-639-7376 or [geraldgregoire22@gmail.com](mailto:geraldgregoire22@gmail.com)

## Executive Member At Large

**Rick Wilson,**

Rick Wilson is relatively new to square dancing and has jumped in with both feet. He's dancing several times a week in the area west of Toronto and has enthusiastically joined the executive team to help boost the number of people square dancing.

Look for Rick's big smile on the dance floor.



## Secretary Lorna Irwin



### Snowbird Snippets by Lorna Irwin

One of the great pleasures of square dancing for me is the chance to travel and dance wherever I go. The community is large and welcoming to this solo dancer.

As a modern square dancer, I often travel to special dances at nearby clubs, Fly-In weekends (dancing Friday evening, Saturday and Sunday, usually with multiple callers and various dance levels), and conventions. In the past year, the highlight has to have been the [IAGSDC Convention in Ottawa](#) in July, over 700 dancers, all levels of modern square dancing (Basic to Challenge), more than a dozen callers, and, expansively, sessions for Traditional Squares (Bill Hands, caller), Contra (Bev Bernbaum, caller), and country and line dancing too.

This winter, though, I checked off a Bucket List experience – [Winter Dance Week](#) at the John Campbell Folk School in Brasstown, NC, as I headed for warmer climes in my

wee tear drop trailer for sun, sand and squares.

Imagine this. A full week of dancing from morning to night. Traditional Squares, Contra and English Country Dancing. Two dance halls. Three awesome bands. Workshops. Introductory lessons. Specialty classes to learn and practice more complex steps and dances. Three tasty meals per day in community. And every night, between Boxing Day and New Year's Eve, community dances, so a whole group of local dancers joined the 80 or so students for lively, fast-paced dancing. Our callers – exceptional in every way – were [Janine Smith](#), [Will Mentor](#) and [Cis Hinkle](#).

The Appalachian square dance tradition is strong in these parts, of course. Influenced by Scots, Irish, French, Native American, and African dance forms, today's traditional square dances have evolved from other rich traditions, and continue to do so. (For a wonderful book on this subject, see Phil Jamison's [Hoedowns, Reels and Frolics; Roots and Branches of Southern Appalachian Dance](#)).

Remember **Swat the Flea**? No? Well, it's the left-hand version of **Box the Gnat**, not often seen in traditional square dancing in my neck of the woods, and erased from the modern square dance canon decades ago. It's fast-paced and mentally challenging. [Here's an example](#) (or google Bill Lichtman Box the Gnat Square Dance). Think you could keep up?

What about **Birdie in the Cage**? Simple steps but also challenging and fun. [Here's an example](#) (or

google Dances of Jerry Goodwin Birdie in the Cage).

We did a full dance involving the **Rip and Snort** move. I couldn't find that one online, but here's a version that will give you the idea, our familiar [Texas Star with a Rip and Snort variation](#) (or google Phil Jamison Texas Star Square Dance).

For the swingers out there, **Heads to the Center and the Side Divide**, [seen here](#) (or google Traditional Square Dance Heads to the Center, Sides Divide).

I learned how to do a **Kentucky Do Si Do**: the gent holds the lady's left hand in his right and brings it up around and over his head. He stays in place while she'll walk around him and returns right back where she started. Yup. Looks kind of like a lasso.

I was surprised how popular English Country Dance and Contra are, too. I enjoyed the gentle introduction to ECD, including the popular [Sapphire Sea](#) (or google Sapphire Sea dance), which I will look for upon my return home. And I learned to appreciate Contra dancing more, having had a chance to do some fun, complex moves and dances, like the ricochet hay.

Every session ended with a waltz, a lovely tradition. There was usually a big circle dance / mixer at the beginning or end. There were young folks (some with their toddlers or babes in arms), singles, couples, same sex dancers and many, many dancers doing both roles and mixing it up every time, in a kind, convivial mix.

The New Year's Eve dance brought Morris dancers, fireworks, a bar and lots of snacks. Hoppin'

John and collard greens for breakfast the next morning, for an auspicious start to the new year.

Interestingly, what there was not... no larks or robins. No crinolines.

Lorna is the Association's Secretary and a member of Royal City Squares, Triangle Squares, and the Ottawa Date Squares

## Fall Dance Report

Saturday November 11<sup>th</sup> 2023



The band was The Missing Link. The fiddler was Bruce Woods, brother of the better-known Scott Woods. We greatly enjoyed having callers and dancers come from Vankleek Hill and Wellington County, who competed at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair the following day.



\*\*\*\*\*



The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair old-time square dance competition happened on Sunday, November 12, 2023, the day after our fall dance.

**LOCATION:** OLG Stage, Heritage Court - Enercare Centre, Exhibition Place, Toronto.

**JUDGES:** Wallace Boustead, Sharon Grose, Iris Perriman,

**CALLER:** Dave Lucas

## The Winners

4-H class

1<sup>st</sup> Prescott County 4-H



2<sup>nd</sup> Wellington 4-H Burgundy Twirlers



3<sup>rd</sup> Wellington 4-H Blue Floral Promenaders



**College & University Set.**

OAC Class of 2026

Ram Good Time.



## Open Set.

1<sup>st</sup> Prescott County 4-H



2<sup>nd</sup> OAC Classics



3<sup>rd</sup> Ram Good Time



The best caller winner was  
Cadence Beck



## Annual General Meeting

Our Annual General Meeting was held on October 25, 2023, at 7:30 pm. It was held on Zoom so that members near and far could participate from their homes.

The motion to raise the annual dues to \$15 passed, so that is now in effect.

## Winter Dance Report

Saturday January 6<sup>th</sup> 2024



This is all the dancers, callers and musicians at the winter dance. Although our turnout for the last two dances has been low, memberships and donations are keeping us going. Thank you!



## Membership Dues

### If you have not paid

The membership year is Sept. 1<sup>st</sup> to Aug. 31<sup>st</sup> Your renewal dues are only \$15.00 a year. Dues should be forwarded to.

**Gerry Gregoire**  
106 Murray St,  
Brampton, ON  
L6X 2V8,

In an effort to keep your membership dues low we will be trying to send this newsletter by email from now on so we need your email address.

## Callers' Corner

As a traditional caller, I like to include couple dances and mixers in my programs. In addition to being fun to do, they permit any number of dancers to take part – not only in groups of eight. Some of the old-time couple dances that most folks know nowadays are The Gay Gordons, The Navy Two-Step, The Jesse Polka, St Bernard's Waltz, The Seven Step Polka, The Roberts, The Heel and Toe Polka, and The Canadian Four Step. Wherever you live, there are probably a few of these that you do not know and others you do know. Some of my favourites that seem to have gone out of style are The Varsouvianna Waltz, The French Minuet, The Irish Waltz, The Black Hawk Waltz, and The Military Schottische.

I have noticed that a fairly high percentage of our dancers sit out the couple dance at our Association dances. Reasons I have heard include (more or less in order): wanting to save energy for

the squares; afraid to make mistakes and look foolish; do not have a great sense of balance; do not have a partner; and the list goes on. I would like to address each reason not to dance:

**Saving energy:** Yes, we are getting older every day, so we might not have the same energy level as we once had. One fellow told me that he thinks we should do one square at a time because it was all he could handle. We Ontario old-timers used to do three changes per “set” - first change, a visiting couple dance; second change, a singing call, change partner dance, or three-couples active dance; and third change, a “breakdown” where all four couples move at the same time. Our MWS dancers are used to two squares in a “tip”. These days, we often stick to two changes in a set, which is partly to deal with the needs of our dancers. If you really need to save your energy, do so. But if this is not really your reason, see below.

**Lack of balance:** Take care of yourself. Do sit it out if you must. On the other hand, dancing is one of the best ways to improve your balance.

**Fear of failure:** I recently attended a caller’s workshop where if you said, “I made a mistake”, everyone replied with “Congratulations!” Mistakes mean that you are trying to do something new. The more you try, the better you will be. At least, you will surely not get worse! Besides, it is the caller's job to explain the dance, so you can blame the caller (or “cue-er”) if any mistakes are made.

**No partner:** More and more, the rule of the dance floor is becoming: If you want to dance,

stand up. If you are sitting, it is not obvious that you want to dance. Waiting to be asked is for the birds. Callers will do their best to get dancers together. This also applies to squares. Stand up if you want to dance.

A few of our callers also include Country Line Dances. Personally, they are not my favourites. I find that looking at the backs of people is not as enjoyable as looking at their smiles. Obviously, these dances were not around when the Association was formed in 1954, but they can fit into a square dance program. However, they do allow people without a partner to dance.

**In short:** What the heck. Give the couple dances a go!

Bill Russell

### Up Coming Dances

Callers Dance on Saturday, April 13, 2024, from 2-5 pm, at Westway United Church.

Admittance will be \$15 for members, \$20 for non-members (cash or cheque at the door).

The upcoming date for the Duff’s Square Dances called by Bill Hands is April 6th, 2024. Next season, the dances will be held on October 5th, and November 16th, 2024, and January 18th, February 8th, March 1st, and April 5th, 2025.

### Collage Royal Square Dance Competition at University of Guelph



The College Royal old-time square dance competition is on Saturday, March 16<sup>th</sup> at the University of Guelph. Dave Lucas is the compulsory caller for the competition. Former members of the Association Gary Baker and Brenda Watson are both going to be judges (last I heard, anyway).

After all, it is nice to support the young dancers and callers, but there is limited chance for our members to dance that day. So, it is only for interest if people want to go and watch

### Get to Know the Past, this is the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year

## History of our Founding

It was in the early part of the year 1954 that James fisher, one of the established square dance callers in the Toronto area conceived the idea of forming an organization to preserve and promote traditional olde tyme dancing so that it would still have a place in our community life and many more of our people could enjoy this relaxing recreation of our forefathers

With this in mind, invitations were sent to old time callers to meet at the residence of James Fisher in March, 1954. Seventeen callers were present at this meeting and plans were made to form an association. Further meetings were held and the organization became known as the Canadian Olde Tyme Square Dance Callers Association. The first officers were James Fisher, President, Alex Boustead, Treasurer and Murray Morrison, Secretary with a total of twenty-one charter members.

The Association now formed, a constitution was written and a crest adopted having as its main part a cut taking from a picture featuring an orchestra and caller.



The first monthly dances were held in the Jane Street Library basement and only callers and a partner could participate with only two sets most of the time. It was suggested that a caller could invite another couple to these dances. Four sets was too many for the basement and a new location was found in Buttonville.



In May of 2003 the Township upped the rent that was beyond our means. We had to find a new place to hold our monthly social.

In Sept.2003 we moved to Grace Anglican Church in Markham. We held the socials there until May 2009. On our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary we had a cake cut by Alex Boustead one of the founding members.



With the organization work completed in the spring of 1954 it was time to advertise the Canadian Olde Tyme Square Dance Callers Association, so a public dance was held in Perth Avenue Public School. To this dance were invited callers from many places – Oshawa, Port Hope, Belgrave, Severn, Wingham, Galt Etc. and as each and every caller prompted, chanted or sang his call for the four hundred enthusiastic square dancers tapped their toes and

clicked their heels as they danced to the old tunes and calls of the days of the pioneers. This first dance of the Association was followed by two each year, a Spring Dance and a Fall Dance.

The election of officers for 1955 returned James Fisher as President and justly so, as he had given his time freely and worked unceasingly to further the work of the Association which is to promote the traditional dances, with ties and roots reaching back to our forefathers, along with the best of the new ones.

So let us dance and work together in sponsoring our Canadian dances of relaxing beauty, fun and enjoyment. To this goal our Presidents – James Fisher, Tom Wight, Jack Hayes, Jim Kennedy, Alex Mulligan, James Lebourne, Murray Morrison, Norman Anderson, Alex Boustead, Reg Boustead, Herb Pollitt, George Betts, Murray Smith, Ernie McCullough, Fred Giles, Wayne Lowdon, Jim McGlynn, Patrick Bryant, Len Waltham, Archie Gagg, David Lucas, Ken McCormick, Bill Russell and Calvin Everitt have worked.

So let us share the finer things of life, our fine Canadian dancers, so we can all say “Square Dancing Is Fun!”

\*\*\*  
IT'S A SQUARE DANCE TIME ! Once again it's time for the Annual Spring Square Dance, sponsored by the Canadian Olde Tyme Square Dance Callers' Association. Participate in this uniquely enjoyable form of recreation. The dance takes place Friday, April 19, 8:30 p.m. at Richview Collegiate Institute (corner of Islington and Eglinton Aves). The Nova Scotians are supplying the foot-stompin' music. Admission is \$1.50 per person for advanced ticket sales or \$2 at the door. Call 251-6309 for more information.

Notice in the Etobicoke Gazette  
April 11, 1974



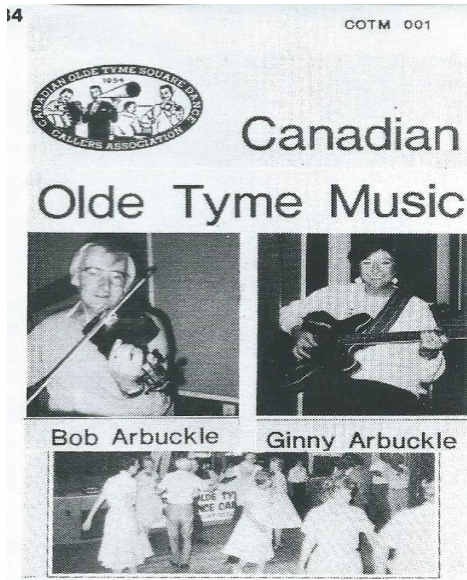
The tunes are

Side A

- 1) Cy's jig,
- 2) Green Mountain Boy,
- 3) Fishers Hornpipe/Ste. Anne's Reel,

Side B

- 1) Rock Valley Jig/Donegal Jig,
- 2) Londonderry Hornpipe/Mist On The Mountain,
- 3) Operator's Reel/Pea Soup Reel.



Pages 9 or 10 you  
can print as a flyer  
and give it to all your  
square dance friends,  
or post on free notice  
boards.

\*\*\*\*

#### Web Sites Of Interest

If you have not checked out the Association's website recently, you might want to see what is new:

<https://sca.uwaterloo.ca/cotsdca/>

In particular, we have added some pictures of the sheet music for many of the couple dances. Fiddlers should be able to download them and learn the tunes.

If you have found any interesting traditional square dance web sites, please pass them along to me at [russell\\_bill@hotmail.com](mailto:russell_bill@hotmail.com)

Bill Russell



#### Publisher/Editor

Articles and items for sharing or comments should be sent to:  
Wallace Boustead 70 Willowridge Rd.  
Toronto ON M9R-3Z4 416-249-0147  
[mj-wc\\_boustead@sympatico.ca](mailto:mj-wc_boustead@sympatico.ca)



# Come on out for a Traditional Square Dance!

Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup>

Live Music    Multiple Callers    Quick Walk-thru of Each Dance

**Everyone very welcome!**



**No experience or partner needed.**

Come on your own...  
bring a partner...  
or lasso a group  
of family and friends.

**Mostly Squares,  
maybe a Line or two,  
Mixers/Big Circles, and more.**

All easy to learn,  
super fun to do.

**Saturday, April 13, 2024**

2 – 5 pm | Mini lesson/Refresher at 1:30

**Westway United Church**

8 Templar Drive, Etobicoke (Kipling & #401)

**\$15** / person (COTSDCA members)    **\$20** (non-members)  
Teens / Youth / 4H, Jr. Farmers, Guides/Scouts **\$7.50** / person

If you can walk energetically, you can square dance.

Two left feet? Bring both!

Bring comfortable shoes  
and a water bottle (you might work up a sweat).

**Optional:** Join some of the dancers  
after for casual dinner at a nearby restaurant.



**Hosted by the Canadian Olde Tyme Square Dance Association**

**Celebrating 70 years of Canadian square dance traditions**

**Questions?** Text or Call (leave a message): **Calvin** 705 706-4396 | **Lorna** 416 487-2170

# **CANADIAN OLDE TYME SQUARE DANCE ASSOCIATION**



## **CELEBRATE 70 YEARS OF TRADITIONAL CANADIAN SQUARE DANCING ANNUAL SPRING DANCE**

**2:00PM – 5:00PM**

# **SAT. APRIL 13th 2024**

**Members \$15.00 Non-Members \$20.00**

## **WESTWAY UNITED CHURCH**

**8 Templar Dr, Etobicoke, Ontario, M9R 3C7**

(1 block north of the Westway & 1 block east of Kipling at Holywell)

**Music by Sandy Price, fiddle; Donny Wood, keyboard; Barry  
Brookes, guitar & bass**

For information call Lorna 416-487-2170 or Calvin 705-706-4396

Always Leave a Message

## **COME CELEBRATE WITH US**

**Website: <http://sca.uwaterloo.ca/cotsdca>**