

The Ottawa Area Callers Association History

Compiled by Paul & Judy Adams

In 1954 Jack & Pam Zoubie started the **Ottawa Valley Square Dance Association** which included Callers, Club Representatives & Dancers. In 1958 the Name was changed to **Ottawa Square Dance Association** (OSDA) and again in 1969 to **Ottawa Square And Round Dance Association** (OSARDA). Then in 1979 it was changed again to **Eastern Ontario Square And Round Dance Association**.

This Section of the Square Dance Organization began in 1959 it was just called **The Ottawa Square Dance Callers**, a name change was in store and it became **The Ottawa Valley Square Dance Callers**, when we joined in 1974 it was named **The Ottawa Square Dance Caller Teachers Association** and at present **The Ottawa Area Callers Association**.

In the early years many Clubs were Caller Operated, where the Caller Couple basically ran the Club but had 1 or 2 couples as helpers. Other Clubs had an executive who worked under the guidance of the Club Caller. I knew of at least one club that was operated by just one Dancer Couple, as a business. This association was born out of a need for Callers to keep in touch with each other, to announce Club and Open Dances as a means to avoid conflicting dates with other Club's Dances. I believe The McMorrans were instrumental in the formation of this organization although I can not prove it, The McMorrans organized a meeting which led to subsequent meetings held monthly and mainly at the home of the McMorrans.

Angus & Catherine McMorrans were very well respected in the Ottawa Square Dance Community and with many Professional Callers in the USA, They were members of **Legacy** an American organization trying to direct Square & Round Dancing in North America. Prior to Callerlab being formed. Angus & Catherine were part of the first **Board of Governors for Callerlab** in 1973.

Later the McMorrans acquired a method where they could have Square Dance Records shipped to them, which they would bring and play the music of at the following Callers meeting. The Callers would listen to the Instrumental side of four Records, and then with their Partners dance through the Opener and First Figure of the Called side of the record or a section of Patter if it was a Hoedown with Calls on the flip side. Angus would read out the Record Label, The Name of the Recording Caller, the name Music and the Record Number, the Callers in attendance would

make up a list of the records they wanted to buy and submit the list to Catherine, who would in turn send the list to the supplier and we would get our ordered records the following month. Sometimes the recorded figures would be discussed in length as to the smoothness and dance-ability of the choreography. Following the listening and dancing section of the meeting there would open discussion on a variety of topics, such as smooth choreography, timing, how a particular movements should and would be taught to the dancers. Sometimes this would lead to very heated discussions.

This was a time before Callers Note Services, Web sites, or Callerlab were available, Choreography was a very closely guarded secret of every Caller. The only means of gaining Call information was to get invited to a Club Dance where a Professional Caller from the USA was brought in and hired to do the Calling, or from either **Sets In Order** or **American Square Dance Magazines**, When they were available from Bob Osgood and Stan Burdick.

However as time moved on, more and more information became available and sharing this information was to become normal. New Calls were being written daily to reach the point of saturation, Callerlab worked to reduce this practice.. The monthly Caller Teachers meetings moved from home to home of the member Callers and when the Hanhurst Tape and Record Service became available the music section was dropped and replaced to be close to what we have today, with a Business Section and a Presentations Section, being given by member Callers on a variety of topics.

Below are the names of Callers who were members of this Ottawa Callers Association, although it may have been under a different name.

Ashmore, Ken & Noni,

Batza, Jack

Bowan, Shorty

Borsa, Pat & Joe

Cathcart, Bob & Barbara--- **Trillium Award**

Deck, Decko --**Credited with bringing Modern Square Dance to Ottawa**

Flemming, Chuck & Elsie

Foot, George

Grigsby, Ernie

Harvie, Burt & June

Heatherington, Cam started Keith Watters calling

Hellier, Chuck & Margaret

Holmes, Don & Janet

Holyoak, Frank & Elsie

Hoople, Ross & Margaret—Trillium Award

Hubbard, Keith & Joan

Judge, Bill & Hazel—Trillium Award

Logan, Al & Phylis

Maxwell, John & Sheila

Maynard, Glen & Ester

McConnell, Doug & Shirley

McMorran, Angus & Catherine—Trillium Award 1st. Board of Governors of
Callerlab

Moreau, Roger & Ruth

Murray, David

Murphy Merv

Peterson, Harry & Lil—Trilium Award

Pollard, Reg

Potter, Bob

Quince, Cliff & Joyce

Reid, Don & Shirley

Rooke, Evan

Smith, Jack

Spratt, Tom & Joanne

Suek, Al & Rose

Turner, Mike & Mary

Washington, Bob

Wilkerson, Mel

Wilson, Art & Isabelle

Wilson, Ian & Margaret

Young, Gary & Maryanna

40 Callers who were active members, there were others but either didn't hang around long enough to be noted or quickly figured out the Craft of Calling was not for them.

Some of the Clubs that are no longer in existence are.

Adams Apples, Adams

2X4's, Harvies

Beaconaire Squares, Petersons

Beaver 8's, Petersons

Bee Sharps, Maynard

Blackburn Rambelers, Petersons

Bytown Squares, Judge, Wilkerson

Capital A's, Cathcart

Capital Steppers, Cathcart

Centenial Cross Towners, Petersons

Circle 8ers, Maynards

Confussion Squares, McMorrans

Corners & Belles, Petersons

Country Cousins, Holms, Judge, Ingram

Dip & Dive, Spratt

Gay Laurs,- Laurentian Squares, Holyoaks
Lil'l Beavers, Petersons
Queenswood Heights, Petersons
Richmond, Murray
Sashayers
Silver Spurs, Ashmores
Smith Fall Happy Squares, Grigsby, Cathcart
Spin Chainers, Turners
Spinning Spurs, Foot, Judges, Bob Cathcart, Keith Watters
Stardusters, McMorrans
Stetson Strutters
Teen Twirlers, Turners
Town & Country Kickers, Clarke & Crawford
Triangle Squares, Youngs
Valley Reelers, Maynards
Village Scooters, Adams
Watter Wheels, Watters
Whirley Birds, Potter

That's all the history of this organization I could gather or could remember and Thanks to Keith Watters for his help in remembering some of the Callers and Club names for me.