

## Keith & Rita Watters

By Paul Adams



Keith and Rita started Square Dancing in 1958 and Keith started Calling in 1959. Keith was the Club Caller for the **Cross Trailers** in 1959 and called his first Jamboree that same year. In 1960 he was the Club Caller for **Sunshine Squares**, and in 1962 formed his Advanced Club **Watter Wheels** then in 1977 became the club Caller for **Spinning Spurs**. Back in 1962 Keith was referred to as The Caller's Caller because many Callers danced at Watter Wheels.

Keith's favourite people were Les Goucher, Cam Heatherington, Dave Taylor, Ken Anderson, Glen Maynard, and I think Paul Adams. For approximately ten years Keith & Rita and Paul & Judy hosted a sold out 15 Square, New Year's Eve Square Dance. These Dances ended when

health and family loss became more than could be tolerated.

Keith was always ready to give assistance and guidance to new Callers, always inviting them to Call a Tip when they dropped in on his Clubs. Two of Keith's favourite sayings were "Drive Safely and don't let anyone pass you", and the second was "You did very well, but no better than I expected". His favourite pass time was fishing for Bass and eating what he caught.

**The OACA wish you and Rita many years of happy retirement.**

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## KEITH WATTERS RETIRES AFTER 56 YEARS CALLING 1959 - 2015



A neighbour's knock on the door in September of 1958 introduced Keith and Rita to the world of "Square Dancing". Their first club was The Whirlybirds with Bob Potter calling. They enjoyed square dancing from the very first lesson! At the time Bob felt there were not enough callers in town and encouraged Ray Sauve and Keith to become callers - and so the process began. In the spring of 1959 Keith found himself calling at the Jamboree with Bob Potter holding onto the back of Keith's pants to control timing, and to encourage him.

Keith and Rita were both born and raised in Ottawa and have been married for 62 years. Their daughter, Cathy, her husband Jim, and their grandson Michael, reside in Brantford.

The first club that Keith called for was the Crosstrailers in 1959. This club met at the "West End Y" on Gladstone Avenue. In 1960, Art Wilson, who was the caller for Sunshine Squares, asked Keith to become the club caller. The dancers approved this selection and in September of 1960 he became their caller for both the Graduates and the New Dancers. Who could believe that he would be with the club for the next 55 years!

Keith was also the caller for another well known Ottawa club called Sash-Shayers until 1975. He was also involved with Circle Squares for two seasons. In 1962 a group of very enthusiastic dancers asked Keith to form a workshop club for experienced dancers - and thus Watter Wheels was born. Their first dance was held at "The Square Spot" on Albion Road, and they met every second Saturday night for seventeen years. In January 1977 he took over Spinning Spurs (Mainstream) and Spinettes (Basic) and merged them into a tri-level club under the supervision of Sunshine Squares.

Keith has always been among the first leaders to volunteer his time whether it be a ski weekend, our annual curling day, promotion dances, the Grey Cup dance, or any other charitable dance that needed a caller. In 1991 he supported the club when Sunshine Squares organized a dance to raise funds for the Heart & Stroke Foundation, and for the next 15 years he organized area callers to donate their time in support of this cause. His inspired calling and Rita's continued support have carried them through 56 years of life immersed in the Square Dance World and enshrined by thousands of dancers Keith has taught throughout his career.

**Sunshine Squares** thanks both Keith & Rita for their commitment and dedication to the club and now as Keith hangs up his mic, we wish both of them many years of health and happiness.