

THE DOUBLE TOE TIMES

Volume 5, Number 5

A Clogging Newsletter

May 1987



Possum Holler Easter Weekend Fontana Village, North Carolina

The photograph above has been "doctored" a bit to reflect this flatlanders opinion of switchback curves. The folks who came via Knoxville tell me that Route 129 has precisely 278 curves, and one can see the whites of their eyes as they describe the drive. In the rain. After full dark.

Saturday morning: The Pioneer Restaurant high atop the Inn at Fontana Village has wide windows overlooking the valley and the misty grey mountains beyond. It has rained since our arrival Thursday and this morning patches of blue are showing through the clouds. Most of the blooms have been beaten off the forsythia, but crabapple, azalea, flowering quince, dogwood (both white and pink), are in their glory, and the tulips are incredible.

Fontana Village is barely open for the summer season each year when we arrive for the Possum Holler Easter Weekend, and this year the staff was stunned by the sudden death of a young chef just a week earlier. We were told that even the General Manager pitched in as a cook. Additionally,

Continued on Pages 10 & 11

A Word About Competition

by Peg McLerran
Pride & Joy Cloggers
Solsberry, Indiana

Competition seems to be a popular thing in the field of clogging today. There is a competition held almost every weekend somewhere. There are all types of names for these competitions. Sometimes it is very hard to explain why two teams are carrying the same title. Schools and workshops are hot items, also. It is interesting to see what the latest ideas are and just who has the most vivid imagination to put these movements into new steps and these figures into new routines. Who is going to come up with the latest earthshaking idea on how to organize or standardize all this? When is it all going to end? I'm really not looking for an answer to all these questions. I sincerely hope that this form of dance called "Clogging" never ends. I love to dance, and I love to teach. My husband and I are the directors of two competitions and one school. I also teach at other schools and workshops throughout the country, so I know how eager people are to learn new things. All the time that I am teaching, though, I am wondering and just a little leery of the future of this dance.

I have been asked to write an article on clogging competition and to share some of my ideas. I don't claim to be an authority, but after entering competition for the past eight years, I have learned a lot of do's and don'ts. If I was giving advice to anyone I think it would be "Do your homework first and you will make a better grade on your finals."

What I mean by doing your homework is this:

1. Check the rules of the competition you are thinking about entering and write your routines accordingly.
2. Use the material and ideas that have been made available to you, but do not copy someone else's routine.
3. Make sure you have the right music and the right speed.
4. Practice your routine exactly the way you intend to do it in competition.

Continued on Page 20

THE DOUBLE TOE TIMES

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Bobbie Adams

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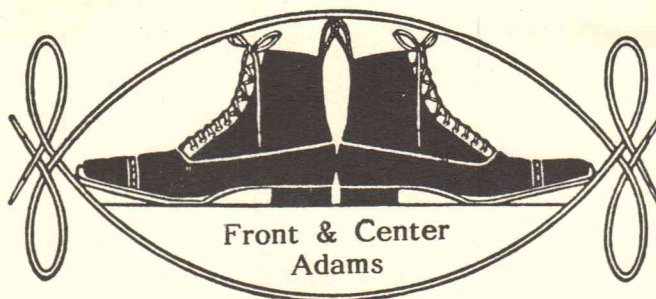
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Mari Barrett

I never made the chili.

Friday, March 6, 1987, my dear little friend Mari Barrett passed away. I miss her.

We met through Clogging classes and for 2½ years she attended regularly, missing only one class. She was one of the most generous contributors to any charity the Club was sponsoring, and for all of the Club "covered dish" affairs headed straight for a local Bakery and invariably brought more than her share.

Mari was one of the "regular" folks who make up the backbone of all Clogging Clubs. They dance every week, contribute time, money and cookies, but are not the flashy cloggers or personalities known to all. Mari enjoyed the dancing and the fellowship and showed up at performances, not to dance but to be an enthusiastic part of the audience.

About a year ago she did not appear for class and when I talked with her, she said she had had the flu and when she put some weight back on, she'd be back. Mari was a very determined private woman and did not tell me she was seriously ill. We kept touch through long phone conversations - she truly loved to talk. She had been a staunch supporter of my journalistic labors with this newsletter, and read every word of every issue, could quote verbatim from back issues and laughed in all the right places.

During our last phone conversation I promised to make hot home-made chili for her. When I visited her in the hospital, she reminded me of that promise. I don't think I'll be able to make chili for a while. I will miss Mari Barrett.

On a reflective note - I feel so very fortunate to have the opportunity to get to meet many of the folks I've talked with on the phone, or to greet once again Cloggers from all over the country at still another workshop. Lonnie and Dana Curl, and Al Zielberg, KY the McCrary family from Mississippi, Erin and Tasha Walker and their parents, Maine; Nancy Biehler, TX; Darl Moreland, IN; bubbly Skip Lemmond, TX; Allen Zion, TX; Bryan Steele, UT; Barry Fayne, who with his wife will become adoptive parents this summer; and last but not least, a long interview with Bill Nichols, Walhalla, SC, who will be our featured Instructor and Clogging Personality in our June issue.

Upcoming Events

May 1-2

Honey Creek/Hill Cty. Workshop
New Braunfels, TX, See Stahl
(TX) Directory

May 1-3

Georgia-Carolina Clogging
Championship, Southeastern
Sports Complex, Carnesville, GA
See Richards, (NC) Directory

May 2

Country Hoedown
Charleston High School, Cleve-
land, TN, See Scoggins (TN)
Directory

May 8-10

Kansas State Clogging Championship
Wichita, KS, See JoAnn
Gibbs (GA) Directory

May 9 & 15 & 16

Rocky Mountain & Western
U.S. Clogging Championship
Farmington, UT, See Steele
& Cobia (UT) Directory

May 9-10

Sunshine Cloggers Jamboree
Pensacola, FL, See
Spencer, (AL) Directory

May 9-10

Dogwood State Classic
Hickory, NC, See
Summey (NC) Directory

May 16

Tidalwave Cloggers Jamboree
Brunswick, GA, See
Drake, (GA) Directory

May 16

Missouri Clogging Council
Workshop, Howard Johnson
Motel, Springfield, MO, See
Sare, (MO) Directory

May 15-16

Wisconsin Jamboree III
See Back (WI) Directory

May 16-17

Osceola County Centennial
Kissimmee, FL, See
Hughes, (FL) Directory

May 15-17

West Coast Swing Workshop
Fern Park, FL, See Ryan
Ad, Page 16, DTT

May 29-30

Hoedown for Heart
Huntington, WV, See
Driggs (WV) Directory

May 22-24

International Clogging Jamboree
Novi, MI, See Trask-Heskett
(MI) Directory

May 24

Amateur Clogging Championships
World's Fair Site, Knoxville, TN
See Goode, (TN) Directory

May 22-23

FCC Convention, Tampa, FL
Contact: M.J. Wright
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May 28-30

NCHC Spring Festival, Lees
McRae College, Banner Elk, NC
See Farlow (NC) Directory

May 30

Driftwood Valley Workshop
Columbus, IN, See Carolyn
Kell (IN) Directory

June 6

Texas State Festival, Dallas
Clog Chrmn. John & Rosemary
Thompson, 5826 Valley Point,
San Antonio, TX 78233
(512) 656-1276

June 5-7

Volunteer State Clogging
Championship, Pigeon Forge, TN
See Shepard (TN) Directory

June 12-13

Southern Heritage Clogging
Competition, Columbia, SC
See Whitten (SC) Directory

June 18-20

21st Annual Nat'l Mountain Square
Dance & Clogging Festival, Natural
Bridge State Restort Park, Slade, KY
See Jett, (KY) Directory

June 19-21

Silver Dollar City Clogging
Competition, Silver Dollar City,
MO., See Burdette (MO) Directory

June 20

Fancy Feat Fun Festival
Kissimmee, FL, See
Hanna (FL) Directory

June 21-24

Hee Haw Clogging Championship
Opryland in Nashville, TN
2802 Opryland Drive
Nashville, TN 37214

June 26-27

Banjos, Fiddles & Feet Workshop
Punta Gorda, FL, See Bohley (FL)
Directory

June 25-27

Nat'l Square Dance Convention
Full Clogging Program, Houston
TX See Carolan (TX) Directory

June 28 - July 4

Nat'l Cloggers Festival
Provo, Utah, See
Cobia (UT) Directory

July 10-11

U.S. Clogging Championships
Vincennes, IN, See McLerran
(IN) Directory

July 12

Clogging Cruise
See Lamping (FL) Directory

July 11

NCHC Judges & Directors
Workshop, Durham, NC Write:
NCHC, P.O. Box 705
Durham, NC 27702

July 17-19

Clogging Classic at Dollywood
See Burdette (MO) Directory

July 24-25

East Coast Clogging
Competition, Chesapeake, VA
See Johnson (VA) Directory

July 28 - August 4

Clog International in Kauai,
Hawaii. Clog International, P.O.
Box 903, Orem, Utah 84057

July 30 - August 2

Mississippi Queen Steamboat'n' &
Cloggin, See McLerran (IN) Directory

August 1-2

Clogging Championship
World's Fair Site, Knoxville, TN
See Goode (TN) Directory

August 7-8

Canadian Clogging Festival
Oakville, Ontario, Contact:
Shirley or Doug McConnell
1221 Springwood Crescent,
Oakville, Ontario Canada L6M 1S3

August 7-8

Sunshine Cloggers Pirate's Ball
Expo Centre, Orlando, FL, See
Sue & Tom Toor (FL) Directory

August 7-9

Blue Ridge Competition
Gainesville, GA See
Thomas (GA) Directory

August 21-22

Charles-Towne Clogging Workshop
Charleston, SC, See
Phetteplace (SC) Directory

August 22

Kountry Kloggers Hoedown
Georgia Agrirama, Tifton, GA
See Hasty (GA) Directory

August 29

W. Virginia Clogging & Hoedown
Competition, Charleston, W. VA.
CBS Travelers, 910 Scenic Dr.,
Charleston, WV 25311
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September 18-19

Bass Kountry Cloggers Workshop
Palatka, FL, Ravine St. Gardens
See Spivey, (FL) Directory

September 18-19

Northern Connection Festival
White Palace, Wheeling, WV
See Adkins (OH) Directory

September 26

Chatt-Town Clogging Festival
Chattanooga, TN, See
Ufford (TN) Directory

Continued Next Page

Sound!

By Tom Toor

To begin, let us lay down just what we want the ideal sound reinforcement system to do. Some of the items will probably seem simple or obvious but I feel they need to be stated for matter of completeness and also that sometimes when dealing with a complex subject the obvious facts become blurred or overlooked.

The primary job of our sound system is an aid to communication. We have a source of sound in some form be it verbal, a person speaking into a microphone, or prerecorded, such as a record or tape. The target for this sound is a person or group of people located some distance away from the source. This scenario could be enclosed in a room or building or be located outside in the open air such as a stadium or open field. Now, our ideal sound system will take sound from the source at whatever level is available (i.e. a person speaking very softly, moderately or even shouting) into the microphone. Pre-recorded sources have varying levels associated with them also, and present it to the target listener at a comfortable level. This is to say the sound is not so loud that it hurts our ears or so weak that we must strain ourselves to hear it. This also must be accomplished without any distortion of the source material.

The implication from this description indicates that the source material must be increased in strength to some point powerful enough for all to hear. The term applied here to this "boost in strength" is called the "System Gain". Several factors affect system gain with the most prominent being the power amplifier of your sound system. The power amplifier! That's the piece of equipment that is generally rated in watts (i.e. 25W, 60W, 250W). There exists a relationship between the output power and the system gain, but that discussion

is not within the scope of this article. OK, more about power amplifiers later. Another factor affecting system gain is the "room acoustics". Rooms, like people, vary from room, to room, to room. Like people, each room has its own personality, especially when it comes to acoustics. Ideally, the room acoustics would not cause problems, but as nature has it, it usually gives us the most headaches. Well, more about acoustics later.

To start our study we first must develop a common language. When we talk about distance we refer to units of feet (ft), yards (yd) and miles (mi). If we ask someone how far is it to the next city and we get a reply of 10 miles, we have a "good feel" for the distance. Even though we might not know how many feet are in a mile, through experience we have a "good feel" of the distance. By the way 5280 feet = 1 mile!

The units used for the "loudness of sound" is the decibel (db). As a beginning point to develop a "feel" for loudness or sound level lets look at some levels we encounter everyday. The normal conversational level of speech is about 70db and a very soft whisper is about 30db. A vacuum cleaner 10 feet away measures about 70db, however, I think mine is much louder! Bands at some "rock" concerts have been measured at 100 to 130db. A 130db sound level for substained periods of time will be painfully noticed.

One more point to be made when speaking of sound levels is that when we increase the sound level by 3db, we need to increase the power (measured in watts) by a factor of 2. For example, to increase the sound level from our speaker from 80db to 83db, we need to double the input power to the speaker (i.e. 10 watts to 20 watts). What does all this mean? In future articles we will discuss the noise level (in db) generated by a group of cloggers on a dance floor and relate this to the power needed to be generated by your sound system in order for the dancer to hear the music and your voice.

Upcoming Events - Continued

September 26-27

Mid-South Fair Clogging
Championship, Memphis, TN
See Ruch (TN) Directory

October 2-3

J'ville Clogging Jamboreeee
Jacksonville Coliseum, Jacksonville,
FL, See Thompson (FL) Directory

October 31

Yadkin Valley Clogging Workshop
Yadkinville, NC, See
Hall (NC) Directory

November 6-7

NCHC Fall Festival
Plato's Crash Landing, Greensboro,
NC, See Farlow (NC) Directory

November 27-28

National C.L.O.G. Convention
Tarrant County Convention Center,
Ft. Worth, TX, See Gibbs (GA)
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The Kentucky Running Set Vs. The Big Set

By Richard Jett
Campton, Kentucky

In the April issue, I briefly discussed the Kentucky Running Set, and also presented the 'how to' in dancing the Birdie In The Cage figure. This month I shall discuss some similarities between the Running Set and the Big Set dance.

The Running Set is structured in a four-couple square formation. However, the Big set can be performed in a large circle with an indefinite number of couples enjoying this easy-to-learn dance of the Appalachia. In both types, many of the same dance figures are used, as well as a comfortable music tempo of about 132 beats per minute.

In today's Big Set dancing, the participants are usually at liberty to use whatever style of footwork they choose; be it the Running Set step, clogging, the western-style walking step, or a variation of either.

Now to get the Big Set organized, simply invite eight or more couples to meander into a big circle. Then give each couple a sequential number around the circle. Designate the odd numbered couples as the 'odds' or active couple, and the even numbered couples as the 'homesteaders' or inactive couples. Next have the odd couples lead out to their right and face the nearest even couple. We have now formed two circles, with the odds facing outward and the evens facing the center of the dance circle. Now let the fun begin by calling one or several of the basic Running Set figures such as Birdie In The Cage, the Old Side Door, Butterfly Flip, or Chase The Rabbit. After each figure is danced, prompt the odd couple to move on to the next couple in a counterclockwise direction.

My technique of getting people to participate involves the use of the incentive of self-confidence in the dancer, by simply saying "anyone can dance the

Big Set if they can 'hit the beat one every eight licks of the music' ", or "it's more fun to dance if you don't know how". This may not be the correct word usage in the classroom, but it seems to get the shy folks to get on the floor for an enjoyable session of mountain square dancing.

It is very important not to make the dance too long. I usually have the odd couples visit and dance with about eight other couples. Then I have the even couples exchange places with the odds and become the new active couples and dance a few figures with the outside couples around the circle.

I shall discuss, in a later issue, some of my experiences in the length of time of a square dance. But for now, let's discuss the 'how to' of the old Appalachian dance figure called Chase The Rabbit.

CHASE THE RABBIT

"CHASE THE RABBIT, CHASE THE SQUIRREL,
CHASE THAT PRETTY GIRL 'ROUND THE
WORLD',"

The active couple, with the lady in the lead, goes between the outside couple and around behind the side lady and back to place.

"CHASE THE 'POSSUM, CHASE THE 'COON,
CHASE THAT BIG BOY 'ROUND THE MOON."
Now the active gent leads his pardner between the outside couple and around behind the side gent and back to place.

"CIRCLE FOUR HANDS AROUND AND GONE
AGAIN,
NOW SWING YOUR CORNER WITH A GREAT
BIG GRIN"

Circle left about eight counts and then swing opposite lady. (corner lady)

"NOW SWING YOUR OWN AND ON TO THE
NEXT"

After swinging pardner, the active couple moves on to next couple or waits for next call.

Next month's featured figures (2): Swing To The Wall and Take A Peek.

Pittman-Thomas Wed

Sandra Denise Pittman and Kerry Bryant Thomas exchanged wedding vows at 7:30 p.m. on December 20 at the River of Life Church, Lilburn Georgia.

The bride is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William C. Pittman, Loganville and the groom is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Luther B. Thomas, Commerce.

There were 56 cloggers in the wedding party.

Editor's note: In an elevator in Chattanooga, TN, in November Kerry Thomas promised a photo, and article about the wedding. It was hand delivered to me in North Carolina at Easter! Congratulations Sandra and Kerry!

Question: What do they call The Chamber of . . . in Commerce, Georgia??



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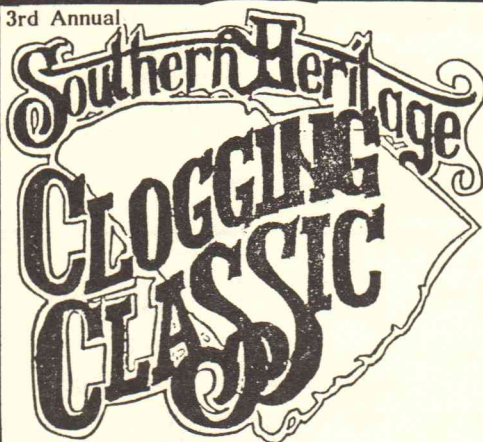
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- 10 A.M. - 12 P.M.
- COMPETITION

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As The Pendulum Swings

By Steve Smith



There is an old adage, "What goes around comes around". I am going out on a limb (a la Shirley MacLaine) and making a prediction. The old crystal ball has recently revealed that there will be a re-emergence of an old tradition in clogging. Just as I am holding on to those wide dress ties of the 60's in await of their renewed popularity, so I believe that there is just such a pendulum effect in clogging. The crystal ball tells me that just around the corner (this could be 2-3 years) there awaits a revival of dancing to fast-paced music.

When I first started competitive clogging in 1980, the trend was such that faster usually meant better. Old favorites such as "Rocky Top" and "Orange Blossom Special" were often speeded up to 170-190 beats per minute (bpm). Endurance and visual flair were the style of the day. As it became apparent that the music could not be speeded up anymore without turning bass voices into soprano, music began to slow down. This allowed more styling to be put into the dance as well as more rhythmic complexity. This of course opened the door for the styling that we now call "buck". More recently, with music slower than ever, we are ex-

perimenting with and adding to their skillful repertoire.

I think that it is most interesting to consider that each of these styles: drag-slide clogging (shuffle clogging), buck dancing (Heel-ball & slides), and canadian step dancing (hopping in place on ball of foot) have all emerged and take precedence depending upon the speed of the music played. Now I am making no pretense that speed of music is the only factor responsible for the emergence of buck and Canadian influence, but I do believe that each is performed best under different speeds of music.

This brings us to competition. It is my contention that since we are not (at most competitions) dividing individual freestyle into categories of clogging, buck, and canadian, that we are in effect choosing the style that will win by the speed at which we play the music during the competition. Canadian and buck cannot be performed crisply when the music is fast. Shuffle clogging looks lazy if the music is slow.

I have longed at some competitions to crank the music up fast and watch the buck dancers just disintegrate. Shuffle clogging is beautiful and so smooth. If you are a good dancer, you should be able to dance to any speed of music. If you are a festival director, I am suggesting to you that you separate the men from the boys by varying the speed of the music in freestyle finals. If you don't, you are, by default, choosing which style will predominate at your competition.

Getting back to my original contention -- fast music will see a revival. How soon, I'm not sure. But fast bluegrass is a strong part of our clogging tradition and just like the old wide dress ties of the 60's, it will return and the children of that day will think that they have discovered something new. That's OK, let them have their fun.

Diane Allen, Joanie Benton,
Bud Berwick, Jan Bohley,
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SATURDAY - JUNE 27, 1987
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Friday - June 26, 1987
Workshop 7:00 - 11:00 PM

Saturday - June 27, 1987
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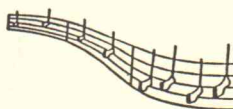
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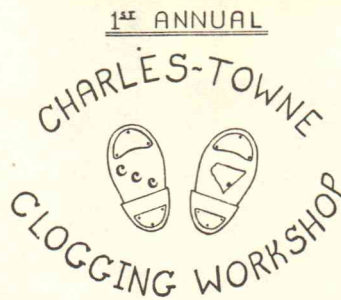
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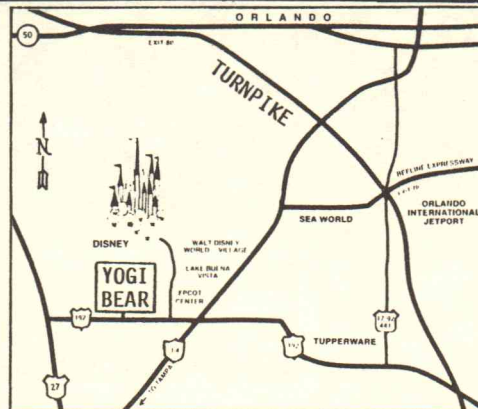
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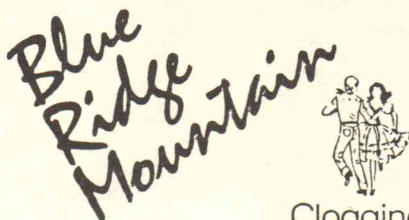


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Main Hall - Fontana Village, N.C.



Marge Callahan adds autograph to Beach Britches. Lonnie Curl - KY



Late Saturday - "Tard" Cloggers.



Colorado Cloggers - Carla McCartney and Ree Payne

Guest Services, Inc. will no longer manage Fontana Village after May 1st, which caused some confusion. The wrangler had not yet arrived with his string of horses and even Fontana Dam was closed for repairs.

The rain and Village "glitches" did not dampen the enthusiasm of the Cloggers however. They came from Maine to Texas, and from New Jersey to California, with wonderful representation from our neighboring Canada. Many of the workshops were so crowded that one clogger said he now knew how the ham in a sandwich felt. The "Beach Party" evening event produced some wild outfits, crazy relays, and Bill Nichols and Garland Steele calling Big Circle and Mountain Style sets.

Judges Training Seminar

Nearly 50 people enrolled in the nineteen hour Judges Seminar held separately at Fontana Village over Easter weekend. JoAnn Gibbs, Jean Stephenson, and Jeff Driggs are the co-ordinators of The Clogging Judges Service, an entity which provides training and then lists of Judges to Competition Directors.

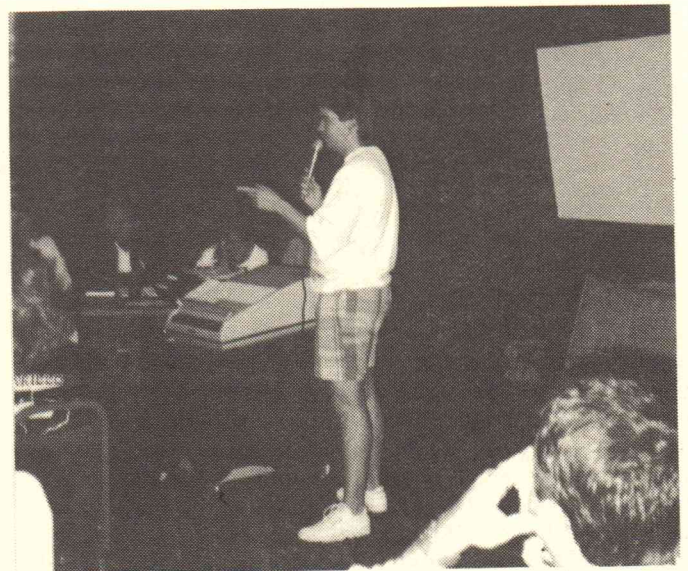
Representatives of many of the various Sanctioning organizations were present, and score sheets from as many as five different formats were compared.

Judging ethics, conduct (both on the part of the judge and on the part of the competitors and their families), the various sets of Rules, were ably demonstrated through skits and roundtable discussion. Through the magic of videotapes each Competition category was explained and then the novice judges went to work, though many of the attendees were and are current Judges.

At the end of the two day course, all the new Judges received a diploma and card stating they had completed the course.



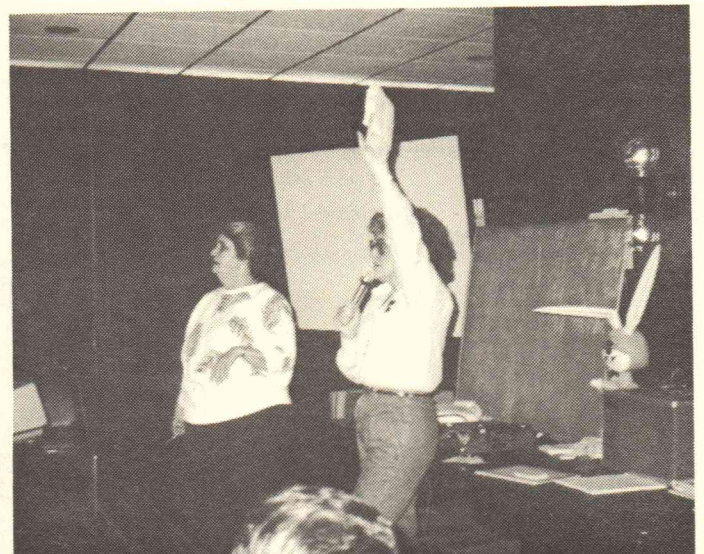
Instructors Seminar



Jeff Driggs, W.V.



Russell Gibbs



JoAnn Gibbs & Jean Stephenson, S.C.

Richard Jett

Richard Jett is a fantastic story-teller - the only way you can tell he is amused is a slight twitch at the corner of his mouth and his eyes laugh and crinkle at the edges. Well known in Kentucky as "Mr. Hoedown Island" he is an outstanding Mountain Square Dance Caller and an accomplished Master of Ceremonies.

Richard was born of a farm family in Puncheon Creek, Kentucky a town, by the way, that isn't even on a map. His Father Zeke Jett was a school-teacher. His earliest memories of Hoedowns were in folk's homes. They'd just move all the front room furniture out into the yard so they could have a dance, with a single fiddler for music. He tells of a pie supper at the Morgue Elementary School near Jackson, Kentucky. His father was the teacher there and the pies were auctioned as a fund raiser. After the pie auction a Square Dance was planned but there were no musicians. Richard remembers that the "music" that evening was provided by a man clapping two wooden-back chalk erasers together. "A good time was had by all" he states.

During the Korean Conflict in 1950, at the age of 17, Richard Jett joined the Army and was stationed at Ft. Belvoir, Virginia. This Army base is 12 miles from Washington, D.C. and for many years Ralph Case (See April Double Toe Times) called Square Dances and Clogging tunes for the Servicemen there. Richard Jett became one of Ralph Case's demonstration team. After his tour of duty ended in 1953, he enrolled in the University of Kentucky, graduating four years later with a degree in Vocational Agriculture. He secured a teaching position at Ezel High School in rural Eastern Kentucky and began calling Square Dances as a community extra-curricular recreational activity. Richard taught for 11 years, was the High School Principal for 7 years, and ultimately the County School Superintendant in Wolf County, Kentucky for 7½ years until his retirement in 1983.

In 1963, the folks at Kentucky's Natural Bridge State Park in Slade, Kentucky, asked Richard to conduct ten square dance sessions during that summers tourist season. The Square Dances are held

in the open-air pavillion known as Hoedown Island and after 24 years and more than 900 dances Richard Jett has become known as Mr. Hoedown Island!

Richard and wife Carol Jean, a 7th & 8th grade teacher, are Tour-Brokers and travel when Richard isn't calling mountain square dancing, free style clogging, western dancing, polkas, waltzes, schottisches and M. C.'ing at Hoedown Island.

This Editor asked how big Campton, Kentucky was and Richard Jett's mouth went crooked at the corners as he replied "it's so small we can't afford a town drunk so we all take turns." To this Editors delight he began writing a column for The Double Toe Times last month on Kentucky Running Set Figures. Welcome Richard Jett!



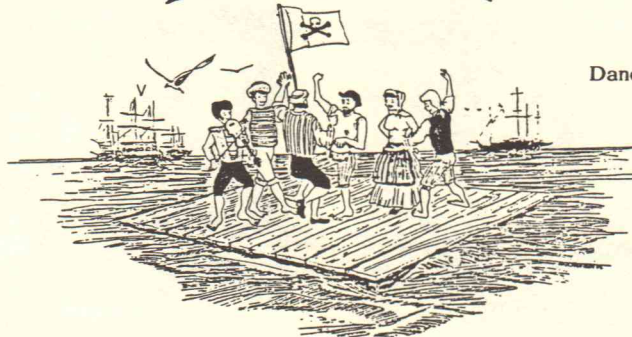
Richard Jett

The Boston Nation, a newspaper published in Ohio during the mid-nineteenth century, had pages 7½ feet long and 5½ feet wide. It required two people to hold the paper in proper reading position.

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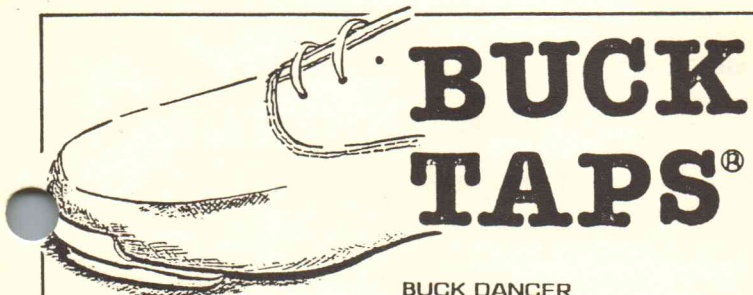
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Editor's note: I had heard nothing from Elvira for about two years. Reprintings of Selected Letters from her column did not seem to generate much interest. The lime-green Tupperware container behind a viburnum bush at the McDonald's drive-thru in Longwood (her contact point) had become brittle and cracked from the weather. Letters to the paper inquiring about her had to go unanswered. Her disappearance was as much a mystery to me as to anyone. Then, just the other day I received a letter in the mail. The envelope had a single "E" in the top left hand corner...!

My Dearest Readers,

For those of you who have questioned my disappearance and have written, requested, even demanded my return, I am pleased to announce that Elvira is back. In the time that I have been away, I have been from the top of the emotional ladder to the very depths of depression, and lots of places in between. I have reversed a financially ruinous investment and have turned my life completely around. I am pleased to say that I will be back in correspondence with you through this column on a limited basis for the present, but if demand for additional material is forthcoming, so too will be my participation. For the present let us become reacquainted as I tell you the story of the past months.

I awoke one morning with the sun shining in my eyes. As I walked on to the balcony of my condominium overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, I felt wonderful. This feeling did not last long, however. When I looked into the bathroom mirror I discovered to my horror, a single gray hair hanging down across my forehead. I immediately made an appointment with my hair dresser. For the remainder of the day I sat and stared at the walls, being very careful not to look at my reflection. I felt as if I were getting old and life was passing me by. I decided that day to do all the things I had always wanted to do but was afraid of due to the danger, the expense, and the fear of embarrassing myself. The next morning I put my condo up for sale, called my stock broker and sold everything, cashed in all my securities, then went to the bank and wrote a cashier's check to American Express for the entire balance of my net worth. My American Express account now had a credit balance that would allow me to do anything I wanted. And that's what I did.

The first thing I did was to fly to Africa where I spent three weeks on a photography safari I wanted to see all the animals and the country before someone built a theme park in the middle of it. I shot 31 rolls of film. It was an experience I'll never forget. During the next months I visited China, Austria, Denmark, Norway, Australia, Peru, Hawaii, Alaska, and every state in the United States. I learned how to fly a plane and a hang-glider, how to skydive, how to scubadive, how to

Page 14

sail, how to ride a bronco bull, and how to ride whitewater in a kayak. I also took courses in art, weaving, theatrical make-up, Chinese cooking, karate, German, and auto mechanics. For touring the United States I purchased a Corvette Stingray. I felt like Route 66.

One day I found myself in Reno, Nevada. When I went to pay my dinner bill at a restaurant, my American Express Card was refused. I called American Express. My credit had been depleted and I was \$11,000 in debt. I was broke. Luckily I had some cash in my purse and my dinner was only \$43. That left me \$6.12.

I walked from the restaurant to the closest casino, laid the keys to my Corvette on the table, and picked up the dice. I spent the next forty-five minutes gambling on my future. By the time I was finished I had turned that Corvette investment into \$740,000. I had broken the casino.

Confident with my good fortune, I went to another casino, put down the entire \$740,000 on the roulette wheel, Red 28. Twenty seconds later I was again flat broke. Dejectedly I left the casino for the parking lot. My car was gone. Stolen. I never saw it again.

I wandered the streets of Reno for three days. Lunch everyday was a hamburger and Coke, supper was fries and a Coke. With 93 cents to my name I walked through a nightclub to use the restroom. A sign caught my eye. "Mud Wrestlers Wanted, Good Wages." I went to see the manager.

For the next 2 weeks I wrestled in mud three times a night for \$10.00 per match and all the change I could dig out of the mud pit after hours. I was alive, I was able to buy food, but I was barely existing. I often thought about my situation and how I had gotten there, and I knew there must be some way out. Nobody enjoys eating peanut butter colored mud three times a day. **Peanut Butter**, that's it! I went to see the manager.

It took a lot of talking but I finally convinced him to substitute peanut butter for the mud. Not only was it cleaner, it smelled better, it tasted better, and after it had been used a few days it could be sold to farmers as high protein livestock feed. On special nights we would throw in a little Strawberry Jam for color. It may sound stupid but it really drew the crowds.

I was put in charge of scheduling bouts and keeping the pit stocked with peanut butter. As our reputation grew, the other mud pits in town began to come to me for advice on switching from mud to peanut butter. Naturally I received a fee for the consultation and we began to sell franchises. I called people I knew in South Georgia and through bank loans I bought up enough peanut futures to supply the circuit for two years.

All up and down the west coast, night clubs were putting in peanut butter wrestling pits. As my franchise and supplier income increased substantially, I began to make investments. I bought a condo in California and repurchased the one I had

Continued on Page 20

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Q. One of the latest fads that has attached itself to the 1980's clogging scene is the extensive choreography of hand and head movements. Without question, these seem appropriate to show and line dance routines, but they somehow seem out of place while dancing big circle or circle-4 figures.

A. In an earlier issue, we responded to a question that is similar. It went like this, "I am tired of picky judges. I think that judges should look at the dancing and not at costumes. I remember when we used to dance in overalls and whatever shoes we could muster. Let's hear it for the good old days!"

We responded this way, "Appearance is not the most important item in competition, dancing ability is. We hear this argument often, and we agree; however, it is hard to get beyond the appearance to the dancing if there are major differences between competitors... That is what competition is all about - "doing it better than the next guy..." Co-ordination of upper bodies is one way of adding complexity and visual balance (if done correctly) which elevates that routine to a more difficult performance level.

Just as clogging has moved from the time when contestants walked barefoot to the competition with their lunch pail in one hand and their dancing boots thrown over their shoulder to today's elaborate costuming and styling, we have moved from the unbridled use of bodies, hands, arms, and heads which prevailed through the 70's to more sophisticated and complicated choreography of the 80's. And, we aren't sure this is simply a "fad".

At one time when neighboring towns got together infrequently for a dance, the better dancers from both localities were emulated and bits and

pieces of their steps and styles were carried to other locations. Changes spread in this fashion, but they spread slowly. With the advent of clogging competitions, people came from greater distances and prided themselves on the ability to capture a new step or move to take home with them. Workshops fostered more sharing, and today videotaping gives people all across the country an opportunity to accelerate this copycat phenomenon. And this isn't bad. It actually improves quality. Fads (flashes in the pan) are begun and perpetuated for a time, but trends also spread more quickly nowadays. Changes that would have taken years and even decades become accepted practices in months in the 80's. We feel that choreographed upper bodies is a trend that is here to stay.

In the late 70's we used to award bonus points for teams that choreographed heads and hands, now we deduct points from teams that do not. As competition gets more popular it also gets tougher, and no doubt about it, everything extra that you choreograph makes a given routine harder to perform. It's rather like patting your head and rubbing your stomach at the same time.

Our concern is not the choreography itself but the quality of the choreography and its implementation. Using the same upper body movements over and over - even in unison - can be deadly. They should reflect the mood of the music. They should not take on the appearance of a military drill but should be comfortable and fluid.

We cannot envision using choreographed upper body movements in Appalachian (freestyle) routines or in hoedown or Kentucky running set routines. Any routine that requires freedom of total body movement (without over or under dancing). However, all precision routines could have upper body movements choreographed into them. If done well, the team employing them should be rewarded for using them. This should give them an edge in competition over the team that does not use upper body movements for they will have "done it better than the next guy."

Happy Clogging!





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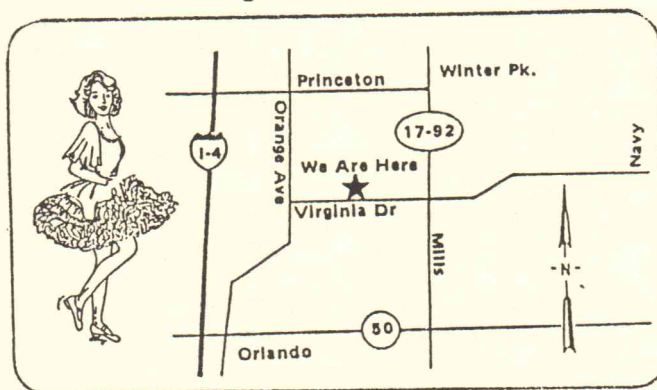
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A Word About Competition Continued from Page 1

5. Give something new to the judges and the audience and don't make your routines long and boring.

6. Have your team ready for competition in spirit, mind and body. A happy dancer is more often a good dancer.

7. Train your dancers to dance to fast music, slow music and all types of music. Above all, train them to listen to the music. If you only use one peice of music for your routine and you go to a competition where you have to use live music, your team may be lost as to what to do.

8. There are some steps that are more suitable for one category than other categories. For instance, the fancy footwork and high profile steps are more suitable for individual or duet competition. The low profile or close to the floor footwork is more suitable for team routines.

Elvira

Continued from Page 14

sold in Florida. I played the stock market and bought real estate in Arizona. And, when, one day a conglomerate offered to buy out my interest in the circuit, I sold for \$3.6 million.

I returned to Florida to rest and relax, arriving at my condo late on Friday night. When I awoke the next morning the sun was shining in my eyes. When I went into the bathroom and looked in the mirror I saw hanging across my forehead a single gray hair. I took the tweezers and pulled it out by the roots. I sat at the desk and began to write.

Dear Double Toe Times,

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E

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