

Save Square Dancing



Trivia

- Question 1: Who was the first square dance record producer?
 Question 2: Who was the first caller to be recorded?
 Question 3: Has square dancing been done at Disneyland?
 Question 4: What year did Dogbert become a square dance caller?
 Question 5: Did the Brady Bunch ever square dance?
 Question 6: What movie musical had square dancing? Can you name the caller?
 Question 7: What Paule Shore movie had square dancing? Can you name the caller?
 Question 8: How many movies can you name with Square Dance in the title?
 Question 9: What famous cartoon character did a square dance skit?
 Question 10: Who on the TV show Tool Time was learning to be a square dance caller?
 Question 11: Why did the family on That 70's show go to a square dance?
 Question 12: Name some television cartoons that have featured square dancing?
 Question 13: What famous 1950's comic strip put out a square dance book?
 Question 14: What Wesley Snipes movies has square dancing?

Some History of Square Dancing (Check back often for added history pages)

America has always had music and dance to remind of us of history. Take a look at history: We danced when Lindbergh did his trans-Atlantic flight (Lindy-hop which later became known as the Jitterbug), American Bandstand/The Dick Clark Show was a weekly show featuring dance. By 1960 Chubby Checker made the Twist the most popular dance in the world. If you take a look at dancing, you see we dance when we are dating, at weddings, at the harvest of the crops, at the end of a war, theatrical productions, religious holidays, and special occasions. It will take lots of teamwork to reawaken the public's interest in square dancing. Music and dancing should be a part of everyone's life.

Henry Ford and Benjamin Lovett

Henry Ford (1863-1947), who once worked for the Edison Illuminating Company (1891), in 1903 started the Ford Motor Company. Henry Ford and his wife Clara Bryant loved to dance. Henry Ford began his search for someone to teach square dancing. In 1923, Mr. Ford purchased the Wayside Inn because of its beautiful ballroom. Shortly after purchasing the Wayside Inn, Mr. Ford found Benjamin Lovett (1876-1952) and his wife Charlotte L. Cooke. Henry Ford felt Benjamin Lovett to be the perfect teacher of "old fashion" dances, and in 1924 Benjamin Lovett began teaching classes for Mr. Ford, something that lasted over 20 years.

Mr. Ford decided he wanted a place to dance near his home, so in 1937 Lovett Hall was built as part of a building at the Edison Institute. The floor was made of Burmese teakwood with a spring board floor designed specifically for dancing, along with English Colonial furnishings and chandeliers. Square dancing,

along with quadrilles, two-steps, waltzes, and other old fashion dances, became a part of life for Ford employees and school children across the United States. Ford and Lovett believed square dancing taught social training, courtesy, good citizenship, along with rhythm. They felt it should be a part of every school's teaching of physical education.

Around 1928, Boards of Education all over the United States endorsed their square dancing program. Almost half the public schools in America began teaching square dancing and other old fashion dancing. Not only was this great exercise, but Ford and Lovett felt square dancing corrected the missing fun and teamwork that one-on-one dance lacked. Ford and Lovett felt that having square dancing in schools would help train children in manners, courtesy, and social training, a quality Henry Ford wanted to see excel in people.

Ford and Lovett also brought square dancing to the handicapped (blind, deaf, those with artificial legs, etc). They felt the dancing had great balancing exercises, and taught rhythm, manners, poise, and grace, along with giving self-confidence, over coming timidity, and appreciation of good music.

In 1944, Henry Ford decided he wanted a radio show that would have dances and discussion of the dances. "The Early American Dance Music" radio program was a half-hour show that ran about a year and a half, twice on Saturday night, and featured Benjamin Lovett and others calling squares with the music being played by the Henry Ford Old-Fashion Orchestra.

In the book *Henry Ford and Benjamin B. Lovett* by Eva O'Neal Twork, the following appears: "Mr. Ford and Mr. Lovett regarded the dance as another means of expressing ideas and thoughts. In *Good Morning* the following appears: 'Some have regarded the dance as a part of human speech. From the dance of atoms, through the mating of certain [sic] birds and animals, up to the tribal dances of the various nations, the expression of emotions and ideas in rhythmic movement of the body bears all the indications of a deep natural instinct. No aspect of human interest has escaped interpretation in the dance. From time immemorial marriage has been celebrated by dancing. The coming of spring has inspired several forms of dancing. The war dances of the Indians are well known. Religious dances are found throughout the world. Joy, of course, has been the most moving source of dancing. The lamb skips, the dog leaps, the pleased child dances in ecstasy. . . .'

"...Mr. Ford was a true believer in the benefits and power of music and old-fashioned dancing. In starting the old-fashioned dancing program, he, along with Mr. Lovett, saved a part of the American heritage for the present generation and those to follow.

"To know his crusade to bring back old-fashioned dancing had been so successful and enduring would please Mr. Ford. He, however, never believed the old-fashioned dances had ever left. When someone commented about his bringing back the old dances, he said, 'They've always been here.'

"...The Early American dancers of today owe Mr. Ford and Mr. and Mrs. Lovett a great sense of gratitude. It is because of their unique partnership, the Lovetts' talent and diligence, and Mr. Ford's great interest in old-fashioned dancing that many people still merrily swing to an allemande left and an allemande right. Early American dancing is not a relic from a crowded attic of nostalgia, but is still a part of the recreational scene. While watching a recent Henry Ford Musical Historical Concert, an Early American dance program, at beautiful Lovett Hall and seeing the joyful, rhythmical dancers, it was evident old-time dancing is very much alive. You need not be concerned about old-fashioned dancing being asleep, Mr. Ford and Mr. Lovett. It is still 'good morning' with the Early American dances."

Our National Dance and State Dance

On January 25, 1982 the 97th Congress unanimously passed a Joint Resolution designating square dancing as the national folk dance of the United States and on June 1, 1982 President Reagan signed it. This Resolution was a temporary action which would expire in two years. To make the national recognition permanent the Congress requested that the proponents return to the States for individual state endorsement and when two-thirds of the states complied, reconsideration by Congress would be automatic.

President Ronald Reagan made square dancing the National Folk Dance 1982-1983.

February 05, 2003 Bill # H.R.645 was Referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary. As of Dec 2009 there doesn't appear to be a bill H.R. 645 regarding dancing.

To look up Bills in congress: <http://www.congress.org/congressorg/issues/bills/>

The following are states that have passed laws designating square dance "the state dance," "the state folk dance," or "the state American folk dance." The years of the laws passing are given, if known. These URLs were current as of 12/2009

Alabama (1981) http://www.archives.state.al.us/emblems/st_dance.html

Arkansas (1991) <http://www.sos.arkansas.gov/education/activity/dance.html>

Arizona <http://www.usda.org/folkdn.htm>

California (1988) <http://www.streetswing.com/statednc.htm>

Colorado (1992) http://www.netstate.com/states/symb/dances/co_square_dance.htm

Connecticut (1995) <http://www.state.ct.us/emblems/folkdanc.htm>

Delaware (1994) <http://www.usda.org/folkdn.htm>

Florida <http://www.usda.org/folkdn.htm>

Georgia (1996) http://www.legis.state.ga.us/legis/1995_96/leg/fulltext/hb1485.htm

--September 2001 as Georgia Folk Dance Awareness Month http://www.legis.state.ga.us/legis/2001_02/fulltext/sr162.htm

Idaho (1989) http://gov.idaho.gov/fyi/symbols/symbols_index.html

Illinois (1990) <http://www.museum.state.il.us/exhibits/symbols/dance.html>

Kentucky <http://www.usda.org/folkdn.htm>

Louisiana http://www.netstate.com/states/symb/dances/la_square_dance.htm

Maryland (1994) <http://www.mdarchives.state.md.us/msa/mdmanual/01glance/html/symbols/folk.html>

Massachusetts (1990) <http://www.state.ma.us/sec/cis/cismaf/mf1a.htm>

Mississippi (1995) <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0801717.html>

Montana (1991) <http://www.usda.org/folkdn.htm>

Missouri (1995) <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0801717.html>

Nebraska (1997) <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0801717.html>

New Jersey (1983) http://www.netstate.com/states/symb/nj_symb.htm

North Carolina (1997) <http://www.ncleg.net/sessions/1997/bills/house/html/h638v1.html>

North Dakota (1995) <http://discovernd.com/about/symbols.html>

Oklahoma (1988) <http://www.statesymbolsusa.org/Oklahoma/stateFolkDance.html>

Oregon (1977) <http://bluebook.state.or.us/kids/symbols/symbols.htm> or <http://bluebook.state.or.us/kids/symbols/symbols01.htm>

South Carolina (1994) <http://www.sciway.net/facts/sc-state-folk-dance-square-dance.html>

South Dakota <http://www.usda.org/folkdn.htm>

Tennessee (1993) http://www.netstate.com/states/symb/tn_symb.htm

Texas (1991) <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0801717.html>

Utah (1994) <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/usa/states/utah/>

Virginia (1991) <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/usa/states/virginia/>

Washington (1979) <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/usa/states/washington/>

West Virginia <http://www.usda.org/folkdn.htm>

<http://www.usda.org/folkdn.htm> has a map showing all the states and their current status.

For a glimpse into past square dancing:

Bob Osgood movie http://www.archive.org/details/square_dancing

1948 Lucky Strike Commercial featuring square dancing cigarettes http://www.archive.org/details/LuckyStr1948_2

Pat Barbour 2005 <http://www.archive.org/details/SCJBluebonnetsSquaresAug222005>

Tootsie Roll audio commercial-Farmer Alfalfa leads the Terrytoons barnyard in a Tootsie Roll square dance.

<http://www.toontracker.com/ttracomm/tootsie.ram> or <http://www.toontracker.com/ttracomm/ra-com-2.htm>

[Tractor Square Dancing Group](#) [Video clip of tractor square dancing](#)

[Audio of Hersey's square dancing kisses with Almonds](#)

Trivia Answers:

Answer 1&2: At the request of Henry Ford, Thomas Edison recorded Benjamin Lovett calling square dances. Mr. Ford wanted the recordings to be used in school programs across the United States.

Answer 3: Yes in 1976 and 2001 in conjunction with the National Square Dance Convention.

Answer 4: Jan 31, 1992 Dilbert comic strip by Scott Adams. Dogbert claimed to be in the "Alberdeen Hall of Dung".

Answer 5: Yes, in their living room. (Episode #80)

Answer 6: Let's Dance. Paul A. Pierce (un-credited) and 7 Brides for 7 Brothers.

Answer 7: The Son-In Law. Ernie Kinney

Answer 8: Square Dance Katy (1950), Square Dance (1987)

Answer 9: Bugs Bunny

Answer 10: Al was taking a home correspondence course in square dance calling.

Answer 11: Kitty Forman's family forgot her birthday and she had been wanting them to go square dancing for a long time. They felt guilty and went and ended up having a good time.

Answer 12: Bugs Bunny (Hillbilly Hare), Arthur (Arthur and the Square Dance), Bob the Builder (Square Dance Spud)

Answer 13: The Official Li'l Abner Square Dance Handbook by Fred Leifer (1953)

Answer 14: 1992 movie Passenger 57 at the carnival there are people square dancing.

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