

Ron van Dijks' newsletter offers many new facts about Square Dancing in Europe, so we feel committed to print it same as in previous years in the Bulletin and to give it a broader distribution. Unfortunately the space this time does not allow a German translation. The translation will follow in the next Bulletin (Editor)

Ron van Dijks' Rundbrief enthält eine Menge neue Nachrichten über Square Dance in Europa, deshalb möchten wir ihn wie in den Vorjahren gerne auch im Bulletin abdrucken. Leider reicht der Platz nicht für eine deutsche Übersetzung, diese folgt im nächsten Bulletin. Viele von Euch werden aber auch den englischen Text verstehen können. (Editor)

Hello dance friends

After the Presidents meeting at iPAC in Barmstedt, I was invited to continue with what I did before. Editing a new issue of the European Newsletter and getting it out to "whom this may concern".

To keep in pace with the previous issues I asked for input by November. Yes I knew what I was getting into and also what I had to expect. But I had liked to edit the other issues and was looking forward to doing it again.

Starting off by sending reminders at the end of October and making sure they could not forget, the result is what you see here. I am glad that I got more input then I hoped for. From all participating countries and even from Canada. The Swedish youth club Buffalo's provided a very interesting article about the way they work and try to get other young people involved. Also the German Lion Squares told us about what happened there.

I hope that you enjoy reading it all.

At our "home ground" things did not develop as we might had hoped for. You will find more about that in the NVSD part by Maarten Weijers.

The club where Corry and I were members of, decided to stop their activities at the end of 2013 due to the decreasing number of dancers. In the last year we had a weekly question "do we have 8 dancers?"

We managed to have 20 "Delta Dances".

We visited most dances in the Netherlands and Belgium, iPAC, the Fall Round Up in Germany, the Pader Rodeo and the 60 years BAASDC anniversary in Banbury.

John, we did not "ride a cock horse" but have a fine memory of "Banbury Dance".

Both Corry and I wish you all a merry Christmas and have a great 2014 in good health. May the number of dancers increase.

Happy dancing,

Ron van Dijk

Brandenburglaan 38

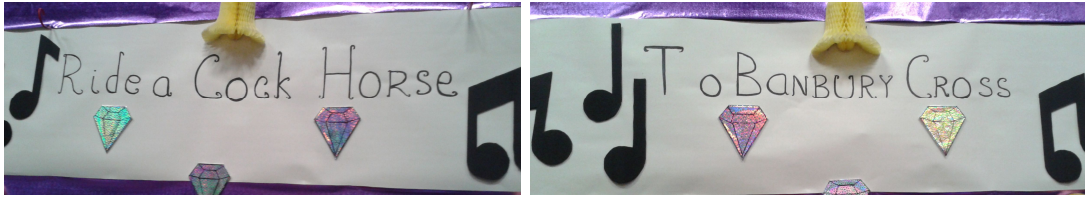
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BAASDC

BRITISH ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN SQUARE DANCE CLUBS



60 YEARS ON WITH THE BAASDC

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

WOW!!! What a truly memorable weekend of dancing in Banbury celebrating our 60th Birthday. We did it! Well done to everyone who contributed in any way. Many thanks to the SDCCGB, Callers Cuers, supporters and dancers who helped make it the success it was. A special thank you goes to all the Callers & Cuers who gave their time for no fee and who paid their own expenses and who helped make the weekend the success it was.

I thought it rather appropriate that in I would take this opportunity to reminisce on how far we have come in the past 60 years.

I started dancing 48 years ago and remember attending the 25th anniversary of the BAASDC's formation. It was smaller and less complicated affair than the 60th but just as enjoyable. One aspect of the weekend 60th celebrations was that some callers who normally only call to a few club members performed very well in front of a hundred or so dancers.

When I started dancing in the mid 60's, there was only the equivalent of mainstream. Round dances were cued only for the first sequence, and then the dancers were expected to remember it and repeat it a few more times.

There were no square dance shops so our clothes were home-made and very basic in style and design. If you wanted to go to a Saturday night dance you had to wait a couple of months for a local one or travel to Norwich, Birmingham, Bradford, Nottingham Bristol or Southampton. The motorway system was not well developed, so travelling long distances posed a few problems for us young dancers. However the dances were well attended.

One particular dance sticks in my mind hosted by Newbury Travelling Squares, where 100 dancers were expected and 150 turned up!

In the intervening years, the number of clubs has grown to 200+ however sadly this has now dropped to 150+. New levels of dance moves have been introduced from Basic to C 4. Round dancing has gone from a basic two-step to seven different rhythms with degrees of difficulty ranging from Phases 2 to 6.

Square dance shops now provide a professional service with attractive clothes accessories jewellery and shoes for both men and women.

Callers strive to maintain a high professional standard, with at times challenging calls providing the dancers with a good workout both mentally and physically.

What of the future? A difficult question to answer as the prognosis for square dancing is not looking good. Our problems are mirrored not only in the rest of Europe but also in the USA and the Southern Hemisphere. A very worrying statistic comes from the home of square dancing the USA, where they have seen numbers of dancers at a National Convention drop drastically from 42,500 to 4,500.

The Americans and the Germans have introduced a programme of involving school age children; however it will be a long time, at least ten years, before any long term benefit may be seen. Programmes like these rely heavily on the goodwill of the Head Teachers who already have many pressures of timetabling the National Curriculum. In today's society interaction between youngsters appears to be restricted to facebook, twitter and electronic games. The beauty of square dancing is the 'face to face' communication. It is my humble opinion that the continued success relies on people in the 40+ age range joining us, therefore we need to find inventive imaginative and creative ways to encourage them to take up a leisure activity that gives me and so many others fun and friendship. Any ideas?

Keep smiling, keep dancing,

John Webb

President BAASDC JohnWebb338@aol.com www.squaredancing.co.uk

EAASDC

EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN SQUARE DANCING CLUBS



1. International friendship book

The EAASDC has introduced the over 40 year old tradition of friendship book to the other European Associations and it was agreed upon to implement the system in Europe and worldwide. The first draft of an international friendship book has been presented at the last Presidents meeting in Banbury, England and is presently under review for further adjustments. After final agreement it will be published and Associations and dancers worldwide might use it in cooperation with the EAASDC.

2. Trade mark protection

The logos (signs) for Square Dance, Round Dance, Contra and Clogging have been trade mark protected in Germany for many years. Due to the fact that many member clubs of EAASDC are coming from outside Germany, EAASDC has decided to register the trade mark for these logos for Europe, Russia and Switzerland as well. The reason behind of this is to make sure that we can use these logos in future without anybody charging us for it or even disallow us the use. At this time the registration is still in progress and we have no final result yet.

3. News about Youth

The German youth club "Lion Squares" became a member club of EAASDC and we also implemented two teams for youth development. One team is working for youth starting at the age of 14 and up and develops special attractions, events and programs for the youth already dancing and also getting more youth to our hobby. The other team is working for

the 8 thru 13 year old kids with a focus on school projects. One team member is an English teacher for teacher students at the University of Landau and has developed a bilingual teaching system on the basics of Square Dance terminology. Within the last 4 years she has trained about 180 teachers on this teaching method and they worked with approx. 1.000 kids. Her report "Learning English with Square Dancing at primary school, from Dr. Birgit Smieja" (page 64) gives you more details and also you'll find some info and a slide show on the EAASDC website (eaasdc.eu) under the chapter "dance at schools".

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Wolfgang "Wuffi" Daiss

President EAASDC e.V.

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DAASDC

DANISH ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN SQUARE DANCE CLUBS



DAASDC are looking forward in 2014.

Dance's Day in Denmark, for our part, will be celebrated by 2 - 3 shows / dancing events in Copenhagen. We are inviting all dancers who want to join and together we will celebrate Dance's Day on 29th April. If we can present 120 dancers like in Rebild July 4th 2012, where we also showed the flag at the 100th anniversary, it will be a spectacular show. Tivoli is one of the goals we are aiming for that day, and we hope to get the chance to dance there. We will try to create a "flash mob" at a (secret) place in Copenhagen and we will also try to get permission to dance in The City Square. This will be a great way to show the flag again. DAASDC believe that visibility is one of the ways for promoting square dancing.

DAASDC (Square Dance Denmark) have joined forces with a well-known journalist to help us get media attention for the European Convention 2014. She is a professional journalist who has the relevant insight and connexions. One that can write up catching press releases, professionally expressed and who has contact to the right people in the right media. Currently we have prepared brochures for handouts. However we have one last hurdle - the web-site! It is under development and the front page will be in line with the rest of the promotion material.

"Hedens *) Square Dance Club" are putting a lot of effort in organizing the European Convention 2014 in Ikast, Jutland. In cooperation with DAASDC the club will put all the effort they can to welcome dancers for a great festival event. 16 callers and cuers will enjoy and challenge us with dance in 5 halls. Especially the Round Dance will be a pleasure for us Danes to witness, as this dance form is not widespread in our country.

Ikast-Brande Arena in Ikast is the perfect place to celebrate the European Convention. Right in the heart of Jutland. Close to Billund International Airport. Easy to reach by road or train. Plenty of parking space and camping close to the halls. Now we just need the on-line booking system to be ready for release – it is being tested as these lines are being written. Hopefully it is ready for use, when you read this.

DAASDC (Square Dance Denmark) will take this opportunity to highlight, that we are celebrating our 25th anniversary this year. We hope and trust, that our public relations activities will pay off and that we will get sufficient attention from the public media.

On behalf of "Hedens Square Dance Club" and "Danish Association of American Square Dance Clubs" (DAASDC/Square Dance Denmark) I wish everybody WELCOME to a tremendous European

Square and Round Dance Convention in Ikast 2014.

Lotte Vangsgaard

President DAASDC president@daasdc.dk www.daasdc.dk

*) "Heden" means "heather" in English, "Heide" in German and "Ijung (landskap)" in Swedish.



<http://squaredancedanmark.dk/>



NVSD

NEDERLANDSE VERENIGING VAN SQUARE DANSERS

Looking at the past, present and future... What will the future bring...

Are there so many differences between today and the past?? And can (or will) those differences influence the future?? Can we go back to the past to change the present for the future...

When I started dancing back in the early eighties, nobody knew what Square dancing was but we had many dancers all over the country. Many of the "older" dancers have been club members for a long time and started dancing before I started dancing. But can those dancers make the future?? One thing is for sure; we are in desperate need of new dancers. Youngsters would be fine but certainly not necessary.

When I speak with the other presidents, we all are facing the same problem. But when a country like Germany is missing 25 or even 50 dancers, nobody would notice it. If we are losing 50 dancers in a year, it's about 25 percent of the complete Dutch square dancers' population.

This year we lost several clubs and more will follow in the near future. The total number of dancers is not clear at this moment but I guess we have about 200 dancers left in the Netherlands... Square- and Round dancers.

The NVSD will have at the beginning of next year (2014) 12 member clubs. Furthermore we have a couple of clubs who are not a member of the NVSD.

But why are those dancers stopping? Is it the age of the dancers and may be their health problems caused by their increasing age? Are they losing interest; dancing the same for too long? Can we change this? Do we want to change this? So many questions but so less answers to these questions...

When I'm writing this letter, we are on our way back home from the 60th anniversary of the BAASDC (the British association of American Square Dancing Clubs). We have seen lots of friends. Friends I have known for many, many years. Being back in the UK since a long time, this time I noticed that there are hardly any young dancers anymore on the British dance floor. Like John Webb (president of the BAASDC) was mentioning this weekend to me, the average age of the dancers is going up and the number of dancers is going down. The same as in Holland.

2014 must be the year of changes... Changes needed for the future. We don't know what the future will bring but if we don't change, the future will certainly change us.

Ahead of us lies the year 2014 with lots of events and especially the European Convention in Denmark. From the Netherlands you will find on the Square dancing program: Wil Stans and myself. For the Round dancing program you'll see Guido Gircour. Guido is from Belgium but has done a lot for the Round dancing scene in the Netherlands being Club caller at the North Sea Dancers for a long time and he is a Guest cuer at many other dances. I'm looking forward to see you all at the European Convention. The details and a flyer can be found at <http://euroconvention2014.dk>.

If you are planning a trip to the Netherlands, please take a look at www.squaredance.nl for the latest information about our clubs and special events. You may always contact us for further information at info@squaredance.nl or via president@squaredance.nl.

Many greetings and happy holidays,

Maarten Weijers

President NVSD, the Netherlands president@squaredance.nl www.squaredance.nl



SAASDC

SWEDISH ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN SQUARE DANCE CLUBS

Dear friends all over. I hope that you all have had a nice and joyful dance year also in 2013.

Let me give you a flashback from our part of Europe in 2013.

As you perhaps know SAASDC have member clubs apart from Sweden also in Finland, Åland and now also in Norway.

The top priorities for us in the board of SAASDC has been, this and last year, to recruit new dancers, but also to keep the dancers we already have. It is perhaps easy to fall into the trap that we focus too much in recruiting new dancers and forgetting the one we already have.

One of the activities in order to recruit new dancers, clubs have organized an increased number of try out dances and open air dances. The ambition was to put activities behind the saying "If you are not visible, you don't exist". The result is hard to evaluate but we have a good feeling and we believe that this is a step in the right direction to stop the drop of dancers.

This year and for the first time in history, our national convention was held outside Sweden. The host this year was Alandia Square Dancers in Åland. Alandia SD organized an enjoyable and nice convention in a great atmosphere.

For me I have had two more highlights of the dance year and it was IPAC in Barmstedt and the BAASDC anniversary in Banbury. Both events were great and I enjoyed much both the dancing and the meetings we held.

If you are planning a trip to Sweden, please have a look at www.squaredans.se, choose dance list, for the latest information about our dances. You may always contact us for further information at info@squaredans.se

Finally I would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Tommy Hansson

President SAASDC Tommy@suaredans.se www.squaredans.se



CSTCA
CZCZECHOSLOVAK CALLERS & TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Czech Republic and Slovakia

Similarly to the situation in other areas, there are not many changes happening on our SD/RD scene. Fortunately, the decline in numbers seems to have almost stopped (which are bringing just a few new people in total every year but even this small addition probably means that we are retaining our die-hard dancers successfully). Our classes are significant in our dance population of several hundreds of more or less active dancers.

The good thing is that some of those who had stopped dancing several years ago due to job commitments and having children, are slowly finding their way back to their once beloved activity. It obviously makes sense to keep Square Dance and Round Dance alive so

that these temporarily forgotten friends can come back, renew their friendships and establish new ones!

For 2014, three major dances have been announced so far which are hopefully interesting for dancers from abroad as well:

- On January 17/18/19, 2014, the "Ostravský Šachták" dance will take place in Ostrava (north-east of the Czech Republic). The program is situated in four halls and it ranges from Basic (in order to attract new dancers) to C1 in squares, rounds are offered in the full range of phases I through VI and there is also some Line Dance and Contra offered, too. We are very happy to welcome Trudy and Simon Fielding together with Teresa and Paul Hart as our guests from the United Kingdom.
- More information: http://www.extend.ic.cz/index.php?page=sachtak_2014_en
- On April 11/12/13, 2014, the CSCTA Convention will take place, this time in Brno (south-east of the Czech Republic). The program will feature most of the Czech and Slovak callers and cuers, offering squares from Basic through C1 as well as all six phases of rounds. More information: <http://www.square.cz/convention>
- On May 2/3/4, 2014, another face of the Non-Traditional Maytime Dance will be revealed in Bratislava, Slovakia. The theme for 2014 is "Cirque du Square" and we are excited to welcome Robert Milestad from Sweden as the guest caller. More information: <http://special.karolina.sk/>

Of course, there are many other dances taking place in our area: if anyone is interested, feel free to send an e-mail to doug@square.cz. We are looking forward to meet dancers from abroad at our dances and clubnights as well as in their home clubs and special dances in their countries!

On behalf of Czech and Slovak dancers,

Tomas "Doug" Machalik

President of the CzechoSlovak Callers & Teachers Association Doug@square.cz

SQUARE DANCING IN FRANCE
CLUBS FRANÇAIS

News from France

Square dancing in France has seen some wonderful progress since the last article written. There is, unfortunately, some bad news to report as well.

The oldest club in France had to put their activities on hold this last year. The caller for "Paris Calling» lost his home in a fire and has been too occupied with getting his personal issues handled to assure the classes and club nights. Fortunately, nobody was injured in the fire. We are awaiting news of when "Paris Calling" will be up and running.

The teachers for «Rabbits & Doves», the second oldest club in France, retired and moved to St. Etienne, near Lyon. The «Rabbits & Doves» are currently not holding classes, but the dancers still proudly wear their badges, and you may cross them in squares. Since retiring to St. Etienne, Paul and Bernadette Riviere have started a club, «Loire Square Dance», in their neighbourhood. They have pages posted on the internet. If you are in the area of St. Etienne, they would be happy to have your visit. The «Rabbits & Doves» were the club who organized the dance at the foot of the Eiffel Tower for many years. Fortunately this event was carried on through the hard work of «Bunny Circle», a club situated more than 20 km from the Eiffel Tower.

The «Ouest Paris Swingers» are still chugging along. Though the club has not increased in number of members, they get new members each year. They have been quite active in promoting the activity through their demonstrations (often with the participation of dancers from «Lucky Boots»). In May of 2013 they gave an introductory class to a Western Line Dance club who had seen one of their demonstrations 3 years earlier. This Western Line Dance Club has now formed a Square Dance section and they have four squares of participants. The club is in Gemozac, a village in the area of France where Cognac and Pineau is produced. A visit to the Gems Country Club will merit the detour in another year or so.

Other line dance and country dance clubs are also showing interest in Square Dancing thanks to the demonstrations and introductory lessons given by the Ouest Paris Swingers. Not too far from the Belgian border in the village of Feuchy, near Arras, the «Keep it Country» club has also started a Square Dance section two years ago. They turn with about 12 dancers in their section.



The «Ouest Paris Swingers» have started organizing two student dances a year for two years running. Since the activity is still small in France, the student dancers have little opportunity to visit other clubs. These student dances have given excellent results in assuring the students the opportunity to feel integrated in the family of Square Dance. The last week of this November, the first student dance of this season assembled eighty dancers, mostly students. Twelve dancers travelled 1000 kms (round trip) from Gemozac to St. Lubin de la Haye to participate in their first Student Dance. About half the club of Feuchy travelled nearly 500 kms round trip to participate. They all returned home with wonderful memories and a few new moves to add to their exercises.

A new club has also been founded about 50 kms south of Paris. «Jambalaya Square Dance Ballancourt» have been learning the activity over the last 4 years. They have completed the Mainstream program and are ready to be recognized as a club, and to receive visitors. They also participated in the recent student dance.

Last, but not least, in the area of Bourgogne, the Circling Snails are no longer the only club. They have recently been joined by the «Butterfly Dancers» of Ecuisses, a town situated about 60 kms from Beaune. The two clubs are situated about 225 kms from each other, this should give an idea how it is difficult for the clubs in France to dance together.

Despite the distance between clubs, most of the participants are bitten by the Square Dance virus, and carry the symptoms for many years. Dancers from «Lucky Boots» have learned to teach themselves the A1 and A2 program, sharpening their skills at the new

levels by a week of training at Cham, Germany. Some are even learning Challenge dancing. This was unheard of in France 5 years ago.

Tom Mackler
Paris

Editor: <http://www.theluckyboots.fr>
<http://opswingers.square-dance.fr/>
<http://pariscallingsquaredance.over-blog.com/>
<http://bunnycircle.free.fr/>



CSRDS

CANADIAN SQUARE AND ROUND DANCE SOCIETY

<http://www.csrds.ca/>

News from the Canadian Square & Round Dance Society

The Canadian Square & Round Dance Society (CSRDS) is incorporated in Canada, "to bring Square & Round dancers and their organizations together to coordinate the activities of the square & round dance movement in Canada." The included dance categories of the Society are: Modern Square Dancing, Round Dancing (choreographed ballroom dancing), Clogging, Line Dancing, and Contra Dancing. There are approximately 11,000 CSRDS members in the 10 Canadian Provinces, belonging to 357 clubs.

CSRDS provides bursaries for square dance Callers, round dance Cuers, and Leaders in the other dance categories. The Society promotes the various dance categories through Canadian media and with handout DVDs. Dance programs are also supplied to schools throughout the country. The official website of the CSRDS is: www.squaredance.ca There are listings of all Canadian Clubs, Callers, Cuers, and Leaders. It also has listings of Provincial special dances as provided by the provincial organizations. CSRDS has a toll-free phone number throughout Canada: 866-206-6696.

A Canadian National Convention is usually held during the summer of each even-numbered year.

In 2014, 17 to 19 July, Festival 2014 will be held in Ottawa, Ontario. For information about Festival 2014, please visit: www.festival2014.ca There, you will find the details regarding dance levels, hotels, and pre-registration forms. Registrations received prior to 31 May, 2014, are less expensive than the final fee. Since the Festival is being held in the National Capital, Ottawa, there are an exceptional number of interesting tourist sites to visit, using an excellent public transit service. The chance to visit the land of the "Mounties", in mid-summer, is one not to be missed!

Should you miss Festival 2014, please note that plans are being made for the following Festival 2016, for July 28 to 30, 2016, in Regina, Saskatchewan. Giving you a chance to see the great Canadian Prairie where the grain fields stretch to the horizon!

The usual custom in Canada is that visitors to dance clubs receive an especially warm welcome, particularly if they are from "overseas". The Society has enjoyed the pleasure of hosting dancers from Europe, at many National Conventions. If readers need an excuse to visit Canada, here is a personal invitation to come to share the fellowship of dance with enthusiastic Canucks!

J.R.(Bob) Ruohoniemi
President
Canadian Square & Round Dance Society
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LION SQUARES GERMANY

Dear Squaredance friends

We are very pleased that there is still a large interest in the youth development of the squaredance world. And we are happy to give you a view into the progress in our club.

Although we were a bit off the foreground for some time, this did not mean that there was no activity in our club.

Anyway we still are the first youth club in Germany. And now official, which means that from this year on we are at last member of the EAASDC!

It was a long road to this point, but we are pleased that our members now at last under our name can visit other clubs. Naturally being EAASDC member also means organizing club evenings. On November 23rd the Lions Squares Germany invited our members to the first club evening in Hamburg, our place of birth.

Following this call we could besides our caller Thorsten Ueckermann great 87 dancers from close and far away.

This afternoon everyone had a good time with a lot of dancing (MS/P/A1) coffee and cakes and of course friends.



After having 5 youth dances the club has experience in organizing events, meaning that we can look forward to a future of many Special Dances and club nights.

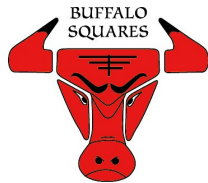
But of course nothing would function without the work of our club members from all over Germany. And this year we have passed the 100 members line.

With this notice we like to thank again very much all parents, clubs, board members and members, who did substantially work with us to get to the point where we are now.

We would like to keep you informed about our club and wish you all a very Merry Christmas time.

See you in a square

Lion Squares Germany <http://www.lionsquares.de/>



NEWS FROM SWEDISH BUFFALO SQUARES

There's a new wind blowing.

2013 has been a very exciting year for Buffalo Squares, the youth Square Dance Club in Sweden. We have launched a campaign of strength to show that we exist, and that we do care about Square Dance. We wanted to show that we have matured and that we are willing to do whatever we can for the survival of the activity we all love.

First of all, let us tell you about our Youth Dances. We arrange them twice a year, one in the spring and one in the autumn. They are weekend dances, Friday to Sunday and in varying cities. All young square dancers are welcome to join and some travel far to attend. We always gather on Friday evening, we dance, eat pizza, socialize and play games. On Saturday we go somewhere nearby, a shopping mall for instance, and dance in public. Since we want more people to be able to see and hear about Square Dance. At our dances, we spend the weekend together, we dance on our own terms, eat good food together, play games and have a lot of fun. Always. Sometimes we go wild and play a game of "Fruit Salad Square Dance" or "Gingerbread Square Dance". On Sunday we have breakfast together and then we dance some more before it is time to go home. That is about how we arrange our Youth Dances.

The thing is, and we believe this is a pretty important part, that we share the whole weekend together. Many of us live several miles apart but at these dances, we do everything together. It is so much more than just dancing. Square Dance is the basis, the foundation that keep us together. But it is the culture of our group that is so unique, the connection that binds us together. We are united in a way that is hard to explain. We respect each other, have faith in each other and are always there for each other. We are the kids with the hungry hearts – And they will never keep us apart. When we ask our friends to take a beginner's class and join our squares, we want to give them that feeling of belonging together. But how can we make them understand what it is all about? That is a good question. And our toughest objective right now.

Anyway, so we published an article in the journal of the Swedish Square Dance Association, telling other dancers about who we are, what we do and what we want to achieve. That was the first step of our campaign.

What else do we do? We attend larger dances and try to recruit newly graduated young square dancers. We want to show them that we are many more young dancers and we want them to try out our Youth Dances and get to know us better. We want to dance with them! We also tell and remind other square dancers about Buffalo Squares, so that they, in their turn, can recommend us to their youths. This spring, we also made kind of a com-

mercial about Square Dance and Buffalo Squares, to attract young square dancers, to attract young people to a beginner's class and again, to show other square dancers who we are. Knowledge and understanding are our most powerful tools.

Something else about Buffalo Squares: There is no prestige in our club. We do not believe in that and in a time when we are all fighting for the survival of Square Dance, there simply is no room for prestige. We have to be flexible. We need to cooperate. We need to strengthen our ties. We have to be willing to do whatever we can. Now is not the moment to talk about old times, to think that "it was better before..." or to lose hope. Always remember that we set the greatest barriers ourselves. Now is the time to act. There is a new wind blowing. There is another wave coming. This is when the tide turns.

This autumn, we launched the second step in our campaign. It began in January with scattered thoughts and ideas but now we have turned it into reality. In September Buffalo Squares launched our first and very own beginner's class of Square Dance. We simply called it "Square Up!" We taught a group of young people how to Square Dance – in a weekend. A beginner's class that was adapted for young people. An intensive course in a fast pace and with an appealing set up. We just wanted the young people to get going, to dance and to give them a fair idea of what Square Dance is all about. One could say that we copied one of our successful Youth Dances. We had a very enjoyable weekend, with focus on the dance, with music, nice friends, good food and games. Now that is *Buffalo*, and that is how we wanted our beginner's class to be like. We did not just offer a course, but also a fun and delightful weekend, a highway straight into the heart of Square Dance. A feeling of belonging together. The true meaning of Square Dance and the connection that binds us together? Yeah, we wanted them to experience that right from the beginning.

We made young people Square Dance in less than 48 hours. We taught them Basic in a weekend and it all worked out just fine. We had a lot of fun together. It was their own free choice to decide whether they wanted to keep dancing after that weekend. I had a good feeling about it. We spotted three of them at a dance a couple of weeks ago, more than a month after they took the class. It was one of my proudest moments.

Right now, we are planning our next Square Up weekend, coming up this spring. We learned a lot from the first time and we will do it better this second time. We are the kids with the hungry hearts. We will make more young people Square Dance.

You can find us on buffalosquares.se or at our Facebook page. We hope that you now have got a better picture of the Youth Club Buffalo Squares and what we do in Sweden. Just remember that you set your own limits. No act is too small. This is when the tide turns.

We really hope to see you soon in a square!

- *Buffalo Squares through Jon Hansell Nilsson (November, 2013)*

Note:

The in this articles mentioned slides can be found on the EAASDC web site "eaasdc.eu" (dance at schools)

Learning English with Square Dancing at primary school' Dr. Birgit Smieja

0. Introduction

Dancing connects – most of all in group dances that place fun and not competition in the foreground. And in Square Dancing we even dance to commands given in a foreign language. This works already with kids as well!

In many of the federate states of Germany a foreign language (mostly English) is taught as early as grade 1 in primary school. The language is supposed to be used authentically and based on the momentary situation and thus as much as possible integrated in different subjects and activities. Square Dancing can offer all this for it connects the foreign language with music, group activity and a multitude of cultural and regional topics centred on Europe and America.

The special thing about Square Dancing (and what's so important for primary school) is that it only exists in English. This is especially motivating for kids. It can therefore be a part of event pedagogics, of the practical, activity-oriented and hands-on teaching approach in the process of learning a foreign language. Moreover primary schools are placing more and more importance on an increase of physical activity (keyword 'active primary school'). Based on this in 2008 we started a small experimental project at the university in Landau. We, that is Andreas Hennecke, club caller for the Swinging Landavians and myself, assistant professor of English at the University of Koblenz-Landau in Landau. The 2008 idea has developed as follows:

(Slide 2 – statistics)

- 95 students in small classes (10-18 participants) at the University of Landau and Koblenz; + 40-60 until summer 2013 (university Landau) + 20-40 until summer 2013 (Pedagogical University of Karlsruhe)
- 12 teachers in further education courses (+30 until summer 2013) got
- ca. 800-1000 kids (+ at least 500 until summer 2013) in ca. 20 projects and work groups (preschool: 4-6 year olds; primary school: 1st to 4th grade; schools for children
- ca. 800-1000 kids (+ at least 500 until summer 2013) in ca. 20 projects and work groups (preschool: 4-6 year olds; primary school: 1st to 4th grade; schools for children with special needs; secondary schools 5th to 6th grade) to dance.
We cannot count the work groups any more, since we don't know, where our students are already working and spreading the idea – we keep hearing about new ones....
- 16 state exams and master papers (+ 10 until fall 2013) describe the success in learning a foreign language – among other teaching goals – through Square Dancing.
- Every SD-Party (Open House) at the universities - in Landau (2008 until now), Koblenz (2010) and Karlsruhe (2012) got between 80 and 100 students, colleagues, and other interested people to dance and to enter into further seminars and workshops.

But what prompted this idea anyway?

In June 2008, during my own class, I started to modify what I learned for use in primary school. Andreas, our caller, was with it right away. In a four-hour test workshop we provided university students with background information on the dance, the history and on American regional studies in order to then allow them to test for themselves the postulation that Square Dancing would prove particularly useful in primary school at an 'open dance' hosted by the Landau club 'The Swinging Landavians'. Inspiration was high from the start and within 24 hours all 19 'test squirrels' asked us for a 'real' seminar as part of their university studies.

Since the 2008/2009 workshop block seminars titled 'Square Dancing in primary school: Learning and teaching English made easy' took place at the Landau University at regular intervals and were constantly developed further. The course for university students includes 4 x 6 seminar hours plus a practice weekend consisting of an introductory evening (Open House) and two days that are centred on calling and teaching dances. That's at least 43 hours all together – more than any other university seminar! And nevertheless students register in January for a seminar in October and ask for their names to be put onto a secret list (that doesn't exist) to make sure they get in. I get three times as many applications as there are places on the course. Due to this there is no lack of attempted bribery, with which people are trying to reach their goal...

We start with a theoretical introduction on Square Dancing, show the connections with other subjects and the didactic approach of integration and create our own badge and bolotie in terms of dancing equipment. This is something that big and small children like to do! (Slide 3)

Before the practice weekend that is part of the school caller education we have a musical introduction and many exercises on rhythm and scaling since most of the students have little experience in teaching these things. (Slide 4)

The theoretical - music introduction is then followed by the practical Open House, where the students can try on Square Dance clothes and dance with the angels from the Swing-Ing Landavians, who show great enthusiasm in the teaching and involvement of the university students. On this evening they already learn at least 12 dancing figures.

This is what the Audimax looked like.

(Slide 5) During the weekend workshop the students learn how to call (=16 hours); they practice this during all of the following blocks of the seminar. (=ca.50 hours all together).

(Slide 6) In three more blocks the language teaching goals are connected with the dances and the calling practice.

Just one example for the use of vocabulary during lessons. The integration works for all subjects without exception, though there are more possibilities in some than in others.

(Slide 7)

In maths alone a division of the semantic field in *shapes, directions, numbers, and fractions, other expressions* and *general classroom phrases* offers a multitude of overlap in learning fields and vocabulary work as follows:

Calculations are the same in German and in English! Adding/subtracting and estimating while purchasing cowboy clothes or Square Dance outfits with photocopied dollar notes offers a great deal of motivation for most kids and presents a situational context to the real world. (Slide 8)

As I've mentioned before this applies naturally for all other learning fields as well. The language related and cultural possibilities are many as well as the goals we can pursue.

(Slide 9) The great final is the organisation of an individual project at the school including a final presentation in front of an audience.

The request for a Square Dance teaching seminar for teachers with completed education has been brought to us from several schools already in 2009. So it was a small step to addressing teachers directly with our concept. The seminar was held in February 2012. Its success was the immediate and enthusiastic realisation at the schools. It was through this seminar and the participation of seminar leaders and school principals that the idea was first realized at the Studienseminar Rohrbach for trainees of all subjects, to which also belonged a great number of former students who were already trained in the Square Dance concept. Thus a great number of multipliers was given.

So the concept consists of a mixture of theory and practice and ensures through its big amount of practical content and the offered materials a high level of motivation in all participants. The practical part is supplemented with didactic-methodical suggestions and discussions about the integrative realisation of dance, foreign language and relevant regional topics in all learning fields of primary school.

In its diversity the concept makes great demands on university students and teachers, but because of this also ensures quality and sustainability in its realisation in class. Teachers are supposed to become enabled to independently and effectively use American dances and motivating elements in an appropriate form for children as part of an integrative language teaching in their daily school work.

When an idea becomes successful there is always a lot of work involved in the developing and adapting of the concept and also very clear training goals.

What does this concept look like, that has been developed since 2008 and how do we justify its contents?

English classes in primary school are supposed to be playful, action oriented, multi-sensory and holistic and have a lasting effect. Kids are supposed to have fun learning the English language. Apart from the little time in language class, however, other areas for concrete and holistic learning have to be found. One example is the subject 'general knowledge', for besides learning the language (according to the curriculum) the kids are also supposed to obtain knowledge of other cultures and on American history. But the curricula for music and sports also offer an opportunity for integration into the basic musical and physical education. It is obvious that shapes such as squares, circles and lines play a role in sports as well as in art and maths and so do numbers and colours. And not only here but also in traffic education can they be used in constantly new games and exercises. This serves the principle of varying repetition and every expansion is part of a spiral-shaped learning process. Basic vocabulary such as directions (right, left, beside, opposite, behind, end, in front, across, straight, forward, back, middle, turn, etc.) in connection with the shapes and colours of the traffic signs is sticking amazingly well, for it is experienced actively and in motion, elaborated and expanded upon in varying learning situations and transferred into real-life situations.

Nevertheless a few basic conditions should be considered before the practical realisation, for example:

5. Right- and Left-location is seldom well established. Kids should make themselves a reminder-bracelet for wrist and ankle on the left side.

6. The rules for the dancing (Square Dance traditions) must be made clear before the start. Courtesy is king (greeting and thanking) – no shoving, kicking, boxing, scratching etc.; a cowboy/-girl or settler/Indian doesn't even do this in the WILD West!

7. Kids should choose their partner for the beginning of the dance themselves. No insisting on mixed couples. While calling we then refer to colours, e.g. Blue (boys) and Green (girls). Initial objections against

1. touching the opposite sex are hereby avoided; if the dance requires mixing later this is okay with 99% of the children. Part of the trick is also that the boys can be more easily involved in the dancing if they are allowed to wear a hat – like a real cowboy. This is then also permitted to the girls.
2. What also needs to be observed is the degree of difficulty. It depends for one thing on the grade (1st or 4th) but also on the individual skills of the children on their own and as a group. Movements and figures as well as vocabulary are being transferred from one dancing level to the next with slightly increasing difficulty to be expanded

upon there. A sensible *progress* according to the *degree of difficulty* is followed in a dancing introduction from a circle via the contra formation to Square Dancing.

(Slide 10)

Phase 1

1. **Hokey Pokey:** It serves as preparation for everything else. Circle dance, the kid acts as an individual (as used to), learns terms and movements, e.g.: *right, left, arm, leg, body (whole self), put in, put out, turn around, shake*, etc.

Phase 2

2. **Maine Mixer:** Circle dance with couples, first without, later with change of partners (kids choose the partner they are willing to touch), rhythm plays a bigger role, stepping in time has to be practiced (needs more time in grades 1 and 2, use rhythmic games in music class for support), vocabulary: *numbers 1-8, march, face (your partner), dosado, clap, stomp, swing (next)*.

(film: Sandra&Kathrin – grade 4; Bingo (Sibylle und Lisa))

(Slide 12)

Phase 3: Contras

3. **Barley and Oats** (tunnel contra): Forming couples, couples facing each other in regular contra lines with *blues* and *greens* on opposite sides.

Goals: Forming couples, rhythm, self-confidence (everybody in turn has to dance as top couple between the two lines). Vocabulary builds on the previous dance and is expanded, e.g. *top, couple, everybody forward and back, promenade, dive thru, head, foot, slide down*, etc.

4. **OXO Reel:** Forming couples, couples facing in lines with *blues* on one side and *greens* on the opposite, best, if six couples form a line but comes very close to the quadrille. Goals: as before plus numbers, ordinal numbers. New vocabulary, e.g.: *circles, stars, reverse, first, second, arch*, etc. possible modification: the top couple chooses the style of the slide down the lines, for example: *jump, gallop, stomp, glide, fly down like a frog, horse, elephant, snake, bird*, etc.

→ Creativity, expansion on animal vocabulary

Film Barley and Oats (Sibylle/Lisa, grade 2-4)

Phase 4

5. (a) **Pretty Baby Quadrille:** SD-formation: 4 couples as a group. Goals as before plus e.g. concentration, listening comprehension, coordination in space and time. New vocabulary: *heads/sides, right and left thru, join hands, circle left/right, corner, swing*

(b) **First Night Quadrille:** SD-formation: 4 couples. New vocabulary: *head couple(s), side couple(s), corner, partner, same four, allemande left = turn corner left, grand right and left, home*.

(film: Square Dance (Daniela, Grade 4))

One sees here already that the number of figures is limited to the following:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. circle right / circle left | 9. Dive thru |
| 2. dosado | 10. Grand right and left |
| 3. swing | 11. U-turn back |
| 4. allemande left | 12. Pass thru |
| 5. turn partner/corner left/right | 13. Cast off |
| 6. star right/left | 14. Separate |
| 7. forward and back | 15. Split |

8. promenade

Among the fun at being in motion and the many class-specific goals however one has to be specially emphasized: (Slide 13)

Social competence: it creates group dynamic, self-confidence, team spirit, tolerance and helpfulness; Kids learn in a playful way about the necessity of discipline and to follow rules. And they enforce these rules!

All this shows that with our carrying SD into primary school we reach several goals in one: Kids who don't just sit but get in motion and learn important motor skills; kids who develop social competence including self-confidence and group-awareness and above all kids who have fun dancing and dance and talk about Square Dancing with enthusiasm! Even the boys!

Now the question remains, what do the clubs gain by this? The Swinging Landavians have joined the teaching idea with great commitment, even though it is a path that shows its effects only in the long run. In 2012, the club graduated the first two students who gained first dancing and calling experience in our university seminars in 2008 and 2010. They now carry the concept further and will soon establish regular projects at their schools and call regularly. As long as clubs for reasons of personnel, finances or time aren't able (or willing) to offer kids-classes that are scheduled according to the learning and sleeping hours of the 8 to 12-year-olds, school remains the sole pivoting point for activities of this kind. If we succeed in establishing more long-term work-groups at schools or through the kids even manage to involve the parents in an afternoon or early evening family-dance-class, it is possible that more young families will find their place in a club as well. But the clubs have to want this, have to expand or modify their program and advertise patiently at the right places.

Schedule of / Geplante Conventions, Jamborees & Round Ups (Stand Januar 2014)

Date	Event	Hosting Club and Dancing Location
2014		
7.-9. März/March 2014	Jamboree	Tamara Twirlers RDC, 85221 Dachau
22. März/March 2014	ECTA Student Jamboree	Nord: Hachede Swingers, 21502 Geesthacht
22. März/March 2014	ECTA Student Jamboree	Süd: Black Forest Ghosts VS-Tannheim, 78054 VS-Schwenningen
23.-25. Mai/May 2014	ECTA Round Dance Festival	Crossing Creeks SDC Leverkusen e.V. 51373 Leverkusen
11.-13. Juli/July 2014	European Convention	DAASDC, DK-Jutland
29.-31. Aug. 2014	Fall Round Up	Schwäbisch Sweethearts SDC e.V., Schwäbisch Hall
2015		
13.-15. März/March 2015	Jamboree	Kuntry Kuzins, 65239 Hochheim
28. März/March 2015	ECTA Student Jamboree	tba
15.-17. Mai 2015	ECTA Round Dance Festival	tba
4.-6. Sept. 2015	Fall Round Up	tba
2016		
11.-13. März/March 2016	Jamboree	tba
2. April 2016	ECTA Student Jamboree	tba
20.- 22. Mai 2016	ECTA Round Dance Festival	tba
2.-4. Sept.2016	Fall Round Up	tba
2017 siehe / compare EAASDC Homepage		