

***4 Seasons Board***

**64th NATIONAL SQUARE DANCE CONVENTION®**

Springfield, Massachusetts

JUNE 24, 25, 26 & 27, 2015

**PARK 'N' RIDE BUS PASS**  
**Dancers coming for the day**   
Coming to dance, not staying at a contracted Hotel / Motel, staying with family / friends. Park at the Big E - take a free ride to the MassMutual Center to purchase a bus pass if you have not already done so on your convention long form.  The pass costs $50.00 for each person riding the bus.  The bus runs only between the Big E and the MassMutual and your car has in and out privileges from the Big E.  Keep an entrance tag in your car for free admission into the fairground.   
   
**VS**  
   
**BUS PASS**   
**Dancers staying at contracted convention hotels**   
Each contracted convention hotel will be on a bus loop.  You can request a bus pass on your registration long form for $50.00 per individual rider.  You can get a bus pass at convention for $60.00 per rider. Each bus loop will go from the hotel to the MassMutual Center at 30 minute intervals.  Leave your car at the hotel at no charge. The Bus Pass does not include residents parking in garages at the Sheraton or Marriott Hotels.  Their parking fees are set by their parking authority.  
   
**NOTE:  THE CONTRACTED HOTEL LIST IS ON THE REGISTRATION LONG FORM ON THE WEBSITE** [**http://64nsdc.org/**](http://64nsdc.org/) **Tour Updates**

We have plenty of tours left for people to join. The Cape Cod 3 Day and the New Hampshire 2 Day trips have been cancelled due to lack of participation. Are you interested in a day tour of a variety of New England sights or an overnight tour to NYC? There are still seats available! Check us out at our website, 64NSDC.org. Our 6 Day Tour of New England is sold out! We have 2 full buses and a waiting list of 12 people. We have a city bus tour which will cost $35 and runs on Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 9:00 AM during our convention. It is a 3 1/2 hour tour and will highlight many Springfield landmarks such as the Basketball Hall of Fame, the Springfield Museums which includes the History Museum with Springfield--made Indian Motorcycles, 1928 Rolls Royce and Duryea, the first American gasoline powered vehicle, the Science Museum and Arts Museum. Also tour the Springfield Armory, and Dr. Seuss Sculpture Gardens. We still have tickets available for the Neil Diamond Tribute Band on Wednesday, June 24, 2015. The dinner & show is $44. The show only is $20. See you in Springfield!

**Showcase of Ideas**

The 2015 version of the Showcase of Ideas in Springfield, Massachusetts, will have a full house of 79 tables of exhibitors showing off their areas with brochures, magazines, trinkets, pens, pencils, candy, and the increasingly popular bags of peanuts if the people from Georgia get them transported.

**Something new** for Showcase this year is a two-hour live event on Thursday-Saturday in the Showcase. All exhibitors are being encouraged to be at their displays to be available to talk about their areas with the various dancers who walk through the Showcase to see what it is all about. The hours are from 10 am to noon. We want the dancers to walk through the second floor Pre-Function area of the MassMutual Center and talk to the exhibitors about their state, council, organization, etc., find out what kind of activities happen at home, invite the dancers to come and tour, dance, and enjoy the area they represent. Usually by the end of the day, the area in the Showcase is void of people because they are touring, dancing, or eating, and not available for the dancers who find time to browse through the area.

The instructions for the exhibitors for setting up, shipping notes, and other news will arrive in email boxes in late May so be on the lookout if you are the responsible person for your area.

We look forward to seeing all the dancers at some point in time during the convention. We are set up in front of the ballrooms on the mezzanine so we are hoping that you will take a few minutes to look through the Showcase before you go in to the ballrooms to dance. Marilyn and Ron Schmit Directors of Showcase [marilynron@msn.com](mailto:marilynron@msn.com) 503-508-0539

**Technology and the 64th NSDC® Education Theme**

The 64th NSDC® Education theme is “Celebrating Our Dance Heritage, Planning Our Dance Future”. This is an active theme as Convention attendees participate by way of hands-on methods throughout our Educational offerings in Springfield, Massachusetts. Be sure to check out the Education webpages at 64nsdc.org!

In “Planning Our Dance Future” the 64th NSDC® Education Committee incorporates using up-to-date technology resources in many of our Education program offerings. We are encouraging Education presenters in seminars, panels, and clinics to use digital multi-media presentations to maximize the experience for you, the audience. Our Keynote Speakers, Paul Cote and Ted Lizotte, are going to use visual media in their Keynote Address. We will have one seminar focused on social networking on the web as it relates to square dancing. Have you visited the 64th NSDC® on Facebook?

One special seminar offering at the 64th NSDC® is a seminar “How-To” on building a Square Dance Club website. This seminar is scheduled for a 3-hour block. Participants need to bring their own laptop and have solid word processing skills. Due to the material content and limited space, dancers interested in attending this seminar should email education @64nsdc.com prior to the Convention in June 2015. Pre-registrants will have priority to participate. Based on interest, the 64th Education Committee will know whether or not to schedule more than one workshop. Again, we invite you to visit our Education webpage concerning this special seminar. The technology theme will extend beyond just our speakers. You will want to visit the 64th NSDC® “Showcase of Ideas” where organization members are “GOING LIVE” every morning from 10:00 am to 12 noon. We truly showcase the best ideas of our organizations and have planned a method for organizations to share, live and in-person, their on-line resources with dancers who visit the Showcase. During the “GOING LIVE” times, organization members will be at their tables with on-line connections to show you their websites and on-line resources. Certainly, some of our best “Ideas” to “Showcase” are our many on-line resources. No computers will be hooked up unattended at the Showcase. And Organization members are welcome to staff their tables any time the Showcase is open.

For the Archives and historical displays we plan to have a special viewing area for dancers to see video presentations that bring into play the other part of our 64th NSDC® Education theme, “Celebrating Our Dance Heritage”. We will have audio-video footage of historical and vintage dances that illustrate the roots of modern western square dance. There are clinics for dancers to try out quadrilles, eastern squares, and historical contras – all forms of dance that preceded our familiar modern western squares. There are three wonderful seminars bringing the delightful and fascinating history of our folk dancing to our Convention attendees. There are two demonstration groups scheduled for our entertainment who have heritage dances to add to our evening schedules.

The celebration of our dance heritage brings a rich and unique dimension to this 64th NSDC®. We hope Convention attendees will find some exciting and interesting technology and future planning of dancing at the 64th National Square Dance Convention® Education offerings in Springfield, MA! Be sure to read the Education offerings as soon as you get your program book!

**Have You Experienced a New England Contra Dance?**

Come dance in the Contra Hall for a look at the roots and relatives of Modern Square Dancing. For those new to contras, we recommend attending one of our Intro to Contra sessions to learn about the framework of a contra dance. The daytime schedule will include six hour-long workshops focusing on Traditional Squares, Quadrilles and Contras. One of the presenters will be David Millstone, who is a dance historian working on the Square Dance History Project. He is currently President of the Country Dance and Song Society, which this year is celebrating 100 years of traditional dance, music, and song! He says his fascination with the older dances “has something to do with dancing in small New England halls that have been the center of village social life for ages. In such a setting, it's easy to imagine the room filled with dancers ages ago doing those same figures to the same tunes, a great chain of being that links us today with those who have gone before.” See the following article for a brief glimpse into our past.

Our evenings will be an exciting opportunity to experience a New England contra dance complete with live music by three popular New England contra bands. There will be a similar fourth dance on Tuesday evening sponsored by Contralab in the same location. New England has at least a 200 year history of joyous contra and square dance events. Come be a part of it!

Thursday evening will feature the Moving Violations from Massachusetts. Come enjoy their fiddle, mandolin and piano expertise playing a blend of dance tunes from Scandinavia and Eastern Europe melded with contra’s Anglo-Celtic framework.

Friday evening will feature another contra dance band from Massachusetts called Wild Card. Come enjoy the very special sound of a hammered dulcimer, along with a guitar, fiddle, accordion, piano, and whistle.

Saturday evening will feature The Fiddleheads, a venerable contra dance band from New Haven, Connecticut. Come enjoy their unique combination of fiddle, banjo, bodhran, mandolin, guitar, and upright base.

**Do You Know our Square and Contra Dance History?**

(Compiled by Dottie Welch, Vice Chairman Contra, 64th NSDC®)

In 1651, a book by John Playford was published in London. This was called *The* *English Dancing Master or, Plaine and easie Rules for the Dancing of Country Dances with the Tune to each Dance*. This is the oldest reliable source for contra and square dancing. It contains dances using formations of couples in proper longways lines for six to as many as will, of couples in rounds of six to as many as will, and includes some that specify eight dancers in a square.

By the late 18th century the English longways dance crossed the channel to France where the common folk were delighted to find a dance that was easy to learn by watching the first couple. The French gentled it down, polished it up and gave it the name *Contredanse* (dance of opposition) to describe the lines of dancers standing opposite each other. They gave names to defined movements which made it possible to prompt them and we still use Dosado (dos-à-dos means back-to-back) and Promenade which is the French word for “walk”. The Scots contributed the reel with their unique music and we have the roots of our Contra Dancing.

English Country Dancing included something called a “round for eight”. These migrated to France along with the longways dance and eventually were transformed into the quadrille, which became popular early in the 19th century. Here is our first, true square dance with four couples dancing in a square and someone prompting the action. Certain orthodox quadrilles featuring five sections became very popular in New England, the Maritimes and Quebec and are still danced in some communities. These are known as “The Lancers” (the name probably came from an early version arranged for a French regimental ball). Each section consisted of a certain type of musical rhythm and had its own dance figure. The last section was always a military style march. There is the origin of our Grand Square.

Between 1750 and 1850 European dance halls saw the beginning of the contredanse, waltz, and quadrilles. At the same time many British and French settlers came to the New World. Naturally, they brought with them their dances, so all of these new dances made their way to North America. Along with the French settlers coming to Quebec and French soldiers coming to fight during the American Revolution were some men who were dancing masters. Quite a few eventually joined traveling, theatrical troupes and wandered up and down the Atlantic coast giving lessons at every stop. The great advantage of these dances was that they only required a fiddler and a flat area and they were relatively easy to learn. Accordions were first made about 1830 and were probably in use soon after.

In New England, the contra dance had a long popularity with the names of new ones telling the history of the area such as: Green Mountain Volunteers and Ethan Allen (pre-Revolution from Vermont), and Hull’s Victory and Sackett’s Harbor (from the War of 1812). The music used for contra dancing was a mixture of Scottish reels, Irish jigs and English hornpipes. Sometimes the only space for dancing was someone’s kitchen and the fiddler and prompter would perch on the sink to be out of the way. Such events became known as Kitchen Junkets. *The American Dancing Master, and Ball-Room Prompter*, by Elias Howe was published in Boston in 1862*.* (It is available on the internet from the Library of Congress.) This book contains 80 quadrille sets and 115 contra dances. Many of these dances lasted well into the 1900’s and several are still danced on a regular basis.

In the American and Canadian west, settlers would travel miles to a box or basket social and these often included a square dance. Musicians and prompters would do their best with whatever skills and knowledge they had, sharing the stage and simultaneously sharing their heritage. Such events often lasted until dawn and no doubt there was some spontaneous creativity. With contributions from all parts of the East Coast and Europe, the square dance became a uniquely North American folk dance. In addition to plain quadrilles danced to old Scottish, English or Irish music, callers began using rhyming calls and choreographed many quadrilles to the popular tunes of the day. These were known as Singing Quadrilles and were the beginnings of our square dance Singing Calls.

At the beginning of the 20th century folk dancing was neglected in Europe and North America. Many areas saw a decline in the variety and quality of the dance repertoire. The old figures were forgotten, style was lost, and the music became forlorn. Then Cecil Sharp in England began to research the old English country dances, both from actual dancing in rural communities, and from books of the Playford era. This eventually led to the foundation of the English Folk Dance and Song Society in 1911. In 1915 a North American branch formed in Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, New York City and Pittsburgh. It was named the Country Dance and Song Society and it is now celebrating 100 years of promoting Anglo-American traditional dance, music and song.

In 1923 Henry Ford visited the Wayside Inn in Sudbury, Massachusetts and there saw Benjamin Lovett teach the gavotte, the schottische, mazurkas, minuets, the Virginia Reel and square dancing. Henry Ford, with his automobile fortune, negotiated a contract with Mr. Lovett to teach dancing and to train dance instructors in Dearborn, Michigan. In 1926 they published a book called *Good Morning – After a Sleep of Twenty-five Years, Old Fashioned Dancing is being revived by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Ford*. The school lasted until 1949 regularly filling specially built Lovett Hall with forty squares. They were responsible for a national newspaper column containing choreography and instructions. This was followed up weekly with a radio show from Chicago during which Mr. Lovett called the dances printed the previous week. Henry Ford encouraged Thomas Edison to produce the first square dance records on thick 78 records. In addition, their program introduced square dancing to students in 34 universities around the country.

Their 1926 book inspired Dr. Lloyd “Pappy” Shaw to begin a quest to research and revive the American dance. He taught the students of Cheyenne Mountain School this dancing heritage and by 1937 they were giving performances across the country. In 1939 he published *Cowboy Dances* containing a discussion of the square dance as it was done in the western United States.

During World War II traveling service men and women were often made welcome by providing a square dance. Church and civic groups organized dances and found callers who could entertain inexperienced dancers in the friendly atmosphere with which we are familiar.

After the war many new communities arose in a much more mobile life style due to family automobiles, modern highways and shorter working hours. Searching for a means of getting acquainted, many remembered that square and contra dancing was an excellent icebreaker. NATO troops stationed in Europe during the Cold War also found square dancing to be an excellent recreation.

Simultaneously, the modern sound system, a by-product of electronic discoveries during the war, made it possible for a caller to be heard and understood by a large dance floor. Also the use of phonograph records meant that music was not limited to the availability and talent of the local musicians. So with potential dancers and good sound, the stage was set for the big boom in square dancing.

Lloyd Shaw reopened his summer classes for callers in Colorado and taught more than 200 each year. He also wrote *The Round Dance Book* in 1948 about the old-time couple dances. By the time of his death in 1958 he had promoted square dancing on a grand scale and by many is considered to be the Father of Modern Western Square Dancing.

Meanwhile in New England, contra dancing to live music continued to thrive. For many years the leading authority in the field of contra dancing was undoubtedly Ralph Page from Keene, New Hampshire. His Scottish-Irish family included minstrels, a dancing master, and a square dance caller. He published 35 years of *Northern Junket* magazine, researched old dances, wrote new dances and music, and recorded on the Folk Dancer label. Herbie Gaudreau, a square dance caller and contra enthusiast from Massachusetts, wrote a lot of "modern contras" and popularized features like double progression, automatic cross-over and the Becket formation. Come to the Contra Hall at the 64th National for a sampling of this heritage and its modern form.

*American Dancing Master and Ball-Room Prompter* by Elias Howe, Boston, 1862

*The Caller Text* compiled by Bob Osgood, 1983

*Cowboy Dances* by Lloyd Shaw, 1952

*The Country Dance Book* by Beth Tolman and Ralph Page, 1937

*The Complete Book of Square and Round Dancing* by Betty Casey, 1976

*The English Dancing Master* by John Playford, 1984 reprint of the 1933 version based on the original edition of 1651

*History of Contra Dance* by Heiner Fischle

*Square Dancing Indoctrination Handbook* produced by Sets In Order, 1980