

## SQUARE DANCE LOVERS ♥

The following responses were submitted for an article in the January 2012 *Grand Square*.

Nancy (Caufield) and James Anderson  
Jefferson Township, NJ

Current club: Reelers  
Former club: Lakeland Squares



How did you start square dancing?

Jim: Out in California.

Nancy: I was given a pair of square dance shoes from my mother. Several years later when I was looking for something else in my life to do, I remembered those shoes and looked online for the nearest square dance club. Lakeland Squares was giving lessons and I signed up. Square dancing added the joy in my life that was missing.

What year did you meet? Sept, 2007                      And marry? May 29, 2011

We were married at the First Presbyterian Church of Berkshire Valley. We had pictures taken and a cocktail hour outside at our home. Luckily, it was a perfect day. Later, our two families had dinner at the New Orleans Restaurant.

Circumstances of your meeting and dating?

Nancy: Lakeland Squares was hosting its fall Barn Dance and I remember Jim walking in the front door. He was so-o-o tall and I remember saying to myself: "I like 'tall!'" I walked up to him and asked if he would like to dance. He said "yes," and the rest is history.

Jim: Nancy was waiting to introduce herself to me while I was speaking to another member of Lakeland. There was definitely something intriguing about her. I remember thinking she must be an officer of the club. That feeling was confirmed when she seemed to "take me under her wing" for several dances. It appeared that she had a regular "older" dance partner, so I didn't know if she was married. I hoped she wasn't!

Favorite square dance memories?

We have thoroughly enjoyed the annual Cross Trail dinner dances. Our worst trip to a square dance was the trip to Western Wheelers during a horrendous rainstorm. When we got there the power was out. But square dancers don't give up. We danced by candlelight until the power returned.

Dot and Don Coy  
Brooklyn, NY

Current clubs: Regular caller for AleMo Squares and  
Pelham Promenaders



How did you start square dancing?

Don: I went to my first square dance to please my [first] wife.

What year did you meet? 1986          And marry? 1990

We danced one tip at our reception.

Circumstances of your meeting and dating?

We met in 1986 at the National Convention held in Indianapolis, Indiana. I liked Dot because she was so peppy and she loved to dance. I knew she was right for me because of her positive attitude about life.

Favorite square dance memories?

Traveling and participating in 25 National Square Dance Conventions with Dot.

Anything else?

Square dancing and calling has been my fun thing to do for 39 years. I am at a dance celebration at least 4 or 5 night a week. I have traveled all over America and Canada calling and dancing. I have been to places that I would have not had the opportunity to visit if square dancing had not been a part of my life. If it were not for square dancing, I would not have met the love of my life: Dot.

Pat and Don Elliott  
Ringo, NJ

Current club: Hunterdon Flutterwheels  
Former club: Fantastic Bears (former Saucon  
Squares and Rounds)



[Information from telephone interview]

How did you start square dancing?

Don had gone to an open house at Warren Wheelers and they sent him to Hunterdon Flutterwheels. Pat knew Peg Bailey's son from work and had told him she loved square dancing as a child. (He wasn't a square dancer.) He said that his parents' club needed helpers at square dance lessons to take the place of those who couldn't dance, and Pat agreed to be a partner for a single man – Don!

What year did you meet? 1987          And marry? 1992

They wore square dance outfits for the wedding and Dalt Young called squares for the reception.

Circumstances of your meeting and dating?

Don picked up Pat to go square dancing and took her back home. Sometimes they did things together on weekends, and they got comfortable with each other. "I guess we can get along; we should get married!" It just clicked after a while.

Favorite square dance memories?

They enjoyed special dances in Pennsylvania with callers doing skits. A bad memory was when Dalt Young died at a New Year's Eve dance.

Anything else?

The way Ted Knauss and Dalt Young got along like brothers reminds me of Dennis Reardon and Jim Snyder.

Mary Ann (Ryan) and John Erdek  
Hillsborough (Millstone), NJ

Club: Rutgers Promenaders



How did you start square dancing?

Mary Ann's co-worker at the time pretty much "dragged her kicking and screaming" to a Rutgers "hi-lo" dance. . . . .co-worker was concerned about her introverted personality (not knowing, of course, that MA at the time was an inveterate "disco queen" ☺ and was one of those who managed to get into Studio 54 when it was pretty darned hard to do!)

What year did you meet? Sept. 1977                      And marry? Sept. 1978

We actually had two receptions – one for the "formal" party, and a "mini-reception" immediately after the church service. John's parents lived ¼ mile from the church and had a nice property with room for an impromptu square dance to bide time before the start of the actual reception.

Anything else?

Square dancing is still in the family through the addition of Theresa, who is now at the C-1 level along with her parents.

Nina and Al Gerhold  
Moorestown, NJ

Club: Rutgers Promenaders

How did you start square dancing?

Nina wanted to learn to dance because her parents danced when she was little, and it looked like fun. Al was introduced to dancing in high school gym class, where his teacher was an oddity in gym square dancing – a *real* caller.

What year did you meet? 1979            And marry? 1981

Some dancer friends were at our wedding, but square dancing was not part of it.

Circumstances of your meeting and dating?

We met in lessons at Rutgers. One of Betsy Gotta's most important lessons to us was that squares are going to break down, and the best thing to do is to laugh it off, square up again and start dancing. We were in a square that did nothing but crash, and we were following her advice. It was a lot of fun. The next week, Al walked into the lesson as Nina was looking for a partner for the first tip. Remembering how much fun the square was last week, she made a beeline for him.

Betsy (Seele) and Roy Gotta  
North Brunswick, NJ

Club: Rutgers Promenaders



How did you start square dancing?

Betsy as a child in Metuchen, NJ – caller had a program for kids at the YMCA. Roy when he was in college at Rutgers, brought (kicking and screaming) by his then fiancée. Betsy was the teacher for the lessons. Roy and his fiancée broke up and another girl persuaded Roy to return to the class.

What year did you meet? 1972 (spring semester)      And marry? June 1974

Betsy and her father, Art Seele, called for both square dance club members and beginners during the breaks taken by the regular band [at the reception].

Circumstances of your meeting and dating?

Roy was in the spring 1972 square dance class at Rutgers Promenaders as mentioned above. After the split with Donna, the girl who brought him to square dance lessons, Roy dropped out of class until another girl talked him into returning. (Classes were only 10 weeks) Roy then dated several women in the club including Betsy. Betsy needed a partner for the Delaware Valley Festival and invited Roy who was able to come for Saturday. This was Sept of 1972 and by Thanksgiving they were engaged.

Favorite square dance memories?

Square dancing has been a part of our lives and the memories are too many to separate.

Anything else?

Betsy and Roy rented their guest room to at least 3 Rutgers Promenaders women, all of whom married men from the club. We advised on several aspects of the weddings. “No kids, but we just married off number 3.”

Carin (Williams) and Frank Gufert  
Woodcliff Lake, NJ

Club: Circle Eights



How did you start square dancing?

Carin: I had an exchange student living with me from Ecuador and I wanted to provide him with an “American” experience during his stay here. So I found square dancing through the adult education bulletin, I thought that was definitely an American folk dance and I took him, three other teenagers and myself to the classes.

Frank: I originally started dancing as an effort to have something in common to do with my first wife.

What year did you meet? 2009                      And marry? 2011

Since our mutual background is German and our mutual interest is square dancing we had both types of music at our wedding. Paul Ingis was our caller, and he was great. The square dancers did several demos for the rest of the wedding guests. Paul did barn dancing with the rest of the wedding guests and all our experienced dancers were “angeling” in the squares. Our guests laughed and smiled so much that other guests in the hotel wanted to join us.

Circumstances of your meeting and dating?

Carin: I first met Frank two months into our square dance classes. He started coming to help out because they needed more experienced male angels. I noticed pretty early on that he was a good dancer and I really enjoyed when we teamed up on the floor together during our class tips. After a few months seeing each other weekly we both learned that we shared a German heritage. That brought us even closer. Our first date was February 14th, three months after we first met. It’s hard to say when I knew he was the right one, but I did sense early on that he was very special. We continued to grow closer during the year. Frank surprised me by proposing on December 12, 2010. I was shocked and elated at the same time.

Frank: My impressions would be: of meeting someone nice to dance and teach dancing with. The dating was something very special since we had many things in common, especially dancing which gave us joy and contact frequently.

Favorite square dance memories?

Carin: Our honeymoon is my favorite square dancing memory! We went on a square dancing, sightseeing trip to Germany with Crisp Tours. We met 90 other square dancers from all over the US. We danced Mainstream, Plus and A. We also danced with three different German square dancing clubs. We met so many wonderful people. I highly recommend the tour to any square dancer reading this. It is very unique and so much fun. They have another tour scheduled in 2013. I really enjoy meeting square dancers. They are a great community of people.

Frank: My favorite square dance memory would be dancing to American national callers in Germany, as well as meeting and dancing with German dancers.

Patrice and Bill Hartung  
Magnolia, DE

Current club: Pepper Steppers (MD)  
Former clubs: Belles and Beaux (Patrice), Rutgers Promenaders,  
Shooting Stars (OH), Kittyhawk Squares (OH), Magnolia Swingers  
(MS)



How did you start square dancing?

Bill: Square dancing was a gym class at Rutgers University. A friend and I went to check it out. There were girls there, so I went back.

Patrice: I had always loved to dance and remembered doing square dancing a couple of times in school. One summer, the young adults group at my church went to a one-nighter at Bear Mountain State Park in NY, and it was fun. Soon after that, I saw square dancing was offered through the community adult education, and took the lessons. The class was taught by two callers. The male caller gathered all the single women together and tried to discourage us from continuing the lessons as we would have difficulties getting partners after we graduated. The woman caller made the effort to get me alone to encourage me to continue. She said I was a good dancer and that I would not have trouble getting partners. I am very glad she spoke to me or I might never have become a square dancer.

What year did you meet? 1985                      And marry? 1987

Among the guests were a bunch of square dancers from Rutgers Promenaders and a caller, Betsy Gotta. So we did one tip at our reception, with Betsy calling.

Circumstances of your meeting and dating?

Patrice: The summer after I finished the Mainstream classes with Belles and Beaux, I attended all the Wednesday summer dances given by the NNJSDA. On August 14, 1985, the night that Betsy Gotta called, a group from the Rutgers Promenaders were there. My company had recently moved to Piscataway, and I had gotten an apartment nearby. That made Rutgers Promenaders the closest square dance club to my new home. I went over to one of the club members and asked for directions to their usual dance location. I was referred to the club treasurer – Bill. Bill gave me directions as best he could, given that I was still new to the area and had no idea of the landmarks or roads. (As it turned out, I didn't need the directions ever – he drove me all the time.) We stood talking for the rest of the break. He didn't ask me to dance until after three other people had asked, and it was the last dance, so we didn't dance together that night. He did ask me to join a group of people going to a diner after the dance. We all had a great time, and when it came time to pay the check, I pulled out my wallet. Bill told me to put it away and paid for me. I was pleased that he paid my share. He was happy that I let him without any argument. (If I hadn't, we probably never would have dated, according to him.) Afterward, he drove me back to my car, and we stood there talking until 2 or 3 a.m. The next week he again showed up at the Wednesday night NNJSDA dance because I was going to be there. We danced together, went back to the same diner, and I got home about 3 a.m. again. The next week's dance was our first date, August 28. We became engaged February 3, 1986, and married November 7, 1987, after the original wedding date was changed due to Bill's joining the Air Force and his training schedule. My first impressions of Bill were that he was a tall, thin, kind of cute young man. He was 20 years old and going into his junior year of college. He was very nice and very friendly, and somehow we found a great deal about which to talk.

He enjoyed square dancing, and dancing with the Rutgers Promenaders with him was a real blast – energetic, fun, crazy. It didn't matter to him that I was over seven years older than he was. We spent a lot of time together. I realized within weeks that he was the right one for me. (Wouldn't you know that my mother's frustrating answer to how you do you know when you are in love – "You just know" – was true? And just as unexplainable.) But given that I was a lot older and had dated some and felt that I had had enough experience to know that Bill was what I wanted, I tried not to let him know the depth of my feelings. I didn't want to scare him off. Much to my surprise, one day he tapped my head and told me not to start hearing wedding bells in there. As it turns out, he was the one hearing them. He was considerate and romantic and fun, and he cherished me. So when he proposed, I said yes, and didn't change my mind even when he decided to go into the Air Force (and the Air Force blew away my June wedding date.)

Bill: Since I was an engineering student at the time and the Rutgers engineering school was isolated from the rest of the university, female and breathing was enough for me to notice. As to knowing it was the right person. I had dated girls that excited me physically, and girls that I could have intelligent conversations with. Patrice was the first that hit both buttons for me.

Favorite square dance memories?

Patrice: Dancing at a large festival where people kept switching squares (trading at the ends of waves, passing into the next square instead of doing the partner trade part of a Trade By)

Being in the Royal Court of a Mardi Gras Ball square dance in Mississippi

Being human checkers for a caller friend to try out new and interesting routines in his garage, followed by food.

Me calling an All Eight Circulate from facing lines in a lesson class and having the students do the move while the angels stopped dead and told me "You can't call that from there."

Bill: I do not know if favorite is the right term, but a strong bad memory from square dancing was from a club we danced at for a short time in Ohio. Background first. Our first child was 6 months to 1 year old, and I would dance with her in a front carrier. My wife would get into a square and I would get Beth settled, then join her. People walked out of the square rather than dance with us. It was a sizable portion of the club that did this. We stopped dancing for several years because that was the only club we could get to with my shift schedule.

Anything else?

Patrice: Bill thought I should have something to keep me occupied while he was in his military training. So we attended a local callers college and I learned to call. I never did too much with it, but I called some dances in a few states and taught square dancing for two years for our club in Mississippi.

All five of our children have learned to square dance, starting about age 9. I taught two of them. And most of them enjoy it still. (Our college age son dances sometimes but not really by preference.)

We are not currently official members of Rutgers Promenaders. We do attend the annual picnic and we try to get to at least one or two of their dances a year. So we may be considered unofficially members. But financially, given the distance and the fact that we can attend the dances so rarely, it makes no sense, so we have not officially been members for the last few years.

Sharon and Charlie Kittner  
Honesdale, PA

Currently we dance with Happy Footers of Youngsville, NY and Roy Leber at Tannersville, PA RSVP's.  
Former clubs: D and H Dancers, Orange Squares, Mainstream Dancers (Sharon), Rare Squares



How did you start square dancing?

Charlie: In 1975, Charlie's aunt and uncle invited him and Pat, his wife at that time, to come watch them. They did, thought it looked like fun and then they decided to learn to square dance.

Sharon: Saw an ad in the *Times Herald Record* in 1992 for a fun night, but did not go because she didn't want to go without a partner. Then in 1993 when the ad appeared again a co-worker named Earl Storms said he would like to learn too and would go as my dance partner. We did the classes together (Charlie and his now deceased wife were the main greeters of the new students) and we all became friends.

What year did you meet? September 1993 And marry? October 8, 2001

We did go to a dance with a Canadian club on our honeymoon...but it was not part of our wedding.

Circumstances of your meeting and dating?

Charlie: Sharon was in a class that my wife and I were angeling. There were many times when my wife could not dance because of her illness. I would dance with Sharon and when my wife passed away we just kept on dancing.

Sharon: Charlie and his wife were the main greeters when I took my class with DandH Dancers. After graduation, Charlie always encouraged me to go to dances even if I didn't have a regular partner. He said would gladly dance with me whenever his wife needed to sit due to illness. But sometimes I think his wife purposely sat out some tips to allow me time on the dance floor. Often I would go to Spinning Wheels in New Jersey rather than to my DandH club because I knew they always had 2 or 3 regular men without partners, but after Charlie's wife passed, everyone knew she wanted him to continue dancing and I was there to see Charlie through this rough period and we became very close and because we had the Love of Square Dancing Bond we just decided to dance the marriage dance. (We eloped, we were married in Niagara Falls and honeymooned in Canada then came home by way of the beautiful autumn foliage of Vermont.)

Favorite square dance memories?

The wonderful belated reception from our D and H members when they treated us to dinner and a show at Jarvis' place called Boodles in Chester, NY ~ a wonderful evening in which they truly let us know how happy they were for us.

Anything else?

Charlie (and Sharon) are members of CCNJ. Charlie and I both hung plaques in our Honesdale home summing up our thoughts:

Charlie's - "Life may not be the party we hoped for, but while we are here, We Should Dance!"

Sharon's - "Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass, It's about learning to dance in the rain!"

Kathy and Dan Koft  
South Brunswick, NJ

Cuer and caller for Rutgers Promenaders,  
Y Squares, MR Squares



How did you start square dancing?

Dan started dancing at East Brunswick High School with Dick Jones as the caller/instructor (PiR Squares). Kathy started at Rutgers when a co-worker invited her to come and try it out.

What year did you meet? 1987            And marry? 1989

We had a tip at our wedding for all of our square dancing friends and then one for everyone – and everyone really joined in on the dancing and fun.

Circumstances of your meeting and dating?

The first time I met Dan was on a double date (he was not my date....) and a contra dance in Lambertville.....

Favorite square dance memories?

First weekend..... funny clothes.....funny people..... lots of fun.  
First dance NNJDSA dance – are you sure I learned slide thru?  
First Toys for Tots Rutgers – Greg Kushla – don't ask!  
First Convention..... Wow!!!!

Ann (Tulp) and John Lovatt  
Franklin, NJ

Current club: Lakeland Squares  
Former clubs: Kittatinny Rangers, Hix & Chix (John), Sussex Spinners, Kuntry Kuz'ns, Lakeland Squares, IDTT, County Squares, Cloud 9 Round Dance



How did you start square dancing?

John: My cousins were square dancers. They wanted me to take lessons. I took Kittatinny Rangers classes with Dick Pasvolsky in 1979-1980.

Ann: I saw three different demos, including one at the Sussex County Farm and Horse Show. I wanted to take lessons. Finally, we found a club where my sisters and my mother and I could take lessons. I took lessons at Sussex Spinners with John Kaltenthaler in 1980-1981.

What year did you meet? 1980.            And marry? Engaged on July 4, 1982, married on August 6, 1983

We did not have square dancing at our wedding. However, when John proposed he said, "Could I have this dance for the rest of my life?" This was a popular round dance song at that time. It became our song for our first dance as husband and wife.

Circumstances of your meeting and dating?

I met John at the Kittatinny Rangers student level Christmas dance in 1980. He was there with a girl from his club. He asked me for one dance that evening. A few days later, we met at the Kuntry Kuz'ns student Christmas dance. John was there with another girl from another club. He told me this was his "Number 1 girl" and the girl last week was his "Number 2 girl." I figured I was at least "Number 3" and I would have to try harder to move up in position. I did not see him again until after I finished my lessons. We met again in May 1981 and he was alone that night. Soon after, he asked me to be his square dance partner. Now I was his "Number 1 girl." In May 1981, when we danced together we were perfectly in time with each other. I had been a ballet dancer, so I knew what timing brought to dancing. This is when I knew he was the one for me.

Favorite square dance memories?

My mother, my sisters and I learned Plus the summer after we graduated in the spring of 1981. We soon became all position dancers. We went to a NJ square dance convention. Les and Lola Patterson were there. Lola found my twin sister and me and she asked us to get in a set with two other sets of twin sisters and two sisters who looked almost alike. It would be 8 girls, with each set of sisters dressed alike, right in front of the caller. Each couple were all position dancers. She told us that even if we got confused, the square would not break down if we just danced in whatever position we happened to get into. The caller, John Kaltenthaler, was busy looking at his records and did not notice the hall become quiet as all the surrounding dancers realized that we were setting up the caller. He looked up and was startled by the sight of our square. All the other dancers started to laugh. He said "I'm not going to look at that square!" He then called a "hot hash tip" to try to break down our square. We never missed a beat. After the tip, someone took our photo and it was in the next issue of *Grand Square*.

Anything else?

Square dancing is a lot more romantic than most people realize. When you are dancing face-to-face, hand-in-hand, cheek-to-cheek, or hip-to-hip, it's almost impossible to not fall in love. Square dancing is a contact sport. But it is a lot safer than other contact sports! It is the best way to find a spouse who will share your love of dance.

Dianne and Don Madden  
Forked River, NJ



Current club: Y Squares  
Former clubs: Pairs and Squares, Elk Mountaineers,  
Crestwood Village Promenaders

How did you start square dancing?

We both started at Y Squares; but not at the same time.

What year did you meet? 1998            And marry? 2006

We had a church wedding and a reception aboard the River Lady, a paddlewheel riverboat out of Toms River. Don's son, Arnold, provided us with karaoke and Tom Denniston and Ellen McCabe cued our favorite round dances.

Circumstances of your meeting and dating?

Don joined Y Squares the year after I joined. We became round dance partners in 2001. We didn't begin to date until 2005. Up until that time we were good friends.

Favorite square dance memories?

When Tom Denniston and Ellen McCabe began our round dance class in 2001, I asked Don if he would like to join the class. He declined; but when the class actually began, Don went on his own. He arrived to find a shortage of women dancers. He called me at home and told me that the men were dancing with the men. He asked if I would come to the class. Well, I made an attempt to find the hall, which was off the beaten track. I didn't find it that night. When I got home I called and left a message for Don that I would need directions. The following week, I attended the class. The interesting thing is that the word had spread that women dancers were needed and there were quite a number of women on that second class night; and there now was a shortage of men. We are now in our 10th year of round dancing. We now dance with Roy Gotta and Mary Pickett.

Anything else?

Like many square dancers, we like to dance when we travel. We've danced with clubs in Florida, Pennsylvania, and we've danced in Canada. We attended the National Convention in North Carolina and we've been to Cherry Ridge a number of times.

Linda (Leslie) and Rick Murphy  
Morristown, NJ



Current club: Reelers  
Former club: Rutgers Promenaders

How did you start square dancing?

Linda: I think most of us can remember square dancing during gym class. But I first learned that square dancing could be a club activity while I lived at Scott AFB in Illinois. My parents wanted me to do an activity to meet people and signed me up. One of the sergeants on base was a caller and he had organized a club for teens. That was my introduction to what I guess I would call “organized square dancing.” The club fell apart during Operation Homecoming, the return of the Vietnam POWs, as the sergeant was heavily involved in it.  
Rick: Other than gym class, as Linda mentioned, my first involvement was seeing an advertisement for the Promenaders’ Hi-Lo dance in the college newspaper during my freshman year at Rutgers. I went to the Hi-Lo’s at the beginning of each semester freshman and sophomore years, and bit the bullet and took lessons at the beginning of junior year.

What year did you meet? 1980                      And marry? 1981

[Square dancing wasn’t a part of our wedding.] Our wedding was very small (less than 40 people). But the church, which was very small, looked filled to capacity. The reception was very informal and held at Linda’s parents’ house.

Circumstances of your meeting and dating?

Linda: During my senior year at Douglass College I had a friend who was a member of Rutgers Promenaders. She talked my roommate and me into going to the Hi-Lo at the beginning of the fall semester. That was the first time I saw Rick. I didn’t really get to know him until the lessons. Rick was one of the angels.  
Rick: I danced at Rutgers starting my junior year, and continued going to the Promenaders dances as an alumnus after I graduated. It was about 1½ years after my graduation that Linda and I met.

Favorite square dance memories?

Linda: One of my most memorable experiences was a Hi-Lo (intro to square dancing) at Rutgers. We had our dance in the multi-purpose room of the Rutgers Student Center. I believe the caller for the tip was Alan Gopin. He put on a loud disco song and had us dancing so fast and furious. Students were coming into the room to see what was going on. I’m pretty sure they never expected to see square dancing going on to a disco song. Another great memory was my first convention in Charlotte, NC. I had expected to feel self-conscious walking around in public in square dance attire. But when there are how-many-thousands others doing the same thing, it seemed very normal. Then the dance halls! It seemed like we should all have felt squished, there were so many of us. It was wonderful. And it was non-stop. It amazed me how many people were from outside of North America. We danced with people from England, South Africa, Germany, Japan – the list could keep going.  
Rick: Probably the most memorable experience for me was the first national convention I attended in

Milwaukee in 1979. It was memorable for the same reasons Linda mentioned: the crowds of people on public streets in square dance attire, the sheer number of people in the dance halls, from everywhere, and the fun of all the dancing.

Anything else?

Rejoining square dancing was one of the best decisions we ever made. The people we have met have been some of the kindest, nicest, and friendliest. The best squares we have been in have been those that can laugh at the breakdowns but keep on dancing. We can't help but dance with a smile on our faces as we twirl, bump hips, and dosado with everyone!

Ginny (Overberg) and Jeff Platania  
Somerset, NJ

Club: Rutgers Promenaders



How did you start square dancing?

Ginny: I started with Teen Promenaders when I was 14. I joined Rutgers Promenaders when I started attending Douglass College in 1977, and have been a member ever since.

Jeff: I started with Rutgers Promenaders in Fall 1980 when my best friend dragged me there – it was after the break-up of a relationship, and he said I was “bumming him out” and needed to meet some new women.

What year did you meet? Fall 1980 And marry? January 1985

Square dancing wasn't supposed to be a part of our wedding, originally, but Jeff's family refused to believe he had met me through square dancing, and wanted us to prove it by dancing at the reception. We ended up dancing a tip with Jeff's guitar teacher playing “Rocky Top” along with the band, and Betsy Gotta calling. We also had a square dance party for our dancing friends a week or so before the wedding.

Circumstances of your meeting and dating?

Jeff: As soon as I saw Ginny, I told my friend, “That's the one.” He said, “What?” I said, “That's the girl I'm going to marry.” I asked who she was, and he told me her name and said, “Forget it; she won't even talk to you.” It took me a couple of months to get up the nerve to even talk to her. By then, she was mad at me for some unknown reason. I didn't know what I had done. Read on for the explanation... Meanwhile, at our wedding, I reminded my friend of what I had said to him the first time I saw Ginny, and pointed out that I had, in fact, just married her!

Ginny: Early in my senior year of college, a friend pointed him out to me as someone she was interested in. He was in the fall square dance class at the time. I thought he looked okay but wasn't interested in him myself. A couple of months later she told me he had done something really unkind so of course I took her word for it and I decided I hated him, too. It turned out that she was jealous because he had asked her about me and was interested in asking me out. Three months later, at the end of a dance, I found myself first trading smart-ass remarks, then flirting with him – to this day I have no idea why! – and he asked me out and I said yes. We dated for five months but had problems and broke up. Nine months later, when I was halfway through grad school, I ran into him at a summer dance. It may sound silly, but when he walked in the door, it was like I saw him with a new set of eyes. A thought instantly popped into my head: “That's the man I'm going to marry.” At the same time that I thought “that's a ridiculous thought,” I also knew deep-down it was true. We went out after the dance, talked for a long time about what had gone wrong before, and decided to give it another try. About eighteen months later, we were engaged, and just over a year after that we got married. We've been married 26½ years now.

Favorite square dance memories?

Annual Labor Day square dance weekends, first in Ohio, then in Virginia, now at Cherry Ridge, where we get to dance and cut up with our friends, most of whom we knew back when we were all young and still single. Going out after dances, whether for a late-night diner raid or a potluck at someone's house.

A square dance cruise to Bermuda in 1995, where we danced on board the tour boat that took us to/from our snorkeling excursion – it was a three-hour tour on board the Minnow, and we danced as it went through part of the Bermuda Triangle!

Annual winter barbecue at the Gottas' where we get to catch up with the old college crowd

Having a great group of friends for over 30 years with whom we've shared the good and the bad, the highs and the lows of life, and knowing that when times get tough, they'll always be there for us, ready to help, listen, and care

Seeing the younger members – children of the old crew – who have a bar on their club badges that says "The Next Generation." A great way to get new members for a club with shrinking attendance is to "grow your own"!

Anything else?

Ask Betsy Gotta about how they changed renters but kept the same boyfriend – who ended up marrying the new renter.

When we were all single and college-aged, you either learned how to get along with a person after you broke up, or one of you would have to quit the club. Since most of us couldn't imagine quitting, some of our weddings looked like, as a friend described it, a reunion of the bride's/groom's exes!

Helena and Ken Robinson  
Hillsborough, NJ

Club: Rutgers Promenaders



How did you start square dancing?

My parents were square dancers, so I knew of it in the late 60s, early 70s. They got me to a dance once and I hated it. Helena was already dancing when we met. She graduated lessons in 1975. I started square dancing in the fall of 1978 because Helena was dancing – what better incentive??

What year did you meet? 1977      And marry? 1979

We did not have square dancing at our wedding. Our circle of square dance friends was not as big as it would eventually become and we had to limit the number of guests at the reception.

Circumstances of your meeting and dating?

We met on a blind date! Sort of arranged by my mother. Helena went to a Star Thru dance in Toms River by herself and was approached by two women – one of whom was my mother. The other women said, “You’re a nice single Jewish woman, aren’t you? How would you like to meet some nice Jewish men?” Helena gave out her phone number to both women. This was around Thanksgiving. A month later, when the woman I was chasing after told me that she had “sort of a boyfriend,” I looked for Helena’s phone number – which I couldn’t find. I was going to my parents’ home that weekend (it happened to be Christmas Eve) and I asked my mother if she remembered the phone number. She remembered the name, which I looked up in the phone book. I called and got her on the second phone try. We went to the movies and saw *The World’s Greatest Lover* with Gene Wilder. I proposed 2.5 months later and we were married on March 25, 1979.

Favorite square dance memories?

How can I pick just one? Would it be the first dance Helena took me to after finishing Mainstream lessons? It was a full Plus dance (then called Plus 2). On the way there she told me all the Plus calls and I swear the caller used every one in the first tip. By the end of the night people were asking when I was going to take Advanced lessons! Or could it be going to my first National Convention in Memphis, TN in 1980? Over 30,000 dancers were there. I remember dancing a lot of A1 during the convention (before I actually learned Advanced) and pulling many people through the tips. (I took Advanced lessons that Summer with Lee Kopman.) Or was it going to my first National Challenge Convention in the Summer of 1982 when we were halfway through C1 lessons? I’ve traveled to about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the 48 contiguous states, mostly for square dance related events.

Anything else?

Helena was misdiagnosed in 1979 with a “rare benign growth,” which was correctly diagnosed in 1981 as cancer (Adenoid Cystic Carcinoma). A few weeks after her surgery and the start of radiation treatments, we went to the January Jubilee Festival in Philadelphia, where she saved her strength so she could dance the “Die Hard” – a full hour of dancing with practically no breaks. This shows that dancing was our life and she wasn’t going to let her illness get in the way. We spent the 10 years dancing all over the country. Once the cancer reoccurred, Helena scheduled surgeries and procedures around planned square dance activities. She never let recovering from the procedures interfere either. Usually, she went dancing and told the doctor what she did after the fact. Helena passed away in 2005.

Connie (Seiler) and Terry Schmalzried  
Morganville, NJ

Current club: Rutgers Promenaders

Former clubs:

Terry – Tip and Ringers (MS, P), 2 Bee Squares (A-2)

Both – Princeton Rounds, Red Rose (Exhibition),

BACtracks (A-2), tagBACs (C-1)



How did you start square dancing?

Connie: I saw an ad in the Rutgers student newspaper in September 1981 advertising a beginner square dance – and I have been there ever since.

Terry: I wanted to learn to square dance in college, but never had my homework done on Sunday evenings when the local club met. So when in my first job after college I saw an ad for a Bell Labs club offering square dance lessons, I jumped at the opportunity.

What year did you meet? 1986            And marry? 1994

Many of our friends and guests at our wedding were square dancers, so we planned one tip and one round at our wedding reception. Dan and Kathy Koft called and cued. I think about two squares got onto the floor. Most of our relatives hadn't seen us square or round dancing before, appreciated seeing us demonstrate, and remarked that we put on a great show!

Circumstances of your meeting and dating?

Connie: Tip and Ringers (Bell Labs Square Dance Club) came to visit Rutgers. Some of their members came back since there were many fun people dancing. Terry and I went to dances together as friends for a number of years – often as part of a group. Terry seemed to be nice quiet shy guy, a bit of a geek – but also liked to do crazy fun stuff.

Terry: When I had learned most of the Mainstream calls, Craig Sherman, my square dance caller, recommended going out to dance with other clubs to practice our new skills. He suggested Rutgers Promenaders had a lot of dancers my age, many of them singles. I went, found plenty of welcoming singles to dance with, good calling, great refreshments, and had a lot of fun. Connie was in a relationship at the time, so wasn't really on my radar for dance partners for the first several years. She was perky, very pretty, always contributed something for the refreshment table, and was usually working on some needlework craft between tips. After her relationship broke up, Connie became one of the singles I asked to dance with at Rutgers. I took her to other dances in the area as well, and we traveled to conventions in neighboring states and to a couple of national square dance conventions. We became friends, then boyfriend/girlfriend for years. I finally realized one day when struggling with a closet-remodeling project in my house that I would miss Connie if she wasn't around, and that she had come over to help me on that Saturday when she could have chosen to do so many other things herself that day. I asked her best friend (also a square dancer) about Connie's taste in rings and swore her to secrecy, bought a ring, and planned to pop the question at Connie's favorite restaurant in Colonial Williamsburg on our way to the National Advanced and Challenge Square Dance Convention. The right moment didn't arrive until after dinner under a streetlight by Old Parish Church on our stroll through Colonial Williamsburg, but Connie said, "Yes!", and we married four months later.

Favorite square dance memories?

Connie: When I carried our first baby, Alex, through his first-ever tip, Alex cried through most of it as Dan Koft called to the aptly chosen "What a Beautiful Noise." Betsy Gotta singing "*Alex's Restaurant*" to Alex to calm him afterward in the dance hall bathroom. Of course, passing the baby during tips. Dancing on the beach after a Rutgers graduation. Leap Day dances. Dancing on stage for the Statue of Liberty Centennial celebration closing ceremony.

Terry: Going out for dinner and conversation after dances with members of our square dance clubs. Vacationing with friends to and from square dance weekends. The professional photos we had taken of us at National Square Dance Conventions in full square dance attire that Connie had sewn. Performing with Red Rose at National Square Dance Conventions.

Anything else?

Terry was impressed when visiting other clubs while traveling in Kansas, Alaska, and Colorado how the entire family was welcomed and attended dances: older adults, young adults, teens, children, and babies. Not all of them danced, but they all socialized and visited with each other. Terry brought this idea back and Rutgers Promenaders has been very supportive of families over the years. It has kept us dancing rather than taking a hiatus to rear kids, and the club has a number of children who have learned to dance with the club, including our three sons. We hope to welcome you to a dance sometime, and bring the kids!

Mary (Cottone) and Bill Sellar  
South River, NJ

Current club: Rutgers Promenaders

Former teen clubs:

Bill – Ridge Squares (Basking Ridge, NJ)

Mary – Conejo Swingers (Thousand Oaks, CA)



How did you start square dancing?

Bill and I both belonged to teen clubs, then stopped (he graduated high school, I moved from CA to NJ). I saw the Rutgers Promenaders ad in the *Daily Targum* (Rutgers University newspaper) and having just suffered through a breakup, thought this would be a great way to get out and meet new people.

Bill's mother saw the ad in a local paper, and suggested to him and his brother that they start up lessons again. By the time they started, I was vice president and therefore in charge of lessons, and was there weekly.

What year did you meet? 1983 (started dating in 1984)      And marry? 1988

We celebrated at our reception by having a square dance tip and round for us and our Promenader friends courtesy of Betsy and Roy Gotta, our friends as well as caller and cuer for our club.

Circumstances of your meeting and dating?

I was vice president and in charge of lessons (administrative – caller was in charge of teaching!) when Bill joined, so we saw each other weekly. I was dating someone else at the time, so although he was interested, he didn't want to break anything up, so he, my roommate and I just started hanging out as friends, going to dances, etc. My other relationship broke up when I realized my feelings for Bill were more than just friends. We stayed together all through the rest of college, and got engaged after we both graduated from college.

Favorite square dance memories?

Our first trip together was to the 1984 National Square Dance Convention in Baltimore, MD. We were in one of the two central platform squares (out of 26 total on the field) as part of the country music section of the Statue of Liberty Centennial celebration at Giants Stadium on July 6, 1986. Our engagement was announced to our friends by Roy Gotta at our Toys for Tots Dance in December 1986. Roy also obliged us by dedicating the round dance "Thank God for Kids" at dances to us when we wanted to announce our two pregnancies. Our younger daughter is also a Promenader, having grown up around the dances.

Anything else?

We have many friends that we have made as a result of our long membership in the Promenaders, and know that we will always have friends at any dance we decide to attend.

Holly and Bill Smythe  
Warren, NJ

Current clubs: Bee Sharps; Mountain Squares  
Former clubs:  
Bill – Rutgers Promenaders, Friendly Squares, Valley Squares,  
Solitaires (singles club), Harmony Dancers  
Holly – Do-Si-Doers (teen club; Indiana, PA), Footloose  
Squares, Golden Triangle Singles (Pittsburgh, PA)



How did you start square dancing?

Maria Light invited Bill to Rutgers Promenaders lessons. Holly answered a newspaper advertisement for “Modern Dance” (no mention of “western” or “square”). She went to see what it was all about and she was hooked. The teenage club, Do-Si-Doers, had matching outfits and danced at all of the little county fairs in western PA.

What year did you meet? 1996            And marry? 1998

Our wedding took place in the outdoor “Chapel in the Woods” at St. Paul’s UMC in Pittsburgh, but we had a square dance wedding reception at the First Presbyterian Church of Cranford one week later. We hired caller John Kaltenthaler, cuer Dave Roberts, and a DJ. We had square dancers, family, and non-square dancing friends at the reception.

Circumstances of your meeting and dating?

We met on January 26, 1996. This was the first time Holly attended a square dance after moving to New Jersey. Bill was visiting Bee Sharps. Irma Huhn introduced us. Bill proposed on September 26, 1997 during a Bee Sharps dance while John Kaltenthaler called “diamond” calls. Peg Dockery was the cuer and she really enjoyed watching the proposal. We were married on September 26, 1998.

Favorite square dance memories?

Holly: Dancing at all of the little county fairs with my teenage club. Dancing in the pool at the Star Spangled Banner Festival. Dancing in a pool to an Australian square dance caller and getting a platypus badge (no ducks in Australia!). Going to the National Singles and International Singles Square Dance Conventions with my Canadian friends Karen and Lynda. Going to out-of-state conventions and dances with Bill.  
Bill: Good – From the start with square dance lessons everything was great. I have very much enjoyed going to the various clubs, NJ Sate Conventions, Mini-Festivals, and other types of square dance activities. Bad – I have attended dances as a solo dancer and was not permitted to dance. I asked for a refund and they said “no.” So I just left and never returned. On another occasion at the end of a dance I was not feeling well and wanted to sit out. I was rudely asked to get up and move. I kept my cool and tried to move to another area to rest. Sad – I was at a Valley Square club dance and after an hour or so a fellow dancer collapsed and a dancer right away started CPR until the rescue squad arrived. The EMTs worked on him for a while but he did not make it. Whatever – I have traveled five hours to a dance in Lewisburg, PA for a few hours and then returned the same day. On the way back home I got stuck in traffic for an hour and a half. I got home around midnight

then had to work the next day. At one time I danced 14 days straight. On one of those 14 days, I danced in the Poconos in the morning and then traveled to Elmwood Park, NJ for a dance in the afternoon.

Anything else?

For the past 28 plus years I (Bill) have been dancing and I still love the wonderful world of square dancing. (Holly has been dancing on and off since fall 1972 – started as a teen.) We have both served as Association Delegate and Club Treasurer.

Alice (Tulp) and Andrew Goodell (Husband #1)

Former clubs: Sussex Spinners, Kittatinny Rangers, Lakeland Squares, Western Wheelers, Motiv8ors, IDTT (I'll Dance To That), Cloud 9 Round Dance

How did you start square dancing?

I participated in a demo in August at the Sussex County Fair (formerly Farm and Horse Show) in Augusta, NJ. I took lessons with Sussex Spinners the next month, September 1980, and graduated in May 1981. John Kaltenthaler was the caller. My late husband had taken lessons the year before with Betsy Gotta in a combined class from Covered Bridge Squares and Rutgers Promenaders.

What year did you meet? 1980            And marry? 1983

The late Peg and Joe Dockry had been our round dance teachers and she volunteered to both call squares and cue rounds at our wedding. She was a cuer, not a caller, but she learned enough from fellow callers to do our reception, in the social hall of the church where we were married.

Circumstances of your meeting and dating?

My identical twin sister and I met our husbands the same night. John Lovatt and Andrew Goodell had gone to the student level "holiday" square dance at Kittatinny Rangers. Since they had never met us, they brought two women with them as dance partners. This was December 1980, and we had only had about 12 weeks of lessons. When Andrew walked in wearing his cowboy hat, cowboy boots, and Western style shirt and pants, I thought he was really cute. I remember thinking, "Wow, that's the man I want to marry!"

Favorite square dance memories?

We set up a square in the front corner of the hall where Bob Mitchell was calling at Lakeland Squares, when it was in Parsippany, NJ. Our square had extra dancers who kept jumping in and out, as we all took turns at wrapping the caller in toilet paper from his feet to his head, including his face! As other dancers started laughing, our square got more and more attention, until everyone realized what was happening. Bob had been "sight-calling" and ended the tip when he could no longer see.

Anything else?

Carl Ostertag was a local dancer (Kittatinny Rangers, Sussex Spinners) who always wore a badge that said "Panty Watcher." One night at a Sussex Spinners dance, Audrey Bolin approached him and asked him how he could tell us apart, since we are identical twins. Without missing a beat, Carl replied, "Oh, that's easy. Alice always wears her garter on the right leg and Ann wears hers on the left leg!" Ann and I looked at each other knowingly, and simultaneously we both pulled up our skirts and petticoats, each stuck out the appropriate leg, and said, "See?" Audrey's mouth fell open, flabbergasted, and she walked away without another word. Carl burst out laughing, as he had made the whole thing up, on the spot. Unknown to anyone, we had both left the house with the garters on our left leg. On the way to the dance, my leg was bothering me so, in the car on the way to the dance, I had switched the garter to the right leg for that night only. The only way to really *definitely* tell us apart is to observe in which hall we are dancing. Ann and John dance only the Mainstream and Plus programs. Alice and Michael dance every program from Mainstream through C3A.



Alice (Tulp) and Michael Winnick (Husband #2)  
Massapequa, NY

Current clubs: We dance with Lee Kopman in Rockville Centre, NY and with Todd Fellegly in Katonah, NY. Lee Kopman and Todd Fellegly have groups that are caller-run clubs. They do not belong to any association and they have no names for these groups. Lee's Monday groups are Plus and Advanced. Lee's Tuesday groups are C1, C2 and C3A. Todd's groups are C1 and C2.



How did you start square dancing?

Alice participated in a demo at the Sussex County Fair (formerly Farm and Horse Show) in Augusta, NJ. She took lessons with John Kaltenthaler at Sussex Spinners the next month, September 1980, and graduated in May 1981. Michael started square dancing (Eastern style) at county parks on Long Island. Someone told him about an open house with Lou Flego and he took lessons in 1978.

What year did you meet? Labor Day weekend 2002

And marry? October 21, 2004

Lee and Lilith Kopman volunteered their services as caller and line dance leader at our reception, held in the restaurant where we had first gone to dinner together.

Circumstances of your meeting and dating?

Alice: On the first day of the [National Singles Square Dance Convention in Richmond, VA], on the third tip, as I stood in a square with my hand up for a partner, I saw Michael spot me and I knew he was coming in my direction. He became my dance partner for the entire weekend. When he asked for my phone number and then called to see that I got home safely, I knew that was it.

Michael: When I saw Alice for the first time, on the escalator, I thought "She's the one!"

Michael proposed during a full eclipse of the moon, while we were attending a square dance at Country Promenaders on November 8, 2003. The caller was Jim Snyder, who did the song, "Alice, Alice, Who the Heck is Alice?" Then Steve Bradt cued "Could I Have This Dance?" which Michael had asked Mary Pickett to teach him, just so that he could dance it after he proposed.

When we met, I danced Advanced in square dancing and Michael danced C2; but I danced Phase V in rounds and Michael had never round danced in his life. So we made a deal. I had to get up to his level of square dancing and he had to get up to my level of round dancing. Now we both dance C3A and Michael is up to Phase IV.

Favorite square dance memories?

A square dancer who knew Alice and Michael had gone to a dance at Lakeland Squares, where she saw Ann and John. She walked up and asked "Where's your husband Michael?" Ann explained that we were identical twins, and learned that this woman would be attending the National Square Dance Convention the following

week at Detroit, MI (2011). As Alice and Michael walked into their hotel in Detroit to register, this same woman was ahead of them in line. She turned around and saw us and asked, "Where's your husband John?" Ann had set the woman up to ask us this question. We all had a good laugh.

Anything else?

I'd had a premonition that I was going to marry a square dance caller. Michael went to callers school in 2005 and has taught classes in Mainstream, Plus, and Advanced. He has run workshops for all levels from Mainstream through C3A. He has also called at two National Square Dance Conventions, doing Advanced and Challenge.