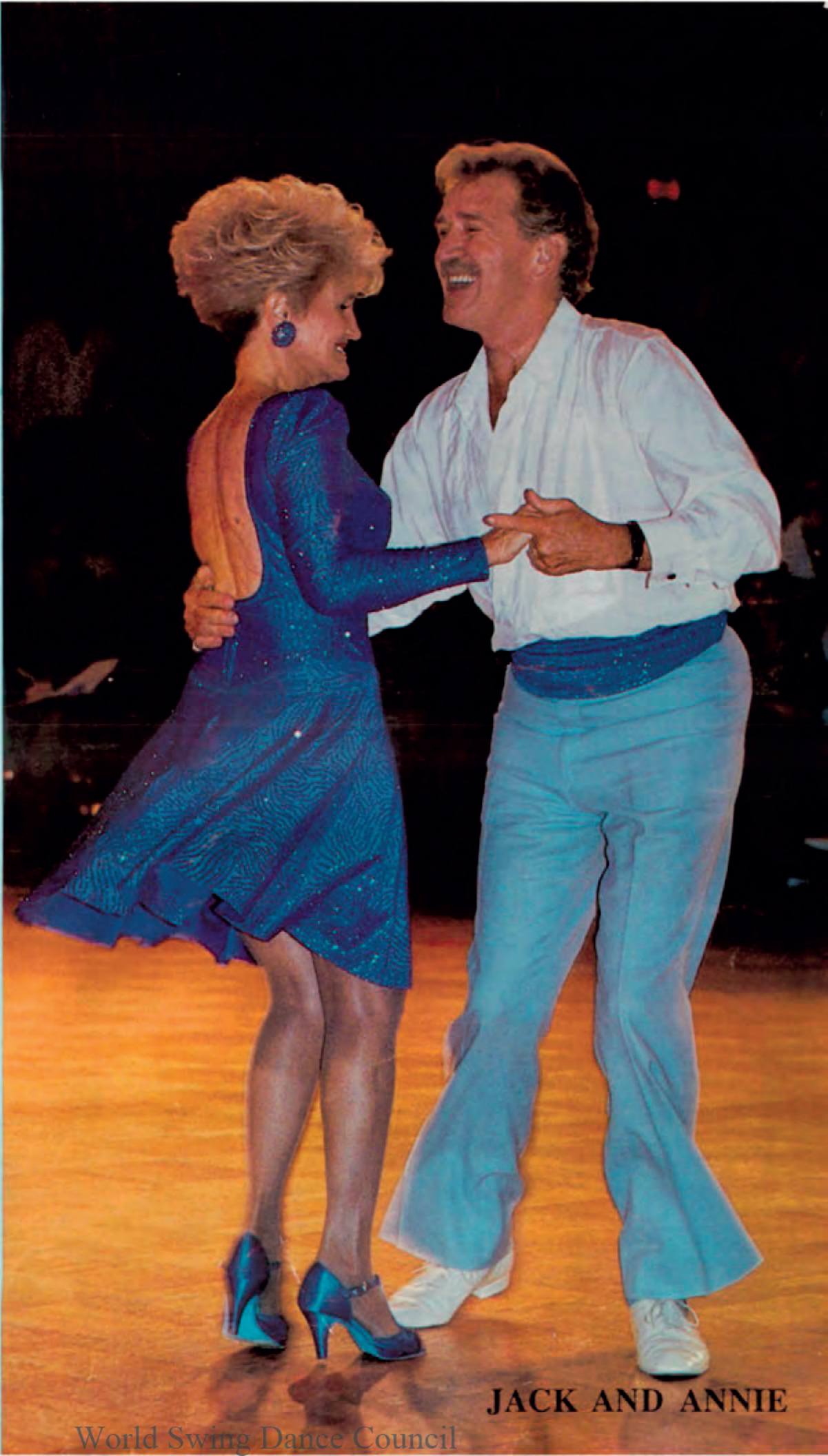


JITTERBUG

Volume I ISSUE 1
JUNE 1992

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COVER STORY

As all Swing Dance buffs can readily see, well-known and much loved **JACK CAREY** and his delightful partner, **ANNIE HIRSCH**, grace the cover of the first, and long-awaited issue of JITTERBUG Magazine.

Jack and Annie have been dancing together since 1987 and have thrilled many an audience with their tricky-foot showcase routines. They are also famed for their technique seminars and pattern classes which they teach in various states across the country. Their diversified dance backgrounds and personal biographies can be found on pages 6 and 7.

THE JITTERBUG SPEAKS

JITTERBUG MAGAZINE
CONCERNS ITSELF WITH

*East Coast - West Coast
Lindy - Flying Lindy
Shag - Bop - Whip - Push
Jamaica Whip - Lambdanu
Dixie - Imperial - Balboa
Hustle - Disco - Reggae
And That Which Is In
Immediate Vogue*

TELL US...

What's happening
with you?

This section of JITTERBUG Magazine will henceforth be devoted to letters to the editor. Your input, ideas, comments, opinions and critiques are most welcome. (Just be sure you're able to handle the backlash!)

TOMMY SMITH

from Dallas, Texas

Be it Jitterbug, Swing, Shag, or... in Houstin, Texas... Whip; in my opinion, all are related... some more remotely than others. Whatever the title, if it feels good and it looks good, it has to be good.

Push is a favorite in Dallas and surrounding Texas counties. "Contemporary" and "Traditional" are two basic titles used in dance contests. However, I am just going to touch on some basics in the two dances with which I am most familiar.

The basic differences between Jitterbug, or some call it Eastern Swing, and Push, as I see it are:

1. Push is done in a slot and Jitterbug goes around in a circle. (Push is much better on a crowded floor.)

2. Jitterbug has one triple and a "one" two with the girl going back on her left on the "one."

3. Push has two triples consecutively and a "one" two, with the girl coming forward on her right on "one."

4. Basically I picture the girl always coming into her partner.

5. I think one of the most important things for a girl to learn is to spin. Two spins to several seem to impress judges, especially when the girl comes out beautifully with poise.

6. And let's not forget styling. No matter what dance, lots of time on the floor, and watching someone you admire will help a bunch in either gender.

BILL and ELEANOR REED

from New York, NY

The Savoy is basically a whipping style done mostly to 8 counts and sometimes 6. It is characterized by the lady walking forward toward the man instead of the conventional back balance as done in studio Lindy. The whip style of dancing was prevalent from 1940 to 1950. Somewhere along the way the studios converted the lady's walk to a back balance as done in the early Lindy.

Study any recognized dancer from the early forties; and, even though they have worked for studios and probably teach a syllabus style, when they dance for their own enjoyment, it's the Savoy they are doing. They dance that style for feeling, comfort and enjoyment. The irony of it is, somebody obviously smarter than our nucleus of authoritative New York teachers, translated the Savoy styling and called it West Coast Swing. Their emphasis was to dance in a slot where the girl walks forward, forward. It thus became a symbol of West Coast excellence.

Call it what you want but it's the same Savoy all New York danced in the mid forties; but, why not place the emphasis on the whips and call it what it is... the Savoy!

JOHN P. SMITH

from Sacramento, CA

There are two old adages which apply 99% of the time to the subject of "giving or accepting advice." One, advice is only worth what you payed for it...and two, only give advice to those who request it! It would benefit everyone greatly if dancers on the floor would remember these adages.

For the new dancer, remember; persons giving unsolicited advice (critique) on the dance floor, generally fall into one of three categories; 1) persons who have the knowledge and ability to teach who sincerely wish to help you improve, 2) persons who sincerely wish to help, but do not have the knowledge or teaching ability and 3) those insecure individuals who are always finding fault with others in order to make themselves feel superior. Every club or organization has its share of all three types of individuals. Learn to recognize the "types" and don't be misled or discouraged by the third type of "advice-giver!"

If you are a #1 or #2 and have the urge to give unsolicited advice, consider this; there is nothing wrong with "advice" relating to your personal preferences such as the amount of resistance you like, but in other areas... such as technique or styling...be careful. If you are a #3, the point is lost anyway!

CAY CANNON

from Laguna Beach, CA

For those of you who value the benefits of self-critique, here is the most educational way to go about it.

Get a video camera, set up the stage, rent/hire/beg/borrow or steal an outstanding partner, and get someone to tape you while you are dancing all of the material you have acquired throughout your days, years or months of floor experience. Put your best foot forward; be mindful of your posture, use care with your footwork and follow through, and don't forget to use style and animation.

With the filming complete, sit down alone, taking a great deal of time, and view your tapes, first, at regular speed for an overall picture of the way you look to others. You may be surprised to find what you think you are doing and what actually comes across are two different things. The areas over which you previously felt self conscious may not look so bad after all. On the other hand, those aspects of your dancing you never considered as having fault... or, more likely, you never even considered as aspects, may jump out of the screen and knock you off your chair.

When the "total" truth has sufficiently sunk in, replay the tape at a much slower speed making periodic stops. Look carefully at body carriage. Does it appear proud... confident... regal? Is your chin up and out of your collar? Does your head look as if it's reaching for the ceiling? Is your ribcage pulled up from your waistline? How about arms shoulders and hands... do they look like they comfortably belong to the rest of your body?... Is everything moving together... in unison?

Now take a good look at your footwork. Are all patterns being entered, excited from one of the five foot positions? Is your foot placement on the inside edge of the ball of the foot? Is the illusion crisp? lightfooted? definitive? sure?

After the "overall" view, and the "fine point" scrutiny, the third step in this self analysis calls for a little outside assistance. One at a time, you will need three other viewers of your film: Your instructor, or, a qualified teacher of the dance; a fellow dancer whom you regard as skilled and perhaps even enviable; and a total novice to dance. Now, ask for the absolute truth... "Don't spare my feelings... tell me as you see it." From all three critics you will gain some very valuable insight... especially from the NOVICE(!)

Good luck to all swing dancers in the quest to better their dancing.

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JITTERBUG

September
1992

This Issue
**G.I. JIVE
and
SWING
IN THE
MOVIES**



META, CAY AND SANDRA

Mock Cover Photo by FanFlair

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World Swing Dance Council

JACK CAREY

Mr. Jack Himself

by John Devorick

"Swing is the only dance form where a man and a woman can merge while still maintaining their individuality of style."

-Jack Carey

It takes a Ship's Cook to make it... and he's got to be seasoned with four years in the service, and make his kitchen in Los Angeles during the Golden Years of Swing Dance. Add the right music, pepper with fancy footwork, simmer well, serve generously on the local dance floors, and that's the recipe for JACK CAREY... and he's still cooking today.

After his release from the Navy, Jack devoted his recreational time to Swing Dancing. He relates that those were the days of the Big Bands and the glamorous Ballroom Events. With his dynamic partner, Lorraine Edwards, he entered and shared top honors in Swing Dance competitions almost five nights a week. During my interview, his tone warmed many times as he recalled the names of his contemporaries, and then remembered their most memorable moments in the dance scene. He recalled competition dancing as pretty much where it was at.

It seems that 1949 was a banner year for Jack, as that was the year he took first place in the Swing division of the *Los Angeles Examiner's* "Harvest Moon Ball." This granddaddy of contests featured winning competitors from all of the major cities across the country. He tells it that contestants had to dance twice... once at a medium fast tempo, and once at "get-it-on" speed.

Back in those days, Jack and his friends acquired many movie and television credits. He says it was an exciting time to be a part of Swing Dancing. But, alas, with the music change in the early 60s, the Swing Dance World began to crumble. Big Bands dissolved, the ballrooms gave way to smaller clubs and saloons, and the music was replaced by small groups and combos.



12-year old Jack with his coach (getting ready to try out their dancing shoes).

Then the darkest of all days happened when "Twist" dancing became the fashion. For many, Swing Dance went completely underground as the social dancers stopped touching and dancing together. In spite of this, Jack seized the opportunity to do floor shows in and around the Los Angeles area. With his

partner, Lorraine, he was additionally assisted by Jerry and Gloria Igo. Together, they would do exhibitions, sometimes a contest, and incorporate other novelty acts. Once, for a finale, Jack went so far as to tap dance! That's show biz!

Jack's mind was as agile as his feet... for it was he who initiated the very first Jack and Jill contest. He was struck by the workability of bowling leagues' use of this approach to competition, and introduced the idea to the dancers at "Hank and Stan's" in Downey, California in 1955. It has since become a widely used way to not only have the enjoyment of non-programmed partner dancing, but also have a perfect means to increase the skill of lead and follow techniques.

Today, Swing Dancing has come back into vogue again and, although the music is greatly responsible, it is, in a large part, due to guys like Jack Carey and his peer group. They kept it alive when the social set abandoned the art. They actively participated in the affairs of the Swing Dance Clubs and, through persistent appearances along with their contribution to the workshops that are so valuable to the buffs, they are actively promulgating it today. Keep on cookin', Jack!

Editor's Note:

Jack and Annie's swing dance classes are superb. You can catch them at most major events in California, Nevada, and Arizona; although, recently they spent six days going up the river from New Orleans, teaching about 50 people on the Mississippi Queen Paddle Boat, and they just returned from the "Boogie '90 Bash" in New York where they taught 40-50 teachers and students at a three-day swing dance camp.

ANNIE HIRSCH

Little Miss Jill

by Cay Cannon

"When Jack came into my life,
it was the frosting on my cake."

-Annie Hirsch

"Tell me something,
or tell me everything."

-Annie Hirsch

Jack's Jill, who has been lovingly called "Little Annie" by everyone in the dance community, was born on a farm in Akron, Ohio. She moved to Stockton, California at school age and later graduated from Stockton High.

Of Italian descent, and coming from a family of dancers, all of Annie's home style gatherings included lots of music and dance.

"My father played a small concertina (accordion) and he would wrap his arms around my mother, with the concertina in his hands, and play it behind her back while they danced the Italian Polka.

"My two brothers, Larry and Danny were very good dancers and when the one whom we lost to cancer came home from the war in 1945 he was an elegant and polished jitterbug. He attracted attention everywhere he danced... and was my teacher. He was not only a great dancer but a great human being.

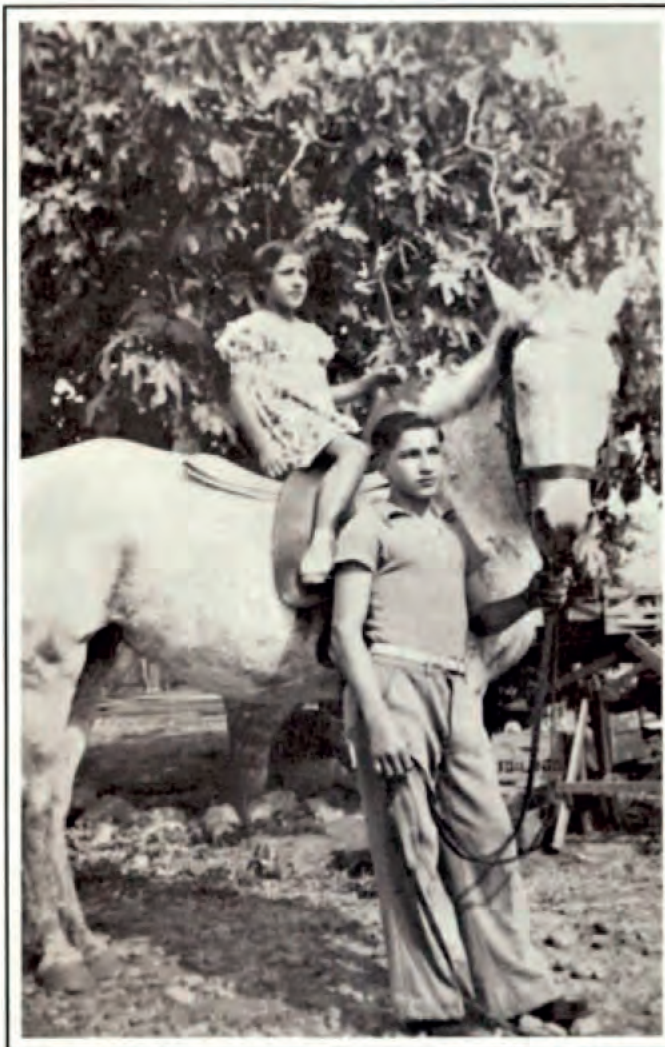
"Growing up on a farm left me little time to attend any of the dance functions at school, but I did participate one time and won the \$2.00 prize for "Best Dancer" ... that was big money!

"Stockton was somewhat limited, but I got to know the town's best dancers and learned a lot from them... Bill Joslin was one of my teachers.

"Moving to Southern California, I became aware that Swing Dancing wasn't dead, as I had thought. Even with the popularity of Rock music, the hard core Swing Dancers were still out there at the "Kontiki" and "Ivanhoe" in Temple City, the "Waterwheel" in West Covina, and later, my very favorite spots, the "Staircase" and "Top of the West" in Downey, where we enjoyed Mark Anthony's group and Kenny Wetzel's music.

"I was extremely shy in those days, but I admired some of the great dancers like Pat Eggers and Darlene Greminger Lind, Jackie and Jerry Cobb, Ron Andrews and Darlene Goree - super couples! And my favorite gals to watch were Bonnie Hauser and Sandee Bryant.

dance functions purely out of selfishness, because I want this dance to be around forever! In return for the joy it has brought into my life; hopefully I can be a small part in opening the door for others. Traveling all over the country with dance conventions has widened my family of friends, all of whom are dear to me."



Little Annie down on the farm

"Competition wasn't for me, but I thoroughly enjoyed watching it and, today, I enjoy judging it. I support all the

EDITOR'S NOTE

The very well known Annie Hirsch is, in our book, one of the most outstanding Swing Dancers in the nation today. She is also a very giving lady. Her devotion to Swing Dance and all those who are participants can be measured by her many accomplishments.

She is a member of the Board of Directors of the United States Swing Dance Council, the Advisory Board of Directors of the US Open Swing Dance Championships, and the Advisory Board of Directors of the American Swing Dance Association of New York. She is a Contestant Representative for the US Open Swing Dance Championships, a Head Judge at many of the Swing Dance Conventions and a Judge at many more. She and Jack Carey are first place Shining Star recipients for the California Swing Dance Hall of Fame, and Legends in the Rebel Swing Dance Club. And that's not all! She was awarded the Humanitarian Award at the U.S. Open Swing Dance Championships and, with Jack, has brought raves from the audience at numbers of event showcases and jams. This delightful couple has also performed at DANCE AC-

TION functions. By the way, a number of Swing Dance Clubs across the country are now changing their "Jack and Jill" Contests to be called a...

"Jack and Annie"!

WHAT EVER BECAME OF...?

An Open Letter to Mr. Gail Carpenter

Dear Gail,

Wherever you are...I hope this magazine catches your eye, and your love of Swing Dance compels you to open its pages and find this letter. I've exhausted every course I can think of to find you... and in a last desperate effort to make contact, I've chosen this means. It's almost as if you've vanished off the face of the earth; and now, above all times...you should be here. You'd be amused and pleased, I know, if you were only aware of this magazine. Yes, you'd even demand to participate in its development. You'd be especially excited over this particular issue, for it features those dances and days which were "the best of our lives." Together we could laugh about them, cry about them, and reminisce to our hearts' content.

Do you remember the first time when we met? It was during an Arthur Murray All American Contest, held for teachers, at the Wilshire Studio in 1955. What an utterly nerve-wracking event that was...do you recall? Ironic, too, that the later Seminar Team of Carpenter, Cannon, Carson, and Curry were part of the group who were all striving to take first place in 'top teacher' competitions. That whole idea of having staff study dance and sales manuals, all year long, in order to compete for prestige among their peers, was certainly a beneficial and lucrative one. It was a great way to make better practitioners...who would then be able to sell lessons to boot. Anyway...you won the All American...as we all knew you would. You were a genius. A bawdy, crazy, unpredictable genius. Not long after that you became the Regional Director's Assistant.

I guess, one of the wildest things that happened, in my association with you, was when, as a Traveling Rep, you came to the studio in Fontana, California, which I happened to be managing. You saw one of my teachers, Armando Neri, waltzing around the floor with his student, and commented on how delightfully she danced. You stopped them, spoke to the woman, and discovered that she was not only enormously enamored with her lessons, but that she was an enthusiastic booster of the school, the system, and the whole Arthur Murray program. Your comment to me was, "How is it you've not made this lady a Lifetime Member?" I can't recall my response, but you left me dumbfounded

when you hustled into the foyer, called the New York Home Office, spoke personally to Kathryn Murray, recommended the student, gained approval by phone, and then sashayed back into the ballroom to announce that, if the student so desired, it was within her reach to become a member of the Murray Studios all over the world...for the rest of her life!! She was stunned with elation; I was bowled over by the whole approach. All in a matter of five minutes...and it didn't take another five for her to write a check for twelve thou! How adept you were. ...Then, when I acquired my own franchise for the Laguna Beach Arthur Murray Studio, you'd come there periodically, in you role as traveling "shake-up" Rep, and send us all into some other kind of episodic tailspin.

We loved your Lambdanu...no one could do it then, like you...nor can they today... in fact, most can't even spell it! Your approach to it was as subtle, winsome, and loaded as your proficiency at enrolling Lifetime Memberships!

The next big awesome caper came when you walked into my studio and announced that you'd quit being a rep and you'd come to work for me(!) You liked Laguna Beach, you loved my staff, and your mercurial nature needed a change. I still can't believe it...everyone in the business wanted your job, and you ditched it to come to Laguna. Your delightful unpredictability was my good fortune...we succeeded on all levels.

Just before the 'big' studios started to come unglued, because of too much oversell, you once again threw me a curve by announcing that you were going to leave Laguna, get your own franchise, and open a studio in Ventura. From that point until the nearly complete demise of the Murray chain, what hilarious times we had...carting our students back and forth between Laguna and Ventura just to throw a simple "togetherness" party. But they weren't all that simple... were they? They were major productions, is what they were! We'd pull the drapes closed, set up little cocktail tables, put on checkered clothes, light candles, hire a band, spike the punch, and put on a "drag" show that Arthur Murray would have yanked the carpet out from underneath us if he'd only known!

Well, my dear Gail... I guess I should have used this letter to tell you

about everything that's happening... rather than relive the past; but, hopefully, this magazine will reach you, and it will bring you up to date.

One last thing before I sign off... something I never really got a chance to do in the past. When all the fun and foolishness was over... I should have told you how very much I admire you. When we finally threw in the towel with the "chains," you opened a "home" in Santa Ana, and converted it with ramps, and the like, in order to accommodate wheelchair people. You took into that home, and into your heart, about seven disabled men and women who had become either paraplegic or quadriplegic as the result of spinal cord injury. The last time I saw you was when you invited me to come to one of your parties, about fifteen years ago, for which I was to dance, play hostess, and socialize with your friends. We made it like an Arthur Murray party... remember?

Your object was to provide an enjoyable evening for the disabled people whose lives you devoted yourself to enrich. Something as dedicated and altruistic as was your endeavor, left me without words when it came to expressing heartfelt respect and praise. Let me say it now... you're a good man, Gail; you involved the biggest part of your life to the dance.. and then gave the balance of it to those who would never be able to. Lovingly,

Cay Cannon

Are you looking for a swing dancer who seems to have dropped off the face of the earth?

Send us a name and a little background and we'll initiate the search.

Since this magazine is directed to swing dancers only, it's best that your missing person be a jitterbug... to increase your chance of success.

Lorraine Lewis or daughter Rikki...

Love to hear from you.

Lin Harmann Montgomery

P.O. Box 6804, Burbank, CA 91510

STUDIO OR STREET

Which are the Better Dancers?

by Cay Cannon

This debate has gone on since the first 'rock step' of mankind. Our aim is to address the dispute, in this our first issue of JITTERBUG, by the following editorial.

My home sits on a hill, in Laguna Beach, overlooking a nature tousled canyon on one side... and a landscaped backyard on the other. The canyon is lush with color-bursting foliage... blue Morning Glories pushing their way up through vines of Copa de Oro... Bougainvillea running rampant... unexpected growths of Eucalyptus saplings breaking through a tangle of multi-hued surprises. Unmanicured--untrained, it all springs from an inner gift of life... seeds of nature's talent uncontrollably sprouting out of a pure love to be born.

My backyard, on the other hand, is disciplined, well planned and totally aesthetic in its logical balance and harmony. From Hibiscus to Jacaranda to Acacia... all rising in the crescendo of a framework, I elected to cultivate the entire picture right before the ocean's view... so the eye would move from rock... to bush... to sea. You might say it has all been choreographed with intricate clumps of color scattered strategically among well manicured shrubs and Juniper.

Lily of the Nile and Pansies can only live in my backyard... Naked Lady and moss only grow in the canyon. Both are a delight to behold; but where each have their own special dance within great nature's manifold pageant, they each have an area which requires attention.

The fastidious garden, you see, must continue to be trimmed... in order to keep its symmetry and balance; but, because it is trained, there is no great problem... a gardener can always bring things back to exactitude or I, an old master of detail, can reach for my clippers and adjust the more controllable things myself.

The free-style growth, however, is rarely... if ever, attended by a gardener; and when it becomes too dense or unruly, ugly weeds crowd into its domain making it lose color and become disheveled and unkempt. Frequently I find myself stumbling down a forty-five degree hill to attend to a grotto which is beginning to strangle itself.

Thus, we would think that gardeners are needed for both kinds of horticulture. Gardeners... or City Parks Departments (Private vs Class) with the wisdom and insight it takes not to destroy the basic spirit of *either* the regimented *or* the unrestrained. For when it comes to experienced

dancers, per sé, the matter of training can be a problem... should those who are coaching be insensitive to what each individual student truly needs.

In the case of the **street-dancer**, for him to become disciplined (have his garden trimmed, so to speak) that which flows from his soul can possibly never be free again. Yet, the bad habits which cost him the contests he so aspires to win, could well be remedied if he recognizes them and calls upon the services of one who is knowledgeable in the area of his weakness.

As for the trained **studio dancer**, for whom it is difficult to break the "chain" that binds him, he too needs some help... in giving his structure a bit more abandon... to lessen his devotion to pattern and to loosen his dedication to perfection.

Watch the crowded dance floor... dear reader... you will know which is which--**street** or **studio**--by idiosyncrasies peculiar to each. See the lady who rolls her weight onto the outer edges of her feet? She is a **street dancer** and her problem is a habit difficult to break if it's been done over a long period of time. By not centering her weight over the *inside* edge of the ball of the foot it not only disequilibrates her balance, it is most unpleasant to view. Were she to know how unattractive it makes her appear... and how much better

control she would otherwise have, she would seek out a few lessons in foot placement and give herself just *that* aspect of structured dancing which could be so much to her advantage.

See the gentleman who does one underarm turn, two sugar push, a whip and a side pass... consistently... in that order... no matter what message the music gives? He is a **studio dancer** (unless he's a **street dancer** who has pre-programmed his choreography to play it safe should a dance contest be on the horizon) and his problem is one of conditioning. He doesn't need any technique... he just needs to employ a non-teaching lady-street-dancer who will dance his brains out for a couple of hours!

The question is: how to solve the skilled dancer's idiosyncratic problem... assuming his ego is secure enough to recognize he has a problem. We recommend: before selecting a coach, since that is the only intelligent way to go, study well the coach's pupils *first*, and if his students manifest the same anomaly which you have come to accept as your own...move along to another teacher!

And so... when the feetsy-free are groomed... and the impeccable have become footloose... what have we got? A cultivated botanical garden that makes judging mighty tough for the swing dance critics!



What'll you have... a Naked Lady or a Pansy?

SHAGGERS AND BOPPERS

by Phil Sawyer

Comparison and Contrast

A study of two similar but different dance styles in 4/4 time.

You "lag to shag," you "hop to bop." Shagging is lazy, bopping is aerobic. Shagging is a slow jitterbug, bopping is a fast and dynamic combination of the Lindy and the Disco. How are they so much alike? Why are they so different? Grab yourself a "blue hand Bud" and hang on! I'm gonna try to answer these questions. I am sure that there will be those who will disagree with my observations. That's fine: that's why we have Democrats and Republicans, shaggers and boppers.

Let's start with Shag. That's the one I know the most about. I've been around it a long, long time. I learned to shag in the mid-forties, and like everyone else of the era, sort of adopted it from the jitterbug. The shag was born somewhere on the Atlantic seaboard between Virginia Beach and Savannah. No one knows exactly where or what year. It just evolved.

One thing is certain. The slower, sultry, and sexy moods of the Black rhythm and blues bands had a lot to do with it. On the North and South Carolina coast, Billy Ward and the Dominoes, Bull Moose Jackson, The Tams, and The Clovers began to nudge the big bands of Tommy Dorsey and Glenn Miller off the juke boxes and the small pavilion dance floors became the social meccas of generations of teens and college kids. It was a summer world of a cold beer on a warm night with a hot date, and no plans for tomorrow.

Eight counts make up the basic shag step with the dancers moving into and away from each other with almost all of the motion from the waist down. There is little if no vertical movement from the waist up and the shaggers do not veer to one side or the other. We dance "North and South," as we say, not East and West, and glide like Nuns walk.



*Eight time and current
National Shag Champions
Charlie Womble and Jackie McGee
show why they have no equal in the shag world.*

In the early days, Shag was a male chauvinistic dance with the guy doing almost all the dancing and the girl anchoring, or "being his doorknob." But that's all changed now, and the partners now share equal dancing time. There are many steps, and most of them are "mirror." The flyback, sugarfoot, duck walk, boogie walk, stutter step, pick, and lean are repertoire. The queen steps of shagging are the pivot and "belly roll."

Bop is a far more vigorous dance. It has remained much more closely related to the Jitterbug, from which it too descended. The added components seen to be disco related and there is much more turning, crossing, and tossing. Boppers move all of their body in rhythmic sways and swings, and move their heads, shoulders, hips, and legs in a never ending combination of complex steps and moves. Boppers showcase the girls in a way that would make Miss America green with envy. It is an awesome dance to watch and even more fun to do.

Boppers tend to use more floor than shaggers do. Many good shaggers can do the whole record in a space not much larger than a hula hoop while the entire floor might be needed for one good bop routine. Bop probably originated on ballroom and dance hall floors which were larger by far than the shagging floors.

While Shag is a Carolina thing, Bop is standard dance in Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee. We have come together under the umbrella of the Association of Carolina Shag Clubs, and the Spring and Fall editions of the S.O.S. (Society of Stranders) is the glue that holds us together. We meet and mingle well, dance with one another, and have genuine respect and admiration for each other's dance styles. It is our love of the music, the dance, the camaraderie, and the carefree time of a beach weekend together makes it happen.

I am sure that anyone involved in the Swing dance movement would be comfortable with a bop or shag event. We would love for you to join us.

Phil Sawyer, president of the Society of Stranders, was chairman of the Association of Carolina Shag Clubs and president of the Columbia Shag Club

Shag Lane

by Tammy Phillips

The shag is a Carolinas native. It was born out of the jukeboxes on the beach pavilions of the Carolinas and Virginia coast. Since the exact time and place cannot be established absolutely, Ocean Drive Beach is the accepted ceremonial birthplace. Shag is a migration. Since 1980 when S.O.S. (Society of Stranders) was born, Ocean Drive has become the twice a year destination of over 10,000 people from all over the country. Shag is a dance; slow, yet fast, a 1&2, 3&4, 5-6 "smooth way of moving." Shag is a feeling, an attitude, a friendship, and a community.

I began this project with no knowledge of what I was getting into, but I was eager to learn. I quickly found others just as eager to pull me into this world and show me the inside. I started my project with no lead and no formula and soon realized that this isn't just a dance, it's a way of life.

I began by talking to Marci Daniel and Carolyn "CJ" Bell, two friends who shag. I found dance teacher Charlie Stancil. Then I met Phil Sawyer, who led me to connections throughout shag land. Through him I learned about Woody Windham, Larry Grant and Representative Bubber Snow. They told me the story.

I watched the movie *Shag*, and *Shag The Documentary*, read countless articles, and went to the Shag Club and Beau's in Columbia. I took a few shag lessons. I decided to present the story from a cultural aspect and the folklore that is embodied in the community.

Life histories always begin with a birth. "This began in the late '40s on the Ocean Drive Beach. The clubs were very small so they made up a dance that used the diving board concept. The sliding idea came from dancers sliding their feet on the sand on the dance floors, making a different feel from swing." (Charlie Stancil, Fred Astaire Instructor)

Larry Grant decided on a more personal dimension. "I was about 14 and all the guys that could dance had all the girls. I had to learn. I'd watch, then go home and practice with the doorknob. In

Columbia, back then, blacks and whites were separated. They didn't play black music on the radio stations. They had it in the jukeboxes on the beach pavilions and we danced to that music. That's where the shag got started."

Woody Windham learned to shag at Folly Beach. "There was a girl on the pier, and these kids were shagging, and it was so cool, so sexy..."

The shag is a migration. The first S.O.S. Migration was in 1980. According to Phil Sawyer, it will never be replicated in the life of anyone who was there.

"It was as if you were born again and bodily ascended into heaven. Here we were back where it started. The guy who got it together expected about 200 old lifeguards and beach bums-I wasn't even sure I'd be welcome-but it was the most exhilarating experience I've ever lived." (Phil)

Larry Grant attended the first S.O.S. also: "The S.O.S. has about 10,000 members, and the reason we like it is everybody parties and dances, and nobody fights."

Woody Windham said, "You ought to go. That's where it all goes on. There are only four small clubs and about 10,000 people. Every good shagger in the world is there. You would see the lifestyle. These people all know each other. They haven't seen each other in six months or a year, but it's like it was just yesterday."

They are migrating, but why? Just to dance? What makes the shag so important? Is there a certain movement?

"You move in shag like nuns walk," say Phil Sawyer. "Nuns glide as if they don't have knees," he added. Woody Windham says "...there is no accident about shag, it is all planned, and there is a look, too. You have to know how to hold yourself-how to look."

What is the shag lore about how to dance and look? "Pay close attention to your north and south and don't wiggle your butt. Dance from your waist down. Dance with doorknobs. Most good shaggers have loose closet hinges

(laughing). I've danced with more doors than girls." (Phil)

How did the name shag become attached to the dance? "I think shag is appropriate because the dance is erotic. The English have a different meaning for 'shag' than we do. People say they aren't jitterbugging, they're doing 'dirty shag.' We dropped 'dirty' and just called it shag." (Bubber Snow)

During my many interviews with shaggers, I soon realized that no one was ever sad or distraught. I asked Phil why. "You can't possibly be depressed and dance...and you can't dance and be depressed. Dancing and depression are incompatible." He also said, "They live life every second of every day, they don't burn out or have as many emotional problems and are well adjusted."

Shaggers realize they have something special and they express it. "Yeah, I think the beauty of it is the camaraderie. Everybody here is fun, everybody is glad to see everybody else, everybody is interested in the other person. If somebody is having a problem, I'll put my arm around them and show them I care. A lot of friendships are formed that way." (Larry Grant)

"Shagging creates instant friendships. There is a bond that is immediately established. The second you take the hand of a shagger, a relationship that transcends "just friends" is created. It's difficult to describe, but shaggers recognize it, and never forget." (Phil)

Every shagger I interviewed knew all my other contacts. I think that bond transcends the one-on-one relationship and forms a community spirit.

Larry Grant told me why it is special: "You stay in touch with everybody and you become a little family. You know if somebody has a death, if they have children. It's a community inside a community. Everybody looks out for each other. I love it."

Along with all of this, there is something more: there is a shag look, a shag "presence."

"The guys generally wear cotton

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DANCING = DATING = DIDDLEIN'

*STD = No Way to Go

Whether you're single, separated, or married... and on the prowl, big trouble can start on the dance floor.

* Sexually Transmitted Disease

by Cay Cannon

You go to the club... you dance up a storm... you work your creative juices into a frenzied fervor, and... (dum-de-dum-dum) passion comes to the fore. Let's face it, the driving pulse of the music is stimulating in and of itself; but, to hold another dancer in your arms-- especially a "hot" swing dancer, and bodily express that same driving music... it can't help but awaken desire.

So? How do you handle dancing... with coffee after... with a possible roll in the hay following that? Or, more efficiently, no coffee. And, what if your slumbering sex drive snaps to attention more than just occasionally? Let's say there are a *couple* of "hot" swing dancers that really turn you on? More than that? Good Grief! You could be cruising for the plague!

Most people who have been through a few relationships know pretty well what they are looking for in a lifelong, serious partnership. If you asked, they could probably give you a list of the specific qualities they have in mind. They can tell you which characteristics must already be intact and those on which they might be willing to compromise. Everyone is looking for the cream of the crop... someone who will care for them, is attractive, who will sweep them off their feet (on or off the dance floor), who is financially secure, and with whom they can communicate and share common interests, values, goals...kids. BUT, in the meantime...

For a temporary arrangement... or just a "casual fling," it's not only important to know what kind of person you have eyes for, it is essential to know what risks you're willing to take. Dancing that equals dating that equals intimacy with more than one person at a time, while waiting for that permanent partner, can be downright dangerous in today's pit of pollution. Lurking behind every sexual union is the danger of STD.

When deciding whether and with whom to "go all the way," it is well to consider the total value of the total relationship. Dancing is an unquestionably

great way to get to know someone better (given more than one spin around the floor); but, as prudent as we think we might be, physical attraction can sometimes overshadow all other considerations. Given the ease with which STD is communicated, and the high level of risk involved in unprotected sex, it's foolish to allow decisions to be governed by hormonal urges. Think carefully about the danger involved before getting close to someone who may never mean more than just a "quickie" after the dance.



Many STD's are dormant and can be carried and transmitted without either person knowing it until it is too late. Sometimes they may not even show up on test results. The mere fact that someone says they have been tested doesn't mean much; so, your chances of contracting something increases dramatically when having either unprotected sex, and/or multiple partners.

Another critical factor to consider, when deciding with whom to be intimate, is who *else* your partner may be dance-dating. You are incurring the very real possibility of contracting and

transmitting whatever health problems not only your current partner may have, but also all of their other sexual partners! The number of risks you could be taking with someone who is sexually promiscuous, has its domino effect. If it's difficult to keep track of who your current dance-date is seeing, imagine what it would be like keeping track of the partners of the partners?

If you *do* decide to include intimacy in your relationship, it's advisable to have a serious talk first. You could always open the conversation with... "Say, I hear Manny Dunkit uses monogrammed condoms!" It's good for a laugh; but it could also open the door to clarifying your concern. With that as a springboard, you can then discuss how you both feel about protection, contraception and other health guarantees. You may want to suggest you both get tested for AIDS, when intimacy hovers in the background. Although some people are offended by being asked to take tests, and others can't be bothered, there are those who will be glad you asked. If your partner refuses to take a test, you then need to decide how important this is to you. Do you feel you can have safe sex with this person, given their background and what you know about them... and, is the possible outcome worth it?

Many people are choosing to eliminate the risks altogether by either being celibate (oh, foo) or holding off intimacy until they're in a monogamous relationship. Whatever... it makes sense to get to know someone well, establish a needed sense of trust, learn whether there are other people in your partner's life, and what the future with that person holds... *before* jumping in the sack. The rewards are greater than letting physical chemistry control your behavior. Go dancing as often as possible as a safe and fun way to get to know someone. If you can't wait for "step two," you gotta ask yourself... are the health risks (death being one of them... maimed offspring another) worth any short lived pleasure?

BUDDY SCHWIMMER

In Celebration of The World Swing Dance Championships

Say "Man with a Thousand Moves" or "King of Swing" and a lot of people will automatically respond "Buddy Schwimmer!"

by Bonnie Edwards

Edited from The Next Generation Swing Dance Newsletter



Honored in the Dancer's Hall of Fame, Buddy Schwimmer has won many contests and awards and has choreographed for and danced in television shows and films. Dancers from all over the world seek his help, respecting his wealth of knowledge, creativity and sharply perceptive eye. And now, along with Wayne Eng of Club 2005, Mr. Schwimmer will be directing the World Swing Dance Championships... the first of which will be in Las Vegas this coming August 28 through August 30, 1992.

This interview took place in Santa Rosa, California. Buddy was in the middle of a non-stop weekend of teaching workshops and private lessons. Monday morning he would be on a plane to Germany to help the world's ten dance champions with their choreography. It was early Sunday morning....

How did you get the title "Man with a Thousand Moves"?

"My students gave it to me because I never run out of moves to give them. Ron Montez and I did workshops together for the last sixteen years and whenever anyone wanted patterns, he'd say "Go to Buddy, he's got tons of them."

How did you get started in dancing?

"I wanted to learn to dance to become popular. That's why a lot of people take up dancing, because they're lonely and want to meet people, and there is no better way."

So, how did you rise to the position you are in now?

"Because everyone said I couldn't do

it. They said 'You'll never learn to dance,' and it made me mad. I had something inside me that wanted to come out, and I knew it. I decided it was important to be good at this, and I did it."

Do you have any advice for people who feel terminally uncoordinated?

"Get a teacher who works for you. I'm one who tells you what you are doing wrong in order to make you better. Some teachers will just try to make you feel good and tell you you're doing great no matter what. It has a lot to do with attitude too. You can't just sit there and say you'll never learn. There's no one who can't learn to dance. There are a lot of different abilities and levels, but they'll all get there if they keep trying. I was the worst dancer in the world when I first started and now I teach all over the world."

Some people who have taken your workshops want to know how long it took you to master waves and ripples?

"About five minutes!"

I don't think they're going to like that answer (laughter).

"I was the pits, though, when I first started. I used to cry to my mother and father to teach me how to dance."

Many people get into dancing for recreation, but when they find out how much work it is, they turn it into an obsession. Do you have any tips on how to keep it fun?

"I have fun in my classes, and it's important to me to keep it fun for every-

one else. Dancers have to know their abilities and work to improve them all the time. They can't always be comparing and wanting to look like someone else. It's you that you are dancing for and not anyone else. On the floor you should be enjoying your dancing, and not worrying about doing something wrong."

What advice do you have for beginners?

"To search. Go to different teachers; see what they are teaching and ask them the reason why. They should have reasons for what they do. Good teachers know why they want you to do things a certain way, but many teachers don't have those answers. They just say, 'do this.' And once you have a bad habit it's very hard to break."

A lot of dancers become frustrated because of the plateaus that don't let them go on to other steps. How do you break through those plateaus?

"That happens with anything you do, no matter what it is. Once you get to a

plateau, and you think you're not learning anymore, and you're not getting better, you're still at a higher level than you were before; but to break that feeling of being stuck, you have to completely change what you do. Don't keep working the same way. I will take someone who is at a plateau and tell them to stop doing what they have been working on and work on something completely different.

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THE GLORY OF HARLEM'S SAVOY

The year was 1941. Roosevelt was president. Men wore zoot suits. Women wore snoods. The Savoy Ballroom was the Kingdom of Swing.

by Jayne Keedle

Back in the '30s and '40s, Frankie Manning was one of Whitey's Lindy Hoppers which ruled the Kingdom of Swing. The famed Savoy Ballroom dancers were masters of the eight-count swing dance named for Lindbergh's hop from Paris to New York. The dance combines Charlestonlike kicks with hip-shaking rhythm. Partners hold each other close, then swing apart. It's energetic, sexy, and with the edition of Manning's pioneering "aerial" moves, dangerously fun.

Today, at age 77, Manning is still sweeping dancers off their feet. He brings the era alive again when he swings to the sounds of the Savoy's own George Kelly and the Jazz Sultans at Hartford's Charter Oak Cultural Center.

In recent years, swing has made a giant comeback. People worldwide are catching the Jitterbug and starting swing dance groups in Sweden, London and the U.S. Closer to home, the Connecticut Swing Dance Society, founded a year ago by dancer Bill Muirhead, already has 700 members.

This renewed interest in swing surprises Manning, who hung up his professional dancing shoes in the '50s for good—he thought. "I didn't have the slightest idea that it would really ever come back, because it seemed like the big bands were gone forever," he says.

Still, he's got a few theories as to why the Lindy Hop is making a comeback. "My own interpretation was the kids had been dancing so much apart from each other," he says, describing the no-contact disco dancing that ruled the floor for decades. "It seemed like the kids wanted to get back together again."

The "Dirty Dancing" phenomenon of the '80s helped people rediscover how much fun it is to dance with a partner. As Lambada fever spread, people started looking into "new" dances. They rediscovered old favorites. "To them it was like something new and something different," says Manning.

"Now kids are coming back 30 years later, saying 'Oh, we've got a new

dance'—It's only been around 50 years!" he chortles. So, after a 30-year hiatus, Manning finds himself swept up in this resurgence of swing. Because of his first-hand knowledge of the dance and its era, he was invited to teach Lindy Hopping in New York, Sweden and London. He was one of the choreographers for Broadway's *Black and Blue*, and recently served as a consultant on Spike Lee's new movie *Malcolm X* (Malcolm cut quite a rug at the Savoy).



Frank Manning and Margaret Batiuchok

Swing dancing while the New York Swing Dance Society looks on.

-photo by Schutzer and Gabiner

It's a surprising career twist for this retired postal worker, but Manning has always been surprised at where his love for dance has taken him. "Honestly, when I started out I was doing it just for fun. I never in my wildest dreams was thinking of doing it professionally. I didn't figure on the people picking up on it," he says. "To me, doing the Lindy Hop back in those days was like a high. Dancing was our way of getting high, we just felt so good doing this."

Growing up in Harlem, Manning started dancing as a kid. "We did it every single day and every night, because we had the opportunity to go to the Savoy Ballroom after school," Manning

says. "Sometimes the band would practice, and we could dance with them. Lots of times the band leader would ask us if it was swinging enough. That was our whole life, just dancing and enjoying ourselves. We just heard that music all the time."

Manning's first dance partners were broomsticks, but he soon discovered he could get a lot more creative with female partners. One day he entered a competition and decided to lift his partner and roll her across his back. The "aerial" was born, catapulting Manning into dance history.

Unlike the graceful lifts of ballroom dance, Manning's are dizzying moves that take coordination and a very trusting partner. "To do an aerial depends on trust," Manning says. "Lindy Hopping is swinging. You're just going to throw the girl up in the air and hopes she comes down on her feet." His deep, rich laugh rumbles forth again.

Manning continues, "I think one of the high points of my career was when I was dancing with Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, I guess late '30s, at the Roxy Theater in New York with the Count Basie Band." "I love them and to be on the big stage like that with Count Basie in the back of you...."

"Another high point was at Radio City Music Hall, again with Whitey's Lindy Hoppers. When we finished dancing, the people would not let us off the floor," he says. "They wanted us to do two encores. Radio City Music Hall doesn't have audiences like that, so that was a real high point."

Almost half a century later, Manning is still capable of tossing his partner into the air and doing his thing to the swing. "It has kept me fit and it has kept me young," Manning says. "I still enjoy dancing. I love it. It's my life. No, I'm not moving as good as I used to. But the amount that I move—I enjoy."

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PROFILES IN POPULARITY

by Mary Ann Bridges



LARRY KERN

Birthdate: December 15, 1936
 Residence: Laguna Beach, California
 Occupation: Dance (for 30 years)
 Marital Status: Single, Involved
 Hobbies: Portrait painting and stained glass

Larry moved from North Dakota to California in 1962 after completing five years of college. He taught art in the Orange County school system for the next five years. One night he happened to see Jerry and Jackie Cobb in a swing contest at the Red Barn in Garden Grove, and that's when he first got hooked and began his dancing career. "I studied with Skippy Blair, and professionally danced with her daughter Lucky. We were Golden State Latin Dance Champions in 1968. Then, I studied Jazz with George Jack in Hollywood, and for the next eight years traveled in stage musicals from Puerto Rico to Seattle, Denver, Reno and Las Vegas. Sheila Blair and I opened at the Union Plaza Hotel in a Barry Ashtone Production of Adam and Eve... dancing as a nude adagio team!"

Returning to Los Angeles in 1975, Larry did several television commercials, T.V. Dance Specials, and movies. In 1976 he resumed ballroom dancing, partnered with Lynn



*Larry and Paula Rogers
 working out
 under the tutelage of
 Francois Szony*

Vogen, and won the California State Swing Championship. In 1984 he and Lynn entered the U.S. Open Swing Dance Championships and placed 2nd in the Showcase Division; they were finalists in 1986 and took 2nd place in 1987. In 1991 Larry was voted The Most Popular Male Dance Instructor in the Nation by the Dance Action Magazine FEATHER AWARDS. Also in '91, he placed 3rd in The U.S. Open Cabaret division dancing a Bolero with Paula Rogers.

"It has been a wonderful life of dance... and I am very grateful for all the opportunities that have come my way because of it. Life keeps sending beautiful people my way to share in wonderful dance experiences."

In June of 1992, Larry and his dance assistant, Barbara Mirza, will be teaching and performing on the Crystal Harmony Cruise Ship for 45 days, beginning in Copenhagen and ending in Barcelona for the Summer Olympics.



Success!

MORE PROFILES...

by Mary Ann Bridges



ROB VAN HAAREN

Birthdate: March 12, 1958
 Residence: Ventura, California
 Occupation: Dance Instructor
 Marital Status: Single
 Hobbies: Bicycling and kayaking

Originally from Holland, and present director of the newly formed UPBEAT SWING DANCE CLUB, Rob Van Haaren has been swing dancing for the past eight years.

"I always wanted to be involved in teaching outdoor sports," says Rob, so he set out from New York and rode his bicycle across the U.S. to Southern California! While taking recreational leadership and dancing classes, he ran into Jonathan and Sylvia teaching Lindy Style Swing in Santa Barbara. "I took classes off and on for 3 years. At one point, I moved to Sacramento to teach kayaking for 6 months; but when I came back to dance I didn't stop. I got to like the Lindy Hop and decided to explore it from stories, to steps, to the soul of the dance." What Rob found was an era so rich with skill, knowledge and style, he realized he had to move into tomorrow with the knowledge of yesterday.

In 1988 Rob partnered up with Melinda Comeau to teach Lindy classes in Ventura and went on to teach swing at UC Riverside as an adjunct faculty member. In 1991 he became Southern California's Swing Dance Champion and was nominated for the California Swing Dance Hall of Fame. A big year!

Rob's next goal is to start a dance group to perform in the U.S. and on the Continent. He just returned from a 3-month tour of Europe, where he met up with several European dancers and taught in 5 different countries. "I'm on the lookout for exciting dancers!" says Rob.

"It is refreshing to see the Lindy being picked up and practiced. Dances like the Shim-Sham, Big Apple, Balboa, Shag, Lindy Hop or Jitterbug and Swing are here to be learned and taken to the next stage. I am very excited about the future, and I like seeing a lot of people getting in on the fun."

FRANCES BOSTWICK

Birthdate: September 27th
 Residence: Dallas, Texas
 Occupation: Computer Teacher (3rd, 4th & 5th grades)
 Marital Status: Single
 Hobbies: Dancing, Dancing, Dancing!

You can certainly see by her style, Frances has been dancing for years! Her favorite male dancer is Mario Robau, Jr., and her favorite female dancers are Annie Hirsch and Mary Ann Nunez.

When Frances was 16 years old she joined the Arthur Murray Dance Association and taught dancing for them for five years in Dallas and six months in Mexico City. She performed her first exhibition with Luis Arnold out of New York and became "hooked" on competition. She claims, "If I wasn't teaching, I was out watching to pick up styling and steps!"

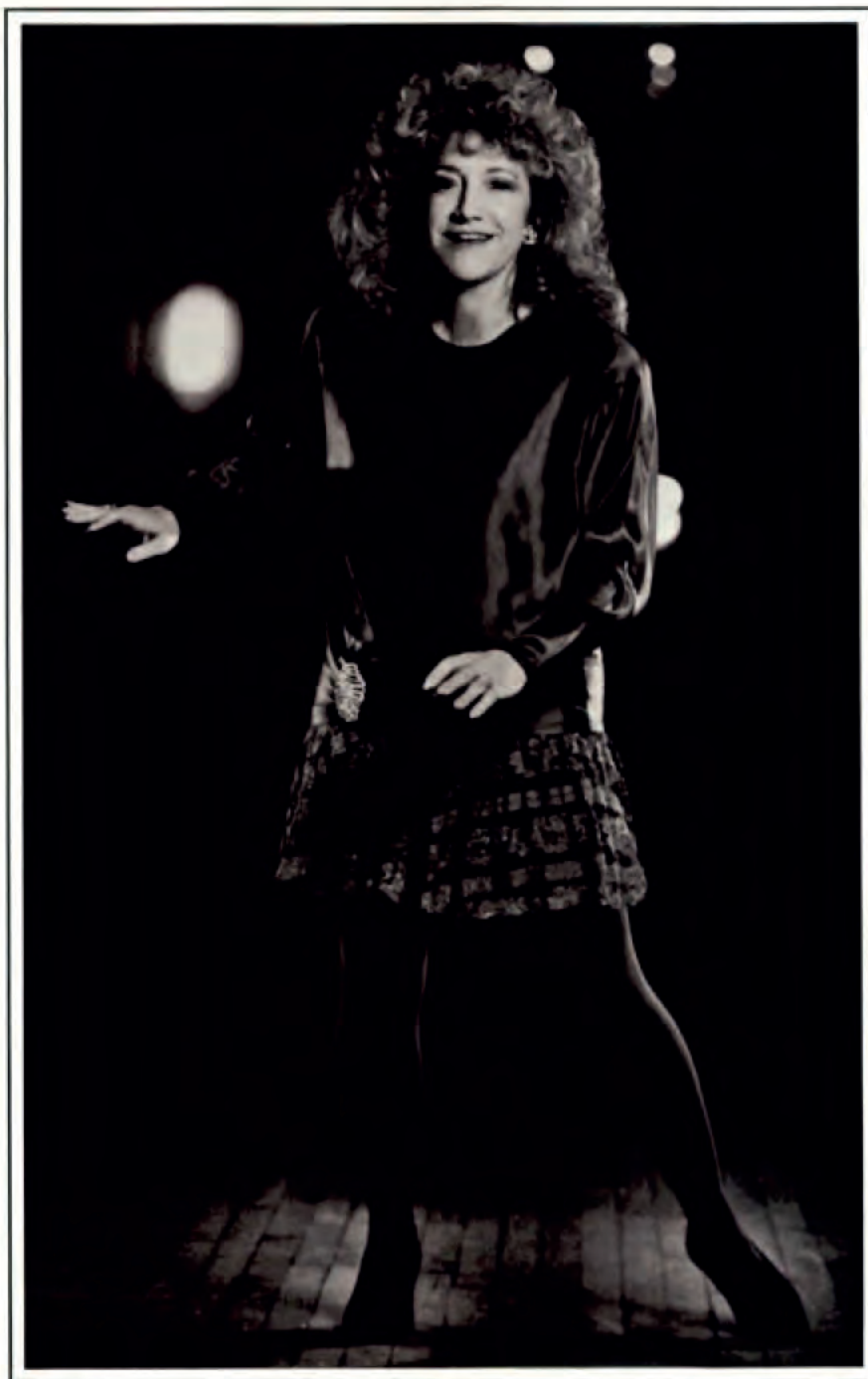
Frances stayed out of dancing for a few years while raising a family and then came back to it when she started to compete in 1989. She and her partner won the Dallas D.A.N.C.E. and went on to the U.S. Open (her first time) and came in fourth! She says she was thrilled and excited to be in the company of such terrific dancers. In 1990, she won the Champion of Champions in Phoenix with Mario Robau, Jr., who then asked her to compete in the Dallas Dance, which they won. Then she "begged" ("I'm not proud") to go on and take their routine to the U.S. Open, which they did, and won!! That was the highlight for her. Not only to dance with Mario, but to win in the very best of the dance competitions. It was a real thrill, she says... one she'll never forget. "The only trouble is," she says, "it's like candy. You don't want to give it up, but you have no choice when it's gone. Partners are hard to come by."

Finally, she says she's grateful to the good Lord for her talent and ability to dance. She gives any credit to Him and a lot of great dance partners along the way.



AND MORE...

by Mary Ann Bridges



TEDDY KERN

Birthdate: September 12
 Residence: New York, New York
 Occupation: Dance teacher, Choreographer, Occupational Therapist
 Hobbies: Musical theatre, movies and acting

Teddy has a personality that's hard to beat. She's so exuberant about life in general, it's hard not to be "up" when one is around her.

Originally from Tulsa, Oklahoma, Teddy has been dancing since age ten. She started swing dancing by taking lessons at a local studio and watching "American Bandstand." She is a master teacher, dance stylist and choreographer, equally skilled in social, theatrical and period dance forms. She is currently on the faculty of the Dance Division of Baruch College of the City University, New York, and maintains a studio in the Westside Dance Project.

Teddy has been a faculty member of the American Opera Center at the Julliard School of Music, the Albert Butler School of Dance, the Institute for Social Dance Studies in New York, the Dance Masters of America, Dance Educators of America and Professional Dance Teachers Association. She has choreographed for the New York Swing Dance Society and, annually, for the Viennese Opera Ball at the Waldorf Astoria in New York. Her credits include Broadway and off-Broadway musicals, cabaret and historical dance presentations. She has most recently returned from Stockholm, Sweden where she was invited to teach and choreograph for the Swedish Swing Dance Society and Rhythm Hot Shots Dance Company.

Teddy's choreography and commentary is represented in the Dance Division of the Library and Museum of the Performing Arts in Lincoln Center, New York. She holds Master of Science degrees from the University of Kansas and University of California in Occupational Therapy and Exercise Physiology.

Mary Ann Bridges Biography Column

The publishers of JITTERBUG magazine are enthusiastic about Mary Ann Bridges' Biography Column, and are eager to help with the accumulation of its information. If the reader would like to send a photo, along with some background history, similar in length to pages 15-16-17, we will keep your bio on file for later inclusion. You could well see yourself in print in a future issue of the...

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COMPETITION YESTERDAY

The Trophy is Only a Yardstick

by Kenny Wetzel

Like a Marine outta Boot Camp, I felt ready to take on the world. I was considered the best Jitterbug in high school and had just been named "Mr. Teen Town." I was anxious to cross the Mississippi into St. Louis and take on the big names. One-Eyed Eddy Plunkett and Windy Cohen were the top Jitterbug guns, and they were going to hear from me.

My partner Irma and I made our first stop at The Wonder Bar on Olive Street. The place was packed and the band was cookin! The couples on the floor were jammin' -- I mean they were doing slides, aerials and lay-outs like I never saw in my life. I thought I was at the Barnum and Bailey Circus. Was I over my head here? Of course not! I said to Irma, "It's too crowded, let's go."

We took the trolley and didn't talk all the way home. We both knew we had a long way to go before we could compete with the seasoned dancers.

How bad did we want it? Were we willing to sacrifice and pay the price? My sister (who was the best Swing Dancer I ever saw) said, "The only way to get to the top is practice and take your lumps. You have to earn your place in the sun. Only then will you appreciate it."

Irma and I practiced 3 or 4 nights a week for 1-1/2 years. (Who could afford lessons?) We wore out two rugs in her living room and picked up speed along the way. We invented steps, made the Lindy Fly and perfected the Shag.

We went to small town contests in Alton, Collinsville, and Belleville, Illinois to try our routine under fire. The dream was slowly becoming a reality. Finally I asked my sister to watch and she said only two words, "You're ready."

The great St. Louis Jitterbug and

City Championship Dance had moved to the "Latin Quarter" on Thursdays, so we went in on a real rainy night, danced at half-speed and qualified for the finals.

I had acquired several friends and a few fans, but most of the Missouri dance

year. (I think the Latin Quarter's brother owned the cleaners.)

There were 12 couples in the finals, and we drew position number 12. It was a long wait and I threw up while waiting. I had bought the band a round of drinks earlier and told them to play "One O'Clock Jump" - up tempo - for Irma and me.

Our time came and we flew... we shagged... we were like lightning. After it was over I couldn't remember exactly what we did, but I knew we didn't make a mistake.

The crowd was screaming and clapping. One-Eyed Eddy and Windy picked me up as if to concede victory. I looked in the crowd and saw my sister applauding and crying.

The emcee announced us as the winners and said that, now, Barbara would be known as Kenny's big sister. When I got off the bus I was so anxious to show my mother the trophy that, while running home, I dropped it and it broke.

Mom was waiting up and I told her the good news and the bad news. She told me something that night that I will pass on to all dancers and competitors at all levels of accomplishment. Material objects depreciate with time... the real trophy is in the time it takes to earn it.



crowd only knew me through my sister. "That's Barb's little brother." My partner Irma was well liked and could shag all night and never got tired. The second best female dancer in the world... for my money.

The City Finals only paid \$100 (in 1952 a fortune), but the fame was superior. You received a four foot trophy, life size picture posture on the club's marquee, free drinks for twelve months, and your cleaning done free for the whole

PHOTO

No, it's not Clark Kent and Lois Lane dashing to the City Desk to report a big crime. It's Kenny Wetzel and Joyce Fitz dancing a Samba at the Chi Chi Club in Palm Springs. The year is 1956 and the only crime is... they can't do it all over again!

COMPETITION TODAY

From Local Jack and Jill... to National... to World

THE START OF THE U.S. OPEN

by Jack Bridges

In the fall of 1982, I was sitting around with my girlfriend (now wife), Mary Ann, talking about the "good old days" of Swing dancing. I was telling her of the friendships I had made over the past 30 years, and of all the great dancers and clubs in my home town San Diego. I told her I could remember when one could go into 8 or 10 nightclubs, any night, and find it wall-to-wall with Swing dancers. And, there was a contest at one of them almost every night of the week. I mentioned how I missed those times and wished there could be great contests again.

About four in the morning I sat up in bed and awakened her, declaring I had a great idea. I was going to put on a large dance contest and give \$5000.00 (an unheard of amount at that time) to the winners. She told me to go back to sleep and accused me of having either a nightmare or hallucinations. The next morning I convinced her I was serious and we began discussing the mechanics of the idea.

In the course of conversation, she asked me if I had ever seen the Grand Ballroom at the Disneyland Hotel. I had not; so we called the sales department at the hotel and made arrangements to look over the facility. The minute I stepped in the door, I was sold. It was beautiful! I told the sales manager, "We'll take it." Since I'm known as a casual kind of person, I had gone to the meeting in a pair of tennis shorts, a T-shirt and Reeboks. He just laughed.

After two hours of fast talking, I finally convinced him that, even though I had limited experience, I would be able to pull off a "Jitterbug" competition (he had never heard of Swing dancing) that would be worthy of the venue.

I felt the only way to make the event successful was to give the dancers the very best; so, I immediately called an old friend, Kenny Wetzel, as I knew he was the top deejay and emcee in the business. With his personality and gift of gab, I was certain he would be able to carry the load and the long hours of a three day event.

In the beginning, I wasn't aware of all the things that add up to a giant venture. Not just in effort and time, but dollars as well. I thought all I had to do was rent a hall, hire a band, and sell tickets. Wrong! There are things like a \$5,000,000 insurance policy, cost of house engineers and electricians, fees for parking so the dancers don't have to pay, guarantees on the bars, security guards, and more.

If we are successful at what we provide, I believe it's because of our openness to the suggestions of others. We do our utmost to keep attuned to what the dancers prefer. Of course, it's impossible to implement all of the ideas, just as it is impossible to please all of the people; but if we cover 90% of both, we feel we've done our best.

So, here we are... ten years later. Our attendance averages over 1500 people a day. Last year we had 355 contestants and awarded over \$25,000 in cash and trophies. AND, in 1991 we were awarded the prestigious FEATHER AWARD for being the Most Outstanding Competitive Event in the Nation!

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Dancing models Mary Ann Nunez and Louis Juarez of Orange County, California demonstrate the comfort, ease of motion and good taste of acceptable and attractive swing dance wear.





SWING AROUND THE CIRCUIT

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON by Shirley Jo Ange

The longest swing dance club in the nation is called the Seattle Swing Dance Club. With over 300 members and a 27 year reign, they are making plans to host a "Big Birthday 30 Year Party" in 1995. The club meets each Sunday with free swing dance lessons before each dance. Music is always a good mix of live and tape. Hotline: 206-789-3970.

There's more! The Rose City Swing Dance Club will be celebrating their third anniversary and is, perhaps, the most up and coming dance group in the Portland, Oregon area. They are supported by over 200 members, have a 4,700 square foot dance floor, and the live music of the "Let's Dance Band." This group meets the first and third Sunday of the month and features swing dance classes before the dance begins. The crowd is generally entertained during intermission by exhibitions of various styles. Attendance is high! They meet at the Scottish Rite Temple and can be reached at 206-695-5833.

CASTLETON, VERMONT by Richard Draizin

Janet Gelfan and David Larson are getting the Upper Valley region of Vermont and New Hampshire swinging! Individually and together, as SWING ETC., they teach ballroom and Swing dancing at Dartmouth College and in numerous community settings. They sponsor dance events and seminars, and promote other people's dances. They also share dance information by way of a newsletter called SWING TIMES. Janet and David perform at dances, fashion shows, and community events.

"Interest in partner dancing is growing here. We could each teach five nights a week in this area," Janet reports. "Swing is definitely the most popular dance we teach, and the most requested kind of music at our dances. Swing fever is especially strong among college age people."

Other people who teach swing and ballroom dancing in Vermont are Rich Draizin in Rutland, Carolyn Nims in Brattleboro, and Terry Bourcous in Burlington. Nearby in New Hampshire Bob Laundry also teaches in Hanover, the Olsens in Concord, several people in Keene, and Kathy Blake plus others in the Manchester area.

Vermont's Killington, Rutland area are doing the jive; Irene Blackman and Rich Draizin are making sure of that. Irene Blackman, a professional Broadway dancer and 15 year ballet teacher, and Rich Draizin, native New Yorker and king of the Crazy Legs Jive, began offering Jive, Lindy and Jitterbug classes to the Portland region in January 1992. The classes have been overwhelmingly successful. "People come in work boots, sneakers, and occasionally dance shoes... but they all wanna swing," Draizin commented. There have only been a couple of dances in the immediate area, but Rich and Irene plan to sponsor new dances more frequently. With Janet and Dave covering the Upper Valley, and Rich and Irene taking care of Central Vermont, the entire state will soon be swinging like the rest of the nation.

To participate in the SWING TIMES Newsletter, and share dance information with other Vermont-New Hampshire swing dancers, contact Janet Gelfan at SWING, ETC., P.O. Box 85, Hartland Four Corners, VT 05049. Or give her a buzz at 802-436-2936.

SUDBURY, MASSACHUSETTS

by Deborra Good

The sound of dancing feet can be heard all over New England where the Swing scene is alive and well. In the Boston area, the year kicked off with a gala New Year's party at the Veronique Ballroom. Dancers kept the floor continually occupied to the expert music of the Winiker Swing Orchestra, one of the popular dance bands in Massachusetts.

The Third Annual Swing Classic, an amateur swing dance event, was held at the Charles Hotel in Cambridge on March 7th. Sponsored jointly by the Boston Festival and the Boston Swing Dance Society, a promotional arm of Bob Thomas Productions, the evening was exceptionally fine. The sense of community and the enthusiasm of those attending enhanced the truly wonderful competition.

The winners were Robert McOwen and Katherine Ford, whose intricate executions and well-coordinated partnering earned them all around judges approval. Robert is a mathematics professor at Northwestern University and an expert in the area of Scottish Dance. Katherine is a professional performer, appearing regularly at the Medieval Manor in Boston. Second place in the Swing Classic Competition went to Shaun Smith and Peggy Sheenan and third place was awarded to Bob and Paula Virgile.

In the western part of Massachusetts, the local swing scene is coordinated through the Hooked-on-Swing Society, which sponsors regular bi-weekly dances on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Hooked-on-Swing can be reached by calling 413-586-4252.

In the Boston area, there is currently no formal Swing Society, as the community is close and casual. Dancers intermingle freely at the various dance studios, many of which sponsor weekly events and all of which hold monthly events. Information about events can be obtained by calling Rug Cutters Studio at 617-397-6362; Tempo Dance Studio at 617-783-5467; Dancing Feats at 617-646-4952; Boston Swing Dance Network (Roger Weiss) at 617-924-8232; Best Foot Forward at 617-522-1444; and Boston Swing Dance Society (Bob Thomas) at 1-800-343-2263. For more non-studio event information, call 508-443-6245.

Happy swing dancing from New England!

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SWING AROUND THE CIRCUIT

FLINT, MICHIGAN

by Robert E. Budzynski

What's going on in Michigan? THE HUSTLE!! It's hot, hot, hot! If you go north to Saginaw and Bay City, DANCE MAGIC STUDIOS teach it. In the far west, it's ARTHUR MURRAY and in the Detroit area and in Flint, Michigan, everyone's teaching it that can.

The biggest boosters have to be Larry Joseph and Mary Wolfe both of whom teach it at an adult club in the Detroit area called *Characters*. Larry also teaches in Flint at the Embers Lounge. Between the two of them, they teach over 360 Hustle students a week. Barry Douglas, one of Detroit's finest teachers is probably most instrumental in developing the Hustle to the look it has today, aptly named the "Detroit Hustle." He has been teaching this style for about fifteen years and is regarded as the King of Hustle.

It is truly amazing to go to clubs all over the state and see so many couples doing the Hustle. It's a fun dance that is danced to the music of today. Now, when the top 40 music plays, we don't have to say, "What can we dance to that?" Instead we say, "This is a good song to Hustle to. I don't know if it has caught on in the rest of the country yet, but the "Detroit Hustle" is here to stay.

Michigan Ballroom Dance Festival was March 14 at Bay City, Michigan. It was hosted by DANCE MAGIC STUDIOS of Saginaw with competition, general dancing and a professional show performed by Benoit Papineau and Martine Sarah.

A new dance group has been formed in Michigan called "The Great Lakes Swing Dance Club." The club was started in May of '91 and grew to about 185 members in a very short time. The club has already sponsored several dances with great success. We are looking forward to our first Anniversary Dance held on May 30th. All Michigan residents were invited to join or participate.

For more information about what's going on in Michigan, call Bob Budzynski at 313-239-8414.

You are welcome to send news of what's going on in your part of the country; JITTERBUG MAGAZINE will be happy to put it in print.

SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

by Chris Meyer

Santa Barbara is a charming small town about two hours northwest of Los Angeles along the California coastline. Sandwiched in a small area between mountains and coast, it is primarily a resort town and is often referred to affectionately as "a city for the newlyweds and the nearly dead." What many people don't know is that Santa Barbara is one of the major hotbeds of swing dancing in the country.

The dancing style is quite uniform in that the number of steps common to every dancer is greater than where there are many versions of the same dance.

Although Santa Barbara is on the west coast, there isn't much west coast swing going on. Many of the patterns are identical to slotted west coast moves, but they are mostly done with jitterbug footwork. When doing one of these steps, a temporary slot is created. After the step is finished, the slot disappears and the traditional circularity of jitterbug returns. This style can be traced to Dean Collins who left New York in the '30s to bring Savoy style swing to California.

The swing dance community is quite visible in Santa Barbara. A troupe known as the Cats and Jammers gives performances around town periodically, and occasionally enters national competitions. For the past several years the swing dancers have participated in Santa Barbara's popular Solstice Parade which takes place late in June. Dancing in 50s clothes, they have consistently been one of the parade's most popular attractions.

A swing dance with a first-rate band takes place on the first and third Friday of every month at the Carillo Recreation Center, typically attracting 200 to 300 people. Every Wednesday night the hard-core dances meet at the Take One Lounge to dance to taped music. Of course, there are the nightclubs, but they cater to the alcohol and pick-up crowd.

While there are a handful of dance snobs who only dance with each other, the Santa Barbara dance community is in general very friendly and welcoming, and almost everyone is happy to dance with an out-of-towner.

ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

by Joy Florentz

Swing dancers across the nation keep up with news, colorful experiences and friendly advice about their favorite pastime as "The Swingletter" begins its second year. With circulation surpassing 400 subscribers and growing, The Swingletter is a timely, comprehensive resource on upcoming swing dances, special dance events and culture. While many dancers collect flyers and rely on friends for information, this little eight-page newsletter brings it to their fingertips in a single package. Most covered dance events take place in the Washington metropolitan area, though out-of-state events are reviewed as well.

Joy Florentz, an avid dancer from northern Virginia, is editor and publisher, and is assisted by a small, enthusiastic staff. Contributions come from all facets of the dance world: dancers, instructors, bands, club owners, even a foreign correspondent on the European scene. All manner of swing dance styles are represented: east and west coast, jitterbug, shag, country, and some ballroom dances such as waltz, tango, mambo and cha cha.

The Swingletter contains a mix of regular columns and occasional features. There is a "Calendar" listing dance locations, from clubs to dance halls, which covers two months, enabling dancers to plan ahead. Also listed are "Workshops"; "Ongoing Weekly Dances"; and "Band on the Run" a column profiling dancer's favorite bands and DJs. The "On the Town" column includes dance-related movies and book reviews, details about the development or demise of local places to dance, upcoming benefits, etc. Intermittent features include a "Swing Dance Directory," listing organizations across the country and overseas for traveling dancers; "Dance Personalities"; "Mind Your Dance Manners"; and "Dancers' Forum," where people can offer their opinions as to what is going on, or should be, on the dance floor.

The Swingletter also packs in two feature articles. These have included reviews of weekend dance events, experiences of fellow dancers who have danced or competed around the country/world, and in-depth profiles of people and places, ranging from the ballroom-dancing Bova twins in suburban Maryland to the Synergy Dance and Movement Center in Washington, DC to the Synchronicity School of Ballroom Dance in Herndon, Virginia.

Contact Joy Florentz at 306 North Irving Street, Arlington, VA 22201-1242.

SWING AROUND THE CIRCUIT

NEW YORK, NEW YORK by Lynda Lees Adams

The East is meeting the West once again, this time with the West Coast Swing infiltrating itself into some of New York's favorite night spots. West Coast Swing (WCS) actually evolved from the East Coast lindy hop. They both use the same rhythm, but WCS is danced to the rhythm breaks, and the music is usually slower. As a rule, the lindy is usually danced to big band swing music from the '30s and '40s; whereas WCS is danced to rhythm and blues or some types of rock 'n' roll.

Californians originally developed the West Coast Swing in the early '50s to accommodate crowded dance floors. Whereas the lindy is danced in a circular pattern and thus requires a large circumference around the dancing couple, the West Coast Swing is danced back and forth along a straight track, known as "slot dancing."

The woman does her spins and pivots traveling within this track, while the man moves on and off the center of the track.

West Coast Swing reached New York about five years ago, and Margaret Batiuchok started teaching it four years ago. The dance didn't become popular, however, because the music wasn't played in any dancing spots. Then a group of WCS devotees started gathering at the North River Bar and Spodecoodes to dance to the old jukebox music and their own tapes. At the same time western dance instructors started to introduce some WCS when they taught at East Coast dance weekends. The dance schools soon followed.

A new cult to cherish and honor this dance has now been formed. It is appropriately named the East Coast West Coast Swing Club, although it isn't really a chartered club with membership dues or privileges. Instead it is a group of people who gather together to dance. They invite others to join them on Tuesdays at their new meeting place, Top of the Gate, from 8 pm to midnight. The cover charge is \$7; \$5 for New York Swing Dance Society members. The price includes a free lesson in West Coast Swing at 7:30 pm (only during the month of February). For more information call Danya Wilkinson at 212-245-8240.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS by Ralph Zuccarello

Jitterbug's jumping in Chicago! Youngsters and grown-ups alike are keeping the dance floor HOT. At a recent Greater Chicago USABDA Chapter dance, more than 200 members and friends gathered for a good time and lots of swing dance. Eight-year old Magda Witek and Stefan Migala stole the show with a well executed routine. The audience loved them and saluted the youngsters with a standing round of applause. Magda and Stefan have been taught by The International Club's resident instructor, Elizabeth Kasperowicz, who works with a number of young people. These kids are the champions of the future!



Magda Witek and
Stefan Migala
"They'll Jitterbug anytime a
crowd of more than one gathers"

Among other local competitions in Chicago, the Geritol "seasoned" dancers are scheduled to participate in the May 21, 1992 preliminary events at the Hyatt Regency.

Other events designed for the "seasoned" include the Illinois Senior Olympics which take place early in May at the Southern Illinois University. Competitions that feature swing as well as other dances are set in two age categories: 55 to 65 and 65 and over. The Indy Senior Classic, which is slated for early in June in Indianapolis, Indiana, is another competition that includes Jitterbug. Contestants must have reached "double nickle" age to qualify.

DALLAS, TEXAS by Sherry Lawson

The Annual Swing Dance Federation National Convention was held in Dallas, Texas over the Easter weekend. A three day affair turned out to be four because of the many dancers who arrived on Thursday. Over 500 people attended with representatives from at least thirty states.

Workshop instructors included Robert Bryant, Mario Robau, Romero Gonzales, Jerry Crim, Skippy Blair, Gary Valvero and yours truly, Sherry Lawson. Gary and I taught traditional Imperial Swing (see page 35), Joe Grippy style. We used several of the moves I had just learned from a great new program being offered in the St. Louis Area by the United Federation of Swing Dance Teachers and Judges. We only wished more St. Louis dancers had been able to join us in promoting our style and our city.

Kenny Wetzel was there keeping everyone in stitches. Such a generous and fun loving swing dancer! He did a great job emceeding the special entertainment on Saturday night.

As the host club finale, Barry Jones and many more did one of the best dance productions ever seen. A star spangled rendition of "Yankee Doodle Dandy" performed by over 40 dancers. What a show!

The 1992 Hall of Fame inductees were Frankie Manning (see page 14) from New York, and my good friend, Terry Ripa, from Dallas. Terry has promoted, taught, competed, and promulgated swing dance more than anyone I know.

Competition winners were as follows:

CHAMPION JACK AND JILL
Barry Jones and Lynn Vogen
CLASSIC DIVISION
Mike and Amber Cross

On Sunday night, "Stampedes" was the final stompin' ground for the weekend. Gary Long was a great deejay and host, and super dance music filled the room. We had to squeeze out just a few more hours of swing dancing... after all, the had only been over 30 hours over the three days!

Three locations are being considered for the 1993 Nationals: Las Vegas, Laughlin, or Phoenix. Call the U.S. Swing Dance Council, 1-800-655-5445, to express your desire.

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UNITED STATES SWING DANCE COUNCIL



The UNITED STATES SWING DANCE COUNCIL would like to commend the publishers and staff of JITTERBUG MAGAZINE for their journalistic entry into the world of swing dance. This new voice for swing has been sorely needed for many years and, as such, it promises to place a necessary emphasis on the importance of swing dance as a healthy and worthwhile social art form.

The recognition, expansion and appreciation of swing dance is the primary goal of The United States Swing Dance Council. One of the major aims of the Council is the enactment of legislation in the Congress of the United States, to institute swing as our national dance. Other aims include: an informational service to the swing dance community; the forming of championship events, in every state, for increased camaraderie and networking; a Hall of Fame whereby recognition is given to deserving individuals who have advanced the movement of swing dance at either a local or national level. JITTERBUG MAGAZINE has avowed to embrace Council aims through the print media, and has committed to assist in the achievement of related goals.

The long history of swing dance, its durability and adaptability; the fact that it is the only surviving dance native to this country; and the current resurgence of its popularity, make it worthy of all our initial aims and goals. The Council is pleased to know JITTERBUG MAGAZINE will be an ally in actualizing these goals, as it continues to expand the consciousness of its readership. Swing dancers everywhere will benefit as JITTERBUG MAGAZINE and THE UNITED STATES SWING DANCE COUNCIL cooperatively serve as benefactors. In our combined effort to promulgate the spirit of swing dance, we ask that all swing dancers, everywhere, join in the support of its growth through subscription.

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JITTERBUG *From Out of the Past*

by Dale E. Malpezzi

Swing Dance, as we know it today, originally sprang from the cotton plantations of the South. In its origin, it combined the slow expressive movements of Southern Blacks, passed down by African descendants who danced with the passionate expression of their primitive tribal dances.

The dance and music, unnamed and unstandardized, found its way in and out of Honky-Tonks, where customers shuffled, shimmied, and shagged in imitation of the slaves. It finally made its appearance in the North during the roaring twenties, when it was given the name of Lindy Hop, in honor of Charles Lindberg's flight across the Atlantic to Paris (May 20-21, 1927). The dance became lost in the midst of the Jazz Era as it was danced primarily by the Blacks in the big cities of Chicago and New York.

When the depression hit, social dancing had its first recession in more than fifty years; however, this soon changed when Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected in 1932. The Volstead Act was repealed in 1933, and the unforgettable kidnapping of the Lindberg baby in 1932 ended in tragedy.

By the middle thirties, Swing music with its written arrangements became a progressive form of jazz, reaching a popularity to rival the Latin-American music. A new breed of dancers and language appeared.

"Swing," was the musicians descriptive term for the new sound in music. Swing marked the beginning of Jitterbug and a more conventional style of dancing. Avid followers of the Shag and other dances were soon in the swing of it. Both Jazz and Swing were a self-expressive, let me alone, noninterference dance; and soon, killing-pace exhibitions with violent acrobatics challenged the dancers.

The ballroom style of the Lindy soon gave way to the Swing with its exaggerated routines which were geared to excite and benefit the audiences.

In 1934 Hitler became the fuhrer of Germany, while swing continued to gain in popularity. Benny Goodman was known as "The King of Swing," his band dominated the thirties while playing at the Savoy ballroom in New York's Harlem, long recognized as the place to Jive. Cab Calloway, watching the fringe of dancers, remarked, "They

jump around like a bunch of bugs. Yeah! "Jitter Bugs." Thus, the Lindy dance now took on the name "Jitterbug." Calloway wrote a tune "Jitterbug," in 1934 in salute to the Lindy Hop. The style of the dance changed in each locale, but the basic step always remained the same.

The driving insistent beat of the swing music brought on a variety of contests from coast to coast, phrases such as "dig, dig, dig, well all right," "truckin on down and hep cat," dances such as the Lindy, Shim-Sham, and Suzy-Q, with movements called Truckin' and Peckin' became the rage. Swing music and the Jitterbug swept across the country; organized World Swing Dance Contests were held for the title; the most eccentric Swing Dance was held in Miami, Florida, while in the Los Angeles Coliseum the International Jitterbug Contest was held.



Lauré Haile and G.I. Joe, 1944

The black Lindy Hoppers added what is called today "Flash Dancer," simply dancing without touching your partner... a breakaway move in which one of the dancers performs his or her movements, splits, somersaults or other acrobatics, and then rejoins the partner.

During this period of time, Hitler's armies marched into Poland. In 1940

they invade the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxemborg, and in May crossed over to France. In 1941, Germany attacked the Balkans, and in June attacked Russia. Then, on December 7, 1941 the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, the Phillipines and Guam, forcing the United States into war. Within a period of three days U.S. and Britain declared war on Japan. Germany and Italy declared war on the U.S., and on December 11, congress declared war on those countries.

The war years brought on every form of entertainment and particularly social dancing. U.S.O. centers sprung up and became bright spots for servicemen both going and returning from overseas. There they could talk, listen to music or dance; and dancing became a large part of their lives. Zoot suiters changed their clothes for navy blue, army brown or marine green and danced to "Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree" and Tommy Dorsey's "Boogie Woogie." The Stage Door Canteen, the most noted of all canteens, held dances for the lucky service men who got leave. Irving Berlin wrote a song called "I Left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen," and movie actors, actresses, entertainers and popular Swing bands gave their time during those troubled years. It was a joy watching a G.I. or sailor dance with a starlet, or compete in the Jitterbug contests. The carefree sailor with cocked hat, would fling his partner over his shoulder or between his legs, always glancing sideways toward the "Dog Face," who gave him a run for his money. The soldier would give the swabie a smile and his eyes would say, "Let's turn it on." The crowd could sense the challenge... after all, the dog face was from New York, and the gob from Chicago. Soon the crowd would form a circle, the band would strike up a fast Swing, and both dance teams began "cutting the rug." Hand clapping, cheers and good natured jeers would come from the crowd. When the band ended in a crescendo, the room would burst into a thundering applause. Who won? Who cares! Both servicemen tired and sweaty would embrace and walk off arm and arm to the coffee bar... their rivalry forgotten.

God bless America and the dance that got us through World War II... the Jitterbug!

One Writer's Version

JITTERBUG *From Out of the Past*

by H. Leon Raper

Over a period of more than 100 years, American social ballroom dance has reflected the spirit of the times from the earliest form of the Virginia Reel to the Rock 'n' Roll period.

Folks who came to America brought their own dances; but, by far, the most preponderant in influence as well as pervasiveness were the English forms (the country dances, longways and rounds). European dances underwent little adjustment to the new environment other than spreading out and became quicker, longer, and harder. They were performed counterclockwise, and some of the dance sets lasted 15 minutes.

In the 17th and 18th centuries, over eight million African negroes were imported as slaves. They brought with them a developed sense of rhythm and body technique that was unlike anything the Europeans had practiced. The negro has changed much of our art expression... particularly in music and dance.

The black slave danced for escape and forgetfulness; and, since he had no entertainment of his own devising, he sang and danced for fun. Wherever the blacks lived, the white children picked up the rhythms and joined in. A new kind of lilt took over in songs and dance. The accent was placed on the up-beat (or offbeat) and not on the down-beat as was done in Europe. Although this was African, it quickly became adopted by the Americans who then clapped and stamped their dances on the offbeat.

After an unsuccessful but alarming uprising of slaves in 1739, laws were enacted forbidding negroes to use drums, their native instrument. However, that didn't stop them; they transferred their drum rhythms to their feet and anything they could rattle or bang on. They changed the bongo, an African gourd with strings, to the banjo, and it became native American.

In the 19th century there was another tremendous immigration, this time by the Irish who came voluntarily, by the thousands, because of a potato famine in Ireland. The Irish tinkers traveled everywhere in the South; and, in encampments, they performed their jigs, reels and clog dances wherever they went. The negro slaves quickly learned these dances and changed the Irish downbeat to syncopated offbeat rhythms. They also

added the African emphasis of the free loose swinging of the body. The decorous hornpipe of the Irish Clog became the exuberant American Buck and Wing, Tap Hoe-Down and Jazz.



Around 1910, Americans went into the ragtime dance era which flowed from the musical style of the same name. It swept the nation and marked the transition to a new dance style. A series of dances came out of the spirited activities in bars, dives, tap rooms and music halls, and became the rage. The Turkey Trot, Texas Tommy, Bunny Hug, Camel Walk, Grizzly Bear, Gotham Gabble, Humpback Rag, Gabby Glide, and others. The first Junior Cotillion of the season at Sherry's in New York enjoyed the largest attendance in its sixteen year history. However, it was not the Cotillion that was danced, for they all did the new dances. At a ball at the National Arts Club in 1911, the Turkey Trot, Bunny Hug and the like were forbidden; but most of the dancers went into the corridors and did them anyway.

Between 1912 and 1915 the dance craze evolved more than 100 new dances. Most popular were the Hesitation Waltz, Argentine Tango, Maxixe (from Brazil), Lame Duck, Castle Walk, and finally the Foxtrot which gradually began to push the others into the background

and became standard. The Charleston, which was a spin-off of the Foxtrot in 1924, created quite a fervor. It was blamed for all the country's ills from alcoholism to juvenile delinquency. It was followed by the short-lived Black Bottom which was first seen in a Broadway musical in 1926.

Ballroom dancing was standardized in 1925 when Arthur Murray simplified all modern dancing by formulating five fundamental steps. In 1930 he introduced the Westchester style of dancing, popular with the college students. This called for a sixth basic movement which became the "running step."

Swing music, which broke out about 1935, was occasion for the creation of several new dances. The first of these were the Shag and the Lindy Hop (the Lindy Hop was thought to have been originally created in 1924). As the vogue spread and Jitterbugs (followers of swing) demanded more expressive dances, several group participation dances were created in 1937, the first of which was the Big Apple... a combination of the Shag, Trucking (based on an old shuffle movement used by comedians), Pecking, and Suzy-Q. They made use of a "caller," long familiar to square dancers. The Big Apple was followed by Peelin' the Peach.

Since its creation, Jitterbug has never died out. It was very big in the 1950s but started to taper off in the '60s. However, there were many hard core swing dancers that just wouldn't let it die. In fact, by the late '60s, in Los Angeles, one could see a swing dance contest almost every night of the week in many of the nightclubs. In the early '70s, several swing dance clubs were formed in Los Angeles, and began to spring up in San Diego, San Francisco, Houston, Dallas, Phoenix, Tulsa, New York, etc. Today there are swing dance clubs in most major cities in the U.S., and one can meet swing dancers at nightclubs almost every night of the week.

Swing is not only still with us, it is getting bigger. There are national meetings and contests, and people and organizations are trying to get Congress to declare it as the national dance. It is truly an American creation and is loved by everyone who learns to do it. It will survive far into the future as one of our treasured art forms.

And... as Another Sees It

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BUDDY

continued from page 13

"That gives them a new train of thought to go on."

So they should drop the steps they do all the time and make themselves do other steps?

"Exactly. Some people say they can't do syncopations. I tell them to pick one for the night and put it in every single pattern they do. Then, do what they can, because if they do it a hundred times, it's going to become easier each time. People tend to try a syncopation once and if they goof it up, they stop. They've got to change the way they do it and not worry about trying to impress people when they're out there dancing. If they're self conscious they should go someplace where all the dancers don't hang out. Some little club with a dance floor. Practice there so they won't be worried about doing it in front of everyone."

It seems as if you love to develop choreography.

"I love it. It's wonderful. It's a whole different aspect from just dancing. It's good for competition; however it's not good for social dancing. I have a problem with people who teach moves that are not leadable for social dancing. Beginning, intermediate and advanced levels should all be taught leadable moves. If they are going to just dance with one partner for competition, then fine, do choreographed moves. A lot of teachers run out of patterns to teach and start making up things. Making up things is fine as long as they have the elements of lead and follow. If they are going to teach routines, then they have to tell their students that these are definitely not leadable moves, and they won't be able to do them with anyone but those in the class. It's more important to be a good dancer than to be step happy."

What are some of your short-term and long-term goals for yourself?

To convey the knowledge I have to large number of people. Also, I want to make my kids good dancers. My little boy has already gotten jobs! My daughter is coming along, too. She's a year and a half and does an arabesque on cue. He does lifts with her. He just turned six. He loves it. Also, I have another goal! I want a dance ranch with several ballrooms and in-house teachers. People could come and spend a week with us, like a dance camp, going all year long. I'd give scholarships out to talented people who could not afford to do it. Sort of a college for dance.

SHAGLORE

continued from page 11

ducks or khaki pants, and T-shirts, polo shirts, or open-necked shirts. All the guys wear Weejuns...the girls like low flat heel shoes, never high heels, and you see very few skirts and dresses." (Phil) "I wear socks; most shaggers don't wear socks. So when I go shagging, I don't wear socks." (Woody)

Shaggers wear the same clothes, walk the same walk, and talk the same talk. Yet there is an abundance of individuality. Shaggers emphasize their "presence." "Presence simply means looking like a shagger is supposed to look: not bopping up and down; moving from the waist down, and moving what we call 'north and south.' We move in and out together and we don't flair. The move is straight in and straight out.

The way you look is everything." (Phil)

The shag seems to develop an unequivocal confidence in its followers. With every interview, I heard embarrassing stories. "I fell doing the tush push," said a laughing CJ Bell. Woody learned from his mother, and for thirty years he danced on the wrong foot. Marci had a fall recently, and it didn't bother her. She laughed about it.

Phil tells about his first trip to a dance floor at Ocean Drive. He was doing a not-too-cool jitterbug, and they started throwing pennies at him. "I thought they were throwing pennies because they thought we were great, I really did. I didn't know, then, it was a put down. We gathered up the pennies and that 'put down' became a great exhilaration for me." To share moments like these and laugh about them says something special about this community.

From the beginning of shag, the guy has always been the attention grabber. The woman has done her basic, while the man showed off his talent. "...it is basically a male-dominated dance and always has been. However, lately the women are becoming dancers and are no longer content just to let the man show off. Now the women do steps on their own--mirror steps--and done well, this really looks good." (Larry)

Where is the shag today? Born on the coast, it had a shaky adolescence in the 60s and 70s and a Renaissance in the 80s. In 1984 it had matured enough to become South Carolina's State Dance. North Carolina shaggers have great hope that it will become the Tar Heel State Dance. Shag clubs are springing up all over the southeast. Yet, however large the the movement becomes, it will always be a Carolinas' baby.

"It originated here, and it's our dance. It's friendly, and you can't just shag all by yourself (practice excepted). You're always with a big group of people having fun." (CJ Bell)

"It's almost like a religion. It's a way of life. People come to the S.O.S. and just dance for days. It's a kinda cult following that people are really into. It is only gonna get stronger and stronger as the people who grew up with it get older. They'll keep it intact." (Charlie)

Larry said, "Carolina shaggers are more laid back and smooth." Marci Daniels said, "It's fun, lots of fun, and the best part is it's southern." The concurrence among my interviews was amazing. Phil Sawyer summed it all up. "It's emphasis is on the gentle aspect. We still have a lot of chivalry. It's bad shagging manners to turn down a request to dance. We're huggers--we hug all the time--even if we just saw you at noon. Shagging would not relate to the northern way of life. It relates to ours."

Well, that's it. As the newest shag convert, I'm grateful to have the chance to enter this wonderful wacky world. Whatever it is, a dance, an attitude, a feeling, a look, a personality, a presence, or a conglomeration of all, it will stand as a culture within itself.

Tammy Phillips is a Junior at the University of South Carolina. In the spring semester of 1991 she did a project on "Shaglore" in an honors college class on American Folklore. This article is a condensed summary of her project as it was printed in the *S.O.S. Carefree Times*.



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All endeavors must start with an idea, then they must go through the planning stage, and finally they need to be energized and set into motion. In this instance, the idea began with CSDHF Founder, Smiley Bomka, a lovable chap who breeds and raises purebred Arabian horses when he's not polishing the boards with his dancing shoes.

Smiley's idea for a Swing Dance Hall of Fame was but a spark some twenty years ago. Over the ensuing decades it went through the early planning stages which then began to burst into flame in the summer of 1989.

The first people Smiley approached with his plan were long time Swing dancers Hal Takier and Jack Carey (cover story). More fuel was added to the fire of creation when Smiley called upon Annie Hirsch (Carey's partner), Bob Hefner, Mary Collins (wife of the late great Dean Collins), Jack Sigler and Sandee Bryant, all champion dancers and advocates of Jitterbug.

After countless hours of board meetings, two successful Award Presentation events, and new members Bart Bartolo (Committee Chairman), Dixie Jones Lloyd Lickert, Nancye Baca, Bob Brewer, Cay Cannon, Fran Nefrony, Ron Andrews and Betty Corbus joining the board, the fire had been fanned to its fullest.

The First Annual Dinner Dance and Awards Presentations were held October 27, 1990 at the Anaheim Hilton in Anaheim, California. Swing dance buffs from all over California were on hand to witness "Shining Stars" Jack Carey, Hal Takier, Sandee Bryant and Annie Hirsch inducted into the Hall of Fame.



Additional recognition was given to "Nova Stars" Lance Shermoen and Mary Ann Nunez, "Rising Stars" Lynn Vogen and Phil Trau, and "Stellar Stars (deceased)" Jewel McGowen, Betty Takier, Frank Mannion and Dean Collins.

On October 5, 1991 the CSDHF Second Annual Presentations again recognized the most outstanding Swing Dancers in the state of California. Inductees included Jackie Cobb, Bob Hefner, Mary Manzella Locantore and Jack Sigler. "Nova Star" recipients were Linda Cooke and Louie Juarez, "Rising Stars" were Shirley Fietsam and Lowell Gosser, and "Stellar Stars" were Lou Southern, Lenny Smith, Nikki Brady and Bonnie Hauser, with a Special Recognition plaque going to Mark and Marge Peters. An animated crowd of 600 gorgeously dressed guests dined sumptuously, viewed large movie screen "olden days" portrayals, applauded their winning colleagues, and danced to the music of the famed Ray Anthony Orchestra.

This year's event, the Third Annual Awards Presentations, promises to be bigger and better than ever before! With two live bands providing music, surprise guest stars and formal costume theme, California will once again be treated to a posh and stunning event. Even if it means jumping on a plane and flying a thousand miles, the entertainment and camaraderie will be well worth it. Be sure to don your Halloween best!

Top photo: Chairman Bart Bartolo and his partner and board advisor, Kathy Lovelady. Bottom photo: Sergeant at Arms Bob Hefner and Treasurer Mary Collins.

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JIGGERJACK

A Jitterbug

The Best Swing Dancer in the World

by Cay Cannon

This is the story of Jiggerjack Brown,
a dude, a dandy, a dancin' man about town.

He's a crawly kind of creature but you will soon learn,
he's not a limpet, or a slug... and don't ever say worm.
Though he comes from the sea, a mollusk... if you will,
he hates getting in water so he moved up on the hill.
Now most mollusks (pelecypods) live in shells we agree,
but rather than 'valves' Jack has legs... don't you see.

Eleven pairs of legs and they bend both directions,
he can move every way... he has endless selections.

He has twenty-two feet and all of them apt...
they've shuffled, buffeloed, jived, and tapped.

He can dance eleven times better than any common old bug
and when the 'Cricket Band' plays he cuts a mean rug.

Now his goal in life was to become a big champ
and be recogidolized (you read it right)
in the Swing Dancers camp.

But he had a dilemma, that is... up until,
he met twenty-two-legged Jiggerjack Jill.

Overjoyed with each other they went off hand-in-hand
to routine their Swing steps on the beach in the sand.

Now the two of them together measure less than an inch,
so a clam shell for a dance floor made practice a cinch.

Came the big day in November, Mack Fridges World Feat (!)
where thousands of contestants aspire to compete.

You know how it all ends, but do you know why they won?

They did something, my friend, that no others have done.

They set up their clam shell and upon it did climb
and did forty-four break endings * all at one time!



* Editors note:

For the benefit of the novice, a "break ending" is done in lieu of the "coaster" which is a maneuver used in swing dancing whereby both partners can reposition themselves in order to execute a subsequent step pattern. The "coaster" also affords the opportunity for specialized foot styling, such as "break endings." The "coaster" is a two count, or slow step in which the first of the two beats is stepped on and the second beat is held. If it is to be executed as 'double rhythm,' the first of the two beats is held and the second is stepped on. If it is 'triple rhythm,' the first beat is stepped on and the second beat is syncopated (two rapid moves on a single beat). The "coaster" is then followed by two quick steps which are done by stepping one beat for each foot. By doing a syncopation on both beat 'one' and beat 'two' of the slow step, or "coaster"... thus winding up on the opposite and incorrect foot... the two quicks can then be incorporated into the "break ending" in order to complete the pattern on the correct foot. In the late 1930s, Arthur Murray and his staff of experts established the 'single,' 'double' and 'triple' rhythms as the most consistently logical way to deal with a slow, or two-count step in swing. The quick steps are just that... one beat for each step taken... unless a syncopation is used and, if it is, then both beats must be syncopated in order to finish the pattern on the proper foot.

JIVE

by Dale Rittermeyer

When World War II kicked off, a lot of good American Swing Dancers passed through England. Where most stylists had been leaning towards hot, faster, swing... the slower sentimental sounds were the more favored with most of the G.I. dancers. These slower swing sounds resulted in a lot of triple time Chicago style being introduced to pretty English girls.

Now, of course, in today's International dance circles it is more or less presumed that if the English don't do it... it shouldn't be done. So, the International competitors do triple swing using the term the English picked up in WW2... "Jive."

However...

"Jive" is an updated word for "Jazz" and "Jive," like "Jazz" before it, was hip Black slang for uninhibited sexual intercourse. How very English of the English to instigate so many American Puritan ethic types into cavorting and jumping madly around the floor, smiling all the while they are performing under a title that is not really acceptable in polite society!

Jive anyone?

NOTE: Thanks for the trivia, Dale. We understand today's updated term for "jive" is "rad slammin," and it too has a connotation aimed at either the ballroom or the bedroom. -Ed.

"WHAT IN THE WORLD WERE THOSE JUDGES LOOKING AT?"

by John P. Lee

Some judges grade dancers down or up because they dance below or above the level the judges thought they should be able to dance.

Often we hear some version of those words uttered by someone in the audience at almost every dance competition. An explanation of the judging procedures and some of the problems confronting a judge might eliminate some of those comments. There is a need to generate both a standard form(s) for the judging system and the criteria of the level of competence required for a judge. Said prerequisite should include, but not be limited to: experience as a competitor as well as a dancer, an understanding of the difference between "style" and "technique," and a unclouded consciousness of what is good, (and bad), technique! If more of our dance community understood these ingredients, we could arrive at a standardized system of judging based on the type of competition and the number of entries. I, of course, like many others, have my own ideas on this subject, which I will express herein. These opinions are based on my experience as a trained adjudicator for the Fred Astaire Chain.

First of all is the pure simplistic truth in the statement itself: "What in the world was that Judge looking at?!" Many times the judge is NOT LOOKING AT THE SAME THING AS THE AUDIENCE! Because of overly complex judging systems and forms, all too often the judge is required to spend more time writing than watching! The type of system/form used is currently up to the host of the competition and varies greatly from event to event.

The simplest form has the basic information: event and heat followed by the competitors number and placement in that heat; 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th or 6th. There might also be a place to indicate either an exceptionally strong or weak area regarding the basic elements of the dancers' timing, footwork, partnership, etc. With this simple form, the Judge can watch the competitors

throughout their entire number. It is relatively easy to determine the 1st through 6th placement at that time. Even with 12 couples it would be a simple matter of having two heats of 6 couples and then bring back the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place couples from each of the two heats for a runoff.



Many host clubs have gone to a judging form which requires the Judge to set an arbitrary dance standard in his or her mind which represents a 7.5 score and then judge EACH INDIVIDUAL ELEMENT OF DANCE for EVERY COMPETITOR against that mentally pictured level. He or she must then assign an individual score to each element.

An example score sheet could look like this:

Timing 7.5, Footwork 7.8
Execution 7.9, Phrasing 7.5
Partnership 6.8, Choreography 7.2
Degree of Difficulty 7.5

Another version of this system is negative scoring where everyone starts at 100% in the Judges mind and then points are deducted for each error noted.

With either of these systems, the Judges are not directly comparing one competitor to another, and they often spend as much, or more time, looking at the judging form as they do at the dancers. If a Judge looks up when a dancer is performing well and then looks down to make notes at the same time the dancer makes a major blunder...so be it! The audience then correctly wonders...What in the world was that Judge looking at!

Somewhere in between these two extremes of judging forms is a good compromise. Possibly we need a simple system for the smaller competitions and a modification of one of the above systems for the larger competitions. At any rate, until a more improved and standardized system is developed, AND ACCEPTED, the uninformed audience will continue to ask the infamous question: "What in the world...!" It is necessary to have some type of form indicating why the Judge scored the way he or she did. When the scores are made available for all the competitors to see (as they should be), this compels Judges to be accountable for their scores.

This brings up the discussion of who is to judge and what are the qualifications to be a Judge? Let's face it; most of the audience would not be qualified, as they tend to base their choices on personal likes in the areas of styling and showmanship, with a lot of politics and favoritism thrown in as well.

continued

A Grave Responsibility Entrusted to the Judge

Rarely does anyone COMPARE ONE DANCER TO THE OTHER solely on their ability to correctly perform each of the necessary elements of good dance form. I have even heard "Judges" state they have graded a dancer down, or up, because they dance below, or above, the level that Judge thought they should be able to dance. I do not understand what that has to do with judging a competition where one is to determine who is the best dancer on the floor at that point in time! Many, in the average audience, and some Judges I've seen, are not aware of the necessary elements of good dance form. Ergo the problem: who is qualified to judge. Test yourself on a few of the elements just for the fun of it...

What is the difference between technique and style and can you watch someone dancing a "styling" you don't care for and not grade him down on technique? What is phrasing? What are the necessary elements for good choreography? What are the five foot positions? What are the five parts of the foot and how should they be used in swing? What is the difference between a syncopated movement and a movement done "off time"? Can you visually determine the dancers' lead or following ability?

These are just a few of the many elements a good judge must be capable of evaluating in a very brief time across several dancers on the floor. Above all, a good Judge will not let his/her personal likes or dislikes of a styling, person or club influence scoring.

I hope this will enlighten some of the audience as to the grave responsibility entrusted to the person called a Judge, and to some of the reasons why the Judges' results do not always coincide with the popular opinion expressed by the audience. Hence, "What in the world...!"

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IMPERIAL SWING

by Sherry Lawson

The St. Louis Imperial Dance Club was opened in the '50s by George Edick. Ike and Tina Turner got their start there. Jitterbug dancers were welcomed as they flocked to dance to the great music. Everyone became close friends and shared moves, styles and patterns. When other dancers asked where our members learned to dance, they would say, "The Imperial Club," and soon the name Imperial Swing was given to the dance itself.

Very similar to East Coast Swing, Imperial was always danced very fast... and in the round. Lots of footwork and spinning, plus plenty of stamina are essential. When blues bands played, single time converted to triple time for variety and variations.

The basic Imperial Swing Dance step has changed throughout the years. Influence from our sister clubs around the country has altered our style and patterns. There are now two schools of thought: the traditional, in the round, style with a back break step; and the new slot style with the break step changing direction with different patterns. The traditional has a basic 6 count (1&2, 3&4, 5-6) with the 1&2, 3&4 done in triple time and the 5-6 as a break step back.

We use a boogie style, which is a side to side hip movement, to accentuate each weight change. This is done by applying weight on the ball of the foot, along with a bent knee, while swinging the hips back and forth... much like Cuban motion. It is important for the lady to give some resistance as the man leads, and to stay even shouldered with him when in open position.

Lindy 8 count is an important part of our intermediate level of Imperial Swing. Our lindy is very similar to the West Coast and/or Texas whip. The lindy is also taught in the round and is very hard to teach other than one on one. There is a right arm extension for the man that is critical in the execution



of the lindy. The count is 1&2, 3-4, 5&6, 7-8. The 3&4 is a rock step, and the 7-8 is a break step. Triple steps on 1&2, 5&6. Some of our classic steps are the "Hully Gully," "The Sugar Foot," and "The Walk," with many variations of each.

Many of our newer teachers are teaching slot moves with our old count and back step. My observation says: it is very difficult to do slot moves from a back break step. One tries to rush and force the lady to cover much more distance. It's so much easier with a forward or side break for either the man or the lady. I have also found that counting with words rather than numbers makes mental comprehension much easier. Thus, "triple step, triple step, back break; or, triple step, triple step, walk walk," is better understood.

Today, St. Louis has seven swing dance clubs throughout the metro area, with over 2000 members. All clubs give group lessons at very reasonable rates, and anyone who attends for the first time never fails to comment on how friendly the dancers are.

Imperial Swing is just one more child in our swing family that is growing every day. For me, it is a pleasure to be a part of.

TO JUDGE OR NOT TO JUDGE

Qualifying is Where it Starts

by Kenny Wetzel

Lie detector tests, swearing on stacks of bibles, and holding up score cards for public viewing won't do any good until judges of Swing Dance contests have something standard to look for.

Although there is no accepted and sanctioned set of step patterns which are required to be done, either as school figures or free style, judges are, nonetheless, asked to score timing, choreography, and execution. Of what? We ask judges to be fair; but in order to be fair they must first know the facts... and the fact is we can't present a proper case to them because Swing Dance contests are hearsay. In a court of law the judges would be scratching their heads while wondering what was going on.

Swing Dance couple-contests are few and far between. The result is... Jack and Jill in every make, shape and form. It's an embarrassing situation, in the General Dance World, when it is realized that Jack and Jill is about all we have left. And, at that, even those competitors are trying to do everything but Swing. They also don't know what is expected of them and are, consequently, using sexual moves and bizarre behavior in order to capture attention, applause and votes.

I recently saw a Jack and Jill Finals where every girl, but one, persistently displayed her rear end... which was only slightly covered. These gals certainly weren't showing off footwork(!) Rather a shameful display of our State Dance.

Before we get stuck with carnival freak shows, and open up the flood gates to let the inmates take over the asylum, it is quite possible to professionally organize Swing dance competitions.

One way would be to qualify the contestants! All responsible competitions, of any kind, have qualifying rounds or elimination periods.

To start with, all contestants should be required to perform three school fig-

ures, i.e.: Basic Starter Step (Throw-out or release to open position) a Push, Whip or Lindy; one turn (left or right); and one trick (drop, lift or aerial) if they are in any kind of showcase division.



These should be performed in a qualifying round alone, or with a qualified teacher/dancer from the area of the competition, and/or another competitor

from the area. Only three school figures and one turn should be required for Jack and Jill competitors. Three school figures, two turns and one trick should be required to be executed in a qualifying round by couples together.

Those contestants qualifying for the competition should then be required to incorporate the same school figures, turns, and trick in their routine... and be encouraged to show other variations of the same.

This method does several things. It gives the judges something to look for and to judge by; it guarantees a quality competition, it lets competitors know what to practice, it sets a high standard, gives everyone a fair chance, and eliminates amateur tactics and undesirables. If competitions adopt this, or a similar system, contests could be sanctioned legit, and training programs for judges could then be started. One certified judge would go to a competition and preside over the entire contest by qualifying competitors, schooling other judges and even hold the draw for position of dance. In essence, one Senior Judge would be responsible for the competition and have their travel expense, room and admission paid for.

In the past, people have offered their services for free. These volunteers no doubt mean well, but usually fail to get the job done. An example of this was at a recent dance where the deejay was asked by the promoter to play a certain song. The deejay refused and the promoter bemoaned, "I can't do anything about it, because he's working for nothing."

If we don't raise our sights, hire professionals and go forward, then we are the guilty and should be judged as such.

Qualify the contestants as well as the judges

JUDGING THE JACK AND JILL

Let's Not Make It Other Than It Is

by Cay Cannon

The following is one judge's response to the complaints which abound in the maverick of Swing contests called "JACK AND JILL."

Some say the judging guidelines, and even the judges, are less than acceptable. And yet they are, more often than not, the very same judges and, if one will analyze the content of the criteria, the very same guidelines used in every other kind of couple-dance competition... including Ice Dance!

We have heard some contestants say that "ballroom dancers are not qualified to judge swing dancers"(!) Can the reader believe such an absurd statement? Good form in one kind of couple-dance is decidedly applicable in all others. If a judge can recognize it in one... he can certainly discern it in all.

Although the terminology and component 'tags' may differ, the elements used to grade all forms of couple-dance are, in essence, precisely the same. And herein, we believe, lies the problem. Perhaps the contest organizers of the incongruous Jack and Jill cousin have been trying to make a typical shoe fit an atypical foot.

About the only elements which could remain consistently appropriate in all representations of couple-dance... if it is to include Jack and Jill, is **TIMING** and **FOOTWORK**. When the entrants lack "Timing"... it would seem, for them, the contest is over for, whatever they are doing out there... it cannot be called dancing. "Footwork," the foundation of good dancing, and an area that requires a discourse of its own, is purely individual, not reliant upon the partnership, and demands close attention on the judge's score-pad.

Above and beyond these two qualities which persist in every kind of dance... partnered or solo... the only other grade-point that could possibly apply to *unprepared* partnerships is **INTERRELATION**... or, teamwork.

The entire Jack and Jill endeavor is hinged on whether each partner allows freedom for the other to express him/

herself: i.e., whether they are sensitive to one another's ability and emotional response to music; whether each is cognizant of the other's momentary 'high'... surge of 'white heat'... passion to create; or whether they are "getting-it-on" as a unit of one. Self involvement doesn't work if the end result is aimed to 'score.'



Swing Dancing is like a love affair. For Jack and his Jill it's "of the moment"... a lighthearted encounter... a fleeting romance of the dance. For practiced partners it's a commitment... a serious involvement... a marriage of disciplined reciprocity. The technique, detailing and fine-tuning of studied partners isn't likely to be found in couples who have been "drawn from a hat."

With good "Interrelation" in a J & J, all other components logically fall in place... Lead/Follow, Variety, Animation, Smoothness, Showmanship and Styling. That is... all but **CHOREOGRAPHY**... for there is no such creditable element in a Jack and Jill!! "Choreography is a predetermined element" (Webster) which has no place in an extemporaneous event. I recently had occasion to question its appearance on my scoring tablet, and the contest-coordinator brushed my concern aside by calling it "instant choreography"... which is like saying "instant pregnancy." It takes nine months to complete a fetus... sometimes longer to choreograph a dance routine.

In randomly partnered competitions, the only point grade which could come close to "Choreography" would be **MUSIC INTERPRETATION**... and, if the partners are in harmony with each other, "Interrelation" covers that facet as well.

With Interrelation, this judge looks for spontaneity... dancing that is not governed by patterns or programmed to include maneuvers simply because they are part of a repertoire. What the dancers do must be innate, with nothing decided... it happens only because it happens. Skill plays a large part in Interrelation. Effortless control with total discipline and coordination. No maneuver should be set into motion unless it can be completed without a flaw. Skill also includes the ability to continue unobtrusively while, at the same time, complementing the partner's use of his/her own skill.

In summary... why try to make something out of a Jack and Jill contest other than what it is... a spontaneous communion between two people who love to Swing. Let's forget all the 'points' that can only come through pre-planning, practice and development. If the couple can make it past "Timing," let's consider their "Footwork" and then... place most of the emphasis on "Interrelation." With that as a stringent guideline and if they perform that requirement well, they are at **ONE** and they have **WON**.

A spontaneous communion between two dancers

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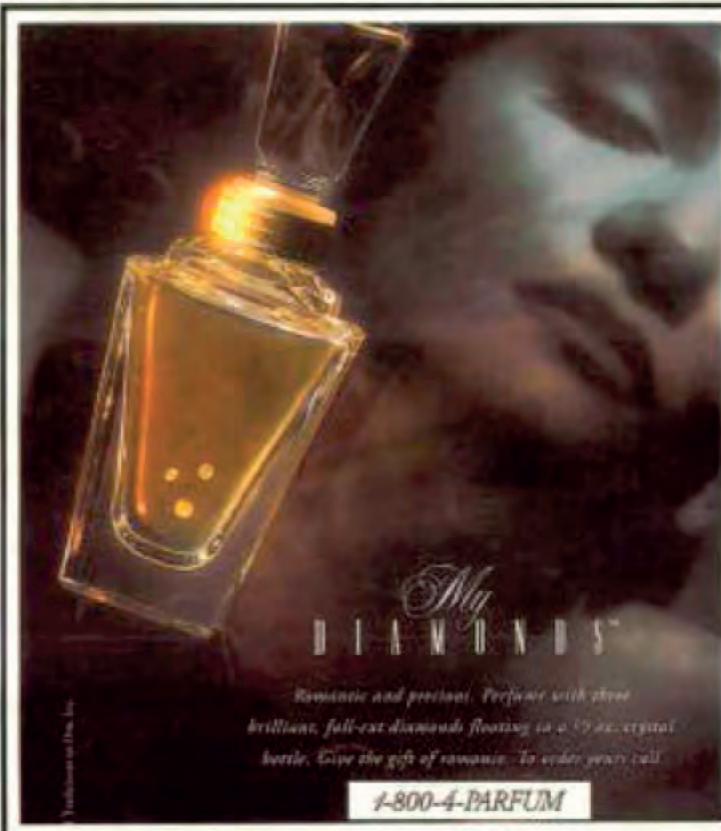
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