



PRINCETON  
COUNTRY  
DANCERS

10 - YEAR ANNIVERSARY  
CELEBRATION

MAY 20, 1989



Perhaps because our own beginnings are beyond our comprehension and ability to remember, we are always interested most in how something we love got started. Yet some of the best things we know begin without formality, without decree and without a recording secretary.

We can -- albeit with some difficulty -- pinpoint the beginning of weekly contra dances in the Princeton area. Yet the community that is encompassed in the title "Princeton Country Dancers" is something harder to capture definitively.

The details set out here comprise a sketch of the events, the places, the people, the learning and the sharing that we each color, sometimes brightly, sometimes delicately, with our memories. Use it as a basis for remembering, for sharing memories, for learning about new and old friends, and most of all for getting closer to the special heart of this community.

- Annie Anderson



## Our Beginnings

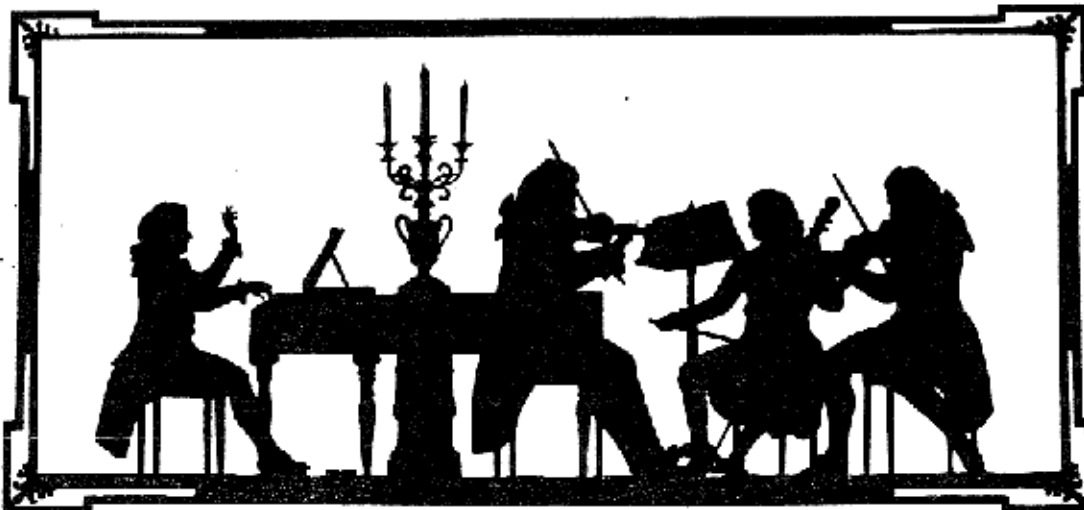
The dance was started by caller David Chandler in 1978. In the beginning, the group danced to records, then to a pick-up band, and then to Tripping Upstairs, which formed from some dedicated pick-up band members. Tripping would play until 10:00 every night at first, then pick-up would play until 11:00. As the pick-up band gained practice, reliability, and respectability, evenings were set aside for pick-up to play for the whole dance.

In 1979, after the dance moved on campus, the average age seemed to drop considerably and the number of dancers began to grow steadily. At first there was no sound system (except for the caller), and the room was long and thin, so the band would set up on the long side of the hall and the caller would call from the middle. In 1980/1981 we did La Bastringue at the end of every evening, with no calling; we danced Petronella, Hull's Victory, BEARPUF and/or Nottingham Swing almost every week. Under David Chandler's calling, an evening consisted of an even mix of English and contra dances. Later, David Herndon brought us some Southern dances; Janet Peters introduced us to the concept of double-swing contras, which some dancers embraced militantly.

After David Chandler moved away, Sue Dupre and David Herndon decided to set up a committee to manage the dance; calling was provided primarily by Sue, as well as David Herndon, Laura Grotzinger, Steve Schnur, and occasionally Michael Levine. Around 1981 Janet Peters learned to call and then turned around and moved to New York.

PCD sponsored its first special event, a Harvest Ball, in the fall of 1979 at the Graduate College (beautiful, but hard floors and heavy tables). PCD dancers by then had already gained a reputation in at least one other dance community as "shit-kickers".

It was also in 1979 that Princeton dancers started going (en masse) to the dawn dances held on holiday weekends in Brattleboro, Vermont. The dancers' styles and abilities changed and improved dramatically at this time; the New England influence probably also contributed to the start of a gradual decline of English dancing in Princeton.



Our Weekly Dance Locations:

- 1978 YWCA, Princeton  
1979 Wilcox Hall, Princeton University  
1980 Wilcox  
1981 Wilcox  
1982 Trinity Church, Mercer Street, Princeton  
1983 Trinity  
1984 St. Paul's Church, Nassau Street, Princeton  
1985 Harlingen Reformed Church, Rte. 206, Belle Mead  
1986 Harlingen  
1987 Harlingen  
1988 Six Mile Run Reformed Church, Rte. 27, Franklin Park  
1989 Six Mile Run



Summer Locations:

The Woodrow Wilson School fountain, Princeton  
185 Nassau Street, Princeton  
Sunset Hills Country Club, Belle Mead

Our Weekly Callers:

David Chandler	Janet Peters
David Herndon	Robert LaRue
Sue Dupre	Nick Kuhn
Steve Schnur	Beth Kuhn
Laura Grotzinger	Trish Petzold

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Fall, 1978: "David Chandler invites me to a dance at the Y during a Scottish dance. Contra dancing doesn't interest me -- too slow and boring."

Spring, 1979: "Teresa Micheleni decides to lure Bob Dupre to a dance (despite his staunch protests that "I'm not the dancing type"), invites a few dancers and Bob to dinner before a dance, hoping that Bob will feel it only polite to then go... Bob sees through the ruse, accepts anyway, and he's hooked. Between 1979 and 1989 there has been at least one Dupre at all but 20 or 30 of PCD's 500+ dances."

- Sue Dupre

Outside callers include:

Jan Alter  
John Alden  
Ira Bernstein  
Rich Blazej  
Claudio Buchwald  
Mary DeRosiers  
Ted Crane  
Henry Chapin  
Larry Edelman  
Bridget Edwards  
George Fogg  
Brad Foster  
Beverly Francis  
Debra Givens  
Ricky Greenwald  
Nick Hawes  
Christine Helwig  
Chip Hendrickson  
Scott Higgs  
Cammy Kaynor  
David Kaynor  
Christy Keevil  
John Krumm  
Dudley Laufman  
Walter Lenk  
Pam McKeever  
Jim Morrison  
Fred Park  
Tony Parks  
Eric Rounds  
Pat Rust  
Tony Saletan  
Ted Sanella  
Tom Senior  
Connie Waring  
Tod Whittemore  
Marlin Whittaker  
Carlotta Wellington  
Steve Zakon

Outside bands include:

Bare Necessities  
The Blarney Stones  
BLT  
Coal Country Traditions  
Fresh Fish  
The Heartbeats  
Steve Hickman  
High Society  
Rodney Miller  
The Nashtones  
New Caledonia  
New York Pro Contra  
The Okey Dokey String Band  
The Pat and Lloyd Shaw Show  
Spaelimenninir  
Swallowtail  
Wellspring  
Whitewater  
George Wilson and Selma Kaplan  
Wild Asparagus

September, 1980: "The first general meeting? The evening was cut short so we could all sit on the floor and discuss whether to pay the band. ... the discussion continues to this day."

- Janet Peters

"At my first dance everybody sat on the floor and talked about the band schedule. I'd driven all the way down from Somerville -- Princeton seemed so far. I wondered, what have I gotten myself into?"

- Garry Moore



## Our Musicians:

Princeton Country Dancers is blessed with the equivalent of a pride of lions or a gaggle of geese: an embarrassment of musicians. That is, ...riches. The fine quality, stylistic variety, and sheer exuberance of our musicians have put Princeton on the dance map and drawn dancers -- and other musicians -- from points all over. In addition to the enormous number of pick-up musicians who gather at the mere mention of music, PCD has been treated to the music of

Tripping Upstairs (and its Cajun cousin, Bon Temps)

Hold the Mustard (originally referred to as "The Trio" or, alternatively, "The Law Firm")

Nick's Maggots (later renamed Plum Pudding)

Put the Kettle On (later renamed Shepherd's Holiday)

Rag 'n Tangle

Loose Members



Fall, 1983: "I showed up at PCD mostly as a musician... Now, many old-timey musicians are pretty hostile to bluegrass pickers and I was afraid contra musicians would cop the same attitude when I unpacked my Gibson F-style mandolin. On the contrary, they seemed happy to have me on board. I found this gracious attitude extends to beginner dancers, too (my evil twin brother has shown up from time to time to dance and flirt and tells me it's true). Hanging out at PCD and playing at R&O has literally provided me with some of the loveliest moments of my entire life. Thank you for welcoming me."

- Richard Smith

## PCD TRADITIONAL EVENTS

### Rum and Onions

The band was formed in the spring of 1981 by David Herndon so that area musicians could have a common repertoire (making pick-up band easier to lead!) and so that he could play in a band that prepared and practiced tunes together.

The name was chosen by long and arduous consensus, made all the more arduous by the extreme cold of the rehearsal space at the time. David threatened to name the band "Jersey Lightening" if no alternative was proposed. "Maggot Pie" was a strong favorite, but in the end the band was named for a little known tune that switched between jig rhythm and reel rhythm and has never in fact been played by the band at a dance.

From its humble beginnings with 11 members, the band doubled to 20 members in November, 1981. It continued to grow each year, until its peak year of 1987, when it comprised around 65 members. In true PCD fashion, after the first two years it became inviolable tradition for the R & O dance to be a Halloween costume dance. Some memorable costumes:

- Garry Moore as a 4-armed fiddler
- Janet Peter's onstage costume change (strip tease?) from conductor to can-can dancer
- Paul Prestopino au naturel (almost)
- Richard Smith as Katarina, the Russian lady shot putter
- Steve Schnur as Adam
- Brenda Baskin as the New Jersey Turnpike
- Ann Harwood and Trish Petzold as alien cocktail waitresses (1984) and -- topping their own record -- Hare Krishna disciples (1985)
- Bob Mills as a jukebox
- ten members of the band as Paul Prestopino
- Garry Moore and Trish Petzold in true cut-away formal wear

In 1983 the band established another tradition by playing its first "big number" -- Bob Pasquarello's Bobcat Shuffle, starring Paul Prestopino on a sinister bass solo. Since then, big numbers have included the theme from Masterpiece Theatre, Stars and Stripes Forever, Jay Ungar's Hoodoo Hoedown, and the William Tell Overture. The band has also provided a showcase for our numerous talented local tune composers, including Bob Pasquarello, Eric Scott, Tex Logan, Paul Prestopino, Scott Marshall, Richard Fisher, Susy Lorand, and others.

Spring of 1984 marked R & O's first opportunity to GO PUBLIC, when the band was invited to play at the New England Folk Festival. The band (along with many others) has represented Princeton at NEFFA every year since 1984, reaching such proportions that it was necessary (and appropriate) to charter a bus in 1986.

RUM & ONIONS FACT SHEET

R&O I April, 1981

Caller: Tony Parkes  
Leader: David Herndon  
Hall: 185 Nassau Street  
Princeton

R&O II November, 1981

Caller: Pat Rust  
Leader: David Herndon  
Hall: Trinity Church  
Princeton

R&O III October, 1982

Caller: Jim Morrison  
Leader: Barbara Greenberg  
Hall: Trinity Church  
Princeton

R&O IV October, 1983

Caller: Todd Whittemore  
Leader: Barbara Greenberg  
Hall: Princeton Day School  
Princeton

R&O V October, 1984

Caller: Sue Elberger  
Leader: Barbara Greenberg  
Hall: Cranbury School  
Cranbury

"I lived in Philly and danced at Summit. I first attended R&O in 1983... I didn't wear a costume, and didn't really know what was going on. I thought it was called 'Roman Onions'."

- Sarah Roberts

R&O VI October, 1985

Caller: Mary DesRosiers  
Leader: Barbara Greenberg  
Hall: The Fire House  
Titusville

R&O VII October, 1986

Caller: Tony Saletan  
Leader: Janet Peters  
Hall: Princeton Day School  
Princeton

R&O VIII October, 1987

Caller: Steve Zakon  
Leader: Janet Peters  
Hall: Princeton Day School  
Princeton

R&O IX October, 1988

Caller: Dan Pearl  
Leader: Janet Peters  
Hall: Princeton Day School  
Princeton

1988: "Phil Warren provided my other strong memories of 1988, by his frequent and freak injuries and his unrecognizable R&O appearance (his own clean-shaven face and a business suit!)." - Ken Samoil







## Winter Cotillion

The Winter Cotillion is the annual dress-up event so that women can get nostalgic about the lovely old days and men can be relieved that they don't have to wear cummerbunds in modern times. The theme is carried out with care to the potluck and the hall, which are dressed up in ribbons, white linen, greens, candlelight, and ornaments. Sometimes even the band -- notably the Blarney Stones the first year -- surprises us by wearing old-world finery.

After-dinner entertainment has become a tradition at the Cotillion, including the amazingly appropriately named Cotillion Singers, mummers plays, morris dancing and sword dancing. Highlights of recent years have included the Star Trek mummers play, a modest Cotillion Singers encore of the Hallelujah Chorus, and a Sacred Harp version of Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer -- completed by the ceremonial donning of red rubber noses.



Cotillion, 1984: "Sarah comes to her first PCD dance at Harlingen ...and we are introduced at the potluck by Jane and Michael. I run out of the walk-through to get her phone number before she leaves. Is this PCD history? Anyway, it's history to us!"

- Larry Koplik



**PCD Blessed Events:**

(those weddings and babies that PCD members feel some responsibility for, involvement in, or even guilt for causing)

**Weddings:**

Linda Toole and David Gottschlich  
Louise Broad and Michael Levine  
Nadia Morano and Jeff Weeks  
Patricia Sorenson and Neal Cox  
Mary Cox and Gerry Kaplan  
Laura Grotzinger and Charlie Thomford  
Martin Harriss and Ellen Harrison  
Lis Romanov and David Laurance  
Larry Koplik and Sarah Roberts  
Reggie Ware and Carolla Bosenberg  
William Bender and Susan Kokora  
Trish Petzold and Garry Moore  
Neil Lundberg and Gretchen Shankweiler  
Jean Miller and Bill Groth  
Debbie Goodkin and Mark Goldman  
Cairn Williams and Charlie Kraft  
Jane McCarty and Michael Bell  
Janet Peters and Robert Mills



**Babies:**

A lot of us remember the Saturday night dance at 185 Nassau Street on June 30, 1983. Every 15 minutes or so one of us would call Mercer Medical Center until we finally learned that Sue Dupre had given birth to twin boys. Since then there have been...

Joe and Sarah Keifer  
Terrence Post  
David Wasserman  
William Francis Chandler  
Michael and Jeremy Kuhn  
Ross Harriss  
Willie Bender  
Peter Laurance  
Matthew Lundberg  
Kevin Moore



## SPLINTER GROUPS

Over the years PCD has encouraged and nurtured the inception of more than just bands and babies.

### Millstone River Morris

Of the many shady splinter groups associated with PCD, Millstone River Morris is perhaps the most disreputable. Authorities believe this band of scurvy counterculture revolutionaries coalesced some time around 1980. Early ring leaders included Marrrrrrtin Harrrrris and Andrea Osgood, repositories of perhaps the filthiest jokes known to the western world. The names of Jim and Lindy Van Fleet, Robert LaRue, Bob Dupre, and Curtis Hoberman have also been linked to this underground organization, but the University has thus far been unable to prove anything. Photographic evidence has recently surfaced, however, indicating that the group has continued its arcane dawn activities as recently as May 1, 1989.

### Foaming at the Feet

FATFeet developed out of a PCD clogging class offered by Philadelphia clogger Debbie Halpern in the spring of 1982. Original members included the usual suspects as well as Katy Ford, Laura Grotzinger, and Sue Dupre. The team established its notoriety early on by unintentionally using a routine that had been copied, lock, stock and barrel, from the nationally famous Fiddle Puppets. After that, it maintained its reputation both inside and outside the Princeton community, for instance by dancing with the men in drag and the women in mustaches at Augusta Dance Week in Elkins, West Virginia in 1984. It was also proud to be the featured team at NEFFA in 1986.

In the opinion of some, FATFeet's high point was a transatlantic pub crawl in the summer of '85. Highlights of the tour included the Redcar Folk Festival (where the crowd ROARED), the Cambridge International Folk Festival, and getting locked into the Watergate Pub with the Chester Morris Men. In the words of Sam and Cal Dupre, "Daddy, Tish, coggng Ingand."

### Original FATFeets:

Annie Anderson	Katy Ford
Sue Dupre	Laura Grotzinger
Bob Dupre	Garry Moore
	Trish Petzold

### England Tour:

Annie Anderson	Plus the Long Weekend
Bob Dupre	String Band:
Ann Harwood	
Robert Mills	Joan Ogden
Garry Moore	John Pranio
Trish Petzold	John Sobon



## Shandygaff Longsword and Garland Team

Named for the traditional English mixture of ginger ale and beer that the team drinks collectively (but not individually) after arduous practices, Shandygaff has been dancing in circles for four years. It came as somewhat of a surprise to some members of the community when the team demonstrated its ability to dance in straight sets, although they appeared to need the security of holding garlands to maintain order in the unruly ranks. Recent rumors have connected Shandygaff with a certain incident of anonymous hooliganism after dinner at the last Winter Cotillion, but so far material evidence is lacking.

In addition to a traditional and inexplicable fondness for the Princeton Battlefield at sunrise, Shandygaff has danced for the past three years in New York at the annual Longsword Ale, astounding bag ladies and passersby in such venues as Penn Station and South Street Seaport. Sue Dupre founded the group and has been foreman over the past four years; Beth Hodsdon, the resident garland expert, was the first squire.

## Cotillion Singers

Started by Annie Anderson in 1983, the Cotillion Singers were originally formed to provide Winter Cotillion attendees after-dinner entertainment or an incentive to help in the kitchen. Since that time the acapella group has expanded its repertoire from wassailing songs and traditional winter solstice songs to doo-wop, sacred harp, Renaissance chansons, contemporary folk, spirituals, and early music. The group's most ambitious piece to date was an off-the-cuff rendition of the Hallelujah Chorus with full orchestra, although the orchestra didn't didn't make the gig. It has also moved out into the unsuspecting community, singing at area churches, the Troubador Folk Club, and even weddings. The Singers are currently led by Robert Mills.

## Other notable splinters:

- now-defunct other-Friday sings at the Post-Petzold house
- PCD Gardeners Seed Exchange
- Sacred Harp Singers
- The Ladies Who Lunch (new mothers' support group)
- the as-yet-unnamed and extremely modest rapper team

## Head For The Hills

The idea for a get-away party-and-dance weekend was conceived by Dan Post in the fall of 1983 after he went to an international dance camp at a location whose name is now lost in the mists of time. Marge Scott suggested Hudson Guild Farm after attending a CDSS weekend there, Ann Harwood came up with the name, and the rest is history. Or it would be if any of us could remember exactly what went on there.

The idea was that this would not be the usual dance weekend, where outside talent is brought in to entertain the masses. Instead, members of the community would contribute their calling abilities, musicianship, organizational skills, and other talents to create a party for each other. Consequently, PCD doesn't advertise the weekend to other dance communities. Nor does PCD make a profit on the weekend: HPTH is budgeted so it will break even. The success of HPTH has caused CDSS to rethink its practice of sponsoring dance weekends at Hudson Guild; as a result, CDSS has been encouraging local dance communities to sponsor their own dance weekends in recent years.

The spirit of the weekend has evolved over its five-year history. The first year, the party in Jane's House lasted until 4 a.m. Friday night and 5 a.m. Saturday. This past year, HPTH organizers practically had to beg people to stay in the party house. Over the years, the need for a baby house has grown from nil to the dedication of all of Rosewalter to families with small children in addition to the usual designation of Despres to new babies and their families.

Some memories of HPTH weekends include:

- a rubber chicken that turned up in various locations
- Don Promish's ubiquitous flea act
- the rock 'n' roll dance party, with DJs and glitter ball
- the mysterious disappearance of Ann Harwood's whistle, and her equally mysterious late-night vision of beef-cake in drag
- the year it snowed
- the beauty of Nonesuch, played by Nick and Beth Kuhn and Louise Topp at an English workshop
- 3-year-old David Wasserman on Bob Stein's lap, having his first banjo lesson
- tired, happy people (wearing their best PJs!) talking quietly in front of the fireplace late at night



... and some other memories:

- rain pouring down the walls in the kitchen at Sunset Hills, and the new outhouses with their little kerosene lanterns;
- trying to call "Ten Mile Run Reformed Church in Kendall Park", and luckily getting an information operator who figured out that there was a Six Mile Run Reformed Church in Franklin Park;
- ten years of discussions about paying bands and callers, how much English, how much teaching, how to welcome new dancers, how to influence thoughtless dancers, scheduling bands and callers;
- the large group of people lifting the piano up out of the McCarter Theatre pit so it could be transported across town in a pick-up truck to 185 Nassau Street for the Whitewater dance... and then the large group of tired -- and scared -- people waiting in the pit with upstretched arms for the same piano to be lowered back down after the dance;
- climbing over the fence at a community pool and skinny-dipping after summer dances at the fountain;
- Larry Koplik being the only male on the executive committee -- dubbed a "gynococracy" by Nelson Caldwell -- for a year and hearing numerous classified discussions (many about Steve Zakon and the Fish) with discretion and good humor;
- PCD contra dance, Shandygaff longsword, and Foaming at the Feet clogging demonstrations at May in Montgomery;
- the pride of seeing PCD members make it in the larger dance world: Sue Dupre, Janet Peters, and Steve Schnur gaining national reputations as callers; Curtis Hoberman and Sue Dupre being elected to the CDSS national executive committee; Tripping Upstairs and Hold the Mustard releasing albums; Bob Dupre, Mary Zikos and Annie Anderson singing at NEFFA; Mary Zikos singing at the Philadelphia Folk Festival; FATFeet in England; Robert Mills and Barbara Greenberg on staff at Pinewoods; Millstone Morris dancing at ales in upstate New York, Connecticut, Maryland, and Virginia; Shandygaff being repeatedly invited to the New York Sword Ale; and the many many representatives of PCD on the NEFFA schedule, year after year;
- the Brookmead Farm dance and music commune in Skillman in 1981, with the Dupres, David Herndon and Ruth Ann Byers: two contra lines in the cavernous livingroom, cold winter nights, warm parties, the first Rum and Onions rehearsals, dancers falling in love in the livingroom, Whitewater publicity pictures taken on the front porch;
- lying on the damp grass outside the dance hall in the spring, listening to the sweetness and nostalgia of the band's last waltz.