

GETTING TO KNOW JOHN CONWAY, LIFE
MEMBER OF CDS-BOSTON CENTRE ***

Probably you'd recognize John Conway at a dance, but you may not know of his years of participation and service to CDS-Boston Centre. He's the man with the tuxedo t-shirt, and the t-shirts from Pinewoods Campers' Weeks, signed by all the campers. His is the first Round Pond t-shirt painted with a crescent moon, with white geese and a bright blue pond. From that gift, Toni Weidenbacher went on to design the shirt with the outline drawing, which people have colored in their own way -- as fall, or summer, or full moon.

Mostly, you'll meet John at Tuesday night contra dances, and at the Fourth of July weekend, and at Cardigan weekend. He lifts his partner during a swing, a brief smiling merry-go-round effect.

John Conway was honored at the March Annual Meeting, and made a Life Member of CDS-Boston Centre. (Our other honoree, Ted Sannella, was saluted in June). During crucial years when CDS-Boston doubled in size, changed board structure, and became a non-profit organization, John was President.

Three months after John joined the governing committee in 1972, the President resigned. John became President, then was reelected twice for two year terms.

At that time, 3 Joy Street was the site of the first Summer Series and of a Thursday drop-in dance with 3 or 4 square sets. (Admission was 50 cents for members, and 60 cents for non-members!) The office, which was shared with NEFFA as it is now, soon moved to Cambridge. With publicity and advertising, membership doubled, from 400 to 800 members! (We have about 600 now). After 3 years, the drop-in dance outgrew its hall, and contras moved to Brimmer and May. The more publicity, the more we grew. Then as now, English and contras alternate in popularity, taking turns supporting each other.

The governing committee drafted new bylaws, and filed the paperwork to become a non-profit organization. In about 1978, S-J Thomas succeeded John and became the first to preside over a Board of Directors. Soon various people pressed for the one-year presidency, preceded and followed by years as President-elect and Past President, by which we now operate.

John began dancing during the war (WWII), during Coast Guard service, his first trip east of his native Indiana. Within 2 weeks, he met Libby Hunter, and Louise Winston, and Jean Bouvier. Ralph Page called a dance at Boston Teacher's College. Louise Chapin taught English, with an occasional contra. Lily and Richard Conant always attended, in white. He remembers dancing at the Charles Street Meeting House, and the smelly locker room of the Union Boat Club. He remembers Mary Woods, who danced and served CDS for a number of years, and who died on the same day as Lily Conant. Both remembered CDS in their wills.

Thanks, John, for bringing the tradition to us!

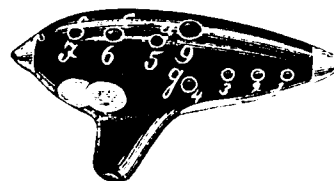
-- Betty Hoskins



DANCE WITH ROBIN AND BRAD

At the suggestion of the English Dance Committee, we have begun plans to provide an additional opportunity for folks to enjoy English Country Dancing. We are currently investigating halls suitable for such a dance and making arrangements with musicians. It is our plan to offer a monthly party (as opposed to a more formal class structure), starting in October. Please be alert for flyers and other notices that will have information about dates and location of the dance. If you have any suggestions about this venture, please let us know. We both thank you, the dancers and leaders in the Boston area, for your support in the past, and we hope that you will be part of our new effort.

-Robin Rogers-Browne and Brad Sayler



SIMPLE, YET SPECIAL GIFTS

Thanks to Cindy Bignelli, for her donation of a typewriter to the CDS office!

Thanks to Ellen Mandigo, for her gift of a fan to the Summer Series!