

Milestone Award - 1984

Jim Mayo

Presented By Don Beck

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I am pleased to now be able to present the milestone award on behalf of CALLERLAB to a man who certainly meets the criteria of unselfish contribution to leadership in uncharted fields that have stood the test of time. He was born in Framingham Massachusetts on March second in 1931. In his adolescent years he moved to Nashua, NH. In high school he was interested in sports and played clarinet in the high school band. His organizational talents surfaced, even then. When his high school's championship football team was chosen to go to Florida, he was upset that the band and cheerleaders could not go along. So he organized a campaign to raise close to \$8000 from the residents of Nashua. The band and cheerleaders did go to Florida and the team won the game.

For his senior year in high school he transferred to a prep school in Worcester, MA where he studied chemistry. In 1948 he went to college attending Yale University in New Haven, CT. He graduated from Yale with the class of 1952. Some of his activities during those college years included sailing during the summer months, being a counselor for a church group and being a swimming instructor. From Yale he went into the Army and a year later he got married. After the Army he went to General Motors Institute for two years and then returned to Nashua to work for his father. He currently works in Massachusetts for Lincoln Laboratory, an affiliate of MIT where he was in Purchasing and Publications for a long while and is now the assistant to the Head of the Engineering Division. He remarried in 1978 and he and Jo Ann now reside in Hampstead, NH.

I have outlined a full life of somebody without mentioning square dancing. I'm not the only one to keep the square dancing life separate from his other life. When he was inducted into the square dancing hall of fame in 1979, an article appeared in the Mass. Institute of Technology publication, Tech Talk, which said "The news came as a surprise to his long time colleagues." It started by saying "Winning awards and professional distinction is par for the course for many MIT people including some off-beat honors." and I am quoting. "James P. Mayo Jr. fell into this category in February." and the article went on from there.

Jim Mayo, Chairman Mao as he has been referred to, was first introduced to square dancing in high school when in 1947 one of his two sisters took him to classes. Ralph Page, a former milestone award recipient, was the instructor. In his sophomore year in college, 1948, he began his calling career. The Outing Club at Yale, which was the center of square dancing there, was in need of a new caller because the present caller was graduating. Jim took advantage of the opportunity. Jim received some help in calling from Ralph Page but because of his progressive ideas, Ralph considered him a renegade and Jim had to seek help elsewhere. Jim then located another local caller, another milestone award recipient, and learned about the budding career from Al Brundage. To further his calling education he once went west to attend a callers' college run by yet another milestone award recipient, Ed Gilmore. Ed shared Ralph Page's impression of Jim's being a renegade and Jim to this day, marvels at how much he got from someone with whom he disagreed so much.

I have known Jim since 1967 and I am convinced the caller he has learned the most from is himself. Jim is able to listen as well as talk. He is willing to keep changing when changes will be beneficial yet will strongly stick by his decisions when that seems to be best. Jim is an innovator, not a renegade. Jim is a caller. He has called throughout the USA and Canada as well as Germany, Bermuda and New Zealand. He is a local club caller having been involved in many clubs in New England. Two that he helped form just celebrated their 25th Anniversaries. One club that he still calls for, and he has been their only club caller, was formed 28 years ago. He formed a Round Dance Club in 1960, the first of its kind in New England, and still cues Rounds at some of his dances. He has called at all but one of the 26 New England Square and Round Dance Conventions as well as numerous National Conventions, festivals and weekends. Jim has recorded for McGregor, Pulse and Dance Ranch and has appeared on the Sets in Order documentary albums. He has called programs from limited basics to A-2.

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Jim is a teacher of callers. He started teaching callers in 1959. He has run and been on the staff of week long schools. He has run schools that meet weekly and some that meet monthly. He has done clinics all over the Continent as well as in Germany and New Zealand. In 1966 Jim wrote a book entitled "Calling For Modern Square Dancing." In 1972 he started writing a series of booklets on various aspects of our trade. The first was called "Timing" then "Leadership and Club Administration" followed in 1974 by "Your Voice" and in 1977 by "Smoothness in Square Dancing." He is a contributing editor to the New England Square Dance magazine and writes one of their monthly columns. He is recognized by NECCA, The New England Council of Callers Assoc., as a caller training specialist in the following fields: Leadership and Club Administration, Programming, Smoothness and Timing. Jim is a CALLERLAB accredited Caller Coach and was part of the committee that established this program.

Jim is a teacher of teachers. His innovation was one of the guiding forces behind the three year old concept of running schools to teach caller coaches. Jim has also just started a caller aid where he helps callers by critiqueing tapes of their dances. I once asked Jim why I found it easier to use things I learned from him than those I learned from others. He told me he is not a "natural" at calling. He had to teach himself to do things and, since he is a tough student to teach, his self teaching techniques also work on other tough students.

Jim is a leader and organizer. He helped organize Tri State Callers' Association and has served in all its offices. Jim was a founding member of NECCA, a council of all the callers' associations in New England and has held all of their offices including Chairman. Jim is a charter member of CALLERLAB and was involved in the formative stages of this organization. Jim is a leader's leader. He served as the first Chairman of the Board of Governors of CALLERLAB in the first two years of our existence.

I opened by saying I was pleased and honored to be able to present the milestone award on behalf of CALLERLAB to a man who certainly meets the criteria of the award. I want to add that I am proud to be able to present this award to my mentor and friend. Will you please join me in this presentation to Mr. Jim Mayo and his charming wife JoAnn.