

SQUARE DANCE HISTORY PROJECT LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE

By David Millstone

A group of square dance enthusiasts has launched a digital library and website (www.SquareDanceHistory.org) that takes a broad look at square dancing in its many forms as well as the historical antecedents of today's squares. The project has financial support from groups representing modern and traditional squares alike; CALLERLAB, Country Dance and Song Society, The ARTS, and the Lloyd Shaw Foundation, with additional resources made available from the Square Dance Foundation of New England and the University of New Hampshire's Special Collections.

The project's primary focus is to collect good examples (more than 300 videos so far) that document square dancing in its many forms. This includes modern square dance programs from Mainstream to Challenge as well as New England dosido and western docey-do, barn dances and hoedowns, stately quadrilles and rip-roarin' squares of the 1950s. The site also includes interviews, text, photographs, audio files, and much more. Among the treats awaiting you are:

- More than 150 items related to MWSD, including an article by **Jim Mayo** looking at the early years, illustrated with live recordings from the 1940s and 1950s.
- A set of 100 high-definition videos filmed at the John C. Campbell Folk School in Brasstown, NC, with six nationally-known square dance callers.
- Black and white silent film (1955) showing square dances in Central City, Colorado, young dancers demonstrating Lloyd Shaw styling.
- Silent footage of southern Appalachian Mountain squares from the early 1930s.

The site is a work in progress and additional material will be added regularly to the collection. The home page offers a way to contribute additional items. The organizers are especially interested in locating home movie footage from decades past. Thanks to CALLERLAB for its early and continuing support.