



Texas Caller's Hall of Fame - J.D. "Red" Warrick

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Warrick

Inducted: 06/14/2008

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Red Warrick

In 1945, after returning from WW II, Red & Gwynn Warrick learned of a square dance class sponsored by the City of Kilgore and decided to join. Red had danced as a youngster while growing up in rural Oklahoma. When he found the instructors, though wonderful people, were not qualified to teach, he asked if he could call. He called "Birdie in a Cage", and he never looked back. He called at the class at least once each week. Felix Till provided the music with his fiddle and set the rhythm with the stomp of his cowboy boot.

When the class graduated, they organized "The Texas Star Square Dance Club." Clubs were being organized throughout East Texas, and Red began calling for several of them and was soon calling just about every night. They formed a band called "Till's Square Dance Band."

In 1946 a club in Henderson hired Red to call. That was his first professional square dance job. In 1947 the club paid Red's tuition to Herb Greggerson's Caller's School in Ruidoso, New Mexico; and that same year Red recorded an album on the Dude Recording label.

In 1949 Red again went to Herb's school and met Bob Osgood, publisher of Sets in Order magazine; Al Brundage, associated with American Squares, a publication in the New England area, Ed Gilmore, who later became famous for his smooth style, his callers' schools, and his creative choreography, and Ira

Findley, a music director for MGM studios. Ira Findley later asked Red for permission to use “Jessie Polka Square” in an MGM movie.

In 1950 Red met Lester Woytek and Daryl Raley (The Melody Cowhands), while calling in Houston. Lester had originated the Longhorn Record label and asked Red to record with them. Red later bought the label and produced many records, with mostly original figures. Darlene, Karen, Sharon and Cynthia, Red and Gwynn’s four daughters, remember many nights when their Daddy would use the kings and queens from a deck of cards to work out these figures. Red couldn’t read music, he played instruments by ear, so Darlene remembers him humming a note so she could find it on the piano.

Red was invited to call in almost every state and several Canadian provinces. Because he operated a oil field equipment business and Longhorn Record Company, he was unable to accept many invitations. He did participated in the staff of square dance vacation institutes at Elk Horn Lodge in Estes park, Colorado; Long’s Peak Inn, Long’s Peak, Colorado, Lightening S Guest, La Veta, Colorado; Fun Valley, South Fork, Colorado and Kirkwood Lodge in Missouri for ten years and many weekend affairs.

Red organized three square dance bands, three exhibition groups, conducted a half-hour television show for three years, taught thousands of dancers and was responsible for assisting at least a dozen callers to begin their careers.

Red felt indebted to so many people who helped him in his career and the many close friends who traveled thousands of miles dancing with him and Gwynn. Many of those friends became friends for life.

He felt very fortunate and gratified to be the featured caller for Holiday in Dixie in Shreveport, Louisiana, for eight years; Tennessee Eastman Club Anniversary Dance for ten years; Louisiana Sesquicentennial Festival in New Orleans, Louisiana; Tulip Festival in Holland Michigan; Thomas A. Edison Light Pageant in Ft. Myers, Florida; Azalea Trails Festival in Mobile, Alabama; Oil Centennial in Casper, Wyoming, the Cactus Festival in Tucson, Arizona, the International Rice Festival in Jennings, Louisiana and the Cotton Festival in Memphis, Tennessee.

No other activity gave Red more pleasure than square dancing because of his love of people and his love of music and the enthusiasm at seeing people get such enjoyment from square dancing.

Those of you who knew Red knows that he always ended his dances with a tune called “Figure Eight”. The energy of that song portrays Red’s passion for square dancing. Red continued to call until shortly before his death in December, 2000.

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