



**STEW
SHACKLETTE
MILESTONE 2003**

In 1947, Stew began his calling career while still in high school. As a student, he played football and worked with a group of children on roller skates. Following high school, Stew attended Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, KY for two years. He then enlisted in the United States Navy and was stationed in San Diego, California. While in San Diego he became involved in the square dance movement. At that time (the early 1950's) square dancing was developing from the traditional form to Modern Western Square Dancing as we know it today.

While stationed in California, he joined the Southern California Callers Association, the Northern California Callers Association, and the San Diego Callers Association, where he served one term as President. He also founded the Palomar Callers Association, where he served one term as President. He met Doc Graham when he began calling Contra in 1955. Doc helped Stew by taping his Contra Prompting and critiquing the tapes.

After returning to Kentucky in 1958, he completed his college degree at the University of Louisville, where he graduated in 1961. Stew then returned to California where he taught Physical Education and Social Studies for a private school for a year. Stew also drove the school bus.

Returning again to Kentucky, Stew taught in the public schools, and called for seven different square dance clubs including an Advanced club and a club for children. During the summer, he taught in the park system, often as much as seven different parks a day. He was also instrumental in forming the Kentucky Square Dance Callers Association. Stew served six terms as president throughout the years.

Stew continued his square dance involvement, becoming a permanent staff member and then a director of the Kentucky Dance Institute. This dance week covers square, round, contra, folk, and other related dance forms and has reached teachers and future teachers throughout its program.

In 1991, Stew, along with David Lewis, founded the Kentucky Dance Foundation with the goals of preserving square and folk dance music and dances for the future. The Foundation acquired the Folk Dancer Label, copyrights and inventory from the estate of Michael Herman who was the originator of this record label. This music was for international folk dancing, traditional squares, and contra dancing which had been collected over many years from all over the world. After acquiring the inventory and copyrights and a building to store them, Stew and his wife Kathy sorted and shelved 71,000 pounds of phonograph records. They have worked to “catalog” these records using computer technology. Stew and Kathy have worked over two and half years digitally recording this music on the hard drive and converting the records to CD’s. In 2001, Stew received the National Dance Award from San Antonio College for this work.

Stew has supported square dancing throughout his career. Stew became a member of CALLERLAB in 1975, served four years on the CALLERLAB Board of Governors, and served seven years as Chairman of the Contra and Traditional Committee. He has attended and called at 36 National Square Dance Conventions, three years on the Board of Governors of CONTRALAB and two years as Chairman of the Board of CONTRALAB. He is a member of the National Teachers Association of Line and Country Western, the Lloyd Shaw Foundation, and the National Folk Dance Society. In addition to all of this activity, he has developed a self-paced program, “How to Prompt Contra” for CONTRALAB, produced videotapes on how to dance, and written four books on subjects varying from teaching square dancing for grades four to seven, to contra calling.