

CAMPBELL AND GENNY McCORD KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE

Genny and Campbell McCord were on hand for the first square dance class in Knoxville, Tennessee, in 1957, sponsored by the City Recreation Bureau. The few traditional rounds done at these first square dances captivated Genny and Campbell who already had a musical background including ballroom dancing. Campbell had previously been a band member at his military school and a member of the "Pride of the Southland" University of Tennessee band.

By 1958, the McCords were convinced Knoxville's square dance program also needed round dance lessons. After an excellent reception when they taught two rounds at the Smoky Mountain Festival, and with the further inspiration of Manning and Nita Smith at the Alabama Jubilee, they started Knoxville's first round dance class in 1959 with the aid of Shaw and Hamilton books on round dancing. They and their sponsors, the Knoxville City Recreation Bureau, could not have been more surprised or more pleased when 80 couples appeared the first night. Thus began a brand new career for Campbell and Genny.

Genny and Campbell met at the University of Tennessee where both graduated. Genny "retired" from teaching school to care for their two sons, Michael and Danny, both of whom are also University of Tennessee graduates. Campbell was Chief Electrical Design Engineer at TVA before his retirement in 1969. Their hobbies included golf, wood carving, and furniture making. Many of their friends cherish handmade items made in the McCords' garage workshop.

Busy as they already were, round dancing became an integral part of their lives. Since their first beginners class in 1959 they have continually given of themselves, as the beginners classes were continued each year by them as well as adding a weekly intermediate workshop to their schedule after their first class graduated. A little later they helped form a weekly round dance club, the Roundelays, where they taught as well as cued.

They taught the other round dance teachers now teaching in the Knoxville and Oak Ridge area, Dick and Pat Whaley, Bob and Jeanette Kemper, and Wentz and Norma Dickenson. East Tennessee can truthfully say the McCords were the ones who actually brought round dancing to this area and made it stay.

Campbell and Genny were charter members of Dixie Round Dance Council, which was formed in 1963, on which they served as chairpersons on two occasions. Dixie Round Dance Council is made up of members throughout the United States, but meetings are usually held in Tennessee, Georgia and Alabama. They have taught regularly throughout the years at DRDC.

When Genny and Campbell officially retired from round dancing in June,

1983, there was not only a big retirement party at KSDA given by the Roundelays but there was a huge surprise dinner party at Deane Hill Country Club given by their many, many friends and well-wishers for the years of tireless effort and dedication not only to round dancing, but to the hundreds of couples who were their students and friends.

November 9, 1983 brought to an end the short retirement period for this wonderful couple as Campbell did not survive the open heart surgery doctors said was his only chance to live, after the severe heart attack he had undergone a few weeks earlier.

If there is round dancing in heaven, Campbell will be right there in the midst of it. Campbell may be gone, but he and Genny will live on in the hearts of all of us--round and square dancers, teachers, and friends the rest of our lives.