

# Where In The World Is Kay Patterson?

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**Kaye and Dan Grover proudly display their diplomas from Ottawa Pioneer Plus Club, August 2005.**

This story began some 30 years ago, in the summer of 1975, while Rosalee and I were taking square dance lessons. The Lawrence Barn Dancers Association, which then consisted of the Lawrence Barn Dance Club and Merry Mixers Square Dance Club, conducted lessons in the basement of Fraternal Order of Eagles, on Sixth Street in Lawrence. Karl Edwards of the caller-run Barn Dancers, and Bob Klinkenberg, caller for the Merry Mixers, alternated in teaching on Tuesday evenings for the Mainstream level of 75 calls.

As many other novice dancers will attest, the mind becomes scrambled after a few weeks and one has trouble remembering even Basic calls. Karl and Bob gave permission to tape record lessons so that we could review and practice calls at home. This worked for us and we graduated in the fall, joined both Clubs, and began enjoying square dancing.

During the 1980s, Karl disbanded the Barn Dancers and retired from calling, and the Merry Mixers Club folded. We continued our membership in, and dancing to Bob with the Tonga Twirlers, but dropped out a few years later. Karl passed away and Bob retired from square dancing. Tonga Twirlers continued on as a traveling club.

In early 2001 Rosalee saw an ad in the *Lawrence Journal-World* of Kevin Oneslager conducting square dance lessons in Lawrence. We gave it a try, discovered we remembered most of the calls, and decided to get back into square dancing.

We attended two of Kevin's classes and thought it time to attend a dance to see how we could do. Our first dance was at Croco Hall in Topeka (I do not remember which Club), and not being a member of a club and no badge, Rosalee dug out the many old badges. We decided to wear the old Barn Dancers badges.

The butterflies were similar to our first Tenderfoot Dance and likewise the Angels accepted us re-treads into the squares and pulled us through. While resting between tips we were approached by Lois and Al Park of Sunflower Steppers, Osage City. Lois looked at the badges and exclaimed, "My father called for that club!" That explained why she looked so familiar as we quickly realized the resemblance of her mother, Helen. While swapping stories of "the good old days" I mentioned the now misplaced audio tapes, and how they helped us become familiar with some of the calls. Lois told me she had a few old tapes that her father had recorded, and offered to let me borrow them. I should mention here for those who do not know, Karl Edwards, a KU professor, was a widely acclaimed teacher, not only of dancers but also conducted classes for callers. He was accredited by CallerLab, sitting on the Board of Directors for many years.

While spring-cleaning in 2002, Rosalee discovered a shoebox of our old cassette tapes, the audio tapes from summer of 1975. It was a real treat to listen to them, wondering why some of the neat old calls had been dropped and others moved up to Plus level. We discovered that not only were there recordings of lessons but some from Merry Mixer's special dances. Back then Bob Klinkenberg would occasionally organize a band for a dance, consisting of himself on guitar, his son Robert on drums, Lee Kennedy on base, Jay Stires playing banjo, and sometimes another I cannot recall, who played fiddle. There was one recording of Karl calling with the band.

This reminded me of Lois Park's tapes and I contacted her about borrowing them. One of the cassette tapes was labeled "1983 Callers Graduation Dance." The familiar voice of Karl Edwards is heard awarding diplomas, and then introducing each new caller for their "guest tip." We also heard the familiar voice of Vic Perry, who was already an accomplished caller, and apparently was assisting Karl. Five graduating callers are heard on the tape, one being Jay Krebs with his classic "It's A Small World." Of the remaining four, one was the intriguing voice of a young lady caller, introduced by Karl as "Kay Patterson from Osborne, Kansas."

During the following months, I frequently asked local area old timers and callers if they remember a lady caller from the 1980s by name of "Kay Patterson." No one remembered her, suggesting that maybe she married, or remarried, and now had a different name. But no one could connect her with a present-day caller.

Since our return to square dancing, several friends from the old clubs have also returned, and new friends from Kevin's Tons-of-Fun classes and Vic's Ottawa Promenaders have joined us in traveling to dances. On one recent trip out to Junction City for a dance with Buckles & Bows, there were three couples in our van, followed by couples in another vehicle. The usual custom is for us gents to sit toward the front and discuss world events, and assist in navigation so as not to have to stop and bother locals for directions, while the ladies sit toward the back and chatter on their matters of interest.

Somewhere west of Paxico the conversation from the rear of the van turned interesting, as it sounded like someone said "Yes, I attended one of Karl Edwards' caller schools." More chatter. And then, from Rosalee, "Hey Bob, do you realize who we have back here?" I was thunderstruck. Within milliseconds, my mind pieced together memory segments from the past:

Kaye and Dan Grover completed Mainstream lessons in 2004 and they both immensely enjoy dancing and traveling to different clubs. Dan was new to square dancing while Kaye obviously had danced before, but I had not learned when and where. There seemed to be something intriguing with her voice and presence in a square, sometimes she seemed to be calling along with the Caller.

The now vaguely familiar voice from the rear of the van was that of Kaye Grover. After what seemed like an eternity, I asked if she had known a Kay Patterson? She did not respond, as there was still much chatter back there. Dan spoke up with "Her name when she danced before was Patterson." I could not contain myself in exclaiming, "I have a tape recording of you calling!" There was a moment of silence, and then Kaye's "Oh, I have to hear it!"

During the second tip at Buckles & Bows I learned from a couple who were riding in the following vehicle that Dan must also be anxious to hear the tape of Kaye calling, as he was very excitedly telling all of our group about it. We were all getting excited with Dan.

Upon our return home, well past midnight, I went to the computer to find the hard drive folder "Karl Edwards 1983 Grad Dance." Windows Media Player was soon filling the room with Kay Patterson calling "Promenading Katie" and "Five Foot Two." The yodeling voice was unmistakably that of Kaye Grover.

Rosalee and I listened to the two calls several times and then burned a copy to an audio CD for Kaye and Dan. As Rosalee departed for bed, leaving me listening to the songs yet again, she exclaimed "After all these months of searching for Kay Patterson, she was right behind you in the back seat!"

The trip and dance with Buckles & Bows in Junction City was really fun. They are a great group and, of course, guest caller Vic Perry is always fun to dance to. Our discovery of "Kay Patterson" provided a nice finishing touch to a grand evening.

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## **SIDEBAR:**

Lois Park's generous loan of Karl Edwards' tapes, coupled with discovering my own recordings from 1975, inspired me to begin recording at square dances in order to preserve the voices of as many callers as possible, especially our North East callers. I first ask the caller for permission, which is always positive and often with an offer to plug into their equipment. Although this would provide higher quality recordings, I prefer instead to use open microphone so as to capture the joyous sounds of the dancers along with the caller.

Sadly, some callers are no longer possible to record as they have retired or passed on. On the happy side I have discovered that other dancers, and callers, have old audio and video recordings of lessons or square dances, and are willing to briefly loan them to me for recording into digital format. If you attended the 2005 Kansas State Convention in Salina and ventured by the North East KSDA display table, you had an opportunity to hear some of our callers, both past and present. Look for more in 2006.

This is a plea for you to search for those almost forgotten cassette, 8-track, or open-reel audio tapes, or even VHS tapes, of square dances or lessons, especially from "the olden days" or of inactive callers, and allow them to be preserved. Please contact me by phone (785-842-9799) or on the dance floor if you know of, or have any recordings to share.

Bob & Rosalee Rainbolt,  
NE KSDA Historians,  
Happy Time Squares,  
Lawrence

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