



Jack O'Leary
www.silversoundsmusic.com



WE DIDN'T START THE FIRE

Writer: Billy Joel - Publisher: Joelsongs
Square dance lyrics written by Jack O'Leary
**Tom Manning appears courtesy of
Solid Gold Records**



Tom Manning
www.tom-manning.com

OPENER, BREAK, CLOSER: SIDES FACE, GRAND SQUARE

CONTRA DANCE, FRENCH QUADRILLES, WESTERN SQUARES, LOTS OF THRILLS, COBO HALL, GILMORE'S CALL, SHOOT THE STAR, ASILOMAR GOTCHER'S HASH, DON'T GET STUCK, ANDERSON AND KEOKUK, ASD AND SIO, CALLERLAB AND DON'T YOU KNOW, **4 LADIES PROMENADE INSIDE GET BACK, SWING YOUR MAN AND ALL PROMENADE. . . WE DIDN'T START THE FIRE, IT WAS ALWAYS BURNIN' SINCE THE WORLD'S BEEN TURNIN'.**

FIGURE:

HEAD COUPLES **PROMENADE, HALF**, WALK IN AND **SQUARE THRU 4 HANDS AROUND**, GO ALL THE WAY AND A **RIGHT & LEFT THRU, PASS THRU, TRADE BY, TOUCH A QUARTER** THEN, **SCOOT BACK** AND GO THAT **CORNER SWING**, YOU SWING THAT GIRL AND **PROMENADE** AROUND THE RING. . . WE DIDN'T START THE FIRE, IT WAS ALWAYS BURNIN' SINCE THE WORLD'S BEEN TURNIN'.

CALLERS: *Additional lyrics for break and closer:*

Alternate lyrics for Grand Square

BREAK: HONOR PARTNER, KEENO KIDS, THINK OF ALL THE THINGS WE DID, JOE LEWIS, SINGIN' SAM, WAGON WHEEL ACROSS THE LAND, RILEY SINGS HIS SONGS FOR YOU, DICK JONES AND MOUNTAIN MUSIC TOO, MACK IS BACK, SO MUCH FUN, BLUE JEANS SONG IS NUMBER ONE

CLOSER: JERRY STORY, OXENDINE, ASCAP, BMI, FESTIVALS, LOSE YOUR BLUES, KOPMAN'S ON PHIL DONAHUE, MAINSTREAM, PLUS, ADVANCED, LEGACY, OUR NATIONAL DANCE, JOIN IN DON'T STRAY, WHAT ELSE DO I HAVE TO SAY . . .

**SILVER SOUNDS RECORDS, 2037 JASHALITA DR., NEVADA, IOWA 50201 (203) 482-6682
(WWW.SILVERSOUNDSMUSIC.COM)**

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The Explanations

We Didn't Start The Fire - SSR - 266

Whether you have been connected with square dancing for a few years or a few decades, here is some background information regarding the lyrics for this "square dance timeline".

Opener:

Contra Dances and Quadrille's were the basic foundation of American Square Dancing.

Cobo Hall, a world class convention facility in Detroit, MI was the site of some of our first National Square Dance Conventions.

The Texas Star routines were popular as Western Square Dancing developed.

ASILOMAR was a square dance vacation / retreat hosted for many years by the late Bob Osgood.

Les Gotcher was known as the "King of Hash and traveled throughout the U.S. calling his brand of creative choreography.

Caller Ken Anderson was calling a pre-Thanksgiving dance in Keokuk, Iowa in the mid-1960's when the furnace in the dance hall exploded. There were several deaths and many injuries to the dancers. Ken survived the accident.

ASD is American Square Dance Magazine, a national publication.

SIO was Sets In Order Magazine – another national magazine published for many years by the late Bob Osgood.

Callerlab is the international association of square dance callers, who along with the American Caller's Association, works to maintain caller professionalism.

Break:

Honor Partner was usually the first call, replaced by "Bow To Your Partner. Keeno Kid's was the last call of a patter or singing call.

The late Joe Lewis was a very well known caller who played the accordion while he called. Joe worked extensively with youth in square dancing.

The late Singin' Sam Mitchell, a former police officer was nationally known for his great singing voice.

Wagon Wheel was a record company that introduced a new sound and professional recorded music during the 1960's.

The late Chuck Railey was another singing caller who recorded several songs on the MacGregor label.

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The late Dick Jones from New York was a very popular caller who had a unique singing style. His record "I Like Mountain Music was a top hit.

Mack is Back, recorded by Earl Johnston on the Grenn label was a block buster hit during the 1960's and '70's.

Blue Jeans song refers to the record "Something 'Bout You Baby, I Like" recorded by Jerry Haag on the Chaparral label, and was the most popular square dance singing call of its day.

Ending:

Jerry Story and Tony Oxendine are two well known callers who enjoy world wide popularity. They are co-owners of Royal Records.

ASCAP / BMI refers to the licensing of caller's to perform copywrited music. Callerlab negotiated for caller licensing rather than requiring each square dance club to obtain licensing, which would have been cost prohibitive for the clubs.

Kopman's on Phil Donahue - Caller Lee Kopman appeared on the nationally syndicated talk show. The Phil Donahue Show, along with dancers, and demonstrated what Modern Western Square Dancing was all about, in a most positive way, for a national audience

Mainstream, Plus, Advanced refers to the call lists developed by Callerlab in an effort to standardize square dance programs.

Legacy was an organization to promote callers and dancers working together for the betterment of square dancing.

Our National Dance - many states lobbied to have square dancing as the official dance of the United States.

This is by no means a complete history of Modern Western Square Dancing. Rather just some highlights of where we have been.

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