



Gerard Murphy

**Where were you or what did you see that made you say, "I want to do that!!"**

The first time I saw line dancing was in a country bar during a work Christmas party! Everyone in our group gave it a try and we had a super time! A few of us decided to check it out again and ended up getting into a weekly routine... I think one of the first dances we learned was THUNDERFOOT!

**How did you get started with dancing, or DJg or producing videos or whatever?**

Well, there was always dancing goin' on growing up in Newfoundland - with the Irish influence! My wife Susan and I took some social dance classes the year we were married - had to make that first dance look good! And then when we discovered line dance we were hooked...

# WORLD LINE DANCE NEWSLETTER



## **What made you want to continue?**

Funny how things turn out... Susan and I were happily living and line dancing in Nova Scotia for a few years and then I was offered a super career opportunity which meant a move back to our home province of Newfoundland. Within a month the local YMCA asked me to consider teaching a beginner line dance class. My university background is in education and training - specifically in health education...so to think about instructing a small group of beginners was very tempting and not a large stretch - so I jumped right in! That was in 1993. Each week I'd arrive at class with my little boom box and bag load of cassette tapes (YUP!) and within two years I was teaching three line dance classes, a partner's class and helping with choreography for a synchronized swimming team (YUP!)...and before long created my first line dance...COMMODORE CORRAL!

We eventually moved back to Nova Scotia and I started teaching here - and coaching MURPHY'S LAW dance team. What a great group - and patient too! I started travelling more and more in the late 90s, as well as choreographing more dances. The team has moved on to look after babies and refocus on other life priorities - and I'm certainly not as active locally as my schedule has also changed over the last few years. But I am planning my third line dance cruise for the spring of 2009!

## **What type of dancing/teaching do you do?**

Line dance is my primary focus - though I have taught partners and couples workshops. Teaching/facilitation is my professional interest. I'm particularly excited with opportunities to help prepare people to be the best teachers or instructors they can be - no matter the subject matter. And in the line dance community I think there's a HUGE opportunity - and need - to help local instructors increase their skills and knowledge - not so much just around dance technique, but around teaching technique as well!

## **What dances have you choreographed that you are most proud of (because I know some of you will have a zillion of them)?**

Well - I'd have to say I'm most proud of those dances that seem to appeal to dancers and instructors alike - and that tend to 'find their own legs'!... I'm so fortunate to have the opportunity to travel to large dance events but with work commitments am not in a position to travel as much as I'd like - or as much as other choreographers. So - when a dance does well and other instructors teach it that's a great feeling! The success of dances like HEAVE AWAY, MAMMA AFRIKA, THE WAY, CRABBUCKIT and now DO IT! really has resulted from other instructors adding them to their teach list! (Thanks folks!) If I had to pick I'd say that I'm most proud of THE WAY - particularly for how far reaching beyond North America it has stretched...

## **What has been a real thrill for you related to dancing?**

Overall, meeting SO many people in SO many new places! And entering a ballroom somewhere to see the floor jammed with one of my dances - and knowing that folks might have no idea that it's mine and that I'm actually in the room! How cool is that!

## **What hobbies and interests do you have outside of dancing?**

Work, work, work.... Dance some... Work a little more... Pack a suitcase... Travel... Start again from the beginning!

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## **Where do you consider "home"?**

Home is Nova Scotia, Canada. Susan and I live on the outskirts of Halifax. We love our house and neighbourhood - but I'm DEFINITELY NOT a home maintenance kinda guy - so Susan has a 'man for everything' to keep the place in top notch condition! We both grew up in Newfoundland and I guess part of us will always consider that 'home'...

## **What type of job do you do or dream of doing (if you would like to share it)?**

My career history has been varied! I get bored easy! I am a health educator by training and had worked for several years in education or management positions with several provincial not-for-profit health organizations (ie: Cancer, Heart & Stroke and Alzheimers). More recently I've spent time in government and since last February am the Manager for Primary Health Care in one of our nine district health authorities. Sounds fancy, eh?! My work schedule is crazy - and I'm toying with the idea of setting up my own consulting business - which should provide more flexibility to focus even more time on dance!

## **Share information about your family (if you would like to share it).**

That would be Susan... She travels with me sometimes, depending on her schedule. Susan's always been my biggest supporter - and has so much patience...I guess I have a tendency to be 'high maintenance sometimes'....hmmmm... It's just the two of us - no pets, plants or kids...

## **Just give us a general overview of you as a person and a dancer.**

GOSH! Well, I generally say in my work life that I'm at my best when I'm in front of a group. I'm confident with my skills as an instructor/facilitator, as I've been doing it for years in all parts of my life. Not the 'superstar' dancer for sure, but that's just fine with me! I draw energy from other people so need to be around lots of people (that's why large dance events are soooo great!). I'm extremely extroverted - though not everyone in the line dance community might think that, as I tend to float under the radar sometimes! That might be an unconscious choice - as I find that it takes some time to get recharged at a weekend event and shift from the typical 'hectic hellish work mode'. But once you really get to know me you'd see that! I'm highly intuitive - apparently! I took one of those personality tests once and was told that I'm bordering on being psychic - HA! I can read people and situations extremely well. I'm spontaneous and generally don't take life too seriously. I'm usually 'in it' for the FUN and feel successful when folks have a great time! So - come to my workshops and LAUGH! Even if I'm not funny!!