

I wish I had a photo

Here is another wonderful story from Society member, Val Wilson (nee Rolfs). Val has captured the essence of youthful energy in rural Greensborough as a teenager that helped form lifelong friendships that still remain today.

I was about 16 when Square Dancing came to Greensborough, Eleanor, a girl I knew said her uncle was starting up square dancing lessons in the Church of England Hall, next Wednesday night and did I want to come?

And along I went, I guess there were 40 or so there, mums, dads, kids, assorted people, plus a handful of my friends. We were sorted out into sets of eights and shown how to do the movements, etc. well sort of!

As Eleanor's uncle was teaching himself to be a caller, and using us to practise on, we were the blind leading the blind, but under bossy boots Eleanor's pushing and shoving us into our proper places, we bumbled and fumbled our way around, laughed a lot and had a very good time. So we went back taking more people with us, it got to the stage that we didn't wait to be put into a set, we formed our own.

There was of course Eleanor, Donny my cousin, Shirley, Graeme (these two were to marry later on and live happily ever after), Margo, my future bridesmaid, and Max, we had trouble filling the last spot, first there was Brian my ever faithful gentle giant, the only problem with Brian was he danced like one, a couple of others came and went, then along came Frankie, he could dance on sixpence, so he stayed.

And we loved it, as well as the Wednesday nights in the hall, we started going around to Eleanor's place every chance we could, to practise and teach ourselves new dances from the 78 records her uncle had lent her. One new record and we were around there.

We were becoming very good and dressed the part as well, the girls wore full circle skirts of red and white gingham, full petticoats with lots of lace around the edge, essential for swishing around, white peasant blouses with the low neck and sleeves threaded with red ribbon, black cinch belts and black flatties. The boys wore black trousers, white shirts and gingham neck chiefs.

Well as you can judge we were fast outgrowing the Church of England Hall at Greensborough, Eleanor's uncle told us of a knockout competition at the Preston Town Hall. This was a bit out of our area, but a challenge had been put out, were we good enough? So be it, we set off, train to Heidelberg, then bus over to Preston, a long way really.

All worth it, we won! I can still remember the euphoria of that trip home. We returned for the next 2 weeks and won again, on returning for the 4th. Week, we were lining up on the dance floor, the M.C said by a special favour the Greensborough Square Dance Set were about to give us an exhibition set, which we did. We had been politely removed

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from the competition - we had been shafted.

Well, we would go on to bigger and better things, there was a knockout competition further in the city at Leggatt's, that is where we would further our claim to glory. Well we tried and got knocked out in a semi-final; Preston Town Hall had been our 15 minutes of fame. We still danced for a while, but the bubble had burst, and as in a group of 8 people, we were all moving on to other things.

While it lasted you could not have found a happier group of young people, we had a ball and I wish I had a photo.

Val Wilson (nee Rolfs) 2011

Many thanks to Val for another enjoyable snippet of life in Greensborough through the eyes of a young girl growing up in the district. Val's wonderful line ". . . *and I wish I had a photo*" again demonstrates the importance of photographs and other memorabilia.