



AUSTRALIAN ROUND DANCE ASSOCIATION

~ QUICK REFERENCE ~

Volume 2024/3 DECEMBER 2024 Edition vs.1 17/12/2024



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Attachments to be emailed with this ARDA Newsletter:

ARDA Conference Registration Form

ROUNDS BY THE SEA Flyer & Registration Form

Excel Spreadsheet DanceLog Query.

Registration form for the 65th ANSDC may be downloaded via
www.2025.ansdc.au

*Plus a sincere wish All our ARDA members stay safe and well and we
DANCE together, somewhere in 2025.*



~ **DISCLAIMER** ~

ARDA accepts no responsibility for any inaccuracies, and reserves the right to alter, cancel or otherwise modify in any way, matter contained in this publication.. The opinions expressed are merely those of the individuals and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of ARDA.

FAREWELL and THANK YOU THELMA McCUE



Received from the President of the South Australian Round Dance Association and shared with ARDA members with Shirley's permission.

It is with sadness that I announce the passing of our Life Member, Thelma McCue, at 9.00pm last night the 12th December.

She was in hospital with a bad kidney infection.

Thelma passed away with all her family by her side.

No other details regarding funeral arrangements are available at this stage.

Information will be passed on when known.

Shirley Bates, President SARDA

THELMA McCUE with a 'Wink and a Smile'...

I met Thelma and husband Tom (dec.d) in 2003, at the first of many Victorian Spring Festivals I attended.

At this time, Tom was unable to dance due to problems with his legs and I sat and chatted with him as I was a 'newbie' to round dancing. Tom expressed his sadness at having to watch Thelma dance by herself. It sure made me feel sad as well. The love Thelma and Tom shared was evident in the wonderful partnership of marriage, running a business, raising a family and dancing and teaching round dancing.

After awhile Thelma, being 'Thelma' called me onto the dance floor and told me I would learn more if I was up dancing rather than sitting. Of course she was right and I am very grateful Thelma and I started a long term friendship over a 'foxtrot vine' and 'rumba fan' being executed correctly.. *Thank you Thelma.* If Thelma could dance by herself, so could I and I did and still do.

Along our friendship journey I have shared accommodation with Thelma at various conventions both State and National; been welcomed by and had the opportunity to get to know some of Thelma's lovely family, and have been made very welcome at Thelma's home. I will miss the many phone calls we shared talking choreography and music and if I have one regret, it is that I never did get to share my dance I choreographed for the 2024 SARDA Festival, with Thelma. I wanted to share this with Thelma when I was sure there were no mistakes for her expert eyes to pick up. I was too late.

I am so pleased that Thelma and I 'danced' at the 2024 SARDA Festival albeit Thelma was in her wheel chair and I was her partner.

So with 'a wink and a smile' Thelma I thank you for being my friend. Rest in Peace.

Carol Simondson

THELMA McCUE

Life Member of SARDA
Life Member of ARDA
Life Member SA Square Dance Society

And recipient of the
2023 ROUDALAB Distinguished Service
Award.
Choreographer of many lovely dances.



Pictured above Thelma and Carol at the 2024 SARDA Festival.

To the right are Karen Dempsey, Thelma and Monica Slape.

The three girls were celebrating their birthdays at Dance Around on 1st December this year.

Courtesy of Shirley Bates, President of South Australia Round Dance and with Permission to share.





PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Sadly, ARDA has been advised of the passing of Thelma McCue. Thelma and husband Tom (decd.) had been Life Members for many years and for those in the dancing community who knew or had met Thelma, we have lost a lovely lady. Our thoughts, prayers and condolences go out to the family.



As well, we send our thoughts and condolences to Marilyn van Sambeeck who has sadly lost her brother, Johnno.



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The Google link for the SOP Manual and Incorporation in Victoria documents have been sent out and I look forward to receiving comments and suggestions on these important documents. As I requested in my email, could all comments be back to my by the end of January 2025 so that I have enough time to make any changes.

: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1G_LxNVqJ60vITPII6Tyl6MZHqVubupr?usp=drive_link

The cue sheets on the NDL have been reviewed for consistency and I hope to have them available for members within the next few weeks, once again through Google link.

A reminder the ARDA Conference being held immediately prior to the National Convention in Morayfield - is for both cuers and dancers.

I would like to wish all members a Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and look forward to catching up somewhere on the dance floor next year.

Chris Heyworth
ARDA President.

PS: I have forwarded to Editor Carol, two articles that were printed in the CRDA (Colorado Round Dance Association) Newsletter. I have received permission for these articles to be reprinted in the ARDA Newsletter and both article's author. CH.

APOLOGY from the Editor

It has been drawn to my attention as Editor, the contact number for the 65th Australian National Square Dance Convention in the previous Newsletter was INCORRECT.

I do hope that no ARDA member has been inconvenienced by this error.

There are TWO numbers you can use 0417 729 263 or 0427 135 442 as per the Registration Form.

For your convenience a registration form is attached. See you in Morayfield?

Carol S



REMINDERS for 2025

- * *State and Territory Representatives* You are being reminded the 'due in by date' for the 2025 Showcase and 2025 Intermediate nominations is
28 FEBRUARY 2025

This is the closing date for Caller & Cues Registrations as per the ARDA Criteria 'Showcase' and 'Intermediate' Dance Nominations.

- * Have you registered to attend the ARDA Conference 2025?
YOUR registration form is attached to the email that delivered this Newsletter.
- * Have you registered to attend the 65th ANSDC to be held in Morayfield, Qld from 7th to 11th (Monday to Friday) July 2025? contact@.2025.ansdc.au
- * This is not a 'have you' rather a would you consider joining ROUNDALAB?
Give it some thought.
- * Have you given thought to attending QRDA Rounds By The Sea in beautiful Coolumberrig?
You won't be disappointed as this weekend is packed with learning and dancing.
Paula and Warwick are your Teacher/Cues
YOUR registration form is attached to the email that delivered this Newsletter.

TO DO IN 2025

- * All of the above plus supporting your round dance club on a regular basis.
- * Attend the ARDA Annual General Meeting and provide input and support to guide your committee in the right direction.
- * Give thought to attending the September Spring Festival in Victoria.
Further details will be provided when information/details are received.

There are many wonderful opportunities coming up in 2025 and we sincerely hope you will support as many events you can.





From our ARDA EDUCATION OFFICERS

2024 Beginner Teaching

Like most Round Dance Clubs globally, we are struggling to attract and maintain dancers these days. This year we made a concerted effort to stick to a strategy regarding the beginners.

Note that every group is different, and this will not work every time, but this was our story this year.

We started with a few people off the street with no dance experience. Also, a group from a Rock & Roll Club wanted to learn something different to dance in the breaks between sets the live bands were playing as they usually go to recorded music. Now we knew that we were never going to maintain the full number who started but were hopeful of keeping the really interested dancers.

We covered six different rhythms through the year. Each rhythm had the basics covered over the course of around six weeks. We think it was successful as we have around 4 or 5 couples now able to dance a varied night's program.

In order of delivery –

- **Waltz** – Box family, Waltz Away/TOG, Canter, Dip Back, Vine, Maneuver, Pick up, Left Turns, Right Turns, Left Turn Box, Twinkles, concept of BJO/SCAR.
- **Cha** – Basic (FWD & BK), Cucaracha, Fenceline, New Yorker, Alemana (with and without Lariat), Sliding doors, Walks FWD & Circle, Shoulder to Shoulder.
- **Jive** – Basics, Left to Right & Right to Left, Point Steps, Right Turning Fallaway, Triples, Link Rock.
- **Rumba** – turning what they already did in Cha and extending the movements. Crab Walks, Side Walks, Spot Turns, Underarm/Reverse Underarm Turns, Whip, Chase (Standard and Peekaboo).
- **West Coast** – Sugar Push, Underarm Turn (Lady & Man), Left Side Pass, Wrapped Whip, Normal Whip, Tuck & Spin, Chicken Walks. The course content was based on “Aussie Knock” by Moore.
- **Foxtrot** – extending what they had already covered in Waltz. Timings in Foxtrot, Spin Turn, Impetus, Hover, concept of syncopation (Chasse and Vine)

Warwick & Paula Armstrong





From our ARDA EDUCATION OFFICERS pt. 2

From the Education Officer.

Hi everyone. We have collated a list of dances from various organisations we have access to for popular dances or most taught. This means there will be a mix of old and new dances. Because these have come from multiple sources, some of the dances are repeated. The time frames vary depending on whether they show this by month or by time period. This is a long list so I will be asking if this can also be sent as an Excel sheet as well so that people can apply their own filters.

Just last week, we entertained Rey & Sherry Garza from California. Rey and Sherry have taught and cued all over the world so we asked them for a couple of suggestions as well that have proved popular in their opinion. Note that some of the listed phase levels are indicative, depending how they were represented by the association. That means it might be PH IV + 1 but might be shown as just IV. There are a number of these repeated as they appear in different lists, indicating they really are popular at the moment.

The total list is from Phase II up to phase VI. We think that there are a number of these dances that could be very suitable for both the Showcase and Intermediate categories if you are still looking for something. Regardless, if you are looking for new material for club, this will be a good place to start.

CRDA – Colorado Round Dance Association.
NCRDTA – North California Round Dance Teachers Association
RAL – ROUNDALAB (Rounds of the Quarter)
RDTASC – Round Dance Teachers Association of Southern California
ICBDA – International Choreographed Ballroom Association
ROM/Q – Round of the month or quarter
MF12M – Most frequent for the last 12 months
MT12M – Most taught for the last 12 months
CP - Currently popular

Warwick & Paula Armstrong

Editor's Note:

On behalf of all ARDA members I would like to offer a very sincere THANK YOU to the members of the ARDA Management Committee for all the time and energy you put towards ensuring our ROUND DANCE journey is a great journey.

Unfortunately, you cannot be in every State/Territory, however the time and energy you put towards communicating and educating every one of us dancers, leaders, cuers, is very much appreciated.

THANK YOU Christopher, Paula, Warwick, Helen, Anna-Lee and Bev.

Dancing certainly is a contact sport - but it's not wrestling - and we would often benefit if we could focus a little less on getting through the figure and a little more on being gentle with each other. I wonder if this is a plea mostly to the men - he-men, cavemen. Mostly - but anyone, man or woman, can be over enthusiastic, intense, rushed, or pushy. In round dancing, we focus so strongly on the steps - we focus so strongly on our feet - that 'details,' like gentle execution, definitely can be overlooked.

Moderation

One way to cultivate a gentle style is to make our movements moderate and smooth, instead of huge and jerky. Well some dance steps, should have some abruptness to them. A Surprise Whip should have a surprise in it, but a gentle surprise. As in most aspects of life, we want moderation - some sharpness when called for, but not too often or too much.

We know that long, gliding steps often look good. Maybe we have watched competition ball-room dancers soar from one end of the floor to the other. But take care that your effort doesn't become a sudden leap or lunge. Then, the resulting momentum is hard to resist, so recovery must be muscular and crudely jerky in its turn. We strive for rise and fall in most of the smooth rhythms, but don't pop up to the tippy-toes like a jack-in-the-box and then thump down onto the heels and into deep knee bends. Often, we add arm or legwork to a figure. If the cuer calls for it or if the tempo allows it fine. But don't dance every Fence Line "with arms." Don't do every Open Break with a big, vertical arm thrust. Don't dance every Cross Body with a twirl. Don't struggle to turn every Lariat into a Rope Spin. Don't struggle at all - be gentle.

Think Ahead

Another smoothing strategy is to anticipate the next figure, even as you are dancing the current figure. For instance, if you are dancing a Three Step and then a Natural Weave, you will hear the second cue early. As you do, adjust the last step of the current figure. Turn it a little to the right, and you will flow so much more gently into the Weave. If you're doing Hip Rocks to a Spot Turn, on the last Hip Rock, turn your foot out to allow the Spot Turn to Flow.

As a matter of fact, listen for that word 'to' in the cueing. 'Open Break to a Natural Top'. The to warns you that you especially need to anticipate, in this case, to turn the end of the Open Break to the right so that the Natural Top will flow smoothly. In essence, you have begun the Natural Top at the end of the Open Break. You are overlapping the figures. If we can consciously transition from each figure into the next, with a small action or maybe only a mental readiness, then we will have one smooth dance, rather than lots of separate, isolated, and choppy figures.

Lead But Don't Force

Men, your job is to lead your partner. Is 'leading' the same thing as 'making her go where you want her to go? Do you ever find yourself dragging her across during a Wing? Don't do the caveman thing. Invite her across but don't force it. Open the door for her in a gentlemanly fashion, but don't push her through. If she doesn't get quite as far as you thought she should, let it be. A smaller move will certainly look better (and feel better) than a forced 'correct' move.

We talk casually about 'lead and follow,' as though the information flows only from the man to the woman, from a captain to his crew, but it is really a conversation. He offers a lead, she responds, he reads that response and uses that information to fine-tune his next lead. A caveman lead is rough and awkward. A conversational lead is smooth and gentle.

Thank Your Partner

And, finally, at the end of the dance, you have one more opportunity to be gentle, instead of reviewing every bobble and blunder - 'Stop tugging on me.' 'Keep your arms up.' - think of the good parts. Say, 'That felt good.' If it didn't feel good, at least the music was nice. Smile. Say, 'Thank you.' Be Gentle.



SMOOTHING OUT THOSE SLOWS

Sandi Finch

One of the biggest flaws we see in dancing is abrupt transitions, usually caused by getting onto a foot too quickly to flow smoothly with the music. It happens at all levels—developes where the extension is just a fast kick or a contra check that doesn't take the time to lower first, among the advanced dancers, and a Rumba basic where a newer dancer rushes onto the slow and then has to stand for a full beat of music.

You enjoy music because it has a harmonious flow and some highlights. Dancing should be the same. When you are moving harmoniously with the music, you are showing 'musicality,' relating your steps and characteristics of the rhythm to the energy, mood and melody of the music.

We can be esoteric here and talk about how music is 'multi-layered,' from the steady metronomic timing of the bass notes to the variations added by the lighter instruments and even the singer's phrasing. We can tell you to dance with feeling, picking out the nuances of any of those layers in the music. We can talk about playing with figures using legato or rubato timing [meaning smooth and even or staccato]. At the same time, we say, whatever you do, be 'on time.'

Dancing 'on time' means you keep up with the basic underlying tempo of the music - not rushing ahead of the measures or failing to keep up. Some music runs at 'strict tempo,' meaning the orchestra plays a determined number of measures per minute consistently throughout the dance. Popular music doesn't always maintain a consistent speed. This makes it easy to play with the music. Within the guidelines of being 'on time', you have freedom to slow your steps in places, speed up in others and use more shaping to fill the music.

But this essay is more basic than that.

It is simply a reminder to avoid abrupt transitions between figures and the stop and start action seen in rhythms that require one step to occupy two beats of music. You begin learning a new step or rhythm by focusing on what your feet do, but dancing isn't just about taking steps. Much of the enjoyment is what you do between the steps.

If you look up answers for the crossword puzzle clue 'dance smoothly,' you will get such alternatives as move like a canoe, fly without an engine, move gracefully, flow, like a bird flying on thermals. Each definition implies movement without abruptness. The problem shows up when newer dancers learn Rumba. With Waltz and Cha Cha, there is generally a step on every beat. Rumba introduces new timing—quick, quick, slow.

No problem with the first two beats of the measure - one step on each beat. You know you have one more step to take and two beats of music left in the measure. The tendency is to step on beat three and stand there for beat four. Rumba is designed to fill the music with hip action and a sense of drama. Take the third step on beat 3 and allow your hip 'to settle' on beat four by straightening your leg as you step, allowing your other knee to flex. Your hip should naturally rotate back, all on the last beat.

Newer dancers may dance the slow, quick, quick timing of a Foxtrot feather [phase IV] like this: Step on count 1, wait as beat 2 goes by, then step again when they hear beat 3 and beat 4. By all accounts, they are correctly dancing the three steps of the feather, SQQ.

Continued next page



SMOOTHING OUT THOSE SLOWS

Sandi Finch

Continued from previous page....

A more experienced couple might dance it this way: Swing through from the previous step on the first beat of the slow count (beat 1), not stepping onto 100% of their weight. Their weight is transferred to that foot well into second beat of the slow count. The movement continues 'in flight' through beat 2 with Man rolling through the foot from heel to toe and swinging his free foot forward. He steps onto the toe on the first quick (beat 3) and he steals time from the second quick (beat 4) before taking his third step onto the toe and lowering to a flat foot. The movement flows continuously, almost slow, slow &, avoiding the 'step and stop' style of the newer dancer.

Say the cue is 'explode apart.' The tendency is to step apart quickly flinging your arm in an arc. It might be more dramatic and in keeping with the music to control the arm so that it fills the measure.

It isn't just the new dancers who have a problem with abruptness. A woman's develop [phase IV] requires her to step back drawing the free foot up the side of the other leg, extending it out from the knee then bringing the leg down straight to the standing foot, usually in a measure of music. Don't make it just a kick out that comes down as you are already moving into the next figure. It won't match the music, and you will most likely be out of balance and out of sync with your partner.

We see too many contra checks [phase V] where the man forgets to lower first. The lowering gives partners a chance to connect. Otherwise, he will start without her, and she has to guess how far back to reach, or his forward motion will overpower her.

We could talk about a throwaway oversway [phase VI]. Man might rotate abruptly into his part of the figure not taking her with him. They will end up hip to hip, her right elbow will jab him in the chest, and they won't have the leg connection for him to lead her out of it.

The 'books' tell you what to do, but in very few places are you told what happens when it is wrong. It takes doing it until you begin to feel like a part of the music.

Sandi Finch.

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From the Editor: As mentioned in the ARDA President's report, BE GENTLE - Harold & Meredith Sears And SMOOTHING OUT THOSE SLOWS - Sandi Finch have been reprinted from the CRDA Newsletter with permission/approval from the Editor K Herr and the authors H & M Sears and S Finch.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT



I have a very special announcement to share with ARDA members in the next ARDA Newsletter.

When the sad news of the passing of our dear Thelma McCue was received, I decided to leave the special announcement until the next edition.

Editor





all the way from WA

Courtesy of ARDA State Representative - Marilyn van Sambeek

Dianella Rangers: Thursday 10-12 noon

Rounds for Dianella Rangers on Thursday mornings, has continued to be well received. We had two new dancers join us after the break (for Darwin Convention) and they are progressing exceptionally well. We now dance 16 dancers regularly and have ventured into teaching Rumba.

Dancers have enjoyed the new dances that I have presented to them, the likes of 'Anna Marie II' & 'Life Is A Slow Dance With You' in the Waltzes and 'A Letter From a Postman' and 'Rooney', just two examples.

We recently had a State Festival in Busselton, WA, celebrating 50 years since the first convention there in 1974. I put forward the possibility of having an 'Intro to Rounds' as a session, which they took up and was placed on the programme on Saturday afternoon.

We had nine (9) new dancers attempting Rounds for the first time and they achieved learning, dancing and revising both a Waltz and a Two Step within the hour allocated.

We were programmed for a Sunday session of Round Dancing which again was very well received and Round Dancers got to dance over 20 dances, which included two breaks in the 1 1/2 hour timeslot.

It was suggested we consider incorporating a similar program for future State Festivals, so I have sent a report to our Society.

Bruce Gillett (partnered by his wife Debbie), is the support person for Marilyn and between the two of them, they have organised a Christmas dance with both Cuers. A very interesting time for the dancers. This will be followed by a FREE Christmas lunch at a local Chinese Restaurant.

This most interesting and informative report is continued on the next page.

**Your next NEWSLETTER will be released late
FEBRUARY/MARCH
I need YOUR assistance to fill at least
12 pages.**

DEADLINE for copy - 10TH February 2025



all the way from WA

Continued from previous page.

P & R Rounds: Saturdays 1 - 3 pm

Continues with the three session types, Senior, Intermediate and Beginners. Alan Eades is the Leader and takes on the Senior session with mostly pre-cued Rounds and then half of the Intermediate session. Marilyn does the second half of the Intermediate, often trying out new songs for their comment and feedback. Marilyn then takes the Beginner class where they are perfecting Rumba at the moment and have just started on the Cha Cha.

Kiwilers: Friday nights

Kiwilers are again introducing 45 minutes of Rounds (7pm - 7.45pm) prior to their Mainstream dance on Friday nights. Feedback is that dancers are enjoying new dances to pre-cued sings, presented by Richard Muir.

GENERAL:

Marilyn, together with three of her friends (Bev, Maureen and John Kemp) (ex Queenslander), attended the SA Round Dance Festival and really enjoyed the experience. Marilyn took a heap of video footage to show dancers who could not attend.

Highlight was seeing Thelma cue a couple of Rounds!!!

WA had an annual 'Have-a-go Day' where Square Dancing is featured on a stage area. For the first time in 32 years, Round Dancing was showcased. We had flyers available to hand out, in the hope there will be interest shown.

That's it from the West.

Hope to catch up at the 65th in Morayfield,, Qld.

Best wishes Marilyn.

What a wonderful way to end this final ARDA Newsletter for 2024.

I had faith in you Marilyn and am so proud of what you have achieved in WA, in such a short time. CS

To ALL our wonderful ARDA members, especially those who may be experiencing a 'blue Christmas', please be assured you will be in our thoughts as Christmas 2024 comes closer.

**May YOUR Christmas be shared with family and friends
And we look forward to your company on a dance floor, somewhere in 2025.**

Editor's Note ~~

All articles and photos in this Newsletter have been printed as a matter of courtesy and interest for all. Refer to the 'Disclaimer' on the front page.

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