



A SHORT HISTORY OF FEET RETREAT

Feet Retreat has always been held at Camp Sertoma. In August of 1982 the Winston-Salem Country Dancers gathered here and held their first dance weekend and called it Feet Retreat. There were 67 dancers present. Jody Dunn and maybe Cis Hinkle were the callers. No one is quite sure who the musicians were. John Calhoun of Reel Shady was present. He recalls that it was hot as blazes and some of the musicians ceased to play from heat exhaustion. In 1982 the swimming pool was still open, so the group could cool off occasionally. The next year the dancers moved the weekend to September to take advantage of the cooler weather. John recalls a fire going in the fireplace while Mark and Sally Wingate played on stage in the dance hall.

Feet Retreat was named and organized by P.Z. and Mary Anna Dunn and their daughter, Jody. Jody had been away at college and had learned English Country and Contra dancing. When she returned home in 1981, the family decided to start a dance group in Winston-Salem. They called themselves the Winston-Salem Country Dancers and met at Burkehead Methodist Church. They danced to recorded music and Jody called. The three of them decided to make a weekend affair of it and so Feet Retreat was born.

The Dunns were instrumental in organizing the Fiddle and Bow Society and the dance group was part of that organization for a long time. In the mid 90s, the dancers decided to become a separate group and officially became the Fiddle and Bow Country Dancers.

The Dunn family has always been involved in music and dance. P.Z. played in a band called the Pigtown Fling String Band. Mary Anna played banjo at one time, but now is involved in painting and teaching watercolor. John Calhoun relates that in the early 80s Mary Anna and P.Z. invited anyone interested to bring their instrument and participate in jams at their home. Some continued to get together and play regularly and eventually played for the dances.

P.Z. and Mary Anna left Winston-Salem in 1985 and lived in New Bern for seven years. They now live in Greensboro. Jody Dunn Harvey lives near Pinehurst. I hope they will attend a dance so we can meet them.

After P.Z. and Mary Anna gave up running the Winston-Salem dance, Jody Dunn may have run it for a while. Anne Marie Walter took it over at some point and organized the weekly dance and managed to put on Feet Retreat at the same time. She handed the crown over to Linda Sullivan in the mid 90s. Linda passed it on to Dan Houston. Next came George Segebade for several years and finally Cynthia Stewart took on the job. And it's no small job!

And so for 25 years we have come to Camp Sertoma. For 25 years we have returned to fill the woods with music and laughter. Thanks to all the people who worked over the years to make Feet Retreat one of the most exciting and loved dance events ever.