

Finding Aid to the Prairie Squares & Crescent Squares Records

Prairie Squares, 1953- ; Crescent Squares, 1968-1982

Prairie Squares Records, 1962-2000; Crescent Squares Records, 1968-1982

3 linear ft.

Collection number: MSS 3050

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OVERVIEW

Access: The collection is open under the rules and regulations of the Institute.

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BIOGRAPHY

Prairie Squares is the official publication of the North Dakota Square and Round Dance Club (NDSRDC). The NDSRDC was founded in 1953. The NDSRDC governing board consisted of a president, vice president, treasurer and secretary. There were also four regional state directors responsible for the Northwest (Minot), North East (Grand Forks), South West (Bismarck), and South East (Fargo). The Prairie Squares publication began at an unknown date; the NDSU collection begins with 1962 and goes through 2000 with some issues missing in that date range.

The end date of Prairie Squares (or if there is one) is not known. Prairie Squares underwent numerous changes from the 1960s-2000s roughly coinciding with each new decade.

Prairie Squares began as an informational pamphlet and morphed into a community for square dancing enthusiasts. As membership declined in the 1980s and 1990s, the pamphlet went back to a bare bones publication due to budget limitations and decreasing staff. At its peak, there were approximately 80 square dancing clubs that belonged to the NDSRDC. By 2000 there were 15, mostly located in the four large cities of North Dakota: Fargo, Grand Forks, Bismarck and Minot. There are now 6 active clubs, half of them in Fargo, one camping club, and approximately 80 total members. In keeping with the times, the NDSRDC even has a Facebook page with 16 followers.

The Crescent Squares was a square dancing club that was active from early 1968- January 6, 1982 in Fargo, North Dakota. The Crescent Squares began after a 1968 reorganization of the Fargo-based square dance group, The Sashay Club. They held dances at the YMCA, Eagles Club, Moose Lodge, and the El Zagal Shrine. The Crescent Squares ceased as a club on January 6, 1982 when they merged with the Y Promenaders, another Fargo-based square dance club. At its peak in the early 1970s, the Crescent Squares had approximately 80 members. When they were absorbed by the Y Promenaders in 1982 they had 22 members.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Prairie Squares and Crescent Squares Records consist of instructional square dancing manuals and pamphlets, movement guides, historical magazines, local histories of North Dakota square dance clubs, meeting minutes, guest books, by laws, correspondence, certificates of membership, newsletters, and the Prairie Squares mailed publications.

The **Reference Series** is arranged chronologically from 1949 – 1983. The bulk of the series is how-to manuals on basic and advanced square dancing, there is a short history of the Dahlen Roll-A-Ways and the Country Wheelers included.

The **Crescent Squares Series** is arranged chronologically from 1955 – 1985. The meeting minutes are categorized by date as are the six guest books. The Sashay club material is included as they would eventually become the Crescent Squares.

The **Prairie Squares Series** is arranged chronologically from 1962 – 2000. There are some issues missing. The publication is monthly from 1962 – 1980, every two months from 1980 – 1999, and every three months with the 2000 issues.

BOX AND FOLDER LIST

Box/Folder Content

1/1 Finding aid, and Historical information

Reference Series

1/2 Dance guides, 1949-1985
 1/3 Dance, guides, 1966-1976
 1/4 Square Dancing Encyclopedia, 1983
 1/5 Dahlen Roll-A-Ways & Country Wheelers histories, 1972-1996

Crescent Squares Series

1/6 Sashay Club (Crescent Squares) minutes, 1955-1969
 1/7 Sashay Club (Crescent Squares) guest book, 1961-1968
 1/8 Guest book, 1970 – 1973
 1/9 Guest book, 1974-1975
 1/10 Guest book, 1975-1976
 1/11 Minutes & newsletters, 1971-1981

Prairie Squares Pamphlets Series

1/12 North Dakota Square and Round Dance Club minutes, 1977-1982
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