



USABDA founders Bob and Joann Zollars, Janet Heintzel, Carol and Ron Franklin

The History of Erie USABDA

By Carol A. Franklin

"Memories"....they have a way of reminding us how quickly time passes. Six years have gone by since we formed the Erie USABDA Chapter! What an exciting challenge it was! I would like to give you a historical account of how it all occurred.

On March 2, 1994, the Erie Morning News printed an article announcing the formation of a USABDA chapter in Erie. Anyone interested was invited to call the president of USABDA, Archie Hazelwood. Ron (Franklin) talked with Archie in detail about the undertaking and involvement of beginning a USABDA chapter. The excitement was spreading as we began talking to others such as John Bailey, Tony and Jean Cilluffo, and Bob and Joanne Zollars. Finally, the decision was made to make it all happen.

Ron Franklin volunteered as President, Joanne Zollars, Vice-President, Bob Zollars, Treasurer, and Carol Franklin, as Social Director and Newsletter Editor. The first thing on the agenda was to make a mass mailing. We had to get the word out about this wonderful news. We mailed 300 invitations for a Dinner-Dance to be held on

Friday, April 29, 1994 at the South Shore Inn, Northeast, PA.

The evening was thrilling! We were pleased with the response. Ron presented information about this endeavor and answered any questions for the guests present. After the dinner we invited guests to a dance lesson given by John Bailey from American Dance Exchange in Cleveland. This was followed by a wonderful time of dancing. It was great to see 82 dancers on the floor! Twenty-four joined USABDA that evening. Enthusiasm spread rapidly throughout the city of Erie. Curiosity drew people to our dances through the newsletter and soon we grew to 120 members.

All of our dances were wonderful; however, there are two special dances that deserve to be mentioned.

In October 1994 at the Dreamland Ballroom, Conneaut Lake Park, we had the privilege of having Alfredo Homa and family from Toledo, Ohio. Alfredo is owner/operator of a dance studio. He provided a dance lesson and along with his family entertained us with wonderful exhibitions. It was an evening to remember!

In March of 1995, we had the "Wedding Dance" at the Erie Shrine Club. The Bride and Groom were Kathleen Golden and Michael Laniewicz. It was a very special occasion. They were mentioned in the national USABDA magazine and shown on Erie television.

The first year made history in Erie in that it has been and still is the only organization ever to be the catalyst for the purpose of bringing different dance groups together to dance.

Happy Anniversary,
Erie USABDA.