

WHEELER DEALERS

Wheeler Dealers was started in 1971, meeting at the Grange Hall in Mason on the second and fourth Fridays with Herb Borgerding as the caller.

At the start of the 1973 season, the club had a new caller, Larry Parrella, and was still meeting in Mason. This was the first year the club danced in Lebanon at the Honey Festival. Also in 1973 the club had the first Heart Fund Dance with the proceeds going to the Heart Fund Association. Larry Parrella and Gene Record called for this dance, and Jerry Helt lent a hand with a couple calls.

In 1974 the club moved to the Holbrook School in Lebanon and changed the dance night to the first, third and fifth Fridays. In the summer of 1975, Gene Record became the club caller is still with us today.

In 1979 the club moved to its present location at the Lebanon United Methodist Church and in 1986 changed dance nights back to the second and fourth Fridays. We were listed in the early years as a mainstream club, and now the club dances plus.

This club has done almost everything at one time or another - hayrides, sock hops, cake walks, picnics, ice cream socials, big dinners, Sadie Hawkins dance, broom dances, etc. It had the Heart Fund dance every year, for a number of years, toys for tots dance, and of course the Honey Festival. Dancers have gone to nursing homes to give a little cheer.

There were a lot of good times, a lot of fellowship and togetherness. This fell by the way some where along the line, and in 1987 we found we were in trouble. We were down to 63 cents in the treasury, and we had 12 couple in the club but only 10 working couples. In 1977 there were 96 members in the club.

We had to do something, and we did. By everyone in the club joining forces, we came back stronger. We did everything that was legal to make money to put the club back on its feet; we joined the Miami Valley Dance Council; we ran retrieves and raids. We advertised; we talked and invited people over. We brought back the togetherness and the friendliness. We raised our club's dancing back to the plus program from which it had fallen.

1988 was a better year as we kept up the pace. We ran several raids and retrievals. We started our first class in over 10 years. We only had 15 people in the first class, but they were a big help to building the club back up.

Now in 1994 we have 72 members, and we do have a class again this year. With members like ours, we hope to be here a long time to come.