

## **From Such Humble Beginnings**

*by Chuck Wedge, President Cape Fear Chapter*

"It's been tried before, you won't make it!" "This town simply will not support it!" "It must be Country & Western or nobody will join!" Yes - we heard it all; the original 12 of us who wanted to share and enjoy our love of ballroom dancing. Hard-headed lot we were - we shrugged off the "Nay-Sayers," scrounged up a portable sound system and reserved the ballroom at the Radisson Prince Charles Hotel (no less). Then we ordered 12 of their best dinners, put on our finest evening attire, and thought "at least we'll go down in style." Well, to all of those "Nay-Sayers" out there, all I can say is: "Just look at us now"!

From that humble beginning on March 21, 1993, we formed the Ballroom Dance Society of Fayetteville (BDSF), 12 strong! In less than a year, on 2 February 1994, we voted to become a USABDA chapter. At that point we had 59 members and enough money in the treasury to apply for membership in USABDA all at once. Is that a first for USABDA?

Of course, a lot happened along the way from that humble start. I was elected President (not much competition with only 12 members), Ida Howard - Vice President, Paul Harbison - Secretary, and Junko Brisbane - Treasurer. Our philosophy: "Promote Ballroom Dancing and Keep the Standards High." That philosophy has never failed us. Our first big event was in September of 1993, with a Harvest Ball. Figuring to break even if by some miracle we could sell 40 tickets, imagine our surprise when we had 75 attend and more than doubled our membership overnight. A local interest article in our city newspaper generated a tremendous amount of interest. We can proudly say there is plenty of interest in our area and "that it can be done!"

That is the humble beginning that the Cape Fear Chapter brings to USABDA, and our 100+ members are proud to join you.