

The Barn Dance Opera Country Music Journal

Vol. 4 1994

Holiday Edition

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HALL OF FAME Foundation HONOURS BARN DANCE CELEBRITY



Ernie King and Earl Heywood presenting John Brent with the Hall of Fame award.

What is a Hall of Fame? Probably the first time most of us who ever heard of a Hall of Fame, dates back to the early fifties when the first Country Music Hall of Fame was created in Nashville, Tennessee, USA.

To answer this question as it applies to the field of Music and Entertainment, a Hall of Fame is a showplace for the preservation of the History of the Pioneers and Talented Entertainers where they will receive final recognition and honour for their achievements and become immortalized for ever.

On Sunday, September 18, 1994 the **Wingham Barn Dance Hall of Fame**

Historical Foundation, officially began the process of honouring artists who pioneered the original Barn Dance founded by the late W.T. "Doc" Cruickshank in 1937. Almost two hundred founding members of the Society gathered for the first time in the Canadian Legion auditorium in Wingham, to honour JOHNNY BRENT the first celebrity of the well known Barn Dance Show to receive an award in recognition for creating the title "Canada's Largest Travelling Barn Dance". A name and a show that became internationally known and recorded in the Encyclopedia of Music in Canada. Had it not been

for John Brent promoting, managing and directing the Barn Dance Show, along with the original cast who kept the show alive long after it left the airwaves, there may never have been any reason for creating the Barn Dance Hall of Fame. Based on these merits this special one of a kind award was presented as an everlasting tribute to John Brent for the part he played in making Barn Dance history. The longest lived Radio Show of it's kind in the history of Canadian Broadcasting and the show we have all known as Canada's Largest Travelling Barn Dance. Our thanks to John Brent for his contribution to Canadian Country Music.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Show must go on!

Hello Folks:

Seasons Greetings, may everyone enjoy good health and happiness, as we journey down the road of a New Year filled with music, fun and laughter.

Who would ever have thought that within one year we would create an organization we can share together with extreme pride. One that has been built on the laurels of the original Saturday night Barn Dance we used to hear on radio.

It may be a big challenge, but we are hoping to see the day we get it back to radio, only this time by syndication. If a little place like Renfro Valley, Kentucky has been able to keep their Barn Dance, on radio by syndication since Nov. 1939 and still be heard across the United States on fifty radio stations, surely we should be able to do the same in Canada.

Raising money for a non profit organization has to be a labour of love. We have a challenge before us to make sure we keep it alive.

When we began our Membership drive in January 1994 we could not believe then, that we would reach our membership goal of over \$5,000., in less than a year. Sure we had to spend money, for stationery supplies, postage and printing. The Barn Dance Opera Journal is the lifeline of keeping us together and promoting the interest now generated. As we go to print the total Bank Balance is \$7,378.10 . We have been told we would ... have expenses "it costs a lot to get a lot", normal administration costs should not be more than 10 to 15%. We are now below that level and will try to keep it that way. Excess profits from Membership Fees will be transferred to the Barn Dance Building and Development Fund.

TAKE NOTE: For those who joined the Friendship Club during the first quarter of '94 will receive a notice of your renewal with instructions. Some of our

members have signed for five years, so you will have options A receipt and a Membership card will be mailed to you when we send out our next Barn Dance Journal in March '95. This will reduce mailing costs. We do appreciate your support and look forward to receiving your renewal fees to "Keep the Wheels Turning". Just remember - **DONT GIVE UP- THE SHOW MUST GO ON!**

Earl Heywood, President
Wingham Barn Dance Hall of Fame
Historical Foundation

BOARD OF DIRECTORS SET NEW GOALS

The Board of Directors held a meeting on November 22, 1994, Vice President Ernie King proposed a special committee which would take some of the work load off the President. Gary Pietrick and Gail Holmes volunteered to assist Ernie in finding suitable quarters in Wingham to display Barn Dance Memorabilia for Public viewing.

Anyone in the Wingham area who has an offer or suggestion please contact Ernie King at (519) 357-2694

PROJECTS ON THE AGENDA

1. Stage two Barn Dance rallies for the foundation members in 1995, Spring and Fall dates.
2. **WANTED:** Music memorabilia, to showcase local talent, entertainers, bands, groups, singers, novelty acts etc. An 8 X 10 photo with a biography would be suitable for the Hall of Fame. Let us help you become known.
3. **WANTED:** We need volunteers from the Wingham area to help with various interesting developments of the Barn Dance Hall of Fame for the future. If you can help in any way and donate some time, please contact Martha Heywood.
4. We hope to organize a team of talent

scouts throughout South Western Ontario to help find new talent .. and also create a **Barn Dance Search for Talent Show** to help new performers.

For further information contact -
The Barn Dance Hall of Fame Historical
Foundation
Box 443, Wingham, Ontario
Phone (519) 357-2355

If you have anything such as, a photo or possibly an article from a Newspaper that would be applicable and of possible interest to our Journal readers, please send it , along with a self addressed envelope if you want it returned. Others may enjoy sharing it with you.

We are also very keen for donations to the Hall of Fame any suitable items of Memorabilia, such as sheet music, instruments, photographs, posters, tickets, etc. in fact anything you might feel that is connected with Country Music and would be suitable for display.

The Board of Directors would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone

for helping to get this well worth while
project started
and

also to thank all the members
near and far who have
indicated their confidence in us
by joining

The Barn Dance Friendship Club,
without you we could not continue!

The Directors
wish you and yours
all the very best for '95

Thank You!

The Barn Dance Opera Country Music Journal

FIRST BARN DANCE RALLY - HARMONIOUS CELEBRATION

Sunday, September 18, 1994 was a day for founding members of our association to have a party, one we will long remember and look back on, how this event brought us all together for the first time.

We met old friends we had not seen in a long while and also new friends who came to join us and share the same interests. What a great reunion, created by the Wingham Barn Dance Hall of Fame, Historical Foundation. The official organization working in your interests for which every founding member can be proud.

Len Love played the piano while everyone registered as they arrived and there were no admission fees. Festivities began at One p.m. and lasted seven hours. We had a 50/50 Draw, winner was Marjorie "MacIntosh" Tennyson, of Tiverton who set a precedence by returning her half of the winnings to the organization. Total amount collected was \$253.00 our thanks to Marjorie for being so grateful. As a popular singing team she sang on Circle 8 Ranch TV with her sister Joyce, (wife of Ron Tout of Tiverton).

After, Wingham Mayor, Ian Moreland presented a speech and John Brent was honoured with a special award. The list

Archie is the eldest living gentleman of the Barn Dance and Cora the eldest living lady also the longest active performer of the Barn Dance.

of entertainers who participated, of those who registered, were: Hugh Elder, Wayne Riehl, Hank Beddard, Dave Wallace, Ron Coulthard, Bill Templeman, Evelyn Harrison, Bonnie Brigant, Clare Adlam, Laura Hayden, Archie Mann, Gordon Wall, David Wall, Mary Hehn, Lloyd Warwick, Ivan McFarlan, Wayne Sharp, Lloyd Otterbein, Francois Beddard, Agnes Farrier, Graham and Eleanor Townsend, Lynn Russwurm, Doris Walker, Hap Swatridge, Wilf Fink, Greg Brent, John Day, Norm Andrews, Lorn Veale, Gary Pietrick, Lloyd Bank, Bill Mankiss, Vic Pasowisty, Mel Phillips, Don Sturdy, Vic Williams, Leo Goldrich and from Cable TV Tillsonburg - Bruce Hodgson, George Sawdaski, Tom Maltby, Shirley Wardle, Jonny B and the Tillotson Sisters - Dollie and Doris. Anne May, Western Ontario Queen of the Cowgirls performed her rope tricks and Jo Brennan, Canada Queen of the Auto Harp, played her hit tune - Strawberry Wine. Even Arlan and Sharon Bannick from Bad Axe, Michigan arrived bringing Greetings from the USA.

In observance of the 57th. anniversary of the original Barn Dance, and celebration of the first Barn Dance Rally a cake was donated by Archie Mann and Daughter, Marion Roberts. They are pictured here with Ernie King and John Brent on the left with Cora Robertson and Earl Heywood on the right.



THE BARN DANCE OPERA JOURNAL SALUTES THE BIG BAND ERA

Remember way back then back in the 30's and 40's when our local radio stations played nothing but the sounds of the big band era.

According to the history of our music, the big band era began in 1936 with well known names like Rudy Valee, Benny Goodman, Glen Miller, Tommy Dorsey, our own Guy Lombardo, Mart Kenny and his Western Gentlemen.

Probably the biggest casualty of world war two was the end of the big band era, in 1946 the top bands were built on the reputation of their singers.

Around this time, Eric Scott a local, Wingham trumpet player, formed a band that played regularly on the Wingham Radio Station, alternating with Bert Werth's Orchestra.

With all the glamorous Dance Hall Casinos dotting the summer resort towns along the shores of our great lakes, it was bands like Garnet Farriers Orchestra, Wilabees Orchestra, Jack Day's Orchestra, Wilf Arthur's Radio Orchestra and many others throughout Western Ontario who were having a hey-day.

By the mid 50's Bill Haley and his Comets, Elvis Presley and the Beatles came on the scene with rock and roll music. Suddenly radio stations followed the trend and most of the big bands folded while one famous dance casino after another burned to the ground. Big Bands were now on their way out. Eric Scott was fortunate ... to land a good job as the leader of the Royal Canadian Airforce Band in the nations capital, Ottawa.

For many musicians it was choose another profession and today there are few bands of this type to be found. Norm Dunsmoore of Kincardine and Bill Templeman of Wingham are two band leaders we know who can still muster a group together to play the sounds of the **BIG BAND ERA**.

(Note: If you have photos, posters and news items of the Big Band Era and Dance Casinos, please let us know)



Left- Standing:, Eric Scott - Trumpet, Seated:, Chips Swales- Trombone, Sammy Sharp - Barantone Sax, Al Cheslo - Tenor Sax, Don Rosenhagen - Tenor Sax, Norm Andrews - Drums, Alex Brydges - Piano

What's New ?

Bonnie Brigant of Brampton, Ont. is gaining recognition singing the title tune "I'm Saving Today for Tomorrow" on her new cassette released on Circle "M" records of Mt. Forest, Ont. The tune is also on a CD with several duetts with Clarence Adlam.

Rowan & Mary the Mississauga couple known as COUNTRY CLASS, are promoting their latest cassette "My Fondest Memory". This is an excellent recording of beautiful songs backed up with the genuine sounds of Country. Drop them a line at 2590 Argyle Rd. Apt. 1201 Mississauga, Ont. L5B 1V3

Michael T. Wall, "The Singing Newfoundlander" writes he received a photo and letter of appreciation from President Bill Clinton, Washington, DC, after forwarding a copy of his latest recording.

The Ranklin Family, who joined our organization, inform us that they will be on tour in the U.K. thru Jan. '95, and have a photo contest in their Fan Club. You may reach them at - Box 43, Mabou, Inverness County, Nova Scotia, NOE 1X0

Our Australian member - Don Gresham has recorded 250 songs and received a special award for promoting Aussie Music. Don is a loyal member of this club.

You may reach him at - P.O.Box 186, Murwillumbah, N.S.W. 2484, Australia- for information on his songs and recordings.

Our member Linda Godkin, who once lived near Walton, took violin lessons from Ross Mann and frequently played on Circle Eight Ranch is playing piano on the club circuit in Totonto.

J.D.Grant Overand, born at Eden Grove, Ont. and living in Elkhorn, Manitoba, says he enjoys the Journal, as it brings back memories of the Sunday Concerts at the Palace Gardens in Formosa when the Kansas Farmer and Clarke Johnston once entertained there. Thanks for joining our club, hope you stay with us.



*How about you?
Drop us a line.*

Board of Directors
Wingham Barn Dance
Hall of Fame
Historical Foundation

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Organization
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