

The Barn Dance Opera Country Music Journal

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BARN DANCE HALL OF FAME IN TRANSITION

It was a great moment in the development of the Barn Dance Historical Foundation on Sunday September 17, 1995 when Founding Members came to vote on the constitution.

The festivities took place in the Wingham Legion auditorium amid memorabilia and all kinds of entertainment. A one hour presentation by some members of the original Barn Dance Artists featuring Larry Mercey and under the direction of emcee Johnny Brent with special guest Michael T. Wall, the "Singing Newfoundlander" who moved the crowd with his native songs.

The day was rounded off with a good Ole Fashioned Hoedown, with many members providing the entertainment while others kicked up their heels on the dance floor. Len Love presided over a short business meeting during which a Constitution and a set of bylaws were adapted and a twelve member Board of Directors was elected.

Less than ten days later Sept. 25, 1995 the official Board of Directors assembled for the appointment of Committees.

Earl Heywood was appointed, Special Projects Officer. Directors Sandra Jamieson and Ron Coulthard were appointed to the finance committee, and John Jamieson to head up the Membership Committee.

Appointments for Publicity, Public Relations and Promotions included Director Ron Coulthard, Martha Heywood, Gail Holmes, Steve Young, Joyce Steurnal and Bill Leach. While Directors Larry Mercey and Lynn Russwurm were appointed on the Fund Raising committee, Director Hugh Elder was assigned the duties of Legal Insurance and property possessions.

Appointments for Directors to the Artifacts Memorabilia and Historical Committee are Ernie King as Chairman, Directors - Dave Wallace, John Schedler, Bert

Pepper, Lloyd Warwick and Jim Metzger.

Hugh Elder reported our lawyer is Robert Johns of Listowel and the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations are in the process of Incorporating our organization as a non profit corporation without share capital.

The Board also sanctioned renting a room in the Wingham Armouries located behind the Town Hall as a temporary location to display Barn Dance Memorabilia and artifacts. Supervisors of the Historical Committee are working on making this ready for the official first Exhibition of Barn Dance Memorabilia to be open for public viewing on Sunday April 14 at 1:30 p.m.

Everyone will be welcome to attend this historical event.

Great Oaks -
from little Acorns grow.!

First Elected Board of Directors

Seated left to right -
Ron Coulthard, Larry Mercey, *1st. Vice President*, Len Love, *President*, Lynn Russwurm, *2nd. Vice President*, Hugh Elder.

Standing: left to right -
John Schedler, Sandra Jamieson, *Treasurer*, John Jamieson, Earl Heywood, *Founder and Honorary President*, John Brent, Dave Wallace, Betty Dale, *Secretary*.

Picture Compliments of-
Robertson Photography



Message from The President

As your President, I take pleasure in bringing you my personal Greetings.

The newly appointed directors have been meeting monthly since the annual meeting held Sept. 17, 1995. We find the committee system described in the constitution has not only been established but working to the best of each one's ability. Everyone on the Board is working on ways and means to make this project become a successful operation.

Judging by the interest and enthusiasm shown by the members of this foundation and the public in general, I am personally convinced that the preservation of South Western Ontario's illustrious musical and entertainment history can and will be accomplished.

Vice Presidents - Larry Mercey, Lynn Russwurm and I are developing a giant musical extravaganza which will be a significant fund raiser. The show will feature many of the artists who were associated with the former Barn Dance.

I wish to thank everyone including the directors for the support you have given me and the foundation. Keep in mind Music is a universal language, shared throughout the world by both those who perform it, and those who listen to it.

I am proud to have the privilege of working along side so many of you in pursuit of what I believe will be the fulfillment of all the hopes and dreams of the Barn Dance Historical Foundation.

Len Love, President

IT'S NICE TO BE IMPORTANT,
BUT IT IS MORE
IMPORTANT - TO BE NICE.

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AN OPEN LETTER TO THE MEMBERSHIP

I consider it a great honour to be selected as the 2nd. Vice President of this Foundation. Born and raised with my ears glued to the radio listening to the Barn Dance every Saturday night, it was the greatest thrill when the opportunity came along for me to join the Barn Dance Gang on Radio.

I am especially interested and dedicated to get the show back on the road. I am also positive with the support of all members of this association we can and will accomplish our goal. Our greatest need now is to expand the membership and to this end, I challenge all members out there to try and bring in at least one new member. If we do, we will create a greater society and the funds will help us achieve our goal that much sooner.

Remember, this is your association, and only by your faithful support can our goal become a reality.

Let us all share this PRIDE together.

Lynn Russwurm

WINNERS OF BARN DANCE DRAW

The annual Big Barn Dance Draw was held Monday Sep. 25, 1995 over CKNX Radio at 12:45 p.m., Murray Gaunt and Scott Pettigrew made the draw.

"And the Winners are" :-

Grace Brunk of Stratford won a guitar clock, hand crafted and donated by Hank Bedard of London. David Charlton of Southampton won a model plowman and horses carved and donated by Lloyd Otterbein of Zurich. Gord and Marjorie Wall of Wingham won the authentic Cowboy hat and fancy shirt supplied by Today's Variety at Londesborough. Well over \$1,000. was raised for further development of the Barn Dance Historical Foundation.

Another draw is being planned at this time.

TVO ONTARIO TELEVISION Portrays Donnelly Historians

February 4, 1996 is the 116th. Anniversary of Canada's wildest feud.

No other saga in the annals of Canadian History continues to create as much public interest as the legend of the Old Roman Line near Lucan, Ontario. The Donnelly's, their neighbors and the memories of that bleak Wednesday morning February 4, 1880 still makes headlines in the news.

Through the passing of time the incident was almost forgotten until the unusual wording inscribed on the Donnelly tombstone was discovered by a reporter for "Ripley's Believe it or Not", a syndicated cartoon feature that revealed the message worldwide in the daily newspapers.

When Thomas P. Kelly's first book "The Black Donnellys" came on sale in 1954 the aftermath was unbelievable. Year after year thousands of curiosity seekers came to view the Donnelly gravesite. When visitors began hacking granite from the tombstone for souvenirs the stone had to be removed.

January.. (1995) TVO Ontario Television sent a camera crew on the road to capture what the authors and historians had to say, and why a horse won't pass the Donnelly farm after midnight. They even captured the remarks of Bill Ryder, a local descendant of one of the vigilante committee, and Orlo Miller the church minister who wrote the "Donnelley's Must Die".

Continued on page 3 - Donnelly

RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

The Foundation is looking for a back issue of Popular Mechanics Magazine dated Dec. 1956 - containing a story of "Doc" Cruickshank, his radio and TV station for our Hall of Fame.

If you can help locate one please contact Earl Heywood, Box 68 Wingham, Ont. N0G 2W0



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Donnelly - continued

... It took 15 years research for Ray Fazakes a Hamilton lawyer to prepare his book "The Donnelly Album", CBC dramatized the story on network. Historians Don Cosens, Daniel Brock and Don Phelps were involved with a book about the "Donnelly Tragedy" of old newspaper clippings, and William Crichtens book adapted from a screen play by Leonard Yakir and Murray Marzowitz.

Credit goes to James Reaney, Paul

Thompson and the London Little Theatre group for writing and producing the story for live theatre. "Stompin" Tom Conners wrote several Donnelly songs and did a CBC TV Special on location where the Donnelly's once rode their horses down the Old Roman Line.

In 1970 Martha encouraged her husband to write and record a series of songs portraying the "Tales of the Donnelly Feud" and in three months Earl Heywood wrote and recorded 14 songs for his album. Since Earl's forefathers were early settlers in the Donnelly

neighbourhood he and Martha tried to save the Donnelly School House for a museum but with souvenir hunters removing the bricks and land severance problems it never materialized. In the end the School House was demolished.

Suggestions have been made that we incorporate the music, drama and history of this era into our Barn Dance Hall of Fame after all William Donnelly - was an old time fiddler.



Left to right:- Clare Adlam and Lloyd Warwick, two of the first old time fiddlers who ever played on the Barn Dance.
Singer: Hank Bedard at Microphone, Ernie King monitoring sound in the background, Hugh Elder on Guitar at right.
Taken at Barn Dance Rally 1994
Photo by: Bill Ojo

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Howdy Folks:

So What's new ? Well, Vice President Larry Mercey hopped a plane to Europe for a personal appearance in Holland and John Jamieson landed in hospital for a wee spell. Johnny Brent took off for Florida, but before leaving he arranged with the folks of Howick Township the presentation of our Barn Dance for their 140th. anniversary, in the Howick Community Centre, on Saturday night, June 29, 1996. Hope you all make it.

Born and raised on a farm I am totally sold on the idea of a theme park as our ultimate goal. Buy us a farm with a good Barn and House and we'll have our home for Country Music and room to exploit all other avenues of the music and entertainment industry.

They did it in Renfro Valley and they did it in Nashville. So can we!

Southwestern Ontario provides us with the most unique area we could ever hope to find, for our kind of entertainment centre. We are in the heart of Canada, on the big peninsula of land that projects far beyond the main border line of all the other Provinces of Canada. We are surrounded by the chain of great lakes with the United States on the other side. We have the resources with one of the greatest tourist potentials for development and where else could there be a better location for this kind of tourist attraction.

Remember the Show must go on - let's put our shoulders to the wheel and we will accomplish the goal.

Earl Heywood,

Founder and
Honourary President, Director and
Advisor.

REF: 9113C/96



EVENTS Notes 'N News

May we Congratulate Shania Twain, native of Timmins, Ontario. She won the Big Country Award at the Country artist of the year 1995.

Also a host of other awards including song of the year, and having sold more than one million copies of her records in Canada and the United States. Our organization is proud to learn Shania once starred on Good Time Country over CKNX-TV with the Country Versatiles.

Remember fiddler Wayne Riehl and pianist Len Love of the Country Versatiles. They did the last series of Circle 8 Ranch TV shows. Recently they guested on the Happy Seniors syndicated cable TV show originating in Tillsonburg. Congratulations fellas.

Singer, songwriter Grant Heywood who wrote and recorded "Dynamite" with the Desert Dolphins reached top ten on Radio charts in 1995. Latest releases now climbing the charts "Here's What They Say" and "Lisa Marie" are also on video. Heywood has signed a recording pact with Quality Records for an album to be released early in February 1996. Good luck guys.

Sid Yates reports from the "Nickel" town of Sudbury, Ontario of participating recently in the Bluegrass Awards Show at the Deerpark Lodge in Huntsville, Ontario. Sid and his partner Ed Burnett the "Cedar Boys" first became known on Canada's Original Barn Dance. Today these boys are recognized for the birth of Canadian Blue Grass music.

The Autoharp Quarterly currently published in the USA ran a story on Jo Brennan "Canada's Queen of the Autoharp." With the story was a photo of Jo and her late son Rick, including the music of Strawberry Wine. This beautiful melody penned by Jo leaves little doubt as to why it has received so many weeks of airplay on Radio both sides of the border.

The Barn Dance Gang attended the birthday celebrations for Lynn Russwurm at Elmira, and Victor Pasowisty at Whitby, Ontario ... and a Happy Birthday to Cora Robertson, who celebrated her birthday in December.

Archie Mann the eldest member of the Barn Dance turns 94 years young on February 11th. this year. Send Archie a card if you will at :-
145 Winston East, Listowel, Ontario N4W 2T5

Happy Birthday Archie.

Drop us a line.



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by sending \$1.00 per copy plus \$1.00 for postage & handling.

Make payment by cheque to:-
Barn Dance Historical Foundation
Box 68, Wingham,
Ontario N0G 2W0

Circle the 1996 Calendar

April 14

General meeting, followed by a public showing

of Barn Dance Memorabilia and Artifacts in the Wingham Armouries

May 26

Ole Time Fiddlers Convention, workshop and much more at the Wingham Legion - beginning at 10 a.m.

September 29

Annual membership Rally celebrating the 59th. Anniversary of the Ole Barn Dance.
More details to follow later.

MEMBERSHIP

Ask your friends to become a member of the Barn Dance Historical Foundation then send their name & address with the \$20. fee

TO: Box 68 Wingham, Ont. N0G 2W0 and bring them along with you to the April 14th. General Meeting.