

# The Barn Dance Opera Journal

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Fall Edition

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## Living The American Dream

### An Interview with Shane Wilder

by Grant Heywood - Part 1

There are very few people that I know personally, who I can honestly say have "done it all". Shane Wilder, is one of those people who actually has, and still is "doing it all".

I first heard of Shane through my dad, Earl Heywood. Shane got in touch with my dad via his fan club. Shane was an American D.J., and played many of my dad's country recordings on U.S. radio stations, back in the 50's and 60's. It's been years since my dad had heard from Shane, so it was a big surprise recently, when Shane once again rekindled a long lost friendship with Earl.

My dad told me how gratifying it was to have an American D.J. playing Canadian country music over the U.S. airwaves. Dad also told me how Shane was involved in songwriting, and his many acting roles in several western Hollywood and T.V. movies. Then, my dad told me that Shane was moving from Hollywood, California to Las Vegas, Nevada. This was great!! I immediately contacted Shane, to let him know I would be attending the American Federation of Musicians' convention near the end of June in 'Vegas', along with our Secretary Treasurer, Ron Coulthard. This provided a perfect opportunity for me to finally meet this

most extraordinary, down-to-earth man.

Shane has been a D.J. for Trans-America Radio for many years. He was a regular, with Clint Eastwood, in the TV series, Rawhide. He's been on the Opry, and as an emcee, he's introduced everyone from Elvis to George Jones and Tanya Tucker, as well as his good ole buddy, Willie Nelson. Shane has appeared in countless western movies with the likes of Robert Mitchum, John Wayne, Randolph Scott, and Sam Elliott, as well as Arnold Schwarzenegger, in The Terminator.

The following is Part 1, of a condensed interview with Shane Wilder.

*How did you ever get started in the many facets of the entertainment business?*

'Well, I started out at WSIX radio in Nashville, in the 50's. I was pretty young at the time. People kept sayin' to me, "You're just a kid." I got so dadburned tired of hearin' that. So I packed up and moved to Hollywood, found an agent, and three weeks later I did my first movie, with Randolph Scott and Donna Reed. Then it was one western after another. I did Grey Ghost, Cheyenne, Colt 45, Sugarfoot, and so many more. I was a regular, with Clint Eastwood, on the TV series Rawhide when it started back in 1960. I was 19

years old, and Clint was 21. That show ran for 7 long years. We worked 6 days a week, 12 hours a day, and we thought we were rich, makin' \$500 a week. Income tax was only around \$40 bucks back then.'

*Have you got any stories about working with John Wayne, "The Duke"?*

'Years ago, I worked with "The Duke" in Sonora, Mexico, shooting a movie. We walked into a restroom and I noticed "The Duke" standin' over by the toilet to take a leak. I was standin' in front of the urinal and I said, "You know Duke, you shouldn't be embarrassed. It's only you and me in here." Duke said, "Oh, Shane, I'd never pee in a urinal." I said, "How come?" He said, "Well, about 3 years back, in Beverly

Hills, we were out for dinner one night. I had to go to the men's room. So I'm standing at the urinal, and this big ol' boy comes over. A few seconds later he looks up at me and says, "Damn, you're John Wayne!! You peed all over my leg." John said, "So I'm never peeing in a urinal again."

*You've been somewhat of a cowboy all your life. How long have you been at this business?*

'I've been in this business about 42 years. Been married 43 years. I'll tell ya, my wife's put up with a lot. I've been very fortunate though, I've done just about everything, every chance I had. I rode broncs and bulls in the rodeo circuit. One time in Dallas, Texas, I had my face smashed in by a Brahma bull, and had to have it reconstructed with wires.'

*Your dad had a brush with fame as a doctor. Tell me about that?*

'My dad was a heart specialist in Nashville. He was the one that operated on President Eisenhower. Dad wanted me to be a doctor. He said I'd never make it as a D.J., and I proved him wrong. He said the same thing went I got into the movies. I proved him wrong on that one too.

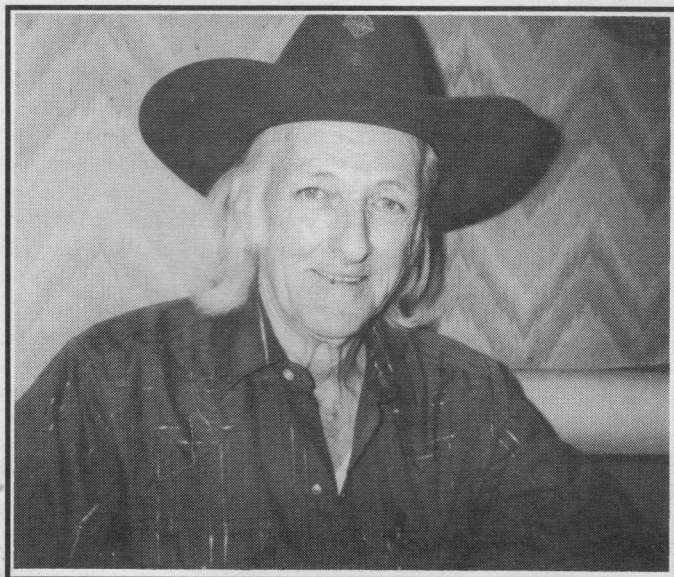
*What's your perspective on the current country music scene?*

'They closed down about 6 big labels down in Nashville. I think they made a big mistake by letting a lot of their top artists go. They just went ahead and signed a lot of these young kids. Then they all started sounding the same No originality.' *I think it's great that you play 4 hours of Canadian country music everyday on the radio. What's your thoughts on Canadian country artists?*

'Well, the biggest problem we found when we started spinning Canadian records on our Can-Country radio show is, (and I hate to say it) that Canadian artists don't follow up on promotion. An example is Farmers Daughter. We busted our butts on that first CD. When the second CD came out, we didn't hear anything from anybody. Not even a phone call.'

*You're still making movies. What's it like now compared to the early days?*

'You make a lot of friends in the film business. But the hours are long. 12 hour days are in the norm. It is nice though, because they pay me \$7,500. a day, now. If I get water splashed on me

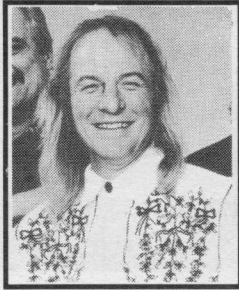


Shane Wilder, an American county music / cowboy institution.

Continued on Page 4

## The Editor Speaks

by Grant Heywood



This past summer was certainly one of the warmest on record. And for many of the farmers it was one of the driest as well. This was the first summer where I didn't have too many musical engagements on my calendar. Consequently, I took advantage of the hot summer weather, and the extra time and weekends I had off.

In late June I attended a convention in Las Vegas, Nevada. The temperature was about 45 degrees one day. You could cook a meal on the sidewalk in seconds flat. Just a little too hot for my liking. Once in a while, I would make the trek with our family up to Sauble Beach on the weekend. A little less hot, but oh sooo many people on the beach. In August, with our van all packed, we crossed the U.S. border, without any problems, and proceeded to drive down to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. We had a great vacation there, celebrating our wedding anniversary, talking to many Americans with that friendly southern drawl, and spending most of our time at the beach, along the ocean. AHHH!! It was great summer weather there too ... except for the odd jellyfish and shark. When we finally got home, there was all that unpacking, and lawn mowing, and washing, and gardening, and weeding, and answering telephone messages, reading the junk mail or not reading the junk mail, feeding the cat, getting ready for work and for school, never getting a chance to read that new book ... and so on and so forth.

But you know, I really don't mind hot weather. Sauble Beach is a beautiful place to take the kids whether it's crowded or not. I have to admit I have taken for granted how easy it is to be able to cross the U.S. border to visit our friendly southern neighbours. Ans I feel fortunate to be able to do all those trivial domestic chores, as well as having a loving and caring family in my life, knowing we are safe at home.

Since Tuesday, September 11, 2001, I don't think I'll ever complain, or take any-

thing for granted ever again.

To all of our American friends, we share you pain and sorrow, and hope that love and understanding will prevail, during these dark and troubled times. You are not alone. We are there to stand with you.

Comments? Please contact:

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### BOOKING THE BARN DANCE

*If you are interested in more information about booking the Barn Dance Musical Production, please write to:*  
*Barn Dance Bookings,*  
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*Wingham, Ont. N0G 2W0;*  
*or call*  
*Wayne Otterbein,*  
*(home) (519) 565-2102,*  
*or (bus.) (519) 235-0559*

### MEMORIES OF A DON MESSER JUBILEE CHRISTMAS

"This show is not to be missed by anyone who can attend when it comes to a community near you," said Len Grace of the Canadian Fiddle Magazine. The Ontario 4th Christmas celebration which is carried out in true Messer style is performed by the Heritage Allstar band led by Canadian Fiddle champion, Scott Woods. The same stellar cast that has thrilled audiences in Ontario and more recently in their highly successful Western tour are back again with the jigs, reels, seasonal songs, Buchta styled dancing and the whimsical appearances of Santa and Frosty. Messer's tradition of featuring talented guests is being carried on by the Allstar Band. This year fiddle champions and step dancing sensations, Lindsey and Tyler Beckett, who recently appeared with Natalie MacMaster and the Barra McNeills will be featured on the show.

From the show's first song to the very last tune the audience will be royally entertained.

This highly successful show is sold out in some locations so book early to avoid disappointment.

Appearing at locations across Ontario and Western Canada. For tickets and details, please phone (905) 941-5683.

## The Barn Dance Historical Society and Entertainment Museum

P.O. Box 68  
Wingham, Ontario N0G 2W0  
Phone (519) 357-2160  
*(or leave a message)*

**BARN DANCE WEBSITE:**  
<http://www.barndance.ca>

Earl Heywood

*Founder, Honourary President, Advisor*

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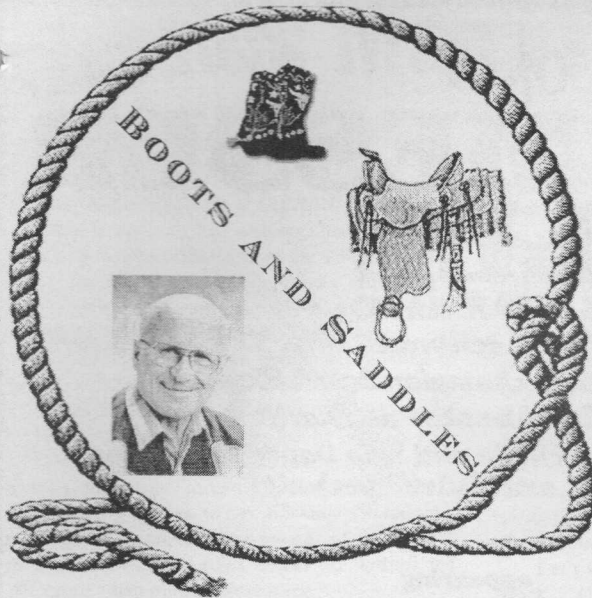
Doug Dietrich, Lynn Russwurm.

## IN MEMORIAM

*(continued from page 5)*

**CORA ROBERTSON** - Passed away in Wingham, Ont. June 2001. Cora will most undoubtedly be remembered as that magical piano player of the "Ranch Boys" who appeared for years on the ever popular CKNX television show, 'Circle 8 Ranch'. Cora's husband, Don, (predeceased), was a pioneering member of the Ranch Boys, playing stand-up bass, as well as doing singing choirs. It was Barn Dance emcee, the late Johnny Brent, who coined the phrase for Cora, 'First Lady of the Barn Dance'. It was just over a year ago that Cora received the Barn Dance Pioneer Award, at Blyth. Don and Cora ran a successful creamery business in Bluevale, Ont. for many years, while they raised a family. Bluevale is on the outskirts of Wingham, and was also home (in the early Ranch Boys days) to fiddler, Ross Mann and singer / guitarist Ernie King. Cora was also church organist in Wingham, for many years as well. Cora will be remembered by friends and family, and her 'dancing hand-style' of piano playing will never be forgotten.

*On behalf of the members of the Barn Dance Historical Society, may our deepest sympathy go out to the families of those listed above, who were associated with our Foundation.*



by Lynn Russwurm

Sure feels good to be back in the saddle at my typewriter, digging into the well of memories that seems to be lurking just under the surface. I enjoyed doing the first column in the last issue and would appreciate hearing from you with your comments. If you have been wondering about anything connected with the Barn Dance, or country music in general, just send in your questions and I will try to answer them in the column to the best of my ability.

Just recently we've discovered the "CKNX Almanac", which was published by CKNX beginning in April 1942. We plan to resurrect some of the articles from that magazine, starting with Cactus Mac in this issue. Boy, did I learn a lot about Cactus in that article which we are going to share with you. At the present time we have access to only the first 12 issues, and I know there were many more. If anybody out there knows of the existence of any more, *please*, get in touch with us.

The Almanac was copied after "Standby", the official magazine of WLS radio in Chicago and traced the careers of many of the great stars of their "National Barn Dance", people such as Lulubelle & Scotty, Red Foley, Patsy Montana, The Prairie Ramblers, The Hoosier Hot Shots and even "Little" Georgie Gobel. The magazine was not devoted to country music exclusively but was a mixture of farming, cooking recipes and anything else devoted to the home and family image of the WLS family. Pat Buttram had different features as did other announcers, it seemed everybody contributed something.

Once in awhile there would be a letter from some of their alumni who had gone on to greater fame such as Gene Autry or Smiley Burnette. One letter from Gene Autry told of how he had gone to work as a DJ at a small radio station after his first few movies, to pass the summer while waiting for filming to start again in the fall. I guess they didn't like making movies on location in the hot summer months.

Standby was a weekly magazine that published all their programming for the week, whereas the Almanac was only a monthly, but otherwise if followed the WLS magazine very closely. WLS also put out an annual "WLS Family Album" for many years which was a slick glossy souvenir book

that was sold over the air, with many great photos of the stars, announcers and their families. In those days, radio was a friend that came into your house, as opposed to today's cold and impersonal programming. These books are very rare and fortunate is the person who can obtain a copy of one of them. There were other radio stations that put out the odd souvenir book or two, but to the best of my knowledge, WLS and CKNX were the only ones to issue a regular magazine. This was a great promotion tool for the station and gave the listener a feeling of close friendship with the people they listened to on a daily basis. They knew when their favourites were on the air from the published schedules in the magazine, and would be sure to listen. When the artists went out on personal appearances, they always drew large crowds

with little promotion except for radio and their little magazine.

When Lulubelle and Scotty had their first child, it was a big event in the magazine and was followed up with periodical updates on the youngster. When Lulubelle was named "Queen of Radio" by Radio Guide Magazine, it also provided a great deal of hoopla at WLS.

There were a number of inter-marriages between members of the cast. Red Foley married Eva Overstake of "The Three Little Maids" in a surprise move, (another of the Three Little Maids was her sister who became the great song writer, Jenny Lou Carson), Dolly Good of "The Girls of the Golden West" was married to Tex Atchison of "The Prairie Ramblers", even Lulubelle & Scotty came to WLS as separate acts and eventually married, Caroline DeZurik of "The DeZurik Sisters" was married to Rusty Gill also of "The Prairie Ramblers".

One of the acts to go to greater heights was Eddie Dean who starred on WLS with his brother, Jimmie as "The Dean Brothers". Of course you know Eddie as the composer of "Hillbilly Heaven" and "One Has My Name", as well as starring in many western movies. A number of times others of the cast got the call to Hollywood to appear in a movie, such as Lulubelle & Scotty who co-starred with Roy Rogers in "Shine On, Harvest Moon". The great Patsy Montana was summoned to Hollywood by fellow WLS alumni, Gene Autry to co-star with him in two of his early pix. Pat Buttram was no stranger to the silver screen and became Gene Autry's sidekick in "The Gene Autry Show" when television came in. Max Terhume starred as a member of "The Three Mesquiteers" for a time in the eclectic lineup which included at various times, John Wayne, Bob Livingston, Bob Steele, Jimmie Dodd and John "Dusty" King. In fact, the whole cast went to Hollywood to film "The National Barn Dance".

WLS was owned in part by the same company that owned Republic Pictures, so it was only natural that people like Gene Autry made the natural progression to get a chance at the bright lights of the movie world. WLS was originally founded by Sears-Roebuck, the letters WLS stand for "World's Largest Store". As such Sears was highly responsible for many of the recorded successes of their

artists with their own Conqueror label which they sold through their catalogues in astounding numbers, just like here in Canada much of the output of Wilf Carter, Hank Snow and The Calgary Kid was sold through Eaton's catalogue, mostly to rural customers who seldom got to the towns and cities to buy such luxuries as records.

Another thing that helped to bring fame to many WLS artists were the 16" transcriptions put out by the M.M. Cole Publishing Co. These were recordings made especially for radio play and were never available to the general public. Radio stations would lease them for a certain period of time, then were to either return them or destroy them. Johnny Brent told me of spending an afternoon in the CKNX back yard burning them. In the 1940's I used to hear the M.M. Cole transcriptions on the Chatham Radio Station, over the noon hour, while we rested up to go back into the fields for the afternoon.

Of late some of these transcriptions have surfaced on a few records and CD's. Available are a few Rex Allen CD's and a vinyl album by Doc Hopkins. I'm personally working with Cattle Records in Germany, trying to get enough material together for a CD by Jimmie & Eddie Dean, also one by Judy Martin & The Mountain Rangers. As it turns out, Judy Martin is Mrs. Red Foley and The Mountain Ranger is Red Foley, himself. Despite all the great records that Red made throughout his career, you haven't heard anything until you hear him in his younger days. You wouldn't think that the Red Foley of "Peace in the Valley" and "Chattanooga Shooeshine Boy" was a yodeller, in fact one of the best.

Of course there were other companies who put out 16" transcriptions, but these were the ones that featured the WLS performers, who were in Chicago where M.M. Cole Publishing hung out their shingle as a publisher of song folios that also featured these same WLS artists. The transcriptions were a means of publicizing the sheet music and song folios, etc. By the foregoing you come to realize, that through co-operation these groups all worked together and the result was a little kingdom that just kind of evolved.

I guess I got kind of carried away with the National Barn Dance and its' people, but it's such a fascinating era that rivalled the Grand Ole Opry in its tenure. Did you know that it was The Solemn Old Judge, George D. Hay who pioneered The National Barn Dance a number of years before he did the same thing with The Grand Ole Opry?

I have a trivia question for you: "What was Martha Heywood's stage name?" If you can answer this, you'll get a mention in this column as someone who knows his country music.

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**Helen Carson**  
**Wayne Carson**

*Continued from Page 1*

it's \$250, another \$250 if I get mud on me. If they're late for a lunch break, they have to pay me a \$100 fine.'

*Tell me about co-writing the hit song "Put The Bottle on the Table" with George Jones.*

'First of all. George was a one woman man. He phoned me up and said "Shane, why don't you meet me down at the bar for a beer." I said, "Okay", and whet down to meet him. I said, "Where's your girlfriend?" He said, "Ah, she said she had to do laundry and stuff and couldn't make it." So George and I are sittin' way at the back of this bar where it was dimly lit. All of a sudden George says, "I'll be damned!" His girlfriend had just showed up with another guy, and they sat up at the bar. Forty five minutes later, George's girlfriend turned and walked towards us, on her way to the ladies' room. She stopped dead in her tracks, when she saw us and said, "George, honey, I'm sick." He said, "I hope you puke your guts out! Don't ever call me again."

We sat there, and in ten minutes we wrote "Put The Bottle on the Table." It goes kinda like this. "Put the bottle on the table. Let it stay there till I'm not able, To see your face in every place, and then I'll go." George has got a new young filly now. She's keepin' him off the booze. Now you can't call him "No Show Jones" anymore.'

*How many kids have you got Shane?*

'Three kids. My oldest son, Peter is 6 ft. 8 inches tall, my daughter works for Wells Fargo, in Oregon. My youngest son looks like me. He had a successful rock band called Lionheart. They were on the RCA label. Now he's got a big paying job at NASA with the space shuttle program.'

*When did you first connect with my father, Earl Heywood?*

'Well, way back in the 50's, your dad's fan club president, wrote me a letter and started sending me stuff. Earl was on the RCA record label, at the time. I told my wife years ago, "What's he doing in Canada? Why doesn't he come to the States?"'

*What prompted your decision to play four hours of Canadian Country music?*

'I felt that Canadian artists weren't getting world-wide recognition. In fact, I came up with the idea to do a show called Can-country, everyday. I talked to Larry Delaney, editor of Canada's Country Music News, and he thought it was fantastic. So we ran an article in the Country Music News, then all of a sudden I started getting artists sending in material. We've also got a show called "The Best of Country", where we play both American and Canadian artists. Trans-America radio now is broadcasting on 78 stations from coast to coast.

*You and Willie Nelson are good buddies. Do you get to work with him a lot?*

'I'm shooting a movie with Willie, up in Montana, this year. Yes, were real good friends. When he asked me to do this western movie, I said, "I'll do it, if you can afford me." Willie's a good ol' boy. He opened up a night-club in Branson, Missouri. He had it about three months. I was introducing him at a show in Vegas, a few months ago. I said, "What happened to your night-club in Branson?" Willie said, "Ah, hell! I couldn't stay in one place that long. I had to get back on the road .... again."

**\*\*Part 2, of the Shane Wilder interview will continue in the next upcoming winter issue.**

# Memories of a **DON MESSER JUBILEE**

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**THANKS** to Verna Steffler and the Museum Committee. Our museum expansion to the ground level, east side of the Wingham Armouries is one step closer to reality.

**THANK YOU TO:** Mark Steffan, of Steffan Computers in Wingham, for hosting our Barn Dance Website, barndance.ca.

**OUR APOLOGIES** - Our Barn Dance Mini Concert "Orange Blossom Special" train theme, held at the Palmerston Railway Heritage Park was advertised as Aug. 12. The date was actually August 19. We regret any inconvenience. (Despite the rain that day, this concert was a great success, with a standing room only crowd.) Thanks to everyone who attended. We intend on doing this one again, next year.

### MARK THESE DATES ON YOUR CALENDAR:

\* **THE 5TH ANNUAL BARN DANCE CAMPOUT JAMBOREE**, in Blyth, Ontario, May 24, 25, and 26, 2002.

\* **CANADA'S ANNUAL OLE TYME FIDDLERS CONVENTION**, in Wingham, Ont. at the Royal Canadian Legion. This year - Sunday, Sept. 30, 2001. Next year - Sunday, Sept. 29, 2002.

\* **COUNTRY TRADITION: Sun., Oct. 14** - at 2 p.m. at the Heritage Theatre, Town Hall, Wingham. Jim Swan - Master of Ceremonies and featuring: Paul Weber, Smoky Weber, Sue Gottfried, Janet Turner, Gerald Davidson, Wayne Riehl, and the Barn Dance Band. Tickets \$16.00 in advance or \$18.00 at the door. For reservations, call (519) 357-4082.

\* **DENIM AND DIAMONDS: Sun., Oct. 21** - at 2 p.m. at the Country Heritage Park, Milton. A 2 hour stage concert featuring the best of Ontario's Traditional Country Music Artists. Jim Swan - Master of Ceremonies and featuring: Larry Mercey, Earl & Martha Heywood, Randy Satchell, Mandi Craddock, Jamie Gordon, John & Geneva Heaman, Dan Mighton & Ian Leith, and the Barn Dance Band. Tickets \$18.00 in advance or \$20.00 at the door. For reservations, contact Country Heritage Park, at (905) 878-8151 or 1-888-307-3276..

# "Cactus Mac" - CKNX Artist

Reprinted from the CKNX Almanac,  
Wingham 1942

by permission from Wingham Museum

Around 42 years ago a strange scene could be witnessed in a humble home in the village of Luc-know. The MacDonalds were proudly displaying a small, pink bundle of joy, which, as the years passed, was to become know as 'Cactus Mac'.

Advancing a little from this tender moment in the life of one of CKNX's great, we find Cactus trying on his first pair of shoes - at the age of twelve. It was around this time that he began to earn a reputation as a cowboy, herding cattle down in Huron County near Goderich. Ground-hogs in those days were big fellows, as any old timer will tell you, and Mac often drove home several of the smaller ones along with the cows before he noticed the difference when milking time came.

Life in those days wasn't easy. There were no radios to sing over, and a cowboy had to work instead. But Mac was industrious and loved work. In fact, he tells us that he used to watch folks for hours and still not tire of it.

Then, in 1915, Mac decided to stop the scrap in Europe but it took him nearly three years to do it. There were some other fellows trying to help him and Mac admits they did a pretty fair job but still thinks the 161st Battalion was about the finest in the front. In the arguments that developed with the future Nazis, Mac was seriously wounded and it was while in hospital that the army discovered the real Mac. You see, in order to treat him, they found it necessary to give him his first hair cut and beneath was the same handsome (?) face you see today.

It took Mac 'til 1920 before they would let him out into the sun again after that haircut and beating he took but they finally relented and sent him back to America. At first people were a little skeptical when he told them he was Cactus Mac ... the shoes and haircut fooling more than one person. But they

knew his voice.

However in 1924 he took that voice across the line to Del Rio in Texas and for six months sang over station XER as featured entertainer. Listeners are still wary of radio as a medium of pleasure and shudder when the name of Cactus Mac is mentioned. You who listen to CKNX while Cactus Mac is on the air know what we mean.

The following year Mac went to Oklahoma, where he joined Otto Gray and his Oklahoma Cowboys in Tulsa. The group played over station KMOX and enjoyed record fan mail. Eventually however, people heard the group with their own ears and they were railroaded out of town. Then followed a period of four years during which they visited every town and city in the middle west and finally wound up in Detroit in 1929.

Let's see ... 1929 ... wasn't that the year that the stock ... Oh, yes. Anyway, Mac and the rest of the boys were swept completely off their feet and the gang broke up. He returned to the north country again for a long rest from the singing business and lived in Port Huron for about ten years, working as an electric welder. We have it on good authority that between 1929 and 1939 there were more people said ... "Why don't you take this \_\_\_ thing to a good welder" than at any other period in history.

As time went by, Mac exhausted all his credit in Port Huron and had to return to radio. He joined the staff of WHLS in Port Huron in 1939 and remained with them for about a year, when he came to CKNX. Now, we have always been broadminded and charitable, so when Mac came to us pleading for a chance, we couldn't refuse him and placed him on the air between 3:45 a.m. and 4:00 a.m. But even here he managed to gain some listeners so we gave up and here he is ... Listen for Cactus on your Barn Dance over CKNX and drop a line to the station. (Mac saves the stamps.)



## IN MEMORIAM

**GORDON BEADLE** - Gordon Edwin Beadle, 634 West Gore St., Stratford and formerly of 60 Church St., Stratford, passed away on Tues., July 31, 2001 at Stratford General Hospital, in his 93rd year. Gord was born in Stratford and worked in many key positions with CN Railways until his retirement in 1970. Gord was an active member of many local labour organizations, most notably as the Financial Secretary-Treasurer for 25 years, and a term as President for the Stratford Musician's Union, Local 418. He was a delegate to 21 annual conventions of the American Federation of Musicians of the US and Canada. Gord played drums for the Art Shaw Sextet and Len Shaw and His Orchestra. He was a lifetime member of the Stratford Masonic Lodge No. 332, and the Stratford Musicians' Assoc. Local 418 of the AF of M. He was a member of the St. James Anglican Church, Stratford. God was predeceased by his wife Dorothy, in Sept. 1995. They had been married for 62 years. Surviving are Gord's daughter and her family, several nieces, nephews and two granddaughters. He was the last surviving member of his immediate family. Cremation took place with burial at Avondale Cemetery, Stratford.

\* \* \* \* \*

**ART FINLAYSON** - Arthur James Finlayson, passed away at the Seaforth Hospital on Friday, Jan. 19, 2001, in his 89th year. He was the beloved husband of Mary (nee Coleman) to whom he was married for 58 years. He is survived by sons, daughters, nieces and nephews as well as grandchildren and great grandchildren. Art was a farmer and a school teacher for 33 years. He was a Barn Dance Pioneer, and was leader of "The Buckle Busters" musical group in the early days of the Barn Dance. Since his retirement in Seaforth, in 1962, Art shared his love for country music through the years by entertaining his many friends, and later on in life he entertained at nursing homes. He also was an avid sports fan, and keen competitor. His sense of humour and practical jokes will be missed by many. Service was held at the Seaforth United Church on January 22, 2001.

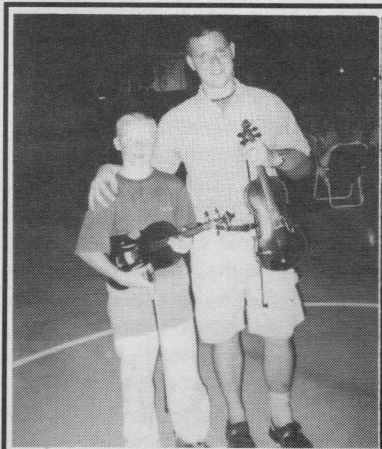
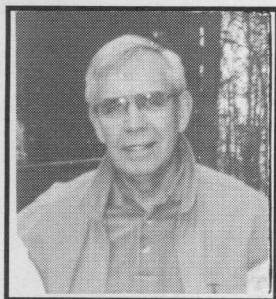
\* \* \* \* \*

**MOZART GELINAS** - Passed away on June 1, 2001. Mozart was from Zurich, Ont. and was a prominent local musician, as well as a leading member of the "Bayfield Valley Five". This group appeared several times on CKNX Radio around the time it was beginning, sometime around 1942. This group, were pioneers of the early Barn Dance and early radio days of the Wingham area. Mozart is also a lifelong member of the Stratford Musicians' Association, Local 418. His love of life and music will be sadly missed by friends and family.

(Continued on page 2)

# Just Fiddling Around ...

with Bill Oja



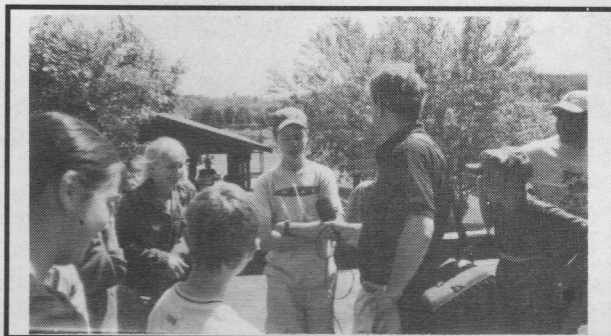
At the Tavistock Fiddle and Step Dance Contest (previously the Stratford Contest), **BOURTON SCOTT** (l) of North Bay greets Pennsylvania's **LUKE ZACHERT** in the Open Class category.



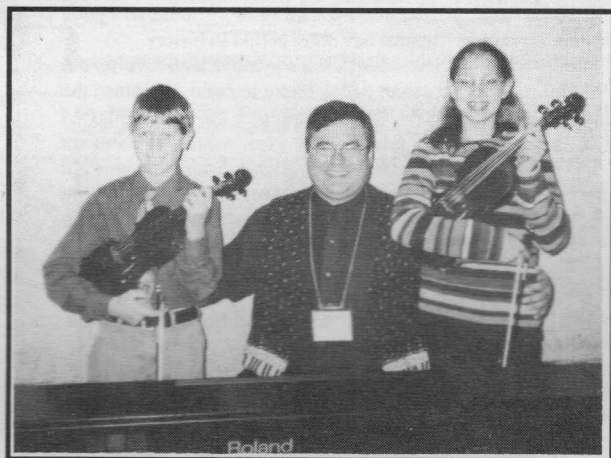
**DONNELLY LEAHY** of the internationally famous Leahy Family entertains at Burlington, Ontario's "Sounds of Music" Festival.



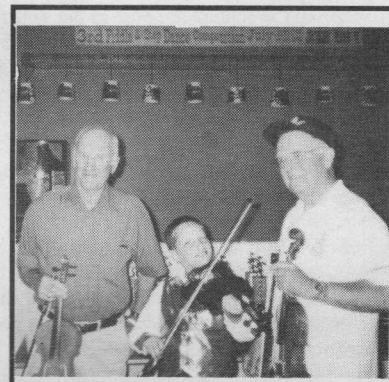
At the Pembroke Fiddle & Step Dance Contest celebrity fiddle judges included **CALVIN VOLL-RATH**, of Alberta (fresh off a world tour), **IVAN HICKS** of New Brunswick and the Ottawa Valley's **BRIAN HEBERT**.



Bill Elliott's Orangeville Fiddle & Stepdance School has attracted national interest. **EITAN CORNFELD** of CBC Radio interviews Junior Instructor of Kemble, Ont. Interviews from this camp were included in the 2-hour fiddle radio special played across Canada on August 31.



Two up-and-comers in Canada's fiddle community are **PATRICK** and **ERIKA WIELER**, seen here with one of Canada's top piano accompanists **TRENT BRUNER** of Saskatchewan. The scene was in Pembroke where Erika won the tough 12 and under class.



Blind River, Ontario was the scene of their popular Fiddle and Step Dance Contest. Co-ordinator **BOB PLANT** (r) lines up competitors **BRUCE ARMITAGE** of Tuyen, Quebec, and 9 year old fiddling sensation, **LYNDON COULAS** of Round Lake Centre, Ontario.



**IVONNE HERNANDEZ** of Victoria, B.C. confers with **BOB ROWLANDSON** co-ordinator of the Sturgeon Falls, Ontario Fiddle and Stepdance Contest. Ivonne reached the finals in Shelburne, Sturgeon Falls and appeared at the Canadian Grand Masters in Nepean (Ottawa).

## COUNTRY CALENDAR



by Doreen Brown

(Toronto and surrounding area)

\* **Happy Trails Country Hoedown**, at Otterville Hall, 6:30 to 12 p.m. Oct. 7, Nov. 4, Dec. 2. Old Time Bluegrass Music with Square Dancing.

\* **Mapleleaf Country Jamboree**, (Chef Adams), New Market Legion, 707 Srigley Ave., Oct. 7, Nov. 4 and Jan. 16. There will also be shows at the Academy Theatre, Kent St., Lindsay on Oct. 14 and Nov. 18 produced by Chef Adams.

\* Country entertainer, **Kiley Joe Masson** will be appearing: Oct. 5, 8-12 p.m., RCL, Legion Rd., Burlington; Oct. 6, 2-5 p.m., RCL, Kilbourne Rd., Lambeth; Oct. 20, 8 - 12 p.m., RCL, Watford; Oct. 21, Brantford Musicians Assoc. Showcase, RCL Dunsdon Br., Tolgate Rd., Brantford in the afternoon; Nov. 11, 2-6 p.m., Naval Veteran's Assoc., 108 Parkdale Ave. N., Hamilton; Nov. 17, 9-1 a.m., Army Navy Club, 151 Lorne Ave. E., Stratford; Nov. 24, 4-8 p.m., RCL Nichol St., Waterford; Dec. 1, 8:30-12:30, RCL, Hamilton Rd., Waterdown.

\* **Opry Niagara**, Classic Country Music every Wednesday 7 to 11 p.m., Polish Community Cultural Center, 5681 Thorold Stone Rd., at Stanley St., Niagara Falls, Ont. Play, sing, dance or listen.

\* **Moose Lodge**, Hwy. 27 & Brownsline, features Norma Gale every Sunday 4 to 8 p.m. and invites special guests.

\* **October 13**, Centennial Secondary

High School, Palmer Rd., Belleville, features well known country entertainers, Johnny Burke, Myrna Lorrie, Harold MacIntyre and Norm Post. Show starts at 7 p.m. For ticket info, call (905) 987-1693.

\* **Eastern Passage Restaurant & Night Club**, 30 Melanie Dr., Unit #4, Bramalea, (905) 789-0857, features Country and Newfoundland Music, Fri. & Sat. from 9:30 pm and Sun. from 5-9 pm with special guests invited.

\* **Oprey Toronto**, Silverthorn & Rogers Rd., will be having jamborees starting Oct. 13, 1 to 5 p.m.

\* **Appearances by Doreen Brown** - Oct. 13, 9-12 pm, by Oprey Orillia at Simcoe Hotel, Bayfield at 5 corners, Barrie. There is also a show 3-6 pm, Oct. 18, Holland Landing Community Centre; Oct. 28, 2-6 pm, Sadler's Apple Orchard Jamboree and Potluck, Clarksburg; Nov. 4, Mapleleaf Country Jamboree, Newmarket Legion; Nov. 27, Bond Head Fiddle Club; Dec. 1, 8, & 15, Oprey Toronto.

\* **Mapleleaf Country Jamboree Christmas Show**, date TBD; Oprey Orillia Christmas Show, date TBD.

\* **The Lock's Nest Restaurant & Tavern**, Kirkfield, has Country Music every Sat. night starting at 9 pm (at the lift locks, with Roy Payne, Shirley and Les White, (Lock's Nest Band).

\* *Since the next Barn Dance Journal will be 2002, I wish to take this opportunity to wish you the very best of everything for the Holiday Season. Also to thank all who support our wonderful field of Country Music.*



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## From the President's Desk

by Shirley Russwurm

Greetings to one and all in our association, our members are so scattered that it's difficult to meet all of you, so I'll just have to try and do it through our journal. We've experimented with a few things, we tried to do some monthly mini shows at the Wingham Armouries to lukewarm success. Then we were invited to bring the mini show to Palmerston for the opening of the Palmerston Railroad Museum, result - a packed house with some turnaways due to having to move inside because of threatening rain.

We are currently planning a move for the museum into the Wingham Police Station which will be vacated by the end of January, pending negotiations for a satisfactory lease. This will give us a ground floor location with extra room for displays. Our present location is so crowded that new acquisitions which are arriving on a steady basis cannot be displayed properly.

We have to get a number of Barn Dances for next year's summer season, and although we have a number of potential Barn Dances, there is nothing definite as of now. If you know of a potential association that may be interested, please let us know ASAP, we need to deal with these people now. Of course we will be doing the Campout Weekend in Blyth again next year, which is growing at a steady rate. A lot of work goes into this and we always need more volunteers to pull it off.

You may reach me as follows:

Shirley Russwurm,  
Box 63,  
Elmira, Ontario N3B 2Z5  
Phone: (519) 669-2386  
Fax: (519) 669-1814

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Sizes M, L, XL	\$15.00 each
Souvenir Hats	\$12.00 each

*Please include \$2.00 per item for mailing  
or pick up at Ernie King Music.*



### HOWDY FOLKS:

With the spirit of Canada's Largest Travelling Barn Dance always on my mind I find it a pleasure to keep members of The Barn Dance Historical Society and Entertainment Museum well informed.

Here now is the latest information I have for the Journal. During the past three months June, July, and August 2001 - it has been my pleasure to work with a college student undergoing training to be a historian, Miss Julielynn Anderson of Brussels, Ontario. With her help we were able to document a complete filing system for our Hall of Fame and Museum. Julielynn returned to take another year in

college to get her Doctors Degree.

Every evening in June, Martha and I drove to Blyth, Ont. to participate in the production of the Outdoor Donnelly's play. Our part was to sing songs from the collection of 14 numbers we had recorded in our record album, "Tales of the Donnelly Feud" in 1970. According to the latest news, tickets are already available from the Blyth Festival to see a repeat performance of The Outdoor Donnellys next year 2002 in June. This is probably the largest dramatic performance of a play produced outside anywhere in Canada. More than 40 volunteers were on hand to stage this event.

I am fully aware that many of our Barn Dance fans and members of the Barn Dance Historical Society are asking when is the story of "Canada's Largest Travelling Barn Dance" to be published. First of all I am very grateful for the work Dave Wall has done on his computer to capture the story. At least we know now it has been preserved. There's a lot more work involved in writing a book than writing a song and getting it published. At the present time the Barn Dance Book is being edited by several university educated

school teachers. We also must select as many good photos for the book as we can and this will take time. Once the editing is finished, Dave Wall and I will be rehashing the book to see that it is written in a manner it will be selected by a publisher.

All said and done it could be another year before this work can be accomplished. In the meantime, I assure you I am determined it must be done right. In the meantime, I'll be working on this book until it happens. It will just be a matter of time.

I hope to see you at the next Barn Dance function. As I've always said, as long as you friends and neighbours out there, keep enjoying great country entertainment -

### THE SHOW MUST GO ON...

Earl Heywood  
 Founder, Hon. President,  
 Advisor, Museum Curator

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