

# The Barn Dance Opera Journal

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The Barn Dance Historical Society Inc.

A Not For Profit Organization

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Spring Edition

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## Michael T. Wall - Singin' from Newfoundland to Australia

by Grant Heyward

I don't know for sure if it was Michael's original intent to sing his way around the world, but at this stage of the Singing Newfoundlander's career, he's well over half way there by now. Born in Cornerbrook, Newfoundland, Michael set his sights on Toronto like many other of his fellow provincial brethren. His dream was to promote his island home and Canada to the world by singing country songs about his homeland.

Former Newfoundland Premier, Joey Smallwood gave him the title of 'Newfoundland's Official Musical Ambassador.' That pretty much made Michael T. Wall "The Singing Newfoundlander" a major export, and so he commissioned himself to make his dream of promoting Newfoundland and Canada as a country singer a reality.

At the start of his career Michael worked various jobs to keep the bill collectors at bay. Other transplanted Newfoundlanders recognized his homegrown pride in entertaining right away and packed the clubs nightly around the Toronto region just to hear him perform live. It wasn't long until Michael broadened his horizons appearing at the famous Tootsies Lounge in Nashville, moving on to the Ernest Tubb Midnight Jamboree, and then onto the Grand Ole Opry. With his trademark map of Newfoundland always emblazoned on the back of his jacket Michael was proud to sing his own brand of country, appearing onstage with the likes of Loretta Lynn, Dolly Parton, Porter Wagoner and Ernest Tubb.

He soon started enjoying international airplay of his songs in Europe, Japan, and Australia. That led him on a tour of Poland in 1984 when he became the first Newfoundlander to sing behind the Iron Curtain. To his surprise he was given the Polish International Country Music Festival Award while appearing in Warsaw.

Michael's guest appearances on T.V.

with George Hamilton IV and the late Harry Hibbs eventually steered him into acting school. He soon appeared as an extra in several movies working with notable Canadian actors Gordon Pinsent and Tom Jackson as well as international stars, such as Richard Thomas and Denzel Washington.

Through his many years of singing and entertaining, Michael has been honoured with countless awards including environmental awards for his song 'The Recycling Song', International Music Ambassador awards from his home province, and 21 certificates of appreciation from the Muscular Dystrophy Association of Canada for charitable work. In 2003, Michael was inducted into America's Old-Time Country Music Hall of Fame, along with Jett Williams in the state of Iowa. His long time friend and country music pioneer, Earl Heywood was instrumental in having Michael honoured with the Stompin' Tom Eastcoat Music award in 1997. Michael returned the favour recently by recording 'The Ballad Of Earl Heywood' which is receiving a lot of airplay in Australia.

Michael has been a long time Barn Dance Historical Society member and never fails to make an appearance at our annual Fiddlers Convention and Show held at the end of Septem-

ber in Wingham, Ontario. He has introduced his singing daughters, Sarah and Sabrina onstage and on many of his recent recordings as well. His No. 1 hit song 'Daddy's Girl' was written exclusively for daughter Sarah when she was just over 4 years old.

In February of this year, Michael toured extensively in Australia and was honoured to be a special guest on the Slim Dusty float in the parade at Australia's biggest Country Music Festival in Tamworth. Michael's songs have become an instant success on the radio airwaves 'down under' and he guest hosted several times on the Big Al Field radio show which is broadcast all over the world. Australia has as much as embraced Michael almost as if he were a native son. His songs relate to the 'down to earth' listeners of real country music. Michael's secret to success in Australia has been the result of years of record promotion and keeping in

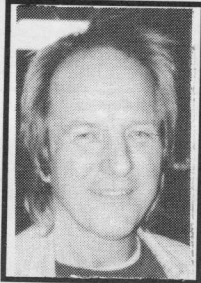
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Michael T. Wall - Newfoundland's Official Musical Ambassador live on-stage at the Hall of Fame Park in Tamworth, Australia, January 28, 2006

## The Editor Speaks

by Grant Heywood



Just recently, my family and I decided to make the trek south to warmer 'climes' in sunny Florida. At first I thought it just wasn't meant to be. First, our dryer packed it in and we had to get a new one. Next, the oil pump went on our furnace. Then our transmission and brakes packed it in on our van. So by this time regardless of the cost we packed up and headed down I-75 in a new vehicle hoping to leave all of our troubles behind. I figured I'd likely need to rest up before I got back to working double shifts to pay for everything.

We drove all night through Michigan and Ohio taking a few short naps at rest areas on the way. Had our breakfast at Bob Evans and lunch at the Cracker Barrel and proceeded down the highway until we crossed the Florida state line. Just like typical tourists we stopped at the Florida Welcome Centre and got our free glass of orange juice and took pictures by the Welcome to Florida sign. That kind of made it official that we had arrived.

Vero Beach was our destination, situated just above West Palm Beach on the Atlantic side. Being March Break it was nice to find a spot that was relatively quiet with hardly a soul on the beach. The weather was perfect as well with sunny days well into the mid 80's.....Fahrenheit of course. We spent much of our time relaxing on the beach and then by the pool, trying to de-stress ourselves if only for the moment. Dining out was always interesting as well and I had to commend our neighbours to the south for their kind southern hospitality. It sure makes you feel at home.

Our twin teenage daughters, Janessa and Kianna can soon get bored easily by this life of leisure so I had pre-arranged an outing with Paleo Discoveries (fossil hunting) fielded by local owner/operator, Fred Mazza. We followed Fred in our vehicle practically across the state until we reached our destination at Peace River. The 'jungle like' site along the river was

almost a scene out of Jurassic Park. It looked like some huge dinosaur behemoth would come crashing through the trees at any moment. With a few other fossil enthusiasts from Carolina and New Jersey, we all waded into the middle of the river until we were chest deep in the water, then with shovels in hand we proceeded to dig up some 4 and 5 million year old skeletal remains from the river bed.

I thought the girls would've 'pooped out' after about an hour of heavy digging in waterlogged conditions, but 'no way'!! Fred's palaeontology knowledge paid off, he knew where and what to look for and guaranteed us that we wouldn't go away empty handed. He was right! After digging for many hours we managed to find over 100 remains including 5 million year old whale bones, Great White and Mako shark teeth (some 2" long), vertebrae from long extinct animals, and much more. Not only that, we were allowed to keep our treasure trove of fossils from the dig. We were so excited that we hardly even flinched when Fred told us there were alligators just up around the river bend from where we were digging. .... Hmmm, finding the ancient variety of teeth was a little more palatable than encountering the real thing.

After 5 or 6 hours we slogged our way out of the river and got into some dry clothes. Just then noticed four local 'good old boys' getting ready to float downstream on some inflated inner tubes. Two of them got positioned on their inner tubes while one of them hoisted a chunk of plywood onto his inner tube, put a lawn chair on the plywood, sat down on the chair and then they all floated away without a care in the world .... well, all except the one who didn't have an inner tube. Hmmm .... maybe he was a decoy. Wonder if they ever met up with any of those 'gators.

Comments?? Please contact:

Grant Heywood  
5584 Deborah Glaister Line,  
R. R. #2,  
Wellesley, Ontario N0B 2T0  
Phone: (519) 656-2552  
E-mail: heywoods@golden.net

## The Barn Dance Historical Society and Entertainment Museum

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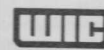
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more information about booking the  
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please write to:

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P. O. Box 68,

Wingham, Ont. N0G 2W0;

or call Wayne Otterbein,

(home) (519) 235-4783,

or (bus.) (519) 235-0559

Continued from Page 1

touch with his 'Aussie mates'. Obviously, Michael made a big impact with his growing fan base in Australia and sold every last C.D. and tape he had. And if that wasn't enough, he was promoting radio airplay of some of Earl Heywood's songs and selections from the Barn Dance C.D.'s as well.

Michael's latest double C.D. titled 'Newfoundlandly Yours' is due out this summer. That's not soon enough for those fans who want him to return to Australia A.S.A.P. The trip to Australia was undoubtedly the highlight of Michael's career. As Michael says, "Touring Australia was just like getting a gold record."

At this time we are hoping to schedule Michael for a guest performance on the Barn Dance show at the Blyth Campout Jamboree Weekend, Saturday, May 27th.

**Happy 89th Birthday to Earl Heywood  
March 12, 2006**



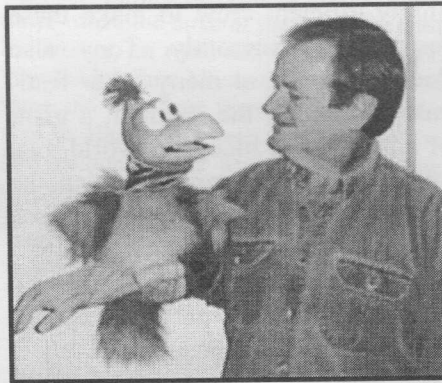
Michael T. Wall made it to the front cover of Country Music Capital News, Australia's premier country music magazine.

## John Heaman Taking on a Worthy Cause

Barn Dance guest entertainer and musician, John Heaman has been invited to Russia in April as a forum speaker regarding the challenges of dwarfism and the usefulness of the disabled in today's society. John and his wife Geneva are in the process of adopting a little girl Ella, from Russia who is challenged with dwarfism, and are looking forward to doing whatever it takes to give this little girl a home and family and a brighter outlook on life.

John who is small in stature as well (a pituitary dwarf), wants to give something back by promoting the self-worth and hope to children in Russian orphanages who have this disability and to show them that they can become productive citizens in society. John will be entertaining children in St. Petersburg, Russia, April 4 to 12, playing guitar, singing, and doing his ventriloquist act with pal Charlie, all to be translated into Russian. Besides speaking with orphanage representatives, John will also be speaking in English on a broadcast radio show. Many of these children are institutionalized in Russia and John says he hopes to show government officials that the disabled can lead productive lives without being locked away.

John will be heading off with 7 others from the U.S., Newfoundland and Ontario in co-operation with the Mission of Tears organization, headed by Gordon Lewis. The CBC television show, 'Moving On' hosted by Joanne Smith, will be filming the upcoming



John Heaman and his puppet, Charlie, are off to Russia in April. (photo courtesy of John Heaman)

trip to Russia as well as covering John's life story of coping with dwarfism. Although dwarfism isn't disabling, it carries with it a lot of prejudices that become a challenge in everyday public life.

Bravo John! We salute you on your mission and support your cause with open arms. Let's hope others can help you in your crusade to help those who can't help themselves.

The trip to Russia will cost John about \$3,500 to \$4,000. He hopes to get a lot of support from local clubs and organizations. Anyone interested in helping John can call him at (519) 396-6137 or e-mail him at : [jrheaman@bmts.com](mailto:jrheaman@bmts.com).

## BARN DANCE SOUVENIRS

Souvenir Mugs -	\$ 5.00 ea.
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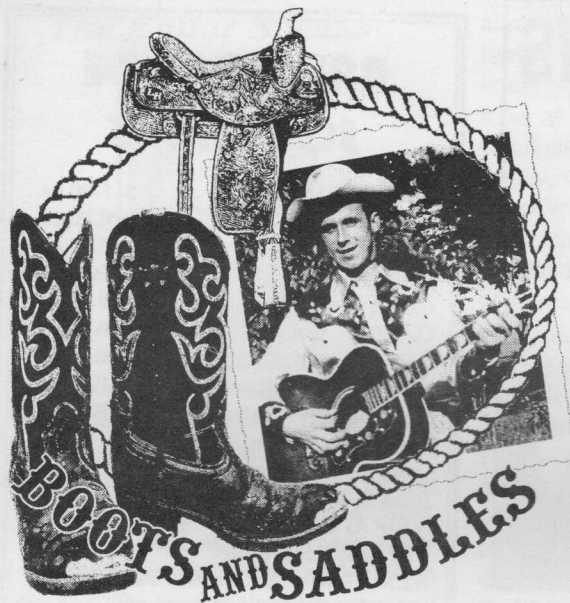
Full Page (inside) -

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Full Page (back cover) -

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*All prices are per issue.*



by Lynn Russwurm

Spring is almost upon us after a cold and grueling winter, thank goodness there wasn't much need for getting out the old snow shovel. It makes me think of all the bluegrass and country music festivals that have become such an integral part of the social life that revolves around these events. Many folks plan their whole summer following up these festivals in their motor homes, or what have you. As these events are planned around weekends, you can line up an itinerary to include one weekend festival, then spend the week traveling to the next stop on the following Friday, Saturday and Sunday. It's a time for renewal of old friendships that were made throughout the past years with others that you've met along the way. A number of years ago, in the late eighties I had the opportunity to take my band, The Jamboree Reunion Band, to some of these festivals, of course they had to be the ones that included country music, along with the usual bluegrass fare.

The major one was the Palmer Rapids Festival which features two stages, one for country and the other for bluegrass from six o'clock Friday night until six o'clock Sunday night, breaking off at about midnight each evening until noon the next day. The cost for the whole weekend is usually not too pro-

hibitive when you consider the value received. All feature top quality entertainment in a very friendly atmosphere, with singing around the campfires at night. River Valley is another of the top festivals in a beautiful setting about fifty miles north of North Bay that has been going on for many years on the August 1st weekend. A second festival to include country music was started with our band as the headliner around the first weekend in July. Recently a third festival was started to

signify the end of the festival season at the start of September as a farewell to the summer bluegrass season, sort of a clean-up event.

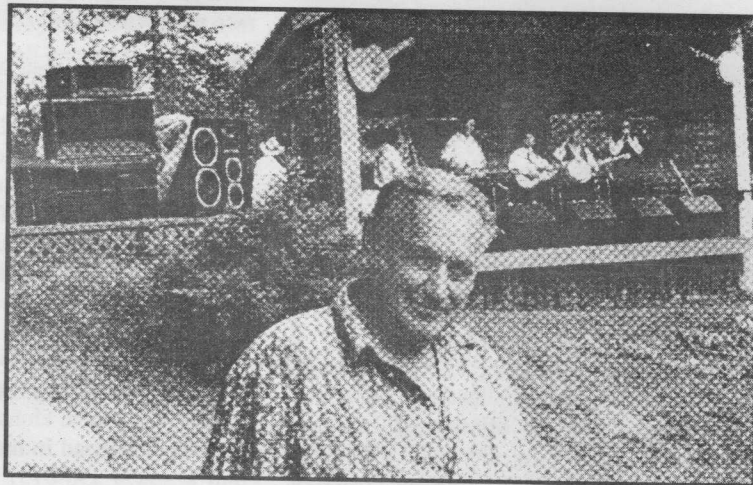
Tony DeBoer is the man behind the River Valley happenings, along with many volunteers, it takes a highly efficient crew to make these festivals go smoothly. Tony also does the sound at many other festivals throughout the summer, a giant of a man in the bluegrass world. Oh, yes, he's also the mover behind the annual bluegrass awards weekend in Hunstville, Ontario in November. And just to keep things moving he takes several bands on tour throughout the dreary winter months. Whenever there's bluegrass on the menu in Ontario, you can be sure that Tony will be in the background, stirring things up a bit.

Of course, the opening date in your itinerary should be our annual Jamboree Campout at the Blyth Arena Complex on the last full weekend of May, the week after the May 24th holi-

day. On Friday night we kick off with a bluegrass concert, followed by an open jam for anyone who wants to get in on it. Saturday is a full day of events with a continental breakfast in the morning, an all day musical flea market, along with a silent auction and a major draw on a musical instrument, I don't know what Grant will be coming up with this year. I do know he's looking for donations for the silent auction. Afternoon is another on stage jamboree, which is your chance to hoot and holler with good musicians to back you up, remember it's your party. The big event is when our full Saturday Night Barn Dance takes the stage at eight o'clock, followed by a dance until one o'clock.

The Sunday morning Gospel Sing has fast become one of the favourite moments, with excellent crowds at 10 o'clock so you might want to come a little early for a choice seat. An offering is taken which goes to the service clubs in the area to help with their good work. I would suggest you set a bit of time aside for a visit to our excellent museum in Wingham sometime over the weekend.

The real beauty of this weekend is the low cost. Everything is free, except the camping and the Saturday Night Barn Dance tickets. And these can be had at a discount if you join the Barn Dance Historical Society.



TONY deBOER

# Maurice Bolyer, King of the Banjo

by Lynn Russwurm

"Ladies and Gentlemen, you have just been watching the greatest banjo player in the entire world."

The above quote came from the great Arthur Godfrey after Maurice made his first appearance on Godfrey's Talent Scouts TV show. Godfrey was displeased that Maurice had not been named the winner that night and so he hired Maurice to be his guest on his regular show for the entire week.

Plaudits like the above would be heard many more times after a Maurice Bolyer appearances in many places in the world. World-wide appearances became part of the Maurice Bolyer mystique until his untimely death in August of 1978 at the age of 57 years from a malaria bug he picked up somewhere along the way. Let's learn a bit more about this great all around musician who spent a number of years in Wingham with the CKNX Barn Dance. Born in Edmunston, New Brunswick in 1920, Maurice Bolyer (the Anglicized name for Beaulieu) is known to have played piano at the age of three. His later career with the banjo over shadowed his piano talents, I can remember a program over CKNX called "Play or Pay" in the 1940s. Every afternoon the show was emceed by Johnny Brent and from listeners requests, Maurice played tunes as the letters were opened. If he couldn't play the re-

quested number, CKNX would send \$1.00 to the person who could stump him. Of course there were numbers Maurice couldn't play, but there were many more that he could.

He became an electrician by trade but was playing in country bands from the age of eighteen. At one point he is reported to have done some double tracking some ten years before Les Paul became famous for this innovation. He spent some time in a Hank Snow band in these formative years, also he worked with Marg Osburne before her Don Messer days. At this time he still had not picked up the banjo, but was quite proficient on fiddle, piano, bass, accordion, mandolin and harmonica. The band he was with felt they needed a banjo so Maurice was elected to learn the banjo, and learn it he did. In the mid to late 40's Maurice arrived in Wingham with the western swing band of Slim Boucher and The Golden Prairie Cowboys. In 1948 he moved back to New Brunswick to be near his ailing father, taking Jean and Les, The Colorado Kids, with him. After a two year stay in the Maritimes where the three of them worked with his brother, on radio and other local gigs, they headed from Montreal for more of the same and then from there they found their way to Hamilton where they became the first edition of the Mainstreeters on the Main Street Jamboree in 1953. This is where Maurice met Gordie Tapp and when Gordie went to CBC in Toronto, he took Maurice along for the beginning of Country Hoedown. Eventually this show led to the Tommy Hunter TV show where Maurice stayed until his untimely death.

In between this steady flurry of activity, Maurice found time to appear on some of the top U.S. variety shows such as the Godfrey Show, The Lawrence Welk Show and many others. He had a pilot's licence which made traveling a bit easier in the later years. Such was the multi talented Maurice Bolyer, King of the Banjo.



## IN MEMORIAM

**JOE TIFFIN SR. - PASSED AWAY** ON February 21 at the age of 83. Joe Tiffin and the Tiffin family band were one of the busiest groups in the Wingham area for many years. Residing on the outskirts of Whitechurch, Joe was a fiddle player, a baseball coach, a farmer, and family man. He served as Marshal and Sergeant At Arms as a member of Stratford Local 418 of the American Federation of Musicians from 1964 to 1997.

Joe was a proud entertainer / musician and supporter of traditional country music and was a guest fiddler at some of the Barn Dance Fiddle Conventions. Joe will be sadly missed. Sympathy to Joe's wife Marian and all the Tiffin family.

### Winner of the Barn Dance 2005 Quilt Draw

The lucky winner of the Barn Dance Quilt draw for 2005 was Ms. Sarah Nykamp, R. R. #1, Moorefield. Congratulations The ticket was purchased at the I.P.M. in Listowel.



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at the Blyth Arena Complex,  
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**May 26, 27, 28, 2006**

Registration forms available

January 2006, by writing to:

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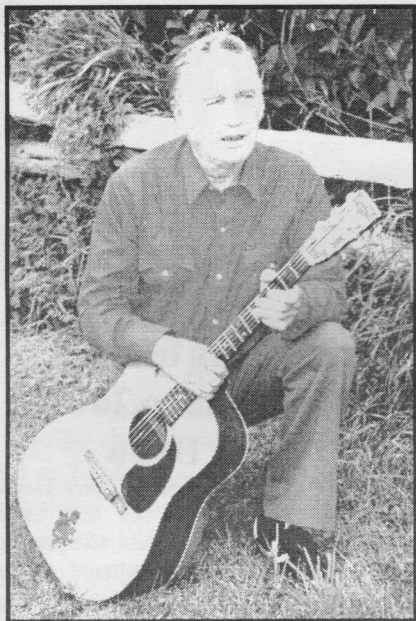
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# Country Music Memories

as compiled by Lynn Russwurm



HANK MacDONALD



JAMBOREE REUNION, KITCHENER, 1987 - left to right- Howard Heathcote, Lynn Russwurm, Stew Clayton, Chickie Williams, Kidd Baker.



MIKE and JUNE SLAUENWHITE, 1954



SHARON STRONG at the Monkton Barn Dance Show, June 27, 1998.



WALTER OSTANEK, performing at the Jamboree Reunion, Kitchener, 1990.

## COUSIN OPIE

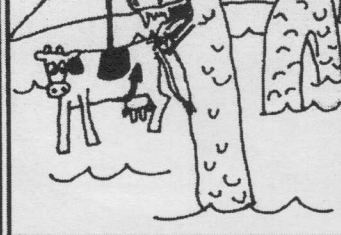
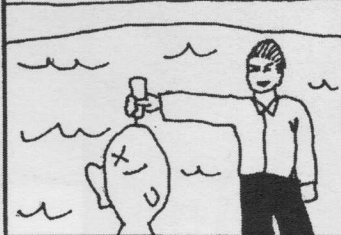
BY LARRY RUSSWURM

WE HAVE TO THROW THIS ONE AWAY, TOO? ARE THERE ANY FISH THAT ARE BIG ENOUGH?

'WHY BACK IN MY DAY THE FISH WERE ALL BIG ENOUGH TO KEEP!'

'AND BACK IN MY GRANDPA'S DAY THEY WERE AS BIG AS LARGE DOGS! IN FACT IT GOES ALL THE WAY BACK TO...'

THIS LOOKS A LOT LIKE A TRAP BUT OBVIOUSLY THIS POND ISN'T BIG ENOUGH TO FEED ME!



## COUNTRY CALENDAR



by Doreen Brown

(Toronto and surrounding area)

\* **Grey Bruce Jamboree** - contact David Chittick 519-364-5284 for following: April 30, Hanover Legion; May 7, Tiverton Community Centre; June 11, Walkerton Agricultural Building, Walkerton Agricultural Society; June 30, Howick 150th Anniversary Opening Jamboree 1 to 6 pm; July 1, Howick 150th Anniversary Dance, 1 to 4 pm to David Chittick Country Pals band; July 9, Participation Lodge Fish Fry, Holland Centre.

\* **Hensal Circle Band** with Cliff Short, RCL, Hensal Circle, Mississauga April 9 and May 28 - the last one until the fall; June 4, at the Bread and Honey festival, Streetsville; May 7, benefit at Stogeys, 443 Hwy. 23 east, Hamilton, 2 pm. Cliff Short will be appearing at the Classic Country Music Reunion, Centennial Park, Lindsay on Sun. night Aug. 6 with Myrna Lorrie and Johnny Burke.

\* **Waterdown Jamboree** is the last Sunday of each month.

\* **Makes plans for the Annual Classic Country Music Reunion**, address above, August 4, 5 & 6. Line up to follow in next issue.

\* **9th Annual Campout Jamboree Weekend**, Blyth and District Community Centre and campgrounds. May 26, 27 & 28 with 300 RV sites. There will be a silent auction, jamborees, Saturday night show and dance, gospel show on Sunday. Tables on Sat. morning in arena. For information contact Bill Simmermaker, simmermaker@sympatico.ca There is also BBQ and breakfast by Blyth Lions. See you there for a fun filled weekend.

\* **Second Sunday every month Jamboree** at Maple Valley, Lafontaine from 1 to 5, with Jules Desroch, Barry Brookes, Ollie Strong, Bob MacDonald and Jean McMann.

\* **4th Sunday of each month, Jamboree** at Mactier with Calico Creek.

\* **First Sunday of each month, Jamboree** at Warminster with Tex Howard.

**Blackfly Boogie Band** are to host a jamor country music jamboree Sun., June 25 on the

Fenelon Falls Fairgrounds. Country entertainers all day with an open mic to follow. Gates open at 10 am. Rough camping site; All proceeds to the Lions Club and minor baseball assoc. For further info, call Larry or B elenda Burnett 705-887-6372 or burnettwelding@on.aibn.com

\* **Bluesky Country Bluegrass Jam Sessions** at RCL, Barrie, April 5 - 7 pm; April 23; May 2 - 7 pm; May 21 - 1:30 pm. A fun time for entertainers to bring instruments and jam. For info contact Terry Calvert at blueskycountrybluegrass@rogers.com

\* **Appearances by Doreen Brown:** Bluegrass Club, Barrie, address above; Moose Lodge, Brown's Line and Lakeshore April 9; Bond Head 4th Tuesday of each month; Bolton Community Centre, 2nd Wednesday; May 5, 6, & 7 Winchester, TN, Country and Gospel shows, Jamboree by the Lake by Colonel Buster Doss, also appearing Tommy Cash, Ernie Ashworth, Billy Walker and several DJs from Denmark and Australia - for info www.jamboree-by-the-lake.com. May 26, 27 & 28 Blyth Campout Weekend; June 23, 24 & 25 Tottenham Bluegrass Festival.

\* **Atlantic Seabreeze** presents East Coast Night June 3 RCL, Br. 344, L395 Lakeshore Blvd. 8 pm. Admission \$10, presenting fiddler, Cynthia MacLeod, singer Gordon Belsler from PEI. Square dancing, songs and fun. Reserved tickets call John 416-255-2127.

\* **Appearance by Bill Beattie** - April 22, May 20 and June 17 Danceland, Lakeside 8 to 12 pm; April 29, June 24 Elora Legion 9 to 1; April 15 and May 13, Club 86, Listowel, 8 to 12; May 6 Shindig Square Dance, 474 Davis Dr., Newmarket 6:30 to 12.

\* **Maple Leaf Jubilee**, August 25, 26 & 27, by Chef Adams, Sentimental Journey, south of Baldwin with gospel show Sunday. Outline of entertainment next issue.

\* **Jamboree** April 30 by Chef Adams at the Moose Lodge, Lindsay. Show at 1 pm.

\* **Shindig Square Dance** May 6, 474 Davis Drive, Newmarket, 6:30 to 12 pm.

\* **23rd Annual Tottenham Bluegrass Festival** - June 23, 24 & 25. Hosted by Mike O'Reilly in the Tottenham Conservation Area. There will be children's program, Beef BBQ, Gospel hour on Sunday at 11 am, and crafts and concessions. There is rough camping and serviced lots, with show and sanitary facilities around the clock. Line up includes Dan Paisley & The Souther Grass, Lou Reid and Carolina, Honi Deaton and Dream, Birch Mountain Bluegrass, Hometown Bluegrass, Silverbirch, General Store, Bluegrass Connection, Gerald Evans and Paradise, The Spence Family, Hard Ryde, Special Edition Bluegrass Band, The Flint River Boys. For info write Box 922, Tottenham, Ont. L0G 1W0. Phone 1-888-BLUEGRAS (toll free Canada & US); 905-936-4100; email cofac@eol.ca Ticket prices weekend advance \$55.00 before June 7, in-

cludes rough camping; Weekend at the gate \$65.00, includes rough camping; Weekend seniors \$50.00 before June 7, includes rough camping, senior's card required. Above mentioned prices include access to all concerts. See you there and have a great weekend at this event.

\* **Appearance by Scott Woods**, April 9, 1:00 Galt Country Club; April 19, RCL, Woodstock; April 21, Exhibition Hall Brigden Fair Grounds; April 22, 7:00, Knox Pres. Church; April 23, 7:30, Tara United Church; April 28, 7:00, St. Francis Xavier Parish, Renfrew; April 29, Child's Auditorium, McKenzie, Deep River; April 30, 7:00, Osgoode Baptist and Vernon United Church; May 3, 1:15, Watford United Church; May 5, Freelon United Church; May 10, Dance Recital, Wingham Town Hall; May 11, Calvin Pres. Church, North Bay, 7:00; May 12, 7:00, Garson Arena; June 1, St. Andrew's Pres. Church, Thunder Bay; June 2, John Wesley United Church, Sault Ste. Marie; June 3, Alain Bray Auditorium, Blind River; June 4 Westminister Pres. Church, Barrie; June 9 Grace United Church, Hanover; June 16, St. Andrew's Pres. Church, Beeton; June 17, RCL, Creemore; June 18, Kincardine United Church; June 23, Arena Dance Competition, Dundalk; June 24, Same; June 30, Arena Fiddle and Step Dance Competition, Tavistock. Info www.scotwoods.ca

\* **The Dolson's** appear the last Sunday of the month at the Country Jamboree in Erin. For a country touch for all occasions, call 519-941-2954.

\* **17th Annual Havelock Country Jamboree**, Aug. 17, 18, 19 & 20. Make it a weekend, nominated 7 times, along with the Calgary Stampede as one of the top 5 country music festivals in Canada. Phone 1-800-539-3353, 705-778-3353, www.havelock-jamboree.com/home.htm. Don't miss appearance by: Lonestar; Charley Pride; The Oak Ridge Boys; John Anderson; Ian Tyson; Creedence Clearwater Revisited; Crystal Gayle; The Road Hammers; Michelle Wright; Ralph Stanley and the Clinch Mountain Boys; Carolyn Dawn Johnson; The Wilkinsons; John Berry; Tommy Cash, Johnny Cash Tribute; Patricia Conroy; Ronnie Prophet; The Poverty Plainsmen; Corb Lund; Gord Bamford; The Abrams Brothers; Terry Summison. For prices contact above website or phone.

**Old Time Country Jamboree** and dance every 3rd Friday of the month, hosted by Carol Hawke and Jim Dunham's No Name Band. 7:30 to 11 pm at St. George's Anglican Church Hall, 60 Guelph, St. Georgetown. Admission \$5.00, Performers Free. Info Jim 905-873-0310 or Carol 415-889-0252.

*Have a wonderful, healthy and country music summer, folks, and see you at several of the above mentioned jamborees and shows.*



pictures taken with my own horse Hero, not to mention my own fan club as well. I also had the opportunity to meet Gene Autry on occasion and had some publicity shots taken with him for one of my songbooks.

Come to think of it, there aren't many real cowboy singers left since country music has evolved over the years. I would have to say that Ian Tyson holds the Canadian title of being one of the only real cowboy singers of today, but then again, Ian is a genuine cowboy. The real deal. He's been lucky enough to make a career out of being both a real cowboy and a real cowboy singer despite all the changes that have occurred in country music over the years. That's a long and successful ride.

Being a cowboy singer meant writing songs about nature, ridin' the range, buckin' broncs, love songs and the west in general, not to mention wearing a Stetson hat and sporting the latest cowboy duds. When I performed on the CKNX Barn Dance, the band was called the Golden Prairie Cowboys, a name certainly befitting for that time period. Another branch of cowboy music was western swing which was kind of like the big band cowboy sound popularized by Bob Wills and his Texas Playboys as well as Spade Cooley and others. Cowboy music was partly the reason 'western' was used in naming the music 'country and western'. And country and western music lasted well into the sixties, but eventually it became known as just 'country music'.

During the 1950's country and western music was at peak demand on radio and record

sales where brisk. Hollywood and early television responded with movies and television shows of the singing cowboy heroes. Tex Ritter, Gene Autry, and Roy Rogers were leaders in the field of the singing cowboy movie stars. During that time the market was hot for new talent and as a rising Canadian country and western cowboy singer, I was lucky enough to be offered a contract by Republic Pictures for a screen test in Hollywood. Timing is everything they say, and by the time negotiations had been settled the singing cowboy market had been flooded and began to wane. My big chance on the silver screen kind of just blew out like a candle in a breeze.

Undaunted, I continued writing and recording and performing with the CKNX Barn Dance on a weekly basis. I was also fortunate to have a weekly television show on CKNX titled Range Rider, hosting cowboy movies while doing dialogue and singing some of my own songs during the breaks. I look back now and really treasure that time period of my career. Maybe it wasn't Hollywood, but it sure was memorable and it certainly helped in establishing my career in Canadian country music.....or should I say country and western.

Remember –

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Earl Heywood

Founder, Hon. President,  
Advisor, Museum Curator

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