

The Barn Dance Opera Journal

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Fall Edition

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Western Swing Authority is ... Cool ... and Hot

by Grant Heywood

Duke Ellington once said, 'It Don't Mean A Thing, If It Ain't Got That Swing'. He'd be 'right on the money' if he ever got to see and hear the Western Swing Authority play a live gig. From Bob Wills & his Texas Playboys to Spade Cooley and beyond, Kitchener's own Western Swing Authority serves up a hearty helpin' of the tastiest western swing music this side of the Grand River. Every second Tuesday night of the month, these first class musicians and singers have been rippin' up the stage at Paul Weber's Commercial Tavern in Maryhill. With their debut CD release, the Western Swing Authority are poised to take on some new territory and maybe even some Texas dance halls if they can swing it.

Recent CCMA 'Fiddle Player of the Year' award winner, Shane Guse, launched the Western Swing Authority idea a little over a year ago, and it has grown steadily and taken on a life of its own. Stacey Lee Guse, (1/3 of former country music trio 'Lace'), is not only married to Shane, but has a voice that is married to the music of the band, and she knows exactly how to deliver a song to get the desired results. "She's the best singer I've ever worked with," says Shane, "and I'm not saying that just because she's my wife either". Both Shane and Stacey Lee divide their time between raising a family and

adding their musical magic on-stage to several top name Canadian country artists such as George Canyon, Jason McCoy, The Wilkinsons, and Jamie Warren.

Many of the band members are musical friends and Canadian country music pros on their own, including, CCMA nominee steel guitarist Ed Ringwald, better known as Pee Wee Charles (Gordon Lightfoot, Ian Tyson, George Canyon), guitarist /vocalist Paul Chapman (Lisa Brokop, Susan Aglukark, Jason McCoy, Michelle Wright), fiddle player/vocalist Dan Howlett (Tommy Hunter, Good Bros., Cassandra Vasik), stand-up bassist Matthew Lima (Kellylee Evans), drummer Charlie St. Denis (Cassandra Vasik, Terry Sumsion, Good Bros., Larry Mercery), and of course Shane Guse on fiddle /vocals, and Stacey Lee Guse on vocals. As a note, drummer Charlie St. Denis is also a very good fiddle player in his own right.

I've had the opportunity to catch the band live on many occasions and recently talked to Shane about the con-

cept for the WSA and what the future holds for the band. I asked Shane why Western Swing? "Why not!" said Shane, "My interest in this type of music goes back to when I would listen to it on an old reel-to-reel recorder in my younger days. I just couldn't get enough of it." Shane told me he has always wanted a band like this his whole life, and that watching a DVD of the Time Jumpers, (an all star cast of Nashville musicians who play regularly at Nashville's Station Inn) was the straw that broke the camel's

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Left to Right - Shane Guse, Dan Howlett, Ed Ringwald, Charlie St. Dennis, Paul Chapman, Matthew Lima. Centre - Stacey Lee Guse.

The Editor Speaks

by Grant Heywood



Ever notice how people think they have a knack for detecting a good singing voice. I mean, there are people out there that think they really have a natural gift in selecting the best singers in the business. It's almost as if they are trying to imitate the judges on American Idol ... please!!! Let's not even go there.

Everybody has their own opinion. Some believe Pavarotti or Englebert Humperdink are tops, while others claim that Freddie Mercury, Martina McBride, George Jones or even Susan Boyle are great singers. The truth is, that many of them are really good singers, and some are just great singers in their own particular genre of music. It all depends on your perspective of what a great singer is. In today's world we tend to categorize almost everything as if it were an Olympic sport, bronze, silver, and gold, or to make it plain and simple, three, two, and one. Over the years there has been a new category added, (kind of like credit card status) and that is platinum. Platinum is pretty much the top of the heap and qualifies that person as the grand champion, if you will.

Blues singers don't usually make the grade that often unless you are a blues soul singer like Aretha Franklin, Marvin Gaye or Nina Simone. Rock music lovers really don't care as long as their contemporaries can 'belt it out' and get the message across. Some have even gone on to crooning such as Rod Stewart and Elton John. Well.....regardless of record sales I think the jury is still out on Rod Stewart as far as I'm concerned. Opera is in a class and world of it's own and really isn't as commercially exposed as blues, rock, country or jazz.

There was a day when the lead singer was totally in the spotlight. Some of the greats from yesteryear would include Billy Holiday, Doris Day, Frank Sinatra, Martha Raye, Rosemary Clooney, Sammy Davis Jr., Anita O'Day, Ella Fitzgerald, Joe Williams, Sarah Vaughn, and even Merv Griffin, just to name a few. This is the benchmark that I use to judge really good singers today, but then again that's just my own opinion. For instance, I'm not a big fan of Canada's own Celine Dion, but I do believe that she is in the platinum class of

singers. One night while driving home from a gig I was listening to a station playing various cuts from a 'best of collection' from Celine Dion. I was totally awestruck!!! This woman is capable of singing almost anything, blues, rock, contemporary, you name it and she can definitely deliver the goods.

Country music fans, and especially musicians, and many Canadians in general, are particularly critical of our own Canadian talent. I still haven't figured that one out yet. I remember when Shania Twain came on the scene and many of my colleagues would comment by saying, 'Well, she's not that great a singer.' The point is, she's not a 'GREAT' singer in the eyes of some Canadian critics, but she is a good singer, which likely puts her somewhere between silver and gold in the medal standings, but just check out the internet standings and she's #2, just behind Martina McBride. Who really cares though. Shania has proved that she has a great voice, she writes hit songs, and she's now a very wealthy woman. The fact is, that some folks don't believe she belongs there because she's not really, truly, country. Neither was Patsy Cline. End of story. Some claim that George Jones, Patsy Cline, Reba McEntire, Merle Hagard, Willie Nelson and Johnny Cash are great singers. Well, Patsy really wasn't a country singer although she was great, Willie and Johnny fall into a category of unique stylistic singers. Other than some of my favourite Barn Dance singers, I personally like the voice of Marty Robbins, Johnny Cash, George Jones, Ray Price, Alan Jackson, John Cowan, and Emmylou Harris. I guess my dad, Earl Heywood, would be included as well. Canadian singer, K.D. Lang is certainly one of my all time favourites. In my estimation, she has a truly gifted, golden voice beyond compare. I guess I should say, platinum.

If you Google Best Canadian Singers of All Time on the internet, you will be hard pressed to find this category at all. Why is it that Canadians are so judgemental of our own home grown talent. We have improved over the years, but I remember when Leonard Cohen received a Juno Award for Best Male Vocalist of the Year. He summed it up best by saying, 'Only in Canada eh.' It could have been Neil Young, and it would've been the same. I think you get the picture. Great successful international artists they are.....great singers they're not. We just don't recognize our own talent enough. Nashville may be music city, but let's face it folks, talent really doesn't recognize any boundaries or borders.

We all have our favourites, and that might

The Barn Dance Historical Society and Entertainment

Museum

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(or leave a message)

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include some of the current crop of great singers that are breaking new ground on radio and in concert. Fortunately, we have great singers on every Barn Dance Show that we put on. Some you already know such as, Larry Mercey, Terry Summison, Randy Satchell, Bonita Mercer, Marie Bottrel, Paul Weber, Stacey Lee, Harold McIntyre, Rick Jones, Sue Weber, Ernie King, and so many more. And let's not forget some of the up and coming younger singers like, Aaron Shane, Naomi Bristow, Brontae Hunter, Crystal Gage many others who appear as special guests on the Barn Dance stage. It's always great when Barn Dance emcee, Jim Swan announces many of these singers and singer/songwriters as stars in their own right, and then goes on to say about some of the younger talent. 'They are tomorrow's brightest stars, and you have the opportunity to see and hear them right now on the Barn Dance stage.' Check out the next Barn Dance show. Hope to see you there.

Comments? Please contact:

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2010 COMING EVENTS

Date	Event Name	Place
Sun., Oct. 24	Barn Dance Show - 2:30 p.m.	Kirkton Woodham Community Centre, Kirkton
Thurs., Nov. 18	Barn Dance Show - evening	Norgan Theatre, Palmerston

Continued from Page 1

back. So Shane got on the phone to see if he could 'round up' the band members to put his idea into practice. They were all into the idea but many had tight schedules touring with other top country acts. No matter, most were in it for the love of the music and entertained the prospect of playing together on an 'off night' somewhere nearby. Shane contacted legendary country singer, Paul Weber, who operates the Commercial Tavern in Maryhill, about WSA playing there every 2nd Tuesday night. Paul was very open to the idea and a year later the band has really developed a following at the Commercial. "Paul has been instrumental in helping the band get a leg up," says Shane. Many musicians love to hang out there just to hear the band having fun playing such great music. Country music star, Terry Sumsion has been a regular there and it's no secret that Terry is very much into western swing.

The Commercial is a great 'live' country music venue with a lot of history and character. It really is one of the last 'old school' live country music taverns around. The wood atmosphere and hardwood dance floor is perfect for a band like the WSA. The band doesn't stray too far from the way the original western swing tunes were arranged, but Shane says, "Sometimes we don't always play the solos arrangements the same, but that's part of the fun." I would have to agree that both Shane and Dan Howlett, play like twin brothers when it comes to harmony fiddle playing. All the musicians get their moment to shine on stage, and they definitely have an on-stage chemistry that is a recipe for success.

WSA has just released their debut CD appropriately titled: The

Western Swing Authority. Recorded live off the floor at Ben Kempel's studio, the CD includes classics such as Faded Love, Miles and Miles of Texas, Cherokee Maiden and Sweet Memories, just to name a few. I asked Shane how the session went and he said, "Pretty quick. We recorded in one afternoon and laid down 11 songs in about 4 hours." The CD is a fine representation of what the band plays live on stage and it still retains that 'wanna get up and dance' feel. The CD is already receiving airplay on select radio stations in over 15 countries from the U.K to Australia and down into the southern U.S. where Western Swing is king.

When asked about any touring plans, Shane made no bones about the band switching into high gear and taking WSA on the road, maybe even Texas. This is some of Canada's best country music talent doing what they enjoy the most. and you'd be best to catch the band at the Commercial Tavern in Maryhill while you still can. If you haven't seen them, you don't know what you're missing. As Stacey Lee Guse told me, "There are some folks who are afraid of the phrase 'western swing', but they come out to hear us and they just

love it." I personally think that western swing has always been cool, but then the Western Swing Authority came along playin' their hot licks and made it cool once again.

Check out them out at:
www.westernswingauthority.com

Season's Greetings from
 the Barn Dance Historical
 Society.

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WHO WROTE THE SONG?

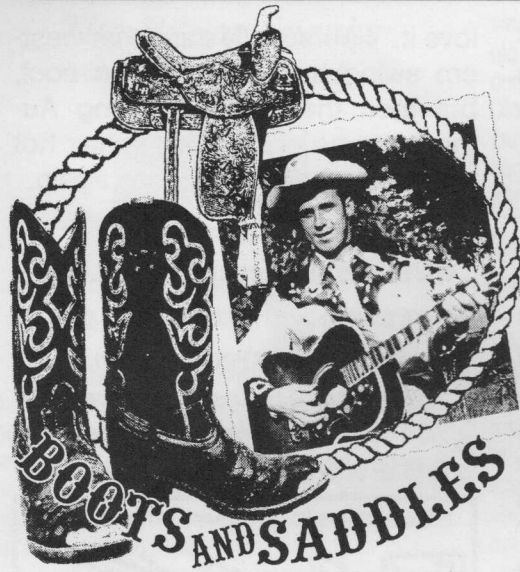
*(It Wasn't God Who Made
 Honky Tonk Angels)*

From out of nowhere, 'It Wasn't God Who Made Honky Tonk Angels' skyrocketed to the top of the hit parade. Kitty Wells was responsible for this great song success, and started a whole new trend of female country singers. This was back in 1952 when Hank Thompson had recorded a song called 'The Wild Side Of Life'. Kitty's song 'It Wasn't God Who Made Honky Tonk Angels' was really the female viewpoint and answer to Thompson's song 'The Wild Side Of Life' and she incorporated the original melody in her own song.

Record sales of Kitty Well's song were so good that it became the fourth best selling single in 1952. That same year, Kitty Wells signed on with the Grand Ole Opry and was voted Queen of Country Music. No doubt this was a major accomplishment for a female country artist, during the early days of country music radio.

Kitty Wells was born in Nashville, Tenn., August 30th, 1919. She first learned to pick guitar from her father, who was a railroad man. Her husband, Johnny Wright, selected her name from the title of an old folk song titled 'Kitty Wells'. She adapted the stage name and will forever be remembered for her signature song, 'It Wasn't God Who Made Honky Tonk Angels'.

... And now you know who wrote the song.



by Lynn Russwurm

Summer's come and gone, and along with it, some great country music. For people who say you can't find good old fashioned country music anymore, this summer was a great disclaimer for those people. After the 'Blyth Camp Out', there were many examples of this in the various bluegrass and country festivals that seem to keep springing up in different venues throughout this area (and other areas as well). I would like to elaborate on the Showcase Concerts that highlighted the bandstand in Gore Park, Elmira, every Sunday night throughout July and August. At the risk of sounding like I'm tooting my own horn, I must say these concerts exceeded all expectations.

In August of last year, the bluegrass/gospel band I'm with, Crossover Junc-

tion, played a concert at the bandstand and an estimated audience of 200 people showed up. That got me to thinking, if we could get some publicity from the local paper, why not a Sunday night concert series throughout the summer. I approached the Woolwich Observer and they enthusiastically endorsed the idea. 'We'll give you a quarter page ad every week, and a lead-in story before the season opener'. How can you lose with support like that. I went to the Woolwich Township and secured a licence for the bandstand every Sunday night from July 4th to September 5th, which gave me complete use of the facility for these periods of time.

I started looking for bands that would come in and play for the publicity, as there was no money up-front. I expected that we could take up a collection that would defray their expenses, at the very least. We came up with a schedule that looked very promising, and the first band to step up was Gerry Davidson and the Country Versatiles. I scheduled Crossover Junction for the 2 holiday weekends at the start and end of the season. Then other groups I contacted came on board. July 11th, we had John Doerr and Greenwood Hill, a local bluegrass night on several occasions. Richard Holm and the Old Country Mishaps came in from Woodstock to take over on July 18th, and a return of the afore-mentioned Gerald Davidson and the Country Versatiles on July 25th. Laverne Ferguson and the Country Ways from Mount

Forest did the honours on August 8th, and on August 15th (when my wife & I were celebrating our 25th wedding anniversary) we brought the jammers from our party in for the evening, which was highlighted by appearances by Larry Mercey and Al Heiser. This concert was cut short after the half-way mark by a severe thunderstorm. Maryanne Cunningham and the Red Rascal Band entertained on August 22nd, and on this occasion Bobby Tremblay and myself were the Red Rascal Band. Maryanne is a great entertainer and put on a great show. The highlight of the summer was on August 29th, when Paul Weber brought in a variety show. Along with Paul and his sister Sue, we had Amberley Beatty, Guylaine (Lynn) Basque, Gerry Smith and Lance Russwurm. Paul's popularity brought in an estimated 500 people. On Sunday, August 1st, I had difficulty booking a band, so I put in a call to Jimmy Phair in Sarnia, and he willingly agreed to headline a variety show. I must thank Jimmy, who came a great distance for us, as well as all the other entertainers that made these concerts a great success.

All in all, the crowds were from 200 to 500 people every Sunday night. Many people were there for all the shows, and some would come at 5:30 with their lawn chairs for the show at 7:00. Many folks came from quite a distance including Fergus, Sebringville and several other places. For the most part, the weather cooperated even though it threatened to rain on some nights. I must say the Paul Weber night was a gorgeous summer evening. One other night it drizzled a fine mist for most of the evening, but people sat under the trees with umbrellas and still enjoyed the music. The only bad weather, was the thunderstorm on August 1st, which curtailed the 2nd half of the show.

I have to say it was a great summer concert series, and I would like to see other towns do this sort of thing. The musicians are out there, all it needs is someone to organize and promote it. Again, I must thank the Woolwich Observer for getting behind this project and helping to make it a success. A few other people I would like to mention, are the back-up musicians that helped out, such as, Doug Dietrich on steel guitar, Mike Slauenwhite on fiddle, Grant Heywood on drums, Bobby Tremblay on dobro, and Carmen Bouchard on fiddle. Without the unselfish contributions of people like this, we would not have reached the unqualified success that we did. Thanks to everyone.

For anyone who is looking for good traditional country on the radio, try The Golden West Jamboree, every Monday on 100.3 F.M., the Waterloo University FM radio station. From: 12 until 2 p.m.



A capacity crowd enjoys the great music at the Bandstand in Gore Park in Elmira.

A Canadian Country Music Milestone

COUNTRY MUSIC NEWS CELEBRATES 30 YEARS

Larry and Joanne Delaney have been promoting Canadian country music for 30 years now and Country Music News is currently the only printed media of its kind, that has managed to outlast all others. It is because of their dedication and perseverance, that many struggling Canadian country artists can thank CMN, for giving them the media attention they deserve. The magazine publishing business can be tough at the best of times. I know that Larry & Joanne have had to weather some hard times as well, especially when it seemed like there was limited support, and they practically carried CMN on their own dime. But through their combined hard work and effort they rallied continued support from the Canadian country music community to reach this 30 year milestone today.

Country Music News began in April 1980, with a mission to provide Canadian country music artists, songwriters, and industry with printed media exposure to fans across Canada and internationally as well. Their monthly tabloid format for Country Music News spotlights up and coming, and top Canadian country music artists, featuring in depth stories, news, CD reviews, Nashville & Cancountry radio play list charts, as well as news and information on Canadian country music artists from loyal volunteer reporters spanning coast to coast. Larry and Joanne live in Ottawa, which makes it a part of Canadian country music heritage, considering it is really the Ottawa Valley area. Actually, CMN is put together and published right out of their Ottawa home. It is a testament to both Larry and Joanne as they continue to work together making Country Music News, *'the voice of country music in Canada'*.

Larry Delaney is editor and publisher of CMN, but he is also an award winning promoter, and was inducted into the CCMA Hall of Honour in 1996 as well as being an 11 time recipient of the CCMA's Country Music Person of the Year Award. In 1993, both Larry and Joanne were appropriately inducted into the Ottawa Valley Country Music Hall of Fame. Larry Mercey, Paul Weber, Marie Bottrell, Terry Sumsion, Lynn Russwurm and many more Barn Dance recording artists and guest performers, including the Barn Dance Historical Society itself, owe a debt of gratitude to Country Music News for the media coverage it has delivered to country music fans in Canada and abroad for the past 30 years. On this 30th anniversary year of Country Music News, we congratulate Larry and Joanne Delaney for their tireless efforts in providing us, and so many others with not only the best, but the only Canadian country music news magazine around. We appreciate it more than you will ever know. Please keep telling it like it is *'Cancountry style'*. It's what we want to hear and read.

Thanks Larry & Joanne. We salute you.

FEATURE C. D. REVIEW

NAOMI BRISTOW ~ 'LOOKIN' BACK'

This is Naomi's 4th CD and although she'll be 13 in October, she has much more to look forward to even though the CD is called 'Lookin' Back'. Hailing from a farm outside of Beeton, Ont.,



Naomi was brought up on country music and is a self taught yodeller. Naomi has played many of the major country music festivals in Canada this year and had just enough time to pick up a major award for yodelling, in Iowa in late August. This CD was recorded in Nashville and was released just at the start of the summer season.

Naomi had the pleasure of singing with Nashville star, Jim Ed Brown on the country classic, 'Looking Back To See' as well as the Ernie King favourite, 'Daddy's Girl'. The two duet tunes work well on the 12 song CD. Yodelling is what Naomi shines at, and songs like 'Yodelling at the Grand Ole Opry' and 'Cowboy's Dream Girl' are just enough to show off her gifted talent. She even yodels her way through 'Big Rock Candy Mountain'. But Naomi really has a handle on songs such as 'Thank God For Kids' and 'One Day At A Time'. Even though she is still a very young girl, she really shows how much her voice is maturing on these particular cuts.

I've had the opportunity to back up Naomi with the Barn Dance Band on numerous occasions this summer, and I can really see her stage personality coming into its own. She works hard at her craft and it pays off on stage with her winning smile as she works the crowd and belts out each song in succession with her sweet, commanding voice. Her parents were originally on the rodeo circuit and have done very well managing Naomi's career, which has taken her from Nashville to Edmonton and all points in between. As long as she is true to herself I am sure that Naomi could become quite a contender in years to come. It's been an honour to have her on our Barn Dance stage and she never fails to deliver. She's learning the ropes pretty quick as she has been pulling pranks on us band members lately too. Still a kid, and you got to love that. Check out this newest CD and I'm sure you will agree that Naomi has what it takes.

(Have a C.D. you want reviewed, please contact the Editor.)

BARN DANCE BOOKINGS

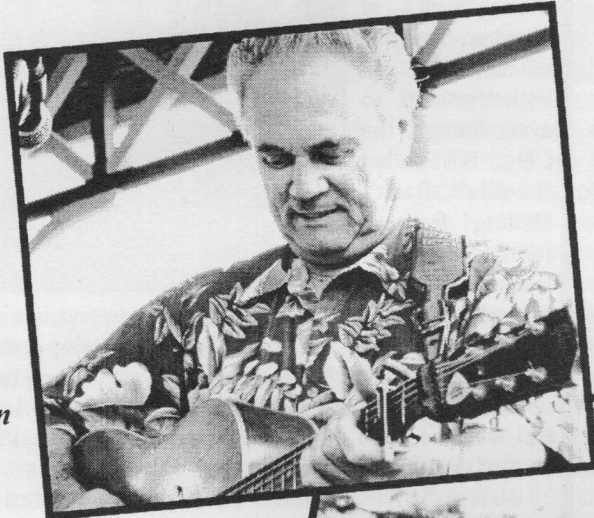
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Country Music Memories

Pictures of entertainers at Gore Park, Elmira this past summer.

*Gerald
Davidson*



Larry Mercey

*Bobby
Trembley*



Al Heiser



Carl Holst and Maryanne Cunningham

COUNTRY CALENDAR



by Doreen Brown

(Toronto and surrounding area)

* **Maple Leaf Jamboree** - by Chef Adams, Moose Lodge, Lindsay, Oct. 31, Nov. 28 and in Dec. at 1:00 p.m.

* **Appearances by Naomi Bristow** - Oct. 10 - Rockton World's Fair; Oct. 24 - Barn Dance Show, Kirkton; Dec. 5 - Gravenhurst Opera House; Dec. 12 - Wingham Heritage Theatre, Wingham.

* **Appearances by Doreen Brown** - Oct. 3 - Warminster Legion; Oct. 10 - Don Celsie Jam, Orillia Legion; Oct. 24 - Erin Legion Jam, presented by the Dolsons.

* **Dec. 31** - appearance at Duntroon Hall, same band as last year, for New Year's Dance. Tickets available Nov. 1, contact Marie Kenwell at 705-445-48.

* **Rosemont Hall Jamboree** - on the third Tuesday of the month.

* **Upcoming performances by Janet McGarry** - recording artist, contact 902-569-3864. E-mail jmccgarry@islandtelecom.com or www.janetmccgarry.com

* **For upcoming shows Hometown Bluegrass** - www.hometownbluegrass.ca Al Benner at 905-936-2008 or weekdays 647-430-5761

* **A Special Tribute** - on Oct. 3 for Johnny Burke celebrating 50 years in country music, 3 to 8 pm, Gen. W. Sikorski Hall, 1551 Stevenson Rd., Oshawa.

* **October 23** - Paxton Orchestra and Standards will be performing at the Bond Head Hall. 7 to 11 pm, includes country music. This group originally opened the hall in the 40's and played for many years on Saturday nights. Boyd Dolson played for 23 years. The public is welcome to this get-together.

* **Thornton Jamboree** - is the third Thursday of the month.

* **Shelburne Community Centre** - has a jamboree and roast beef dinner the second Sunday of the month.

* **Feature Shows** - at the Norfolk Country Fair in Simcoe - Oct. 8 - Lonestar; Oct. 9 - Jodee Messina.

* **Oct. 21** - Pam Tillis and Lorrie Morgan are featured in a double header show at the Thunder Bay Community Centre.

* **Appearances by Ginny McIlloyle** - Oct. 16 - Alderville Women's Benefit, 11 - 6 pm with Sweetgrass, other performers TBA; Oct. 22 - Regency Manor, Port Hope; Nov. 13 - 2 to 6

pm, Trenton Legion, open to public. www.ginny.ca e-mail ginny@ginny.ca; Oct. 31 - 1 pm Warminster Legion Jamboree, fiddle and squares featuring Wilma and Boyd Dolson and Ralph and Sandy Price; Nov. 1 - Kozlov Shopping Centre Food Court, Bayfield Ave., Barrie 11:30 to 1:30 pm

* **Holland Landing Jamboree** - 7 pm on the third Thursday of the month. Featuring Wilma and Boyd Dolson on backup.

* **Upcoming Events at Purple Hill** - purplehillcountryhall@gmail.com www.purplehillcountryhall.com Oct. 17 - Okgtoberfest with the king of polka Walter Ostanek; Nov. 14 - The Terry Sumsion Trio, concert will be followed by a social time with Terry, showtime 2 pm; Dec. 11 - Christmas in the Country with Canada's queen of country music, Carroll Baker, showtime 8 pm; Dec. 31 - New Year's Eve with Shelly Rastin at 9 pm, bring your favourite dish for potluck.

* **Warminster** - the fifth Sunday of the month. Music by the Dolsons.

* **Appearances by Gloria Downer Pearson** - pjgloria@hotmail.com Oct. 2 - Bobcaygeon Fair, 1 to 4 pm, just plain country; Oct. 3 - Royal Canadian Legion Jamboree, Millbrook, 1 to 4 pm. www.musicianscorner.ca
NOTE: Extending best wishes to all in country music for a wonderful, happy and healthy Christmas and the New Year 2011. Also a big thank you to all supporters of the Barn Dance, whether in the entertainment field or coming out to our show.

THE JIMMY PHAIR STORY

by Lynn Russwurm



Jimmy Phair has paid his dues in the country music industry many times over. He's been a guest on the Tommy Hunter Show, The Ernest Tub Midnight Jamboree on WSM in Nashville, and was named a regular performer on the WWVA Jamboree in Wheeling West Virginia. His crowning event came in 1979 when he was given his own CBC television show out of Windsor, Ontario, which lasted through 1984. He was also nominated as the best country TV show in Canada for five of those six years.

His first recording took place in 1969 in Cincinnati, Ohio, under the production of the great Jimmie Skinner. The song was 'Your Life Is One Bad Habit', and it reached number 1 in Canada and number 9 in the U.S. In 1971 he recorded for Jewel Records in the U.S., then several albums for the Weldon label. In 1981 he signed with Boot Records in Canada, with the resulting hit album 'Steal Of The Night', which was produced by Dallas Harms. Next came several singles on the Reba label, and now awaiting a new c.d. album from Rosedale Music.

Jimmy is married and the father of three daughters, and was born and raised, and lived most of his life in the Sarnia area. He was featured artist at the Barn Dance Blyth Camp Out Jamboree a few years ago and can be seen on the souvenir Barn Dance DVD.

Jimmy puts his heart and soul into a song and also picks a mean guitar. I've been privileged to work with Jimmy on several occasions and find him to be a gentleman in all ways, both off and on the stage. I do believe the Jimmy Phair Story is far from over.

BARN DANCE
SOUVENIRS

Souvenir Mugs -	\$ 5.00 ea.
CD - Vol. 1	\$15.00 ea.
CD - Vol. 2	\$15.00 ea.
CD - Vol. 3	\$15.00 ea.
CD - Vol. 1, 2 & 3	\$40.00 set
Cassette - Vol. 1	\$ 6.00 ea.
Cassette - Vol. 2	\$ 6.00 ea.
Cassette - Vol. 3	\$ 6.00 ea.
Souvenir 1997 Calendar	\$ 5.00 ea.
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Sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL	\$20.00 ea.
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BARN DANCE CORNER

by Peter Saros

I'm pretty sure I got into country music because I liked cowboys.

As a boy I was fascinated by the sheriffs, outlaws, and posses galloping through Saturday morning television. The dusty gunslingers depicted on the dog-eared covers of my dad's Louis L'Amour and Donald Hamilton paperback novels were just as seductive. I begged my mother to enroll me in the *Time Life Books* "Old West" series pitched by a breathy Jack Palance long before I was able to read them intelligently. I just had to run my own fingers over the hard cover books to know firsthand the feel of hand-tooled saddle leather. It was all so distantly mysterious; moreover, it all mattered to me as a boy.

It wasn't a stretch then that I would be drawn to the country music album covers in my mom's record rack of 10-gallon capped, rhinestone suit clad singers. In my mind, cowboys were the

kings of cool. Clayton Moore playing the Lone Ranger topped the list. It followed to an eight year-old that if I liked cowboys, and country musicians were cowboys as suggested by the photos on the Hank Williams and Marty Robbins albums, I in turn must necessarily like country and western music.

It really was that simple. My music alliance and identity was established by my wanting to feel like I was part of the Old West. I remember playing Hank Williams on my little Fisher-Price portable record player and just being confused the sound. The music was raw. I played it for my friends publicly as a joke. On my own, I began to inexplicably fall in love with a music a middle class suburban boy in Minnesota should have no claim to.

But it got a hold of me. As Willie Nelson would later famously sing, "My heroes have always been cowboys."

Some thirty odd years later, the timeless appeal of the cowboy still has currency. My four year old son has just discovered the magic of the *Toy Story* movies. That the central character is good guy Sheriff Woody Pride is no

coincidence. There is something about the enduring mythology of the cowboy that calls out to boys.

Unfortunately, a serialized black-and-white television show titled *Woody's Roundup*, even a fictional one, is as foreign to a child today as Hank Williams' moaning out of my turntable was to me. The music industry and the cowboy image are no longer harmonized in sound or in vision. The western tag has long since been dropped from country music. (One gets the sense that the country part might be the next to go.) The cowboy now rides alone.

I hope to one day bring my son and his younger brother to the Barn Dance Historical Society and Entertainment Museum to let them know that wasn't always the case. On its walls, and in those display cases, they will see cowboy hats and big shiny suits. They will read about Golden Prairie Cowboys and Western Roundups. They will learn about "Canada's No. 1 Singing Cowboy" Earl Heywood.

I will let them wrangle with their own questions and sort out their own dusty dreams.

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