

The Barn Dance Opera Journal

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Winter Edition

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A Special Tribute Issue to -

by Lynn Russwurm

The Main Street Jamboree threatened to eclipse our own CKNX Barn Dance at one point but it did not have the solid base that the Barn Dance had. The Barn Dance developed over a number of years which gave it a solid foundation which was lacking in the Main Street Jamboree. The Jamboree was put on by CHML in Hamilton and started, you might say at the top with the money behind it to launch it to make it successful from the start. But in the long run it didn't have the heart and devotion to sustain it.

They lured Jack Kinston and Lloyd Bank from the Barn Dance with triple the money so why wouldn't they take advantage of the offer. I remember one Saturday night trying to tune in The Barn Dance and I heard Jack Kinston singing so I thought I had 920



Jack Kinston

MAIN STREET JAMBOREE

CKNX, but it turned out I had CHML which was at 900 on the dial. It was their Feeler show from the studio at the radio station to test the waters for the show. Apparently the response was great enough to put the show on the road. This was patterned after the barn dance with shows at various locations throughout their listening area. The original cast starred Jack Kingston, with emcee a young Gordie Tapp as Gaylord and The Hillbilly Jewels as the house band. Ray Price was the featured guest at one of their early shows. Then Jack was put in charge of organizing The Mainstreeters as a second band. Jack brought Lloyd Bank in from Wingham, and Lloyd was instrumental in bringing in young Wally Traugott on fiddle. Even today people who know till tell you Wally was the greatest fiddler to come out of Canada. Roly D'Eon was recruited on stand-up bass. As time went on, Donny Steel was added on lead guitar; later Maurice Bolyer. Eventually Eddie Preston was added on drums to complete this great band.

Regulars included Eric & Johnny, The Lincoln County Peach Pickers, Slim Gordon, Jean & Les Dowell, The Colorado Kids & Tiny Tommy Hunter. Early guests included Orval Prophet, Faron Young, The Wilburn Brothers, Carl Smith, Bill Long and The Ranch Girls. By

late 1954, my wife and I, as Laura and Lynn, The Pine River Sweethearts started hitting the guest list. By this time things had changed. Bill Long was in charge, The Hillbilly Jewels were gone, Eric & Johnny had opted for gospel music and regulars included Glenn Mitchell, The Young Twins, Barrelhouse Bill & Peggy Jo Stewart. Peggy Jo came from Buffalo and in her early teens captivated the audience with her yodelling. She recorded one 78 with the Mainstreeters as her backup, the song was I Want To Be A Cowboy's Sweetheart, pre-dating Suzy Boggus and Leanne Rimes by almost 50 years and her version still stands up today. With Eddie Preston as her manager, this recording took her to the Lawrence Welk Show and The Arthur Godfrey Show in Hollywood.

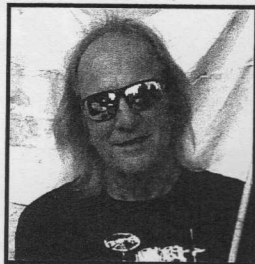
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Bill Long & The Ranch Girls

The Editor Speaks

by Grant Heywood



My only comment on winter so far this year is ... "It's too damn cold" and "What happened with global warming?" Well I guess we can't have everything. Burlington, Ontario is about as far south as I'll get this winter. Maybe next winter I'll get a chance to enjoy some Florida sunshine ... maybe.

In 2013 we lost way too many country music songwriters, performers and stars. Just a few on the list include: 'Cowboy' Jack Clement, a songwriter for many artists incl. Elvis, Charley Pride, Dolly, and Jerry Lee Lewis. Also, yodeling sensation Slim Whitman, Claude King (Wolverton Mt.), one of the original 'Outlaws' w/Willie, Waylon, & Jesse, and the young Mindy McCree (Guys Do It).

We also lost two Canadian icons, Rita MacNeil and Stompin' Tom Connors. Both of these artists are known worldwide and were part of our Canadian heritage in defining Canadians through their music. Against many obstacles they blazed a trail for many younger artists to follow. Let's not forget them.

Two of Nashville's greatest treasures also left us in 2013. Both

George Jones and Ray Price personified the sound of true country music and their legacy of hits will continue to be a testament to what real country music should be. I don't think anyone could ever argue that point. With the loss of George and Ray, I would have to say that country music, as we know it, has turned a page and I can only hope that there are more George's and Ray's out there to pick up the torch and carry on the tradition.

Rock and roll also had many who passed on as well, including, Alvin Lee, J.J. Cale, Lou Reed, Richie Havens and Ray Manzarek, just to name a few.

As we move forward into 2014, let's remember those who provided us with our musical memories and take in the joy of listening to songwriters and musicians who are blazing a new trail on old country music principles. Some may be singers and bands who are paying tribute to some of our favourite stars, or it may be a singer/songwriter who is performing original songs based on an old recipe. I always tell younger artists that you can't know where you are going if you don't know where you've been. It's harder to move ahead if you haven't been exposed to at least some musical history.

Musical history of the country music variety, is what the Barn Dance and the Barn Dance Museum is all about. I hope you will continue to support the Barn

The Barn Dance Historical Society and Entertainment Museum

P.O. Box 68

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Phone (519) 530-8000

(or leave a message)

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and Lynn Russwurm.

Dance Historical Society in 2014 by attending a Barn Dance Show or the Barn Dance Museum located in Wingham. It will reconnect you with your love for real country music and you'll be glad you did. Hope to see you at the next Barn Dance show. Please check out latest schedule.

Comments? Please contact:

Grant Heywood

5584 Deborah Glaister Line,

R. R. #2,

Wellesley, Ontario N0B 2T0

Phone: (519) 656-2552

E-mail: heywoods@xplornet.ca

or send a message on facebook.

2014 COMING EVENTS

Date	Event Name	Place
Sun., April 27	Barn Dance Show	Melville Presbyterian Church, Brussels
Sun., May 4	Barn Dance Show - 2:00 p.m.	Purple Hill Country Hall, Thorndale
May 22 - 25	17th Annual Campout Jamboree	Blyth Arena and Campgrounds, Blyth
Sun., June 22	Barn Dance Show - 3:00 p.m.	Commercial Tavern, Maryhill
Sun., August 3	Barn Dance Show	Wingham Homecoming, Wingham Community Complex
Sun., October 19	Barn Dance Show - 2:30 p.m.	St. Anne's Church Hall, St. Thomas



by Lynn Russwurm

I'm not a great musician or singer, just good enough to get by on. However I consider myself to be a creative person. Everything I've been involved in, I've always tried to add something new to it or at least advance what there was. Songwriting was the perfect outlet for my creative urge. One of the greatest legacies I've given to my children was to encourage them to be creative in their own ways and I think I've succeeded. In my family I have two full-time artists and two that have written books, so I guess the creative bug has been imparted in them.

My oldest son, Lance makes his living as an artist, among his accomplishments he has murals in various loca-



Lance Russwurm

tions, including private homes, and one of his latest is the issuing of five of his paintings on jig-saw puzzles, issued by one of the largest companies out of Vancouver.

Now to Lance there was always a conflict between his art and his music, at one time the music would take over, but in the long run it was art. However, the music is still a factor as Lance is now preparing to go into a studio to record a CD which will include some of his own songs. In art, as in music, Lance is completely self-taught.

My daughter Liana, on the other hand went through the Ontario College of Art to learn the proper ways to make the best use of her natural flair for art. Her schooling included a year's study in Italy. As a studio/residence she bought an old church in a small village somewhere between London and Sarnia, in Alvinston. She's making a major name for herself in the area by having showings at various art galleries where her work has been voted as best in the show. After years of working in stained glass she is finally able to concentrate on her beloved art. The painting of Earl and Martha in the museum is the work of Liana.

My oldest daughter Lynda, dabbled in oil painting too, but made most of her living in sign-painting, in fact was responsible for the sign at our Barn Dance Museum in Wingham. Unfortunately we lost Lynda to cancer a few years ago.

My daughter Laurie, is a graduate of Sheridan College in media arts and worked for a number of years in the television industry, in Toronto. She wrote scripts for several major TV shows including two for the popular "Night Heat". Then she took a hiatus from the industry to get married and raise a son. Today with the son in university, she is busy writing novels and at present is at her third one.

My son Lani has been in Vancouver for a number of years where he earned an MA degree at Simon Fraser U. He has

a great interest in history and has just had a book published about Vancouver called "Vancouver Was Awesome". I've just finished reading the well-written book of vignettes about Vancouver's past and found it very interesting, great job Lani.

My son Larry, who used to do the comic strip in our journal about Cousin Opie is trying to put together a book of his Science-Fiction short stories. So I guess creativity is rampant in my family and if I seem to be bragging, I guess I am.

Getting back to music, after our successful summer concert series, we've tried smaller concerts, indoors at the Woolwich Community Centre featuring The Two Plus Who with special guests. Next one will be on Feb. 9, a Sunday afternoon from 2 to 4 p.m. As you know the Two Plus Who is Bob Tremblay on dobro and myself on stand-up bass, and guests for that show will include Al Widmeyer and Linda Elder.

It was great to see Carl Kees make a return to the stage after six years at Paul Weber's Commercial Tavern in Maryhill. Carl who lives in Florida for six months and near North Bay for six months was home visiting and accepted the opportunity to work with Paul and the response was overwhelming. I'm sure we'll see Carl back in action again somewhere down the line.



Carl Kees

IN MEMORIAM



KEN PALMER, of London, Ont. passed away in October 2013 as the result of pneumonia after a heart transplant at University Hospital. Ken was a fantastic mandolin player/vocalist with the London based bluegrass group *The Dixie Flyers*. Born in Montreal he grew up in Port Stanley and later moved to London. He started *The Dixie Flyers* with guitarist friend, Bert Kaumbach. Ken's career spanned 40 years and he was always into the local music scene. He was inducted with *The Dixie Flyers*, into the London Music Hall of Fame just this past year. He will be missed & remembered by family, friends, and the Barn Dance Historical Society.

LOYD LOUIS BANK, of Kitchener, Ont. passed away in November 2013 at his home. Lloyd was 77 and was predeceased by his wife Grace. Lloyd was steel guitarist/dobro player with the CKNX Barn Dance in the late 40's & early 50's. He then became an integral part of the Main Street Jamboree radio show with Jack Kingston on CHML Hamilton, Ont. Later in his career he became a member of Lynn Russwurm's Jamboree Reunion Band. Lynn was responsible for getting Lloyd to record a cassette at Ernie King Studios titled *A Touch of Dobro*. Lloyd had a longstanding career as a fine 'old school' steel guitarist/dobro player and was presented with the Barn Dance Pioneer Award in 2000. He will be missed & remembered by family, friends, and the Barn Dance Historical Society.

FEATURE C. D. REVIEW

"Main Street Jamboree"

(various artists)

Canadian Radio

There are 28 songs on this CD celebrating the old Main Street Jamboree radio show that originated from CHML Radio in Hamilton. The list of artists on the CD include Jack Kingston, Bill Long, Chef Adams, Madelaine Bonin, Peggy Jo Stewart, and many others.

There is some fine instrumental work on the CD as well,



including Wally Traugott doing the Wagoneer Breakdown, Lucky Ambo on a fiery Orange Blossom Special and the banjo king himself, Mr. Maurice Bolyer, pickin' some great banjo classics. Peggy Stewart does Patsy Montana proud on I Want To Be A Cowboy's Sweetheart. Slim Gordon and Chef Adams are featured as well performing two or three songs each including a couple of their own tunes.

A surprise song of the CD caught my attention with Jack Kingston's smooth vocals on a song written by Lynn Russwurm, Ernie King, and Reg Bitton, called Something In The Past. And if you ever wondered what Ward Allen's Maple Sugar would sound like with lyrics then Maple Sugar Sweetheart would be it. Ward Allen obviously got together with lyricist Hank LaRiviere to come up with this unique version of Maple Sugar sung by Jack Kingston. Maybe we can try this one out at a Barn Dance sometime.

The songs included here have an old time country charm which helped to make the Main Street Jamboree so popular back in the 50's. I wouldn't hesitate to say that a lot of the songs on the CD were most likely performed live on the Main Street Jamboree at that time as well.

For those who remember the Main Street Jamboree or anyone that loves old time country music that takes you on a trip down memory lane, than this CD is a must for your collection. A big thanks to Lynn Russwurm for keeping our Canadian musical heritage alive. The CD is for sale at Barn Dance Historical Society shows and events or by contacting Lynn Russwurm direct.

Country Music Memories

*Memories from
The Main Street Jamboree ~
Early 1950s*



Les and Jean Dowell and Maurice Bolyer



Laura and Lynn Russwurm



Gordie Tapp "Gaylord"



Wally Traugott



Eric and Johnny and The Lincoln County Peach Pickers.



The Hillbilly Jewels - Joe Brown, Vivian Brown, Randy Stewart and Unknown.

COUNTRY CALENDAR



by Doreen Brown

(Toronto and surrounding area)

* **Upcoming Shows for Cliffy Short** - please call 905-812-0475.

www.ambrec.com/cliffy

* **Purple Hill Country Opry presents:** Feb. 2 - 2 pm, Grand Ole Time Country Show, first Sunday each month. This is the first kickoff show for 2014. Three times Canadian Step Dancing Champion, Tiffany Fewster, Canadian Recording Artist from PEI, Tiffany Fewster; Randy Poirier, John P. Allen, Wayne Mack, Caroline Danowski Burchill, Murray Williams and special guest rising Star Chelsea Crites.

Feb. 14 - 7:30 pm - Valentine's Day Special with Marie Botrell and her band. Marie's guest will be 16 year old Brooklyn Roebuck. March 2 - 2 pm - Acoustic Talent Extravaganza. Class acts including Wendell Ferguson, The Schotts, Pam Brooks, Eric Shain, Brent Jones, Jay Allen, Amberley Beatty and Fred Lewis, John P. Allen, Dwayne Friesin, Guy Melanson, Brian Storey, Al Widmeyer and Shane Cook. For info call Anna 519-461-0538.

www.purplehillcountryhall.com

* **Ron & Linda's Old Time Country Music** - different bands weekly. Oddfellows Hall, 42 Bagot St., Brooklyn. Every Friday night, 6:30 to 10:30, light lunch.

* **February 15** - Hitchin Post, Classic Country Dance, Baltimore Community Centre, 8 to 11 am, light lunch. Tickets call 905-349-2765.

* **Upcoming Jamborees** - Bolton Community Centre, second Wednesday of the month; Thoron Fiddle Club, second Friday; Rosemont Community Centre, third Tuesday; Holland Landing Community Centre, third Thursday; Dottie Kirkpatrick & Band, fourth Sunday; Bond Head Fiddle Club, fourth Tuesday.

* **For upcoming appearances of Hard Drivin' Bluegrass**, Stay Tuned, contact Richard Wigfield, at 519-967-1743 or richardwigfield@sympatico.ca

* **Appearances by Doreen Brown:** Jan. 12, Shelburne Community Centre; Jan. 10, Thornton Fiddle Club; Jan. 21, Rosemont Community Centre; Jan. 28, Bond Head Fiddle Club; Feb. 23, ANAF, Barrie, Dottie Kirkpatrick Jamboree; Mar. 11, Bolton Community Centre; May 22 weekend, Blyth Campout.

* **For appearances by Amberley Beatty** - tribute artist of Patsy, Gretchen and Loretta,

call 519-669-3982 or amberley@ampressions.ca

* **Not too soon for planning summer jamborees / festivals / shows:** the 17th Annual Barn Dance Jamboree / Campout, Blyth campgrounds/arena, May 22, 23, 24 & 25, 2014; Thurs. 7 pm, Campers' Jam Session, upstairs in the arena; Friday night 7 pm, Bluegrass Show & Open Stage; Sat. 9 am to 3 pm, Musical Flea Market & Silent Auction; 8 pm Barn Dance Show, after show, dancing until midnight; Sun. 10 am to noon, Sunday morning gospel show. Everyone welcome. Host Mary Elliott Huyzen.

* **Pleased to announce** that Michael T. Wall has a new CD Release, namely "From Newfoundland to Australia", containing two discs that have been receiving a lot of international airplay. This CD contains many pictures as well. This recording is amongst my treasures. "Way to go, Michael".

* **For upcoming appearances of "The Two Plus Who"**, contact Lynn Russwurn at 519-669-2386 or Bob Tremblay at 519-569-8128.

* **April 5:** Annual Spring Dance, Westway United Church, 8 Templar Dr., Etobicoke, one block north of the Westway, 8 pm, music Bob Arbuckle's Band

* **June 19 to 22:** Country Roads Music Festival, Napanee Fairgrounds, 170 York St., Napanee.

* **June 21:** Hitchin Post Jamboree, Grafton. Contact Al Traynor 905-723-3210.

* **July 19 - 21:** Pickin' By the Pond, 519-881-1716. pickinbythepond@gmail.com

* **July 19 - 21:** The Queen's Bush Bluegrass, Wolsley. Contact Dan Campbell 519-371-5037. dcampbell@queensbuch.ca

* **June 20 - 22:** Tottenham Bluegrass Festival. Contact Peter Deaveau. Line up next issue.

* **Aug. 1 - 3:** Classic Country Music Reunion, Trenton. Line up to come.

* **Aug. 8, 9 & 10:** Holstein Bluegrass Celebration. Thurs. night in the pavilion, Ken "Digger" Harrison and Campfire Country, entertaining you with some great traditional country music and dancing, 7 to 10 pm. Line up for the weekend includes The Little Roy and Lizzy Show; Hard Ryde; The Commercial Tavern Bluegrass Band; Sweetwater Gospel Band; Canucky Bluegrass Boys; The Monroe Sisters; Barrel Boys; Blue River. More next issue.

* **Jan. 12:** Moose Lodge, Lindsay. Jam session and dance, 1 pm. Call Doug Montgomery at 705-799-6238.

* **Jan. 18:** Fenlon Falls at Seniors Centre, Kawartha, Olde Tyme Music Assoc. monthly jam session and dance starts 7:30 pm. Call Norma Evans 705-738-3285 or George Samson 705-887-1323.

* **Jan. 26:** Dundalk at RCL, monthly jam session and dance, starts 1 pm. Roast beef

supper 4:30 pm.

* **Jan. 25:** Downeyville at the hall, acoustic jam session and dance, 7 pm. Info Michael LaMoire 705-799-0685.

* **Jan. 26:** Barrie ANAF monthly dance and open mic, 1 pm. Call Dottie Kirkpatrick 705-326-8703.

* **Every Thursday:** Parkview Senior's Centre, 189 Blake St., Barrie, Old time seniors dance 1:30 pm. Dance to live band. 705-737-0755.

* **July 17 - 20:** Lindsay Country Jamboree, 671 Erskiline Ave., Lindsay Agricultural Society Grounds and Facility Unit 201. Info 1-800954-9998. Lineup next issue.

* **Cobourg Dances:** and open mic. 2nd and 4th Sundays until April.

* **Aug. 14 - 17:** Havelock Country Jamboree, announcing 25th Anniversary. 1-800-539-3353. info@havelockjamboree.com Dirks Bentley joins Alan Jackson; Mavericks perform Fri. night, joined by LoCash Cowboys; Lisa Brokop on Thurs.; Dierks on Sat.; Alan Jackson Fri.; Suzy Bogguss Sun.; Blackjack Bill Sat.; The Gibson Bros. Sun; Elizabeth Cook Sat. & Sun.; Lisa Brokop Thurs. More to come, check next journal.

* **Deepest sympathies** to Debbie Powell of Powell Printing, who does a wonderful job for our Journal, on the recent loss of her father and also her partner of 16 years.

To all our readers, our gratitude and thanks for all your support of the Barn Dance and Barn Dance Historical Society.

Earl Heywood would be proud.

Also seems like we just had Christmas, but wishing you a lovely Spring and super 2014 with tone of country / bluegrass music.

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BARN DANCE CORNER

by Peter Saros

Whether it was acting as Hank Williams' baby-sitter through the bleakest days of Hank's professional and personal demise in 1952, or his first awkward and ineffectual stabs at emulating Hank's vocals, Ray Price had the drifting cowboy's fingerprints all over his foray into commercial country music.

Many people were less than impressed by the floundering Hank acolyte. Hank Thompson said, "He was not very good back then. He was trying to sing like Hank Williams, and he was a far cry from that. At times it was kind of embarrassing. I never did really think Ray would get anywhere because he just didn't have it. With Hank Snow and Lefty Frizzell, it was there, but with Ray it wasn't. He was not born with natural talent."

Although he may have been born with a hole in his talent bucket, Ray Price died this past December as the greatest gut-bucket stylist country music has

known.

What was not God-given, was hard earned for Ray Noble Price of Perryville, Cherokee County, Texas. His 1996 induction into the Country Music Hall of Fame was based on the strength of two distinct and seminal sounds. The first was the hard, pleading vocals in front of a big, heavy 4/4 bass and shuffle rhythm with drums and a single-string fiddle, the Ray Price sound. Listen to "Crazy Arms" and "My Shoes Keep Walking Back to You" to hear what I am writing about.

Many considered that propulsive sound honky-tonk music's salvation against the onslaught of rock and roll music in the 1950's. It also gave notice to the Nashville produced smooth country-politan music coming out of Chet Atkins' RCA and Owen Bradley's Decca studios.

Price had finally stepped out of Hank Williams' shadow. His country credentials were now rock solid. Who then, other than Price himself, could have then imagined his creative second act would be as a stylized pop crooner,

drenched in the Nashville Sound?

Former Price drummer Johnny Bush said, "I think basically he wanted to be a pop singer. He wanted to be Tony Bennett. It cost him money to transfer over [from honky-tonk to pop]. It cost him his career, just about."

The risk actually made his career. His music now reached a much wider audience and appealed to the people who grew up on the rock and roll Price was leading the hard country resistance against ten years prior. Price had successfully crossed over. Again, listen to the rich vocals and lush orchestration of "Danny Boy" and "For the Good Times" to hear what is being described.

Hank Thompson who was once so openly critical of Price later said, "I think Ray Price makes a good model for somebody to say, 'If you say that it can't be done, look at Ray Price and by God, it can be done!' Here's a guy that did not have the natural talent but had the determination and stayed with it until finally he became what he thought he was all along."

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