



# The Barn Dance Opera Journal



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**Vol. 88 2016**

**Spring Edition**

**1**

## Barn Dance Band Profile Series

### Getting to know: **Doug Dietrich, Steel Guitar, Dobro & More**

by Grant Heywood

Being a great steel guitarist and a nice guy seem to go together. Doug Dietrich is no exception. As Barn Dance musical director, Doug is constantly striving to keep each show unique, with some of the best talent around. Doug was brought up in a musical environment at home and this is a brief portrayal of his life in music, and more.

Doug was born in 1951, in Waterloo, the night his dad was playing fiddle on a job. His dad just got to the hospital in time to witness the event. As a youngster, Doug fondly remembers relatives & friends jamming around the Dietrich house. A lot of his father's musical friends, Earl Fries, Karl Kees, Gord Affeldt, were a big influence on Doug. Before learning on his own, he took lessons for almost a year on Hawaiian guitar. (no pedals) Doug also plays, guitar, bass, & dobro, and it was his dad's home built steel, via Gord Affeldt, that really got him started. Once Doug became a steel guitarist, his radio influences became apparent, with such greats as Buck Owens steel player Ralph Mooney, then Tom Brumley, Lloyd Green and Buddy Emmons.

Early on Doug played with the Rhythm Ramblers, The Galaxies and then joined Sunrise in 1985, and they're still going strong. He has performed with Randy Satchell, Paul Weber, Bill Murray, and Terry Sumsion, to Larry Mercey, Carol Baker, Johnny Burke, Marie Bottrell, Harold McIntyre, and countless others. Along with Grant Heywood, Doug also toured with Rick Jones in the U.S. & Canada, opening for the Bellamy Bros. in Minnesota. It was also a privilege when Doug became a regular member of the theatrical tribute show, 'Hank Williams

Live 1952', touring across Canada several times. The show features Joe Matheson, (of Jersey Boys fame). Joe plays the role of Hank Williams at a 'would be' last performance of Hank. Doug says, "It's definitely a high end gig." But he really loves playing Barn Dance Shows, simply because of the great people he gets to work with. Playing with George Hamilton IV, Stompin' Tom, and Gordie Tapp are right up there as well.

Doug & wife Tracey have been married 41 yrs., blessed with 3 children & 5 grandchildren. Tracey is Doug's biggest inspiration/supporter, and both Doug & Tracey love spending time with family and grandchildren. Doug had a high profile job in the investment/bond division of Mutual Life/Sun Life for most of his career and now works for Equitable Life 3 days a week. Doug & Tracey's love for hockey is no secret since their son is active in coaching, playing, and owning a hockey school. It's never a dull moment when it's ice time. Besides hockey, Doug & Tracey have met many country stars in their travels, such as, Vince Gill, Reba McIntyre, Marty Stuart, & Connie Smith.

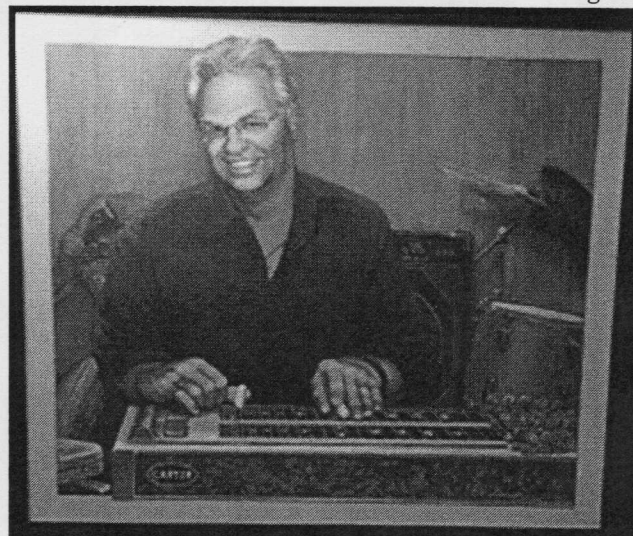
Doug played Sho Bud steel guitars for quite a while before switching, (thru Al Brisco), to Carter steel guitars made in Texas (of which Doug has two). Carter steels are lighter in weight, which suited Doug, and with Al Brisco, he knew he'd have ongoing service and support. Doug was honoured when he was asked to work at the Carter Steel

Guitar booth at the International Steel Guitar Convention in St. Louis for a few years. I can only imagine, but I'm sure for Doug, it was the job of a lifetime, getting to meet several of his steel guitar heroes through this connection. That had to be the ultimate dream gig.

Over the years, Doug has played on various recordings including, Randy Satchell, Paul Weber, Jimmy Phair, The Heywood Family, John & Geneva Heaman, Lynn Russwurm, Al Widmeyer, Bill Murray, Wayne Diebold, Al Huiser, Kevin Westphal, Cheryl Lescom, and many others. Also, Doug played and co-produced with Grant Heywood, on Tom & Rose Merrigan's c.d. and had some of his original songs recorded by Randy Satchell, Bonita Mercer and Roger Quick. In 2005, Doug was honoured to receive the Barn Dance Pioneer Award.

Carrying on the legacy of the Barn Dance with the people and music, has allowed Doug to interact with a larger circle

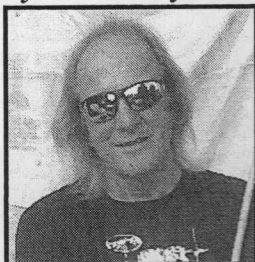
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*A portrait of Doug at the steel guitar, painted by Lance Russwurm. A gift from Tracey.*

## The Editor Speaks

by Grant Heywood



It's hard to believe that we're already to the year 2016. It only seems like yesterday we were celebrating the millennium, so I guess I'm showing my age more than I thought. But I am glad that winter is over and the spring weather is beginning to arrive.

This past winter I spent time inside our home on a kitchen renovation project. I've spent many days stripping wallpaper, skimming and sanding walls ... and re-skimming and sanding walls. Did I mention re-skimming and sanding walls again, and again? When you live in a house that was built over 125 years ago you learn to deal with so many of the imperfections. For instance, putting up crown moulding should be a 'no brainer' but when the walls are out of proportion and your corners don't meet, it can become a huge headache. I'm not sure they used a square or level much back in the 1800's.

Doing a project like this can be quite time consuming, but when you've got more time than usual it can drag on. I bought all new hardware for the kitchen cabinets to update them and have sanded them down for the crucial painting job that will come next ... inside and out, sigh! I'm fortunate that I have band mates that are handy and can help me with flooring, and countertops. The kitchen is most certainly the worst place for a renovation project since that is the room that gets used each and every day. With it being so dusty and messy, it's wise to try and complete the job a.s.a.p. before the family starts wondering if it will ever get done. They might not say anything but the

stares usually say it all.

I know my wife said for me to just take my time but I know when my time is up. I'm sure you know what I mean fellas. I'm starting to get to the halfway point and I will be glad when it is finally done, so I can get on with my music projects ... or maybe the next room. Well ... maybe that will just have to wait until next winter.

Be re-assured you won't have to wait until next winter to catch a live Barn Dance Show. The 2016 Barn Dance Schedule is posted here in the journal and it looks like we've got a lot of shows for this year in many different areas of southwestern Ontario. The popularity of the Barn Dance continues to grow and I always enjoy getting to meet so many regulars and new fans of the Barn Dance. The guest lineup is always different at every Barn Dance Show too and this year is no exception. Hope to see you at the next Barn Dance.

Comments? Please contact:  
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or send a message on facebook.

## The Barn Dance Historical Society and Entertainment

### Museum

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Wingham, Ontario N0G 2W0

Phone (519) 530-8000

(or leave a message)

**BARN DANCE WEBSITE:**

[www.thebardance.ca](http://www.thebardance.ca)

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Bill Simmermaker, Ron Shaw,  
Ted Weishar, Doreen Armbruster,  
and Lynn Russwurm.

## 2016 COMING EVENTS

Date	Event Name	Place
Fri., April 1	Barn Dance Show - 8:00 p.m.	Crystal Palace, Mitchell
Sun., April 10	Barn Dance Show - 2:30 p.m.	Lucan Heritage Society, Lucan Community Complex
Sun., May 1	Barn Dance Show - 2:30 p.m.	Purple Hill Country Hall, Purple Hill
May 26 - 29	19th Annual Campout Jamboree	Blyth Arena and Campgrounds, Blyth
Sun., June 12	Barn Dance Show - 3:00 p.m.	Commercial Tavern, Maryhill
Sun., Sept. 25	Barn Dance Show - 2:30 p.m.	Southwold Community Complex, Shedden



Continued from Page 1

of musicians and performers. He says, "Watching young artists develop and working with band members, sound crew, the MC, Board of Directors and supporters, is what really makes it all worthwhile." "Playing a steel guitar instrumental such as Louis Armstrong's, Wonderful World, can be very rewarding too." Hearing Doug play is emotionally rewarding at any time. He works hard at it.

Doug has had many high points in his musical career. 'The Men of Steel' steel guitar show at Paul Weber's Maryhill Tavern is always a treat when Doug get to play with his luminary steel guitar frineds like, Mike Weber, Pee Wee Charles, Dale Rivard and Doug Johnson. As Doug says, "I feel so privileged to have been able to play music for 50 years. I want to keep learning, and don't want to be without the 'people' part of the music business." There is no doubt that Doug is a wonderful steel guitar player, as I can attest to that every time I perform with him on stage. He is also a wonderful person and I consider him one of my best friends. Doug is a no-attitude, no-nonsense, professional musician, and says, "it's never work playing ... as long as it continues to be enjoyable."



Doug Dietrich with Joe Matheson from Hank Williams Live 1952 show and Paul Weber.

## NEWS & NOTES

Lance Russwurn CD Release Party, with special guests, at the Commercial Tavern in Maryhill, on Sunday, April 17 at 3 p.m. No cover charge.

## The Barn Katz

The Barn Katz is a fun-loving and energetic group made up of some of Ontario's very finest and most experienced Bluegrass musicians.

Based out of southern Ontario, the band consists of Glenn George from Kitchener, playing both upright and electric bass. Glenn has been twice nominated as Bass Player of the year at the Canadian Central Bluegrass Awards. (C.C.B.A.) Glenn is well known for an enthusiastic stage presence, smiling face and bass played the way its suppose to be.

Multi-instrumentalist Geoff Sommers currently resides in Cambridge. Geoff has been away from Bluegrass for a few years but has returned to take up the guitar duties with the Katz. Geoff also plays fiddle and mandolin and was a founding member of popular Ontario bluegrass band, Blue Mule. (C.C.B.A. 5 time Band of the Year) He has won two Juno Awards for his work with Roots artist David Fancey.

Five time C.C.B.A. Fiddle Player of the Year Wayne Ferguson from Gravenhurst can saw up a storm on a fast fiddle tune or play soft and sweet on a heartfelt slow song. Wayne can also pick the frets right off the Mandolin and is a 4 time recipient of the Mandolin Player of the Year Award again with the C.C.B.A. Wayne is a highly sought after and can also be found playing stints with the Good Brothers and Rick Jones's Allan Jackson Tribute Shows.

Suzie Sweetman makes her home in the thriving metropolis of Booth's Harbour. While this is Sue's first ever band, she is by no means a stranger to making great music. Suzie has sang harmony vocals on many artist's projects and was a familiar

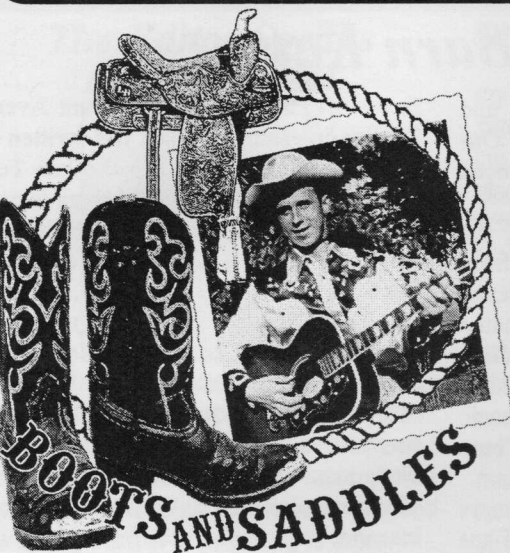
face with Paul Reimens at Grant Avenue Studios in Hamilton. She has written for and co-written music with the late Terry Sumsion. To the stage Sue brings incredible singing with a passion and enthusiasm that you just don't see and hear every day. For Suzie, it's all about the love.

The tallest member of the group is the hilariously funny but oh so talented Tim McDonald. Originally from Calander, now making his home in Burlington, Tim was in one of Ontario's most prestigious bluegrass bands McDonald Bluegrass. The band consisted to Tim and his 3 cousins and were renowned for their gospel work. For the Barn Katz, Tim brings incredible song writing, a richly warm baritone and a deep resonating bass vocal with a percussive banjo style that has earned him three wins as Banjo Player of the Year at the C.C.B.A. as well as a Composer of the Year Award too.

The band's first CD "Road Kill Grill" was runner up in the Alt/Country category at the Hamilton Music Awards in 2013. It features all original music and conveys an energy and sound more closely found in a top Bluegrass act.

This fine litter of musicians have escaped the barn and are out on the prowl. They are sure to entertain and delight you with their fresh brand of bluegrass. Be sure to catch them where ever they play!





by Lynn Russwurm

This is one year we can't complain about our winter. We've had many mild days, often after being threatened with a wild winter storm that didn't materialize.

On my personal health side, I seem to be holding my own; my leg muscles are still very weak, so I have to walk carefully so as not to lose my balance, I've had a couple of falls. But I'm getting around, even going dancing at least once a week.

This seems to be the year of anniversaries in our music. CKNX is celebrating 90 years. The Woolwich Observer is coming up to 20 years of Media Coverage. Next year will be 20 years for The Barn Dance Campout Amboree in Blyth and our Sunday concerts have come of age, in this, our sixth year, so come along for the ride. CKNX is partnering with our Society to bring a high level of entertainment to our concerts to acknowledge the contribution we have made throughout recent years in keeping this heritage alive. Enough may be said but it was The Barn Dance that made CKNX the force it was, and still is today, is what comes to mind when you say CKNX, The Barn Dance. Our music is still alive and well.

The Woolwich Observer has done a wonderful job of promoting our Sunday night concerts. Since the start and I dare say we would not have had the success without their help. This year will be even better, the paper is now coming on Thursday instead of

Friday, so that's an extra day of advertising the shows. A food wagon is in the plans as is a corporate sponsor to pay for rain dates.

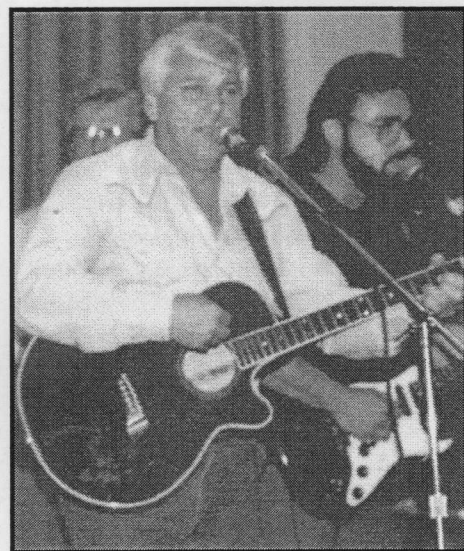
To date I have 8 concerts out of 14 booked and there's some great entertainment in store for us. I have Naomi Bristow with Steve Pittico as back-up; Emory Lester with Jill Jones, Emory is a Virginia mandolin player living in Canada; Diane & The Cavaliers; Darin Parise & Al Widmeyer; Lance Russwurm CD release party; The Muir Family; Gerald Davidson & The Country Versatiles and more to come.

The Blyth Campout Weekend is operating at near capacity with full or near full attendance at all three major events - the Friday night Bluegrass Show, the Saturday night Barn Dance and the Sunday morning Gospel Show. The Barn Katz will provide the bluegrass entertainment on Friday night. They are a top rated bluegrass band.

Of course all other events will be intertwined with the shows, like the silent auction which is always popular; the musical jams; the flea market; the breakfast on Saturday.

Next issue we will have a more complete list of performances and it's great that many people have taken up this kind of music in their later years if nothing more than to prove the demand for traditional country music. So let's keep it alive and well. Us older guys and gals still love this music and

don't know when to quit ... and likely never will. It's got me back writing songs again.



Earl & Greg Fries will be at Elmira's Gore Park on Sunday, July 10.

### BARN DANCE JOURNAL ADVERTISING PRICES

Business Card Size -

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## 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.
Barn Dance Logo T-Shirts (gold logo on blue only)	
Sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL	\$20.00 ea.
NEW Heywood Family Three Generations CD	\$20.00 ea.
NEW Al Cherny CD - "Live / The Lost Recordings"	\$15.00 ea.
NEW Eleanor & Graham Townsend CD "The Talented Townsends" (36 unheard recordings)	\$15.00 ea.
Best of The Barn Dance CD	\$15.00 ea.

All purchases include HST.

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or pick up at Ernie King Music.

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### DON'T FORGET

**Mon., April 4, 2016**  
**The Barn Dance  
Historical Society's  
Annual General Meeting**

Starting at 7:00 p.m. at the  
Barn Dance & Entertainment Museum,  
273 Josephine Street, Wingham, Ont.  
All members are invited to attend, vote  
and participate in committees.

**See you there!!**



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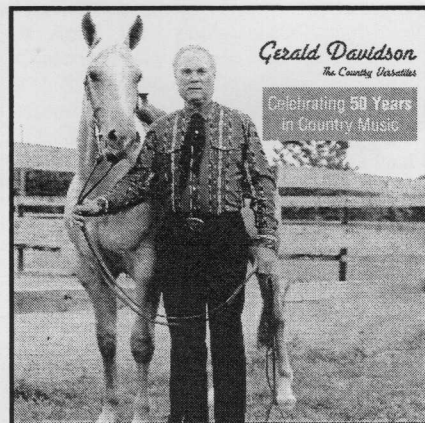
## FEATURE C. D. REVIEW

### "Celebrating 50 Years in Country Music"

*Gerald Davidson & the Country Versatiles*

by Grant Heywood

Gerald Davidson & the Country Versatiles have been playing traditional country music for 50 years and are without a doubt, some of the hardest working musicians around. Originally from Plattsville, Gerald Davidson has been singing traditional country music all his life and his band, the Country Versatiles have been



through numerous changes over the years. Gerald always had some of the best players, like the late great, Len Love, Wayne Riehl, and Tony Leggio. Today the band consists of fiddler/vocalist Ashley Giles, bass/vocalist Gord Ogilvie, drummer Gerry Felker and occasionally steel player George Webb.

This CD celebrates Gerald's 50 years of performing traditional country music. There are 12 songs on this CD from shuffles to ballads and they are all gems. 'Twin Fiddles Turn Me On' works really well, and 'Dreams of a Dreamer' as well as 'I'm a Fool For Leaving' have been staples in the band's repertoire for quite some time. My favourites are the duets with Gerald & Ashley, 'Send a Message To My Heart' and 'This Time We're Going to Make It'. These two songs really put the icing on the cake when it comes to duet vocal performance.

Gerald is in fine voice on this CD as well as Ashley, and Ashley gets a chance to play some great fiddle breaks along with Doug Johnson on steel and producer Doug Deveaux on guitar, with Graig Harly on piano. The tight rhythm section of Ken Post/drums and Gord Ogilvie/bass, gives this whole production the wings to soar. This CD was recorded at Doug Deveaux's Sideman Studio's in Oshawa and Doug certainly delivered a CD that Gerald can be proud of. This is a 'real country music' disc that puts a smile on your face while driving down the highway.

Besides playing all over southwestern Ontario, Gerald will be making a guest appearance on the Barn Dance Show, Sunday, June 12<sup>th</sup> at the Commercial Tavern in Maryhill. For more information about Gerald Davidson & the Country Versatiles go to: [www.countryversatiles.com](http://www.countryversatiles.com)

### Blyth Campout Jamboree Sunday Gospel Show

featuring: Larry Mercey Trio, The Belmore Choir, and  
Stiff Family Bluegrass Gospel.

Hosted by Betty Beer.

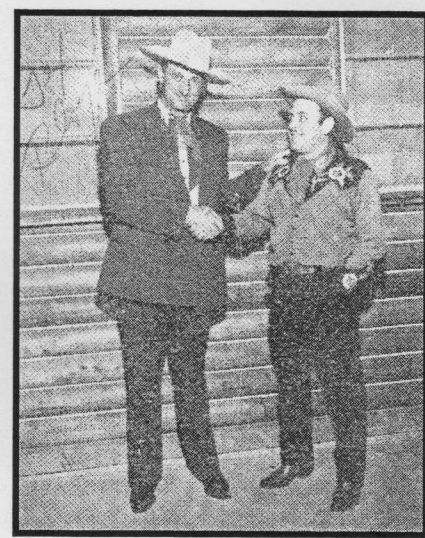
# Country Music Memories



*Wilf Carter*



*Mrs. Wilf Carter and Fred Roden*



*Wilf Carter and Tex Bloye*



*Fred Boden and Tex Bloye*



*Bill Long and The Ranch Girls, with Fred Roden*



*Wilf Carter with unknown friends.*



*George Faith, Ernest Tubb and Fred Roden*

**Blyth Campout  
Jamboree Headliners**

**Friday Night:**  
Barn Katz Bluegrass

**Saturday Night:**  
Harold MacIntyre,  
Traci Kennedy,  
Jack London,  
John Lester,  
Lance Russwurm



## COUNTRY CALENDAR



by Doreen Brown

(Toronto and surrounding area)

**April 9** - Johnny Burke, Joe Howe and Donaul Rogers Show, Carleton Place Legion, 177 George St. Contact 613-223-3734.

**17th CD Release Concert** - by Johnny Burke, Orono Town Hall. Ticket at Apple Blossom Flowers, Orono, also Newcastle. \$20.

**Pineridge Bluegrass Folk Lore Society** - 151 Adillac Ave. N., Oshawa. Upcoming dates for Pickin' sessions May 1, June 5, Sept 18, Oct. 16, Nov. 6 & Dec. 4.

**Upcoming Shows** - first Sunday of the month presents Gerald Davidson, The Country Resartiles houseband. Centennial Hall, Princeton. www.cv.com

**Dave Whelen and Starlite Band** - performances as follows: Apr. 15, 9 pm, Cavens Alley bar, 585 Lakeshore Rd. E., Mississauga; Apr. 16, 9 pm, Newfoundland Club, 472 Danforth Rd., Scarborough; Apr. 23, Michelle's Place, 1828 Weston Rd., Toronto; Apr. 24, 4 pm, Moose Lodge, 3751 Lakeshore Blvd.; May 13, 9 pm, Haven's Alley; May 14, 10 pm, Newfoundland Club; May 21 9 pm, Michelle's Place; May 24, 8 pm, Army and Navy Club, Mississauga.

**May 1** - Classic Country Music Reunion, review show and dance, 1 - 5 pm. Tradewinds, International Centre, 264 Lansdown St. W., Scarborough. Come out and join the fun.

**May 26 to 29** - May late friend, Mr. Earl Heywood, would be so proud to announce the 19th year - Barn Dance Jamboree / Campout Weekend at Blyth Arena Complex. During the weekend there are camper's jam sessions; bluegrass show and open stage at 7 pm Friday night; continental breakfast, Sat. am; musical flea market and silent auction; open stage; Lions club dinner - advance tickets only; Sat. night barn dance show and later dancing; Sun. am Lions breakfast and gospel show.

**Barn Dance Shows** - Apr. 1, 8 pm, Crystal Palace, Mitchell; Apr. 10, 2:30 pm, Lucan Community Centre; May 1, 2:30 pm, Purple Hill Country Hall; June 12, 3 pm, Commercial Tavern, Maryhill; Sept. 25, 2 pm, Southwold Community Complex, Shedden; Nov. 20, 2:30 pm, Strigden Fairgrounds.

**Queen's Bush Bluegrass Club**, Owen Sound Legion, 1450 2nd Ave. W - Apr. 21 Wintergrass concert with Dale Ann Bradley and Phil Leadbetter, opens Hometown Heros, and Grassfire from Owen Sound. Welcome pickers and listeners every Thurs. 7:30 pm, open jam. www.queensbush.ca

**Victory Legion, London** - presents Roger

Long's band, the Country Classics, as follows: Apr. 9, May 14, July 22, Aug. 13, Sept. 2, Oct. 6, Nov. 12, Dec. 10 and Dec. 31, New Year's Eve. Also at Stratford Legion on Sept. 3, Nov. 19 and Dec. 17.

\* **Jessica Wedden** will be performing July 29 - 31 at Hollywood Country Jamboree.

\* **Aug. 4 - 7** - Boots & Hearts, Oro-medonte, Ont. line-up Jake Owen, Dean Brody, Diamond Rio, Chase Bryant, Dylan Scott, Rafael Cole, Madeline Merlo, Lindsay Ell and Lindsay Broughton.

\* **July 21 - 24** - Pickin' in the Park, Fiddle Park, Shelburne. Open mic jamboree, camping, no hydro \$35.00 w/e pass. Supported by the Town of Shelburne. For information, contact Greg Holmes 519-925-3037. www.pickininthepark.webs.com

\* **Michael T. Wall** has been nominated by his fans for Canada's Walkway of Stars in Toronto. Also will be inducted into Canada's Country Music Association in Calgary, AB this summer. Way to go, Michael!!

\* **Norwood Country Jamboree** July 14 - 17, 48 Alma St. Norwood. Phone 1-800-954-9998 or 705-741-6097. Featuring: July 14 Gary Williams, Adrian Boudreau, Missy Knott, Montana Sky; July 15 Cameron Von Criegern, Eddie Francis, George Hillier, Nancy Denault, Phil Denault; July 16 Wendy Lynn Snider, James Pounder, Kevin Young, James Ryce, Larry Mercey; Sun. July 17 Gospel Hour.

\* **Havelock Country Jamboree** Aug. 18 - 21. 17th Annual with twin stages. Lineup includes - Road Hammers, Chad Brownlee, Runaway Angel, Kansas Stone, Terrie Clark, Sammy Kershaw, Asleep at the Wheel, Band Perry, Scott McCreery, Jess Moskaluke, Jaydee Bixby, The Sweet Grass Band, The Good Bros. 1-800-539-3353.

\* **Holyrood Country Jamboree** June 30 - July 3. Performances by George Fox, Johnny Burke, Jake Mathews, Todd Nolan, Pam Miller, Naomi Bristow, Johnny and the Cruizers, Texas Tuxedo, Mike Pollard, Kiley Jo Masson, Dusty King Jr., Steve and Spike Piticco, Kirk Bernard, Scotty Gartshore, Clarence Deveaux, Dave Byrski, Steve Bebee, Stetson, Jessica Wedden, John Valiancourt, Bill White and White Pine, Tommy Hughs. For tickets call 613-967-9551.

\* **Purple Hill Country Hall** - Apr. 3, Dinner Show, 2 pm, with Deann Chase and Thomas Wade, Joan Spalding and Randy Satchell; Apr. 16, Saturday Night Barn Dance Show with Shelley Rastin and the Canadian Country Cruisers, Donnie Bentum and a barn full of special guests, this is a licensed event at 8:30 pm; May 1, Dinner Show, 2 pm, with Paul Weber from Maryhill, ventriloquist John Neaman, Naomi Bristow and Joe Matheson, as Hank Williams; June 5, Dinner Show, 2 pm, with Jimmy Phair, Crystal Gage, Ryan St. Denis, Eric Shain, Caroline Danowski Burchell and Kate Ashby Kraft; July 2 and 3, Canada's Opry land Band Stand Show, a festival of rural living, honoring the CCMA award. Weekend pass \$50. Info www.purplehillcountryhall.com

\* **Appearances by Doreen Brown** - Barn Dance Campout Jamboree, Blyth; Tottenham Bluegrass

Festival, judging panel, children's talent show; Apr. 19 Rosemount Jamboree; July 15 Norwood Country Jamboree; July 14 - 17 Lindsay Country Jamboree; July 21 - 24 Pickin' in the Park, Shelburne; July 28-31 Classic Country Music Reunion, Trenton.

\* **April 10** - Ambassador records present Country Sunday Classic Country at RCL Br. 43, 471 Simcoe St. S., Oshawa, with special guest Naomi Bristow. Musicians Tom Mark, Paul Evans, Randy Morrison, Frank Woodcock. Open mic, also door prizes. Further info call Paul Evens 905-579-7476 or Legion 905-725-4706.

\* **June 17, 18, 19** - Tottenham Bluegrass festival, now in it's 33 year. Line up: Spinney Bros., Remington Ride, Grassic Measures; Winterline, Traditionally Wound; David Pernelley and Cardinal Trad, Slocan Ramblers, Beeton Creek Rising, Davis and Grand the Tebworth Bros. Music all weekend. A fun filled weekend.

\* **Mark Laforme** 905-518-1640 or email mrlaformeezu@gmail.com

\* **Fiddles and Squares** old time square dance parties, Ralph & Sandy Price 705-835-3159.

\* **Gary Gayle**, button accordial player, irish, country MFLS music, studio and live entertainment. open mic. 416-938-4174.

\* **Thornton Arena** - has jamborees the 2nd Thurs. of the month, upstairs. Open mic. All entertainers welcome.

\* **June 4** - Frontenac Masonic District presents Fiddle and Song with Chris Murp[hy and Jon McLeery, also Jessica Wedden, Fiddle Earth. 3260 Princess St., Kingston Shrine Club. Folk, bluegrass. Info call Wayne Anderson 613-634-3029 or Shrine Club 613-384-9554.

\* **Aug. 31** - Auction Barn, Colborne presents traditional country music with Teea Goans, direct from Nashville. Opening for Teea is Naomi Bristow and Mile Pollard. One night only. Contact Gary Warner gwarner@eagle.ca

*Wishing all best wished to enjoy springtime and look forward to seeing many at upcoming shows and jamborees.*

## Booking the Barn Dance

*If you are interested in more information about booking the Barn Dance Musical Production, please write to:*  
Barn Dance Bookings, P. O. Box 68,  
Wingham, Ont. NOG 2W0;  
or call ~ (519) 530-8000  
E-mail: webmaster@thebardance.ca

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# BARN DANCE CORNER

by Peter Saros

I am always amazed – and somewhat surprised to be honest – by the currency the musical barn dance tradition still has in mainstream Nashville. The heyday of the original radio programs like the WLS *National Barn Dance* out of Chicago, or even Music City's own *Grand Ole Opry*, was nearly sixty years ago. The TV variety shows that followed out of that radio tradition also have faded in popularity. But the legacy of those institutions lingers.

Listening to Top 30 country music today might leave die-hard traditionalists thinking something other than a legacy is lingering on the airwaves. The music of Florida Georgia Line and Sam Hunt may not pass their sniff test of what counts as country. Tuning into a country radio station today can be disorienting and confusing. I'm sure there have been any number of occasions of flustered button pushing and angry

squinting to make sure the right station has been dialed up as much of mainstream country has increasingly sounded less and less familiar.

Yet, there on page one of *Nash Country Weekly's* February 15, 2016 issue in the "Then & Now: This Week in Country Music" feature, a midst all the current happenings in Nashville, were two references to that rich barn dance tradition.

The first item announced a specially priced DVD from Time Life titled *Hee Haw: Kornfield Klassics*. I smiled to know that episodes from the 1970's *Hee Haw* series still mattered. What mattered even more was the first DVD featured a live performance of Loretta Lynn singing "Coal Miner's Daughter." Lynn recorded that song in 1969. Lynn, at age 83, just released her first studio album in 12 years appropriately titled *Full Circle*. Will the circle be unbroken indeed!

The second item celebrated the release of a concert-length movie titled *American Saturday Night: Live From the Grand Ole Opry*. Here was a film

featuring performances of today's biggest stars as they honoured and shared what the *Opry* means to them today. Brad Paisley said, "The main goal of my career was to be an *Opry* member."

The old music still matters. In fact, current star and show headliner Justin Moore said, "The older you get the more you appreciate classic country. It's like the old story that you're in the truck with your dad when you're 8 years old listening to Roger Miller or Merle Haggard and you're going, 'That's the worst thing I've ever heard.' But when you're 28 years old, you appreciate it and love it yourself, and your kids are in the back seat going, "What in the crap is this?"

Just like new country confuses old-timers let's confuse some kids and bring them into the traditional country music fold by inviting them to one of the eight Barn Dance performances already booked for 2016. We owe it to them to remind them of the past. They will probably hate us for doing it, but as Justin Moore shared, they will appreciate it later.

**The show must go on!**

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