



The Barn Dance Opera Journal

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Vol. 92 2017 **Spring Edition**

1

Barn Dance Band Profile Series

Grant Heywood, "Son of Earl"... and proud of it! And so much more!

by Doug Dietrich

This article is the fifth in a series that the Journal's editor, Grant Heywood, has been doing featuring the members of the Barn Dance Band. Since this article is about Grant himself, I am privileged to take the pen and write this article about my great friend and extremely talented fellow musician.

"Son of Earl" is a moniker that Grant Heywood has been branded with throughout his whole life. The son of Earl and Martha Heywood was born and raised in Wingham, Ontario. Earl was a legendary country western performer and was known as Canada's #1 Singing Cowboy in Canada and into the US. He was a recording artist, starred on the original CKNX Saturday Night Barn Dance and entertained on CKNX television for much of his life.

I can safely say that Grant was born into music. By the age of 5, he was singing on his father's radio show on CKNX and a couple years later he was part of the Heywood Family touring troupe along with his father, mother and sister Patricia. They toured Ontario and the Maritimes, recorded 3 family albums, appeared on radio and television and often opened shows for major Nashville acts. By the late 50's, Grant was known as Canada's youngest recording artist.

His country upbringing gave him a solid base but he says he also always watched and listened to every performer/musician he ever saw or played with. He is a student of the music and developed an extensive musical knowledge. Grant wears "the son of Earl" moniker proudly and is honoured to uphold the music and traditions established by his father and to carry on the family name. But he has also gone on and used his unique talents to do so much more with his music and is truly a legend in his own right.

Three years of piano lessons was basically his only formal musical training. He is self-taught not only on his main instrument, the drums, but also on guitar and mandolin. A stint in the high school cadet corps did give him some drum teachings. He also took some vocal training and is blessed with an amazing voice and a wide vocal range. He is a great lead singer but one of Grant's greatest pleasures is lending his voice in harmony with other vocalists. It really is a gift that he has!

In his teenage years, the Beatles and the

British invasion fascinated Grant. During that time he listened to all kinds of music and played drums with various local country and rock bands. He formed a rock band, called Mackenzie, made up of great musicians from Mt. Forest and Wingham. They were quite successful and opened for some big name rock acts. When his high school guidance counselor heard he wanted to be a full time musician, he told Grant "well that's a nice hobby". That only made Grant want it even more!

When he moved to Kitchener to go to college, he started writing songs and doing demo recordings. He was soon busy playing almost 6 nights a week on the road on a full time basis. One of the bands was Wizzard which included Grant doing a magic act to rock music. He will do whatever's necessary to entertain! After moving to Toronto for a time and playing in a rock band called Stormcrow (with guitarist Wendell Ferguson) Grant and his wife moved back to the K-W area. He became a member of the very successful Major Hooples Boarding House. They had a top 10 hit with a song written by Grant, Late Night Invitation. One of the highlights of Grant's career was the tour that Hooples did opening for Roy Orbison. Unfortunately, bandleader Dave Lodge passed away suddenly from cancer and the band disbanded. But this led to Grant joining the Desert Dolphins whose song Dynamite (written by Grant) hit Top 10 on the RPM Canadian charts. That band was nominated for several awards for video, producer, album and single.

Times were changing in the music business and Grant wanted to spend more time with his wife and twin daughters. He got "off the road" but still continued to dedicate himself to his music. He did a lot of work and some touring with Rick Jones' Alan Jackson Tribute and played locally with Randy Satchell, Bill Murray, the Country Versatiles and others and, of course, the Barn Dance.

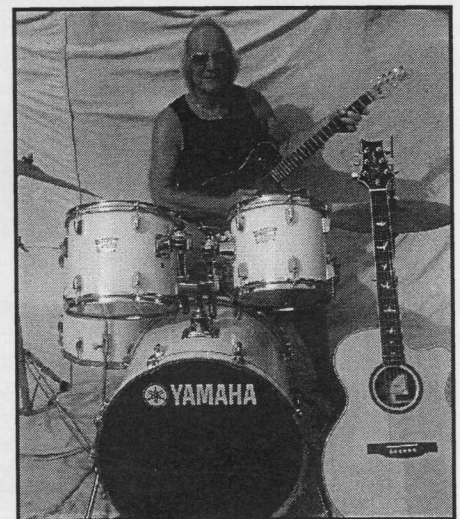
I got to know Grant when I first became affiliated with the Barn Dance Society in 2000. We share a passion for music and, by coincidence, we were born in the same year (11 days apart - guess who's older) and we got married in the same year. Grant grew up surrounded by the original Barn Dance. So it was only natural that his father asked him to be part of the Barn Dance Society when it was formed. He not only performed on the shows and as a member of the

Barn Dance Band, but also is a long standing member of the Board and editor of the Barn Dance Opera Journal. We receive so many compliments on how much the Society's members enjoy the newsletters that Grant puts together. His journalism course at Conestoga College is being put to good use.

In addition to the journalism, Grant also studied for a time at the Labor College outside of Washington, DC. The labour union knowledge gained there has no doubt been helpful throughout his many years as President of Local 418 Stratford Musicians' Union. This role introduced him to so many more people in the various facets of the music business. At a convention in Las Vegas he met up and played with Bobby Kingston (son of Barn Dance performer Jack Kingston). He met musician Rick Norcross, leader of a western swing band from Vermont. Rick & the Ramblers recorded a song co-written by Grant as the title cut on their latest CD.

Grant lives in the country outside Wellesley with his wife of 42 years, Jeanette, along with his twin daughters Kiana and Janessa. Earl unfortunately passed away in 2006 but his mother is still alive. Well into her 90's, Martha still enjoys the music. In addition to his work in music, Grant says he had several day jobs over the years and recently retired after 25 years as a fiberglass

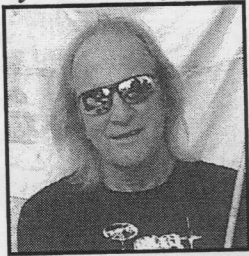
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Grant posing with some of his instruments.

The Editor Speaks

by Grant Heywood



Well it looks like winter is pretty much behind us now. I think I used my snowblower about 6 times, so winter was relatively kind. It remains to be seen if 'Willy' was right and spring comes early, or maybe we'll just roll right into summer. When it comes to sun and warm temps, I say 'bring it on'.

I know that folks aged around 45 and older generally grew up with music being a big part of their life. I know that baby boomers basically thrived on music, be it radio, buying vinyl records, cassettes, and eventually cd's.....and let's not forget 8-track tapes. I remember laughing as I would drive down the highway after spying a bunch of tape strewn at the side of the road caught in some grass, waving in the wind. No doubt the tape deck ate the tape and musical road rage ensued.

We were lucky to have grown up in a generation that was surrounded by music. Yes we had television, movies and a few arcades, but music was and to some degree, still is a major stimulant and relaxing part of our lives. Jazz, folk, country music, 50's doo wop, psychedelic, hard rock, pop, disco, punk, 80's new age, and even heavy metal became a lifelong source of listening pleasure for many my age. It was special because you had a choice, and most of it was good music even if you weren't particularly fond of a certain genre'.

Most of our parents grew up on big band, contemporary pop , 50's rock & roll, and especially country music. Vinyl records, A.M. radio, and live music dances were everyone got their musical 'fix'. Then along came F.M. radio, concerts, tape, cd's, video and eventually the internet. Music was good, musicians, performers, and songwriters got paid fairly for their musical talent. But then there other ways to get entertainment value such as video games, big screen

television, cell phone, i-pad, and the internet on computer cocooned people into staying home and viewing concerts, listening to a world of music online, and downloading music for free without having to pay to buy a ticket or cd.

I realize it seems to be the 'norm' nowadays, but it makes it harder to get people to venture out and experience what a great feeling 'live' music provides for our aural senses. Music stores have become like the dodo bird, and live music venues are struggling to keep their doors open. The Holstein Rodeo is a local example that won't be operating this year. They had top brand musical entertainment but I heard that insurance, lack of volunteers and competition may be a few of the reasons it won't be continuing. I know of other events and festivals that are having a hard time as well.

Recently, a friend of mine told me that many schools in Ontario are cutting funding to the arts programs. I believe in a well balanced approach to education but if kids don't learn about the benefits and therapeutic value of music then what the hell are they going to do with the right side of their brain. Musical education should definitely be a part of education if not for the appreciation of music alone. It also helps with math skills as well, memory, and social skills.

I appreciate the hard work that goes into creating, recording and marketing music. I also value and respect the musicians I get to play with. Unlike radio, playing live gives you the opportunity to perform music you might not always get to hear on the airwaves. Playing music at the Commercial Tavern in Maryhill with Paul Weber is certainly a delight for me. Sometimes I don't even know what song we are about to play, but Paul has confidence that the band can make it sound like we've been doing that tune for years. And he'll sing that song with passion and grace. Music is a gift to share amongst the players, audience, family and friends, and can be a positive part in emotional healing at times.

When it comes to learning how to play a musical instrument, it can be frustrating at first, but the personal rewards are evident when jamming with others and seeing happy smiling faces. I never believed that music should be a competition. It's not about who is better or who can stand on their head playing guitar backwards while they yodel Oh Canada with flames

shooting from their nose. Okay... I think I'd pay to see that! The sheer joy of making music is a joy unto itself. Music has always been a huge part of my life, and continues to satisfy a sense of purpose in my well-being. That sense of pride and professionalism is nowhere more apparent than at a Barn Dance Show. Please check out our Barn Dance Show Schedule posted in this journal. This will be our 20th anniversary of the Blyth Barn Dance Campout Jamboree wknd. The lineup of entertainment is stellar and not to be missed. Hope to see you at the next Barn Dance Show.

Comments? Please contact:

Grant Heywood

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or send a message on facebook.

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Museum

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(or leave a message)

BARN DANCE WEBSITE:

www.thebardance.ca

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Bettinger, Grant Heywood, Doug Dietrich,

Bill Simmermaker, Ron Shaw,

Ted Weishar, and Doreen Armbruster.

2017 COMING EVENTS

Date	Event Name	Place
Sun., April 23	Barn Dance Show - 2:30 p.m.	Fundraiser - Appin Presbyterian Church, Glencoe Agricultural Hall, Glencoe, ON
Sun., May 7	Barn Dance Show - 2:00 p.m.	Purple Hill Country Hall, Purple Hill
Thurs. - Sun. May 25-28	20th Annual Campout Jamboree	Blyth Arena and Campgrounds, Blyth
Sun., June 11	Barn Dance Show - 3:00 p.m.	Commercial Tavern, Maryhill
Sun., October 22	Barn Dance Show - 2:00 p.m.	Southwold Community Complex, Shedden

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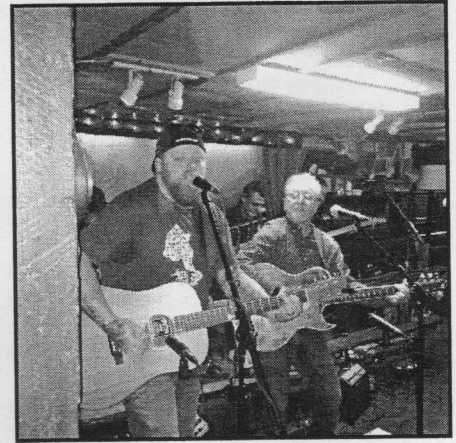
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*A GUY WALKS DOWN NASHVILLE'S
MUSIC ROW CARRYING A GUITAR. A
TOURIST PULLS UP AND ASKS,
"EXCUSE ME, DO YOU KNOW HOW TO
GET TO THE COUNTRY MUSIC HALL OF
FAME?" "YEAH" SAYS THE GUY,
"PRACTICE 'TIL YOU'RE DEAD!"*



Billapolooza event held on March 5th, at the Corral in Oshawa for a great musician and personal friend, Bill Ritchie, who is battling cancer. From L to R – Doug Deveaux, Bill Ritchie, and Rick Jones. It was awesome to see the Corral jam packed.



Winter jam at George Lonsbury's barn, with many Barn Dance musicians and singers. Pictured here is Chris Simmermaker belting out a country classic with his dad, Barn Dance Jamboree director, Bill Simmermaker. Fun times and great memories.

Canada's Largest Travelling Barn Dance

**20th
Annual**

FEATURED ARTISTS

Larry Mercey
Gerald Davidson
Naomi Bristow
Gerry Smith
Linda Elder
Bruce Robertson

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**BARN DANCE
JAMBOREE/CAMPOUT**

May 25, 26, 27, 28, 2017

Blyth Arena Complex

Blyth, ON

May 25th, 2017 - Campers Jam

May 26th, 2017

Bluegrass Show & Open Stage

May 27th, 2017

Barn Dance Show & Dance

May 28th, 2017 - Gospel Show

Early Bird Registration and Full Details on Line at:

www.thebardance.ca

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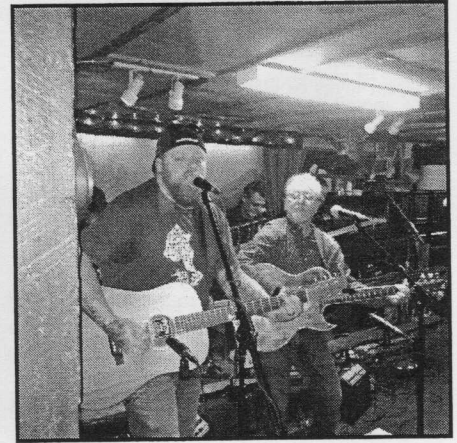
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Harold MacIntyre & Rick Jones CD Review

by Grant Heywood

It's a real treat when you get to listen and review, two Canadian country artists that are not only great singers, but good friends of mine as well.



Harold MacIntyre/ Same Old Me

Firstly, Harold MacIntyre is almost a household name in Canadian country music circles. It's always been a pleasure to back up Harold whenever I get the chance. This 10 song cd was produced by Derek Pilgrim and is laced with Maritime and country songs.

Randy Morrison kicks off with the fiddle on 'What I've Been Missing', written by Harold and a retrospect about him moving through life. 'Peter Behind The Wheel' tells a tale of life on the road with the band in Canada. Harold does a nice job on the Roy Payne tune, 'Living

In The Maritimes With You', and follows it up with a song dear to Harold's heart, 'Song For The Mira', which he performs almost every night on stage. The sad country ballad, 'You're Memory Is All Over Me', is sung convincingly by Harold like he's been there before. A personal favourite for sure.

A real surprise is the Robbie Robertson classic 'Acadian Driftwood'. Old pals, Johnny Burke, Paul Weber and Derek Pilgrim help out on backup vocals. This song is definitely a highlight on this cd and is so tastefully done. Acadian Driftwood resonates with a maritime spirit only Harold could deliver. The melody of the last maritime tune, 'We Remember You Well', really sticks in your head. I don't know if that was on purpose but it sure rounds out this very pleasant listening cd by Harold MacIntyre. Harold was definitely in his element when he recorded this one and it shows that he still loves what he does. The mix of maritime story music and country has served Harold MacIntyre well, and this cd proves it.

Musicians on this cd include, Albert MacDonald/guitars, Derek Pilgrim/bass gtr., Clayton Mark/lead gtr. dobo, Randy Morrison/fiddle, Steve Smith/steel, Sonnie Bernardi/drums, Ilkka leghti/background vocals, and Dean Sargent/gtr.. There is no contact info. on the cd, but rest assured you can buy one off-stage wherever Harold performs. Hailing from Cape Breton, Harold has been singing and recording all of his life and you should take in a Harold MacIntyre performance when you get the chance. You'll be glad you did.

'Hearts Aren't Made To Break They're Made To Love'....the longest title on the cd.

Of course it wouldn't be a Rick Jones cd proper, without a George Jones tune and 'Just One More', gets the '*double Jones*' treatment like a double of Jack Daniels. (need I say more) The Ray Pennington song, 'Right Side Of Wrong' is about as classic country as you can get, and Rick and the band keep it 'in the pocket'. You can't go wrong with the Haggard classic, 'Sometimes I Dream', and another Rick Jones tune, 'We've Just Learned To Break Each Other's Heart', shows that Rick is firmly entrenched in country music as it should be.

The ballad, 'Little By Little', really shines here. The lyrics reflect a relationship slowly falling apart that so many people have experienced in their lives, whether they're country music lovers or not. 'What Am I Gonna Do', by William Frizell closes out the cd almost like a Rick Jones set would end ... sad, broken hearted country fella, loses the girl ... but still gets to sing about it.

Producer/Engineer & guitar guru Doug Deveaux keeps the country vibe real on this one. Doug Johnson/steel, Andrew Affleck/bass, Ken Post/drums, Mel Aucoin/piano, Don Reed/fiddle, and Frank Woodcock/Doug Deveaux on background vocals, take you on a musical journey of first class country music played by the best. If you truly love country music, then the Honky Tonk Stardust Lounge is a great place to hang out. I think it might be up near Haliburton. No contact info. on this cd, but check out the internet or wherever Rick Jones is performing. He might even invite you to a band meeting. Buy this 11 song cd and a bottle of Jack. You won't be disappointed.



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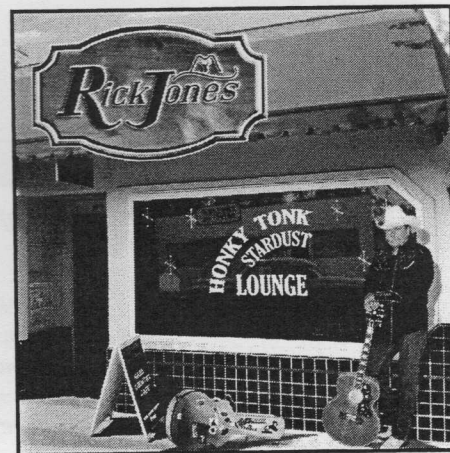
Telephone: 519-291-2049

Fax: 519-291-5065

Email: info@davidcarson.on.ca

Rick Jones/Honky Tonk Stardust Lounge

This cd by Rick Jones has been a long time coming. I used to play with Rick Jones & the Gone Country band (Alan Jackson tribute) for many years and it's great to see Rick coming into his own on this cd. The title cut is actually my favourite, and is a perfect 'lead off' to a musical trip down the yellow brick road of traditional country music. 'I'll Leave It Up To You', penned by Rick Jones, could've been easily covered by Gene Watson, Ray Price or any true traditional country artist. Great melody & harmonies on



Barn Dance Pies and Memories



Circle 8 Ranch Star Ernie King, holding the first dobro he ever made, along with guitarist George Lonsbury Sr.

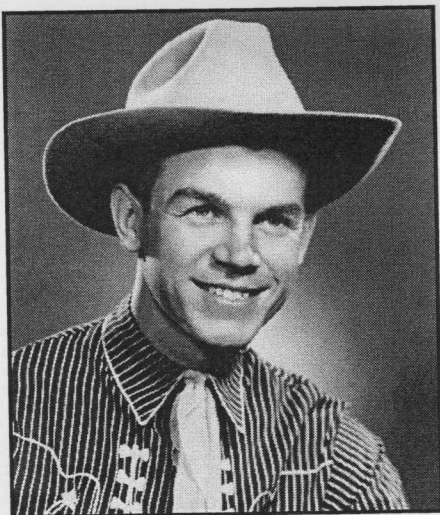


From the days of the CKNX Ranch Boys of Circle 8 Ranch (late 1950's), here is a picture of the Circlettes, featuring from L to R – Judy Bitton, Mary Elizabeth Robertson, and Carol Robertson.



Larry and Ray Mercey, at the famous Formosa Spring Gardens. (late 1950's-early 1960's.)

Legendary, & award winning, singer/songwriter, Michael T. Wall, along with Barn Dance Journal, Country Calendar columnist and dedicated country singer, Doreen Brown.



Founder and Honourary President of The Barn Dance Historical Society. Earl's birthday was on March 12th, 2017. He would have been 100 years old. His vision of newly resurrected Barn Dance Shows of traditional country music, and the Barn Dance Entertainment Museum, became a reality. As he always said... 'The show must go on'.



The Barn Dance Band featuring some of the pioneer originals from L to R - Grant Heywood, Lynn Russwurm, Mike Slauenwhite, Victor Pasowisty, Lance Russwurm, and Ron Coulthard in front. The band went through changes over the years, and this was when the Barn Dance Jamboree/Campout featured 2 bands not all that long ago.



Formerly: The Millenium Cowboys. This is the (current) Barn Dance Band featuring from L to R - Grant Heywood, Bill Norris, Al Alderson, Fred Lewis, and Doug Dietrich. The band plays all of the Barn Dance shows, and is now the designated Barn Dance Band at the Jamboree/Campout.

COUNTRY CALENDAR



by Doreen Brown
(Toronto and surrounding area)

- * **First Sunday of the month** - Warminster Legion 1 - 5pm, dancing, live band; open mic
- * **Second Sunday** - Shelburne Community Centre, dancing, bring your musical instruments, second sunday, don celsie and friends, one to five, live band, open mic dancing at army, navy, Orillia.
- * **Second Sunday** - Don Celsie and friends, 1 - 5pm, live band, open mic dancing at army, navy, Orillia, Ontario.
- * **April 30 and May 28** - Kawartha country jamboree, Fenelon township community center, Cambray, Ontario. Open mic follows guest performers; for info call 705-799-62338 or 705-745-8738.
- * **April 23** - Upcoming shows for barn dance band fundraiser at the Appin Presbyterian Church at 2:30pm, Glencoe agricultural hall, Glencoe, Ontario.
- * **May 7** - Barn dance show 2:30 in the Purple Hill Hall, Purple Hill.
- * **May 25-28** - Annual campout jamboree in Blyth arena, Blyth, Ontario.
- * **May 25 - 28** - On May 25, campers jam. The campers jam is upstairs of the arena at 1 pm. On May 26 Bluegrass Show and open stage. On May 27 barn dance show and dance. Open stage in the lobby. 10 am registration for open mic. 12pm on main stage. There will also be a silent auction and tables musical items at 9:30 am. Saturday night show will be of MC, Jim Swan, the Barn Dance Showband Al Anderson, Fred Lewis, Bill Norris, Doug Dietrich, Entertainers, Larry Mercey, Naomi Bristow, Linda Elder, Gerry Smith, and Bruce Robertson. There will be dancing after the show.
- On May 28 Gospel show.
- * **June Jamborees Hitchin' Post** - For more information go online to www.ambrec.com/hitchinpost.com or call 905-349-3765, Lakefield jamboree 705-760-3583.
- * **June 11** - Barn dance show at 3:00 pm at the commercial tavern, Maryhill, Ontario.
- * **June 16 -18** - 34th Annual Tottenham Bluegrass Festival visit their website at www.tottenhambluegrass.ca or call 647-209-2593. The line up available at this time; Chris Jones and the Night Drivers, The Lost and Found, Ray Legere and Acoustic Horizon, Bill White and White Pine, Country Road 45, Beeton Creek Rising, CR5 Bluegrass, Jim Haywood and Willow Ridge, Switchback Road, The Hit Pickers. For tickets to the Tottenham Bluegrass Festival; PO Box 922, Tottenham, Ontario L0G 1W0.
- * **Country Music Entertainment** - Come in and enjoy yourself anytime. Visitors are welcome army, navy and air force vets club, located at 765 Third Street, Mississauga, Ontario. Call 905-274-3821.
- * **23rd Annual Valley Bluegrass Festival** - in the friendly Ottawa Valley, Renfrew date in July not obtained, or line up, call for tickets 613-432-9084 or

email info@valleybluegrass.ca

or their website www.valleybluegrass.ca

* **July 7 - 9** - Cargill's Pickin' by the Pond at the Cargill Community Centre. Email pickin-bythepond@gmail.com. The food booth will be open throughout the festival. line up for w/e not available. To book a campsite call 519-364-2549.

* **Second Tuesday of the month** - Thornton Community Centre Jam at 7pm.

* **Third Thursday of the month** - Holland Landing Community Centre Jam at 7pm.

* **Friday** - 7:30 - 10:30pm, Acoustic jam night at the Royal Canadian Legion in Beeton, 55 Tecumseth Street. Call 905-936-9647.

* **Third Tuesday of the month** - REC Centre by the Honda bypass in Alliston. Previous Rosemont Jamboree at 7pm. Bring your musical instruments. There will also be dancing.

* **Fourth Wednesday of the month** - At 1:30pm in the afternoon, jam for seniors club at the REC Centre by the Honda bypass in Alliston. Everyone welcome for a fun afternoon.

* **Fourth Tuesday of the month** - Bond Head Fiddle Club in Bond Head, Ontario at 7pm at the Community Centre.

* **May 7th** - From 1 - 5pm the Classic Country Music Reunion third annual preview show and dance, located at the Trentwinds International Centre, 264 Lansdown Street East, Peterborough, Ontario. Featuring Tim Sanders, CCMR Band with Tim Sanders, Andy Schick, Frank Woodcock, Dusty King Jr., and special guests. Admission is ten dollars. Tickets CCMR, PO Box 74, Lindsay, Ontario. K9V 4R8 or call 705-878-3102 or email ccmr1992aol.com.

* **July 13 - 16** - Norwood Country Jamboree. Call 1-800-954-9998 or 705-741-6097. The address is 48 Alma Street, Norwood fair grounds, or go online at www.norwoodcountryjamboree.com. The line up for Thursday, July 13: Taylor Bradley, John Milner Arthur, Shirley Diane Bradley, Paul Wasson and Tom Mark, and Hughey Band. Friday, July 14: Jade Eagleson, Kirk Bates, Scotty Gartshore, The Swinging Doors, and Douglas Connection. Saturday, July 15: DJ Rowatt, Tracy Ryn, Dave Barber, Chuck Simms and James Ryce. Sunday, July 16: Gospel hour TBA, Suzanne Fortin and Penny Scaife.

* **July 27 - 30** - Pickin in the park go to their website at www.pickininthepark.com or contact Greg Holmes at 519-925-3037. Bring a musical instrument for w/e of music and fellowship. Open mic jam, camping, truck sale on Saturday morning. Gospel show on Sunday in Shelburne Fiddle Park.

* **Annual Bluegrass Campout** - Date not available at this time, usually in July. At the Meaford Fair Grounds, Parker Street West, Meaford, Ontario. The Queen's Bush Bluegrass Club, visit their website at www.queensbush.ca.

* **August 17 - 20** - Call 1-800-539-3353 or email info@havelockjamboree.com. On August 17: The Good Brothers, Jane Kramer and Aaron Pritchett. August 18: Justin Moore Confederate railroad. August 19: Meghan Patrick, Lee Brice, Abby Stewart, The Western Swing Authority and The Jordy Jackson Band. These artists join the ones listed here; George Canyon, Blackjack Billy, Mark Cheshnut, Patricia Conroy, Russell DeCarle, Ambush, Marshall Dane, Zachary Lucky and Messy Knott. There will be twin stages and parking.

* **August 31 - September 3** - Auction barn jamboree 13th annual jamboree. Go online at www.auctionbarnjamboree.ca. Address is Keeler Centre, 80 Division Street, Colborne, Ontario. Your

hosts, Gary Warner and Linda Grills. Live country music nightly stage shows, open mic, dancing, parking, food booth. Located at 401 West Toronto exit no.497 HWY 401 East Kingston, Ontario. Get off at the world's biggest apple.

* **September** - No date available for the Marmora Country Jamboree. Go online at www.marmorajamboree.com. For tickets and reservations, call Randy or Brenda at 613-395-077. Sound by McGarry Sound.

* **Usually August 11 - 13** - Newburgh-Camden Lions Club presents the Classic Country Music Festival at the Centreville Fairgrounds. (Line up not available.)

* **April 23** - Appearances by Tim Kennedy and the Roadhouse Boys located at the Royal Canadian Legion branch 344, 1395 Lakeshore West. Phone 416-532-8892. Doors open at 12 pm, band plays from 2 - 6pm. Come over and bring family and friends.

* **Appearances by Doreen Brown** - Some summer shows do not have line ups as of yet. The following are listed, Annual May Campout, Blyth Arena May 25 -28. June 16 - 18 Tottenham Bluegrass Festival, on children's judging panel. July 13 - 16 Norwood Country Jamboree; also same w/e Queen's Bush Bluegrass Annual w/e. July 27 - 30 Pickin in the Park. Shelburne Aug 3 - 6 Classic Country Music reunion in Trenton Centennial Park, monthly fiddle, country jams. The third Tuesday of the month; 54 plus seniors centre, 7300 Industrial Parkway, New Tecumseh REC Centre, Alliston. Call 705-435-1055. Afternoon jams monthly, same address the fourth Wednesday of the month from 1 - 5pm. For both events, bring your musical instruments for an afternoon or evening fun, dancing at both.

* **August 3 - 6** - 26th Annual Classic Country Music Reunion and Jamboree at Centennial Park in Trenton, Ontario. For more info, go online at www.ccmr.ca or call 705-878-3102. Main stage and open mic during w/e with gospel show on Sunday.

* **Every two weeks on Fridays** - Acoustic jam RCL in Beeton, Ontario. Contact for more info, 905-936-9647 or email young_ruth04@yahoo.ca.

* **20th annual barn dance campout** - www.thebardance.ca the barn dance historical society, Box 68, Wingham, N0G 2W0

* **Booking a barn dance band for fundraiser** - Call 519-530-8000 for more information.

Congratulations to those who support all country music and to which I have been a member for 25 and 20 years; am honoured to be a part of all shows and also stateside. Doing this column is a joy and a way of spreading, nationally and internationally artists, supporters and fans and new artists who join our special family of country music. Have a wonderful country music summer and will have more updates on shows the next issue.

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. N0G 2W0;
or call ~ (519) 530-8000
E-mail: webmaster@thebardance.ca

BARN DANCE CORNER

by Peter Saros

It has been almost a year now since I could last find *Nash Country Weekly* alongside *The National Enquirer* and *Star* magazines in the checkout lanes of grocery stores, right there with the bubblegum, candy bars, and pop. It was not always clear which was worse for my health; the sugary junk food or the saccharine sweetness of a country music entertainment and lifestyle magazine; both were bad for my heart and made my blood boil.

I never needed *Nash Country Weekly* the same way I never needed the empty calories of the other confectionery impulse items it was racked with. I bought it, in part, because it was there, but I also bought it because it was the last remaining print publication for country music. I grew up with a bonanza of country music magazines: *Country Music*, *Music City News*, *New Country*, *The Journal of Country Music*, *No Depression*.. Where else was I going to get my country music fix?

Beggars can't be choosers, and there was actually a reliable and respectful nod to tradition and older artists in *Nash Country Daily* despite its obvious commitment to mainstream country music. The magazine had been around for 22 years in various incarnations and was most famously known as *Country Weekly*. It had changed its name the last few years and finally disappeared altogether as a magazine on April 16th, 2016. Now the consumer country music publication exists only in a digital format at www.nashcountrydaily.com.

It was there that I found an unexpected send up of the Grand Ole Opry. It was titled "After More Than 90 Years, The Grand Ole Opry is

Still the Best Show in Town" and was written by Jim Casey, the managing editor of *Nash Country Daily*. I think it matters that Casey is a young man. He is a 2001 graduate of the University of Tennessee.

Casey celebrated how fortunate Nashville is to still have such a show. He pointed out that it should not be taken for granted. It represents a unique blend of: legendary acts, Top 40 radio stars, bluegrass artists, and groundbreaking icons.

Casey is right to champion such an institution. The Opry still pitches a big and inclusive tent. It represents the best of Nashville and country music.

As I often try to do, I like to connect what is happening in Nashville with what is going on with the Barn Dance. My point this issue is simple; The Barn Dance is our Grand Ole Opry. As Doug Dietrich pointed out in the winter edition of the *The Barn Dance Opera Journal*, "The Barn Dance society, our museum, and our shows are steeped in tradition." It is every bit worthy of veneration and admiration equal to that of the Opry. It is its own wonder.

I wanted to do for The Barn Dance with this column what Casey did for the Opry with his; celebrate and honour a musical tradition that is still going strong.

The show must go on!

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Annual Barn Dance General Meeting

Monday, April 3, 2017

7 p.m.

at the Barn Dance

Entertainment Museum

273 Josephine St.,

Wingham, Ont.

Everyone welcome.

Become an active member of the
Barn Dance Historical Society