



THE BARN DANCE OPERA JOURNAL

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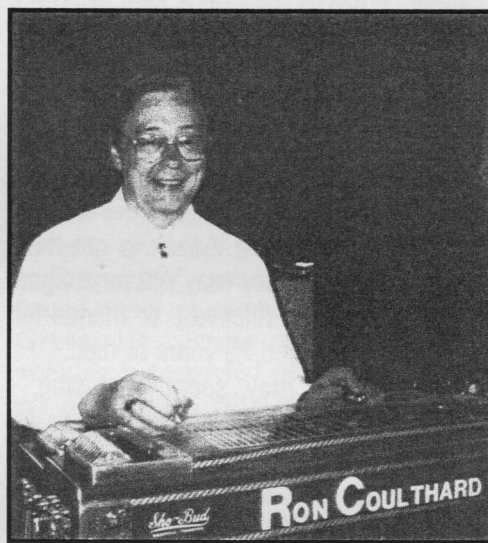
PEDAL STEEL GUITAR

A BRIEF PEEK INTO AN OFTEN MISUNDERSTOOD INSTRUMENT

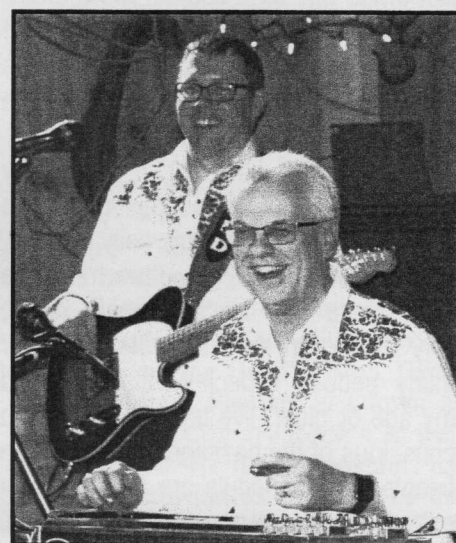
by Grant Heywood



Lloyd Bank



Ron Coulthard



Doug Dietrich and Fred Lewis

The steel guitar first originated in 19th century Hawaii, and was called a 'slack key' guitar using a steel bar and different tuning than a Spanish guitar. In the early 20th century it became a lap steel or Hawaiian guitar, and sometimes a resonator was added by companies like Dobro and National. Through the 1930's and 1940's it became a standalone when 3 or 4 legs were added, making it a console steel guitar. By the 1950's pedals and knee levers were added and the pedal steel guitar was introduced. Sometimes one, two, or even three neck steel guitars were used to accommodate the different tunings. E9th being the most common. Some of the more popular brands of pedal steel guitars include, Sho-Bud, Emmons, MSA, Fender, Mullen, and Carter. I'm not going to get into the mechanics or operation of the steel guitar here, just the apprecia-

tion and honouring of the players and accomplishments.

Pedal steel guitar in my estimation, is one of the hardest instruments to play and requires constant concentration and simultaneous coordination of both hands, both feet, and both knees. But what a beautiful sound they create, for those who are masters of their instrument. Almost anyone who has spent time learning how to play pedal steel guitar, usually evokes a certain kind of magical sound unlike any other instrument.

Over the years the Barn Dance has been blessed with many steel guitar players including, Danny Grummet, Lloyd Bank, Ron Coulthard, and currently Barn Dance Music Director/steel guitarist, Doug Dietrich. I have always had a fascination with the instrument myself, and I've had the pleasure of sharing the stage with

some of Canada's best steel players, including ; Mike Weber (Joe Firth, and the Weber Family), Pee Wee Charles (Gordon Lightfoot, Western Swing Authority), Al Brisco (Carol Baker, Steel Gtr. Club of Canada), Doug Johnson (award winning steel guitarist), Dale Rivard (excellent steel player), Tony Leggio (Wilf Carter), Steve Smith (Tommy Hunter), George Webb (traditional country stylist), Kim Deschamp (Blue Rodeo), Burke Carrol (every style imaginable), Gord Cottrill (Stompin' Tom Connors band), and Rusty Walker (classic country steel), to name a few. Hats off to Bob Lucier, Ollie Strong, Al Bragg, Mike Keates, and any others I may have missed. Each player's particular style is compelling to hear, as they are all unique and have an identifiable sound. Every one of the steel players I have listed, are gifted musicians and

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The Editor Speaks

by Grant Heywood

We've all heard those phrases that are time related, such as, *better late than never*, or *make up for lost time*, or *in the nick of time*, or even *time is of the essence*. It seems, during these uncertain times that time itself is more abundant, or at least that is the perception. I have to admit that I feel I have more time on my hands, but maybe that's because I'm retired from my day job.

I sometimes find myself asking my wife what day it is, as this pandemic situation has altered my daily routine, plus my weekends are often free time now, since I'm not performing music very often. I'm sure it is the same for many people, especially those around my age or older. We tend to be ever so conscious of the passage of time. Those people on a schedule are forever committed to the regimentation of time. There are those who believe that humans are prisoners of time itself.

So what is time? Time is represented through change, such as the circular motion of the moon around the earth. According to theoretical physicist Carlo Rovelli, time is an illusion. Our naïve perception of it's flow doesn't correspond to physical reality. Actually, time is a concept that was invented prior to 1,500 BC in ancient Egypt where they used sundials to track the rising and setting of the sun. Eventually, time was divided into seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, and years. That is the format of time that we live by today.

To a degree, I have always been fascinated by the concept of time. I tend to

write about time related situations or events in many of my songs. I'm also intrigued by the concept of quantum theory and it's relation to time. For instance, the study of quantum mechanics is at the heart of the Quantum-Nano Centre in Waterloo. But that's a whole other subject.

Time is however, how we define change, such as the passage of the seasons, aging, or even travel. In many science fiction movies, time is sometimes irrelevant. An example would be when crew or passengers on a spaceship are put into suspended animation or frozen, until they arrive at their destination light years away that might take years to get there. But because they are frozen, they have not aged when they arrive at their destination. Not only that, because of the passage of time it took to get there (eg. 25 years), they may not have aged, but their family, relatives, or friends left behind, have aged 25 years or died.

I know it may seem confusing. I might suggest watching one of my favourite movies of all time, *The Time Machine* by H.G. Wells. By reading the book or watching the movie, you will be able to better grasp the concept of time and time travel itself, which seems far-fetched now, but could become a reality in the future.

We used to be able to tell time by the position of the sun. Then along came the clock with its gears, springs, and jewels and hands. It was Thomas Tompian of England who was the father of the first clock ever made in the late 1600's. Clocks took many forms and the Swiss became famous for their clock and watch making skills. These were commonly known as analog clocks and soon gave way to the digital age of tracking time. Watches are still used today, but with the proliferation of handheld cell phones, many people just don't use them anymore. They've be-

come somewhat of a fashion statement.

Well... by the clock on the wall, it looks like my time is up. How time flies. I barely have enough time to tell everyone that it won't be too long before this pause in our lives (Covid-19 pandemic), will be behind us. And hopefully, next year we will be hearing the timeless countdown of Barn Dance host, Jim Swan, as he introduces the next Barn Dance show. We'll all be together again for that time honoured tradition of being entertained by the Barn Dance Band, special guests, and good old country music. Time is on our side. Hope to see you soon at the next Barn Dance show.

Comments? Please contact:

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2021 COMING EVENTS

Date	Event Name	Place
May, 2021	23rd Annual Campout Jamoree	Blyth Arena and Campgrounds, Blyth
June 19, 2021	Barn Dance Show - 7:00 p.m.	Elma-Logan Arena, Monkton

Continued on Page 1

share a common bond with each other. It is particularly evident when Paul Weber presents the 'Men of Steel' show as an annual event at the Commercial Tavern in Maryhill.

My love for steel guitar started when I was young, and I was surprised when my wife Jeanette told me that when she was younger, she had taken up lap steel guitar lessons from the Conservatory, when they came to Wingham. We still have her National Lap Steel to this day. When I became interested in rock music, I was always intrigued by the bands that included steel guitar in their sound, such as Poco, Pure Prairie League, The Flying Burrito Bros., Jerry Garcia of the Grateful Dead, and others. Even many of the rock and country rock groups of the 60's & 70's included pedal steel guitar including Elton John's *Tiny Dancer*, Crosby, Stills & Nash's *Teach Your Children*, The Eagles *Best of My Love*, Neil Young's *Out on the Wknd.*, and even Led Zeppelin's *That's The Way*. (which I am currently recording for a cd with Doug Dietrich on steel).

Besides many of our famous Canadian pedal steel guitarists, I am going to list some of the more famous steel players from the United States, many who made their mark in Nashville. This is just a partial list of some of the pioneers and great steel players of our time. I don't have room to list each and every steel player so I have taken the liberty to list most of the predominant ones. I know I may have missed some of your favourites so please understand I don't have space to list them all. I believe this list includes most of the more recognizable names from a vast list of famous pedal steel guitarists. Only a handful are still living and playing to this day. I'm sure there are many more on the horizon to carry the torch.

In no particular order:

Jerry Byrd: The influential master of touch and tone. **Leon McAuliffe:** Composer of the classic instrumental, *'Steel Guitar Rag*. **Alvino Rey:** Father of the steel guitar, sound effects and tuning innovator. **Speedy West:** Steel's foremost showman. **Buddy Emmons:** Major stylist, tuning inno-

vator, and unique jazz improvisation master. Emmons was the world's foremost steel guitarist for a quarter century and he won the Academy of Country Music *Best Steel Guitarist Award* 9 times. He also was the innovator of Emmons Steel Guitars. **Jimmy Day:** He influenced hundreds of aspiring player for 3 decades, and was a true honky tonk steel guitarist. **Ralph Mooney:** He created the 'Mooney' take off and 'chicken pickin' before such styles had names. So uniquely original that he remains unduplicated to this day. **Don Helms:** He was the steel guitarist for Hank Williams with the Drifting Cowboys. He was a traditional steel pioneer for 4 decades. **Roy Wiggins:** During the 40's & 50's, he was heard on 75 million records sold. He inspired a generation of players. Smooth & artful simplicity was his strength. **Pete Drake:** Award winning innovator of the 'talking steel' sound. He also produced many platinum albums. **Lloyd Green:** He became one of the most popular & respected pedal steel players of all time, with his E9th tuning. For a ¼ century he appeared on thousands of records with artists such as Johnny Paycheck, Charley Pride, Faron Young, Johnny Cash, Bob Dylan, The Byrds, Don Williams, The Monkees and Paul McCartney, to name a few. The king of tone, taste and style, he garnered the monicker 'Mr. Nashville Sound'. **Tom Brumley:** His identifiable sound on Buck Owens *'Together Again'* is timeless. He played with the Buckaroos as well as Ricky Nelson's Stone Canyon Band. In his 30 year legacy, he was also responsible for influencing country & rock. **John Hughey:** He backed up Conway Twitty, Vince Gill, and many others. He became the master of the 'bar shiver' He was known for creating a musical emotion with haunting eloquence. **Johnny Sibert:** Johnny was a session and road player stylist with Carl Smith, Lefty Frizzel, Jimmy Dickens, Gene Autry, Johnny Bond, and The Everly Bros. throughout the 50's & 60's. **Paul Franklin:** He is known as 'steel's' preeminent Session Artist. He has advanced pedal steel guitar playing for 3 decades and has recorded with every major country vo-

calist in the past 30 years. **Curly Chalker:** He was responsible for advancing steel guitar into pop & jazz music. He developed cascading chords with the speed of single string riffs, known as the 'Chalker Sound'. **Herb Remington:** Swing style pioneer. He blended the Hawaiiin sound with western music. Herb was a recording artist and composer of the classic *'Remington Ride'*. **Santo & Johnny:** In 1959, this duo recorded Steel guitar's only Gold Record, while introducing the instrument to the rock & roll genre'. Heard in countless movies & commercials, it's been steel's only Grammy winner (1999). The ever popular instrumental, *'Sleepwalk'*, made them international stars. **Jaydee Maness:** He has won 18 ACM Awards and is the steel player on motion pictures TV's *'Dukes of Hazzard'*, Ray Steven's *'Misty'*, Eric Clapton's *'Tears In Heaven'*, and has been a member with the Desert Rose Band. **Sneaky Pete Kleinow:** He introduced steel guitar to 'country rock', with The Flying Burrito Bros. (band member, Gram Parsons is known as the 'Father of Country Rock'), as well as The Byrds. He is an innovator, using fuzz distortion as an effect on the steel guitar, and is an icon in rock & roll music circles. **Rusty Young:** Steel player/leader of the country rock band Poco. Nominated for a Grammy, Rusty was the first pedal steel player to win a place in Guitar Player Magazine's coveted *'Gallery of the Greats'*.

Clutching a steel bar with a fistful of fingerpicks, Barbara Mandrell & Sarah Jory, are two famous female steel players to be reckoned with as well.

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

WHO REMEMBERS THIS?

by Grant Heywood

Recorded music has been around for well over 100 years. How we listen to our music has taken many forms over the course of 100 years. The jukebox or nickelodeon, was for many years, the only way you could listen to music outside of radio or record players.

In 1877, Thomas Edison invented the phonograph, a coin-operated music machine that played music from a wax cylinder. On November 23, 1889, Louis Glass installed a coin-operated phonograph in his Palais Royale Saloon located in San Francisco. It was called "nickel-in-a-slot" because that was the amount of money needed to make a selection. Later, the term was shortened to nickelodeon. In 1906, John Gabel invented the "Automatic Entertainer," a music machine that replaced the wax cylinder with 78-rpm disc recordings and offered several selections of records that could be played. Gabel's Automatic Entertainer dominated the market until the mid-1920s.

When Automated Musical Instruments Inc. (AMI) developed an amplifier in 1927, the popularity of the jukebox surged. It was especially popular in the illegal speakeasies of the Prohibition Era because it provided a cheap form of entertainment. AMI sold 50,000 of its amplified machines in one year, bringing to life the age of the jukebox.

During the Depression, record sales plummeted from \$75 million in 1929 to \$5 million in 1933. The growing popularity of the jukebox and the purchases by store owners that went along with it resurrected the waning music business, and by 1938, the industry had resurfaced at \$25 million in sales. By 1940, there were well over 400,000 jukeboxes in use in the U.S. and Canada.

Three names were made during

the 1940s and they remain synonymous with the juke-box industry. Seeburg, Rock-Ola, and Wurlitzer all manufactured jukeboxes at this time. Each company began by creating juke-boxes in the likeness of the radio, but in the 1940s, jukebox design came into its own with the help of a few great designers employed by the companies. Perhaps the best known is Paul Fuller, the designer behind the Wurlitzer models that pushed Wurlitzer to the top of the industry in the late-1940s and 1950s. With the use of rotating lights, art deco styled cabinets, and bubble tubes, Wurlitzer models were works of art. The most popular design was the Wurlitzer 1015 that was introduced in 1946 and became the biggest selling jukebox in history. In its original run, it sold a total of 56,246 boxes. In 1948, Seeburg offered its own innovation to the jukebox industry with the introduction of its Select-O-Matic 100, the first jukebox to include 100 selections. This technology allowed popular music to be played in the same venue as regional country, folk, jazz, and blues music—a variety that changed the music industry and its development completely. By 1956, jukeboxes with 200 selections were being manufactured.

Just as the proliferation of fast-food restaurants such as McDonald's and other chain restaurants spelled doom for mom-and-pop establishments, the taped music played in the new gathering places signaled the end of the jukebox's glory. The introduction of 8 track and cassette tapes, and the declining production of 45-rpm records, also added to the decreased popularity of jukeboxes.

By the mid-1970s, the number of jukeboxes had fallen to 225,000.

The jukebox industry waned

through the 1980s until a growing antiques market and new technology revived the industry. Refurbished classic models are collectables, and a Wurlitzer 1015 that first sold for \$750 is now approximately \$12,000. CD technology has breathed new life into the primary market, creating new models that house 100 CDs totaling 1,000 song selections. Since the late 1980s, the number of jukeboxes has crept back up to 250,000. A remake of the Wurlitzer 1015 is even being manufactured by Wurlitzer of Germany. Rock-Ola machines are also still produced as well.

The most played song ever, on jukebox's was Elvis Presley's 'Hound Dog'. I remember going to Lee's Restaurant in Wingham, and they had a flashy jukebox with many of the latest hits. Someone would always drop coins into it while we listened to the music, eating our fries with a coke. Then there was also the personal jukebox that was a small chrome box attached to the wall in every sitting booth at the restaurant. You could make personal selections by flipping through the many song titles, like a rolodex.

I have friends who still have a jukebox in their man cave or rec room. Even the late Stompin' Tom Connors had a jukebox in his house with all his favourite songs. Some of my musician friends would be on the search for a speaker from a jukebox as they were always high quality speakers.

Now that cd sales have waned, so has the jukebox. And like so many other inventions, it is just another antique in the history of recorded music. To quote a song from Mary Hopkins... 'Those were the days my friend, we thought they'd never end.'

CANADA'S SINGING NEWFOUNDLANDER

by Grant Heywood

TILL THE ANGELS COME FOR ME

My friends say Michael T. when ya gonna start slowin' down
They ask me when am I gonna stop travelling town to town,
just tell 'em, I love my fans and country, And I'm gonna sing country
gospel songs,
'till the angels come for me.

I've been lucky making my living at something I love,
I thank all my loyal fans, and thank the lord above,
I've sung in clubs, on tv shows, on the Opry in Tennessee,
and I'm gonna sing country gospel songs,
'till the angels come for me.

When my time has come, and my last song's been sung,
I'll tell everybody just where I want to go.
Take me back to new-found-land.
That's where it all began,
so angels there may serenade my soul.

Ya my friends say Michael T.
when ya gonna start slowin' down?
They ask me don't cha ever get tired travelling all around,
just tell 'em I love my fans and country, and I'm gonna sing country
gospel songs, 'till the angels come for me.
(come for me, come for me)
I'm gonna be singing country gospel songs,
'till the angels-come-for-me.

Words & music by hal johnson/Michael t. wall/
don mc'han 2019 copyright bmi/socan



Here is a song by the legendary 'Singing Newfoundlander', Michael T. Wall. Michael has made appearances all over the world and was inducted into the Australian Country Music Hall of Fame, as well as America's Old-Time Country Music Hall of Fame in Anita, Iowa. Michael T. has many albums to his credit and 'Till The Angels Come For Me' will most likely be included in an upcoming release. You can order any of Michael T. Wall's music directly from his Country Road Records, P.O. Box 715, Pickering, ON, LIV 3T3, or contact him at mr.nfld99@gmail.com.



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BARN DANCE NEWS TIDBITS

Radio host Steven Todd interviews Grant Heywood about his career on FAQ on CKMS 102.7 FM Radio Waterloo. Part 1 & 2 have already been aired and can be heard on a link. Part 3 & 4, to be aired on or near Oct. 14, & Nov. 14. Go to CKMS 102.7 FM, FAQ Grant Heywood Interview w/Steven Todd for the link to previous shows and to listen online. On your computer go to CKMS 102.7 FM FAQ Grant Heywood interview w/Steven Todd, to listen to live radio or previous shows online incl. Dianne Ditner as well.

*A Big Thank You
of Appreciation*

The Barn Dance Historical Society Board of Directors, musicians, and volunteers, thank our Barn Dance friends & fans for their patience and perseverance during these uncertain times. Your unwavering support in past years has kept our Barn Dance country shows alive. Our hope is when this pandemic is over, we can once again return to providing first class country entertainment for everyone. Please be safe, and stay healthy.

MUSIC & MEMORIES



Arriving at a gig in the early 1950's. Left to right: Bill Simms, Jack Kingston, Les Dowd, Earl Heywood with cigar. Lloyd Bank and Maurice Bolyer



Left to right: Hank Bedard, emcee Johnny Brent, and Reg Bitton on CKNX TV's Circle 8 Ranch



Left to right: Michael T. Wall, Tommy Hunter, and Tommy Common backstage at CBC TV's Country Hoedown, early 1960's.



Toronto Daily Star 1957, left to right: Larry Mercey 17, Lloyd Mercey 11, with their father, Leonard Mercey. Were all born in Hanover on the same day, December 12. Ray Mercey chose another date.

THE BARN DANCE MUSEUM

The Barn Dance Museum at 273 Josephine St. Wingham, is **temporarily closed** until further notice. Sorry for the inconvenience.



Country Calendar

by Doreen Brown
(Toronto and
surrounding area)

Country Calendar updates
have been postponed. May
everyone stay healthy!

Country Cheers,
Doreen Brown



*Barn Dance columnist and country artist
seen here with country star Gail Davies at
the Fremont N.B. Awards Show last year.*

INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE 1950'S

by Grant Heywood

♪ Mid 1950's average house
cost was approx. \$15,000 -
\$18,000 depending where you
lived.

♪ Average income was
\$3,500 - \$5,000

♪ Gasoline was 25 to 30
cents a gallon

♪ Average automobile cost
was approx. \$2,000

♪ Average price for a quart of
milk 50 cents

♪ Average cost for a loaf of
bread 25 cents

♪ Postage stamp average
was 5 cents

♪ 1953 Alan Freed introduced
Elvis Presley on radio

♪ 1951 Alan Freed first used
the term *rock and roll* in Cleve-
land, Ohio

♪ Cowboy & country music
gave way to honky tonk and
rockabilly music

♪ Popular toys: hula hoop,
Silly Putty, Magic 8 Ball, Mr.
Potato Head, Frisbee, pogo
stick

♪ First modern credit card
(Diners) 1951

♪ Heart pacemaker invented
1950

♪ First human organ trans-
plant (kidney) 1950

♪ Polio vaccine 1955

♪ NASA was established in
1958

♪ Super Glue 1951

♪ Chrysler introduced power
steering to automobiles in
1951

♪ Colour television was intro-
duced commercially to the
public in 1951

♪ I Love Lucy was the most
popular television show from
1951-1957

♪ Other popular television
shows from the 1950's in-
clude, Gunsmoke, Leave It To
Beaver, Ed Sullivan, Sea Hunt,
Arthur Godfrey's Talent
Scouts, The Honeymooners,
Red Skelton Show, Jack Ben-
ny, You Bet Your Life, Dragnet

♪ Most popular country mu-
sic artist through most of the
1950's, Hank Williams



Ernie King

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BARN DANCE CORNER

by Peter Saros

I am not historian enough of Ontario's old time fiddling history to know if the story of Al Cherny catching the first train out of Medicine Hat, Alberta bound for Wingham, Ontario to become part of the booming musical empire revolving around the CKNX Barn Dance – at the behest of Earl Heywood who needed a fiddler - is true or not, but I do know that fiddle music has forever played a key role in the birth narratives of country music both in Canada and the United States.

Eck Robertson was a Texas fiddler who is credited with delivering the first country music recording in 1922 when he and fellow fiddler Henry Gilliland recorded an old-time duet of "Arkansas Traveler" for Victor Records in New York. The flip side contained Robertson's solo recording of "Sallie Gooden." Hank Williams was obsessed with this recording and Country Historian Tony Russell considers it, "... not just good for its time, it is great for all time, a small but perfect masterpiece of American music."

Fiddlin' John Carson recorded for Okeh records and was the first musician to record in the U.S south. His recording of "The Little Old Log Cabin in the Lane" was recorded by Ralph Peer and furniture salesman Polk Brockman in Atlanta, Georgia in 1923.

Uncle Jimmy Thompson fiddled and appeared with George D. Hay on the "WSM-AM Barn Dance" in 1925 taking listener's requests for an hour long broadcast. This fiddling would be

looked back at as the first ever performance on what would become known to the world as the Grand Ole Opry.

Ontario has its own deep history of fiddle music competitions and performers dating back to the 1920s. It was in August of 1951 that the first Fiddleville competition was held in Shelburne, Ontario. It was broadcast coast-to-coast on the CBC by radio host Don Fairbairn. The winner of that inaugural contest was Mel Lavigne, member of the Barn Dance Gang. Other winners included famous CKNX alumni such as: Ward Allen, Victor Pasowisty, Al Cherny and Graham Townsend. This event evolved into the famous Canadian Open Championship Old Time Fiddle Contest. The championship was re-branded in 2016 as the Heritage Music Festival.

Old time fiddle music is new again in mainstream music because rising Appalachian country star Tyler Childers has just released an album of fiddle tunes titled "A Long History of Violence." The final cut on the album is the title track. It is an emotionally raw and honest take on racial injustice in the United States. Childers also posted a six minute video-message on You Tube challenging his "white rural listeners" to empathize with victims of police brutality and injustice. It is a courageous and brave statement. The entire video can be seen at: https://youtu.be/QQ3_AJ5Ysx0.

As all of this plays out I can't help but be reminded the first epi-

sode of Ken Burns' country music documentary titled "The Rub" where he explored how friction between black and white culture intertwined in the American South sparked the birth of country music.

The show must go on...

BARN DANCE JOURNAL

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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.
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