



THE BARN DANCE OPERA JOURNAL

Official Publication of:

The Barn Dance Historical Society Inc.



Price: \$2.00 (tax incl.)

A Not For Profit Organization

Barn Dance Website: www.thebardance.ca

LORETTA LYNN, QUEEN OF COUNTRY MUSIC 1932-2022

by Grant Heywood

Loretta Lynn's country music career spanned 6 decades. She was named after film actress, Loretta Young. Loretta Lynn was born in Butcher Hollow, Kentucky to coal mining parents, and was one of eight children. Her youngest sibling was Crystal Gayle. In 1948, at age 14, Loretta married Oliver 'Doolittle' Lynn, became pregnant, and they moved to Washington State. After singing with a local group, The Trailblazers, she recorded her first song, Honky Tonk Girl in 1960.

Her popularity grew in the 1960's with hits like *Fist City*, *You're Lookin' At Country*, and later on, *Coal Miner's Daughter*, an autobiographical song which also became a 1970's hit movie. She joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1962. She said she was best friends with Patsy Cline and Tammy Wynette during different times. Lynn said, "Best friends are like husbands. You only need one at a time." *You Ain't Woman Enough (To Take My Man)*, made her the 1st country female artist to write a #1 hit, in 1967. *Don't Come Home A Drinkin' (With Lovin' On Your Mind)*, was her first #1 country hit.

Early on, Loretta befriended the Wilburn Brothers, and ended up in legal battles over publishing rights to her songs. She also had great success as a duet partner with Conway Twitty. Women soon grew to love Loretta, as she was likely one of the first female country artists to take on women's issues, with controversial songs like, *Rated X*, about double standards facing divorced women. Also, *Wing Upon Your Horns*, about the loss of teenage virginity, and *The Pill*, about a wife and mother liberated by the birth control pill.

Loretta had 6 children with lifelong husband 'Doo'. She was the most awarded female country artist of the 1970's, and eventually racked up 16 number 1 hit singles, and 10



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The Editor Speaks

by Grant Heywood

Well, that was a sunny, warm, dry summer we just had. It was great for those who loved going to the cottage and beach, and it was a bonus for those not having to mow that brown, crispy lawn.

Everyone has finally got the go ahead to finally get out and enjoy life, after a two year or so, hiatus. My calendar was very full, with blues, rock, and country gigs. It felt good to finally play in front of an appreciative live audience again. Enjoying the benefits of music with good friends again is something we sometimes take for granted.

Our first Barn Dance show of the year was May 1st, at the Purple Hill Country Music Hall, near Thorndale. It was great to see so many enthusiastic friends and fans of The Barn Dance, with an all star lineup of guests who were equally excited to perform. Purple Hill hosts, George & Anna Taylor, seemed grateful to be able to once again present top notch entertainment at their place once again.

The Barn Dance show at the Drayton Theatre, that was cancelled due to Covid, finally took place on July 23d. The afternoon matinee show was sold out, and the evening performance filled the floor seats and a good portion of the balcony. Jim Swan was in his element as he introduced, and brought on star entertainers, Larry Mercey, Paul Weber, Randy Satchell, and Dianne

Ditner. The Barn Dance Band was in fine form, and as I looked out at the first few rows of the audience, they just seemed spellbound.

I took the opportunity to sit on the bench outside the main doors of the theatre, after the matinee performance. Folks would stop to chat about the show or the old days of past Barn Dances, my Mom & Dad, CKNX, and Barn Dance musicians of yesteryear. I had several comments from some folks about how professional the show, the entertainers, and the musicians were. I said we played as professionally as we always do. I told them it's because we performed in a theatre environment that was built with great acoustics for plays and musical performances. It's also a place where the seats are a little more comfortable and the sound and lighting crew know what the room is capable of.

Our next Barn Dance show will take place where the original CKNX Barn Dance originated, in Wingham, Ontario. The show will be presented at the Wingham Town Hall Heritage Theatre, on Sunday, November 13th. The all star lineup includes, Paul Weber, Naomi Bristow, Hector Sturgeon, and Sue Weber Bell. There is only one performance, so tickets will likely sell quickly. We look forward to seeing Barn Dance members and friends, once again enjoying traditional country music with Barn Dance host and MC, Jim Swan setting the mood and introducing the stars.

Next year, 2023, will be the 95th anniversary of the original CKNX Barn Dance. It started way back in 1937, when CKNX Radio owner/founder, W.T. Doc Cruickshank, brought local

talent to the radio airwaves on a Barn Dance radio show, that eventually toured all over Southwestern Ontario, and became a great success story as Canada's Largest & Longest Travelling Barn Dance.

With all that's happened over the past few years, it's been a very long wait. Music is therapy and the Barn Dance is the medicine. Hope to see those smiling faces once again at the next Barn Dance show.

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or send a message on Facebook.

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2022 COMING EVENTS

Date	Event Name	Place
Sun., Nov. 13, 2022	Barn Dance Show	Wingham Town Hall Centre, Wingham, ON
Date T.B.D	Final Campout Jamboree	Blyth Arena & Campgrounds, Blyth, ON

Continued on Page 1

number 1 albums on her own, from over 160 self penned songs. She always advocated for ordinary women, and her songs reflected that. She won 3 Grammy Awards and was nominated 18 times. Loretta won many awards and accolades including, Best Female Vocalist, Entertainer of the Year, Vocal Duo of the Year, Lifetime Achievement, Kennedy Center Honours, and she also received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Obama. A statue of Loretta Lynn, was erected on 'Icon Walk' outside the Ryman Auditorium.

Later in life, Loretta experienced several health issues. Husband, 'Doo' died in '96. Loretta still had the desire to continue performing for her fans, but died in her sleep at age 90, on Oct. 4th, at her home in Hurricane Mills, Tenn. A true country music legend remembered for her music as well as her tenacity for standing up for women. A huge loss to traditional country music as we know it.

As a note: If you ever get the chance to see local singer, Amberley Beatty, I highly recommend it. She has been on the Barn Dance stage and literally embodies, and captures the essence of Loretta Lynn in her performances. You will agree that she does Loretta proud, as I have witnessed this from onstage myself.

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*

FROM THERE TO HERE

by Grant Heywood

I remember back when I first started listening to music. I'd play some of my Dad's 45 single records, and often play the 33 1/3 long-play vinyl records too. Everything from big band music, to swing, country and bluegrass. But I really got interested in collecting records when my sister bought me the first Beatles album. I eventually amassed quite a collection of 45's and vinyl albums that I still have to this day.

When 8 track tape cartridges took over, you could play your personal favourite music in the car. That is, until you pulled it out of the tape player and the tape would get jammed and then fly all over the place. Then it was cassettes, then cd's and then, came the free downloading off of the internet, followed by streaming services. Today, a professional musician must tour to make up for lost revenue from low cd sales. It's a pity that such good musical talent goes to waste because music has become a free commodity, and streaming services pay a fraction of what musicians used to get paid for airplay.

But moaning and groaning won't bring back the good old days. In the early 1900's music was just beginning to evolve into homes, via early phonographs and the parlour piano. Radio soon changed all of that, and phonograph players made advancements. One thing that stayed the same, was the family piano. Many piano companies all over North America advertised the necessity of having a piano in every home.

And what good is a piano, without having the musical notes to guide you in playing the music. So the invention of sheet music became an industry standard. It was quite prevalent for musical notation and scores throughout the 17 and 18th century. The very first piece of sheet music was developed on a printing press in 1473. By the early 1900's,

sheet music became widely used by musicians and would be musicians.

Throughout the 1930's, on through to the early 1960's, sheet music sales blossomed with the advent of radio and recordings. The late Barn Dance Pioneer, Lynn Russwurm, as well as my Dad, collected stacks of sheet music and eventually, albums turned into sheet music books. I still love to look at some of the vintage pieces of sheet music I have personally collected. Although there is not much value attached to them, it is nice to peruse through sheet music of Earl Heywood, Wilf Carter, Eddy Arnold, Wilma Lee & Stony Cooper, Hank Snow, Roy Acuff, and even the Beatles. Sheet music was a must if you wanted to learn to play the popular songs of the day. Most copies of sheet music back then sold for 10 or 25 cents.

Today, sheet music is still available, but other sources have taken over. If you need music and/or lyrics, just visit the internet. If you want to learn a song directly, then go to YouTube. You can even change the key of the song online. I still like the hard copy of sheet music. They usually have the artist or a picture related to the song on the front page. The performing artist and songwriter(s) are always listed, as well as the publishing company information. Sometimes, fans would get the autograph of the artist on a piece of sheet music.

My cousin, auctioneer, Bob Heywood, once auctioned off the first songbook of Earl Heywood for almost \$40. It sold for small change back in the 1950's. Times may have changed but I still get enjoyment from copies of old sheet music and vinyl records. Kind of like owning a vintage automobile, but a lot less costly. But that's a story for another time.

WHO REMEMBERS THE MILLS SISTERS

by Grant Heywood



Singer/guitarist Mitch Barker, with June Mills, performing at the Little Texas Roadhouse in Kingston, Ontario.

Recently, I advertised a steel guitar for sale, previously owned by a dear friend who passed away unexpectedly. A young musician from Kingston, Mitch Barker, messaged me about buying the steel guitar. Upon further messages, I discovered Mitch is a popular singer/guitarist, who performs traditional country music around the Kingston area.

After much discussion, I found out that Mitch sometimes shares the stage with a friend, singer, June Nixon. To my surprise, I find out that June used to sing with her sister Joan as The Mills Sisters, and they performed in the late 1950's on CKNX radio, Circle 8 Ranch & Western Roundup on CKNX t.v., and yes... even the Barn Dance.

The Mills Sisters lived near Auburn, Ontario, and listened to CKNX Radio on the farm. June and Joan played piano, their parents bought them a guitar as a

Christmas gift, from fiddler, Rossy Mann, of The Ranch Boys. The parents mentioned that June and Joan sang together, so Rossy had them come over to his home to have them sing. Rossy was impressed and arranged an audition over the phone with Barn Dance M C, Johnny Brent. They soon made guest appearances on CKNX radio in Wingham, and a Barn Dance performance in Goderich. They eventually went on to future appearances, with The Ranch Boys on CKNX t.v.'s Circle 8 Ranch Show. June reminisced about meeting Earl Heywood, Ernie King, Slim Boucher and other Barn Dance luminaries. The Mills Sisters soon became quite popular in the area at that time.

Later in life, Joan became a teacher and June worked in Waterloo. They performed once more in 1964, on the CKNX TV show, Western Roundup, then went on with their careers and eventually



June & Joan Miller, The Miller Sisters, with a Barn Dance performer, Larry Mercey at a Barn Dance Show in Goderich, 1958.

marriage. The Mills Sisters don't sing together anymore. Joan lives in London and June is in Kingston. June continued to sing until her husband passed away in 2016. She soon revived her singing career and continues to perform at large open mic shows, jamborees, and local public radio. June has been nominated to the Land of Lakes Traditional Music Hall of Fame and currently has a CD of some of her most requested songs.

It was a special treat to meet both June and her partner Jay, when they recently picked up Mitch's steel guitar for him that he purchased. Both June and Mitch perform around the Kingston area, and sometimes together. It's uncanny how a piece of Barn Dance history presents itself in such a strange way. Who would've thought this would happen. Maybe it'll happen on a Barn Dance show sometime. Such a small world indeed.



Country Calendar

by Doreen Brown
(Toronto and surrounding area)

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

Country Cheers,
Doreen Brown



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**BARN DANCE
JOURNAL**

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Business Card Size - \$25.00 plus HST
1/4 Page - \$75.00 plus HST
1/2 page - \$150.00 plus HST
Full Page (inside) - \$275.00 plus HST
Full Page (back cover) - \$300.00 plus HST

All prices are per issue.
E-mail - webmaster@thebardance.ca

NEWS & NOTES

by Grant Heywood

♪ Kevin Westphal, aka 'The Canuck', has been busy recording and shooting video for some upcoming projects. His first new recording with video, will soon be available on YouTube. The song is called A typical Day on the 401, and you guessed it, it's all about everything that can happen on highway 401, ... and I mean everything!! Kevin is a great entertainer and songwriter who has been on a few Barn Dance shows in the past. Kevin hopes with enough radio airplay, and people watching his YouTube presentation, he can garner a bigger fan base and perform at several fairs, events, concerts, ... and even Legions, in the coming months.

Kevin's past, 'almost hits', include, The Gas Song (which had international success), The Beer Store, Lucknow Now, The CAN-ADA song, Pickled Eggs, and many more. He's currently working on an unplugged version of his famous Toronto Maple Leafs anthem, Pucknut Daddy. Top notch production from producer, Fred Smith, and video assistance from, Tyler Westphal, and Kevin Carroll, and a cameo performance from Canada's premier drummer, Tom Snarey, this could really put 'The Canuck' in the spotlight.

To hear or view any of the videos or songs by **The Canuck**, just go to:

Kevin Westphal YouTube



Doreen Brown, Grant Heywood, Joe McAlly at the 2001 Barn Dance Campout Jamboree.



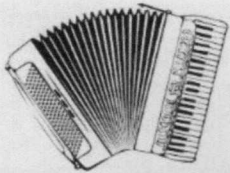
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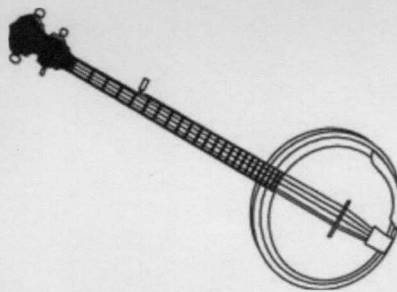
An off stage picture at The Barn Dance Campout Jamboree around 2003. Left to right; Hank Bedard, Walter Ostanek, Wayne Otterbein. All are barn dance pioneer Award recipients.



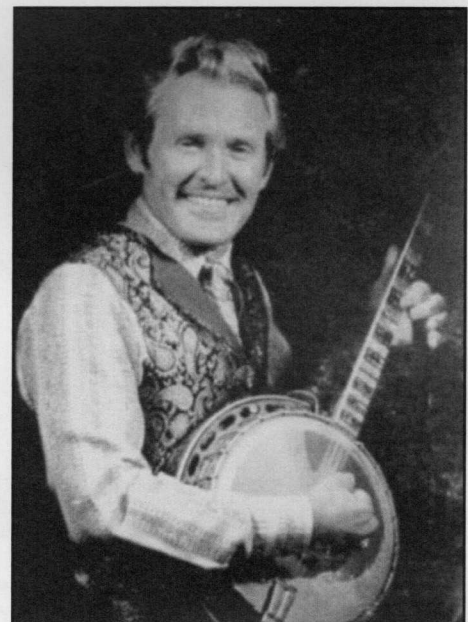
Barn Dance Fiddle Show at the Wingham Legion (late 1990's). Left to right; Paul Faith, Flora Martin, Michael T. Wall, Graham Townsend and Ron Coulthard.



Barn Dance banjo picker extraordinaire, Maurice Bolyer.



Bob Wood, accordion player on CKNX t.v. show, Western Roundup.



MEMORIES



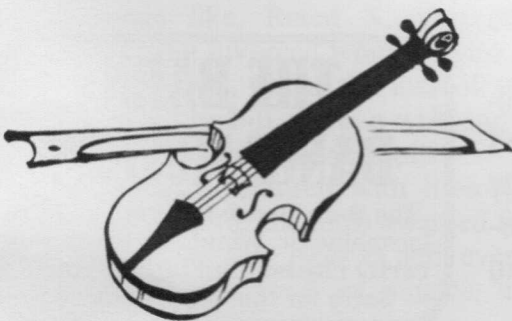
Roy Acuff and Earl Heywood, backstage at The Grand Ole Opry in 1950.



Circle 8 Ranch Boys. Left to right; Hughie Elder, Don and Cora Robertson, Rossy Mann, Sharon Strong, Len Love and Ernie King.



Barn Dance show for Huron Homecoming, mid 1960's. Left to right; Earl Heywood, Mel Lavigne, Don Steele and Bill Mankiss.



BARN DANCE CORNER

by Peter Saros

Do you remember the late 1990's when the top of the US country music charts had a distinctly Canadian flavour to them, sort of like a maple cream cookie?

Although Canada has always figured prominently in the history of country music in the states, it had been some time since Canadian country icons like Hank Snow, Gordon Lightfoot, and Anne Murray were ruling the airwaves south of the border.

That all changed when Shania Twain reclaimed the country throne with a vengeance for Canada when she reached number one on both the US *Billboard* country chart and *Radio & Records* in July of 1995 with "Any Man of Mine."

That single was the second release from her second album *The Woman in Me*. Kevin John Coyne from *Country Universe* said, "Any Man of Mine" felt like a sonic boom going off at country radio when it was released."

Twain would go on to have six more number one hits in the states in the nineties, on her way to becoming the top selling female artist in country music history.

Interestingly, The CKNX *Circle & Ranch* television program showcased an appearance of Shania Twain very early in her performing career. She was later honoured

with the Barn Dance Pioneer Award in 2017.

Next in line to the throne was Calgary, Alberta's Paul Brandt. He reached number one at *Radio & Records* on October 11, 1996 with "I Do," the second single from his debut album *Calm Before the Storm*.

Brandt rumbled onto the scene with his distinctive baritone and debut single "My Heart Has a History." That single reached number one on the Canada *Billboard* country charts while also climbing to number five on the US *Billboard* country charts.

In fact, Brandt's first five singles ("My Heart Has a History," "I Do," "I Meant to Do That," "Take It From Me", and "A Little in Love") all reached number one in Canada.

The Can-Am country music pipeline continued to flow when Terri Clark reached number one in America in July of 1998 with the debut single from her third album *How I Feel*. "Now That I Found You" would be the first of two number one hits from that same album.

Clark had two successful albums under her belt at this point of her career after having initially made her mark in Nashville performing at Tootsie's Orchid

Lounge. She has recorded twelve studio albums to date and was inducted into the Grand Ole Opry in 2014. In 2018, she was inducted in to the Canadian Country Music Hall of Fame.

The Wilkinsons, the family trio from Belleville, Ontario, hit the top of the US charts in September of 1998 with their debut single "26 Cents" from their album *Nothing But Love*.

Even non-mainstream Ontario artist Fred Eaglesmith was getting significant media coverage in 1997 for his album *Lipstick, Lies & Gasoline*.

Emerging stars like Tenille Townes and Lindsay Ell ensure Canada's connection to Music City continues today.

The show must go on!

Please check
thebardance.ca
for Barn Dance Shows
& possible cancellations.

THE BARN DANCE MUSEUM

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