

# The Barn Dance Opera Journal

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**Summer Edition**

**1**

## Barn Dance Museum Grand Opening - July 19, 2003

*by Grant Heywood*

It's official. Saturday, July 19th will be the grand opening of the new Barn Dance Museum, in Wingham. The location is at 273 Josephine Street, (lower quarters of the old Post Office building). The North Huron Museum is located in the same building, and with both attractions virtually under one roof, it promises to be a very interesting tourist venue.

The original Barn Dance Museum was in the old armouries building behind the Wingham Heritage Theatre. That location quickly became too small to handle all of the artifacts, awards, musical instruments, and memorabilia that have been collected over the years. The new main street of Wingham location will have higher visibility and much more room for displays. A new Barn Dance Museum sign (gold letters on barn board, appropriately) will be erected, hopefully for the grand opening.

Many local dignitaries, politicians, and notable Barn Dance pioneers and performers will be in attendance for this grand opening event. And yes,

there will be musicians and entertainers from the Barn Dance, performing that day as well. The main street will be blocked off to traffic during the day, as this is also sidewalk celebration days in Wingham.

The Barn Dance Museum will eventually be showing live television and stage performances from the Barn Dance, via a big screen TV. C.D. releases and autograph sessions, acoustic performances by Barn Dance entertainers and touring music artists, throughout the year, will certainly boost the profile of the new museum. Many of the articles on display will be rotated throughout the year to accommodate new display items, giving tourists a chance to view something different and unique when they make a return visit.

The Barn Dance Museum is located directly across from the Wingham Heritage Theatre, and is another attraction for many of those who attend concerts there. The famous and almost famous, will be honoured with their pictures,

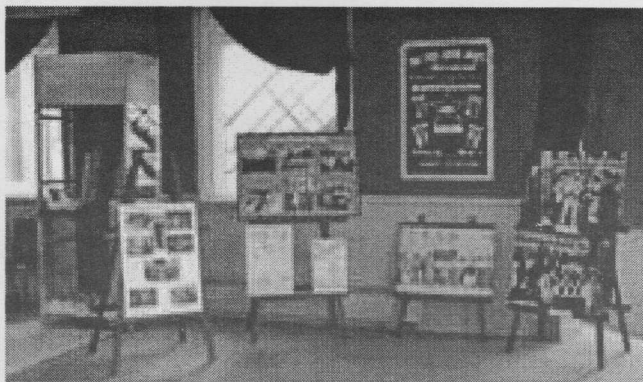
awards, and gold records on display, along with a special section honouring CKNX pioneer "Doc Cruickshank". No doubt, the Barn Dance Museum will be an asset to the area and community, and will certainly reflect and enrich the heritage from where it all started.



*Julilynne Anderson, Summer Student and Your Host*



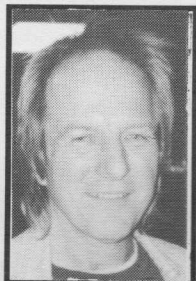
**NORTH HURON'S MUSEUM BUILDING**



*The Museum's Main Floor Showroom.*

## The Editor Speaks

by Grant Heywood



Barn Dance, Barn Dance, Barn Dance! Most folks know what the heck that is, but once in a blue moon smoe smarty pants person will ask the proverbial question ... uh ... What's a Barn Dance? Sometimes I'd just like to answer with ... have you ever seen an egg roll? Have you ever seen a match box? Have you ever seen a horse fly? ... well then ... you've just got to come out and see a Barn Dance.

The Barn Dance Jamboree Campout in Blyth this past May, was bigger and better than ever. There were more than 250 RV and trailers parked for the weekend, Saturday afternoon jamboree guest performers list was full. The Friday night bluegrass show and jam was very well attended, as was the Sunday morning gospel sing hosted by Ernie King. The Saturday night Barn Dance Show played to a near capacity crowd. A lot of folks picked up a bargain at the Saturday Silent Auction which will be expanded next year. The weather even co-operated after the Friday night rain. Thanks to all who volunteered and helped with this premier annual event. Special thanks again to, Bill Simmermaker and Dave Hedley, Jamboree Campout co-ordinators. And, many many thanks to all of our members, and all the folks who came out for a fun weekend.

It was a lot of fun performing on stage in front of many of my friends and neighbours at the Wellesley Barn Dance on June 14. My wife, Jeanette, and my two daughters, Janessa and Kianna, did a ter-

rific job of singing and playing. A proud moment for their Dad, to see the tradition carry on. It was a real surprise when I was honoured along with fiddler, Mike Slauenwhite, for the Barn Dance Pioneer Award. I guess that makes me an official musical veteran of the Barn Dance. What it really means is ... I'm getting older.

Lynn Russwurm, who is an original Barn Dance pioneer, told me recently about one of the songs he co-wrote with Hank Thompson some 35 years ago. The son "I Cast A Lonesome Shadow" has recently been re-recorded by Depeche Mode, a very popular rock group from England. It appears on their latest CD release which came out this spring. Go figure! Next thing you know ... Lynn will be so famous he'll be charging for his autograph. Congratulations Lynn. Ain't this music business strange. You never know what can happen.

Check out our Barn Dance schedule, cut it out, and stick it on your fridge. Maybe we'll see you at the next Barn Dance or even the Barn Dance Museum.

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## The Barn Dance Historical Society and Entertainment Museum

P.O. Box 68

Wingham, Ontario N0G 2W0

Phone (519) 357-2160

(or leave a message)

**BARN DANCE WEBSITE:**

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and Lynn Russwurm.

## LOST

At the Blyth Campout Jamboree 2 pair of expensive clip on sunglasses incl. cases. Please contact Grant Heywood at (519) 656-2552 or e-mail heywoods@golden.net.

## THE 2003 BARN DANCE SCHEDULE

\* **JULY 19 - Grand Re-opening, Barn Dance Museum.** New location - 273 Josephine Street, Wingham. Outdoor musical stage at 1 pm. Ribbon cutting ceremonies at 2:00 p.m.

\* **AUGUST 2 - Forest Barn Dance.** Forest Arena, Forest, Ontario. Show and Dance. Call (519) 357-2160.

\* **SEPTEMBER 6 - Huron Country Playhouse, Grand Bend.** Show only

\* **SEPTEMBER 28 - Wingham Ole Tyme Fiddle Concert and Hayloft Hoedown.** Talent search. Sponsored by the Barn Dance Historical Society. Held at the Royal Canadian Legion, Victoria Street, Wingham.

\* **OCTOBER 5 - Warton Show.** Propeller Club, Warton. Show only. Phone (519) 357-2160.

\* **OCTOBER 19 - The Tradition Continues.** Show only. Held at the Town Hall Heritage Theatre, Main Street, Wingham. Sponsored jointly by the Heritage Theatre and Barn Dance Historical Society. Call (519) 357-4082 for more details.

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## Pictures from recent Barn Dance Events



*The Otterbeins onstage: from L to R - Lloyd a.k.a. "Cousin Opie" (on dobro), Wayne (centre mic) with wife Judy on the right and son Jim (not seen) on guitar.*



*All original cast of "The Saturday Night Barn Dance" onstage at the Wingham Heritage Theatre this past spring. From L to R: Bruce Robertson, MC Jim Swan, Earl Heywood, Lloyd Bank (sitting at steel guitar), Smoky Weber, Wayne Riehl, Martha Heywood, Ernie King (just behind Martha), Larry Mercey, Lynn Russwurm (just behind Larry), Hank Beddard, Hughie Elder and Mary Elliott.*



*Bluegrass group "Lonesome Wind" provided some fine pickin' and sweet harmonies on the Saturday Night Barn Dance Show, at the Blyth Jamboree Campout Weekend.*



*One of the Heywood twins, Janessa, played drums, while her sister played violin and dad sang and played mandolin, at the Wellesley Barn Dance in June.*



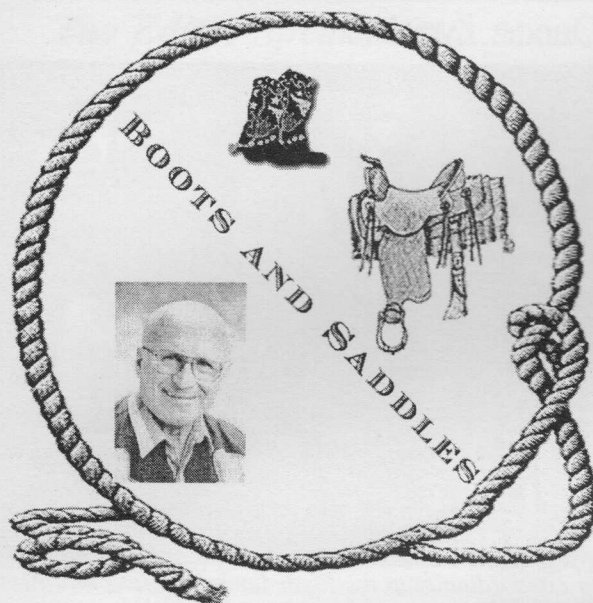
*Fiddlestep extraordinaire at the Blyth Jamboree Campout, From L to R: Patrick and Erika Weiler with Randy Morrison, extreme right.*



*Two originals from the Circle 8 Ranch gang get to pick together once again. Ron Coulthard on banjo and Ernie King on upright bass.*



*John Paff, of Wellesley, winner of the Fender acoustic guitar raffle draw at the Blyth Jamboree Campout seen here with Grant Heywood, editor / musician.*



by Lynn Russwurm

Country music, by and large, has been fairly well documented throughout the years in many ways. Even so there are many artists that have been mostly forgotten for one reason or another, also many artists were local and their music never got too far away from their home base of operations. However, there are probably thousands of reminders of the past in our beloved country music that still exist. The main reminders are of course the records, from the 78s, up to the present CDs. 78s included albums, which would contain a set of 3 or 4 records of a certain artist. Then came the 33-1/3 albums which first came out in the 10" format, the same as 78s had been, then along came somebody with the idea of the 12" LP, which would include about 4 more songs. Soon after that the 45 RPM was invented, where you

could get 2 current songs on the one record "with the large hole", of course eventually a number of these would be put together for a full album. This went along for many years until the 8-track tape came out. However this form never caught the fancy of the public as there were too many problems with the tapes breaking and so on.

Next we had the lowly little cassette that made wide inroads into the record market, and meanwhile the 8-track died a quiet death. Then came the CD, with a lot of hoopla

about how it would redefine the way people listened to music, however the old formats didn't quite die out as was predicted. Although the record companies embraced the new medium, (oh, we can charge more money for CDs, and it doesn't cost us any more to produce them) it didn't quite work out that way. Have you ever been to a Sunday Record Show where 1,000 people come out to buy records? Today they're making stereo systems with record players again, which they had discontinued for awhile. There are even record players which will play the 78 RPM speed, with no changing the needle.

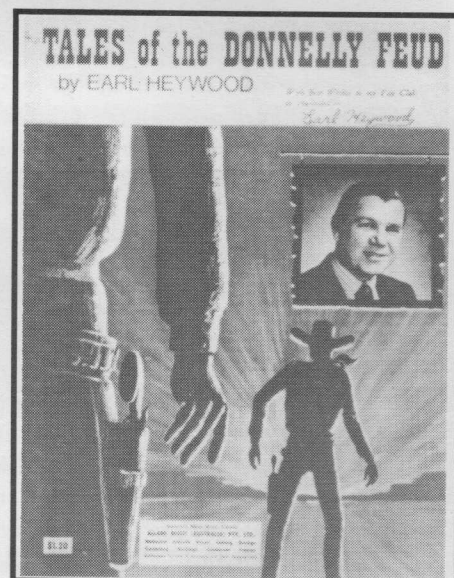
Early on, even in the 30's there was the 16" transcription which was made exclusively for radio stations. They needed a tone arm that could fit the 16" format. The neat thing about these, is that the material was recorded especially for them, it wasn't available anywhere except to the radio stations. Stations would subscribe to this service and after a certain specified time the records were to be returned, or in some cases destroyed. However, many survived and are now in collectors' hands, and some are finding their way onto CDs, so finally we can hear this music which many times was superior to the watered down work that would be released to the public.

The work of many of the WLS National Barn Dance artists of the '30s has been brought to light in this way. Just recently I was involved with retrieving some of this music and having it released on CD by the German Cattle Records label. The artists in question are Judy

Martin and The Mountain Rangers, well it turns out that Judy's husband was the great Red Foley and he's featured on many of the classic country songs, and could that man yodel! There are 2 new CDs on Judy and Red Foley. The other one is The Dean Brothers from the same era. One of the brothers later got into the movies where as Eddie Dean, he became one of the great Singing Cowboys. The way this happened was that I received a full set of these transcriptions on cassette from a fellow collector in Alberta and sent them on to Cattle Records. The Dean Brothers, Jimmie and Eddie had some commercial records on the market, to these I added a special radio program which I purchased from a dealer in the US, which was on a 10" transcription, even including the commercial for a drug company in Chicago. Jimmie Dean recorded some 16" transcriptions which were utilized along with some of Eddie's commercial records to come up with a 24 song CD.

Other mementos of our country music past come in the form of song folios that many artists put out. One of the main originators of this phenomenon was Bradley Kincaid who searched out traditional folk songs throughout the hills of old Kentucky and elsewhere and rescued many of them from oblivion. At the height of his career he sold thousands of them on his various radio programs. Another was Asher Sizemore who appeared on WSM and many other stations throughout the south, where he sold his songbooks with a new edition every year. At one time he

*Continued on Page 5*





Continued from Page 4

had 10 people working full time at packing these books which he sold at 25¢ each. Canadians got into this act early with Wilf Carter leading the way with at least a dozen books to his credit; Hank Snow followed him closely, although a few years behind with about the same number of folios. Our own Earl Heywood had 3 song folios, Jack Kingston had 2 and other Canadian artists were Stu Davis with a number of them, then there was Buddy Reynolds, Stu Phillips, Ramblin' Red Ross, Allen Erwin, The Calgary Kid. Later the fiddle players like Ward Allen, King Ganam, Bob Scott, Ned Landry all got into the act with a folio or two of their fiddle tunes. And I mustn't forget Don Messer, who had about 10 of them on the market and I wouldn't be surprised if you could still find the odd one in a music store somewhere.

Then we come to magazines and there were thousands issued through the years. Country Song Roundup started up in 1950 and is still publishing today, that's a lot of magazines with about 12 per year. There have been several Canadian publications that survived only a few years. Country Music News out of Ottawa is the only one in existence at the present time, and I know Larry Delaney, the publisher has had many trials and tribulations in his 20 odd years of publishing in Canada and many times he's only held on by the skin of his teeth and his love of the industry.

Then there are the books that have been published in recent years, whereby almost every major artist has a book or two on the market and some have been

best sellers, so they aren't very hard to pick up. Canadians who have had success with books include Stompin' Tom Connors with 2, Hank Snow and Tommy Hunter. Did you know that Wilf Carter published an autobiography in 1961 through the Ryerson Press in Toronto.

Then there are souvenir books that artists took with them on the road and sold at their concerts. To some this was a major part of their income. CKNX at one time put out a monthly magazine, later to go weekly, starting in 1942 call The CKNX Almanac. Here at the Barn Dance Museum we are in desperate need of these magazines and they are incredibly hard to find. If you have any and would like to donate them to the museum we would be extremely glad to get them, a sorely needed item.

I've tried to give some background on some of these mementos of the past. If you have anything pertaining to country music and would like to inquire, please feel free to write to: Lynn Russwurm, Box 421, Elmira, Ontario N3B 2Z7. I have a fairly large collection of this type of thing, and as I said, any Barn Dance items would be appreciated at our museum.

So keep your eye out at auction sales, yard sales, antique shops, or even at your neighbours and you may just spot one of these treasures of the past.

## Barn Dance Museum

by David Wall,

Museum Committee Chairman

Our Barn Dance Museum is now located in the North Huron Museum (old Post Office) at 273 Josephine Street, Wingham. The official opening is to take place on Saturday, July 19, 2003, beginning with live music at 1:00 p.m. and a ribbon cutting at 2:00 p.m.

This is an opportune time for the public to visit both museums and chat with stars who helped make Barn Dance history. North Huron Museum has graciously permitted us to use their first floor room until after our opening to exhibit more artifacts than we have room for in our own museum's lower level.

We have Julielynn Anderson working in our museum for twelve weeks this summer. North Huron Museum's fabulous co-operation has meant that both museums can be open seven days a week from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. during the summer. In September, Monday to Friday operation will resume. Group tours can be arranged at other times by calling (519) 357-2160. Admission to both museums is by donation.

The Barn Dance Museum committee thanks the many volunteers, North Huron Museum and the Ontario Trillium Foundation for making our move to this location possible.

## NOTICE

There will **NOT** be a Jamboree in Zurich in July 2003. The building has been condemned. We hope to be in a new arena by July of 2004.

Lloyd Otterbein

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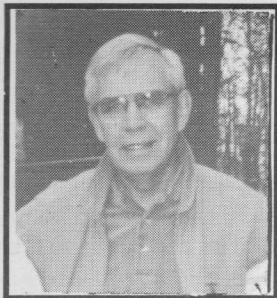
\$300.00 plus GST

All prices are per issue.



# Just Fiddling Around . . .

## with Bill Oja



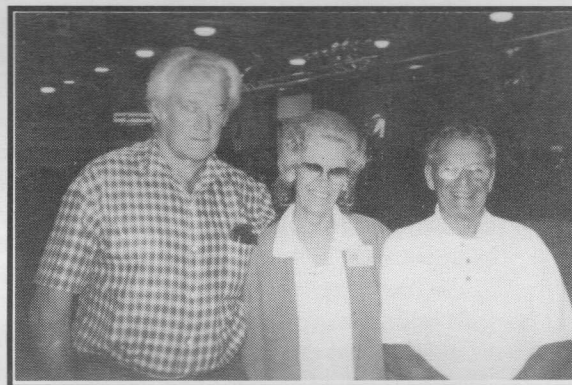
Two category winners at this year's Black Creek Pioneer Village fiddle contest were Brampton's **PATRICK WEILER** and **BILLY MacINNIS** of Charlottetown, P.E.I. Both competitors played the famous "Lou Currah" fiddle to win the ribbons.



**WAYNE OTTERBEIN** did his usual fine job as MC keeping things moving on stage. See way at the back is the great fiddler **BILL SLAUENWHITE**.



One of the many "pick up" groups appearing Saturday afternoon had **AL McGAFFEY** on guitar, **ED GILES** on accordion, **LLOYD OTTERBEIN** on dobro, **EARL BOBIER** gave us some yodelling and **JIM ALGIE** was on dawg house bass.



Seen at the jam, award winning country singer **RON STACEY** (L) with President **SHIRLEY RUSSWURM** and guest **WILF AINSCOW**. Wilf was half of the "Rhythm Riders Duo" who appeared many times on Hamilton's Main Street Jamboree.



At the Ottawa Fiddle and Step Dance Competition, accompanists **PAUL DACIER** on piano and **TERI-LYN MAHUSKY**, house fiddler backed up almost 200 competitors. Visiting Paul and Teri-Lyn is the "Fiddlin' Fireman" **RANDY FOSTER** who will be appearing with the great **CALVIN VOLLRATH** as this year's entertainment at Shelburne's Canadian Open Fiddle Contest on August 8 and 9.



Multi-instrumentalist **WINSTON JAMES** came in off his Florida one-man show tour to entertain at the **WALTER OSTANEK TRIBUTE** in St. Catherines honouring Walter's 50 years in the music business.



At this year's Blyth Campout Saturday afternoon jam, steel player **RON COULTHARD** follows drummer **GRANT HEYWOOD**, while he keeps the beat for the guest artists.



Kianna Heywood along with Barn Dance Bance fiddler, Mike Slauenwhite, playing "Old Joe Clark" at the Wellesley Barn Dance show.



## COUNTRY CALENDAR



by Doreen Brown

(Toronto and surrounding area)

\* **Appearances by Chuck Simms** - July 1, Cobourg Festival; July 4-6, Toronto Street Festival and Mariposa Folk Festival; July 11-13, Aquafest 2003, Hamilton.

\* **JAMBOREES** - Eloram first Sunday of the month; Palmerston and Erin, last Sunday of the month; Dundalk, fourth Sunday of the month; Shelburne, second Sunday of the month; Country Music Club, Kingside Park, Dean & Wilson Road S., Oshawa, Sept. 8, Oct. 6, Nov. 3, Dec. 1; Hastings, July 11-13, contact Al and Lynn Preston, 705-696-2268; Eganville, July 18-20, contact Wilmur Grant, 613-628-2324; Greenbank, Sept. 26-28; Marmora, Sept. 12-14, contact Buck Warren; Warminster - Country Boys, first Friday, contact Glen McGregor 705-835-3625; Sentimental Journey, Baldwin, first Sunday.

\* **Appearances by Derrick Pilgrim** - July 4-6, Rosetown Inn, Brampton; July 18, 1920 Eastern Passage, Brampton.

\* **Dale's Country Roadhouse** - 9281 Hwy. 26, west of Fairgrounds Rd., Collingwood, 705-445-7744, has jam sessions Friday nights

and live country music Saturday nights.

\* **12th Annual Classic Country Music Reunion 2003** - Centennial Park, Trenton, Aug. 1-3, with CCMR band featuring Al Brisco, Albert McDonal, Bill Johnson, Bill Lintner and Johnny Meydam. Special guests Fri. & Sat. nights and Gospel Hour Sun. AM. There's all weekend Watering Corral, entertainment. Join the fun.

\* **Appearances by Doreen Brown** - July 4, Branson, Missouri, Country Concert, Independent's Day Benefit, Branson World Radio and Task Force, Veteran's and Troops, at Stockstill Park with the annual picnic to help raise funding of various projects. Will be webcast on Branson World Radio from July 25 to 27; Aug. 1-3, Classic Country Music Reunion, Trenton; Aug. 22-24, Maple Leaf Country Jubilee, Baldwin; Aug. 10, Musicians' Cornroast, Blackstock; Aug. 12, Bolton Fiddle Club; Aug. 25, Bond Head Fiddle Club.

\* **Havelock Country Jamboree** - Aug. 14-17, featuring Neal McCoy, Lorrie Morgan, Ronnie Milsap, Leahy, Rita MacNeil, Don Williams, Tommy Hunter, Charlie Major, Arlo Guthrie, Quartette, John Landry, Jake Mathews, Shirley Myers, Big Al Downing, Good Brothers, Downchild Blues Band, Robyn Scott, The Sadies and Ambush. Also appearing Cameo Blues Band Stomper a.k.a. Gord Hull, The Backwoodsmen, Rioo Driv & Paul Oliver (gospel). All ticketmaster outlets 416-870-8000. Also 1-800-539-3353.

\* **Mapleleaf Country Jubilee** - Baldwin, Aug. 22-24, with special guests Fri. and Sat. nights, Gospel Show Sun. Closing stage show and open mike during the weekend. Well known country music artist, Anita Perras, will be one of the artists on the show Sun. afternoon. For info contact: April Mayer 647-271-8270 or Chef Adams 705-324-7884.

\* **42nd Reunion Huron Pioneer Thresher & Hobby Assoc.** - Sept. 5-7, Blyth Fairgrounds, Blyth.

\* **Appearance by Joe Tucker & Second Wind** - July 11, Sandy's Place, Weston; July 19, RCL Br. 11, Daws Rd.; July 20, Dynes, Burlington, Sunday Jamboree, 3 pm.

\* **Rod's Country Jamboree** - RCL #442 at 12 Dundas St. E., Erin from 1-5 pm July 27, Aug. 24, Sept. 28, Oct. 26, & Nov. 23. \$5.00 adm. and \$8.50 beef dinner. Info call 519-833-2212. Special rates for entertainers.

*Have a great, safe and wonderful summer to all, and thanks for supporting artists and Country Music.*



Award winning singer, Brittany Brodie of Mount Forest gave a stellar performance on the Saturday night Barn Dance Show at the Blyth Jamboree Campout.

## MEMORIAL NOTE

- One of the patriarchs of country music,
- June Carter Cash died, May 15, 2003,
- from heart complications. Married to legendary singer / song writers, Johnny
- Cash, June was part of the Carter Family.
- A big loss to country music, she will be
- dearly remembered by fans.

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#### HOWDY FOLKS:

June 29th will mark the 10th anniversary of the founding of the Barn Dance Historical Society, which began in Wingham. Maybe we can plan a celebration event to mark this day in the future. Hopefully, I'll be lucky enough to remember my own wedding anniversary before Martha starts reminding me of that very special date again.

The history of the Barn Dance, and the late W. T. "Doc" Cruickshank's early CKNX radio and television days are displayed in the new Barn Dance Museum in Wingham. The story goes that Doc first built a small transmitter on

his mother's bread board, consisting of a couple of vacuum tubes, a copper wire coil, and other small parts. Doc got interested in building radio sets in the early days of radio. Once he built his first one, he decided to sell one to the next door neighbour. When Doc finally built a transmitter, his neighbour phoned him up to say he was picking up his signal. Doc replied to his neighbour "Isn't that a joke." His neighbour told him that JOKE should be the radio station's call letters. (A television documentary included a song, "It Started as a JOKE", written by yours truly, in recognition of Doc's early radio beginnings.)

When Doc ventured into the radio business officially, the original call letters with 10.BP, which later became CKNX. Wingham, being a rural community, became the smallest town in North America with a radio station, and was known as Radio Station CKNX, The Ontario Farm Station, for many, many years. Country and western music was the popular music of that early period, and country is still the hallmark of CKNX A.M. radio today. It was in those early

days of radio that Doc started broadcasting Canada's Largest Travelling Barn Dance live over the radio airwaves. Later on, CKNX television, spawned country music shows such as Western Roundup, and the long lived and ever popular, Circle 8 Ranch.

Besides Martha and myself, the Barn Dance Historical Society has been working diligently over the years to promote and showcase entertainers and memorabilia connected to CKNX and the Barn Dance days of yesterday and even today. The new Barn Dance Museum is a fitting tribute to Doc Cruickshank and Canada's Largest Travelling Barn Dance. We've even got a replica of Doc's earliest radio transmitter on display. Make it a point to visit the museum during the summer season.

And Remember - -

**THE SHOW MUST GO ON...**

Earl Heywood, Founder,  
Honorary President,  
Advisor,  
Museum Curator

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