



Picks N' Licks

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23rd Annual P.E.I. Bluegrass & Old Time Music Festival July 4 - 6, 2008

The Bluegrass festival season is finally here and last minute preparations are well underway for our festival at Rollo Bay. In terms of our program and Island band selections; the jury process has been completed and the following bands were selected to appear at the festival in the order in which they were juried: Janet McGarry & Wildwood, Saddle River String Band, Bluegrass Revival, Jericho Road, Joe Casey & High Tenor, Bethany Coughlin & Bluegrass Angel Band, Kickstart Bluegrass, SK Bluegrass, Eastern Tradition and The Wheatley River Band. In accordance with the budget, as ratified, the top 3 bands were offered 3 sets, the next three were offered 2 sets and the remaining 4 were offered an appearance at an Islander Evening - replacing one of Stan's Jams on Thursday Evening of the festival - of which two crowd favourites would have gone on to play on our main stage. SK Bluegrass & Kickstart Bluegrass have since declined an appearance due to work commitments so essentially the remaining two bands will be offered a set on our main stage and a second installment of Stan's Jam will resume on Thursday. Jury members were nominated by the Board of Directors and jury results are available upon request.

Some have felt that this process was long overdue while others were quite happy leaving things as is. Many more were upset about the fact that society membership was required for Island bands to appear at the festival. Over 20 Island bands or so were expected to apply this year, only 12 actually applied with others citing membership as being a reason. It was difficult finding a way through the changes required to turn this festival around. These measures alone will have saved us about \$4000. Elsewhere, we've renewed our efforts

to raise funds and seek new revenue streams and to date we've raised in excess of \$6000 over last year, through various sponsorships, cookbook sales and fund raising concerts. We hope these measures will be enough to offset some of the anticipated negative impacts from the price of fuel. Perhaps next year, the Society will be in a better financial position and be able to offer more opportunities for Island bands to appear at Rollo Bay.

Elsewhere in our music program, our workshops will be front and centre Saturday morning. "The Buzz" workshops this year will start at 9:00am sharp with 3 sessions on our main stage hosted by myself, and 3 to be held in the Shelter hosted by our sponsor Peter Richards. The morning sessions will wrap up with a songwriters circle at 11:15am. See the attached press release or look up our festival site for more information: www.bluegrasspei.com/rollobay.htm. The Society's Cookbook is out and congratulations to the committee on a beautiful edition. It is hoped that future editions are in the offing, meantime be sure to get your copy at the festival. Final touches are also being put on our first Island Bluegrass BBQ Surf & Turf on Saturday evening featuring Island meats, seafoods and local products.

Finally, my Chairmanship will conclude with this year's festival and I will not be re-offering next year, nor will I be re-offering to sit on our Society's Board of Directors. I wish to thank everyone who has helped me along the way during my tenure as Chair for this festival. It has been a rather difficult term with sobering realities that required change which could no longer be delayed or passed on to someone else. Everyone has worked so hard and I sincerely believe we've done our best and always acted with our Society's best interests at heart.

A flyer has been included in this Newsletter. Please take a few moments & put it up at one of your local establishments. Thank you!

Serg, Festival Chair

P.E.I. Bluegrass & Old Time Music Society

President's Message:

The Bluegrass Jams on Sunday and Friday nights have ended and we are now officially in the festival season. A big thank you to Caroline Jones for organizing these at the Murphy's Community Centre on Sundays and to Gail Mullin for helping me out on Friday nights at the Superstore Community Room. We had a great time together with a good number of dedicated musicians and music lovers turning out to play or just sit and listen. You never know who will be in the listening audience. We were joined by people from Western Canada and even from Australia.

Festivals have started in our region...New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. PEI's festivals are coming up very soon and will include St. Louis Campout June 20-22th, Rollo Bay July 4-6th, Evangeline July 11-13th contact 902-882-3056 and RedClay's August 15-17th contact 902-882-3461.

Festival chairs and others on the committees are working hard these last few days leading up to each of our respective festivals.

The cookbook arrived about one month ago and wow! We're quite proud of the finished products. My deepest appreciation goes out Emily, Edith, Audrey and Joyce for working on this project. We had a lot of fun together and it continues as we set up our tables at the Farmer's Market, festivals, etc. to sell. They make lovely gifts for loved ones, wedding showers and birthdays.

I'll close off for now. Be sure and take in festivals close to you this summer. Remember that our next General Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, September 27/08, 2PM, at the Sun & Shade Campground, Borden. Remember to stop and smell the flowers...and enjoy some really great Bluegrass and Old Time Music with friends and family this summer.

See you at the jams, concerts and in Rollo Bay, Evangeline and Tignish!

Take care folks!

Shirley Jay, President (902-566-2641)

Camp Out

St. Louis is hosting a
Bluegrass & Oldtime Camp Out
June 20-22, 2008

At the St. Louis Community Centre grounds

Feature Bands

The Douthwrights from NB
& Grassroots from NS

There will be performances by PEI bands and
an Old Time Music Sets

Gate Opens: Thursday 6 pm,

1~ Weekend Pass : \$25.00

~ Friday Pass : \$5:00

~ Saturday Pass \$15.00~ Sunday Pass \$10.00

For more information contact Eileen Brown (902)882-3056 eileenbrown45@hotmail.com or Wilma Jones (902)882-3518 wilmajones300@hotmail.com

THE BIRTH OF THE SONG 'PRECIOUS LORD'

Back in 1932, I was 32 years old and a fairly new husband. My wife, Nettie and I were living in a little apartment on Chicago's south side. One hot August afternoon I had to go to St. Louis, where I was to be the featured soloist at a large revival meeting. I didn't want to go. Nettie was in the last month of pregnancy with our first child. But a lot of people were expecting me in St. Louis. I kissed Nettie good-bye, clattered downstairs to our Model A and, in a fresh Lake Michigan breeze, chugged out of Chicago on Route 66.

However, outside the city, I discovered that in my anxiety at leaving, I had forgotten my music case. I wheeled around and headed back. I found Nettie sleeping peace-fully. I hesitated by her bed; something was strongly telling me to stay. But eager to get on my way, and not wanting to disturb Nettie, I shrugged off the feeling and quietly slipped out of the room with my music.

The next night, in the steaming St. Louis heat, the crowd called on me to sing again and again. When I

finally sat down, a messenger boy ran up with a Western Union telegram. I ripped open the envelope.

Pasted on the yellow sheet were the words: YOUR WIFE JUST DIED. People were happily singing and clapping around me, but I could hardly keep from crying out. I rushed to a phone and called home. All I could hear on the other end was 'Nettie is dead. Nettie is dead.'

When I got back, I learned that Nettie had given birth to a boy. I swung between grief and joy. Yet that same night, the baby died. I buried Nettie and our little boy together, in the same casket. Then I fell apart.

For days I closeted myself. I felt that God had done me an injustice. I didn't want to serve Him anymore or write gospel songs. I just wanted to go back to that jazz world I once knew so well. But then, as I hunched alone in that dark apartment those first sad days, I thought back to the afternoon I went to St. Louis. Something kept telling me to stay with Nettie. Was that something God? Oh, if I had paid more attention to Him that day, I would have stayed and been with Nettie when she died.

From that moment on I vowed to listen more closely to Him. But still I was lost in grief. Everyone was kind to me, especially one friend. The following Saturday evening he took me up to Malone's Poro College, a neighborhood music school. It was quiet; the late evening sun crept through the curtained windows. I sat down at the piano, and my hands began to browse over the keys. Something happened to me then. I felt at peace. I felt as though I could reach out and touch God. I found myself playing a melody, once into my head they just seemed to fall into place:

'Precious Lord, take my hand, lead me on, let me stand, I am tired, I am weak, I am worn, through the storm, through the night lead me on to the light, take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.'

The Lord gave me these words and melody. He also healed my spirit. I learned that when we are in our deepest grief, when we feel farthest from God, this is when He is closest, and when we are most open to His restoring power.

And so I go on living for God willingly and joyfully, until that day comes when He will take me and gently lead me home.

-Tommy Dorsey-

For those too young to know who he is, Tommy Dorsey was one of the most popular big band leaders in

the Thirties and Forties.

(A special Thank you to Eileen for sharing this information with us.)

Fan of the Year 2008 Submissions

Each year the Downeast Bluegrass & Old Time Music Society presents a Fan or Fans of the Year Award at the Eastern Canada Bluegrass Music Awards Show in Truro, which will be held in October.

The PEIBOTMS can submit a nomination. We are asking our **members** to consider names as you travel to festivals this summer and **forward your suggestion** on to us **by September 5/08**. You may call 566-2641 and leave a message, email asjay@eastlink.ca or mail your submission to PEI Bluegrass & Old Time Music Society, PO Box 2812, Charlottetown, PE C1A 8C4.

Thank you,
Shirley

Bluegrass & OldTime Music Jams

The Sunday Slow Jams & Friday Advance Jams held in Charlottetown, have now drawn to a close. In September check the Guardian & on the radio for an announcement concerning the start-up of the Jams. Contact Shirley 566-2641 or asjay@eastlink.ca

PEIBOTMS Lending Library -

Instructional videos, CD's & DVD's for loan \$10 for one month and \$5 for 2 weeks

Call Caroline 569-2471

Visit the **PEI Bluegrass & Old Time Music Society** website at: www.bluegrasspei.com

Next Newsletter will be Sept. 2008.....
If you wish to place an advertisement in the Newsletter. \$25 full page, \$15 half page, \$10 quarter page \$5 business card.
Send ad info to: asjay@eastlink.ca Send Society news to Caroline Jones, Editor jonescb@eastlink.ca

PEIBOTMS's website: www.bluegrasspei.com

Keep on picking. See you next time.