



2010 Lineup Complete PEI Bluegrass & Old Time Music Festival

The lineup of bands is finally complete for the 25th Anniversary Festival on July 2, 3, & 4, 2010. Our US bands have had one change, due to personnel problems. The Midnight Ramblers were forced to withdraw and we were lucky enough to be able to book one of the best new bands in bluegrass music, "**Brand New Strings**" (left pic) out of Knoxville, TN.

www.brandnewstringsband.com

Here's a review of "Brand New Strings" new CD.....In the abstract, it's almost surprising that bluegrass, a form of music so resolutely resistant to change, devoid of drums and relying heavily on male harmonies, should continue to exist at all. But when the music is infused with such sincere love and played with the kind of palpable joy that Brand New Strings bring to their latest outing, it



seems the most natural thing in the world. Its basic parameters unaltered since Bill Monroe almost single-handedly established the template in the 1950s, Bluegrass has that timeless quality that makes even new songs sound old. Its insistence on all-acoustic instrumentation – guitars, mandolin, banjo, string bass – and intricately woven harmony singing are definitely the trappings of an earlier era. And lyrically it's based on the tried and true – love (mostly of the heart-break variety), home, family and faith – all stuff that endures, topics that don't depend on fad or fashion.

Brand New Strings are definitely a traditional-sounding outfit. Adhering to the standard instrumental lineup, with a little help from fiddler Ron Stewart, they deliver a platter that celebrates the simple life, with faith and family given equally prominence. Guitarist Randall Massengill and mandolinist Mike Ramsey contribute the bulk of



the originals, but in truth their songs sound as though they've been passed from generation to generation. Also included is a wonderful re-working of "Wheels," a classic honky-tonk shuffle here given the high lonesome treatment with excellent results. Sure, it's been done before. But the sound is classic, with sublime harmonies – voices and instruments blend and weave together seamlessly - and the picking throughout is exemplary. Brand New Strings aren't trying to reinvent bluegrass, nor are they attempting to expand the genre's musical palette. Rather, they're working within robust and time-tested parameters, relying on skill and honest, heartfelt expression. And *No Strings Attached* works on every level. This is good stuff ...!The other US bands booked are **Ralph Stanley II** (right pic) www.ralphstanleyii.com and

Barry Scott and Second Wind" (pg.1 center pic) 2010 Grammy Nominees barryscottonline.com/

Maritime bands booked....

The Spinney Brothers (below pic),
New Ground, Bluegrass



Diamonds, and last year's showcase winners, Simply Blue. We also have a full lineup of Island bands that includes multi-award winners, The Grass Mountain Hobos, Janet McGarry and Wildwood, Dunromin' Four & all the other local favourites. Norm Bowser has agreed to handle the songwriter's circle at noon on Saturday and the open mic, as usual will be held on Wednesday and Thursday evenings in the shelter with Stan Chaisson handling them emcee duties.

On Saturday morning we will be holding the instrument and vocal workshops sponsored by The Buzz and the children's program will take place on Sat. afternoon immediately following the workshops. Join us to celebrate 25 years of Bluegrass & Old Time Music in Rollo Bay, PEI!!!

Lester Flatt used to say of Josh Graves during introductions, "You've heard of people that don't know nothin'? Well he don't even suspect nothin'."

<p>2010 Festival Ticket Prices: Weekend = \$50 per person, +65 seniors \$45 pp (includes rough camping). Open Mic = \$5 (included with weekend passes) Sat/Sun overnight = \$40. Friday day pass \$20. Saturday day pass \$25. Sunday day pass \$18. Children 14 & under are admitted free with parental supervision. Early bird camping \$6 per unit/day. Serviced site \$8 per unit/day (first come/first served) Dumping station \$5 per dump.</p>
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The Structure of a Bluegrass Song by Tom Barnwell

Bluegrass songs are typically divided into a series of breaks, verses, and choruses. A typical bluegrass song might be structured as follows:

- (1) An initial Break (often call the Kickoff),
- (2) Verse,
- (3) Chorus,
- (4) Break,
- (5) Verse,
- (6) Chorus,
- (7) Break,
- (8) Verse,
- (9) Chorus,
- (10) Break,
- (11) Chorus

In each of the individual units, there is a *lead* activity and a *backup* activity. In a break, usually one of the individual instruments takes the lead while the rest of the instruments back him (or her) up. In the verse, usually there is one lead singer. In the chorus, there are usually one, two, three or four singers singing one, two, three of four part har-mony. In both the verse and the chorus, there is instrumental backup music.

The most important rule in bluegrass jamming is **IF YOU ARE NOT LEADING, YOUR JOB IS TO DO BACKUP IN SUCH A WAY AS TO MAKE THE LEAD SOUND AS GOOD AS POSSIBLE**. A point often missed by novices is that *backup* in a jam

session is usually more important than the *lead*.

You can make really good music with a good backup and a modest lead, but without a good backup, you cannot make good music no matter how good the lead is. Since backup is so important, I am going to talk about it first.

The foundation of bluegrass backup (often called rhythm) is three instruments: the bass, the guitar, and the mandolin. The basic bluegrass rhythm pattern is a *boom-chick boom-chick* pattern. The *boom* here is often called the beat, and the *chick* is called the back-beat. A simple bluegrass bass pattern is simply to play the tonic of the chord on the beat and the 5th of the chord on the backbeat.

The guitar typically plays a single bass note on the beat (boom) and brushes the strings of the chord on the backbeat (chick). The mandolin plays either not at all or a very light chord stroke on the beat (boom), and then a sharp *chop* on the backbeat (chick). A mandolin chop is performed by striking the strings of the chord quite hard, but then almost instantly damping the strings to stop the sound. The result is a short, percussive sound which is just barely identifiable as the chord.

When done correctly, the effect of a good rhythm section is remarkable. On the beat (boom), you get the tonic from the bass fiddle and the bass strings of the guitar, setting the pace for the music.

Then, immediately following, you get the dramatic counter-sound of the backbeat (chick) with the roar of the full guitar chord accented by the percussive chop of the mandolin.

So what about the other instruments? Well, potentially the most wonderful and certainly the most dangerous backup instrument is the banjo. One



basic form of banjo backup is vamping. This is basically just a banjo version of the mandolin chop, and it is used pretty

much in the same way -- that is to punch up the backbeat. It is used in this way with the mandolin to backup other leads, and it is used to backup the mandolin when the mandolin has the lead.

The other form of backup for the banjo is to use the same syncopated three-finger rolls which are used for a banjo lead. This can be very effective, but it can also be terrible when it conflicts or competes with other instrument or vocal leads. The best rule of thumb here is that, if you are a banjo player, go out of your way to learn syncopated backup techniques, and then, when you really know them well, use them very selectively and occasionally. The reason for this is that the banjo is such a loud, in-your-face instrument that it can interfere with, rather than backing up, the lead. *..Part 2 June issue.*

What do you call a beautiful woman on the arm of a banjo player? A tattoo

Angela's MacCormac's Fish Chowder

3-4 slices salt pork (optional)
1 medium onion, chopped
1- 15 oz. can evaporated milk
2 tsp. Cornstarch
1 or 2 lbs. Fish*
4-5 potatoes, peeled/chopped
2 cups regular milk
salt and pepper
Method: Fry pork on medium heat in dutch oven pot. Add onion and potato and cover with water. Place fish on top of potatoes and cook until done. Add canned milk and most of regular milk. Mix the cornstarch with a little of the cold milk and stir into hot mixture. Heat to thicken... be careful not to scorch. *Add cod, hake, haddock, halibut, scallops, scrimp and lobster.
Great to make ahead and bring in your camper to festivals!

Sights seen while on the road:
"Jimmy's Plumbing - We repair what your husband fixed."

A few more websites.....
www.banjohangout.org/archive/152101
www.tottenhambluegrass.ca/
www.lakechamplainmusic.com/w.blueberrybluegrass.com/
<http://www.countybluegrass.com/>

Bluegrass & Old Time Music Jams/Workshops

Friday - 8:00 PM **SOBEYS Community Room** Ch'town Call Shirley 566-2641
Workshops - Mandolin, Guitar, Vocal, etc. TBA when instructors available. Notices will be circulated via email, The Guardian, or call 566-2641
Sundays - 7:30 PM **Murphy Rec Centre** Call Caroline 569-2471
Donation: \$2 at the door for Jams.
Workshops: \$5 per person
Check Friday's Guardian for details.

President's Message:

Plans are well underway for our 25th Annual Festival in Rollo Bay, PEI., The winter, that wasn't, (in PEI) was filled with jams, workshops, benefits, concerts, and fundraisers. Thank you to all the volunteers who help out with all of these events....they don't happen without you folks.

Jerry & Bernice's Festival Calendar is included in this issue so you can make summer vacation plans around all the many festivals in our region and beyond.

2010 PEI summer festivals will start up in June with Eileen & Frank's - St. Louis Campout, June 12-14th followed by 25th Annual PEI Bluegrass & Old Time Music Festival in Rollo Bay July 2 - 4, Evangeline Bluegrass Music Festival on July 9-11th and PEI Red Clay Bluegrass Festival on August 15 - 17th.

Festival volunteers who organize these events are pulling all the details together to make these events run as smoothly as possible for everyone's musical enjoyment. Be sure and thank them when you attend the festivals.

Thank you.
Shirley Jay, President

Join Now.....

The PEI Bluegrass & Old Time Music Society

Membership Fee **\$10.00 pp**

Mail cheque to: PEI
Bluegrass & Old Time Music
Society PO Box 2812
Charlottetown, PEI C1A 8C4



Congratulations

The Grass Mountain Hobos are the 2010 East Coast Music Association Bluegrass Recording Artist of The Year and received Music PEI's Bluegrass/Country Recording of the Year:- Zoot!
www.grassmountainhobos.com/

Bluegrass News Tidbits:

On March 3, 2008 - Ricky Skaggs received an honorary doctorate from Boston's Berklee College of Music during a performance on the Opry. The honor is for Skaggs' contribution in keeping bluegrass music "alive and kicking."

On February 15, 1963 the #1 song - The Ballad of Jed Clampett by Flatt & Scruggs

The week of August 1, 2010 - Robin & Linda Williams, fine instrumentalists, great vocalists, and superb songwriters compositions have been recorded by the likes of Emmylou Harris, Mary Chapin Carpenter, Tom T. Hall, Kathy Mattea, Tim and Mollie O'Brien, George Hamilton IV, The Seldom Scene and Irish singer Mary Black. They just signed on to teach vocal harmony at Augusta Heritage's "Bluegrass Week" in Elkins, WV. "We sometimes take harmony singing for granted."

www.robinandlinda.com/bio.html

www.augustaheritage.com/bluegrass.html

International Bluegrass Music Museum

Bluegrass is the official State Music of Kentucky, and Bill Monroe's "Blue Moon of Kentucky" shares with Stephen Foster's "My Old Kentucky Home" the honorable distinction of being the official Kentucky State Songs. The infectious energetic style of dance that grew up around bluegrass and old time music is clogging, the official Kentucky State Dance. This museum, established to preserve the history of the music Mr. Monroe created, is located 30 minutes from the little town of Rosine, Kentucky, and Jerusalem Ridge, the homeplace where he was born and grew to manhood, and where he and members of his family now rest in peace.

The International Bluegrass Music Museum is located in the RiverPark Complex at the foot of "the blue bridge" in downtown Owensboro, Kentucky. As you draw near, you'll hear the sounds of bluegrass music emanating from the museum's radio station, RBI, with audio speakers taking the music to the streets. Only a few hundred feet from the museum's entrance, the sound of music drifts downstream via the mighty Ohio River, the subject of more than a few memorable bluegrass songs.

In the late 1930s, Bill Monroe took the stage with what became known as his signature high lonesome sound. He and his band, "The Blue Grass Boys," forged a mighty confluence of sound... including Appalachian mountain music, rural "old time" string playing, folk ballads, blues, African stomp, and black and white gospel to introduce a new style of music which became known as bluegrass in the 1950s. It

took its name from fans referring to Mr. Monroe's band; Bill, in turn, named his band for his home state of Kentucky, known as "The Bluegrass State." Once--and still--known as the bluegrass state for the gorgeous horse farms planted in bluegrass that occupy many thousands of acres in the central part of the state, Kentucky is now known as the bluegrass state just as commonly for this, the indigenous music of its people.

Check the website to find out more information on the museum.
www.bluegrass-museum.org/general/about.php

The Annual Bluegrass Society Campout will be held at the Sun n' Shade Campground in Borden, PEI Oct. 1 & 2/10.. Plan ahead and call Harold and Marnie to book your campsite 902-855-3492 or email info@sun-n-shade.com
More information will be posted next time.....

Next Newsletter - June 2010

If you wish to comment on our newsletter or submit an article, send to: asjay@eastlink.ca

Mail to: PEI Bluegrass & Old Time Music Society Box 2812
 Charlottetown PE C1A 8C4
www.bluegrasspei.com

PEI Bluegrass & Old Time Music Society Executive & Board

members are:

Shirley Jay - President
 Glenda Johnston - Vice President
 Charlie Hansen - Treasurer
 Angela MacCormac - Secretary
 Alan MacRae, Joe Casey, Guy Cormier,
 Pat MacKinnon, Leonard Perry.

BERNICE & JERRY'S 2010 FESTIVAL & EVENTS CALENDAR

March 28	Bluegrass Old Country Jamboree Summerside, PEI	902-439-2344
April 25	E. H. Club Spring Bluegrass Jamboree Nine Mile River, NS	902-883-7189
June 4-6	Music Barn Bluegrass Festival Sackville, NB	506-536-3031
June 10-13	Digby Fish & Game Bluegrass Campout Haynes Lake, NS	902-245-4886
June 11-13	Memramcook Bluegrass Campout CANCELLED DUE TO HEALTH REASONS	
June 17-20	Blistered Fingers Bluegrass Festival Litchfield, Maine	207-873-6539
June 17-20	Jenny Brook Bluegrass Festival Tunbridge, Vermont	802-463-1184
June 18-19	Stewiacke Newfie/Country Festival Stewiacke, NS	902-639-2556
June 18-20	St. Louis Bluegrass & Oldtime Campout St. Louis, PEI	902-882-3056
June 18-20	The Steeltown Bluegrass Festival CANCELLED	
June 18-20	Old Mill Bluegrass Spring Campout Magnetic Hill, N.B.	506-858-8747
June 24-27	Fox Mountain Bluegrass Festival Aylesford, N.S.	902-624-9492
July 2-4	PEI Bluegrass & Old Time Music Festival Rollo Bay, PEI	902-566-2641
July 2-4	Stan Rogers Festival Canso, NS	902-366-2325
July 8-11	Basin Bluegrass Festival Brandon, VT	802-247-3275
July 9-10	Stewiacke Newfie/Country Festival Stewiacke, NS	902-639-2556
July 9-11	Evangeline Bluegrass Festival Abram Village, PEI	902-854-3391
July 16-18	Kempt Shore Maritime Acoustic Festival Kempt Shore, NS	902-633-2535
July 16-18	Old Mill Bluegrass Festival Magnetic Hill, NB	506-858-8747
July 23-25	The County Bluegrass Festival Fort Fairfield, Maine	207-473-7749
July 23-25	Annual Nova Scotia Bluegrass Festival Bible Hill, NS	902-384-3013
July 23-25	Cape Tormentine Bluegrass Festival Cape Tormentine, NB	506-538-2900
July 23-25	Down River Music Festival Neguac, NB	506-776-1303
July 29-Aug 1	Fox Mountain Country Music Festival Aylesford, NS	902-543-5053
Aug 5-8	Clare Bluegrass Festival Saulnierville, NS	902-837-5984
Aug 6-8	Blackville Bluegrass Festival Blackville, NB	506-622-5045
Aug 6-8	Campbellton Bluegrass Campout Campbellton, NB	506-789-2708
Aug 13-15	Red Clay Bluegrass & Oldtime Festival Tignish, PEI	902-882-3461
Aug 13-15	Kempt Shore Bluegrass & Oldtime Festival Kempt Shore, NS	902-633-2535
Aug 26-29	Blistered Fingers Bluegrass Festival Litchfield, Maine	207-873-6539
Aug 27-29	Rogersville Bluegrass Festival Rogersville, NB	506-384-8655
Sept 3-5	Stewiacke Bluegrass Festival Stewiacke, NS	902-639-2556
Sept 3-5	The County Bluegrass Festival Fort Fairfield, Maine	207-473-7749
Sept 9-12	Old Mill Bluegrass Fall Campout Magnetic Hill, NB	506-858-8747
Sept 10-12	East Hants Club Invitational camp-out TBA	902-883-7189
Oct 16	Eastern Canada Bluegrass Music Awards Truro, NS	902-384-3013
Nov 5-7	Annual Laurie Blue Bluegrass Festival Summerside, PEI	902-436-3333
Dec 12	E. H. Club Christmas Bluegrass Jamboree Nine Mile River, NS	902-883-7189

Note: Dates include only those confirmed at time of posting and are subject to change without notice.

CALENDAR ARRANGED AND PRODUCED BY BERNICE & JERRY MURPHY