



The Northern Bluegrass Circle Music Society

Bluegrass Newsletter

Fall 2015

Youth Bluegrass BOOT CAMP Workshop



Inside This Issue

- P 2-3 Ronnie's Ramblin's
- P 4-7 Fall Workshop
- P 8-15 Club Events /Bands
- P 16-17 Sunny Jim's Storeys
- P 17 -18 Mike's Monroe
Mando Camp Adventure
- P 18 Grassified Ads
- P 20 Jamming Etiquette
- P 21-22 Inside The Vault
- P 22-23 Wood, Steel & Strings
- P 25 Bluegrass Artists
- P 26 Concerts & Festivals

In case you missed it (shame!) the Blueberry Bluegrass & Country Music Festival took place over the August long weekend at Heritage Park in Stony Plain, Alberta. The NBCMS Club had a more prominent presence this year starting with the tent and fantastic banner as shown in the picture. The tent served as a place to jam and to hold workshops.

Even more importantly, the club lived up to its mission to preserve and promote bluegrass in the community by once again hosting the Youth Bluegrass BOOT CAMP Workshop (see the photo above). There were 3 mandolin players, 3 on banjo, one fellow on guitar and 8 fiddle players. The tent was so full that Kayla Hotte and the fiddle players moved to a secondary tent for part of the workshop. The students ranged from age 6 to 17 and were very attentive. Outside the club's tent the parents watched and listened with keen interest. The students worked on songs like "Blue Moon Of Kentucky" and "Roll In My Sweet Baby's Arms." The students capped off the workshop with a great live performance on the big stage. The crowd loved it! Hopefully some of these young players will start to attend the NBCMS Wednesday night jams over time.

Special thanks to the organizers and instructors including Anna Somerville, Ron Mercer, Kayla Hotte, Jim Malberg, Marc Ladouceur, and Les Eberhardt. Towards the end of the workshop, an unplanned appearance by Toby Tellier introduced the students to the role of the bass in a jam and a bluegrass group.

The 30th anniversary of the festival featured great performances from world class groups Seldom Scene, Hot Rize, The Del McCoury Band, Rhonda Vincent and the Rage, Valerie Smith & Liberty Pike plus local bands Back Porch Swing, Kayla Hotte & Her Rodeo Pals, and Prairie Sky. The concerts were well attended and the weather was great. In addition to the main seating area there were another 75 - 100 people listening from just inside the pavilion (in the shade).

A great summer for Bluegrass !

Ronnie's Ramblin's by NBCMS President Ron Mercer



What an incredible summer of picking, hanging out with friends and hearing some of the best music in the world. The Blueberry Bluegrass Festival in August was a real treat this year with Rhonda Vincent, Hot Rize, Del McCoury and Seldom Scene. Good job Norm Sliter! The only complaint I heard was from Les Eberhardt. He mentioned that the Seldom Scene with Dudley Connell had a hard time finding their last note. It sometimes took them up to a minute to finally come to a blend together and finish the song.

The NBCMS had a couple of jamming tents set up along with Augie's tarped truck at the festival. We plan to expand next year to a whole alley of jamming spaces. We also debuted the new six foot bluegrass banner that Kenny Mak designed

for us. On Saturday, a few of us were privileged to teach a group of young players how to jam with each other. They got to go on stage and perform "Bury Me Beneath the Willow" in the key of "A." They sure sounded professional and I wouldn't have wanted to be the band following them.

I met Linda Thorburn, the founder of the Lighthouse Bluegrass Festival held on Vancouver Island. She was quite impressed with our club and especially this newsletter. We got to talking about more connectivity between bluegrass clubs in the west. We batted around the idea of having a concert tour set up for local bands to play a circuit. It would take a lot of coordination, cooperation and communication to make it work, but the results could be a fantastic opportunity for bluegrass bands to get exposure. Got to dream big to get those big pay-offs.

An acquaintance of mine asked me for an unusual request this summer. His 99 year old grandmother was dying at the Sturgeon Hospital. She had asked to have all the poking and prodding and tubes stopped so she could leave this world in peace. The doctors and the family consented and she had only a few precious days left. Her grandson had asked her if there was anything she would like before she passed on. She wanted to hear a real banjo because that had always made her happy. So, I came to her bedside and sang & played a few tunes for her. She had the brightest blue eyes and looked so content and I will always remember that moment. We laughed together while we sang and I cried when I got home.

I attended the Shady Grove Bluegrass festival just outside of Nanton, AB again this year. It was nice to see Kayla & Matt Hotte performing. Kayla pointed out a couple of times to the crowd that they are not married. At times I thought I was listening to a young Kitty Wells sing. The audience loved them and Matt got lots of applause for his fiddle solos (especially from me).

Ronnie continues to Ramble...

What makes Shady Grove so special to me is the group of close friends that stay at a local Bed & Breakfast that same weekend. The farm and the view of the countryside from the verandah is simply stunning and did I mention the extravagant breakfasts? We spend a lot of hours doing hardcore jamming. The six of us might have set a record for the number of tunes we crammed in. When our fingers were flaming red, we would wander over to the festival and hang out. It is a magical time and I look forward to it almost as much as the Winter Jam Camp.



As President, I get to answer a lot of the mail sent to our website address. In the month of August I received 2 different requests for a bluegrass band for their events. It felt really good to promote our

local talent to these vendors (check out our page of Edmonton bluegrass bands in this newsletter). The good news is that two bands now have another "paid" gig. The bad news is that neither of the groups that I play with were chosen. Boy, who do you have to know to get something??

I am sure enjoying this term of being the President and all the blessings that come with this position. I'm so proud of our past history and the fact that we maintain bluegrass "jamming" as our focus. Now, is it Big Sciota or Big Sandy River that has that minor chord in it?

Ron Mercer
President NBCMS

Fall Newsletter

By Co-Editors Frank Omoe and Grant Miner



Once again we had a great time putting the newsletter together. For those who have provided feedback, Thank You! We're being told that we seem to be on the right track and we welcome any suggestions to ensure that we are meeting the needs and expectations of the club and its members.

We found that there was lots of exciting news to include in the Fall newsletter. Although the Summer edition was loaded with news and articles, we realized that it might have been a little on the long side. We are trying to tighten up the length of our future newsletters. However we don't want to eliminate "good stuff," in other words content that we think members will find interesting & entertaining.

The fall activities for the club look very promising. Just take a look at the list of instructors for the Fall Workshop (see the NBCMS website for complete details). We are very fortunate to have the opportunity to learn and enjoy bluegrass music among such accomplished artists and instructors. Plus the jamming opportunities at these workshops are outstanding! See you at Camp He Ho Ha!

2015 Acoustic Music Workshop by Anna Somerville

We had so much fun last year ... are you ready for this year? We got lucky again and have enticed some great players/teachers to make themselves available to spend time with our community. Their flights are booked and they will make their way here right after Thanksgiving. As always it will be hard to choose whose workshop you will enjoy more.

Learning from our success with **Bluegrass 101**, we have added **Appalachian 101**, which is turning out to be a favorite. Along with some of the best **Guitar, Banjo, Mandolin, Fiddle and Vocal workshops**, we continue to promote the ever popular jamming opportunities. **Scheduled jamming** with the workshop leaders is a real highlight, a real chance to play alongside some of the best. Last year's 3 hour **Mini Festival** on Saturday afternoon was amazing, a privilege to see our visitors at their best. We won't have to twist arms to get people to attend that event. Speaking of twisting arms...don't forget to signed up for the **Band Scramble**...come on...it's fun! The **Open Stage** is always well supported. If you think of it, start preparing something now.

Let's not forget how good the food is! ...And the scenery! ...And visiting with friends!...I could go on and on...

The workshop hopes to attract music enthusiasts from all styles and expose them to the strengths associated with Bluegrass. As workshop director I am committed to encouraging a friendly atmosphere where you are free to partake in the many learning opportunities. If you are on the fence give me a call at 780-718-3070. I can answer your questions.

Hope to see you at the **Acoustic Music Workshop** October 16th – 18th, 2015 at Camp He Ho Ha.

Anna Somerville
NBCMS Workshop Director

Bluegrass 101

with Dave Keenan & Kayla Hotte

The **BLUEGRASS 101** circle is the easiest way to find fun at this year's workshop. Participating in a jam provides a chance to take a chance. Where else are you going to have a great time and feel comfortable playing with others? You should give this workshop a try. You couldn't find yourself in the company of two nicer and talented people than Kayla and Dave. How many instruments can these two people play?...all of them...but one at a time. Bring it to **Bluegrass 101**, get up and running on some tunes while you're nestled within a group.
www.davekeenan.com www.therodeopals.com

Banjo with Tom Adams

Intermediate – Advanced players

How many Banjo players got their inspiration to play from Tom? It's your chance to meet and play with him in person. Tom teaches online banjo lessons via Skype from his home in Adams County, Pennsylvania. You can find Tom's instructional videos on the **YouTube BanjoThink Channel**. **Tom Adams**, three-time **IBMA Banjo Player of the Year**, first gained national recognition thirty years ago as the banjo player with the legendary **Jimmy Martin** in the mid 1980s. Described by **Ricky Skaggs** as "one of the best banjo players ever."

www.adamscountybanjo.com

Mandolin with Alan Bibey

Advanced players

Don't miss this opportunity! Alan has made a name for himself as one of the most creative and technically gifted mandolinists in bluegrass and acoustic music. He was an original member of the ground breaking bands The New Quicksilver, IIIrd Tyme Out, Blue Ridge and for the last eight years, Grass-towne. He was included in the Mel Bay book "Greatest Mandolin Players of the Twentieth Century." In early 2004 the Gibson Company put into production the Alan Bibey Signature line of mandolins, reaffirming his status as one of the most influential mandolin players in bluegrass and acoustic music history. www.alanbibey.com

2015 NBCMS Fall Workshop Sessions and Instructors continued...

Calvin Vollrath on Fiddle

What a treat for us all! Calvin is bringing his fiddle to the NBCMS Workshop. If the fiddle community is going to spend time with the bluegrass community, it seems right to have Calvin there.

www.calvinvollrath.com

Guitar Behind the Song

with Steve Gulley

How lucky can we get to have Steve make the trip up from Tennessee again this year? Not only is Steve an inspiring and accomplished singer, songwriter and guitar player, he is just a wonderful guy to have at the camp. His easy way makes you want to slow down and take notice of what insights he has towards writing, playing and singing. Steve will be delving into the relationship between guitar and song and how good communication between the player and their instrument can deliver a great performance. Don't wait too long to get in on this workshop.

www.stevegulley.com

Songs You Need to Sing with Julie Elkins

All levels of Singers

OK...Julie is an amazing banjo player....BUT she is also a beautiful singer....and best of all...she is an inspiring teacher. This group will work on learning tunes, exploring harmony and a bit of how the voice works. Julie has been at the workshop in the past and was such a good fit we had to have her back. Spending time with Julie will bring out the song you need sing. Julie makes her home in Raleigh, North Carolina and teaches banjo, guitar and vocal lessons. She is associated with several bands. Have a look at her website.

www.julie-elkins.com/about.html

Dobro with Orville Johnson

Orville Johnson can sing the blues, pick the guitar and dobro and just about anything with strings on it, write you a song and tell you a story and then teach you how to do it, too. He's been spreading the joy of music far and wide all his life. Johnson is a hard musician to categorize since he can do it all. He's a singer, player, songwriter, author, rec-

ord producer, loves every aspect of music and wants to let you know about it.

www.orvillejohnson.com

Mandolin with Keith Yoder

Intermediate – Advanced players

I am looking forward to having a great time learning together with you. I will give you some music but be prepared to play a lot in class. Topics we will cover include: 0 2 5 – Playing leads on the fly; Simple chords; Crosspicking; Double stops; Using chords with the melody; I IV V; Chopping; Improvising; Enhancing a melody; Closed position playing; Find the root; Partial chords; Blues Notes; 7th chords. Keith has taught full-time since 1994. His workshop experience includes **Steve Kaufman's Acoustic Kamp, NimbleFingers, and the Walker Creek Music Camp.**

Which Guitar Workshop is for you?

You decide as both workshops are geared for Intermediate/Advanced players.

Guitar with Eli West

Intermediate/Advanced

Are you ready to know what you and your guitar can do? Eli West is a Seattle-based multi-instrumental musician who has made playing the guitar his business. He brings experience as a performer and teacher to share with you what he has a passion for. Eli grew up on the receiving end of music camps in Western Washington State, and so it feels quite right to come full circle at camps such as **RockyGrass, Centrum Voice Works, Targhee Music Camp, NimbleFingers Bluegrass & Old Time workshop** and others.

www.cahalen.com/cahalen-morrison-eli-west

Guitar with Tyler Grant

Intermediate – Advanced players

National Flatpicking Champion Tyler Grant is an internationally recognized guitar virtuoso, songwriter, vocalist and leader of the band **Grant Farm**. If you are comfortable chording and have ventured into flatpicking, treat yourself to a good tour of flatpicking possibilities *continued on page 6*

2015 Acoustic Music Workshop register at Bluegrassnorth.com

Tyler Grant continued from page 5

without ignoring the importance of rhythm playing. Tyler's sessions are geared for guitar players looking to expand on what they are comfortable doing ...give it a try! He has been an instructor at **CalArts, Steve Kaufman's Acoustic Kamp, Rockygrass Academy, Augusta Heritage Center Bluegrass Week, Grand Targhee Music Camp, Nimblefingers**, and recently completed a Flatpicking lesson series for the wildly successful **JamPlay.com**. He has been featured in *Acoustic Guitar Magazine, Flatpicking Guitar Magazine* and *Fingerstyle Guitar Magazine*.

www.tylergrant.com

Banjo with Brad Lindberg

Recommended for Beginner /Intermediate players

One of Calgary's best banjo teachers who continues to uncover the mysteries of the 5-string banjo. You don't need to look too far in the southern Alberta music scene to find Brad. If you are looking for a strong foundation to support your banjo craving then Brad is the guy to help you meet your goal...sign up and prepare for a fun time on that banjo.

Appalachian 101

with Jesse Wells and Sarah Wood from Morehead Kentucky

Appalachian 101 puts clawhammer and fiddle together in a workshop. Traditions will be explored and fiddle tunes shared by two very knowledgeable and talented musicians. **Who should sign up?** Clawhammer and fiddle players who have an interest in spending the weekend learning as they play. Time will be spent getting familiar with your instrument and then playing together as a group. If you don't have a clawhammer banjo you can rent one from Myhre's Music...give it a try.

A little rusty?

Haven't been playing guitar, mandolin, banjo or fiddle for awhile but would like to get back into it. Unsure of where you're at? Consider taking **Bluegrass 101**. The best way to get back into it is to just play, play, play. Spend the weekend jamming and picking up some tips and new tunes while enjoying two very enjoyable workshop leaders **Kayla Hotte and Dave Keenan**.

Just want to be singing?

If you are not interested in an instrument class, you can join Julie Elkins in the **Songs That Need Singing** workshop. This workshop is all about being inspired ...it's going to be fun.

Pulling it together

If you sing and play the guitar and would like to focus on supporting your songs with the guitar, then join **Steve Gulley**. Opportunities like this don't come along very often.

You could be jamming all weekend!

Remember, there is lots of jamming going on in between workshops. Friday and Saturday nights have scheduled jams with the instructors, a great opportunity to sit up close and feel the music being made...join in to get the most out of the circle...you could be playing all weekend.

Mini Festival

Take a break Saturday afternoon and sit in at one of the 3 stages that will host 9 concerts. Our workshop leaders will get a chance to present what they love doing and this is your chance to experience an up close and personal performance.

**Register today at Bluegrassnorth.com
Deadline for Early Bird Registration
is Sept. 30.**

Bluegrass has brought more people together and made more friends than any music in the world. You meet people at festivals and renew acquaintances year after year.

Schedule for NBCMS 2015 Workshop Oct. 16-18

Friday October 16th.

4:00 pm **Registration.**
 Pick up room assignment
 Name tag
 Band Scramble sign up
 Open Stage sign up

5:00 pm **ORIENTATION and
 Camp tour**

6:00 pm **SUPPER** in Main Hall

7:00 **PRESENTATION**

7:30 pm **Welcome and
 Introductions**

8:00 Workshop in session

9:00 pm **SNACK and
 50/50 Draw**

9:15 pm **Jamming**
 Slow Pitch Jam - Main Hall
 Intermediate Jam -
 George Kidd Lounge
 Intermediate Jam -
 Lounge 5/6

Saturday October 17th.

8:30 am **BREAKFAST** until 9:30

9:30 am Workshop in session.

10:30 am 15 minute coffee break
 in Main Hall.

10:45 am Workshop in session.

Noon: Band Scramble rehearsal

12:30 **LUNCH** until 1:30 pm

1:45 pm **BAND SCRAMBLE
 PERFORMANCE**

2:30 pm **OPEN STAGE**
 in George Kidd Lounge

3:00– 6:00 pm
Mini Festival

6:00 pm **SUPPER** in Main Hall

7:00 pm Workshop in session.

8:00 **SNACK** in Main Hall.

8:00 pm **Guitar Raffle &
 50/50 Draw**

8:45 **Jamming**

Slow pitch – Main Hall
 Intermediate Jam -
 George Kidd Lounge
 Intermediate Jam - Lounge 5/6
 Old Time Jam - Chapel

Sunday October 18th.

8:30 am **Continental
 BREAKFAST**

8:45 am **Sunday
 Gospel Sing-a-long**

9:30 Workshop in session.

10:30 **SUNDAY BRUNCH**

11:15 Workshop in session.

12:30 pm **Student Concert.**

1:30 pm Closing comments

2:30 pm On the road.



Mighty Glad You're Here by Frank Omoe



The "Grin Sisters" - Ollie Olekshy Martha Pollock and Iris Olekshy

In the 1970 song *Rain-O*, Bill (no, not Monroe) Henderson from the British Columbia based rock band Chilliwack wrote, "If there's no audience, there just ain't no show." Over the years, the NBCMS has had many members in the audience, three of the longest attending being the Olekshy sisters, Iris and Ollie, and their friend, Martha Pollock. I sat down with the ladies a few weeks ago.

Frank: "How long have the three of you been coming to the weekly jam sessions?"

Ollie: "We're too old to remember."

Martha: "I came years ago, when there were only one or two people in the audience. I thought they were the wives of the players. I felt a little uncomfortable so I quit coming for awhile. Then I saw some advertising, and I talked with the girls (Iris and Ollie) about it and they said they were coming, so I said, 'Well, I'll come back again.'"

Iris: "I knew Willie Arsenault who started this thing and I started coming to watch."

Ollie: "We started coming when it was so filled

that you couldn't get a seat. I wish it was like that again."

Frank: Why do you keep coming?

Iris: "We come here because we enjoy it and we enjoy the music. And there's very good talent here. I like the singing."

Ollie: "I like the singing, too, and you never know who's going to show up."

Martha: "I like the mandolins, all the solo parts, and I do enjoy the singing."

Frank: "You mentioned Willie Arsenault, Iris. Are there others you liked or miss because they don't come any more?"

Iris: "Ryer McCammond used to come but he sang mostly Country. I like Country more than Bluegrass. Bluegrass is nothing but they sing country songs faster. "

Ollie: "Edie Johnson and Rose Sutter used to come. I like Country, too but they don't sing it here."

Mighty Glad You're Here continued...

Martha: "I like the old Bluegrass numbers."

Iris: "You know who's a good entertainer these days is Ian Johnson. He just fills in anywhere to play his guitar or fiddle or if somebody needs a bass, he jumps in and plays the bass. He's a very good singer, too."

Frank: "How do you feel about the monthly local band concert followed by them leading the jam?"

Ollie: "Some of the bands are really good and it's nice to watch them play for half an hour. The band I really enjoyed was *Up the Creek*."

Iris: "I liked *Mountain Spirit*."

Martha: "I hadn't heard about that but I think it would be a very good idea."

Frank: "Since you come every week, you must have some ideas about how to make the jams even better for the audience."

Iris: "Come here prepared to play three songs and not say, 'Oh, what will I sing, now' when it comes to their turn."

Ollie: "And when there's a big circle, not everyone has to take a break on every song. It takes too long and I find that boring when that happens."

Martha: "It's good when they have the mikes because it makes such a difference trying to hear what the singer is singing. Some people have soft voices. They're very good singers but you can't hear them without the mikes."

Frank: "Thanks for sharing your thoughts, ladies. Any closing words?"

Martha: "Make sure you write that we thoroughly enjoy coming. That's what keeps us coming back."

House Concert Invitation

Laura Feehan & Fraser Betkowski will be hosting a house concert featuring **Steve Gulley** and **Alan Bibey** at 7:30 on Thursday October 15th. This pre-NBCMS Fall Workshop concert features two outstanding musicians in the world of Bluegrass. Steve and Alan were founding members of *Grasstowne*, playing together from 2006 through 2011. In that time *Grasstowne* released three very successful and critically acclaimed CDs: *The Road Headin' Home*, *The Other Side of Towne* and *Kick-in' Up Dust*.

If you are interested in attending, please contact Anna Somerville for more information. 780-718-3070 or A_D_S@Shaw.ca



"It seems like bluegrass people have more great stories to tell than other musicians."

Dan Fogelberg

NBCMS Presents The Slocan Ramblers Saturday, November 21

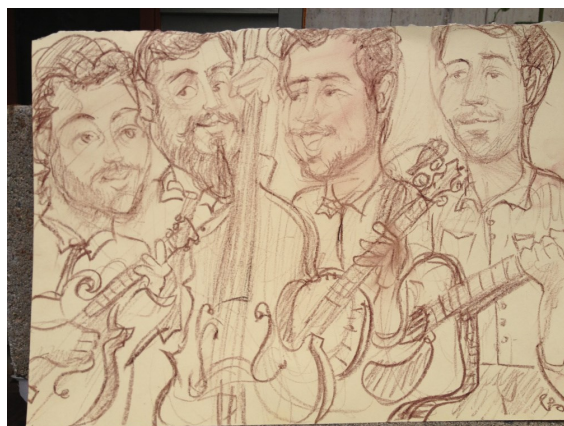
On November 21, the NBCMS is proud to present the Edmonton Folk Fest Award Winner for Best Emerging Artist, **The Slocan Ramblers**.

Fresh off the recent release and supporting tour of the new CD, *Coffee Creek*, the 'Ramblers take the stage at 7:30 p.m. at the Pleasantview Community Hall, 10860 - 57 Ave in Edmonton .

Certainly not your slickly produced "clean Nashville sound," The Slocan Ramblers: Singer and banjo player Frank Evans, composer and mandolinist Adrian Gross, guitar whiz Darryl Poulson, and upright bassist Alastair Whitehead bring impeccable musicianship and raw, high energy in a return to Edmonton. It will be Canadian bluegrass at its finest!

Those who caught the 'Ramblers at the Shady Grove Bluegrass Festival in Nanton, Aug 14-16 were blown away by their performance. *Coffee Creek* has drawn excellent reviews and you can listen to a few cuts from *Coffee Creek* and their first CD *Shaking Down the Acorns* by visiting their website at: slocanramblers.com.

Tickets are only \$20 for NBCMS members and \$25 for non-members. Get yours now for what promises to be a hot time on a cold night in Edmonton.



NBCMS Weekly Wednesday Jam Session

From 7:00 to 10:00 pm. every Wednesday night, the NBCMS hosts an acoustic bluegrass jam at:

Pleasantview Community Hall
10860 - 57 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta

Musicians (the pickers) of all abilities and listeners (the grinners) are most welcome. A donation of \$2.00 for an NBCMS member and \$4.00 for a non-member is requested at the door (but no one is ever turned away because they can't pay). Complimentary coffee is provided and Front of the House Director **Marlene Thompson** always comes up with some tasty goodies.

Bluegrass 101

Bluegrass 101 at Pleasantview Hall took a summer holiday. Due to popular demand we are pleased to announce that it is returning! The sessions are starting up on Oct 14, 2015 with Darcy Whiteside and Jim Storey. All you Bluegrass 101 players have a couple of weeks to get your picking back up to speed before the classes resume. Better head down to practice at "*The Old Home Place*" because you know Darcy and Jim will "*Never Shed Another Tear.*"

Myhre's Music
8735 - 118 Ave. Edmonton, Alberta T5B 0T2
(780) 477 - 1586
10% of all Non-Sale Accessories
Current Membership Card Must be Presented

Local Bluegrass Bands by Frank Omoe

At this time, we are proud to say that there are twelve local bands who are dedicated to playing *all or mostly* bluegrass music. All of them have at least one member who belongs to the NBCMS. Most of the bands have web pages so please check them out to learn more about our very own Northern Alberta bands. The following is a list of the bands, in alphabetical order:

- Amerada Road** website: ameradaroad.com
- Back Porch Swing** website: backporchswing.ca
- The Bix Mix Boys** website: www.thebixmixboys.ca
- Cabin Fever Band** contact Patrick Guidera (780) 235-8671
- Hay City Rollers** website: haycityrollers.com
- Devonian Bluegrass Band** contact Larry Seuter (780) 988-8282 or poundslbs@xplornet.com
- Kayla Hotte and her Rodeo Pals** website: therodeopals.com
- Mountain Spirit** contact: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Mountain-Spirit/487844594605733>
- Prairie Sky** contact Sheila Hallet (780) 488-9401 or galbanjo@telus.net
- Up The Creek** contact Ron Woytiuk (780) 470-0234 or ronpeggywoytiuk@gmail.com
- Long Way Home** contact Eric Papsdorf etpapsdorf@gmail.com
- Whitemud Drive** contact Clem Bray (780) 465-5611 or cbray@telusplanet.net

Each Newsletter will feature two or three of the local bands. For this edition we have focused on Amerada Road, Kayla Hotte and Her Rodeo Pals, and Mountain Spirit. You'll find those features on pages 13-15.

Amerada Road by Frank Omoe



Amerada Road...the almost poetic meter of the two words just rolls off the tongue. And, as guitarist Brad Creemer pointed out, the American and Canadian acoustic musical roots of their songs could be combined to form the word "Amerada." All of which would make for an almost magical origin for the name of this Bluegrass/Appalachian old time influenced band. If only it were true. As lead singer/fiddler Hannah Goa explained, the name of the band actually came from an exit on the QE II that Hannah pulled onto, after being rear ended on her way to a band practice. The secondary highway was called **Amerada Road**.

Two years ago, Hannah, fellow Edmontonian and NBCMS member bassist Toby Tellier, Foothills Bluegrass Music Society members Amber-Lynn Yourk (mandolin) and Brad Creemer came together to play a set for a fundraising event. Though Amber-Lynn left to pursue a musical career in Nashville, Hannah, Toby and Brad have continued to play at such events as The Works, the NBCMS Concert and Jam Lead, Saturday Night Bluegrass, The Carrot, and the Three Hills Arts Academy. They have a twin bill with Prairie Sky booked for March of 2016 in Calgary for the Foothills Club. Between now and then, you may even see Howie Bergeron pinch-hitting on guitar (and dobro) for Brad as Brad undertakes Air Traffic Control Training. Seems to be a fitting program for Brad who always looks so relaxed and calm as his jazz trained fingers fly all over the fretboard. Brad has brought some more contemporary pieces, such as Russ Barenberg's *Our Time*, to the band. Toby Tellier, the ever youthful and effervescent veteran of such bands as Woodbend, Wildwood Flower and, more recently, The Hay City Rollers and Cabin Fever provides a beautiful harmony to Hannah's strong vocals. It was twelve years ago that Hannah began moving away from the classical violin and began fiddlin'. She credits the NBCMS weekly jam, the Fall Workshops and the Nimblefingers Bluegrass Camp in Sorrento for helping her progress in playing ability. She mentioned the importance to her of the support and encouragement she received from the NBCMS jammers (citing Linda Saboe's "gentle, yet firm, insistence" that Hannah take the next break: "Better learn it quick, you're next").

Hannah also chuckled as she recounted a gig they played when Hannah's daughter, Mackenzie, was seven. As Hannah introduced the upcoming song, saying that it spoke of "hard times" and that "the journey on the road of life is never easy," Mackenzie piped up with, "I think you already played this song!" Mackenzie's comment and the resulting laughter from the audience led to the addition of a few more "happy" songs to the band's set list. Enjoying each others' company, whether it be rehearsing, playing a gig or just hanging out jamming, the members of **Amerada Road** make beautiful music together. You can see some video taken of the band at ameradaroad.com

Kayla Hotte & Her Rodeo Pals by Grant Miner



Kayla Hotte and Her Rodeo Pals is a band that focuses on 1940's style country & western music. Kayla formed the band in the spring of 2012 and they have been busy with many performances and other musical endeavours ever since.

Her current band consists of :

- Kayla Hotte (vocal, guitar)
- Matt Hotte (fiddle, and brother)
- Marc Ladouceur (guitar)
- Chris Brzezicki (bass)
- Gary Okrainec (pedal steel)

This past summer the band performed at such places as the Blueberry Bluegrass & Country Music Society Festival, and The Works in downtown Edmonton.

Last year the band assembled at Riverdale Recorders in Edmonton to cut Kayla's first CD. Kayla had a few guest artists play on the CD including Byron Myhre (on fiddle). Kayla is also a songwriter and her composition, "Rope & Ride" (on her CD) is a great representation of her style. She told me that often it is a good story that forms the foundation for her compositions, along with songs that have a bit of humour included. She is currently writing songs for her next CD.

Kayla comes from a family steeped in bluegrass, including Carolyn Hotte (past-NBCMS president, vocals, guitar) and her dad, Ken Hotte (stand up bass). She played bluegrass in the family band. As well when Kayla was growing up she had musical interests other than bluegrass. While attending the Grant MacEwan University's music program, she discovered a love for old-time traditional country & western music, yet still staying true to bluegrass (which she still loves and plays regularly).

I asked Kayla what has inspired her as an artist. She explained that the community that likes traditional music is rather small but very supportive. For example, when she travelled to Toronto for the first time in February, she quickly made connections through the Toronto bluegrass community that in turn led to her play some unexpected gigs and jams. It all happened so naturally (and mirrors the spirit of the bluegrass community both past and present).

Kayla and her multi-talented brother Matt play together in the band and also have appeared as a duo many times this year.

For more information on Kayla and the band see www.the.rodeopals.com

Mountain Spirit by Grant Miner



Within the Edmonton bluegrass community we have a unique band that likes to focus on the gospel side of bluegrass. The band is **Mountain Spirit**, a group that you may have heard on stage at the club or perhaps at Ron & Jean's place during one of their popular Saturday Night Bluegrass house concerts.

The band consists of the following :

- Ron Mercer (vocals, banjo, dobro, guitar)
- Jean Coates (vocals, bass)
- Ian Johnson (vocals, guitar, fiddle, banjo)
- Steve Schroeter (vocals, mandolin, banjo)

The group was first started up about 5 years ago. The desire at that time was to shift away from hard-driving bluegrass over to gospel with a softer approach. In addition to their gospel set they also have a second set that includes bluegrass, folk & country.

A big focus for the group is the harmony singing. Jean and Steve often provide a technical approach towards building the harmony whereas Ian and Ron use the tried and true approach being - "that just sounds right."

A good example of a song that might describe the **Mountain Spirit** sound and style is an Alison Kraus song called "*When God Dips His Pen Of Love In My Heart*," a song with meaning and presented in three part harmony.

Another distinct feature for the group is the fingering picking that Ian does on guitar on some of their songs, in contrast to traditional bluegrass style flat-picking.

I asked Ron about some of the special times the group has experienced. He recalled one day they were in a stairwell warming up for a performance. They were simply singing, with a bit of mando in the background. The sound was like "being in church." It just sounded so right.

In 2015, **Mountain Spirit** has played at the Radway Festival of Stars, a few churches, etc. They plan on continuing in the same direction, with the primary focus of enjoying the music and enjoying others' company.

Sunny Jim's Bluegrass Storeys by Jim Storey

I thought that I would write about the instruments used in bluegrass music, particularly the ones that people think of as 'the best of the best.' We will consider the instruments used by Bill Monroe and the Bluegrass Boys, as well as one used by Flatt & Scruggs. Bill's band consisted of mandolin, guitar, banjo, fiddle & bass (although he did use an accordion for a bit before he came to his senses). Flatt & Scruggs for the most part dropped the mandolin and added the resonator guitar (Dobro - trade name).

The mandolin that comes to mind immediately is the one that Bill Monroe used - the Gibson Lloyd Loar F5 master model. They were made by Gibson from June 1922 until December of 1924 and were hand signed by designer Lloyd Loar, if they passed his approval. These instruments were voted as the best instruments of any type created in the 20th century, and rank up with Stradivarius violins. There were an estimated 250 made, and many are still in use today, and a good one will cost you around \$225,000.00. Although all Gibson Loars are considered great, some stick out even more. John Reischman's F5 wins best Loar F-5 prize pretty much every year at the annual meeting of the Gibson Lloyd Loar owners club.

Hands down, the winner on the guitar category is a pre-war C.F. Martin D-28. Pre-war Martins were built from 1934 to 1944. Most Golden era pre-war D-28 herringbones (named after the trim used around the edge of the top during this period) are great, but, of course, some stick out. Tony Rice's 1935 D-28 is definitely the most famous, although it was altered during the 1950's with a Gretsch fingerboard (longer scale than the Martin original), plus the sound hole was enlarged. My friend, band mate & Martin guitar buff, Logan Sarchfield, tells me that the 1937 D-28 is the most sought after for bluegrass. Because of its construction & materials, it is extremely loud, and just what the bluegrass

rhythm player is looking for to overpower the banjo player (not really). Expect to pay around \$60,000.

Banjoes of the best quality for bluegrass are also pre-war instruments, and according to my friend, band mate and banjo/bluegrass expert/historian Darcy Whiteside, the Gibson 1933 models RB-3, RB-75 and Granada are the ones to look for. They were actually the less expensive of the Gibson's line up that year, but because of their one piece flange, pre-war bell brass, and other features they get the nod from banjo nerds. Probably around \$75,000.00 to \$100,000.00, if you can find one.



*Jim Storey plays bass for
The Bix Mix Boys*

The resonator guitar is the exact opposite as far as age. The Dobro company started to produce them in about 1926 at the height of the Hawaiian craze, as they were looking for a way to improve the volume of a Hawaiian guitar in a band setting. Hawaiian music lost popularity shortly after, and country and blues players picked up the instrument. *Continued on page 17*

Sunny Jim's Bluegrass Storeys

Flatt & Scruggs added the instrument to their band in the 1950's, with 'Uncle' Josh Graves making it popular. Over the last 20 or 30 years, companies such as Beard, Rayco, and many boutique builders have produced resonator guitars of much superior quality to the old ones, due to technology, engineering, and better materials. It's one instrument that always seems to be improving. In resonators, newer is usually better.

Violins or fiddles are numerous, old and new, and a fiddle is a very personal thing. There is no one fiddle that sticks out as a great bluegrass fiddle. The player determines what sounds right for them. Loud is usually good.

The bass has a clear winner in the Kay brand bass. They were made from the 1930's to the 1960's and were made mostly for school bands. They are made of plywood, and are virtually indestructible. I don't think that one year is better than another. In the old days they were usually tied with rope to the top of vehicles to get from job to job, and were subject to all sorts of weather and abuse. They usually don't sound that great, but, with a microphone or an electric pickup, they can sound any way you want them to.

If you see any of these instruments at a garage sale, make sure not to tell the people what they have. But phone me – I'll be right over.

Please try to catch Darcy Whiteside (Cousin Darcy) and me, Jim Storey (Sunny Jim) on the air every Thursday night from 7:06 pm 'til 8:00 pm on 'Prairie Pickin' (CJSR's longest continually running radio show).

It's an hour of the best bluegrass music we can find on CJSR 88.5 FM or streaming live on the old inter-web at www.cjsr.com

Mike's Monroe Mandolin Camp Adventure

by Mike Bunting

From September 9-13, I had the pleasure to spend a week just outside Nashville studying all the facets of Monroe style mandolin as demonstrated by the great Mike Compton, Roland White, David Davis to name some whose names will be recognizable up here. Classes went for three and a half days from 9 am till 3pm and all the other time was devoted to jamming to all hours. Serious playing for sure.



*NBCMS member **Mike Bunting** (left) and mandolin player/teacher extraordinaire **Mike Compton***

The camp was incredibly well organized and run with the most amazing energy by Heidi Herzog, Mike Compton's partner. She took care of everything a camper might need. She brought in a couple of great chefs from New York to cater all the meals and it was terrific food. She made it all very special.

The camp luthiers were Will Kimble and Paul Duff who would do repairs and set ups while you wait as well as giving a two hour presentation on building mandolins, whimsically called "Which Recipe Will give You The Best Biscuits?" It gave great insights on how these guys go about their work. *Continued on page 18*

Mike's Monroe Mandolin Camp Adventure by Mike Bunting continued from p.17

On Friday, Tony Williamson gave a presentation on "The Art of the American Mandolin," a very detailed history of the instrument from the beginning of time right up to when Monroe's '23 Gibson Loar set the standard that all builders strive for today. Tony brought a whole passel of Loars for us to inspect and try out too.

Saturday's presentation may have been the best of all! Blake Williams, banjo, Tom Ewing, guitar and vocal, fiddler Glen Duncan (now a Nashville producer and session player), bassist Mark Hembree and Roland White with his mandolin - all former Blue Grass Boys, came in to spend a couple of hours playing tunes from the Monroe catalogue and telling some great tales about being on the road with the Old Man. Glen Duncan does the best imitation of Monroe you've ever heard and sang Monroe's part on the vocals. They described how they all collaboratively arranged all the tunes as they recorded them, something that all the band members really dug about playing with the eccentric genius that was Bill Monroe. As much of an oddball that he was, they all loved their time with him. As well, they all stayed around to jam which was a pretty amazing treat, I must say.

The classes themselves ranged from Compton's teaching of the changing style of Monroe's playing as he made the transition from the old-timey style he played with his brother to the more syncopated style that he developed in the early years of the Bluegrass Boys. Of course Monroe's style naturally evolved over the years as he chased his incredible musical curiosity. Mike also taught us other tunes in different classes about the bluesy trademarks of the Monroe style and some more obscure Monroe fiddle tunes such as *Nanook of the North*. Mike is a great teacher, good humoured and was able to break things down very clearly into digestible bites for us. Now that Monroe is gone I can't think of anyone who is into the Monroe style as deeply as Mike Compton. He's a powerful player.

Mark Royal taught some basic stuff such as the use of double stops and scalar licks, etc. David Davis had some classes on Monroe singing. Davis is a great singer too. All the instructors really knew their stuff and as a whole all the bases were covered well.

Saturday night it was into Carter's Vintage Guitars for the instructors 'concert where they were backed up by the visiting Blue Grass Boys. Mike Compton is also heavily into the development of young players and had half a dozen youngster from 8 to maybe 14 playing at this show and their talent would knock your socks off.

My friend, Brian Reed, took me out to the old home place where his family lived, about 50 miles west of Nashville. All I can say is that is some of the most beautiful county side I've ever seen. I thank him for showing me that part of the country as well as for being a great travelling companion.

To cap it all off, I spent Monday hanging out at Carter's Vintage Guitars with Paul Duff, Steve Gilchrist and Mike Compton who dropped in briefly. I got my fingers on all the instruments I could. Duff and I sat for a couple of hours playing these axes. I played a '22 Loar for quite awhile, go figure!

I've been to this camp now four times and this one really outdid itself. I'm saving up my pennies to get there again next year. It was just a great adventure and I'd encourage everyone to visit this warm and welcoming music camp. Peace.



“Grassified” Ads

For Sale:

- Eastman Mandolin MD315 F-style, purchased new from Myhre’s Music, May 2014. Gig bag included. For further details contact Grant Miner (780) 246-1424

Bluegrass Instrument Instruction

Are you learning a new instrument?
Are you looking to get to the next level of playing?

Learn to play better bluegrass with help from these local musicians who are willing to give private lessons (unrelated to the NBCMS):

Jim Storey	stand-up bass, flatpicking guitar	(780) 474-6033
Marc Ladouceur	mandolin, guitar	(780) 221-3464
Ron Mercer	banjo	(780) 488-5256
Kayla Hotte	voice, fiddle, rhythm guitar	(780) 940-3375
Larry Seuter	dobro, steel guitar	(780) 988-8282
Troy Gates	fiddle	(780) 998-4817
Leonard Swanson	dobro	(780) 436-1998
Mike Bunting	mandolin, guitar	(780) 952-6820



If you know of any other teachers who wish to have their name added to the list, please contact Frank Omoe at omoe@shaw.ca.

The NBCMS does not sponsor or endorse these lessons nor does NBCMS accept any responsibility if you are not satisfied with the lessons or if still can't play your instrument following your lessons.

HINT - Consistent practice pays off in a big way. Go for it!



Jamming Etiquette by Grant Miner

In the last news letter I provided a suggestion or two on proper jamming etiquette. These hints are standard practices for any jamming circle and align to the NBCMS club's intended jamming environment. Here are a few more suggestions :

- **Split Breaks** - Many instrumentals have a Part A and Part B. Usually each part is played twice. If it is larger circle and familiar song it can take a really long time to get through the song. An effective way to handle this challenge is for one player to play Part A only and pass Part B to the next player to the left. To make this happen smoothly it requires communication between players. On some slow songs it may even work better if the first player plays the first half of Part A, next player plays the second half of Part A; same for splitting Part B.
- **Participation** - Remember that it is a jamming circle, not a performance. Players join a circle so they can have a chance to play a song they know or improvise on a song that they do not know. In other words lots of participation is the goal and makes it fun for everyone.

NBCMS Stuff To Buy

A repeat pitch...

The Club has some great looking merchandise with the NBCMS logo as shown in the picture on the right. Kinley Miller has been passionately exploring other ideas as well.

All of these hot little items are being sold "at cost" which means the Club is simply trying to offer you some cool things without trying to make a profit.



Inside the Vault by Frank Omoe

What an incredible library we have located upstairs at Pleasantview Hall! There are dozens of CD's, lots of DVDs, and many instructional books on every bluegrass instrument and the voice. I was in the library a couple of weeks ago when Robert Leckie came in looking for a version of "Whiskey Before Breakfast." Within five minutes we'd found an instructional DVD that had the song. What a collection to draw from!

In each issue of the Newsletter, I will feature items that are in the Library. They are just waiting for someone like you or me to take them home.

The Bluegrass Compact Disc

Knowing that Darcy Whiteside had been using many of the songs from **The Bluegrass Album Band** as a basis for Bluegrass 101, I decided to check out this 1986 Rounder Records CD. Sometimes so-called "super groups" aren't but **The Bluegrass Album Band** certainly is. The just shy of 60 minute compilation takes 20 of the best songs from the four records of the super group. Tony Rice, J.D. Crowe, Doyle Lawson, Bobby Hicks, Jerry Douglas, and Todd Phillips form his superb band. The CD even has excellent liner notes that do much more than just hype the group.

In this issue, I'll share with you my thoughts about two CDs:

The **Bluegrass Compact Disc** by the Bluegrass Album Band and **Absolutely Bluegrass**, a compilation of songs by various bluegrass artists.

I also watched a 1987 DVD called **Classic Hot Rize** with Red Knuckles and the Trailblazers. All the original members of Hot Rize were there (looking very much younger and in one case, lighter)

If you take them out, I hope you get as much enjoyment out of them as I did.

In almost all compilations, there are a few "weak" songs to fill out the album. Not so on this one. Normally I'd pick out a couple of favourite songs and instrumentals to highlight but how do you pick from 19 outstanding songs? The only easy pick was the sole instrumental tune, the Bill Monroe/Bobby Hicks' *Cheyenne*.

While the variety of songs, tempos, arrangements, vocals and sheer musicianship was amazing, what really struck me how these great musicians jelled together. It was apparent that any egos were buried as all the talent was equally displayed.

Only space left to name a few of



A peek inside "The Vault" looking at half the CD Wall

the songs on this incredible CD. *Blue Ridge Cabin Home*, *The Old Home Town*, *Take Me in the Lifeboat*, *Sitting Alone in the Moonlight*, *Ocean of Diamonds*, *I'll Never Shed Another Tear*, and the gospel number *Talk It All Over With Him* are but seven. To hear the rest, sign out the CD. You'll be glad you did.



More Inside the Vault on page 22 ...

Inside the Vault *continued*

DVD Classic **Hot Rize** with Red Knuckles and the Trailblazers

As is our annual practice, my 90 year old father and I watched the Saturday performances at Blueberry. While we have rarely agreed on a lot of things over the past 62 years, my dad and I were united in our favourite band that day - **Hot Rize**. So, you know that when I saw this DVD in our library, I had to give it a look-see. Recorded live on July 28, 1987, the original members (Tim O'Brien - mandolin and fiddle, Pete Wernick - banjo, Nick Forster - electric bass and the late Charles Sawtelle - guitar) put on a great show as both **Hot Rize** and as their swingin'/honky tonkin' alter-egos **Red Knuckles and the Trailblazers**. **Hot Rize** even played two songs in that performance that they did this year at Blueberry (*Radio Boogie* and Pete Wernick's *Just Like You*), proof, I guess, that if you only perform every ten years or so together, you don't have to learn much new material. For an almost 30 year old filming, the technology was pretty good (only the lack of bass was noticeable in the mixing). And, boy, can they play! The DVD went for nearly an hour. There were 13 **Hot Rize** songs, such as *Blue Night*, *Keep Your Lamp Trimmed and Burning*, *Won't You Come and Sing For Me*, *Untold Stories* plus 8 others including instrumentals like *Wild Ride*, *Sally Ann*, and *Wheel Hoss*.

Red Knuckle and the Trailblazers did four songs, two western swing numbers that my wife really enjoyed - *Deep Water and Pistol Packin' Momma* and two honky tonk songs - *One Woman Man* and George Jones' *Window Up Above*. There was even an infomercial spoof of some songs from the sixties done in Western Swing Style. What a hoot! Complete with interesting short interviews about how the band started, why they use a single microphone and a hilarious faux band slamming of Red Knuckles by Tim O'Brien, the DVD was outstanding. After watching it, I hit replay and immediately watched it again. I even sneaked it over to my dad's place so he could watch before returning it to the library. If you enjoyed **Hot Rize** at Blueberry, I know you'll like this DVD from 1987.

Wood, Steel and Strings by Grant Miner The Fiddle



Back in the 1930's and 1940's the fiddle became one of the key instruments for the bluegrass bands of the time. For example, the fiddle dominated Bill Monroe's Blue Grass Boys' sound. Monroe would expect his fiddle players to generate a specific style that met his expectations. In fact at one stage, his band had as many as three fiddle players.

There are no real distinctions between violins and fiddles, though more primitively constructed and smaller violins are more likely to be considered fiddles. Generally it is considered that the term "fiddle" is simply a nickname.

There are numerous fiddling styles in countries all across the world. In North America "bluegrass fiddling" would be categorized as modern fiddling and a different style from country and western swing. There are also a number of Canadian fiddling styles such as Acadian, French Canadian and Metis fiddling.

Fiddlin' Arthur Smith joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1929 and incorporated blues into his fiddle play-

Wood, Steel and Strings - The Fiddle continued ...

Smith did some studio recording with Bill Monroe with the Blue Grass Boys and some think this was the beginning of bluegrass fiddling. Later Art Wooten joined the Blue Grass Boys and he is considered by many to be bluegrass music's first fiddler. He introduced *Orange Blossom Special* to the band. This song is the most famous fiddle breakdown song and was co-written by Chubby Wise and Irving T. Rouse (although they both have tried to claim ownership). This flashy song starts with some train noises, a lonesome whistle blow (sliding double stops), the sound of wheels turning (sideways chops) and some left hand pizzicato to replicate the train's warning bell. Then the song rips into licks based on double shuffle which is also called syncopated "hokum bowing"....and the crowd goes crazy.

Fiddles traditionally played the melody or lead most of the time. However when Chubby Wise played with Monroe he developed a "chop" to provide a back-beat rhythm when the mandolin was taking a solo break. Wise also learned to back up the vocals by playing harmony, double-stops and fills. Chubby Wise played with the Blue Grass Boys during their "golden years" when Flatt & Scruggs were with the band. Wise recorded "*Footprints In The Snow*" and "*Kentucky Waltz*," both considered classics for the band.

The fiddle also is used to kick off a number with a short phrase using staccato bowing. Bowing can be quite advanced using patterns such as the Nashville Shuffle and the Georgia Bow. The "double shuffle" uses three note patterns that stretch across two bars (borrowed from the 3 finger banjo style). Bluegrass fiddling uses a lot of open strings along with an array of double stops.

In 1967 Byron Berline joined Monroe as his fiddler but only played with him for 7 months before he was drafted to Vietnam. Before he left, Berline and Monroe wrote *Gold Rush*, one of the classic bluegrass tunes of all time. In 1969 Kenny Baker (described as the best fiddler in bluegrass by Bill Monroe) released an album "Portrait of a Bluegrass Fiddler."

It was one of the first bluegrass albums led by the fiddle. Some classic bluegrass fiddle songs include *Soldier's Joy*, *Bill Cheatham*, *Cripple Creek*, *Billy In The Low Ground*, *Arkansas Traveller*, and *Jerusalem Ridge*.

Not all fiddles are the same. Pictured below is a homemade "Saskatchewan" fiddle I inherited from my Dad. Handmade neck and head stock, rough friction fit pegs, Gasoline antifreeze bottles and snuff cans to resonate that smooth sound.

Sources - History of Bluegrass by Mark O'Connor; Fiddling Around The World



***For the good are always the merry
Save by an evil chance
And the merry love the fiddle
And the merry love to dance.***

***"Fiddler of Dooney"
by William Butler Yeats***

The violin sings, but the fiddle dances.

NEWS and VIEWS from Summer Activities



NBMCS Secretary **Corinna Diamond** (3rd from the right) had a great time at Nimblefingers Camp in Sorrento, BC. She studied Guitar 101 under the expert tutelage of fellow NBCMS member **Kayla Hotte**.

NBCMS Vice President **Leonard Swanson** (back row, 2nd from right) also attended Nimblefingers, participating in the Week 2 Advanced Dobro Class.



BLUEGRASS ARTISTS - PAST & PRESENT by Grant Miner

The Carter Family



When you think of bluegrass music it is hard not to think of the Carter family and their influence on the development of bluegrass. They recorded songs that NBCMS members regularly play at our weekly jam such as *Wildwood Flower*, *Can (Will) The Circle Be Unbroken*, *Wabash Cannonball* and *Keep On The Sunny Side*.

Here is how it all started.....

Maybelle Carter joined up with her cousin Sara Carter and her brother-in-law AP Carter in 1927 to start up the "Carter Family" in southwest Virginia. Maybelle played autoharp, banjo and eventually the guitar. She developed guitar picking style called the "Carter Scratch" (melody played on the lower and middle pitched strings and the index finger used to play the rhythm). Sara sang lead and Maybelle provided the harmony, but it was Maybelle's unique guitar playing that helped to establish their reputation.

Their first recording session (called the Bristol sessions) was in 1927 where they were paid \$50 for each song they recorded plus a very small royalty. On 4 November 1927, the Victor Talking Machine Company released a double-sided 78 rpm record of the group performing *Wandering Boy* and *Poor Orphan Child*.

From 1938 to 1942 the Carter Family performed on radio stations in Texas and eventually North Carolina. The marriage between Sara and AP fell apart in 1936 and the group eventually disbanded in 1944. Maybelle continued to perform with her daughters Anita Carter, June Carter, and Helen Carter as "The Carter Sisters." The Carter Sisters reclaimed the name "The Carter Family" for their act during the 1960s and 1970s. Maybelle and Sara briefly reunited, recorded a reunion album, and toured in the 1960s during the height of folk music's popularity. A documentary about the family, *Sunny Side of Life*, was released in 1985. In 1987, reunited sisters June Carter Cash and Helen & Anita Carter, along with June's daughter Carlene Carter, appeared as the Carter Family and were featured on a 1987 television episode of *Austin City Limits* along with Johnny Cash.

In 1970, the Carter Family became the first group to be elected into the Country Music Hall of Fame, which is a fitting tribute to their immense influence and legacy.

Upcoming Concerts and Festivals in Alberta

- October 2 John Reischman and the Jaybirds at Festival Place in Sherwood Park
- October 7 NBCMS Semi-Annual General Meeting 7:30; Cabin Fever Band Concert 7:00
- October 17 Claire Lynch Band at Festival Place in Sherwood Park
- October 22 Central Music Fest (Red Deer) features Claire Lynch
- October 25 An Afternoon With Keith Yoder and Friends, contact Foothills Bluegrass Music Society
- November 21 NBCMS present The Slocan Ramblers at Pleasantview Community Hall
Doors Open at 7:00, Concert to Start at 7:30pm
- November 21 Foothills Bluegrass Music Society Annual General Meeting and Concert 5:30

Workshops and Camps

- October 9-11 Sonny Osborne Banjo Camp (Nashville, Tennessee)
- October 16-18 NBCMS Fall Workshop (Camp He Ho Ha)
- November 13-16 ResoSummit –Dobro only (Nashville, Tennessee)
- January 3 - 9, 2016 Pete Wernick’s Boulder Bluegrass Camp (Boulder, Colorado)

**The Mission of the Northern Bluegrass Circle Music Society
is to promote, preserve and present Bluegrass Music
Visit our Website at www.bluegrassnorth.com**