

**ORIGINAL**  

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**MICHIGAN**  

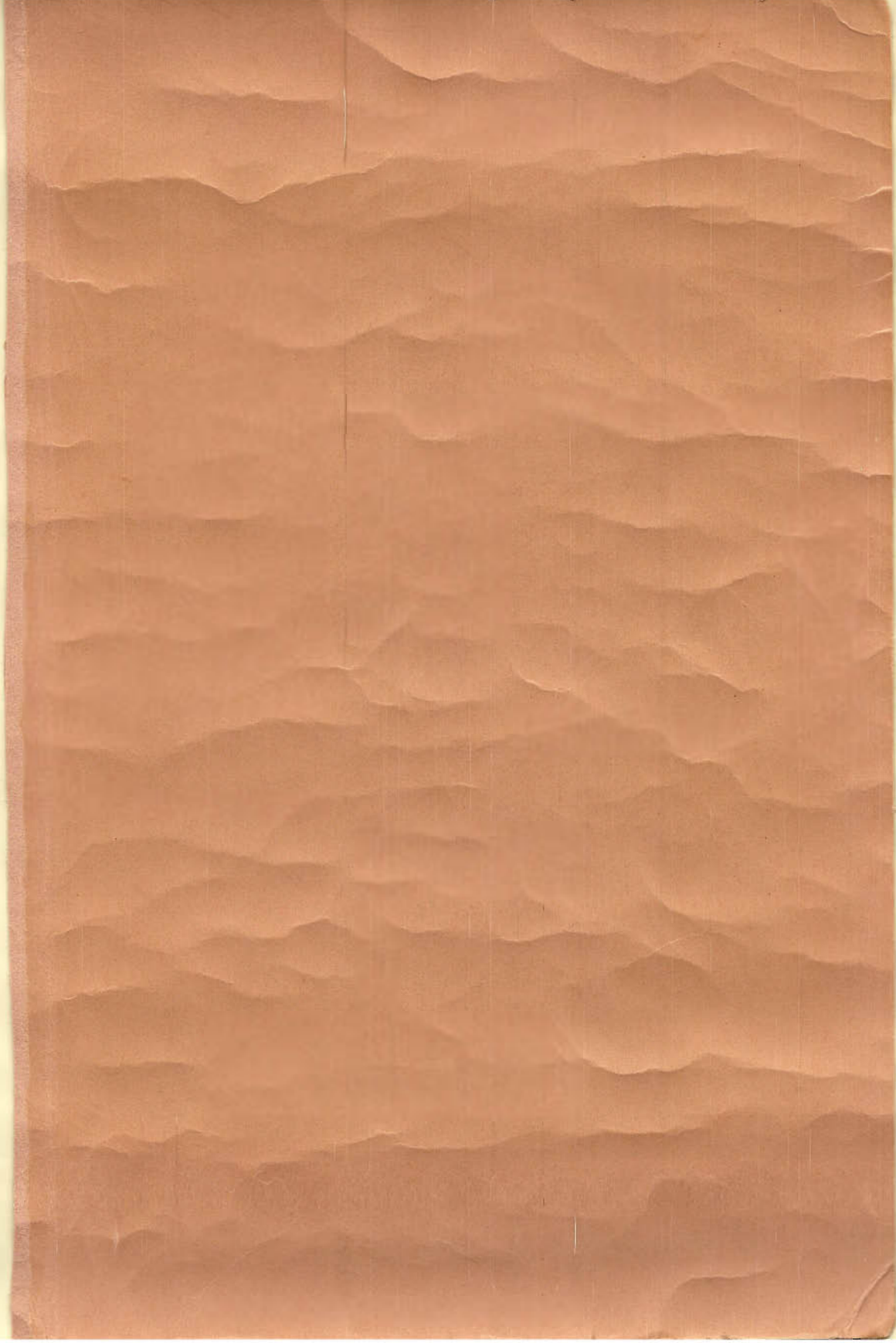
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**FIDDLERS**



**1986**

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whose contributions have helped create the first  
edition of our Original Michigan Fiddlers' Book.

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The  
Original Michigan Fiddlers' Association  
*"Old Time Music & Dances of Yester-year"*



1st Edition

Published by

The Original Michigan Fiddlers' Association

1986

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## FOREWORD

Music has always been an important part of the lives of the people of Michigan. It brings people from all walks of life together and allows them to forget their cares for awhile. It helps us through the sad times and celebrates the happy times. It can make us dance, clap our hands, tap our foot, sing, laugh or cry.

The fiddle has been a favorite instrument since the time of the fur traders. Fiddles were taken to the forts, early settlements, lumber camps and farms of Michigan. They have been played in barns, dance halls, grange halls, at house parties, and opera houses in large and small communities throughout the state. Fiddlers and fiddle music come in various shapes and styles. The fiddlers might be young or old, short or tall; the music can be old-time, bluegrass or country.

An important part of a fiddler's life is fiddling -- alone or with others. The others might play banjo, guitar, harmonica, mandolin, piano or any other instrument. What would a dance be without callers, dancers and an audience? Learning "old" and "new" tunes; encouraging others, whether young or old, to participate and improve; just enjoying the music are also important aspects of the musicians' lives.

Even more important than the music, are the friendships and the fun and fellowship that music, in a non-competitive atmosphere, makes possible all across the State of Michigan.

## DEDICATION

To honor all deceased members of OMFA who have passed away before our first Michigan Book was printed.

Bob Daniels - Fife Lake  
Helen Gross - Saline  
Bill Bigford, Sr. - Portland  
Irma Mattison - Smyrna  
Brian Belleau - Sugar Island  
Earl Churchill - Marshall  
Elton Field - Deford  
Nicholas Bailey - Brethren  
Clarence Carney - East Jordan  
Arthur Boismier - Port Huron  
Jack Furtaw - Bay City  
Ken Staines - Sheridan  
Clarence Gilchrist - Otter Lake  
Leon Pease - Charlevoix  
Bob Keller - Harbor Springs

All of them are remembered with love and affection for their contributions and friendship.

THE BEGINNING OF OMFA AS TOLD BY PAUL GIFFORD

Although other states had fiddler's associations and series of contests, Michigan had nothing of the sort except for the Original Dulcimer Players Club. At these meetings and the funfests at Evart, which began in 1973, fiddlers, banjo players, and other musicians would come and play, but that was it. Bluegrass festivals were beginning to be organized but they were about something else. I wanted something in Michigan to happen.

I think it is fair to say that I got the idea to start the jamborees. I had attended events for fiddlers in other states and in Canada beginning in 1971. Most of these--virtually all--were contests. What I liked about these mostly were the informal jam sessions or warm-up sessions before and after the contestants competed, but these had their disadvantages. Some fiddlers would come, play 2 or 3 tunes and leave. Others were too shy to play or disinclined to perform. Contests also have the disadvantage of allowing only 2 or 3 types of tunes as well as promoting one particular style, as has happened in Canada. What I thought was needed was an event which was participant-, rather than performer-oriented.

I thought of other names to describe the kind of events which I had envisioned, such as "gathering," "festivals," "meeting," and others, but fixed on "jamboree." I don't know what the origin of the word "jamboree" is, but it had a vague meaning that had the right ring to it. The "fiddlers' jamboree" only 9 short years later has acquired a meaning and definition which at the time was waiting for them.

I think I thought of the basic format, which has remained with us. For the first jamboree, jam sessions were scheduled from 1 until 8 o'clock and an "old-fashioned" dance from 8 o'clock on. Each fiddler would play 3 tunes until all had played. At that point the structured part of the program would loosen so that informal jam sessions would take place. The format was thus similar to that of the Original Dulcimer Players Club. At



that time, in 1976, I was secretary to the ODPIC and had the mailing list. About 20 fiddlers were on that mailing list, and I developed a mailing list of fiddlers from people I had met or had heard of. I was good friends with Bob Fleck and Jane Allison of Williamston at that time, and they were forming plans to make a movie about the music. I thought that Sheridan would be a good central location for a get-together and went over there and looked up the late Ken Staines. I suggested the Upper Vickerville Hall, and I investigated that. Later he got use of the high school.

The first jamboree was held on May 29, 1976. It was a success and was enjoyed by all. Organizing it was a cooperative effort and credit for its success should be shared by all of those participating as well as those organizing. Bob and Jane made the posters and mailed them to about 20 or 30 people, sending more to Ken for local publicity. Ken did the leg work in getting the hall. Gene and Esther Cox manned the registration desk and handled the donations. I was the emcee. Participants (performers) were Frank Mattison, Cloise and Harley Sinclair, Stewart Carmichael, Matt Brown Sr. & Jr., Ken Ellsworth, Bill White, Bill Bigford, Bob Spinner, Ralph Schuster, Bill Webster, Merrit Olsen, Fred Elton, Jim Herald, Gene Belgraph, and a few others I wish I could remember.

The next jamborees were held, as far as my records allow, on the following dates: October 16, 1976 at Elk Rapids; November 20, 1976 at Hillman; January 29, 1977 at Harbor Springs; and February 19, 1977 at Alma. The local organizers were, respectively: Bob Spinner, Nellie Elsner, Dan and Sherrie Johnston, and Ken Ellsworth. Having worked at Mackinac Island in the summers of 1975 and 1976, I had met interested people in Harbor Springs and Hillman.

In 1977 and 1978 Bob Fleck and Jane Allison took on most of the responsibilities for the jamborees as they became more involved in the production of their film. In those years we had jamborees at Aura, Webberville, Romeo, Port Hope, Berrien Springs, and Harrietta. I have tapes of most of them.

The Michigan Fiddlers Association was "formed" at the end of 1976. We (Bob and Jane, Bill White and I forming the core group) felt that as local newspaper reporters and others wondered, a group should bear responsibility for the jamboree. People needed an official-sounding organization to see what was behind the jamborees. However, it was an organization in name only, although it did consist of a continually growing mailing list. Reporters would refer to Bob as "president" of the MFA because he acted as emcee and spokesman. There were no officers, however.

Bob Fleck and Jane Allison deserve a great deal of credit for the time they spent in organizing the jamborees. As anyone who has organized one knows, it involves a lot.

Problems arose in 1979 when impetus for having them waned. Bob and Jane had sole responsibility by then for deciding when and where to have one. I think they were getting tired of the work involved. One can also have too much of a good thing. I know that when I returned from a 3-month sojourn in California in March, 1980, problems were brewing. There were 2 groups: The Michigan Fiddlers Association and the Original Michigan Fiddlers' Association.

At this point I became less involved with the jamborees. The responsibilities for organizing them were spread out among many different people. There is plenty of room in the state for several groups. Everyone gets along fine now. That is the way it should be.

Just this summer I met an 18-year old who has been playing the fiddle for a couple of years. It seems that the jamborees he has attended inspired him to learn, and he has learned tunes from the older fiddlers there. He doesn't know or probably care how the jamborees started. That's really as it should be. For history sake it is nice to know how something originated, but for the sake of traditional music and its circulation it is better merely to know that something alone exists. Music that many people considered dead 10 years ago is now prospering and doing well.

OMFA

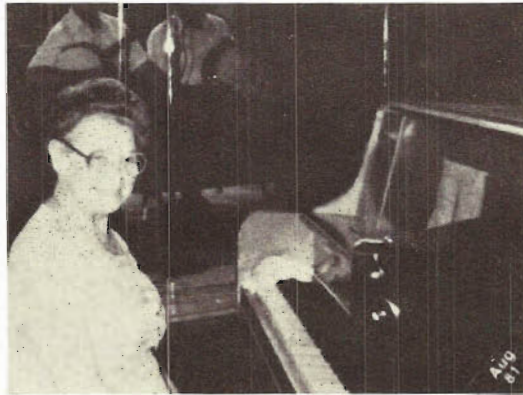
MEMBERS

FOLLOWERS

and

SUPPORTERS

ELLA ARNOLD



I was born on a farm just outside the town of Armada, Michigan in 1892, and have lived at the same address in Romeo for over 60 years. However, after my heart attack in 1983, I am living with my daughter and her husband, Helena and Tony Galan, who live also in Romeo.

My grandfather bought a pump organ for my mother. When I was about 5 years old, I would reach up and play up and down the keys, but because I was so short, it was difficult to reach the pedals. We traveled from the farm to Armada for the band concerts. I would listen carefully and then go home and play with the keys until I got the piece. A neighbor girl taught me some notes. She and I would dress up and play a duet for her grandparents. Mostly I relied on my ability to pick up new tunes from the radio and from other musicians with whom I played. My husband of 50 years (died 1968) played the violin and sax and liked the operatic type of music. He wanted me to take lessons, so I did for a short while to please him. I preferred the bright and peppy music which I continued to play.

My first professional playing job was in Almont, Michigan setting the mood for the audience for silent movies; then for a theatre in Pontiac, Michigan where I learned to play the quick movements; next at Romeo Place Theatre (19 years) until the "talkies" came in the 1930's. I also worked during the daytime

at local stores. I have played the Calliope in parades in the late 70's and for a dedication of a new hospital wing in Romeo. I have played the piano everywhere I went -- restaurants where we would stop, one in Houghton Lake, and a favorite nightstop at Lake City where I am always asked to play, wedding receptions, parties of all kinds(including class reunions), churches, nursing homes, OMFA jamborees, organizations like the VFW and the Eastern Star where I received an Honorary Lifetime membership after playing for them 20 years.

I play anytime I get the chance. Music is the mainstay of my life. Music keeps me going. I've played on some miserable pianos, maybe a cracked soundboard and many times I have had to skip an octave because of the condition of the instrument. My grandson recently gave me an antique organ like the one I learned on. After 88 years of tickling the ivories and with a repertoire of 1,000 songs ranging from ragtime to waltzes, I'm going to keep right on playing as long as I can.

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*The hardest thing to follow is a dose of your own medicine.*

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*There is nothing wrong with being a self-made man, as long as you don't consider the job finished too soon.*

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*No man is ever honored for what he received. Honor is the reward for what he gave.*

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*The foolish man seeks happiness in the distance; the wise man grows it under his feet.*

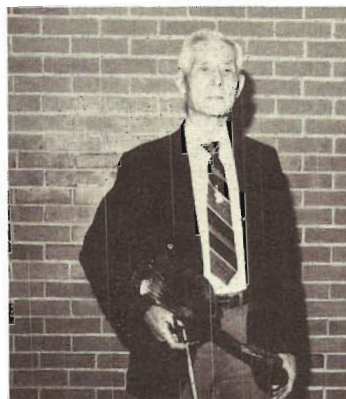
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*Opportunist: A person who goes ahead and does what you always wanted to do.*

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*Age is a matter of mind. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter.*

FRANK MATTISON



Frank is our oldest living fiddler in OMFA and is presently 92 years old. He is a native of Columbus, Ohio, but grew up in the Cadillac area. His wife, Irma, just passed away several years ago. She was also musical and played saxophone and clarinet regularly in Frank's band. They had 3 children (2 daughters and 1 son), but lost the son as a young man. Both daughters are musical.

Frank's life has always been a musical one. Everyone he knew as a boy was a fiddler as were his neighbors. His uncles were show people and he was practically trained by them since he was a child. He has been a teacher of music since he was 17 and taught all band and orchestra instruments, but didn't teach guitar until about 4 years ago. As a young man he made his living touring vaudeville theaters in Cadillac. He is a member of the Grand Rapids Symphonette. He has owned 50-60 violins during his career and none can compare with the Wurlitzer with its clear sound and "carrying quality." His prize violin is special because of its rare Italian mountain-grown Balsam Fir top. He has a special style of fiddling which he coined as "Michigan Style" to distinguish it from the country style fiddling.

OMFA is proud to have him as an honorary member of the association. He is still going strong in pursuit of his musical interests.



ROBERT & CHARLOTTE  
SHOUSE

Bob was born in Owsley County, Kentucky in 1935. He has been employed at Highland Precision Controls, Numatics Inc. for 20 years, the last 7 years in supervision. He and Charlotte have 3 children, twin daughters and a son who also plays guitar and bass. He has 6 brothers and 4 sisters and all but 2 play or sing.

Bob started playing a guitar at age 6 or 7 by ear, using a borrowed guitar, finally traded a motorcycle for an old "Gibson". Then about 10 years ago, with some assistance from Lee Kaines and Gene Ward, he started calling for square dances. He plays and calls regularly at the Fenton Community Center and at Pontiac, Waterford, and for drop-in centers for senior centers. He is also learning to play the fiddle.

They have been members of OMFA for about 3 years.

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*If you want to be the picture of health, make sure you have a happy frame of mind.*

HERB & CECELIA (CURLY)  
WILES



Herb was born in Detroit, Michigan in 1921. He worked 5 years as a dairy farmer and also worked 30 years with the Ford Motor Company and is now retired.

He and his wife, Cecelia, have been married for 44 years and raised 3 children (2 sons and a daughter).

Herb started playing the violin at age 12. When he was 18 years old, he learned the guitar. Then at age 25 he started with the piano and now also plays the banjo. His mother and father were great dancers and his father step danced and played chords on the piano.

They have been members of the OMFA for about 3 years. He has played for dances and weddings, and also played with a 4-piece band for 30 years.

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*"Criticism is something we can avoid easily--by saying nothing, doing nothing, and being nothing." Aristotle*





RALPH & ROSALINE  
SCHUSTER

Ralph was born in Grand Traverse County in 1907. He was a farmer and worked at Kingsley Coop. He and his wife, Rosaline, have 2 children (Joe and Anita).

His father played the mouth organ and sang and all his sisters sang. Ralph plays by ear. He plays the mouth organ, fiddle, tenor banjo, mandolin and chords on the piano. He plays at Summit City Grand Hall, Sherens Hall and for house parties.

He is a charter member of OMFA.



R. DANIEL & SHERRY  
JOHNSTON, Y

Danny was born in Harbor Springs in 1940. He has always worked in the Harbor Springs area as a carpenter. Danny and Sherry have 2 sons. Music has been a great part of their lives.

Danny started playing the fiddle in his 20's. He took some piano lessons when he was 13. They have been members of OMFA from its beginning.

LEE & DORIS  
SLOAN



I was born in Milan, Tennessee in 1916. I was the fifth in a family of 7 children (6 boys and 1 girl). We were a musical family. Each family member played one or more instruments and had varied musical talents. My dad was the best fiddler I have ever heard. If I ever sneaked his fiddle, he always seemed to know even when I was very careful to return it exactly as I found it. I still have my dad's fiddle.

I started on the banjo at age 6 or 7. Then at age 10-12, I started on the guitar and fiddle. I also play the mandolin and bass. I had some music lessons, but soon found it was more fun to play by ear.

My main occupation was a die maker for Tishken Products in Southfield. I retired from there in 1981 after 28 years of service. Previous to that, I worked for Lockheed, Emerson Electric, and McDonell Aircraft.

I married Doris Rea of Belfast, Ireland. We met in Ireland during World War II. She was working as a hostess for the American Red Cross. She was a very good dancer and the most attractive of all the hostesses. We were married in Ireland in 1944. I was a technician for Lockheed who was under government contract. We technicians lived with the service men, but weren't considered military. Doris and I have 4 children (2 boys and 2 girls) and have 2 granddaughters.

I joined OMFA about 2 years ago after attending my first jamboree at Ortonville. Presently I am serving as a Director for the Association.



ROBERT & GERTRUDE  
VIPOND

I was born in Kalkaska County in 1918. I was an only child. I have been married to Gertrude Nalff for 43 years, and we have 3 sons. We have 6 grandchildren; our oldest is in college majoring in music.

I worked 10 years at Pontiac Motors, and then serving in the Second World War. I returned and was employed for 33 years on the County Road Commission, retiring in 1980.

I've always been interested in music. I had my first guitar when I was 14. I played piano for dances in South Boardman when I was 18. For the past 32 years I have played banjo, guitar and bass guitar in our local church.

Gertrude and I have belonged to OMFA for 2 years, and we enjoy the music and fellowship.

It is recorded in our family history that Isaac Vipond was a song leader and John Vipond played his bass fiddle at the Wyman Memorial United Church of Canada (1847) at Vandruil, Quebec.

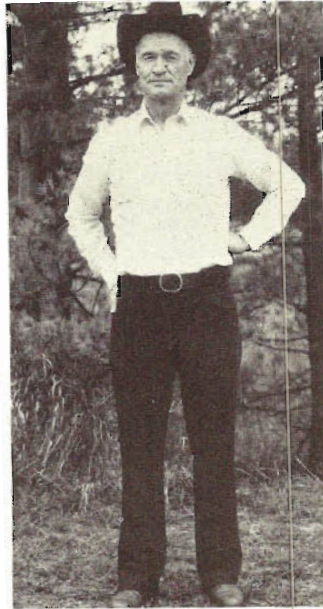
JASPER & MARY  
WARNER



Jasper was born in 1917 and Mary born in 1918 in Charlevoix, Michigan. Jasper was a truck driver for 5 years and farmed for 33 years. He also worked for Burns Security at Big Rock Nuclear Plant and retired in 1980. Mary was a housewife and also worked 18 years at a summer resort. They have 4 children, 11 grandchildren, and 1 great grandchild.

Jasper started to play banjo at dances at age 12 and went on to play guitar, fiddle and piano. Mary played clarinet in band for 4 years and started chording on piano after they were married in 1936. Jasper's mother was a violin player and several others in the family played other instruments. Mary's mother played piano and loved to sing and so does Mary.

Both Jasper and Mary play by ear and have played at the Masonic Temple in Torch Lake for 15 years. They play at grange dances and have done and still do many benefits. They have been members of OMFA since it was first started.



WALTER (PETE)  
KELLER

I was born in Cross Village, Michigan in 1926. I have been a woodsman and saw mill worker since I was 16 years old (1942). I am now a self-employed repairman and semi-retired.

My dad and his 3 brothers were woodsmen and all played the violin. My wife's father and her 2 brothers were musicians, and we played for dances together from 1942 to 1955.. I learned to second on the organ when I was 8 or 10 and played the mandolin and guitar at dances. I came from a musical family and was around when radio was still young in our part of the country. Everyone that could made their own music. I read music for the piano (self-taught), but play most everything else by ear. I've played for dances with 5 or 6 different bands from Charlevoix to the west and Posen on the east to towns in the U. P.

I joined OMFA in 1984 and attended my first jamboree in Elk Rapids. I've been playing with the Countryside Band at Cross Village for the past 7 years.

LORETTA W. JACOBS



I was born in Bellaire, Michigan in 1918. My parents were farmers. My dad and mother both taught school before they were married. My dad played the fiddle and mother played the piano. I have a brother and a sister, both living in the northern part of Michigan. My husband and I had 4 children. All of them are talented musicians. My husband passed way about 6 years ago after 40 years together. I have 5 grandchildren and 2 step-grandchildren. Two of the children are exceptionally talented in the music line and are professional musicians.

I can't remember beginning to play the piano. My mother was my first teacher. I played the violin for 3 years. The first music I studied was classical or semi-classical. After I was 30 years old, I started playing Jazz/Dixieland. When I was taking lessons and tried to improvise, my mother would correct me saying, "That's not the way it is written, go back and play it properly." We had a traditional dixie band in our family for 7 years. I have enjoyed playing for the fiddlers, jamborees and at parties. I am currently playing piano to accompany a gospel quartet, "The Messengers of Melody", and we are having a record pressed this spring.

I have had various jobs. I worked as a secretary from MSU to Bellaire from 1958-1979. I taught school in Antrim County (mainly Elk Rapids) and Grand Traverse County. In the last 3 years I have substituted teaching in Kent County.

I joined OMFA in 1982.



CHARLES & MARY GRACE  
WILCOX, JR.

Both Charles and Mary Grace were born in Bay City, Michigan, Charles in 1928 and Mary Grace in 1930. They have 4 children (3 girls & 1 boy).

They both started playing spoons, tamboreen and drums about 40 years ago. They have belonged to OMFA for about 3 years.



HENRY & ELEANOR  
FOCHTMAN

I was born in 1917 as the only child of Anthony and Emma Fochtmann. My first wife, Helen, died and I have since remarried to Eleanor Thompson. I had 3 children. I worked as a farmer and also worked at the Penn Dixie Cement Plant..

I started calling for square dances at grange halls, wedding parties, and family gatherings at age 15. I have been a member of OMFA for about 3 years.

MARY A. HANSON



I was born in 1949 about 3 miles north of Rockford, Michigan in the backseat of a '36 Dodge. The very first place I ever went was the Rockford State Police Post. After that auspicious beginning, I lived near Ensley Center for almost a year. I grew up at my parents' present home just east of Cedar Springs. We didn't actually live on a farm, but since my grandmother's farm was just over the hill and my father farmed it for her in his "spare" time, we might just as well have. I attended Cedar Springs Public Schools from Kindergarten - 12th grade. When I was in the 4th grade, I started playing clarinet in the band. I switched to bass clarinet when I was in 8th grade, and later, in the 12th grade, I also played tenor saxophone. I never had private lessons for the band instruments, just group instructions. I'm really a piano player though. I took classical piano lessons for 7 years, beginning when I was 7. I also spent 1 year learning to play popular music. During that time, my father also taught me to play chords on the piano while he played trumpet or fiddle. I learned to "play" the fiddle when I was in college, but it was another 10 years before anyone could stand to listen to it. About 6 years ago, I bought a tenor banjo and learned to play it. I also play the trombone, but not much in public--just cemeteries on Memorial Day. I inherited several of my instruments--my fiddle was Grandpa Hanson's; my piano was Grandma Hanson's; and my trombone was my brother, Karl's.

I come from a very musical family. My grandparents, Nels and Matie Hanson, played to dances around Newaygo county for



years. Grandpa played the fiddle and Grandma played the piano. My father, Nels J. Hanson, started playing to Grange dances when he was 15. He has played for dances since then in the Croton-Hardy area and near Cedar Springs, Sparta, Rockford, and Greenville with various groups. He plays the fiddle, trumpet, piano, and drums, and he occasionally calls square dances. He met my mother, Beatrice, who plays drums, while they were both in the Ensley Township Band. All 3 of my brothers play instruments. My older brother, John, plays trumpet and tenor saxophone; Warren, the youngest plays tenor saxophone and piano; and Karl, who was killed in an auto accident in 1970, played trombone and piano. All of us play drums. Warren also calls square dances. We have played for dances at Ensley Grange for over 20 years. We also play for other dances around Cedar Springs, Sand Lake, Sparta, Trufant and that general area.

While I was in college, I had various jobs--warehouseman, yardman, waitress, things of that sort. After graduating from Grand Rapids Jr. College and Central Michigan University, I taught foreign languages for 1 year at Dundee Community Schools. I decided that teaching was not the life for me, so I went to Western Michigan University and earned a master's degree in Library Science in 1975. Since then, I have worked as a librarian. I worked briefly at the Kent County Library System as a substitute librarian. I am now a certified medical librarian and have worked at Saint Mary's Hospital Library since December, 1975. I have been the head librarian since 1977.

I have been a member of OMFA since 1983 and am presently the Editor/Coordinator for the OMFA Newsletter. Since I've joined OMFA, my fiddling has improved greatly. I've also begun to play more by ear, but usually memorize tunes from the music. I especially like to play old-time jigs and reels on the fiddle. For the banjo, I'm partial to "riverboat" music.

RIBY & WILLABELLE  
HOLMES



I was born in 1917 in Harrisville, Michigan. There were 7 children in our family (5 boys and 2 girls). My mother played the piano; father played the fiddle and banjo; a brother is a caller and another a good fiddler. I play the piano and in my teens played at house party square dances. I took some piano lessons, but play mostly by ear.

I met my wife, Willabelle (Lillywhite), on a double date. We went dancing and have been dancing (she is the best) together for the past 43 years. We have a daughter and 2 grandchildren. Her family presently lives in El Paso, Texas.

I learned the calls and movements for square dancing while playing at house parties. I called and started teaching in Fowlerville in 1940 and have been doing it ever since. When square dancing was the craze in the 50's and 60's, I taught classes of youngsters, teenagers and adults for the Village Recreation Department. One summer I had 189 students participating.

In 1949 the Colonial Club was organized and has been very active and still going strong, although there has been almost a complete turnover of members. My wife and I still belong. I have taught 8 other people the rudiments of square dance calling. At the present time Willie and I call for senior citizens at the Howell Recreation Center. We have 3-4 sets the first and third Monday afternoons of the fall and winter months.

I graduated from MSU as an agricultural teacher in 1940 and began teaching in Fowlerville the same year. With time out for military service, I have worked in Fowlerville all my life as a teacher, farm elevator owner/operator, and in real estate and insurance. I retired from teaching in 1980 and from real estate and insurance in 1982.

We have belonged to OMFA for the past 2 years and are enjoying the fellowship immensely.



FLOYD & LETTIE FOX

I was born in Detroit in 1919 and worked in the Air Force and for Chrysler. I am now retired. My wife, Lettie, and I have 3 children.

My father played piano and organ. My first love is the banjo which I play by ear. I play whenever and wherever I can. I have belonged to OMFA about 3 years.

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*The mind's direction is more important than its progress.*

DELORES PEASE



I was born in Bay Shore, Michigan in 1926 to Georgia and Arthur Burnett. They owned and operated a grocery store in Bay Shore. My mother passed away in 1938 and my father in 1945, leaving 7 children. I married Leon L. Pease in 1942. We had 3 children, a girl in Kentucky, 1 son in the Cheboygan area and 1 son in Charlevoix. My husband passed way in 1983. I have 5 grandchildren.

I worked for Michigan Bell Telephone Compnay in Petoskey as an operator/supervisor, temporary management and clerical, and also 5 years in engineering. I retired in 1982 with 34-1/2 years of service.

I played piano as a little girl, also played the flute in high school. My family were all musical and I now play for dances around Charlevoix and Petoskey areas, and also at the jamborees. I have been a member of OMFA for about 4 years.

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*Poetry without music may be beautiful, but music gives poetry wings and elevates it into song. That maybe our reason for our love for song; it has wings and lifts us. With proper song, it is a nourishing, spiritual experience. -- Henry Ford*



GLEN & SUSAN  
MCCARTY

Glen was born in 1942 in Ethel, Missouri. He and his wife are owners of the State Line Saw and Supply in Menominee, Michigan. They have a son and a daughter. Their son, Scott, is a guitar player and also a drummer for Raygo Brothers Band in Marinette, Wisconsin.

Glen started playing guitar at age 12 and started playing fiddle at age 42. He also plays trumpet, trumbone and bass guitar. He got started by listening to Grand Ole Opry on Saturday nights. He later played in country and square dance bands in Missouri and Kansas. After moving to Michigan he founded a country band and played to dances and rodeos. He had a successful 5-piece band for 13 years.

He and his wife work as a duo on weekends and are members of the American Federation Musicians Local 205 at Green Bay, Wisconsin. They are also members of the Twin City Squares. Just recently they joined OMFA.

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*"Fiddling is one of the few musical forms that cannot be taught. It can be demonstrated and if the potential 'Fiddler' has talent, he can learn to play."*

KARL & SUSAN  
HEILMAN



I was born in 1899 in Cheboygan County, Michigan. My father homesteaded in Cheboygan area in 1876. I married in 1923 and we raised 2 sons. My first wife passed away in 1979 and I married again in 1983.

I was an electrician and contractor, licensed in Cheboygan. I worked from Detroit to Sault Ste. Marie since 1917 to 1975 when I retired.

I started playing a mouth organ when I was 10 years old and started playing the fiddle when I was 12. I took some lessons, but play mostly by ear. I played for dances all over the Cheboygan area. I joined OMFA in 1984.

BILL & ALICE  
ALDRICH





BRIAN BELLEAU

Brian was born in 1950 and died unexpectedly in 1984. His father and mother are Cletus and Mary Belleau who live on Sugar Island, Michigan. He has 3 brothers and 3 sisters.

He worked for the Eastern U. P. Transportation Authority as a deckhand on the Sugar Island Ferry.

Brian's grandfather influenced him on the fiddle at an early age along with other musicians on Sugar Island. Brian began playing the church organ at age 14 and began the guitar and fiddle at age 15. He also played the piano, mandolin and accordion. Brian began his career with music lessons for the organ. He played other instruments by ear. The people have said that he had a "perfect ear" for music.

Brian played for dances in the U. P. and Canada. He played at the Aura, East Jordan and Sault Ste. Marie jamborees. He played many sessions in eastern U. P. schools for Consolidated Community Schools Services. Brian helped initiate old-time square dancing for grade school children in 8 eastern U. P. schools.

He was a member of OMFA and will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

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*"FIDDLE...An instrument to tickle the human ear by friction of a horse's tail on the entrails of a cat."*

BOB & PEARL  
DANIELS



Bob and Pearl have lived in the Fife Lake area most of their lives. Bob was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, but his mother moved to Michigan when he was 6 months old. He never knew his dad. He had 6 half brothers. Pearl was born in the Fife Lake area. When she was 6 years old, she lost her mother. She had 3 brothers.

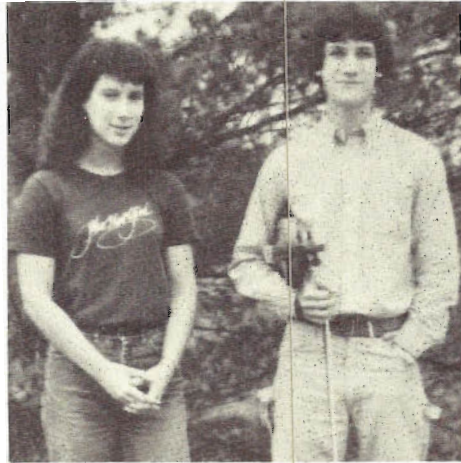
Pearl first knew Bob when he was about 13. They started dating when Bob began working at the CC Camp as a young man. They married young and have always shown a special affection for each other even as the years passed. They have 3 sons and many grandchildren.

Bob was a trucker for a long time and worked for Parker Motor Freight and Truck Line. Then, he later went into his own business as an excavator. Besides working at home, Pearl did house cleaning and cooked at the school for 10 years.

Bob's interest in music started with his step dad who played the fiddle. When he was about 10 or 12, he started playing the guitar and learned to play the banjo, mouth organ, and could chord on the piano. He also developed a good singing voice. He played totally by ear. He played for dances regularly, and always had time for jam sessions with music at his home or wherever he went.

The first jamboree they ever attended was at Cassopolis in 1979. Bob served as a Director for OMFA, beginning his second term until his sudden death in June, 1985. No one was loved more than "Big Bob" and his wife, Pearl. They had friends everywhere. He left his mark with us, and he won't be forgotten.





JIM & TERESA (sister)  
BOYNTON

I was born in St. Ignace, Michigan in 1967. During the summer I work at the local St. Ignace Museum and at the Mackinac Island Museum.

I come from a musical family; my mom plays the guitar and piano; my sisters play the piano; and my dad sings. An uncle who plays the piano and accordion got me interested in music when he went to the Grand Ole Opry at age 10. I was also inspired by Helen Hoskins who has a band in the Lansing area. I started playing harmonica at age 12 and fiddle and mandolin at age 16. I have had a few music lessons, but play mostly by ear.



MR./MRS. STANLEY  
BROWN

ROLLAND & SHIRLEY  
DAUGHTERY



I was born in Cook County, Illinois in 1940. My wife, Shirley, and I own Ron's Auto and Wrecker Service in Gaylord. We have 3 children and a granddaughter.

I was 9 years old when I started playing guitar. I play by ear and play with the Bundy Mountain Jamboree Band. We play at the grange and for weddings. We joined OMFA about 1 year ago.

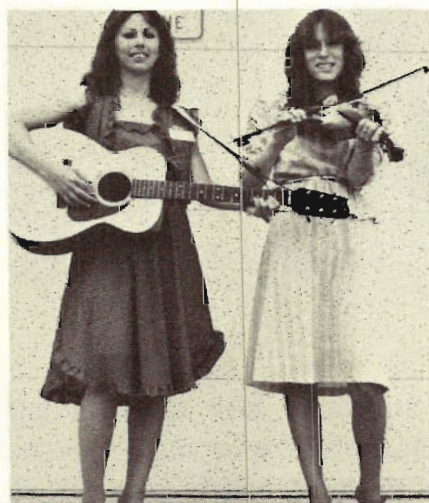
DELBERT & ETHEL  
COLLINS



Delbert was born in 1910 in Hasterman, West Virginia. He worked for General Motors as a model maker.

He and his wife, Ethel, have 3 sons and are a happy family. Delbert plays by ear and loves to play and call.

THE GERMAINE FAMILY



## THE TOUCH OF THE MASTER'S HAND



**T'was battered and scarred, and the auctioneer thought it was hardly worth his while to waste much time with the old violin. But he held it up with a smile.**

"Give me a dollar, and who'll make it two? Only two dollars, who'll make it three? Three dollars twice and that's a good price, but who's got a bid for me?"

The air was hot and the people just stood there as the sun was setting low. Then from the back of the crowd a gray-haired man came forward and picked up the bow.

He wiped the dust from the old violin, and he tightened up the strings. Then he played out a melody, pure and sweet, sweet as the angels sing.

The music ended and the auctioneer, with a voice that was quiet and low, said, "What is my bid for the old violin?" and he held it up with the bow.

"A thousand dollars, and who'll make it two? Only two thousand, who'll make it three? Three thousand twice and that's a good price, but who's got a bid for me?"

And the people called out, "What made the change? We don't understand." The auctioneer stopped and said with a smile, "*It was the touch of the master's hand.*"

Now many a man with his life out of tune is battered and scarred with sin. And he's auctioned cheap to a thankless world, much like the old violin.

But then the Master comes and the foolish crowd, they never understand the worth of a soul or the change that is brought just by the touch of the Master's hand.

GEORGE & ANNA  
SMITH



George was born in Alden, Michigan in 1914. He worked as a chief engineer in the electric generating power plant in Charlevoix for 38 years. He is now retired and living on the home farm.

Anna, his wife, was a farm girl from East Jordan. They were married in 1939.

George learned to call at house parties around the neighborhood during the depression. He has been a member of OMFA for about 3 years.

WALT & PEG BAUER



I was born in North Branch, Michigan in 1915. My parents were farmers and were musically inclined. I have also been a farmer.

I started playing by ear at age 16. I have been attending jamborees for about 5 years.



HAROLD & VERNA  
WIECK

Harold was born in 1913 in Saginaw County, Kochville Township, Michigan. He has been married to his wife, Verna, for 53 years. They have 3 sons who are all musicians. Allen plays accordion; Dale plays banjo and Ronald plays saxophone and clarinet. Ronald and his wife and sons have a family orchestra and play for dances in the area.

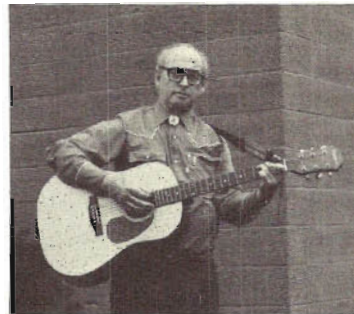
Harold was a custom thresher, worked for Beutel Canning Company, Monitor Sugar company, General Motors and Consumers Power Company. He worked in electrical repair and retired from Consumers in 1974.

Harold always liked music. At the age of 8 he started with a mouth organ. At age 11 he took 24 lessons on the violin and also played the 2-row accordion. At age 14, he got his first concertina. He has played for dances the last 60 years in the Saginaw and Bay counties.



RICK & VEDA  
BUFFORD

FLOYD & THELMA  
HILLIKER



I was born on a farm at Onaway, Michigan in 1920 and lived on a farm for 20 years. For 30 years I was a postal clerk at the Grand Rapids post office, and in retirement, was a free-lance writer. I have 3 brothers and a sister. In 1943 I married Thelma Langley. We have 2 sons and 5 grandchildren.

My interest in music began at about 5 years of age, but I never took it up seriously until age 16. Mother paid \$3.50 for a guitar from Sears Roebuck. During the WPA days I paid 15 cents for lessons on the Hawaiian guitar. A local fiddler taught me Spanish guitar chords. I was away from the guitar for over 40 years, and took it up again a couple of years back. I play by ear and around 1940 played for dances in the Onaway area. Lately I have played with the OMFA and with the Old Timers' Band in Cedar Springs for senior citizens activities. I have belonged to OMFA for 3 years.

MR./MRS. TEX  
BROWN







DALTON & LAURENE  
COE

Dalton was born in 1915 in Lapeer County, Michigan. He worked in the public schools for 42 years. He was an administrator for 35 years. The last 17 years before his retirement in 1977 he was superintendent at Bullock Creek School in Midland.

His parents were original settlers with his grandparents in Marathon Township, Lapeer County and Forest Township and Genesee County. Dalton and his wife, Laurene, have 4 children and 9 grandchildren.

Dalton learned to play the harmonica at age 8 and to chord on the piano at age 16. He started to fiddle at age 67. He called for square dances at age 16. He got interested in music at neighborhood house parties when he was 16 years old. He plays by ear.

Dalton taught square dancing as an adult education class for a number of years. He has belonged to OMFA about 5 years.

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SWING THAT GIRL BEHIND YOU

*Circle 8 hands half around.*

*Promenade back in a single line.*

*Balance and swing the lady behind you*

*Das-a-dos.*

*All promenade*

BEN STOCKTON &  
MARGARET SARGENT



Ben was born in 1905 in Isabela County, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan. Ben worked at Dow Chemical Company in General Service for 40 years.

Ben's father was English and his mother was Scotch and Irish. His parents farmed in Gladwin County. His father worked as a lumberjack in the winter time. Ben had 2 brothers and 2 sisters. As a young lad around 9 or 10, he worked out for the summer. His pay was an old pump organ. He learned some chords on it and also learned to play the harmonica. When the young folks came over in the evening, he played for them to dance and sing. When he was about 18 years old, he bought a violin. About the age of 22 he started to play the fiddle by ear.

Then, he got married and raised 3 boys and 2 girls. When the children started in school, they wanted to play music, so Ben gave up his music time to help them with their music.

Ben didn't do much with his music until he was 68 years old and left alone. Then, he picked up his fiddle and started playing again and repairing violins. By playing second for the old time fiddlers, he learned many fiddle tunes. Ben has played at house parties in the Midland area, senior citizen homes and jamborees. This keeps him busy as a hobby in his old age. Ben plays by ear.

Ben has belonged to OMFA for about 6 years and served as Vice President for several years.



HENRY W. BORN

I was born in Pigeon, Michigan in 1913 to Rudolph R. and Lena Born. My dad played the violin and accordion for house dances and also played in a band. The first thing I played was a fife, playing with my dad when he played violin, and I learned many of his tunes. He died in 1927; then I took up his violin. I started to play the violin at age 14 and started to call for house dances at age 18. I play by ear, having had only 6 months of lessons at an early age. During my younger days I played for many house dances, and when I didn't play, I called square dances. I learned a lot of singing calls from a band from Flint called "Nick and His Cornhuskers." I thought they were tops.

I married Mabel Damm in 1934 and we had 6 children - 4 boys and 2 girls. My occupation has been farming and dairying.

I have played and called at Indian Trail Riding Club, weddings, New Year's parties and the like. I also started a square dance team on horseback for the club which I managed for 25 years. I am a member of DMFA.

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*"Like poetry, Old time Fiddling ability is hard to define, but easy to recognize."*

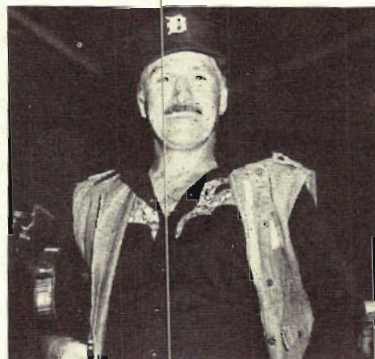
AL GENO



I was born in Bay City in 1932. I have a sister and 2 brothers. One brother plays a nice tenor banjo and the other a mean harmonica. I have been around music and instruments all my life, because my beloved dad, Ed Geno, was a very good violin player. I owe everything I am and do to my parents. Although my dad has been dead 30 years, I miss him as much today as I did when he left. My dad loved music and passed this love on to me. It didn't take long for him to slip out his violin, if he heard a song he liked or one he wanted to learn. He would listen to it once and pick up the violin and play it like he had practiced it for days. I am so fortunate, for this too he gave to me. Some of my best loved memories are of Dad and me playing the afternoon away into evening and losing all track of time with other musicians who happened to drop by with their instruments.

I took violin lessons in Woodside School in the 6th thru 8th grades. In Central High School, out of 60 violin students, I held the #1 seat for 2 years. I play tenor banjo, guitar and mandolin. The banjo is my favorite. I play note or ear. My wife says I would rather play music or hunt than eat. I was 15 years old when I played my first professional engagement with my dad.

I retired from General Motors at a young age on the 30 years-full retirement plan. We live in Essexville. My mother now makes her home with us. I have 2 sons and a daughter, and 2 grandchildren. My youngest son is named after his grandfather and plays tenor and Spanish guitar. I have also had the pleasure of playing with the world's best banjo player - Eddie Peabody.



RENE COTE



DAN STOLT



HOWARD & BESSIE  
GLOSSOP

GRACE & WILLIAM  
KNAUS



I was born in Lake Township, Huron County, Michigan in 1919. I was born a twin to Daniel and Grace McCormick. My twin sister never played any music. I had 5 brothers and 3 sisters. I would play at the organ as long as I can remember, then my folks bought a piano. I also used to play mouth organ and accordion. I have a lot of musical relatives-- uncles and aunts, and my mother used to play organ. My brother was a good caller. I used to play piano for neighbors years ago at town halls and places. I play by ear.

I married William Knaus 41 years ago. We have a family of 7 children - 5 boys and 2 girls, including twin boys. One twin son was killed 14 years ago at age 20. We have 8 grandchildren.

I am a member of OMFA.

LLOYD BURNS



THE SPOUSES LAMENT by Opal Miller

We are the wives of the fiddlers  
Who make up the jamboree show  
And whenever our men get the calling,  
We pack up our gear and we go.

We don't listen to the weatherman.  
There doesn't seem much need,  
For when God made plans for music,  
He planted hardy Fiddle seed.

Through sun and heat, ice or snow,  
We travel near and far.  
For God is our co-pilot  
And we are married to a STAR.

At last the evening is over  
And we have thoughts of dreams,  
But those dreams are too soon shattered  
For the Faulmans have made ice cream.

So it will last at least an hour,  
And we have had that hope before.  
We can already hear the "Wife's Lament."  
Fiddle players call it, "Just One Tune More."

CHAUNCEY (CHIP) &  
ALICE WALKER



I was born in Yale, Michigan in 1912. My mother was an opera player at an early age and was known as Aggie Klay. Mother always wanted me to play the violin, so being the oldest child, she gave me her violin. We lived in the lumber woods at that time, but she found a violin teacher. At age 12, on Saturday I rode a horse to town 9 miles with the violin strapped across the saddle both summer and winter for 2 years. My mother was a pianist and I have many of her music pieces that she played -- they are very old and fragile. Many pieces such as Grasshoppers Band, Midnight Fire Alarm and others would be a treat to anyone who could play this sort of music.

I have worked as a welder at Chevrolet Manufacturing and at Fisher Body at Flint. Later I went to Los Angeles and worked in laundries as a power engineer and stayed in that capacity until I retired in 1977. I'm a member of the National Association of Power Engineers.

Alice and I have 8 children living - 4 boys and 4 girls. I have 2 sons who live in California and 1 daughter in Montana. The rest of the children live in Michigan. We have numerous grandchildren and great grandchildren.

We are members of OMFA, and I have been serving as a director on the board.

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*Worry is like a rocking chair. It gives you something to do, but doesn't get you anywhere.*





HARRY A. LAYMAN

I was born in Aloha, Michigan in 1922. My dad and mother, Art and Milly Layman, played old-time music all their lives. Art played violin and Milly on piano. They played at square dances and political rallies all over northern Michigan. I had 2 sisters and 2 brothers. I married Doreen Paquette in 1945, and we have 2 girls and 1 boy, 10 grandchildren, and 1 great grandchild. We have lived in Michigan until 1985. I am retired now and we are moving to Brooksville, Florida.

I served 3 years and 3 months in the U.S. Army during World War II with 19 months in Italy. I have been a factory worker, well driller, on maintenance for Cheboygan County, and retired after 11 years at Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle School District.

I started playing guitar around age 15 and joined a family band at age 18. I played tenor banjo, and guitar, and am learning on violin, mandolin, and harmonica. I used to love listening to Grand Old Opry on battery radio as late as I could -- I liked Hank Williams, Hank Snow, Johnny Cash and Eddie Arnold. I'm self taught.

I have played at the Silvertop Gardens in Afton, Black Lake Hotel, Buck's, wedding receptions, house parties, at Ocqueoc Tower and anywhere I was. Now I only play at church at Black River.

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*What is hidden in the snow comes forth in the thaw.*

NELSON L. DUNLAP



I was born at Palms, Michigan in 1915. My father was a carpenter and barn builder, and an old-time fiddler. He taught all 9 of us children (6 boys and 3 girls) to play the fiddle and pump organ. I started to play the fiddle at about 6 or 7 years of age. I also play banjo, guitar and chord on the piano. I play by ear. I learned to call from listening to callers in the 1930's.

I am married and we have 3 children; 1 son, who is also a builder, and 2 daughters. Both daughters play piano and organ. One daughter is a registered surgical nurse and lives in Minnesota, and the younger one is a homemaker. I worked for Eaton Manufacturing Co. of Detroit and the U.S. Army. Later I was a carpenter and builder but was forced to retire in 1979 due to an uncorrectable eye problem.

I have played music in the Deckerville area and organized "The Heritage Music Makers of the Thumb of Michigan." We meet every Saturday at the Heritage Music Barn about 1 mile east of Deckerville. We also sponsor an old-time dance at the Deckerville Elementary School.



ALVIN (AL) & DONNA  
TURNER

I was born at North Branch, Lapeer County, Michigan in 1920, and we still live there. I think I was about 5 years old when I became interested in calling. I used to listen to some old fellows that called at house parties in our neighborhood.

I worked for Buick in Flint; then spent 5 years in the U.S. Air Force, then back to Buick. I worked as a carpenter and in 1950 I started to farm. And I'm still farming.

My wife, Donna, and I have 3 boys and 1 daughter and 8 grandchildren.

I have called for dances in Lapeer, Imlay City, North Branch, Almont, Marlette and Mayville. I have been going to OMFA jamborees for 7 years and have enjoyed them all. We are members of OMFA.



EARL CHURCHILL

(Earl passed way in 1985)

CLOISE SINCLAIR



HARLEY SINCLAIR



BILL BIGFORD, SR.





JUDY OSWALD

I was born in Boyne City in 1922. My father taught me to chord to accompany him on the violin at age 8. I now play organ, piano, and accordion, and at one time I played violin with the school orchestra.

I married Robert Oswald, and we have been married 38 years. We have 2 children and 1 grandson. I worked for Michigan Bell Telephone, U. S. Navy (operating room technician), Cheboygan area schools and county clerk's office. Both my husband and I are retired and enjoying our retirement. My husband retired from Proctor and Gamble Company.

My father's family all played string instruments, so I was exposed to music from birth. I had some violin lessons, but the rest was self taught. I played at the grange square dances at Kalkaska. I am a member of OMFA.



FRANCES GEIGER

MR./MRS. / NEIL  
TUCKER



MR./MRS. NEWTON  
MILLER





DANIEL & RUTH  
HENDERSON

I was born in West Union, West Virginia in 1927. When I was 5 years old, I learned to play the five-string banjo; at 6 years an old guitar; at 9 years, an old mandolin, and at 10 years an old tenor banjo-tenor guitar, all by ear. My father and mother played fiddle and banjo, and my brother played guitar.

I have worked in road construction and maintenance as an equipment operator and foreman as well as sign painter and in commercial art. I married my wife, Ruth, in 1949, and we have 3 daughters.

I have played for dances in West Virginia, Ohio, Kentucky, Washington, Japan, and Michigan. I am a member of OMFA.



CALVIN GOSSAGE

ELLA JEAN LIBBY



I was born in 1929 in Benton Harbor, Michigan. My father was Lyle M. Kinser (deceased). My mother and stepfather, John and Goldie Klapotic, live at Houghton Lake and Punta Gorda, Florida. My brother, Morris Kinser, lives in Michigan Center. I was married in 1947 to William F. (Poodie) Belanger. We had 5 children and one son plays lead guitar. One son drowned in 1972 at age 21. My husband died in 1965 and I later remarried Jack Libby from Sault Ste. Marie. We now live at Orchard Lake, but have a hunting trailer southwest of Rogers City at Hawks.

I started playing guitar at age 15. I have always listened to county and western, "hillbilly", bluegrass, and square dance or fiddle music. I play by ear, but can read notes. I have played around the "Soo" bars, lodges, grange halls and house parties. I am a member of OMFA.

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TWO HEAD LADIES CROSS OVER

*Two head ladies cross over and by the gentlemen stand.  
Side ladies cross over and all join hands.*

*Honor your corner lady,*

*Honor your partner all.*

*Swing the corner lady and promenade the hall.*





WILBUR C. BRANCH

I was born in Dowagiac, Michigan in 1916. I am the oldest of 4 children. I have 3 sisters and my parents are still living. I have worked as a tank-truck salesman of Petroleum Products, at Otsego Public Schools, and at various sales. Presently I am retired, but working part-time for Remic Corporation of Elkhart, Indiana.

I started playing violin when in elementary school and started calling in my mid-teens. I attended neighborhood dances with my parents. I learned to play several instruments as back-up, which included violin as lead, guitar, banjo, bass viol and piano. I took 48 lessons on the violin and the other instruments I play by ear. For about 10 years I played and called at the Masonic Temple in Otsego. I have been an OMFA member for about 3 years.



LEONARD GUILLETT  
FAMILY

CHARLES (FREDDY)  
FURTAW



Freddy was born in 1911 in Linwood, Michigan to Alfred and Mary Furtow, the fifth of 7 sons. His father played violin and his mother played guitar. Four of the sons played instruments. His brother, Jack, started playing the violin by ear at age 6 and was well known in the area. Freddy started playing the banjo at the age of 20 and was playing for dances in the area at age 21. He started playing guitar about 10 years later and has been playing at dances throughout the area ever since. He has played at the Bay County Jamboree each time it was held. He was a self-taught musician.

In 1984 he married Maybelle Stasinski.

ELDON & LOU  
HOUGHTALING





LEATHA R. NEAVES

I was born at Vassar, Michigan in 1911. I was married to Edgar L. Neaves, now deceased. I have 2 daughters (Alice and Carol), 5 grandchildren, and 6 great grandchildren. Besides being a housewife in Columbiaville, I worked as a weaver in the Columbiaville Woolen Co., Willow Run Bomber Teacher Governor Test Operator, and Store Manager for Kinney Dairy at Bay City.

I have always loved music and dancing, and started calling for square dances at age 68. I have called at Harrison Senior Citizen Center, jamborees at Harrison and Beaverton, senior citizens at Farwell, and senior citizens at Cadillac. I am a member of OMFA.

I was involved in a serious car accident several years ago and am now paralyzed from the waist down, and have been unable to do any calling or dancing ever since. My heart is still with the music and when possible, I attend jamborees and enjoy watching, listening and visiting with friends.

(When Leatha used to dance, we always loved to watch her shake to the tune of "Alley Cat.")

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*His thoughts were slow, his words were few, and never formed to glisten. But he was a joy to all his friends. You should have heard him listen. †-Wayne Mackey*

ROLAND & HATTIE  
KLOHA



Roland was born in 1912 in Bay County, Michigan. He drove truck and farmed all his life. He drove milk truck for 38 years, operating 3 milk routes for some years. After retiring from milk hauling and farming in 1967, he drove transport truck, owning his own tractor. He transported chemicals from Dow Chemical Company in Midland to the Midwestern states, going as far south as Kentucky and east as far as Rochester, New York and also to Maryland.

Roland started calling square dances at age 18 in local dance halls and house parties. He has been calling for more than 55 years. He has been a regular caller at the Bay County Fairgrounds Canteen for the last 20 years.

Hattie was born in 1913 in Bay County. Her parents, George and Minnie Schmidt, had a dairy farm in Frankenlust Township at the present site of Bay Valley. A woods used to be where the Bay Valley Inn now stands.

Music was always a big part of the home life. Her father played the fiddle and zither. He would have loved to have taken part in the jamborees. As a young man, her father and his brothers played for area dances. He kept up his music all his life. He played by ear.

Hattie taught school for 23 years in Bay and Saginaw Counties. She has been Music Festival Accompanist. She plays the piano both by ear and note. Hattie has taught square dances in the middle grades. She enjoyed teaching music in her classroom.

For the past 8 years, Roland and Hattie have been President and Secretary of the Bay County Senior Citizens. They are in charge of Tuesday afternoon dances the year round and Friday afternoon dances from October through May. They are also the local organizers for the jamboree at Bay City. They also had charge of the spirited jamboree at the Winter Carnival in January, 1984.

They sponsored 2 fiddlers jamborees in Bay City before OMFA was organized. Bob Fleck and Jane Allison were present at these jamborees. They remember having 24 square sets on the floor at one time at the first jamboree. The jamborees have always been well attended. They have been members of OMFA since it was first organized.

The Klohas have 5 children and 15 grandchildren and 2 great grand children.



NORM & WANETA  
WEBER

I was born in New Salem, Michigan in 1915. I worked at the Corduroy Rubber Company and did farming. I retired in 1977.

I started playing the fiddle when I was 12 years old. My father played fiddle for dances and 2 brothers played piano at dances. My youngest son, Peter, just started playing his granddad's fiddle. I play by ear and just recently learned to read simple music. Waneta plays guitar and is learning other instruments. We are members of OMFA.

CLIFFORD W. COE



I was born at Otter Lake, Michigan in 1913. I have 1 living brother who plays violin and calls at the OMFA jamborees. Also, I have 1 sister who with her husband, Dewey Jones, are active in modern square dancing. She enjoys old-time music and often attends the OMFA jam sessions and dances.

During the depression years of the early thirties, we had a family living near us who played various instruments. Most of them could play the violin. I did learn a few tunes from them. Then for many years I was too busy to play much and the various players moved to other places. At one time I did take 2-3 piano lessons and can read notes slowly to learn new tunes, but really play by ear. Several years ago, I began playing the violin again and try to attend the jam sessions in our local area.

I have been self-employed in the archery business for many years, especially in the manufacturing of hunting bows.

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*"Violinists are amazed the first time they see as many as fifty fiddlers playing the same tune at the same time, no two playing exactly alike, yet the overall effect is melodic and most pleasing to the senses."*

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*Admonish your friends in private, praise them in public.*



JOHN (JACK) FURTAW

Jack was born in 1907 in Linwood, Michigan. He died September 23, 1984. He worked at Bay City Shovels as a boring mill operator. He also worked as a tree trimmer for the City of Bay City, and he worked for the Beutel Canning Company of Bay City. When Jack was 7 years old, his mother died. That left his father to bring up the 7 sons.

At 7 years of age Jack was taught by his dad to play the violin. For several years, accompanied by his father, he would entertain the men from the lumber mills as they rode the train from Linwood to Bay City for their weekly night out. They also played at logging camps. Although Jack could not read a note, he was an accomplished fiddler and was much in demand for social events. His was a musical family. Brother, Fred, plays the guitar and banjo, and Earl played banjo. With a few more musicians, it became the Jack Furtaw Band.

During his working years, he had steady jobs playing evenings and weekends at different dance halls throughout Michigan. Jack played violin, banjo, ukelele and piano. The violin was his main instrument. After retiring he kept his band playing for convalescent homes in the area. Jack's band played regularly each week at the Bay City Fairgrounds Canteen for the Bay County Senior Citizens.

Jack's 3 daughters are musically inclined and would accompany him at special functions. Shirley sings, Jackie plays banjo and guitar, and Betty plays banjo and ukelele.

Jack belonged to the Bay City Federation and Musicians. He was V. P. of the union for several years.

MAUDE ANDREWS



Maude was born in 1909 in Elba, Michigan. She has been married 38 years and has 1 son, 7 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren.

When she was 11 years old, she took music lessons. She plays piano and organ. She also plays by ear.

MARILYN KOBE



Marilyn was born in 1931 in Dayton, Ohio. She has been in the insurance business for almost 20 years. She has 5 children and they all play some instrument, mostly by music training in school or privately.

Marilyn started playing the piano at age 6, the first time she got near the piano. She plays by ear. She plays professionally at lounges, private sing-along parties, and jamborees. She has belonged to DMFA for about 5 years.





RICKY TAITER

I was born in Boyne city, Michigan in 1939. I have 5 brothers and sisters and my father is still living. I am married and my wife, Dawn, and I have 1 daughter. I have worked as a carpenter, caretaker, pot and pan washer, and church musician.

I became interested in music by listening to the midnight jamborees on the radio. After high school I started playing the harmonica, guitar and fiddle. I had a few lessons, but play by ear.



PETER & JOANA  
BERTA

I was born in North City, Illinois in 1915. My wife was born in Detroit, Michigan in 1918. I am retired from Fort Motor Company as a tool and die maker. We have 2 daughters, 4 grandsons, 3 great grandsons and 3 great granddaughters.

(Both Pete and Joana attend as many of the OMFA jamborees as possible and tape much of the music played. They are regulars in the audience and a welcome sight at all of our jamborees.)

MR./MRS. CLARENCE  
HOWDEN



We are interested home-town followers from Midland, Michigan. After working at Dow Chemical Company for 37 years, I retired in 1974.

We are not musicians, but sincere followers and enjoy the jamborees. We go to as many as we can. The first one we attended was in Vassar, then one in Alma, and one in Port Hope that was held in the old church. The organizers were a young man from Williamston and a young woman from Detroit. We have enjoyed jamborees ever since.

WILLARD C. JEWELL



I was born in 1917 in St. Joseph, Michigan. I started playing guitar, violin, and mandolin at age 14. My father played music by ear, and mother encouraged it. I learned organ and piano at age 45. I am married and we have 2 sons who are both musical. The oldest has 2 children who sing and play. I have played all over northern Michigan for dances and other types of entertainment. I worked as a supervisor in charge of power plants and maintenance for Consumers Power Company.



GLEN & ALICE MARTIN

I was born in Tuscola County (Vassar), Michigan in 1925. My dad's name was William Martin, and he played violin for dances in and around Michigan. I was 9 years old when I became interested in learning to play the violin, banjo and guitar, and play by ear. I used to go with my dad when he would go out to play, and I would play guitar or banjo with him. My wife, Alice, plays the piano and accordion.

My occupation is car inspector for C. & O. Railroad in Saginaw.



PERRY L. MARTIN

I was born in Saginaw, Michigan in 1963. I started playing guitar at age 7 by ear. My parents both play, mother on piano and accordion and dad on violin, guitar and banjo. My brothers also play, so lots of times we all like to get together and play as a group. I played the horn in school.

I presently work at a foster home and go to Woodcraft Studio in Frankenmuth. I play for church, senior citizens and for dances.



LEE (BUCK) E. GORDON

I was born in Glasgow, Kentucky in 1921, the son of John and Enner Gordon. We came to Detroit when I was 5. My father was a musician and played a five-string banjo. At age 10 I learned to play guitar by ear.

I worked as a musician and truck driver. I am now retired from Roadway Express Company. My wife died in 1981. I have 1 daughter and 3 granddaughters.

When I was a young teenager, I started playing guitar with 2 friends, Wayne Fields and Herb Wiles. We have continued as friends and musicians together for 45 years. I am a member of DMFA.

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"RECIPE FOR CONTENTMENT"

*Health enough to make work a pleasure.*

*Wealth enough to support your needs.*

*Strength enough to battle with difficulties and overcome them.*

*Grace enough to confess your sins and forsake them.*

*Patience enough to toil until some good is accomplished.*

*Charity enough to see some good in your neighbor.*

*Faith enough to make real the things of God.*

*Hope enough to remove all anxious fear concerning the future.*



LEON HULSE

Leon was born in 1923 in Farwell, Michigan. He is a Dow Chemical retiree. He also worked as a handyman, chauffeur, and auctioneer. He has 6 children and 11 grandchildren.

Leon's father played the fiddle and his mother played the piano. They played for round and square dances. When Leon was 12, he took violin lessons for 3 months. He plays by ear. He has played for dances and jamborees all over Michigan, and loves to sing as well as fiddle. He has belonged to OMFA for 6 years.



GLADYS FAUST

Gladys was born in 1943 in Saginaw, Michigan. She worked in a refrigeration shop in Brighton. She also worked in nursing homes as a nurse's assistant. Her parents are Levi and Edlene Ecker. Her husband, Keith, plays harmonica and loves country and western music. The Foust's have 4 children and a grandson. They all love music, square dancing, and coming to OMFA jamborees. Gladys has been dancing since she was 3.

JACOB GREIF &  
MARY HUNTER

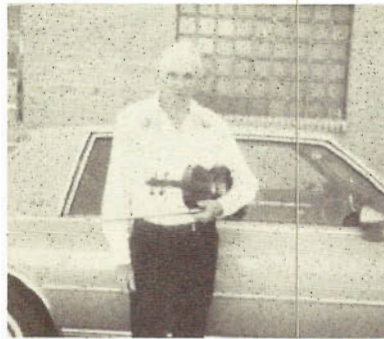


Jake was born in 1907 in Sebawaing, Michigan. His occupation was spray and sign painting. Jake had 4 sons. All his sons are either full time or weekend musicians. Jake had an older brother who played harmonica.

Jake started playing the harmonica at age 5. At age 15 he learned to play string instruments, using self-taught instruction books. His main instrument is the tenor banjo. He played with a few of the larger bands in the Saginaw area. In the late 1920's the first year Bay City Radio Station, WBC, was on the air Jake played at the radio station. He also played at the Wolverine and Temple Theatres in Saginaw, playing between the first and second evening shows and during intermission time. These were live shows with no movies. Jake and his band were weekend musicians. They played for country clubs, the Grotto Club, post office employees, to name some.

Jake played professionally during the 1930's until World War II. Then he quit for 37 years. He had a good excuse because gasoline was being rationed along with tires and what else. Also, if you were working in a war plant, you were working 7 days or 7 nights and you didn't have any time for music.

Jake is a versatile banjo player whose old-time dance tunes are always enjoyed at local jamborees, rap and jam sessions, nursing homes, and senior centers. Jake takes great pride in the musical achievements of his friends and family. One of his greatest pleasures is in helping others, whether it is teaching the banjo, sharing favorite tunes, or repairing an instrument for a friend. Jake has belonged to OMFA since January, 1981.



ARTHUR & BERNICE  
CASWELL

I was born at Deckerville, Michigan in 1918. There were 10 in our family. Five of us could play musical instruments. My mother played piano and accompanied us when we played at home. I started playing the fiddle by ear at age 16. I became interested in the fiddle when Merle Fritch was a frequent visitor in our home. He taught me how to play. We played for County Fairs, granges, and church socials. I am an OMFA member.

I am a retired farmer.



ROBERT & NETTIE  
SCOTT

I was born in E. Jordan, Michigan in 1915. I worked for the E. Jordan Canning Co. for 25 years, then as a house painter, and paper hanger. I have a wife, Nettie, and 1 son and 2 grandchildren.

I started on an old guitar at age 8 or 9, and also made myself a set of trap drums out of a washtub and dishpan. I played trombone in high school. For many years I was a drummer before learning the mandolin. I have played in various grange halls and for weddings.



THE MAKING OF FRIENDS by Edgar A. Guest  
Life is sweet just because of the friends we have made  
And the things which in common we share;  
We want to live on, not just for ourselves,  
But because of the people who care;  
It's giving and doing for somebody else...  
On that all life's splendor depends,  
And the joy of this world when you've summed it all up  
Is found in the making of friends.







RAY KIOGIMA

I was born in Harbor Springs, Michigan in 1930. I am one of 6 boys, and we have 1 sister. We are scattered from Minneapolis to Detroit, but have close contact with each other. Most of my life I have been a self-employed carpenter. I still do this as there is plenty of that kind of work in and around Harbor Springs.

I called my first square dance at age 12. This was at a time before television and all the modern things of entertainment. In those days, it was either go to dances or play cards, so we did quite a bit of both. In the winters most of these dances were house dances. I have called in every hall in northern Michigan, and when I became of age, I called in a lot of the barns that held dances. I'm still asked to call at a lot of functions, both private and public. I am a member of OMFA.



MR./MRS. DON  
HENRICKSON

VERN FURLONG



Vern was born in 1912 in Jackson, Michigan. He worked at Dow Corning, Delta College and was a self-employed farmer. Vern's mother is 92 years old and always took the children to dances, even as young children 9-10 years old.

Vern started playing the piano and violin at 14 years of age. When he was 20 years old, he started playing the banjo. He took lessons for 3 years. Vern played for dances at Winn 3 years, at Chippewa Pines 3 years and at Lumberjack Park.

GLEN & RAMONA  
FOSTER



Glen was born in Flint, Michigan in 1930. His family moved to Gladwin when he was 7 years old. Glen worked at Magline Inc., in Pinconning and played music on weekends. Glen and his wife, Ramona, have 2 sons and 2 daughters and 1 grandson.

Glen learned to play the 5-string banjo at age 7, the guitar at age 14, the fiddle at age 20, and the mandolin at age 24. He plays by ear. His parents both played music. Glen plays at the Highwood Dance Hall and also at weddings, bars, etc.



WAYNE & MARJORIE  
FIELDS

I was born in Wingo, Kentucky in 1921. I learned to play the guitar at age 14 by ear, then the tenor banjo, stand-up bass, and the bass guitar. I married my wife, Marjorie in 1942, and we have 3 children, and 5 grandchildren. I retired in 1980 from Clawson Concrete Co. where I worked as a heavy equipment mechanic and then a supervisor for 15 years.

I lived next door to a musical family, fiddler Dick Dillon. I used to swap guitar with my neighbor buddy, learning the chords. I played music with a bunch of young fellows and still play together with some of them, and we are the best of friends after 46 years. I am a member of OMFA.



LAWRENCE & VIRGINIA  
JEFFERY

ALVIN & MILDRED  
ROOT



Alvin was born in Detroit, Michigan in 1919. He was in the air force from 1942 to 1945. He was a 4-H Club Agent for Michigan State University from 1949 to 1976.

Alvin's mother and father came off farms near Hillman and Long Rapids, Michigan. His mother's maiden name was LaFave. His grandparents came from Montreal, Canada. His uncle played old-time fiddle music. In 1939 Alvin's dad's brother-in-law gave Alvin an old German violin that had been left in a closet at his home for room rent. Alvin's mother, brother and sisters are all musical, playing piano and organ. His children all like music, and his youngest daughter backs him up on the guitar. His wife, Mildred, likes music and supports him greatly.

Alvin got interested in Big Band music at 12 years of age. The Hollenback family of 9 children raised him up on a farm near Byron, Michigan. They were all musical and played instruments. When Alvin was 12 years old, he started playing an old German fiddle that was always on the Hollenback family piano. He used to play with a windup phonograph until 1939. He never played much until retirement in 1976. He joined OIRA in 1980 and began to play at different locations. He also plays the mouth organ well. He plays by ear and can read music just a little.

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*Swallowing angry words is easier than eating them.*



FORREST & HILDA  
LALONDE

Forrest was born in 1915 in Wolverine, Michigan. He worked in supervision at General Motors Corporation in Saginaw, Michigan. His wife, Hilda, is a Medical Assistant. They have 2 children and 5 grandchildren. They have been married 48 years.

Forrest's father played the mouth organ and called square dances at house parties. Forrest became interested in calling because of attending fiddler jamborees. He started calling in 1980. He has called at the Bay County Fairgrounds Canteen and the senior citizen dances at the James Township Hall. Both Forrest and Hilda have belonged to OMFA since it was organized.



GORDON KILTS

LAWRENCE & STELLA  
PEOPLES



Lawrence was born in 1920 in Bay County, Michigan. He retired from the Dow Chemical Company as a Laboratory Technician. Stella was born in 1920 in Bay County. Her parents, George and Minnie Schmidt, were dairy farmers in Frankenlust Township, now the site of Bay Valley. Stella and Lawrence have 5 children.

Lawrence has been singing most of his life. He started calling square dances at age 54 in Bay City, Michigan, just to help out and it kept growing. He calls for several local dances and at the OMFA jamborees.

Stella's father was the fiddler in the area. His brother played cello, and a nephew played guitar. She was put on the piano bench at an early age, and playing the piano at age 4, accompanying her father. Music was a big part of her home life.

Stella is a Michigan Certified Music Teacher through Michigan State University. She has played at recitals at Delta College. She has been Musical Festival Accompanist and 4-H Showboat Accompanist. She plays both by ear and note. She has been a teacher in Bay County and Bay City School System.

Both Stella and Lawrence are members of OMFA and have been for about 5 years.

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*A great deal of talent is lost in the world for want of a little courage. -- Sidney Smith*



MARRIAM & FRANK  
ROBBINS

Marriam was born in 1909 in Gladwin County, Michigan. Her career has been full-time homemaker, mother and wife. Her parents homesteaded the property in Gladwin and raised a family of 10 children. Marriam's husband, Frank, worked 34 years at Dow Chemical Company. He retired in 1975. They have 4 children, but have only 2 living.

Marriam began playing the pump organ when she was 9 years old. Her brother, Clarence, taught her how to play the accordion when she was 10 years old. When she was 15 years old, she began playing the fiddle which she played at social functions. This led her to playing the piano. She tried taking lessons, but found it an impossible task because of her ability to play by ear. She played in the Gladwin area, at Grass Lake, Elk Lake, White Star, Podunk and Pratts Lake. She played at a wedding and 50 years later was asked to play at the same couple's 50th wedding anniversary.

She and Frank have belonged to DMFA since the beginning of the organization.

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*Humor is the hole that lets the sawdust out of a stuffed shirt.*

DELLA & CLIFF  
MOCKRIDGE



Della was born in 1914 in Gladwin, Michigan. During her teens she worked as a traveling saleswoman, selling counter display goods. She married Cliff in 1936. They have 2 daughters, 6 grandchildren, and 4 great grandchildren.

Della was raised an only child. Her dad taught her some violin first. Then, he bought her the first mandolin after she returned from visiting a cousin who had just gotten one. Della confidently told her beloved dad that "I could play one of those things if I had one." There were times she almost had to eat her words, but she knew she had better play it after he paid the whole sum of \$7.95 at Montgomery Wards for it, plus some instruction books. She's still pecking away at it.

Della says she inherited her greatest enthusiasm for music from her dad. Her mother played the organ and sang. Della loves to play "Honky Tonk" piano. She can read music, but she plays mostly by ear. Besides music, she sews, knits, crochets, and does all sorts of crafts. She says she really appreciates the friendships acquired because of her music involvements. She plays with a local group for senior citizens or at the local township hall. She has belonged to OMFA since 1981.

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*If you insist on perfection, make the first demand of yourself.*





ERNEST & FERN  
PARENT

Ernest was born in 1932 in Midland, Michigan. He worked at Dow Chemical Company for 33 years as an alternate (jack of all trades). He also worked a second job as a finish carpenter on modular homes. Fern was born in 1936, also in Midland. She worked at Dow Chemical Cafe for 12 years.

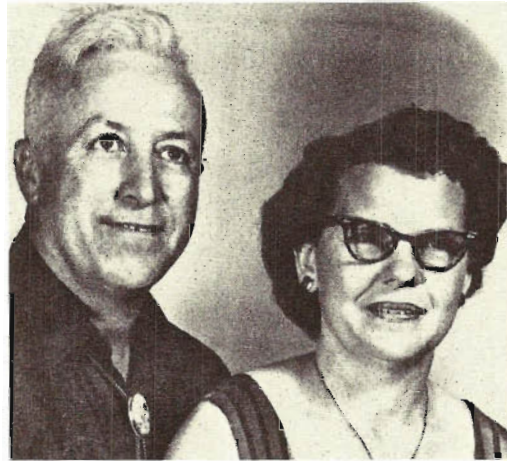
Their daughter plays mandolin. Ernest has a brother who plays piano, accordion, and organ. Fern's father played piano and a brother played saxophone.

Ernest plays by ear. He started playing banjo at age 10, guitar at age 16, and mandolin at age 19. When he was 16, he played for dances with a group called "The Sweet Sister Band". At age 17 years he played old-time music at Winegars for 2 years. Later he played guitar and Fern played mandolin with a band called "Bluegrass Travelers".

Fern started playing fiddle in 1981, mandolin in 1982, and bass in 1984. She had lessons on the fiddle and mandolin and plays bass by ear.

They have gone to the OMFA jamborees and a number of Bluegrass shows for 4 years. They have belonged to OMFA for about 2 years.

J. LESTER & MYRTLE  
HARRIS



Lester was born in 1913 on a farm near Merrill in Saginaw County, Michigan. He ran a sawmill partnership with his brother for 11 years and on his own for another 6 years until 1947. He sold out and moved to Clare, Michigan and started the Long Lake Cabinet Shop. He retired in 1975, but he still does some cabinet work. In 1936 he married Myrtle Rittenour. They have 4 children, 11 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren.

Lester started playing banjo at age 15 and the fiddle and accordion at age 17. He started calling square dances when he was 16 years old, first at house parties and later at dance halls. Lester's granddad was a fiddler. Lester was always interested in music and loved to dance; hence started calling for square dances. He took lessons on the violin, but in later years he played mostly by ear the accordion and banjo. He played and called in the vicinity of Merrill, Michigan, within a radius of 13 miles from where he was born and raised. There were 6 dance halls, plus quite a few places that held dances occasionally. He played banjo with a dance orchestra at Brant, near Saginaw with Ralph Nielson, and he in turn gave Lester violin lessons, as there was not much money floating around in the 1930's.



THOMAS & ELEANOR  
MC KERVEY

I was born in Cheboygan, Michigan in 1927, and have 6 brothers and 4 sisters. I work for General Motors Truck and Bus Division as a fork truck driver and have been there 38 years. My wife, Eleanor, and I have 12 children and 16 grandchildren.

I started calling when I was 23 years old. My folks used to have house parties in the winter when I was a kid. Later as I grew up, we went to square dances. From 1965 to 1981 I was with a country western band in the Pontiac area, and we played clubs, Eagles, Moose, and weddings. I have called at three 50th wedding parties. I am a member of OMFA.

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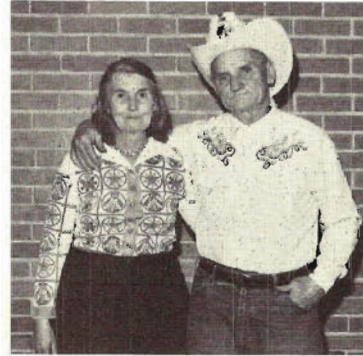
LADY ROUND THE LADY

*For its lady round lady and gent around the gent.  
And the gent around the lady and the lady around the gent  
Four hands half, half right and left,  
Swing your lady once around and lead up to the next.  
For its lady round lady and gent around the gent,  
And the gent around the lady and the lady around the gent  
Allemande left, grand right and left.*

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*God gives milk, but not the pail. --English Proverb*

LEVI & EDELENE  
ECKER



Levi was born near West Branch, Michigan. He worked as a farmer, woodsman, railroader, Western Union, Army, Red Cross, and First Aid. He worked as a machine operator for General Motors Corporation for 17 years before retirement. Levi and his wife, Edelene Cunningham, raised 11 children and 1 granddaughter. They also have 1 great grandson.

Levi's father was Dutch, born in Canada and moved to Michigan when he was 4 years old. Levi's mother was Irish, born in Sanilac County. Her family came from Ireland. There's was a musical background on each side of the family, both Canadian and Irish fiddlers.

Levi played harmonica at age 10 and violin at age 20. His wife traded a guitar for a fiddle and bow. At one time he had a 3 and 4 piece band. Levi called at house parties and at dance halls in Prescott, Tawas, and Whittemore. He took lessons on the harmonica but plays the fiddle by ear.

Many of the Ecker children and relatives attend the OMFA jamborees. Levi has belonged to OMFA since 1981.

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*I don't know the key to success, but the key to failure is trying to please everybody. --Bill Cosby*



HENRY (HANK) &  
YVONNE GORKA

Hank was born in 1920 in Buffalo, New York. His wife, Yvonne, was born in 1924 in Brainerd, Minnesota. Hank graduated from the University of Detroit in 1944 as a chemical engineer. He spent 2 years in the Navy. His occupation was Production Engineer. He retired from Fisher Body Tech Center at Warren in 1981. They moved to Harrison, Michigan in 1978 and love it there. They have 3 children and 2 grandchildren.

Hank started playing violin at age 9, taking lessons for 3 years in classical music. At age 15 he took up the guitar. He remembers his folks paying the teacher for his lessons with chickens, eggs, and milk. Yvonne plays the piano. Hank and Yvonne played with the "Honey Bee Stingers" in Gladwin and Clare. Yvonne played the bones, bells, chimes, sound effects and sang. Ben Stockton of Midland had been their teacher and mentor for old-time jigs and reels when they both played in the band. They got interested in Appalachian Music about 4 years ago.

Hank's uncle Joe Gorka played in the house band at the Hotel Statler in the 1920-30's. The fiddle was given to Hank when his Uncle Joe gave it up. His first performance with it was at the St. Mary's Church in Wayne, Michigan when he played the Angel's Serenade at the Christmas Midnight Service in 1930.

Yvonne and children sang, danced, and acted in various community theatres for about 10 years in the Detroit area, and were members for years in the Civic Center Theatre of Detroit. Most of the family's background in music has been classical, but learning to play old-time country and western has been fun. They say, "Please keep the OMFA going."

KENNETH & LOREITA  
ELLSWORTH



Ken was born in Wheeler, Michigan in 1902. He was self-employed, starting his own garage and auto mechanic business in 1929. In 1950 they made the change over to appliance and television sales and service. His wife, Loreita, did all the book work. They closed the store in 1969.

Ken's mother played the pump organ and sang. His sister played the organ and guitar. His brother played the piccolo in a band and also a guitar and violin. Ken says his brother taught him a lot. In the 1920's Ken took some violin lessons, studied and played light classical music and did some orchestra playing at local music entertainments.

In the 1930's he played and traveled with the Michigan Lumberjacks Orchestra. They played old-fashioned lumberjack Michigan-style music. The group traveled throughout the state and the country. They were sponsored by the Michigan Tourist Association; traveling to St. Louis, Chattanooga, Chicago, and Washington, D. C. Ken was the youngest member of the orchestra, and took advantage of the opportunity of playing with veteran musicians. After he ended his association with the Lumberjack Orchestra, Ken did not play for public entertainment for 25 years.

Now he plays with the senior citizens old-timers band. They play for the senior citizen dances and nursing homes. Although performing is enjoyable, especially before a receptive audience, the real joy comes just from playing, Ken says. He has belonged to OMFA since the beginning.



ILA MAE O'BRIEN

Ila Mae was born in Au Gres, Michigan in 1951. She has lived on a farm all of her life. Her parents are Levi and Edelene Ecker who regularly attend and participate at the OMFA jamborees. She has 2 sons.

She loves to dance and started to dance at age 3 on an old-time bar table top. Presently she is studying the fiddle.



MR./MRS. GORDIE  
MCCURDY

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*Man cannot discover new oceans unless he has the  
courage to lose sight of the shore.*

GENE & THELMA  
WARD



Gene was born in Fenton, Michigan in 1927. He and his wife, Thelma, have a son and daughter and 1 grandson. He worked for General Motors Buick as a cutter grinder. They presently live in Durand.

Gene became interested in square dancing at a very young age. He went to dances with his parents beginning when he was 5 years old. His calling began in 1959 when Highway I-69 was opened. He replaced the regular ailing caller and has been calling ever since.

The year 1960 was an inactive time for him because of a tumor on his vocal cord which required hospitalization. His voice has an unusual resonance; maybe due to the vocal cord tumor. No one ever has a problem of understanding or hearing his calls. You would think he has had years of voice training and in a sense he has.

He calls regularly around the state. He has been calling with the Suburban Steppers Club at Waterford for 23 years. In 1965 Gene resumed his calling for the Fenton Old Time Dance. He has been calling for the Webberville Club once a month now for about 13 years. In 1976 he began calling at the McKinley Center in Flint every Thursday. In 1977 the Senior Citizens of Owosso formed to do mainstream dancing, contras and rounds. Gene has helped dancers prepare and cues for exhibition dancing, keeping the old dances alive.

He attends the OMFA jamborees when possible and calls at the dances in the evening. He is a member of OMFA.





WILBUR & MARTHA  
CARL

Wilbur was born on a farm in 1916 in Gaylord, Michigan. After serving in World War II, he studied and worked with the local surveyor. In 1950 he hired in at Dow Chemical Company as a surveyor. He retired in 1971.

Wilbur and Martha were married in 1938. They have 4 children and 7 grandchildren.

Wilbur's mother was a pianist and taught him the basics of music on piano when he was about 9 years old. At age 14, Wilbur bought a Sears violin and learned to play it in the summer while watching cows in the pasture. In high school he learned to play the clarinet and played in the school band and the Gaylord City Band. He took lessons, but plays mostly by ear now. He played and called for dances in and around Gaylord until 1950. Now, retired, he plays with a local retirees band around Midland, Saginaw, and Bay City area. He has belonged to OMFA for about 2 years.

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*Wisdom is knowing when to speak your mind -- and when to mind your speech.*

EVELYN JOHNSON ROE



I was born on a farm east of Jeddo, Michigan in 1920. At 5 my father started me on the piano as he played the violin. His grandfather wrote music. I had an older brother who played the mouth organ and piano. Thru the years we played for house parties. I just picked up the piano by ear. I also learned the guitar playing in the theatres in Pt. Huron and Sarnia and sang comical songs and took first place in both shows. I got \$5 at each place; that was big money then.

In 1936 I left home to work for a lady who had 4 children, a big farm and lots of hired men. I did most of the cooking and took care of the children. I met my husband in 1937. He was working on another farm down the road. I found out he was a square dance caller, so that fitted in just fine. We were married in 1938. We had 5 sons and a daughter. Some had musical talent and some didn't. I have 12 grandchildren and 6 great grand children.,

As the children started leaving home, I went to work cleaning houses. I said there had to be something better than this. In 1975 I graduated from the 12th grade with my daughter. Then I went on to college and graduated as a visiting nurse. In 1977 my husband had a stroke and we had to take care of him. I still went to fiddlers jamborees. Then I got more schooling and went to Reflexology and got my diploma in 1983. On August, 1985 my husband died. I keep busy with my music and reflexology. I'm going to start going to Florida and get into lots of music. I have belonged to OMFA about 4 years.



### TED REILLY

I was born in 1904 to Sarah Rowen and William Reilly and named Walter, but am Ted to friends and relatives. I was born at home on the banks of Londo Lake, Hill Township, in Ogemaw County, Michigan. I was only a bit over 5 years when my mother died, and was left to live with my father who was farming at that time. I had chores to do, so had many hours to be alone, but would sneak my dad's violin to amuse myself. When I would hear my father's footsteps, would quickly put the violin away as it was my dad's pride and joy, having been brought over from Ireland through Canada. One day I wasn't fast enough and my father heard me playing "The Little Girl I Left Behind Me." Instead of scolding me, he said, "son, when you can play that tune to suit me, that violin shall be yours when I am through with it." That is the violin I play today.

I married Anna Barber when I was 16, and we had 8 children. All the children showed musical ability and when old enough would accompany their mother and dad. Anna played the piano. From the time we were married we played for Saturday night dances, weddings, and local affairs. Then Anna had the misfortune of breaking her arm and the sons accompanied me at the functions. When Anna's health wasn't so good, I did little playing except perhaps for friend's special occasions. Following the death of Anna after 61 years of marriage, my family prevailed upon me to pick up the fiddle again, and I got into the Nuts and Bolts Senior Citizens Band at Hale. I am now a member of OMFA (5 years).

JAMES & FRANCES  
HERALD



I was born in 1913 at Edmore, Michigan. Because of being an asthmatic, I had to get off the farm at pollen time. I spent my summers at my uncle's in Stanton, 10 miles away. He was a watchmaker and I worked as an errand boy for him. It worked out pretty good, so I spent my summers there. I learned the watch and clock business from my uncle in my teens. Also, my uncle was a fair fiddler and a good repairman on all instruments. I saw my first dulcimer at that time being repaired. Later in 1963 I helped in starting the Original Dulcimer Club.

My first occupation was running a watch repair shop in Edmore, only 10 miles from Stanton. If I couldn't make them run, I only had to go to Uncle Mike, who was a wizzard in mechanics. My shop was a corner in Biglow's Barber Shop. In a year's time I was needing more room and found Marion, Michigan in need of my services. I moved there in 1933 and was there until 1942. Then I went to Pensacola, Florida US Naval Base as an aviation instrument mechanic. In 1944 I came back to Marion to continue watchmaking, but couldn't find store space, so I came to Cadillac. I ran the Cadillac Watch Shop until 1952 when I was stricken with Rheumatoid Arthritis and had to quit watchmaking. I then went on the road as a jewelry salesman for a year. Then got a job at Kysor, Indiana and worked there for 22 years and retired in 1975.

I have always been interested in music. Back on the farm the neighbors would have Saturday night house parties. The music was provided by an old crippled man with a short leg, who

walked with a fiddle case as a cane. Usually the only other instrument would be a pump organ. Every home didn't have an organ, so most often the organ was moved weekly to the host home. The tunes were simple and followed the chord pattern. Seems at that time a lot of people could play those basic chords. We always had someone to chord as a second. The fiddler would sit with his bad leg up to a point where his elbow would rest on his knee. He looked like a pretzel, but regardless of how he looked, he could get the tunes out of that fiddle. At that time I made a fiddle out of a cigar box, which I could get a tune by picking. I couldn't make a bow, so sold 12 boxes of Cloverence salve (I got as a prize) to get a fiddle bow. With this fiddle I was able to learn most of Mr. Karcher's tunes by ear. The selling of the salve was the most touching episode of my life, as one person had to rob the cookie jar, borrow from his brother, actually fight to come up with 25 cents for the salve.

When I was in high school, a music teacher came to Edmore once a week. I took lessons to learn notes. At this time I was taken in by George Skinner (drummer, wife played piano) to play at the Gleaner Hall. I played here all thru high school and earned spending money during the depression times. George had a daughter who he wanted to play the saxophone. He took me to Grand Rapids to pick an instrument for her. I picked the smallest one and then both she and I learned to play it. I have played sax in several combos in taverns as well as some fiddling. I had to stop because of sickness. I got back to fiddling after the fiddle jamborees were started by Bill White, Paul Gifford, and Bob Fleck. The first one I attended was held at Harretta.

Over the years I have been collecting odd string instruments and at the present time have a potato bug (mandolin), harmolin, uke, A-lin, violin uke, pianoette, tipple, hawaiian tipple, dulcimers, and several fiddles. All OMFA members are invited to visit and see my stuff.

From September to June we winter in the south.

HARTFORD ("HART")  
SNIDER



I was born in 1908 in the Hills of Perry County in the southern part of Indiana. I was the oldest of 6 in a family of 3 boys and 3 girls. Dad was a timberman, small-time farmer and dealt in horses. He was a good singer and played the fiddle. Mother was from a family that had a string band and was a hard working woman.

I didn't get interested in playing the fiddle until I was in my late teens. By that time dad had sold his fiddle. I made a fiddle from a cigar box by adding a neck to it. Then I untwisted some binder twine and fastened to each end a stick for a bow. After I see-sawed awhile, I could play a tune on it. I can't say it sounded much like a pro on a Strad, but I must have made a point. Shortly after I showed I could play a tune on it dad traded a horse for a saddle and an old "Lion-head" fiddle. Then I sold some furs and sent to Sears and Roebuck for a guitar and dad showed me how to chord on it. My youngest brother, Raymond, caught on fast also, but my other brother, Earl, didn't seem to be too interested until we got a cello and dad showed him how to play it like a bass. Then, we soon had a band. Our first job playing for a dance was for round and square dances on Saturday nights at an old vacant country school house. After Earl got a bass, we played at the better dance halls all around the area.

I worked at Tell City Furniture but it only ran steady 9 months out of the year; then I had to look for other work. I

worked at a lot of different things, but I had hobbies besides. I did art work, wood carving, repairing fiddles and guitars and also making fiddles, etc. Then I quit factory and tried other jobs and finally decided I would go to Kalamazoo and try Gibson Inc. I started working for Gibson in 1943 and worked there for 31 years. I also met my wife, Eleanor, there, and we got married in 1955. We have a daughter. I worked several different operations at Gibson, but in later years I worked in the Custom and Service Department where I did special repair and pattern making for specials and customers orders.

I have made 8 fiddles, 2 guitars, 2 mandolins, and 2 stringed instruments I invented. If you see a Gibson Guitar that has a Humming Bird design etched in the pick guard or Gibson with a dove and wild roses etched in pick guard or an Epiphone with an eagle etched on it, they are my creations.

I built a shop before I retired where I did repairing on guitars, fiddles, etc. Since I have retired, I used some fine wood that an old friend got from a widow of a master violin maker and have made 2 good violins and also a guitar, manolin and 2 other instruments I invented.

I quit playing the fiddle in the 50's, but Tex Brown found out where I lived and had heard me before I quit and got after me to play again. I'd gotten rusty but finally got going again, but have really not gotten over the layoff; like an old boxer trying to make a come back.

I played at one of the first OMFA jams. I think it is a great organization.

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*In the New Year, may your right hand always be stretched out in friendship, but never in want. --Irish Toast*

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*Don't go around with a chip on your shoulder -- People might think it come off your head.*

EDWARD J. HANK



Edward was born in Goetzville, Michigan in 1906 to Frank and Apolonia Traynor Hank. He has lived in many communities in the U P where his father worked in lumbering camps, namely Shell Drake (on Whitefish Point), Johnswood on Drummond Island, and in Raber. Edward's father was an accomplished musician who played trumpet, violin, bass and saxophone. Besides playing, he also arranged music and was instrumental in organizing an orchestra to play for the annual church picnic held on the 4th of July. Ed's father needed a second violin, and so taught his son, Edward, the rudiments of the violin. Thus began Edward's introduction to the world of music. Edward's parents moved to Detroit when he was a young teenager and there he received formal lessons and learned to read music. Upon moving back to the area where he had grown up, he formed his own band which usually consisted of his brother, Fred, on saxophone, and numerous cousins on bass, drums and piano.

Edward was hired to play for a dance at the home of William J. and Cassie Moore, and it was there that he met their beautiful daughter, Mary, whom he later married. Edward and Mary raised 4 children (3 daughters and 1 son) and for many years Mary would accompany his band on the piano for weddings and dances in the area. All of Edward's children played musical instruments, and he has 2 grandchildren who are professional musicians.



Edward was a rural mail carrier for a number of years. He was also employed by the State Highway Department for 10 years and later joined the Chippewa County Highway Department with headquarters in DeTour Village, Michigan. He became foreman of that department in 1966 and served as foreman until his retirement in 1972. During these years for a period of approximately 35 years, Edward left his violin sitting in a corner virtually untouched. In 1981 his wife died and now, living alone, he picked up on his music and plays every day, always on the lookout for an interesting and beautiful melody to learn.

Besides his music, Edward is an avid sportsman and has many trophies of his expeditions. He has traveled to Idaho to hunt elk and to Canada to hunt moose. November 15 --opening day of the whitetail deer season is eagerly awaited each year-- when he is joined by his son, Lou, and his grandson, Leon.

Ed has spent many of the last 14 winters in Florida. Two winters ago in Fort Meyers Beach he was invited to play at a club which he visited and has also been seen accompanying other musicians on the docks at Tarpon Springs.

Ed attended his first "Old Time Fiddlers' Jamboree" at the Pullar Stadium in Sault Ste. Marie in 1983 and now looks forward to this event annually. He has enjoyed the many encounters he has had with the various fiddlers at these events and loves to compare and visit with them.

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*"Oldtime Fiddling" is impossible to capture on paper because it has that certain "whang" that only comes from the heart of the fiddler himself and no note has been invented for it. -- Fritz Kreisler*

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*When ones sings his own praises, he usually gets the pitch too high.*

MICHAEL & SUSAN  
GLEASON



I was born in Collingwood, Ontario, Canada in 1948. My family moved to the U.S. shortly after the Second World War. Both my parents were school teachers and encouraged my brother, my 2 sisters, and me in music. My wife plays the piano and trombone. We have 2 sons and presently live in Manchester, Michigan.

I work for General Telephone Company of Michigan as a linesman, cable splicer, telephone installer, and switching technician.

I started playing piano at age 7. Then, I took up the violin in the school orchestra 2 years later. I heard recordings of fiddle tunes and liked them, so tried to learn some by ear. It sounded like a lot more fun than classical music.

I have belonged to OMFA for 3 years. I've played for dances in Adrian and Jackson and at the American Legion, VFW, and singles clubs.

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*If you are patient in one moment of anger, you will  
escape a hundred days of sorrow. --Chinese Proverb*

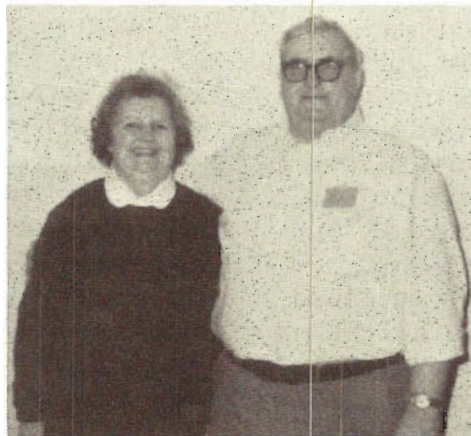


NORMAN & KAY  
EMPEY

I was born in Central Lake, Michigan in 1932. I farmed until 1955 when I became a professional mechanic and worked in the city of Charlevoix since 1971. I have been married to my wife, Kay, for 32 years. We have 4 children, and music has been a very important part of our lives.

I played the uke and guitar by ear when I was about 8 or 10 years old. I was born into a family of musicians and played for many parties, grange dances, and jamborees from the Soo to Grand Rapids.

I have been a member of OMFA since 1982.



ED & KATE  
SOBIE

REX & HELEN  
GLEASON

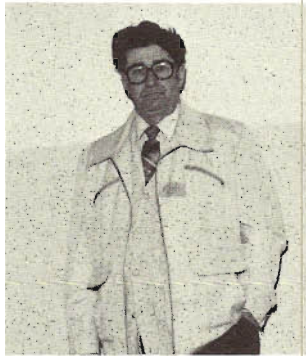


I was born in Newaygo County, but moved to Saline when I was 12 years old. My wife, Helen, and I presently farm around Whitmore Lake.

I came from a family of 10 children. My father was a whistler and my mother sang. My brother, 6 years younger, was an excellent fiddler. I was 11 years old when he got his first fiddle for \$4.95. I played banjo with my brother and 2 sisters played piano, and another one the harmonica. We all love to dance.

At age 14 years I started calling for house dances. After I was married I played and called for dances for \$3 and thought that was good. After my brother died, I inherited his fiddle and still have it. Helen Gross used to play at these same dances. She would tune my fiddle and then play it, and I would chord on the piano. The next fiddle I bought at a garage sale for \$40. Helen Gross always kept encouraging me to play and gave me pointers. She would come over to our house and my wife would fix her hair, then the fiddling would start. Even when she was sick, she would come to get her hair done, and she would still have to fiddle awhile. I had some orchestra training in 4-H and would practice every Sunday afternoon. Helen Gross's father who was an excellent fiddler would come and play too. Presently I am taking piano lessons from a neighbor.

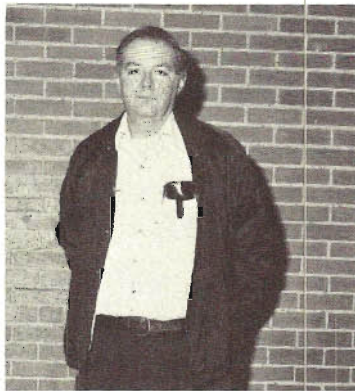
I have been a member of OMFA about 2 years.



JEWELL FRANCIS  
GILLESPIE

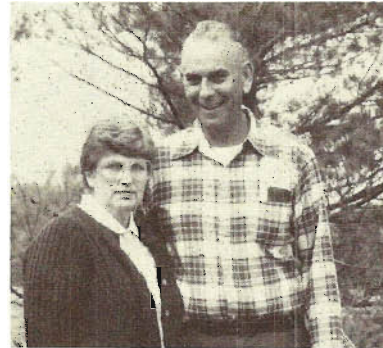
I was born at Beaver Island in 1917 to parents of Scotch and Irish decent. My mother's maiden name was Boyle. My father's name was Frank Gillespie and my parents came from Ireland. In 1863 my grandfather, John Gillespie, and my grandfather, Hugh Boyle, and a Vesty McDonough were the first three to actually homestead on Beaver Island. They had been on the Island several years prior to 1863. I have 9 children, 5 boys and 4 girls. Six of my children still live on the island.

At 9 years of age I learned to play the Ocarina, harp, mouth organ, and chord on the piano. I can play any instrument, but never followed through on any. I have played at Charlevoix, Beaver Island, and Ludington.



TOM KUERBITZ

BILL & DONNA  
STEYENS



I was born in 1934 in Charlevoix County where we presently live. We have 4 sons. Three are musical and one is a camera bug. Three are married and work with me in my contracting business. My wife, Donna, plays the piano and helps me with our business and is a good wife and mother.

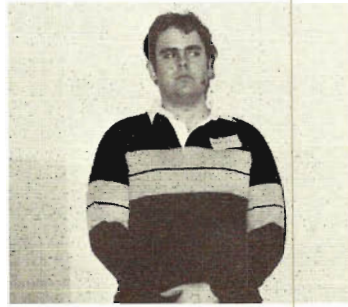
I play guitar, sing and call for square dances. We have been members of OMFA since the organization started.

LOUIS & MARY  
LORANGER



Louis was born in 1918 at Hemlock, Michigan. He and Mary have been married 48 years. They have 4 children, 2 boys and 2 girls. Louis was employed at Saginaw Chevrolet Manufacturing Company for 34 years, retiring in 1980.

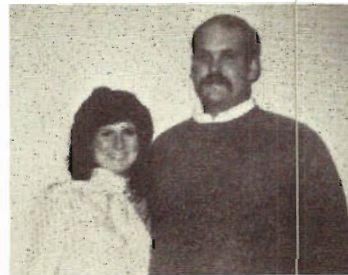
His father was a caller for many years and called at house parties and gatherings. His brother, Ambrose, also called many years all over the state. Louis started to call about 35 years ago. He called at Golden Friendship Club for about 20 years.



DUDLEY STEVENS

I was born in Grand Rapids in 1966 to Bill and Donna Stevens. I have 3 older brothers. I work in hardware repair.

I started playing guitar and fiddle when I was about 14. and play by ear. I have been playing at the Barnard Grange in Charlevoix and at jamborees. I have belonged to OMFA for about 3 years.



RODNEY & KIM STEVENS

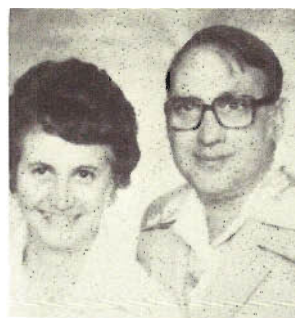
I was born in Grand Rapids in 1962. I was just married this year (1985) and my wife and I live in Charlevoix. I work with my father in his contracting business.

I started playing the piano when I was about 8 years old and have since learned the fiddle, banjo and guitar. I also do some singing and square dance calling. I play at the Barnard Grange in Charlevoix and at OMFA functions. I have belonged to OMFA about 4 years.

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*The only thing you can give a man without hurting him is an opportunity. --Henry Ford*

ARTHUR F.  
KOLE



Arthur was born in 1926 in Alpena, Michigan. He was an engineer on the Great Lakes vessels. He has 3 sons.

His father played violin and mandolin. Arthur is basically self-taught. He took correspondence courses for accordion and violin. He also plays mandolin, guitar, banjo, organ, and harmonica. He makes and repairs violins on a small scale. He has been a member of OMFA since the first year it started.

GEORGE MARSHALL



George was born in Midland, Michigan in 1921. He worked as an electrician at Dow Chemical Company for 37 years. His mother is 86 and still living. He was married in 1941, and he and his wife have 2 daughters and 6 grandchildren.

George started playing cornet in grade school and still plays taps for military funerals. He started playing guitar about 6 years ago. He has had no lessons and plays by ear. He plays for Midland County retirees groups.





LAVERNE & JOYCE  
JACOBS

Both Laverne and Joyce were born in Flint, Michigan in 1916 and 1917. Farming was their main occupation, but Laverne also worked for Morgans Cannery, St. Johns Table Company and Cadillac Malleable Iron Company. Before Joyce was married she was secretary in the office of Dye High School near Flint. After she married Laverne she did clerical work in a creamery in Manton, but mostly she was a helpful farmer's wife. They have 2 sons who live in the state.

When young, Joyce took piano and violin lessons, but nothing came of them. When her husband and she were about 55 they became involved in music. Joyce started lessons on the 5-string banjo and Laverne on guitar. Later Joyce took up the fiddle. They spend their winters at a trailer park which has regular musical performances by a band composed of anyone wanting to play. Besides playing as backup, they play for their own enjoyment and sing mostly southern mountain music.

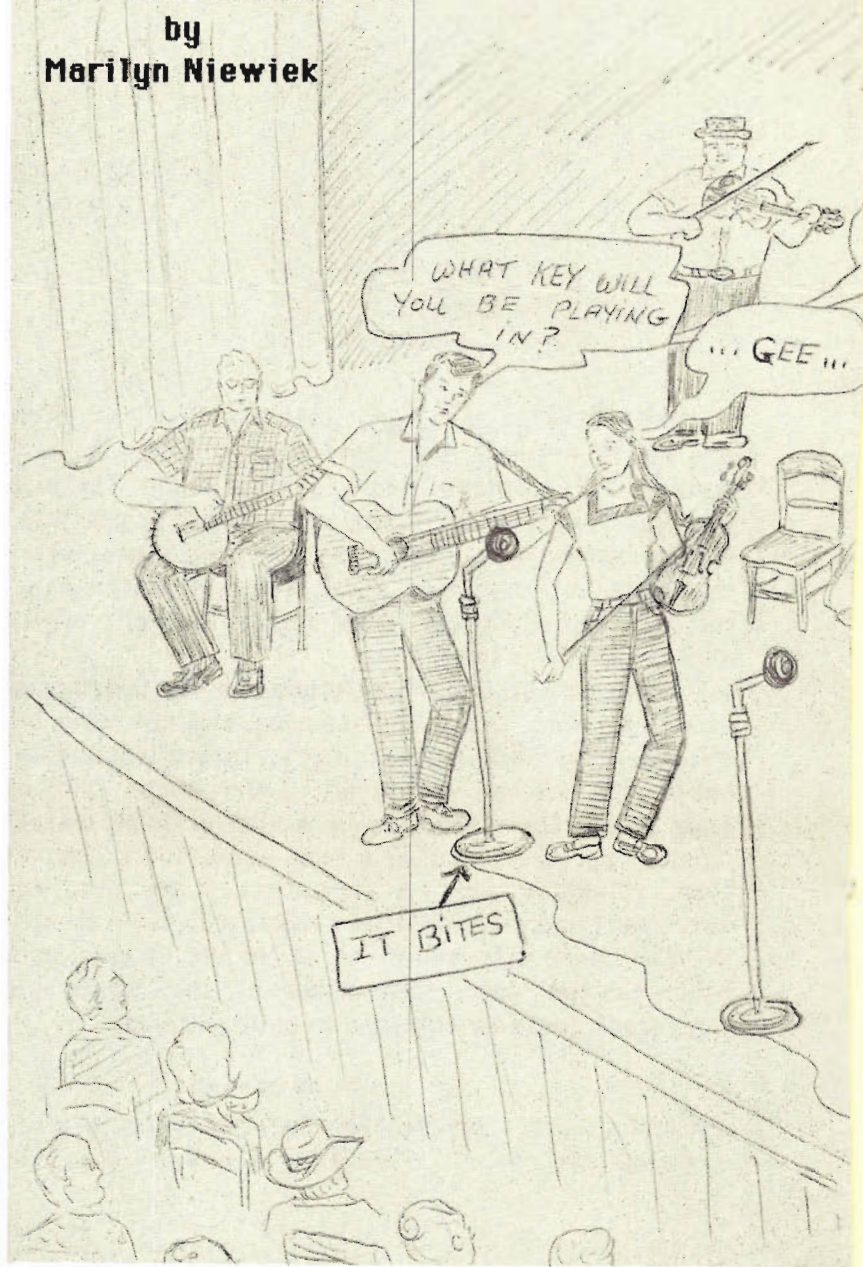
They have attended some of the very first jamborees held in Michigan and wish that some of the music played at the jamborees could be obtained in printed form.

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*Do not insult the mother alligator until after you have  
crossed the river. --Haitian Proverb*

Free-hand Sketch  
by  
Marilyn Niewiek

JULY 30, 1983 - GRANT



MICHIGAN



CHUCK

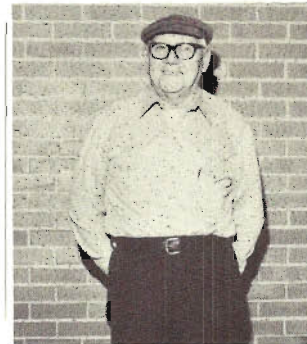
LLOYD & AMY  
KILTS

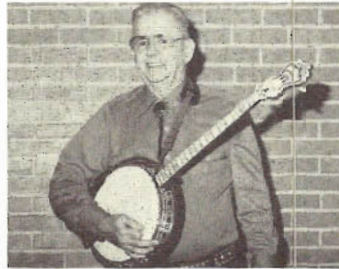


I was born in 1908 at Sand Lake, Michigan. I did farming and some factory work as an occupation.

My father played violin and also 5 brothers played some. When I was 7 years old I started playing the violin by ear by listening to my dad. My sister played a pump organ, my brother the banjo, and I the violin. We used to play for one or two potluck dinners a week, and were lucky if we got fifty cents or a dollar a piece. It was a farm neighborhood and no one had much money. The winters were rough with no cars on the road. We had to walk unless someone picked us up with a team and sleigh. Over the years, I have played at lots of houses and dance halls. I have been an OMFA member for the last 5 years.

EDWARD MCNETT

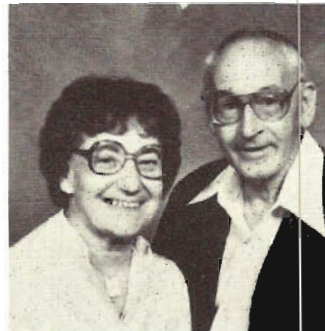




JOSEPH THATCHER

Joseph was born in Midland, Michigan in 1917. He retired from Dow Corning Company. His wife is living and they have 3 daughters and 2 sons.

He started playing the tenor banjo when he was 12. His 2 brothers played the banjo, and he picked it up from them, playing by ear. When he was 17 years old, he started playing a K Banjo for dances at the CCC Camp at Escanaba, Michigan. He played for dances at Belding, Michigan. When he went to war, he took his banjo with him. He has belonged to OMFA about 3 months.



GEORGE & ROSALEEN  
MANN

George was born in Lima, Ohio in 1918. He worked as a truck driver for the Roadway Express Company. He married Rosaleen Murphy in 1941. They have 4 children and 7 grandchildren.

George took violin and bass lessons in school. He has played banjo and guitar since he began as a member of the family band in Trenton, Michigan. His sister, Irene, played violin; sister, Mary, played bass; and brother, John, played the guitar and banjo. His father called square dances in the Detroit area. George has been a member of OMFA for several years.

DONALD & LEONA  
FINCH

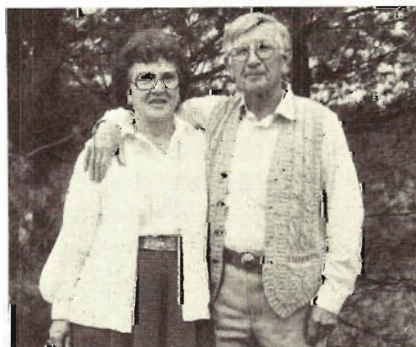


I was born in 1913 at Kent County, Sparta, Michigan. I have worked in auto body repair work since 1938, working at Stegman and Olse Oldsmobile and Row Motor Sales. I owned a body shop in Cedar Springs from 1942 to 1964, and then worked at Ensley Center until I retired in 1975. I married Leona Flynn in 1936. We have 1 daughter and 1 son and 4 grandchildren.

I started playing the tenor banjo by ear and taught myself at age 12. I play with a group of friends at various places in the surrounding area and in Florida during the winter. We call these jam sessions and have lots of fun.

I have been a member of OMFA since 1977.

MR./MRS. DONALD  
MASHUE





OLEVA SMITH

I was born near Grant, Michigan in 1910. I have a son and daughter. Both sing for fun, and my son won top honors on a F.H.A. talent show.

My father was a showman and comedian and ventriloquist, and played violin for house dances. My parents would take us with them. My brother, twin sister and I learned to play mouth organs together--sometimes we watched cattle on a prairie north of Old Rice Lake (now Onion Marsh of Grant). Then my father taught me chords on the piano and I also learned some chords on the guitar. I had no lessons. I played for dances for a little while in Cedar Springs. About 5 years ago I joined the Old Timers Band at Cedar Springs, and we play at McDonalds each Wednesday morning for an hour where we have a nice crowd listening to us. I played dances at Howard City with Lloyd Kilts.

I have been a member of OMFA for about 2 years.



MR./MRS. ROGER  
MARTIN

ROBERT LESLIE &  
ARMINDA EMERSON



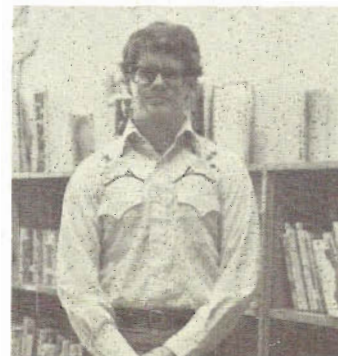
I was born in 1915 at Olivit, Michigan. My wife, Arminda, was born to Hayes and Mable Hyde in 1915 at Nashville, Michigan. I had 2 brothers and my wife had 3 brothers and 1 sister. We had 3 boys and 2 girls.

My occupation was with the Ford people as a salesman. My wife worked with Liebermant of Lansing. We retired in 1980.

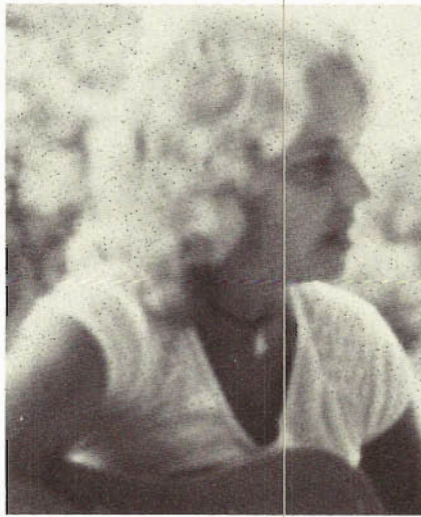
I became interested in music when I was 15 years old and took up the guitar and mandolin on my own. I didn't take lessons and play by ear. I also sing. I have played all over the country for dances and entertainment. I organized my own band and played most of the time around and about southern Michigan.

I belong to OMFA, of which I am proud to be a member.

JEFF LEHIGH



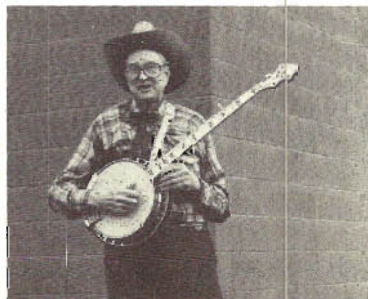




JULIE O'BRIEN

I was born Julianne Simons in Highland Park in 1938. We moved to the North Branch area while I was in grade school and I graduated in 1956.

I have always liked music and dancing. My grandmother encouraged me to sing and play the piano by ear. I married Dale O'Brien in 1957. We have a son and daughter, none of whom are interested in music. In my 20's I taught myself to play chords on an old guitar, but was at a standstill until 1980 when a friend, Don Knox, said, "let's get together and form a group." I have been playing for OMFA and on and off for 4 years. The last 2 years Don has been teaching me to play the fiddle. It's coming slow, but I'm determined.



FRED MALFROID



JORDAN & MARY BUCK

I was born in a logging camp in 1933 at Saranac, Michigan where my father was working at the time. I am the third oldest from a family of 11 children. I worked for the Kent County Road Commission in engineering, with the Grand Trunk Western Railroad as a telegraph operator-agent, and then with the C & O Railroad until I had to take my disability in 1978.

My father, uncle, and aunt used to play at the Community Hall every Saturday night. Dad played the banjo, mandolin, saxophone. At about age 8 years I started on the tenor banjo; my dad showed me the C, F, and G chords and I picked it up from there with further help from dad. There was always music at my home. I play by ear and have taught myself thru music books. From about 1967 thru 1976 I had my own band (The Moonlighters). I play with Frank Mattison at Trufant, at festivals and benefits with the Sinclair family, and also belong to several other old-time music groups. I have been a member of OMFA for 2 years.

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*The man who insists upon seeing with perfect clearness before he decides, never decides. --Henri Frederic Amiel*



J. HOMER RAYBURN

I was born in 1895 at Morrison, Tennessee. My parents lived in and around Manchester and Morrison, Tennessee on farms. My dad was a salesman for International Harvester; he died in 1910. There were 6 boys and 3 girls in our family; 1 brother played the fiddle. I married in 1916 and my wife, Myrtle, and I came to Niles, Michigan in 1919. I came ahead of my wife to find work, so I could send for her. We had a daughter and 3 sons. I worked for 45 years and 3 months as a machine operator for National Standard. My wife and I celebrated our 66th wedding anniversary in September, 1982. Myrtle passed away in December, 1982. We had a good life, but Myrtle was ill a lot and the Lord took her from me.

I started playing fiddle about 1905. A neighbor girl had sent away for a fiddle and after she got it decided she didn't want to play it, so she sold it to my mother, for me, for \$1.50. That's how I acquired my first fiddle. I had a habit of leaving it on the bed after playing and my sister had threatened me about leaving it there. One day she got mad and threw it against the wall and broke it to pieces. That was the end of my first fiddle!

I play by ear and have played for square dances for 40 years in and around Niles and Edwardsburg. Back in the late 20's and 30's the "Tennesseans" got together for house parties and square dances on Saturday nights. I have been a member of OMFA for 5 years and look forward to attending the jamborees.

Two of my sons, Jack and John, are musical. Jack has 2 daughters that inherited his talents. John has a son that is a fine musician and twins who sing.

NICHOLAS & ELIZABETH  
BAILEY



Nick was born in Honor, Michigan in 1906. He and his first wife, Anna, had 4 children. Nick was born into a family of musicians who all played various instruments. When he was a child he used to sneak his uncle's violin out from under the bed where it was kept. He played his first square dance when he was 12 years old.

During the depression, Nick's family picked cherries and saved the money to buy the fine fiddle he played until his death on September 13, 1983.

During Nick's life he worked as a lumberjack, fisherman, and a Great Lakes sailor. He retired in 1970 as a helmsman on the Badger. Nick and his second wife, Elizabeth, lived in Brethren. He was a life-time member of OMFA and Elizabeth is an honorary life-time member.

Nick enjoyed playing at the OMFA jamborees, for square dances with senior citizens in Grand Rapids and for square dances with the Spirit of the Woods Music Association of Manistee County. He picked up tunes for his fiddle in all the times and places he lived.

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*The sweetest of all solitude is when one is alone with music. --John S. Dwight*



WILLIAM & THELMA  
HUFF

I was born in Solon Township, Cedar Springs in 1913. I was a barber for 10 years, then worked for Feddeal Mogul Corporation as a machine shop supervisor for 29 years. During most of those years, I was also a small farmer and pony breeder. My wife, Thelma, is a retired school teacher, and we have been married 49 years. We have 2 sons and 4 grandchildren. Both sons are teachers, one living near Cedar Springs and the other in Allegan.

The first instrument I played was a harmonica when I was 12 years old. At age 14, I bought an old violin from a neighbor boy for 75 cents, which I later found belonged to his brother. Incidentally, I still have it and it is my favorite fiddle. This old fiddle had laid idle for 45 years. My dad was a musician and always encouraged me. In high school, it was the drums, but at the same time I was teaching myself to play the fiddle. I picked up tunes from old fiddlers and listened to them whenever I could. I play by ear. Later I played the fiddle for grange and house dances. I played drums in dance bands more than I played the fiddle. Now I play the fiddle with a group of friends at various places in our area and in Florida in the winter just for fun.

I have been a member of OMFA for about 4 years.

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*The unhppiest man on earth is the one who has nothing to do. --Henry Ford*



## Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 122

Offered by Senators Barcia, Faust, DeGrow, McCollough, Corbin,  
Arthurhultz, Engler and Faxon  
(Representative Alley named as co-sponsor)

### A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION HONORING THE ORIGINAL MICHIGAN FIDDLERS ASSOCIATION

WHEREAS, One of the great traditions of America's past is the image of the people of a small town coming together to celebrate a special occasion by enjoying the music of the fiddler. Since the earliest days of the pioneers, fiddle music was present at weddings, harvest celebrations, and holidays; and

WHEREAS, Though a great deal of American music these days is expressed through "out of phase" electric pickups and synthesizers, the fiddle still maintains its place in our heritage, thanks, in part, to organizations like the Original Michigan Fiddlers Association. This group of men and women devoted to this part of our heritage sponsors jamborees throughout Michigan, enabling people of all ages and backgrounds to participate in the pure fun of this music; and

WHEREAS, The jamborees, including the one scheduled for the Omer community on April 9, 1983, feature local folks sharing their favorite fiddle tunes. It is a common sight at these festive gatherings to see old timers with work-gnarled fingers as well as youngsters perpetuating the tradition of the fiddler through tunes such as "Red Wing", "Arkansas Traveler", or "Red Haired Boy"; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE SENATE (the House of Representatives concurring), That tribute be hereby accorded to the Original Michigan Fiddlers Association; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the officers of the Original Michigan Fiddlers Association as a reflection of our respect for their work in keeping alive a unique part of America's musical heritage.

Adopted by the Senate, March 30, 1983.

Adopted by the House of Representatives, March 30, 1983.

*Thomas S. Husband*  
Clerk of the House of Representatives

*Willie C. Frazier*  
Secretary of the Senate



WAYNE & MARGARET  
DENEEN

We are from Ortonville, Michigan and coordinated jamborees in 1983 and 1984. However unfortunately we received little enthusiasm from the local people, so we decided to give it up so some other city could generate bigger crowds than we had. My sister and brother-in-law, Ruth and Ray Zbieracz from Cheboygan, took over and found people who like the music and love to dance. My brother, Tom McKerverey, is one of the OMFA square dance callers and there are 7 McKerveys who attend the jamborees when possible, and like ourselves enjoy the no smoking and no drinking policy.

I was born in Cheboygan and Wayne was born in Pontiac. When young, Wayne moved to Wolverine and then to Cheboygan. We have been dancers since we were teenagers.

Wayne works for the Waterford Schools and I work for Brandon Schools. He has 26 years there and I have 11 years. When January 1, 1986 comes around, we are playing the tune to our employers, "Take These Jobs and Give Them to Someone Else."

We have met many, many wonderful people at the jamborees and have become very close friends with many of them. Everyone goes to these jamborees and dances for the same reason, to dance and have fun.

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*If you want to be heard -- whisper.*

STUART NIEB



I was born in Niles, Michigan in 1937. I am a residential building contractor and have done this type of work for 26 years. I became interested in music probably before I could talk, as my mother is a good pianist and her father an accomplished violinist who played fiddle music all his life. I have played piano, organ, and accordion for many years, but just recently took up the fiddle. I have not taken lessons, but do read music as well as play by ear. I have never played for dances. The extent of my playing has been for my own "amazement" and jamming with others who play various musical instruments and types of music.

I have 7 brothers and sisters, some of whom are musical and some who cannot carry a tune at all. I have 4 children, all of which play piano and some of them play other instruments as well.

Unfortunately I did not start to play the fiddle soon enough to learn from my grandfather who passed away shortly after I purchased my first violin. He did, however, give me his Stainer Violin, which was given to him on his 12th birthday (1902). It had been used in the New York Symphony, according to him, by its previous owner. I have subsequently become interested in not only playing the instrument, but last winter I built a violin and have since rebuilt, repaired, and refinished several violins for myself and the local music store. I have also been rehairing bows for them. I have been a member of OMFA for several months.





MAURICE JOSEPH  
LAGINESS

I was born in Montreal in 1921. We came to Detroit in 1924. At the age of 8 my mother started me on lessons on the violin. After about a year, I thought everyone was laughing at me carrying this violin, so stopped taking lessons. My folks owned 2 homes, one in Detroit and one in Roberts Landing. They lost the one in Detroit during the depression and sold the other one and bought a farm in in 1934, and I am still on it.

Every chance I could I would go out to the road and sit on the bank and play my mouth organ. One day when I had been helping my dad hoe, a neighbor came by who was an electrical contractor. He asked my dad if he could borrow me for awhile. Pa jokingly said yes, he's no good to me. I spent 27 years working for this contractor and still worked in the electrical business until I retired in 1983.

I went into the service in 1942 and came out in 1945. I got married in 1946 and later divorced in 1953. While I was married I met a man who taught me to play the guitar. My wife didn't like me to play it, so I didn't do much with it.

I had an appendicitis attack and went to the hospital. That is when my cousin, Evelyn Roe, came to the hospital and took me to their place. As soon as I was on my feet I bought a trailer and parked it on my cousin's property. It was then my cousin said, "come and get a good guitar and start playing with us."

My father passed away in 1955, so I took the Roe family out to the farm to live with me. We sure have played for lots of parties at the old farm house. Now I am planning on spending some time in Florida. I have belonged to OMFA for 4 years.

FRED J. SCHULTZ



I was born in Essen, Germany in 1905. My parents and my brother, Eric, who is 6-1/2 years younger came to Detroit in 1914, just before World War I broke out. My father was a tool maker, having learned his trade in Germany. We moved to Imlay City in 1919 on an 80-acre farm. At 14 I learned to milk cows (by hand) and farm with horses.

I also learned to play the fiddle by heart, going to house parties. My mother sent to Sears & Roebuck for my first fiddle in 1920. It cost \$2.50 for the whole outfit. I have several violins now. My favorite was purchased from a pawn shop in Port Huron about 40 years ago.

In 1925 I got a job at Packard Motor Car Company where I worked various jobs and at precision inspection until 1946. Then, I purchased the same 80-acre farm that my folks had and went into the dairy business. In 1932 I married the girl I went to school with. She passed away in 1963. We had 2 daughters, Dorina and Janet. Both are married and live in Bay City. I have 3 grandchildren and 6 great grand children.

I am now 80 years young. I enjoy going to the jamborees and going on short trips.

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*When you meet a man, you judge him by his clothes:  
When you leave, you judge him by his heart.*

*--Russian Proverb*



DON KNOX

I was born in 1933 in the farm house where I still live near North Branch. I retired from General Motors, Buick Division as a maintenance electrician. I am now selling farm machinery for Jensen Equipment at Millington, Michigan.

My grade school teacher in the old Tozer School, a one room country school, let everyone play something in our school band. Between this and house parties when they would get out a couple of fiddles, roll up the rug and swing the piano into position, my musical interest was pretty well charted at an early age. I play guitar, fiddle, mandolin, banjo, bass fiddle, harmonica, and a little piano chording. I play by ear and learned to play pretty much on my own, but with a great deal of help from friends. I have sat in on a lot of good jam sessions.

I became interested in calling also when I started going to the jamborees shortly after they started. I never took any lessons, but it took a long time to work up enough nerve to call. I'm still a novice, but I have called at parties, dances, wedding receptions, etc. My wife tolerates my musical "habit" very well, and in fact, is very supportive of my dedication to music.

I am a member of OMFA.

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*To be positive is to be mistaken at the top of our voice.*

ROBERT &  
ISABELL GILLE



I was born in Moran, Michigan in 1916 and worked on a number of different jobs in St. Ignace, including 17 years with the U.S. Forest Service and about 4 years with the Michigan State Ferries as a dockman and as a maintenance electrician.

In the fall of 1964 I moved to Cadillac and shortly after obtained my Masters and Contractors license as an electrical contractor. I worked this trade until January, 1983 when I retired. My father was a lumberman and politician and my mother was postmaster in Moran for almost 30 years. My wife was an accountant at a CPA firm for 34 years before her retirement in November, 1984. We had 2 children.

I started playing a mouth organ, a ukulele and a saxophone when I was about 10. When I was 12, I got my first guitar from Sears & Roebuck for \$3.75. About this time I also started to sing country and western songs. My parents couldn't get me away from the radio when the W.L.S. barn dance was on the air. In later years, I played over a number of radio stations in the U.S. and Canada. I play by ear, but did study 1 year of saxophone. I learned to read and write music and had copyrights on 8 songs that I had composed both lyrics and music. I started playing for square dances at house parties when I was about 12 and by 17 was playing guitar and mandolin with a dance band. In 1936 I played with the floor show at the Grand Hotel at Mackinac Island and in 1953 played for square dancing in the ball room. I have played for dances in many different states, and belonged to the musicians union for many years. We will be moving to Marfa, Texas and will miss playing with a very fine group of musicians.



GWEN & FLOYD  
FOSBURG

I was raised with old-time music as both my parents played, Dad on the fiddle and Mom on the piano. My folks, Charles and Tillie Sewell of Gaylord, played for a lot of dances years ago. I am the 5th child of 15 children.

When I became a grandmother, I took up the accordion, and my dad, 2 brothers and I used to have jam sessions of our own. Dad and I played by note. I also played in Bob Daniels' band in Fife Lake. So the OMFA is just a continuation of the music I was raised with. I love it.

Floyd was brought up around music. His father played the fiddle, banjo, mouth organ, and piano. His mother played the organ. One uncle played the banjo, one uncle played the fiddle and his aunt played the piano. A cousin played the fiddle and another played the drums. I guess that is why he likes old-time tunes.

Bob and Pearl Daniels told us about the OMFA jamborees, so we went to one. We enjoyed it very much. The people who go to the jamborees are so friendly.

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*Tact is the ability to close your mouth before someone else wants to.*

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*If you say what you think, don't expect to hear only what you like. --Malcolm Forbes*

STEWART & LULU  
CARMICHAEL



Both Lulu and I were born in Chippewa Township, Mecosta County, Michigan. I was born in 1899 and Lulu in 1907. We were married in 1927 and have 6 children. I graduated from Evert High School in 1916 and then studied shorthand, typing, and commercial subjects while attending Ferris Institute for 2 years. I took a civil service exam in Grand Rapids and was waiting to hear the results when I fell victim to pneumonia. It took 3 years to regain my health and to get rid of my cough. Upon recovery I decided to forget about office work and returned to work with my father and mother to their farm. That is how come I stayed on the farm and have resided there ever since. Lulu was a farmer's wife and also worked 14 years at the Wolverine Shoe Company in Big Rapids until she quit work at 62.

Both my parents were born in Canada, but became naturalized citizens. Mother passed away in April, 1949 at the age of 79 and my father passed away in 1951 at the age of 88. I met Lulu when I was playing for a dance, and my first date with her was taking her to a dance.

I first started playing the violin at the age of 7, and also played an old pump organ we had at home. I play by ear. I played for my first dance at a Gleaner Hall in 1912. In those days there were logging bees and get-togethers with a big dance at night, with just a couple of fiddlers. In 1922 I bought a dulcimer and played it with an orchestra for 3 years before getting married. The summer before I was married I played for 94 dances. This was the entertainment at that time. After our marriage I played

the violin and Lulu played the piano, and if a caller couldn't make it, I'd have to call and fiddle at the same time. We played for dances in all the nearby towns until arthritis in her hands forced Lulu to stop playing. Lulu doesn't remember what age she started playing, but it was as soon as she could pump the organ they had in their home. Her father would play with them and wanted the children to learn. Lulu could play by ear, but her dad insisted the children learn to play by note. She also played the violin some in high school, but when we married, it was the piano. One violin was enough!

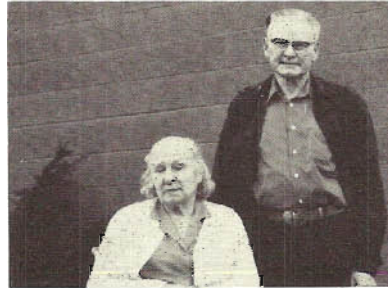
My brother had a violin, even took lessons at Ferris one winter, but eventually gave up on it. I bought it from him and still have it; it is a violin made in Cremona, Italy, made by Joseph Guernarri in 1724. Later I bought a violin made by Bronson of Grand Rapids in the year 1908. I generally play this instead of the older one.

Both Lulu and I are Charter Members of OMFA and attended the very first jamboree organized in 1976. We try to get to as many jamborees as we can.



HOMER & EDNA  
WICKMAN

DORSEY & IOLA MAY(PEG)  
LAWRENCE



I was born in 1909 in No. Carolina. Most of my working years were spent doing body work on cars. The last place I worked was Max Curtis Ford in Lansing where I worked for 24 years. My wife, Iola May (Peg), and I have 3 children.

At one time I was a member of a male quartet and also sang church music. I was about 28 years old when I started on the banjo and then got started on the fiddle as well. I have taken some lessons and do play by ear. Peg plays and in the late 30's and 40's we played in dance bands around the Detroit area, playing modern and old-time music. We quit in the 50's and sold out. About 25 years later I picked up the fiddle and banjo and started playing again, so did Peg. She just got started and then became ill, so I try to play alone. I am a member of OMFA.

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*FIDDLE MUSIC by Mary Coulter  
Now I like to hear the Fiddlers Playing  
And an Hawaiiin Steel Guitar,  
With a mouth harp and an organ,  
Just like echoes from afar.  
I've heard the mocking bird sing,  
But to me the sweetest music  
Comes flowing from those Fiddle strings.*

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*A retentive memory is fine, but the ability to forget is a  
token of true greatness.*





EUGENE & JUNE COVEY

I was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan in 1916 and my wife, June, was born in Saranac, Michigan in 1908. We now live in Ada, Michigan. I am retired from Daverman Associates, Inc. of Grand Rapids where I worked as a project representative. June worked as a secretary for many years. For years we were affiliated with the American Sunday School Union and Youth for Christ in the Grand Rapids area.

As a child I learned to play the violin. My wife also learned to play the violin and piano at an early age, but our combined talents were practically dormant for nearly 40 years, except for occasional playing at home. In the summer of 1984 we found a new friend, Ernest Keena, who was an old-time fiddler and a member of OMFA. He lit the spark of desire in us to start playing again. Now we can't stay away from the jamborees. We also belong to the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) in Grand Rapids and keep busy playing at senior centers, hospitals and places wherever we are called, but love the jamborees!



MR./MRS. JOHN  
TEMPLEARE

MAURICE & JANET  
KIRKPATRICK



I was born in Deckerville, Michigan in 1927 and my wife, Janet, was born in Port Huron in 1944, but raised on a farm in the small town of Yale. We were married on April 13, 1985. I have 4 children, all married and living about the state. Janet has a 17 year old son. My mother is still living -- just had her 80th birthday. My father died in 1974.

I started playing the piano when I was 10 years old. My grandpa played the violin. I always loved that music! I hear these fiddlers today playing the same tunes. My grandpa got me playing and he was a good teacher. He would stop and say to me, "You got to keep in time with me". I think a few times he got upset with my piano chording, so I always remembered that good timing was important. I never took any lessons. I guess I would have been a better musician, but I was always happy with what I could do on my own. If it's in your heart, you'll make it. I've learned to play the guitar with my own teaching and am working on the violin.

Janet has always been interested in music and dancing. As a kid, she used to love to sing with her mom. She took piano lessons when she was 10, but didn't follow thru. Her mom played piano by ear, so she picked up some from her too. She belonged to square dance clubs when she was in high school. She started playing harmonica about 5 years ago and blending in with the back-up crew at the jamborees. She always wanted to play guitar, so took a few lessons and can now chord.

We think the jamborees are fun and relaxing. The DMFA has a wonderful bunch of people who always make us feel welcome.



ISABELL (ISZY)  
MILLER

I am from Marshall, Michigan and was born in 1928. I am employed at the Veterans Administration Medical Center as a Medical Secretary/Stenographer.

I always loved music and started playing the guitar at age 13 by ear. When I was 20 years old I started playing the accordion. Both instruments were self-taught. In 1984 I decided to learn to play the fiddle.

For the past 16 years I worked summers and spend the winters in the south living in the National Forests. I traveled alone for many years, always playing music and looking for others to play with. I am well known for my original crazy hats, which I enjoy and they make others smile. I enjoy doing musical entertainment for the elderly and the handicapped, especially in nursing homes and at the medical facility where I work. I belong to the local dulcimer club as well as OMFA.

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*He who builds according to every man's advice will have a crooked house. --Danish Proverb*

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*You grow up the day you have your first real laugh at yourself.*

ROLAND & FLORENCE  
SQUIRE



Manistee, Michigan was the place of my birth in 1916. For 12 years I worked as a mill operator in the Corduroy Rubber Company in Grand Rapids. The last 25 years I have been a self-employed barber in Fennville. In 1938 I married Florence Rewa, and we have 7 children and 18 grandchildren.

My interest in music began with the gift of a toy violin for Christmas at age 8. I began playing the violin at age 10 and started on the guitar at 18. I have had some lessons and also play by ear. I have been a member of OMFA for 3 years.

MERLE & ALICE  
RABER



We have been dancing to old-time music since the days of the farm grange and 4-H club. It was one of the happy things we shared in common when we first met. Between establishing a career and raising a family of 3 boys and 1 girl, we lost touch with our beloved music. When we were able to return to our hobby, we were pleasantly surprised to find old-time music, especially fiddling, alive and well in the form of the OMFA. We enjoy square dancing, and are especially fond of the schottische.



HUGH & MARGARET  
BROOKS

I was born in Calhoun County near Augusta, Michigan in 1903. I married Margaret Kohn and we have 3 sons, 3 grandchildren, and 2 great grandchildren. One son passed away at age 24 with Leukemia. I worked for the Pennsylvania Railroad 41 years.

When I was 18 years old, I started playing the mandolin, then the fiddle. My neighbor played a fiddle and taught me to read notes and play. I also took a few lessons. I was a member of an orchestra and played at several halls once and sometimes twice a week. I also called at the dances. Some of the members of the orchestra moved, so we had to quit.



AMOS & ISABELLE  
ENGEL

I was born in Kalamazoo and worked for Geo. Pacific for 30 years. Isabelle was born in Greenfield and worked for the Upjohn Company. We have 1 son and 3 grandchildren.

I am a life member for the Kal Rod and Gun Club. We have been square dancing for 27 years and love to hear the fiddlers play. I received a violin from my son as a surprise gift last Christmas, and have been trying to learn to play it by ear. We have met a lot of wonderful people in DMFA.

JOSEPH & ANN  
MATEJCAK



I was born in Lakewood, Ohio in 1913. I worked for 31 years for Phoenix Optical, retiring in 1977. We have 1 daughter and 3 grandchildren.

I started calling for square dances in 1960, after taking lessons for dancing and deciding I liked the calling end of it the best. I now call for 2 senior groups at Midland and Bay City. I never took a lesson, just practiced to records and enjoyed it. I just recently joined OMFA.

RUBY W. DEY



I was born and raised to music and dancing on a farm at Farmington, Michigan in 1920. I have been a mother and housewife, and done a lot of different things on a farm. I have also worked in factories. After almost 17 years, I retired from Double-D Plastics at Greenville. I have 2 children and 7 grandsons, some of whom play horn and drums.

I came from a musical family. Dad played violin, mother played the piano, and an uncle played the drums. They played for dances all over. I started playing the violin when I was about 8 and play mostly by ear. My membership in OMFA dates back 7 or 8 years.



LYNN & RUTH SAVAGE

Antwerp, Ohio was the place of my birth in 1936. I have been a school teacher for 17 years at Tri-County High School. Prior to that I taught in Ohio. My wife, Ruth, and I have 2 sons and 1 daughter.

My dad played guitar and my mother played the piano. I began playing the trumpet and guitar at age 11. I took trumpet lessons and learned to play the guitar by ear. I also call square dances. My wife plays the piano. We have been a member of OMFA for 2 years.



LUKE SAVAGE

I was born in 1973 at Lakeview, Michigan, and at present am a student at the Lakeview Schools. My parents are Lynn and Ruth Savage, and I have a sister and a brother.

I became interested in music at the age of 7, and soon after started playing the violin. I have taken lessons and also play by ear. I have belonged to the OMFA for 2 years.

WILLIS BUEHRER



I am from Marshall, Michigan. I was born in 1919 and raised and lived most of my life in the Mosherville area (near Hillsdale). I retired as a tool and die maker (machinest).

I started playing about 1938, but didn't really pursue it. About 1979 after breaking a leg and having time to practice, I started playing again. In 1984 I began to learn to play the mandolin.

I enjoy OMFA, but don't attend often enough. I would like to find others to jam with in our own local area and across the U.S. as we travel. After retiring I spent last winter in Florida.

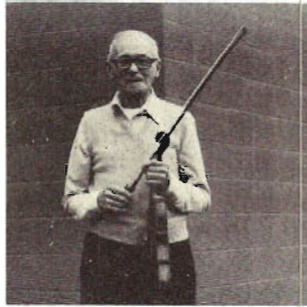
JUDY & KENT BALLIET



I was born in big Rapids, Michigan in 1947. My parents are Mr. & Mrs. Restore Douglass. I work for Michigan Bell Telephone Company as an Estimate Designer, and have been there 19 years. I am married to Kent Balliet and we have 3 children. We live in Grand Rapids.

My dad is a member of OMFA, and I go to play the piano for him and dance. When I was little, my dad played fiddle for parties and at about 10 years of age I started playing piano just by ear. I love to dance, so I attend as many fiddlers' jamborees as possible.





ERNEST V. KEENA

I was born in Ada, Michigan in 1897, and raised on a farm. At the time of World War I, I entered the service. After the war I returned home and went to work. My parents were born in the area and my wife is from Reed City, Michigan. We have 6 boys and 4 daughters.

When I was about 7, I began playing on the mouth organ and then, later on the fiddle and guitar. I found an old fiddle in my grandmother's attic and learned to play on one string--that's all it had on it. As a youngster I took some violin and guitar lessons. I have played at dances, weddings and other activities and functions. I do belong to OMFA and perform as I have opportunity.



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*The greatest thing in life is experience. Even mistakes have value. --Henry Ford*

MARILYN CAROLE &  
JOE NIEWIEK



I was born at Grand Rapids, Michigan in 1942. Upon graduation from Central High School in Grand Rapids, I worked for 9 years at Interstate Motor Freight System doing clerical and secretarial work. I am the daughter of Elmer and Lilly Malfroid of Grand Rapids. I am married to Joe Niewiek.

Ours was a musical family, and I have always been musically inclined. My father is a self-taught fiddler, specializing in jigs and reels. He also plays the guitar and banjo. My mother came to the U.S. from Denmark at the age of 3 and plays the accordion, guitar, fiddle, and banjo. At age 10 I taught myself a couple of tunes on dad's fiddle, and I played at family get-togethers for about a year. Then I put it down until about 2 years ago. I play by ear and have been a member of OMFA about 2 years.

EDYTH & JASPER  
SHEBONGA





LILLIAN MALFROID

Green Bay, Wisconsin was the place of my birth in 1909. I was the only girl in a family of 6 children; 4 of my brothers are still alive. My father was a cabinet maker and died in 1926. My mother lived to a ripe old age of 95. I have worked in various occupations; as a domestic in private homes, waitress work, cooking in a hospital, and assistant teaching in public schools. Also, I have done social work and bookkeeping with a few government agencies, all of this while employed as a domestic in one family.

My first instrument was a handmade fiddle made by my father. Prior to that, old cigar boxes with rubber bands served the purpose. I learned to play by ear and did take some correspondence lessons. I never did any calling myself, but 2 of my brothers called. This was part of our family activity and entertainment in the 1920's. I have played a few times at OMFA jamborees. Two of my brothers, Fred and Gene Malfroid, and also 2 of my nieces, Marilyn Niewiek and Alma Malfroid, also play at OMFA meets.

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*The art of becoming wise is the art of knowing what to overlook. --William James*

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*Who never walks save where he sees man's tracks, makes no discoveries. --Josiah G. Holland*

NILES & NELLIE  
SOWLE



I was born in Decatur, Indiana in 1916. For 38 years I worked for the Kent-Moore organization, making automotive service tools, with 17 of those years on customer service as a machinist. I am married to Nellie Abbey and have a son and a daughter; each has 2 girls.

My activity in music began with a harmonica at the age of 12, and at about 14 I started on the guitar. This was followed by the mandolin, banjo, and hammered dulcimer. I have had no lessons and have just learned to play these instruments by ear. I played in taverns and at dances when in high school, and taught guitar later in the Civilian Conservation Corps. I have been a member of OMFA for about 3 years and also am a member of the Michigan Fiddlers' Association, the Original Dulcimer Players Club, and a charter member of Uncle Carl's Dulcimer Club.

I build musical instruments: hammered dulcimers, mountain dulcimers, and mandolins, and collect stringed instruments of all kinds, the older the better.

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*You can't turn back the clock, but you can wind it up again. --Bonnie Prudden*

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*Too many people use friendship as a drawing account, but forget to make a deposit.*



YARSAL C. & DOROTHY  
FALES

I was born in Leighton Township, Allegan County, Michigan in 1916. I was born on a farm and did farm work for about 12 years after finishing high school. I worked at the Menasha Corporation in Otsego from 1946 until my retirement in 1977, working in production for 4 years and 27 years as a power plant operator. My wife, Dorothy, and I currently live in Delton. I have 5 grown children by my former wife.

Almost everyone in my family played something (grandfather, father, mother, aunts, and uncles), mostly for entertainment. At the age of 11, I started on the fiddle and at 8 began on the piano. I took some lessons on each at Wayland, but mostly I have learned to play by ear. I have played in just about every town in southwest Michigan, mostly at Otsego, Glendale, Allegan, Alamo, and Wayland.

I have been a member of OMFA for 3 years.

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*A critic is someone who knows the way, but can't drive the car.*

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*Music...a universal language, tending to unite and blend and harmonize all who may come within its sphere.*

*--John S. Dwight*

ROBERT & MARGARET  
MURPHY



I was born in 1922 near Grand Ledge, Michigan about 5 miles west of our present home. My parents moved to Pottersville when I was in the third grade. My mother is 87 years old and plays the piano. My father died in 1948. I have no brothers and sisters. I met my wife, Margaret, on a blind date through my cousin who was dating her girlfriend. We went dancing to Nick and his Cornhuskers, and went every Saturday night from that day on. We have 3 children who all are musical. All are married and we have 4 lovely grandchildren.

I am a professional carpenter/builder. I built my first home in Lansing in 1947 and have spent 28 years in this city as a residential building contractor, and another 10 years working as a construction superintendent on commercial and institutional buildings.

I started playing violin at age 7. A man from the Sutherland Music School, going door to door, knocked at my parents door and explained their program. Mother turned to me and asked if I would like to play a violin like my grandfather. I answered yes, and thus the beginning. What I believe, however, really sowed the seed was the playing and singing that took place when the families got together at grandpa and grandma's home. Grandma on the pump organ or piano and grandpa on the fiddle, and my uncle on the guitar or cornet. I started taking violin lessons in 1929. It was a big bargain -- something like 20 lessons at a dollar each and you got the violin, bow, and cardboard case to keep. I had several teachers after that and also attended the School of Music at Michigan State for a short time before going into the Army Air Force, World War II.

During my growing up years, I spent many hours sitting beside the radio playing along with the dance orchestras and the string bands on the Grand Ole Opry, etc. I played my first square dance at the Masonic Hall in Potteryville in 1936. I had a 5-piece orchestra and played for dance clubs and other engagements. I played with other well known groups and bands, on the radio station WKAR, some fairs in Michigan and Ohio where I had the opportunity to play with some of the WLS National Barn Dance personalities--Patsy Montana, Lulabelle & Scotty, Red Foley, etc. Their fiddler wasn't able to be there, so they asked me to play with them -- quite a thrill for a young man.

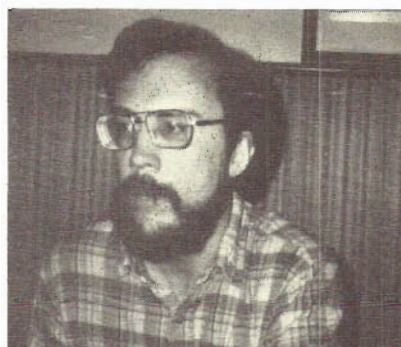
In 1948 I was contacted by a representative for Patsy Montana to see if I would be interested in playing for her. By then I was married and building houses in Lansing, plus enrolled in building contractor and architectural courses, and was no longer interested in being a career musician. From 1947 to 1977 I hardly touched the violin, except for playing in church once or twice a year.

I first attended the fiddlers jamborees at Webberville in 1977 and have been involved with OMFA ever since. That was jamboree #5 for the organization, and 39 musicians took part, including 22 fiddlers. I was appointed a director in June, 1981 and served as secretary from 1982 to May, 1985.

Margaret and I have been learning to play the hammer dulcimer and bought one 4 years ago. Last winter I built one for myself, so we could play together. Margaret likes to play harmony and I play the melody, which makes for a lot of fun.

Often when I pick up the violin, I pause and give thanks for the gift of music, "the universal language", for parents who gave of themselves so I could have lessons; for the fellow in some other land approximately 200 years ago who labored to make violins; and for my music teachers. Today I find great pleasure in playing the old songs and hymns with a group of musicians, to an audience of smiling faces who come to enjoy another journey down the memory lane of melodies. Thanks to our OMFA for putting music back into our lives.

PAUL GIFFORD



I'm almost 35 and have lived in the Detroit area all my life. My father was a professional pianist and flutist and music teacher. My mother plays the violin. I had some piano lessons when I was about 7 and 8, then pretty much gave that up. I took up the French Horn at 9 and played that till 17, with lessons most of that time. My interest in old-time music began when I was 17. My father was a very well educated musician, having studied at the Juilliard Conservatory and at the University of Michigan. His grandfather was a wheelwright and farmer who also played a fiddle he had made himself and, in the late 1850's worked in a local factory which produced a large number of dulcimers. His mother was the local piano teacher in Sherman.

My father was always interested in the dulcimer. The dulcimer was very common in that area at one time. When I was growing up I had little awareness of old-time music, like most other suburban kids. I'd heard about it, and the dulcimer, from my dad but never thought much more about it. In 1968, when I was 17, we went to my uncle's house and he brought the dulcimer out of a closet. My father tuned it up and they started messing with it. He was going to make one and borrow my uncle's to use as a model. Within an hour I figured out "The Irish Washerwoman" and it was like magic. The dulcimer opened up a new world to me. I wanted to learn more tunes. We had an old copy of 1000 Fiddle Tunes around the house and my father went through and checked the ones he remembered. I learned all of these by note. I became aware that there were a few dulcimer players in Michigan and my pal and I began to search them out.



I started to play the fiddle in 1971, by ear. We formed a group and began to play and get paid for performing. We were pretty mobile at that time, and began attending folk festivals and contests in other states. We wanted something to happen in Michigan and helped in planting the seed, organizing and beginning the first jamborees in Michigan.

From 1981 through 1984 I was a student at the University of Michigan, where I got a history degree and a library science degree. As usual I played the dulcimer at the Murray Hotel at Mackinaw during the summers. These activities kept me very busy and poorer than ever. As a result I have been to very few jamborees since the members have been running OMFA. I am looking for work now and hope to get a job within the state. If I am successful, I hope to start attending them again.

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"OLDTIME MUSIC, HOW TO UNDERSTAND IT" By Kelley Kirksey

*There are many definitions for the difference between Oldtime Fiddling and Violin Music. For instance, "A violinist carries his instrument in a case and a Fiddler carries his in a flour sack." Which does not necessarily hold true. To make it simple as possible, Classical Violin playing and old-time fiddling are two different branches of musical expressions. Each has an advanced technique unique to itself. A good Fiddler is a great artist, as is a good violinist. A Concert Violinist often makes a dismal flop when they try to produce Oldtime fiddling; and on the other hand an excellent fiddler sounds like the poorest beginner when he tries Classical Music.*

*The authentic Oldtime Fiddler is not reproducing the music of our forefathers, he is playing the actual music itself. Oldtime Fiddling comes down to us by ear, alive.*

LAURIE & ANNA  
KIVIRANTA



I was born in 1904 and my wife, Anna, was born in 1911, and we now live in L'Anse, Michigan. We have 1 daughter and 5 grandchildren. We are retired honorary members of DMFA.

Ever since I was a kid and hearing my next door neighbor and his son play violin together, I considered this to be the sweetest sound this side of heaven.

In 1934 I established my own business called the L-K Painting Service doing general painting, truck lettering, and signs that kept me too busy to even think about studying violin. After working 40 years, I retired in 1974 and then and there I purchased a violin which happened to be a copy of the famous "Antonio Stradivari". Then the practicing started. For 2 years I practiced in earnest. Then in 1976 I made my first debut for a group of 75 senior citizens. In 1977 I participated at the first Aura jamboree directed by Bob and Jane. I remember that I played over 20 numbers at this jamboree. I do not read music and mostly played Scandinavian and Finnish music. In 1977 I entered the Senior Citizens Talent Contest at the U.P. State Fair in Escanaba. I did this for 3 more years and came out as follows: 1977 - 7th; 1978 - 2nd; 1979 - 3rd; 1980 - 5th.

In 1979 I formed a trio group which included a very talented and charming accordionist, a guitarist, fiddler and vocalist. We named the group "Kiviranta Trio". For 6 years we entertained at nursing homes, country fairs, local radios, and benefits.

Since I turned 80 on June 15, 1984, I have been unable to play the violin anymore which leaves me very sad. We sure enjoy this our musical association. Only happy memories remain.



SYLVESTER & DOROTHY  
SHONER

Sylvester was born in Indiana Harbor, Indiana in 1916 and Dorothy in Dearborn, Michigan in 1919. Sylvester is a retired factory worker and Dorothy a retired housewife. They have a family of 4 sons and 4 daughters, 17 grandchildren, and 5 great grandchildren. Neither play an instrument, but do enjoy listening and dancing to the music. They have been attending the jamborees since 1976.



RITA SHONER

She was born in Brighton, Michigan in 1952. Rita works at Workskills at Brighton. She comes to the jamborees with her parents and enjoys the music and loves to dance.

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*Laughter is the song of the angels.*

RAY & RUTH  
ZBIERACZ



We were both born and raised in Cheboygan and have 1 daughter and 3 grandchildren.

Ray has worked 33 years for Detroit Tape and Tool. Ruth has been employed for 20 years with Procter & Gamble Paper Company. Neither one of us plays an instrument. We do like to go to the jamborees and listen to the music, dance and fellowship with the people.

LEWIS & FRAN SMITH



I was born in 1913. My father was a blacksmith who shod a team of horses for his fiddle and then gave it to me when I was 12 years old. My grandfather played the fiddle, my dad played the fiddle and banjo, and my mother played the organ and banjo. My brother played the banjo and my daughter played the violin in the Battle Creek Symphony. I took lessons for awhile, but I prefer playing by ear because I can put my feelings in it better. When I used to play for dances I was within about a 30 mile radius of Union City.

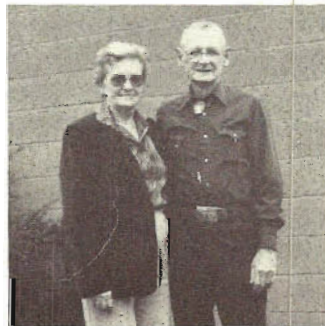
I worked as a tool and die maker at American Stamping Company for 38-1/2 years before retiring to Hastings about 6 years ago. I joined OMFA and really enjoy playing.



JAMES A & JOANNE  
PARR

I was born in 1944 in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. I have been playing the guitar since I was 14 and the fiddle since I was 17. I have been playing music professionally now for the past 11 years and have my own band. The name of the band is Moody Blue Country. Both my wife and I write our own music which has been sent to Nashville for publication.

I was married to Joanne Jones in 1964. She has been playing the guitar for about 10 years. Her father played the Hawaiian guitar and her mother likes to listen to the kids play. Joanne was born in the Sault in 1947. We have 6 children, 2 boys and 4 girls who like to play and are still learning.

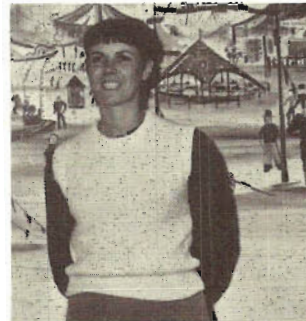


BERNARD A. & CRYSTAL  
LIVINGSTON

I was born at Otsego, Michigan in 1917 and have been engaged in farming. We are the parents of 4 children.

I became interested in calling about 12 years ago and received encouragement and support from my uncle, Ray Livingston. I have called at various locations in the area. I have been a member of OMFA for 4 years.

DEBRA & CRAIG  
STRICKLAND



My name is Debra (Ecker) Strickland. My husband's name is Craig Crandall Strickland. I was born in Au Gres, Michigan in 1956 to Levi and Edeline Ecker of Whitmore, Michigan.

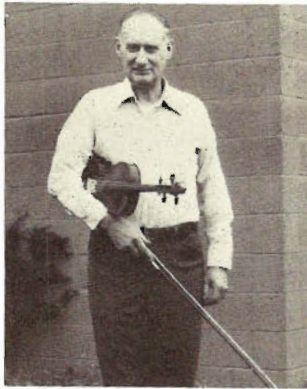
My husband and I own a used automobile dealership which bears my husband's middle name. Crandall Enterprises is located in Pontiac, Michigan.

I was born to a family of 12 living brothers and sisters. My father is very musically inclined and is a long time member of OMFA. I have always been interested in music and country style dancing. I took choir for 4 years in school. I clog at every available opportunity and love to square dance. In fact, I love to dance!!! I have written, composed and performed several gospel songs, many of which have been copywritten. I have performed live in many churches in the metro Detroit area. I have also performed numerous times on television, both live and video taped. In August, 1985 I was invited by an agent for Roy Acuff to go to Nashville for an audition.

My husband and I have made many friends in the music industry. I have done many of my songs in professional studios in the Detroit area. We live happily in Waterford Township which is located in Oakland County, and have been happily married for 11 years. God and life has been very, very good to us.

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*When you have troubles, remember the teakettle. It may be up to its neck in hot water, but it continues to sing.*



LAWRENCE (TED) F. &  
OPAL MILLER

I was born in Marshall, Michigan in 1919. My violin was given to me by my grandfather when I was 8 years old. As a young man I played for dances, programs, and house parties with my brother and sister and me on the violin.

I married Opal in 1939 who was also from Marshall. We have 4 sons and 2 daughters. As farming and a tool grinder at Eaton, Town and Yale took up all my time, the violin was put out to pasture, coming to life just a few years ago with the help of a long time friend, Lawrence Jeffery. We became interested in OMFA and now attend whenever possible.

I retired in 1980 and after suffering a heart attack and several surgeries am now, thanks to God, hale and hearty. I have many hobbies, including piano playing, violin, hunting, fishing and life in general.

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*Don't expect anything original from an echo.*

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*The most solid stone in the structure is the lowest one in the foundation. --Kahlil Gibran*

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*Problems are the price of progress. Don't bring me anything but trouble. --Charles F. Kettering*

CLAYTON (MOUNTAIN)  
& JUNE MAULE



I was born in 1921 at Greenville, Michigan. My occupation has been farming and factory work. I have a wife, June, and a son, John, who has a band. I had a son who also played bass.

I started playing instruments at the age of seven, and play the violin, bass, guitar, mandolin, banjo, and steel guitar. I play by ear and have played all over the country. I have played on the radio and have backed several of the Opry stars. I began calling at the age of 17. I have been an OMFA member for 2 years.

OREN WAYNE &  
ILA MAE LANTZ



I was born in Grant Township, Mecosta County, Michigan. My occupation has been that of a journeyman welder with Pontiac Motors, working on high pressure pipe steam lines. My wife, Ila Mae, and I have a son, Richard, and a daughter, Patricia.

My interest in music began with the old pump organ, and at age 16 I began playing the violin, and at 18 I started on the tenor banjo. I have taken lessons from the U.S. School of Music, and during the 30's was a member of a dance band. I have been a member of OMFA for 7 years.





RESTORE A. & FRED A  
DOUGLASS

1907 was the year of my birth near Pittsburgh, Pa., being one of a family of 5 children. My father worked as a lumberman in the woods and also as a salesman. In 1939 I married Freda Foss. We have 3 girls, all married, and a granddaughter and grandson.

I started to play the violin at age 12. A friend of my dad who played the violin and taught me how visited us. Before he left for home, I could play 3 tunes. At age 17 I played in a hall, and after that, at a lot of house parties and various other halls. I play by ear. I have been an OMFA member for 3 years.



HAROLD BEARUP

I was born in Petoskey, Michigan in 1906. My employment has been that of a Fuller Brush man, truck driver, radio and TV engineer, and various other assorted jobs. My father was born in N. Y. state and was a professional trumpet player and a carpenter by trade. My mother was born in Canada.

In going to dances in and around Petoskey, I became interested in calling and started calling square dances about 1918. I have been a member of OMFA for about 3 years.

TESS RETELL



I was born in Crystall City, Missouri. I came to Michigan almost 50 years ago. I had 3 sons. My husband and I son are no longer living.

I moved to Harrison 8 years ago where I met Margaret Ernst who plays piano for OMFA. With Margaret and Ruth Neaves (Alley Cat), I started to go to the square dances. About 5 years ago at the Harrison Senior Center, it was suggested that we start square dancing. Ruth Neaves started calling and I volunteered to help out. Until then I had never called square dances. I learned them all from other OMFA callers. I just started calling this year (1985) for the OMFA jamborees.

I am not a musician and have no musical background. I just enjoy old time fiddling and square dancing. I am not an old time anything, except in age.

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RIGHT HAND UP, LEFT LADY UNDER

*Head couple leads to right, circles 4,*

*Leaves that lady*

*Leads to the next, circles 3, takes that lady*

*Leads to the next, circle 4, leaves that lady*

*Gentleman return to place*

*Right hand up, left lady under*

*Join hands, forward and back 6*

*Right hand up, left lady under*

*Balance and swing partners to place*



RAY SHEPHERD

I was born in Royalton, Kentucky in 1914. My folks moved to Ohio near the Ohio River near Jackson County when I was 3 years old. We lived there 12 years and then in 1932 moved to Hardin County near Kenton, Ohio. I came from a large family of 13 children. My father was a school teacher, a merchant and farmer.

I have worked at Ford Motor Company at Willow Run and almost 33 years at Tecumseh Products.

I play by note and ear. I took lessons when I was in my teens for 2 years. I became interested in music when I was 5 years old, as both my parents played. Mother played the organ and father played the violin, five-string banjo, piano, and bass. My first violin was a half size. I sold garden seed to get it. At the beginning my father would hold the violin and I would draw the bow. I would watch where he placed his fingers to play the tunes. One day Dick, my little brother, busted the violin with a hammer. We worked long hours and hard on the farm, so I had very little time to play music. At the noon hour I would grab a fiddle or banjo and try to imitate songs I heard on records or from songs that other people played.

I was playing for square dances at 14 and I played on WOW, Fort Wayne, Indiana at 17. Three years later I moved to Hanson, Idaho where I played Saturday nights on KTFI, Twin Falls. Two of my brothers joined me in 1946 as the Shepherd Brothers at WABJ, Adrain, Michigan. In 1948, I played bass fiddle with a 16-piece modern dance band from Tecumseh Products for 2 years. Since then, I have done a lot of studying at home. I am a member of OMFA.

WILLIAM S. ERNST



I was born in St. Johns, Michigan in 1919.

I was made familiar with fiddle music and square dance calling at an early age. My dad made 24 fiddles between 1932-33. I was raised by my aunt and uncle because my mother passed away when I was only 2-1/2 years old. My uncle was a fine old-time fiddler. When I was 13, my uncle bought me a tenor banjo from Sears and Roebuck. With a little help from an older brother, I learned the chords and backed up my uncle at small local square dances.

This was interrupted when World War II came along. I enlisted and drifted away from banjo and guitar until about 30 years ago. I bought a Gibson tenor banjo and had the Gibson Company modify it to a five-string in 1968. Later I bought a fiddle and learned how to play a few hoedowns and waltzes.

I joined OMFA a few years back and enjoy the jamborees.

I have acquired first, second, and third places at old-time fiddlers contests and first and third place in banjo contests. I enjoy trying to play both instruments and see a little, slow improvement from year to year.

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*The sweetest music isn't oratorios, but in kind words.*  
--Ralph Waldo Emerson

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*A smooth tongue often covers sharp teeth.*



WALTER L. MESKE

I was born in Port Hope, Michigan in 1903. I was a rural mail carrier for 42 years, and am now retired. I have 2 daughters living in Florida and 1 son living in Seattle.

When I was 6 years old, for Christmas I received a little tin fiddle which I learned to play on. Later I progressed from a three quarter size to a full size. There were many house parties at that time, and I did play for dances at these parties. In the late twenties, we organized a town band, so I did not do any fiddle playing for about 30 years. While in the band, I filled in where I was needed and did play trombone, baritone, bass and saxophone. I never had any music lessons, but later I was the director of the band.

When OMFA was organized, I got started playing the fiddle again. I have been a member of OMFA for 11 years and try to attend all the jamborees that are close to home.

I have been a contestant in the old time fiddlers contest in Canada, and did participate at Shelburne for 7 years. I am only an amateur, but enjoy playing at the jamborees.

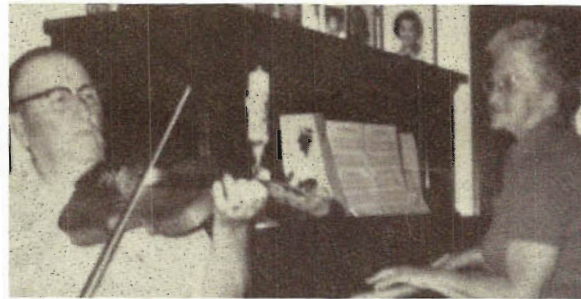
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*Patience and time do more than strength and passion.*  
--Jean De LaFontaine

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*When luck enters, give her a seat.* --Jewish Proverb

FOREST & ASEL  
WARREN



Both my wife and I were born in Milan, Missouri. I was born in 1906 and she in 1907 in the Kitchen vicinity (known as kitcheness by the locals). This was the extreme north and central part of northern Missouri. We were married and came to Michigan in 1929. We have taught school and worked in industry for TRW and retired from this company.

When Asel was a child, her grandpa Yardley played the fiddle and her grandma the parlor organ. Her father played a fiddle, his 4 sisters the organ, and 1 brother the fiddle. On winter nights when there was nothing to do, they would have a dance in the barn loft and put hay around the sides to sit on. Neighbors would come in and have a dance and maybe just music with lots of fun. They would probably get together every week. She took piano lessons, but learned a lot from her aunts.

Back home in Missouri, I started young at guitar picking, fiddling and chording on the parlor organ. A person back there was considered "pretty dumb if they couldn't play something and small potatoes and few in the hill" if they couldn't. I took violin lessons while in school, but always preferred to play by ear. We preferred to cut down on more than one string. When a fiddler got to playing only on one string at a dance, we knew he had had it, and we took him out and put in someone that was sober. Most everyone could fiddle. My mother played the guitar and uncle and aunts played and called for dances. I learned to call from attending many dances in the vicinity.

Our daughter and family are all musicians. Janet took music in school and college and now teaches music.

I was one of the charter members of OMFA. Even though we can't get to all the jamborees, our hearts are there.



MARGARETT ERNST

I am Margarett Woodruff Ernst, and was born in St. Johns, Michigan in 1915. I am now a resident of Harrison.

As a child I pumped Grandma Woodruff's old organ until I almost drove the folks wild, so music lessons were arranged. Mother did dressmaking for my lessons (4 years). Just before my twelfth birthday, I played the last 2 weeks of silent movies at our movie house and my first dance. Six of us teenagers formed a band called the "Night Hawks". I had played my way through school from the time I was in the fifth grade, doing programs, gym classes, chapel, school dances, etc. In high school I was a member of a 45-piece orchestra.

I married at 17, but was in and out of bands and finally worked with an excellent tap teacher. I stayed with one teacher or other for the next 18 years (tap, baton, ballet, ballroom dancing, and aerobatics). Fourteen years of marriage and I was on my own with four children to support. After 1948, I was with one dance band or another. In fact, 2 years while working in the office I made more money at the keyboard than in the office spending 44 hours a week at the piano. Some of these hours were with the service clubs -- Lions Club for 15 years, Rotary Club for 12 years, and Exchange Club for 12 years. I believe I am the only pianist that ever served all three of St. Johns Service Clubs at the same time. The grange dances finally ceased, so to the bars I went. In 1960 I became interested in the electronic organ and purchased my first in 1961. I had no formal lessons -- just me.

I am presently involved with the Harrison Nutrition Center, Memory Lane Band, and OMFA; and I'm suppose to be retired!

I have 17 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren.

AARRE K. LAHTI



I was born in Helsinki, Finland in 1908. Finland was a country where it was assumed that you would play a violin. Two years after my father had arrived in the United States he arranged passage for mother and me on the Titanic. Since mother was unable to sell her belongings in time, we missed this opportunity.

I started violin lessons at nine. At eleven my parents purchased a good violin which I still have and play. Had I had competent teachers and ones who understood the workings of a violin as a tool, I may not have discontinued my efforts.

I became enamored with the Gypsy violin playing during the fifty years when I did not touch the violin. It was because of their playing that three years before retirement I had my violin repaired and started lessons again. When I took my violin for repairs, the violin maker's first comment was, "Your finger board has been dropping". This was the main reason why I discontinued playing the violin. The strings cut my fingers and when the bridge was cut down the tone was gone.

I play mostly by ear, although I've made some progress in reading music. I do not consider a piece "mine" until I can play it without music.

I am a graduate of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and The University of Michigan. At Michigan I taught art and design.

You might suspect from my love for Gypsy violins that I prefer playing music which is quite sentimental and "shmaltzy". There are times when I regret my 50 year divorce from music. On the other hand, by now it might have become a chore. Now it is a challenge. Someone will say, "You've improved since last year". Should I take this as a compliment or a relief to their ears?





RAYMOND & ALICE  
KAISER

I was born in 1923 in Alpena, Michigan. This year (1985) I retired from Besser Company of Alpena after working 35 years as an electrician and electrical supervisor.

I am one of ten children born to John and Edna Kaiser. Seven of us are still living. My father managed the Henry Fruit Farm in Wilson Township, Alpena County, for 35 years. Both my parents are now deceased.

My wife, Alice, and I have 2 children and 4 grandchildren.

My older brother bought a guitar through the Montgomery Ward mail order catalog back in 1934. That was the beginning. It has only been since 1970 that I began a serious effort to learn to play. I did not take lessons, nor do I read music.

I have been a member of DMFA for approximately 5 years.

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HEAD COUPLE ROUND OUTSIDE OF THE SET

*Head couple round outside of the set  
And swing in the center like Old Saint Nick.  
And down the center and cast off six  
Swing in the center as you did before  
And up and down center and cast off four  
Swing in the center as you used to do  
And up and down center and cast off two  
Allemande left, grand right and left.*

HELEN & BUTCH  
GROSS



Those of us who knew her loved her and will never forget her.

Helen was born in 1902 and raised in Saline, Michigan and lived her whole life in that community. In fact, she never left her home even after she got married. She lived in the same house all her life. She was an only child and her parents owned a farm. She got her love for music from her father who was a fiddler. When Helen was 9 years old, she started going to house dances with her father. At that time she played the bass. They used to tease her about carrying her "dog house" around with her. Her mother wanted her to properly learn music, so Helen took music lessons and used to walk from the farm to town and back to take her lessons. She could play practically any instrument (piano, mandolin, banjo, uke), but her first love was the fiddle. She started playing for dances before she was out of high school. When she began teaching school, she still played for dances on the weekends.

When she got out of high school, she went on to normal school to become a teacher. She used to take the street car to Ypsilanti to the college where she earned a life certificate. She began teaching in 1922. At that time she got the mere sum of \$65 a month and had to do everything at the school (build the fire, clean the building, clear the snow). During her career, she taught every grade up through the 8th and was a dedicated, excellent teacher who demanded discipline. She hung a stick on the wall in her room, but never had to use it. Her pupils loved and respected her and used to come back and visit her long after they left as students. She taught 40 years in the communities near her home. She quit teaching in 1962 and even then continued to substitute for awhile.

In 1931 she married Rudolph (Butch) Gross who was also a native of that area. When they married, he moved to the family farm with Helen and her parents. Helen's father wasn't well and Butch was a great help in running the farm. Her father died 4 years later and it was only 4-5 years later that her mother died. Since Helen's death in 1983, Butch still lives at the farm home, but much of the land has been sold or rented and long since made into a subdivision. They never had any children of their own, but do have a nice family who lives next to them which they have adopted as theirs and who includes Butch as part of their own family.

Helen left her mark in the community and in the hearts of the people she came in contact.



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*Children have more need of models than critics*

ALFRED & SHIRLEY  
LIETZ



I was born at Mt. Clemens, Michigan in 1915. My wife, Shirley, also was born in Mt. Clemens, and that city was home for both of us until we moved to Tawas area in June of 1963.

After graduation I worked in a factory while attending various college and night school classes. My occupation for the next 45 years was an accountant, except for the years I spent in the Air Corps during World War II. For 20 years I was the controller and office manager for a department store and for over 22 years I was the accountant and office manager for a wholesale food distributor, where I retired in 1980.

Shirley and I were married in 1947. We have 4 children, 3 sons and a daughter, all married. We have 5 grandchildren. We are very close-knit and have always done things together. While our children were growing up, we spent most of our vacations and many weekends finishing off "our place" up north, which now has become our home. Music has always been a part of our family life; each of us can play some instrument, albeit strictly for personal enjoyment. Shirley has had no musical training, except for her participation in the high school glee club and singing in the church choir, but she has a real interest in music and does spend time on our electronic organ and her autoharp.

I began playing the violin at the age of 9 when I received a violin for Christmas. At that time I participated in a group class in grade school, and this was followed by several years of lessons from local violin instructors. The Mt. Clemens school system had a great music program and I was thrilled with the opportunity to play in the school orchestra. In my senior year I was the concert master of the orchestra and had the opportunity

to perform at various civic and church functions. This music was essentially in the classical field, but I have always enjoyed fiddlin old-time tunes for the fun of it.

In 1976 we became interested in the Mountain Dulcimer and the hammered dulcimer. Shirley had been working on some craft items and I have always been interested in working with woods, so we decided to build a Mountain Dulcimer. It turned out pretty good; I did most of the woodworking and Shirley did the sanding and finishing. We have since constructed 4 additional Mountain Dulcimers and a hammered dulcimer. We have been very active in attending various dulcimer festivals, especially in Ohio and nearby states as well as in Michigan. It was while attending these events that the jam sessions aroused my interest in getting out the fiddle again, this time in the league of old-time and country music.

It was in 1981 that we heard about the Original Michigan Fiddlers' Association and became members. I began practicing and memorizing (something I had never done before) and played my first tunes at the jamboree at Omer in 1982. Since that time, we have attended many jamborees and gatherings. In addition to the fiddle, I do play the viola, mandolin, Mountain and hammered dulcimers, and various recorders.

Our attendance and participation at these various functions has resulted in our meeting some of the nicest people with a common interest. We have established many friendships which have been most satisfying and rewarding. Lord willing, we hope to continue to be active in this most enjoyable sort of recreation, entertainment and fellowship.

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*It is the artist's business to create sunshine when the sun fails. --Romain Rolland*

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*Worry is the most wasteful thing in the world.  
--Henry Ford*

ELMER S. JUNKER



My earliest exposure to square dancing was when I was about 15 years old. One of my aunts taught me to waltz so I could take part in a Waltz Quadrille with family and relatives in our large front room. Later I learned other square and round dances and went to dances with my parents and relatives. I also learned more square and round dances in the public schools at Milwaukee, where we even made our own costumes and put on exhibitions.

I did not do much calling after I went into the service until I returned. I went to school at the University of Wisconsin, but whenever I returned home, I went square dancing. It was there I met and courted my wife.

The pattern of these dances was 3 square dances in a set with round dances between them. Among the dances were the Gavotte, Laces and Graces, Blackhawk Waltz, Jessie Polka, Schottische, Polka, Vasouviene, Circle Two-step, Mexican Hat Dance, Patty Cake Polka, Virginia reel and Soldier's Joy.

While attending the University I called and taught square dancing for the Recreation Department of the City of Madison. After I graduated from college, I taught for 3 years in a small town in Wisconsin and occasionally called dances, but continued to dance whenever I came home to Milwaukee. Later when we moved to New Jersey, I was busy calling one or more dances a week. I am more of a patter caller than a singing caller.

In 1964 we moved to Big Rapids and met people who liked to dance as much as we did. We have gone to various dances with them and the old-time fiddlers jamborees. I have not done much calling except on special occasions, as I would rather dance with my wife.



MILFORD & ELIZABETH  
DUNN

My dad had an ear for music and purchased a violin. I tried to play when I was about 7 years old. My dad loved music and I remember hearing him say that he thought the violin made the nicest music of all instruments. My father practiced on it when he had time, but didn't have much time for that. My brother and I took a few lessons from a teacher, but were always so busy on the farm that we didn't continue lessons. I would try and play now and then, and learned to play for some local dances and a couple of times in church. It was there where I met my wife.

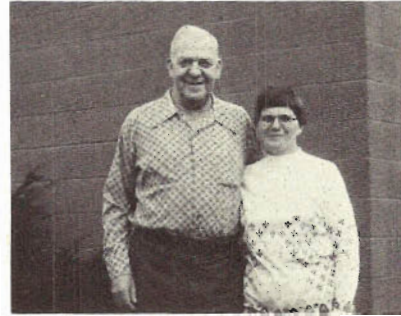
In 1937 Elizabeth and I were married. I didn't have much time to play until the children were older and began asking me to play. I can see now that it was probably a mistake not to have spent time on the fiddle.

One day about 7 years ago, my youngest brother said there was a dulcimer program to be held at the Albion Public Library. I usually worked, but for some reason got ready and went. It was nice music, and I had never heard a dulcimer. After the program they held a jam session and a dance. There was a violin on the piano and no one was playing it. I picked it up and played along with the band. They asked me to join them and play with them through the winter.

I attended my first fiddle jamboree at Cassopolis. I was reluctant to go, but went along with my brother and wife. After a great deal of encouraging, I finally signed up to play. That was the first time I saw some of our OMFA players.

We joined OMFA about 7 years ago. Elizabeth is now treasurer, and we really enjoy the friendship of the people we meet and also all the good music.

GEORGE & THELMA  
MEIRNDORF



Thelma and George are our dancers who attend most of the jamborees and contribute a great deal with their friendship and helpfulness. They live in Leslie, Michigan and George is retired.

When Thelma was a child, she had an uncle that played a banjo and called for dances. These were house dances and in community halls. Her father would get her out on the floor to dance. George never learned to dance until after they were married. Then, Thelma taught him how to dance. They have been going to dances for over thirty years and love to dance, and you can see it when you watch them on the dance floor.

BRANDON ELDER



Brandon is one of our young fiddlers and is only nine years old. He lives in Brighton, Michigan and is in the fourth grade. He has been coming to the jamborees for the last four years with his grandparents because he loves the music and dance.

OMFA lent him a fiddle so he could take lessons. He started lessons November, 1984 and is doing well and enjoying it very much. He is now taking his turn and playing regularly at the jamborees.





IRENE FLANDERS  
WAGGONER

I was born on a farm near Charlotte. In 1940 I was married and later divorced with no children. I took commercial classes in high school and worked as a secretary most of my life, retiring from the American Apparatus Company in Battle Creek in 1976.

I took violin lessons at Eaton Rapids, 1924-1929, summers only. I played in Charlotte High School orchestra 4 years and Olivet College orchestra 1 year. I played violin and accordion duets with my sister at many PTA's and other programs around the county. I started playing with a square and round dance band in 1931. I learned some of the fiddle tunes from the band and some from my grandfather who used to play for dances. I played at the Arches, Springport, I.O.O.F. Hall, Augusta, Shadowland, and Emma Grange dances at Charlotte.

I am very active in many senior citizen organizations - American Association of Retired Persons, Charlotte Senior Citizens Club, Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP). I sing alto in the choir at Lawrence Avenue United Methodist Church and program chairman there. I belong to the Eaton County Humane Society. I am director of the Charlotte Senior Citizens Kitchen Band, and we have played for many programs across the state. When I have time, I like to have a flower garden. I like to knit and have won prizes at fairs for my knitting. I read books and newspapers and also go to plays whenever I can. I keep fairly busy and have more fun than anybody.

I first attended the OMFA jamborees last year (1984) at Lansing. Since then, I have become a member and look forward to attending more.

LORRAINE & BYARD  
STEVENS



I was born in 1925 on a farm south of Pogy, Michigan (near Evart). I am the youngest of 5 children. My 2 brothers and 2 sisters were young adults when I was born. I grew up with my nephews and nieces; it was like being an only child. My father started playing for dances at age 17. He purchased the only fiddle he ever owned at a pawn shop, which I later learned to play. My brothers and sisters played the organ or piano for dad at dances for many years. As each one got old enough to reach the keys and pedals at the same time, they took their turn until they reached the age they wanted to dance. Then, the next one took their turn and so on. By the time I was old enough to play for dances, my dad was getting older and not as interested in playing. My mother always liked to dance, but never learned to play an instrument. My brothers and sisters have kept up their musical skills; their talents range from playing an old pump organ to singing in the church choir.

I took piano lessons for a short time about the age of 8 and again for a year when I was 24. I learned the basics, but wish now I had gone further. Before I was 10, I learned to play chords. I don't know if I was taught or picked it up by myself. It seemed all of a sudden I was playing chords for all those fiddle tunes. Dad played those jigs, reels, and round dances with correct time, and I got a flick on the head with his bow if I got a beat behind. When I was a freshman in high school, I took violin and trombone lessons that later landed me in the orchestra playing violin and trombone in the marching band for 4 years. After high school I never picked up those instruments again. I can tune a violin, but have forgotten all the fingering and positions on both instruments.

I had been away from the fiddle player and piano chords for many years. In 1979 we attended a jamboree at Fremont. Our very good friends, the Carmichaels, whom I hadn't seen for at least 40 years, were there. It had been so long that Stewart called me by my sister's name. Sometime later we visited their farm and, of course, Stewart had to get the fiddle out "for a little tune". Boy, was I rusty. It didn't make any difference what key he played in. It was a learning experience for me all over again. Sometime later at a jamboree Stewart asked me to play piano for him as Lulu wasn't feeling well that day. Since then, I have done a lot of practicing by myself, with tapes and many of my favorite fiddling friends. My style of playing isn't fancy, just bumpity-bump, thumpity thump.

Byard and I have been married 28 years. He has been a cement contractor for all those years. We have a son and daughter, both like music but don't play. Byard never tried his skills at playing an instrument, but he loves to dance and does an excellent job kicking up his feet and getting my toes from time to time.

The exposure Byard and I have had with OMFA has made it possible for us to meet many friends. These old songs have brought back memories. Who knows, maybe someday I'll get that fiddle I used to play and start all over again.

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ELBOW SWING

*Head couple leads to right and gentlemen turn with elbow swing.*

*Turn opposite ladies with elbow swing and back to gentlemen with same old thing.*

*Turn partners with the elbow swing.*

*Circle 4 hands half around and "pop goes the weasel" to next couple.*

WANDA MAY



I was born in Sturgis, Michigan in 1923. I have been a self employed Hareologist (watch & clock repair) for 36 years.

I cannot remember when a song was not going round in my head. I started singing when I started to talk. My mother died when I was only 1-1/2. Her sister raised me. I was a sick child with TB of the spine. My aunt gave me lessons on the mandolin because the instrument was small enough for me to take to the University Hospital in Ann Arbor. I played for dances. While I was in high school, we also had a string band that played in the Sturgis Park in the summer. Although I had taken lessons, I found it easier and more fun to play by ear. I have been a dues paying member of OMFA for about 2 years.

MAX CARLISLE



I was born in 1901 at Nottawa, Michigan. I worked as a farmer, lumberjack and heavy equipment operator. I am now a widower and have 2 daughters, 2 stepsons, several grand and great grandchildren.

I started playing the fiddle around 14, and also played other instruments, especially the banjo. My interest in fiddling started with my father and grandfather who were both fiddlers. I play by ear. I have been a member of OMFA for about 2 years.



CLAIR & LA REINE  
STEVENS

I was born and raised in Charlevoix, Michigan on a large farm originally homesteaded by my grandfather who was in logging and lumbering. My parents were known for their good singing voices, and mother played the piano and dad called square dances and played the harmonica. Around the age of six, I attended corn husking parties which included fiddling and dance.

When I first heard the fiddle, I knew I liked the "A" string because of its catchiness and tone. I was told I had a "Cornfield A ear." Around the age of seven, I was given an old fiddle by my uncle who didn't play. None in my family knew anything about the fiddle, so I just had to listen and learn by trial and error. At age twelve I could play well enough to play for socials, and later began playing for dances.

During World War II, I joined the navy. I was fortunate to have aboard my ship a fellow from Hamtramck who was Polish and also fiddled. We had a lot of fun in the mess hall at the piano with his fiddle. It was one of the best relief valves for me during the war and still is today. I didn't do much with the fiddle then until I moved to Ann Arbor in 1953. I started playing regularly each week for dances. Later I took up the banjo too.

My entire working life has been spent in construction as a master plumber. This year (1985) both LaReine and I retired from the University of Michigan.

We got interested in OMFA in 1977 and attended our first jamboree at Webberville. Later in 1980, I was approached by Bob Fleck to see if I would serve as interim president. To this date I am still president. Through OMFA we have met some wonderful people and formed some lasting friendships.

CLARK & MAE  
REES



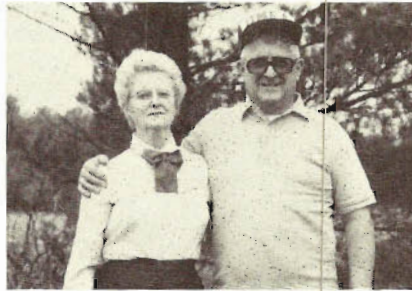
I was born in 1904 in Sidney, Ohio. I am retired from the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad (& Big Four) where I worked as a telegrapher for 33 years. I also worked 10 years with Tide Water and Big Inch Pipe Lines pumping crude oil. In the 43 years I missed only 2 days work. My father's people came from Wales and mother's from Germany. I had 6 brothers and 4 sisters who were all musical.

My interest in music began when I was 8 years old. I came from a long line of musicians. My grandfather, Elijah Rees, played the fife for soldiers to march at their training location just north of Piqua, Ohio and also entertained them with his violin. He played for square dances over Miami County, Ohio. I began playing dad's fiddle at age 8. Later I played violin, saxophone, uke, and mouth harp. I never took any lessons, but did study notes on my own, but mostly play by ear. Music of the 30's and 40's is my delight. I play for churches, senior centers, and rest homes. We are members of OMFA.

My wife, Mae, and I now live in Cheboygan, Michigan. We have 1 son and 3 grandchildren who live in Ottawa, Ohio.

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*Worry is the most wasteful thing in the world.*  
*--Henry Ford*



HELEN & BILL  
FAULMAN

I was born and raised on a farm in Fairgrove, Michigan. In 1932 my grandfather gave me a fiddle made by my uncle. They both played and grandpa tried to teach me. I didn't have time to learn, so put it in a box and forgot it until 1980.

My father heard of the fiddle jamborees from a neighbor and wanted to attend. He was 90. We started taking him and enjoyed them. That is when I decided to take up fiddling. I started to practice and played at my first jamboree in 1982.

Now I am very much involved and am presently Vice President and Bill served as the P.A. Coordinator. Just a world of fun, and you meet so many wonderful people.

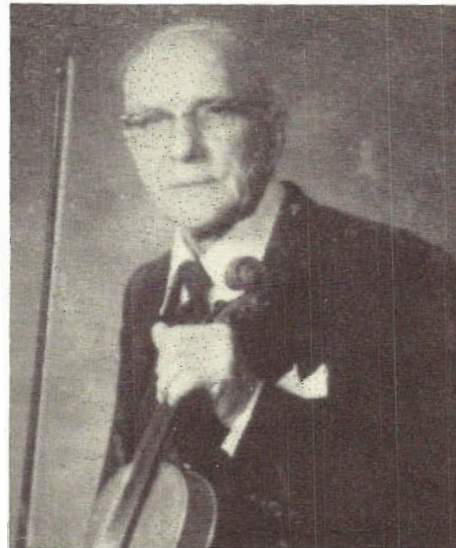


BLANCHE & LEONARD  
LABODA

I am a third generation of callers and musicians for old time square dancing. My mother, uncles, and father all were callers and played for dances. My mother used to try and coach me, but I thought it was too much to learn when I was younger.

After years went by and I started attending OMFA and calling for seniors in Bay City, it all came back. In the winter months we go to Florida where I work with a band and also teach square dancing and calling. We are volunteers for wheelchair dancing at the hospitals. It is called "Wheeling and Dealing".

HENRY DERRY



I was born in 1900. Most of my life has been spent on the farm, though I worked 3-1/2 years at the Hall Lumber Company of St. Louis, Michigan. I am now single. My wife died seven years ago. My 2 sisters and 1 brother died before I was 2 years old. I was an only child growing up. I have 1 son and 1 daughter and 8 grandchildren and 19 great grandchildren.

When I was 9 years old, my grandmother had a violin maker in Detroit make me a violin. It was a fairly good one. She wanted me to take lessons, but I was too bashful. I am sorry to say I did not, but I did go up to the attic and found an old violin book that taught from beginning to pretty well along. I had been playing for dances many years, and a five-piece orchestra took me on. I knew I would have to learn notes when we bought new music. I began studying when I was about 28. I never took a lesson in my life. I was the only violinist in the orchestra, and we played about 3-1/2 years every Saturday night in Fenmore, Michigan, besides outside dances. Even at my age, I play in the church and convalescent homes now and then. I am a member of OMFA.





KENNETH & EDNA  
GILCHRIST

I was born in 1908 at Fostoria, Michigan. I was raised on a farm with 3 older brothers and 1 younger one. My father came from Scotland and my mother was from Pennsylvania Dutch.

Every night on the farm was practice night with Clarence on the piano, me on the violin or trombone, Floyd on trumpet, Dale on whatever he picked up and John mostly listening. I played violin in the school orchestra, trombone in the band and later in life played the sax. As high school students we played at dances and parties in various towns around North Branch.

I married Edna Willey. We farmed one year and then moved to Flint where I went to work at Fisher Body. We started a family and had 1 girl and 1 boy. I played violin some around Flint, but the old time music seemed on the way out. About 1933, I put the violin away and forgot about it until 1982.

One day in Florida I was watching TV and a fellow called himself the fiddling man. I told Edna I thought I could come close to playing some of his music as well as he could. When I got home, I picked up the fiddle and started to practice. Did I get a big surprise, but stayed with it and eventually joined the old time fiddlers.

We have enjoyed DMFA very much and have met many new people and made some close friends.

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*Art is the only way to run away without leaving home.*  
*--Twyla Tharp*

CLARENCE H.  
CARNEY



I was born in 1906 at East Jordan.

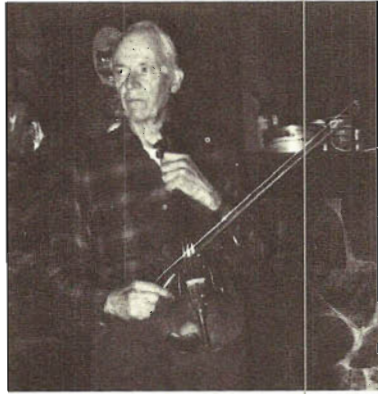
I used to go to the show at the theatre just to hear a good violin player. When I got home, I would get the fiddle out and try to mimic his playing and try to put in the good sounding licks he had. Later on I went to a dance where he was playing. I knew the drummer who was there, and he got me to sit in and play a couple of dances. Boy was the violin player surprised and whirled around and looked at me. Some folks said I sounded just like him. Back in 1931 we got up a three-piece band.

I had been layed off at the depression time as many others. I worked at the Oldsmobile Plant in Lansing. Then, I went to Muskegon and finally got a job working for a cement contractor. In the fall of 1930 I came back home. The depression was terrible. I had a three-piece band and played on commission, sometimes 40/60 and sometimes 30/70, sometimes fairly good and sometimes not so good. The other 3 nights I played with a five-piece band here named the Northern Aces. Then, I got a job through a friend at the East Jordan Canning Company and cut down to 3 nights a week. I guess I have played for a lot of dances in my time.

My grandfather was the top fiddler in this community in the old days.

About 5 years ago I signed up at Harbor Springs and joined OMFA.

(Clarence died in 1985.)



BILL WALKER

I was born in 1900 on a farm 4 miles north of Pt. Austin on what is now M-53.

When I was 16 years old, I bought my first fiddle from Sears for \$4.25. It came in the mail. It happened a neighbor by the name of Johnson stopped in that day who could play some and put on the strings, tuned it, and played a few tunes. I was a very excited boy. I have always been in love with the sound of a fiddle. I walked 2-1/2 miles to school and got to know a man who lived close to the school who played for house parties. I would get the violin under my arm in the evening and walk over to get him to tune it and play for me. His name was Jim Fillion. Later I took music lessons from a teacher in Pt. Austin, driving there with a horse and buggy for almost a year.

I got married in 1922 and didn't play much for a few years while the children were little. About in the early 30's a young man came to Pt. Austin who was a beautiful guitar player. He kept wanting me to play with him. Finally I started and have played for dances ever since, mostly in Huron County.

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*The truest expression of a people is in its dance and its music. Bodies never lie. --Agnes DeMille*

RUSSELL & EDITH  
NELSON



I was born in 1915 in Kalkaska County into a musical family. Mother played piano and my father played the fiddle (dad also made fiddles). They played for dances every Saturday night. I played my first square dance at the age of 9 and soon could play all night.

My wife, Edith, was born in Bellevue, Michigan and moved to Lansing at an early age. We met in high school and married in 1938. We have 2 sons with musical families -- 1 grandson is a fiddler!

In the early 30's, I made my living by playing on radio station WJDM in Lansing, WOOD in Grand Rapids, WKZO in Kalamazoo, and a Jackson station. Later I took a job at GM Olds in 1934, taking time out to serve in World War II. I came home and played for dances. I went to barber school and am now a semi-retired barber.

I have won a few first prizes with the fiddle -- in 77, 78, 79 at Ingham County Fair and at Elderly's Contest in the mall. I have entertained for senior citizens, rest homes, fairs, parades, and private parties. Music is a large part of our lives.

I joined OMFA in its infancy and immensely enjoy the good times with other fiddlers, state and nationwide, traveling to Idaho National Fiddle Contest in 1983. We enjoy playing and traveling statewide to all the jamborees.

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*There may be more beautiful times, but this one is ours.*



ELTON & ARLENE  
COLE

I was born in Cross Village in 1915 and lived there all my life. My occupation was farming and a musician. My great grandfather was the first white man in Cross Village. My grandfather ran the stage from Cross Village to Harbor Springs with horses. My mother was born in Morley, Michigan. Her parents came from Sweden and Norway. My wife, Arlene, was born in Austin Township near Morley. She came to Harbor Springs in 1927. I met her in Harbor Springs High School. We were married in 1935 and celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary this year (1985). We have 1 son who lives in Petoskey and is a Diesel Mechanic. We have 4 grandchildren, 3 girls and 1 boy. The granddaughters are married.

In high school I played trumpet in the band for 2 years. I then learned to play the banjo and later the piano. I first became interested in music in high school. My mother played the piano and also my grandmother. My father played the mouth organ. I play mostly by ear. I can read a little right-hand notes. I have played at dances around the neighborhood. Later years I made a living by playing in dinner clubs and for private parties in Mackinaw City, Cheboygan, and Harbor Springs. I played piano 7 years at Nubs Nob (ski resort) in Harbor Springs.

I have been a member of OMFA for 5 years.

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*When you have troubles, remember the teakettle. It may be up to its neck in hot water, but it continues to sing.*

MELDRUM & DOROTHY  
BAERWOLF



I was born at Sandusky, Michigan 67 years ago. Presently, I am semi-retired from the Polewach Department Stores Corp. of which I am still President.

Both Dorothy, my wife, and my parents were farmers in Sanilac County. We have 2 sons, one an English teacher in Lincoln Park and the other a manager of Channel 39 TV in Dallas, Texas.

I started taking music lessons when I was 14 years. My teacher wished for me to be a concert violinist and was very disappointed when I joined a dance band and played modern and old-time music.

I did not have much money in those days, so we traded sheet music with other musicians to save money. It was easy for me to memorize, so in a few days I could play over 200 tunes (new and old). I then played with several bands. With this background it helped us to get on a request program on W.H.L.S. in Pt. Huron in the late 30's. I am sure I was one of the first fiddlers to play live music on the radio station. I was forced to quit the program when I accepted a position with Polewach Dept. Stores at their Pigeon, Michigan branch. I later joined other bands and for some time had a group of my own. We still play for weddings and clubs. I also play guitar and sing a lot of songs, including "The Auctioneer" and comedy that many folks have never heard.

I have been a member of OMFA for about 6 months.



LESLIE & ROSEMARY  
RABER

I was born in 1911, the son of Roger and Mabel Raber on a farm in Allegan County. I attended two rural schools, high school and M.S.C.

My grandfather Raber was a good fiddler and grandmother played the organ for dances. A stroke put a stop to their playing before I was very old. My mother made me my first fiddle out of a corn stalk, bow and all. She later made another from a broom handle and a cigar box, still some short of a Stradivarius. When I was 10 years old, she sent to Sears/Roebuck and got me a \$4.98 one, instructions and the works for Christmas. My father could play some and he knew lots of tunes and parts of tunes that he taught me. My aunt Hazel and one of the neighbors who was a good fiddler and caller helped me a great deal.

By the time I was 15, I was playing for dances in halls in and around Allegan. It went from grange halls to league halls and house dances to pavillions, which later left the square dances out to quite an extent. After coming to Barry County, buying our present farm and marrying Rosemary, we played for dances all around the area. I took up drumming along with fiddling for many years. We raised 4 fine children who were all musicians.

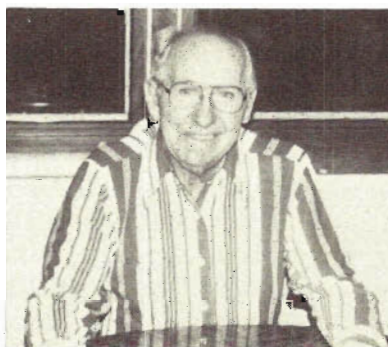
Encouraged by Bud Pierce I attended my first jamboree at Cassopolis, hosted by Bob and Jane. Later I played for the movie they made and its been downhill ever since with such nice people and what great times we have had. I am completely dedicated to promoting and reviving the old-time music and dances -- waltzes, schottisches, two steps, jigs, reels, and quadrills. I much prefer the old-time square dances and calls.

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BOB FLECK &  
JANE ALLISON



CARL SHEFFIELD







CLARENCE & MILDRED  
GILCHRIST

Clarence was born in Fostoria, Michigan in 1910 and died unexpectedly on July 12, 1984. Growing up he lived on a farm with his parents and 4 brothers. In 1933 He married Mildred Skinner. They have 2 children and 3 grandchildren. Clarence was an insurance agent, and previous to that he was a warp dresser in the woolen mill at Columbiaville.

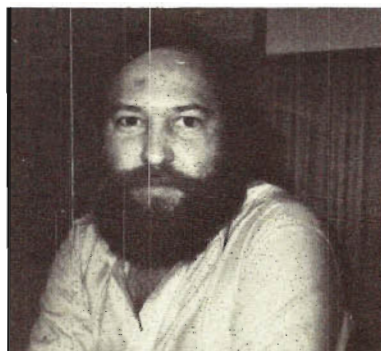
Clarence started playing a mouth organ when he was about 5. His family lived at North Lake which is an Otter Lake address. He would take his mouth organ and go around the park playing. People would give him nickels which he worked to the fullest extent. At about 7 years he started taking piano lessons. When in school he played the piano. Also, in the school band he played bass drum and the tuba. During his high school, he played in dance bands here and there. After high school and after several piano teachers he went to Detroit and studied at a studio and played with many groups.

In the 1930's he started playing at Sid's Bar in Otter Lake along with 2-3 other players. That lasted for 7 years and included the Millington Bar then in Davison, and the American Legion at Otter Lake. He retired from that sort of playing at the age of 54. After that he gave it up for 3 or 4 years and took up the organ and played at church. In the meantime, he started playing with OMFA, which he was enjoying very much until his death.

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*Don't find fault; find a remedy. --Henry Ford*

BILL WHITE



ELAINE COOK



BUD PIERCE





LEON & MADELINE  
GLYNN

I was born in 1908 in my grandfather's farm house located in Oakland County about 10 miles west of Pontiac. A neighboring midwife helped me into this world and the doctor came the next day. I'm the oldest of 4 children, all luckily, still living within a mile of our birth place. I attended the local grade school and used to go over in the early morning to build the fire so the room would be fairly warm by the time school started. I graduated from Pontiac High School in 1926. I spent the next year at home helping my father and then the next year attended the Pontiac Business Institute where I received a diploma and majored in bookkeeping.

I bought my first fiddle in about 1920 from an uncle who lived near Sunfield and had become deaf. I paid \$20 for it and still have it along with about 2 dozen others. I learned to play the one I bought from my uncle by ear and in 1925 took 6 months of lessons from a violinist who lived in the neighborhood.

In 1930 I got a job as a bookkeeper in a building tile plant about 15 miles toward Detroit at \$125 per month, and thought I was in the clover. The depression finally forced my layoff. Several years later I was hired in the Accounting Department of Fisher Body in Pontiac and worked there until I retired in 1968. In 1941 Madeline and I were married. She had come to work at Fisher Body.

In 1973 I again got the violin bug and started looking around for some to buy, and have had about 55 different ones. Last year at Sebawaing (1984) was the first time I played with OMFA, and am still afraid I'll hit some clunkers (and do) but enjoy it and talking to the others and hearing them play.

KEN STAINES



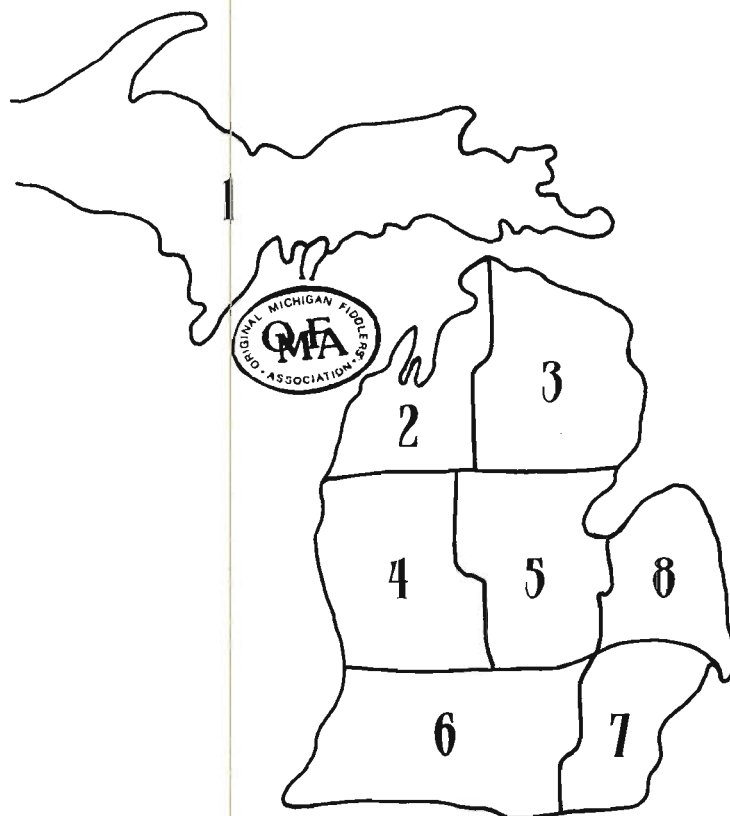
Our OMFA Book would not be complete without some mention of Ken who is no longer with us. Ken was an avid musician and played (and taught) many instruments which included the tenor banjo, dulcimer and fiddle. The only instrument he took lessons for was the violin. He enjoyed the violin and especially collecting and refinishing them. He had 10 violins he had picked up from flea markets, garage sales, or newspaper ads. His wife, Merelene, still has all of them except one she sold to a good friend. Going to the National Folk Festival in Wolftrap, Virginia and also the Folk Festival in St. Louis, Missouri with Harley and Cloise Sinclair were two of his greatest pleasures. It was a real privilege for him. He had tasted just about everything possible concerning music, all phases and types, and had played for barn dances and in Rackham Hall on the University of Michigan campus.

He was very pleased when Bill White, Paul Gifford and Bob Fleck asked if he and Harley Sinclair would help set up and plan the very first fiddlers' jamboree in Michigan which was held at Sheridan on May 29, 1976. They worked very hard on this project and were pleased with the final results. Ken attended jamborees as long as his health allowed. He loved every minute of them and never lacked enthusiasm which we still feel in our jamborees today.

\*\*\*\*\*

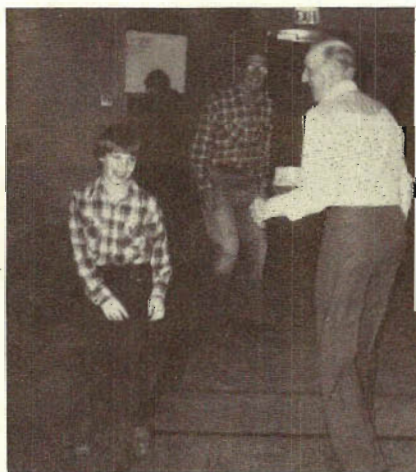
*Music is a means of expression that begins where words leave off.*

# OMFA REGIONS



WE LOVE TO DANCE



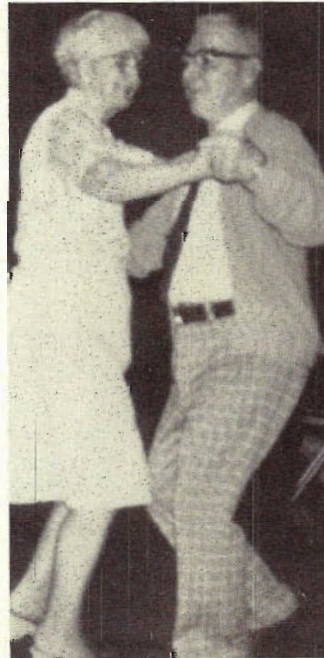


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WE LOVE TO DANCE



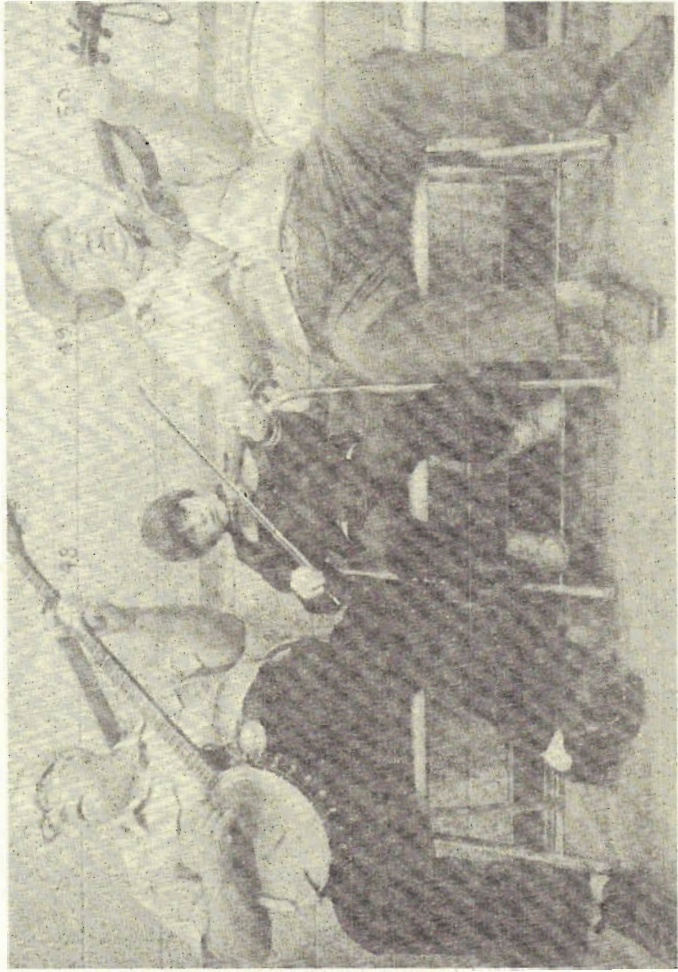




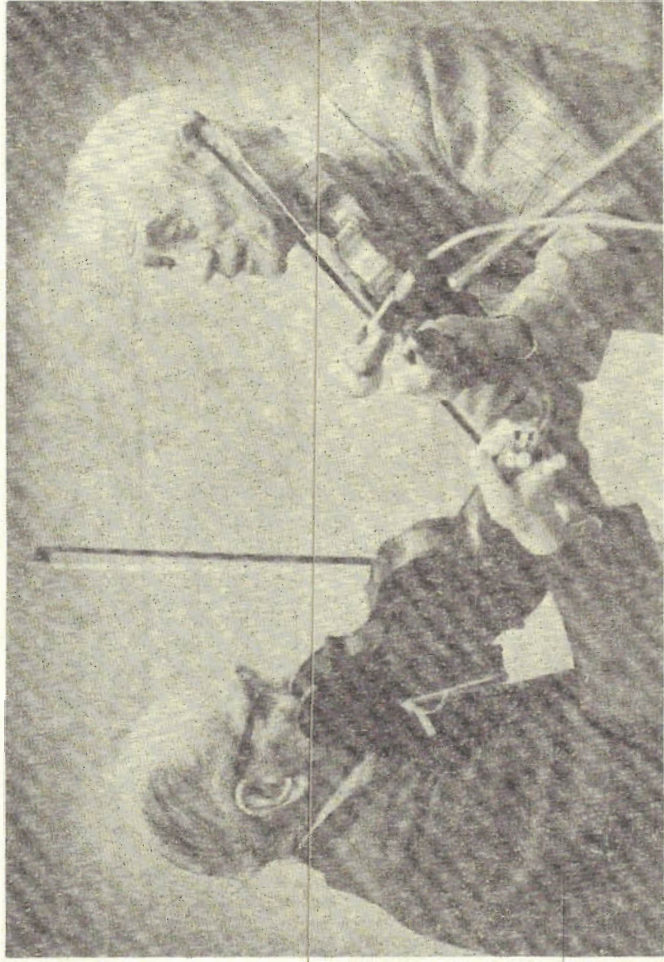
## OTHER MUSICIANS AND FRIENDS





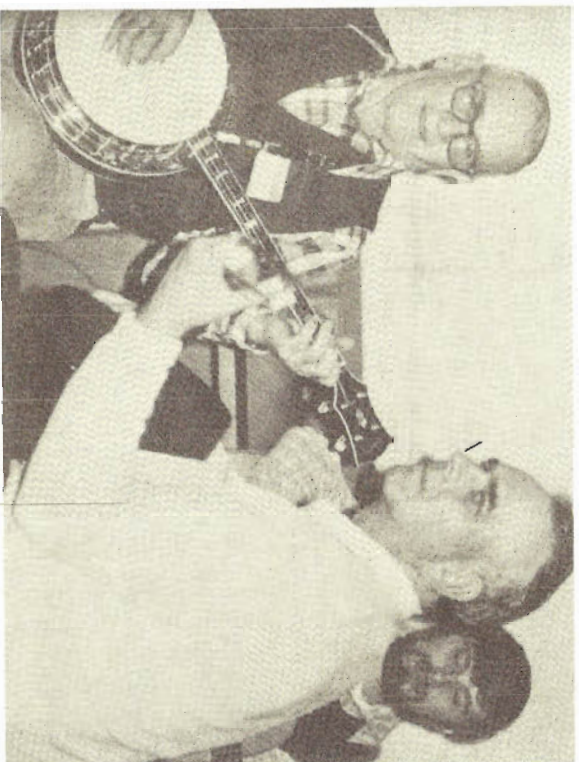


A BUDDING HEIFETZ



A PERFECT BLEND

**OUR  
INDISPENSABLE  
BACK-UP MUSICIANS**









## TUNING UP!



DOWN-HOME FIDDLERS





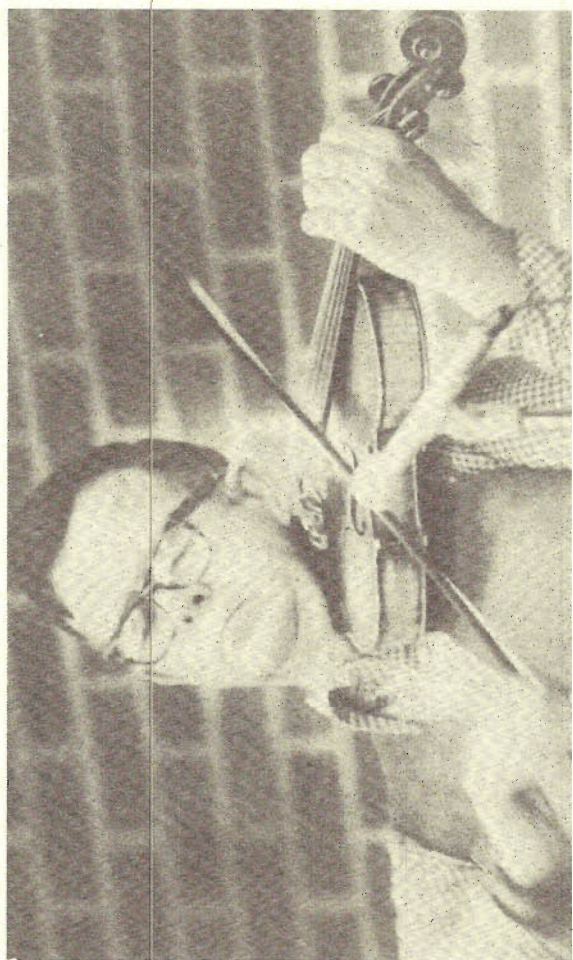




A FIDDLIN DAY









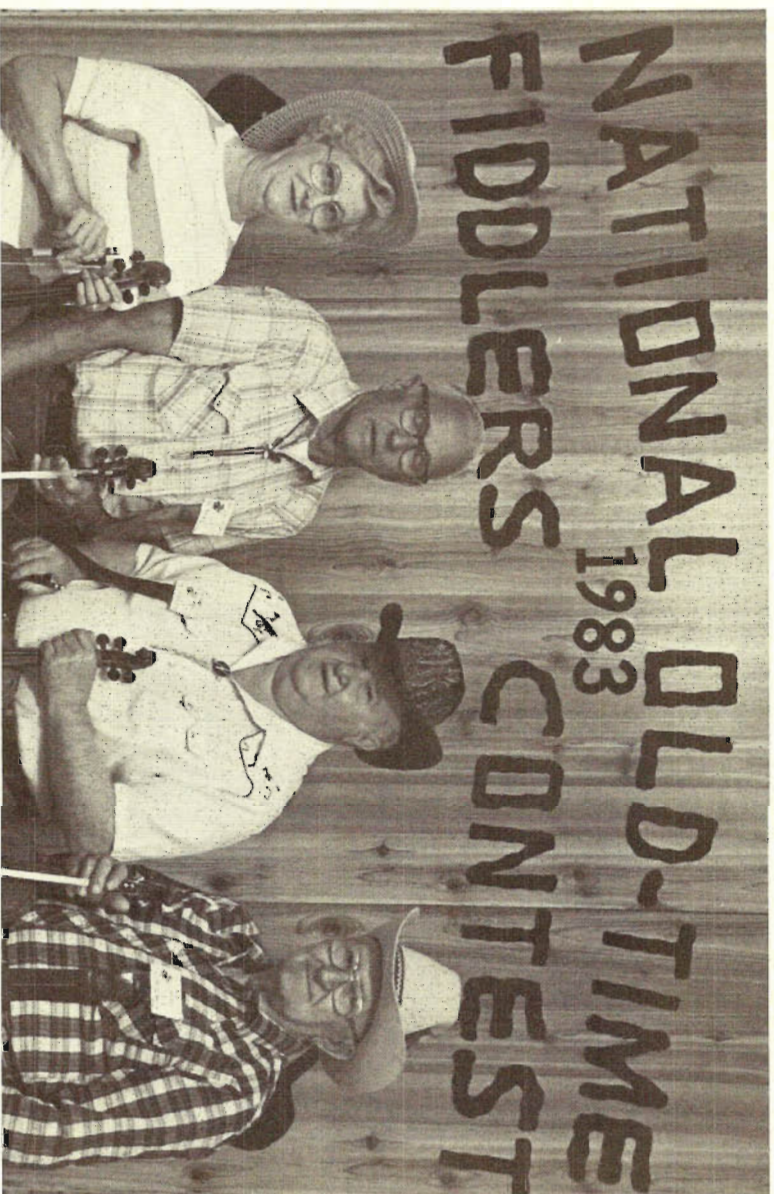


OUR YOUNG  
FIDDLERS









OMFA PURPOSE

To encourage, coordinate, and bring about a greater public interest in fiddle music activities throughout the State of Michigan.

To sponsor the observance of fiddle music "jamborees" for the citizens of the State of Michigan. The theme of these events is fiddlers and other musicians playing old time square dance tunes, waltzes, two steps, etc. of years past.

To foster and encourage the collection and preservation of fiddle music and to bring about a greater knowledge and appreciation of our musical heritage.



### JAMBOREES SCHEDULING

We try to schedule our jamborees as fairly as possible and have divided the state into 8 regions. Our basic guidelines are as follows:

1. Allow 2 jamborees per region with a total of 16 jamborees a year.
2. If we can't schedule 2 jamborees in a region, we will allow another region to hold an extra one.
3. We try to hold not more than 2 jamborees a month, and when possible, schedule them at least 2 weeks apart.
4. We avoid scheduling jamborees over holiday weekends because traffic is generally heavier and more dangerous and many families have special commitments on holidays.
5. We hold only 1 jamboree a month in July and August because these are the months for many fairs, tractor shows, family reunions, family vacations and special community activities.
6. After our last jamboree of the year in early December, we don't hold any jamborees until March because many of our members go to warmer climates during the winter and travel is uncertain.

The majority of our jamborees during the year are rescheduled in the same regions and most often in the same town or community each month. Our tentative schedule for 1986 is as follows:

1986 OMFA JAMBOREES SCHEDULE

- |             |                                                                                    |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| March -     | East Jordan (Region 2)<br>Brighton (Region 7)                                      |
| April -     | Omer (Region 4)<br>Grand Rapids (Region 5)                                         |
| May -       | Cheboygan (Region 3)<br>Port Hope (Region 8)<br>Smyrna - Annual Meeting (Region 5) |
| June -      | Sault Ste. Marie (Region 1)<br>Hillman (Region 3)                                  |
| July -      | Cadillac (Region 2)                                                                |
| August -    | Lansing (Region 6)                                                                 |
| September - | North Branch (Region 8)<br>Bay City (Region 4)                                     |
| October -   | Gaylord (Region 2)<br>Hastings (Region 6)                                          |
| November -  | Trufant (Region 5)                                                                 |
| December -  | Midland (Region 4)                                                                 |



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