



Hall of Honor Inductees
2020

Gary Adams, Sr.

Gary Adams has a long history in bluegrass music in our area. He began playing at age 5. He worked with Wendy Smith beginning in 1971. He left Wendy's band and played with Jimmy Martin, after which he returned to Wendy's band until he went to work for the Bluegrass Cardinals beginning in 1983. Gary filled in and played mandolin in Bill Monroe's band when Bill was ill. Gary formed his own band, Gary Adams & the Bluegrass Gentlemen, in 1984. That band included Gary's brothers Michael and Keith Adams, and Steve Daniels, and was active through the 80s and 90s.



John Coffey

John Coffey, a guitar player and vocalist has been playing since age 10. He was a founding member of Livingston County Grass which was formed in 1975. John went on to play with Dana Cupp & the Detroit Bluegrass Band, Gary Adams & the Bluegrass Gentlemen, Wendy Smith & Blue Velvet, Morning Harvest, Pushin' the Limits, and Harbourtown.

Jerry Eicher

Jerry, "The Ol' Hippie", has been an integral part of bluegrass music in our area for many years. A great rhythm guitar player, Jerry fronts his own band, Hand Hewn, and has organized jams at various venues in southeast Michigan and Northwest Ohio. He has recorded bluegrass for area artists in his studio, Indian Ridge, and has provided sound reinforcement at various events. Jerry has expanded the reach of bluegrass through his "Ol' Hippie Bluegrass Show, which reaches across the nation and beyond; sometimes including live broadcasts from festivals and other events. He was among the original promoters of Blissfield Bluegrass on the River. Jerry also jumped on board and has been a great asset to SMBMA, serving on committees and gaining memberships at various events.



Marvin “Red” Ellis



Born in Arkansas in 1929, Red moved to Ypsilanti, Michigan after his army discharge to work at American Airlines and Ford. He then worked as a DJ and engineer at WHRV, later WAAM in Ann Arbor playing country and bluegrass music. Red teamed up with Jimmy Williams and recorded two albums for Starday and two singles for Happy Hearts Records of Wayne, MI. In 1961 he joined the Huron Valley Boys who recorded for Starday. In 1964 Red performed with the Crossmen, recording on Starday and Pathway Records. Red returned to Arkansas and recorded with Williams again in 1971 on the Jessup label (Jackson, Michigan). He continued occasional performing through the 1991s while working at a local TV station. Retiring in 1995, Red did volunteer DJ work in Little Rock Arkansas. Red passed away on December 29, 2019.

Jim Laprad

Jim Laprad is a great local rhythm guitar and bass player. He spent thirty years as a regular at the Flat Rock Eagles, booking bands and also ran sound. Jim has played with a number notable names: Gene Elkins, Roy Cobb, Wendy Smith, Spanky Moore, Ronny Bloomfield, The Clark Brothers, The Harris-Ellis Band, Oscar McKinney, Nolan Faulkner, Fulton County, and Marion Blue. Jim is a true lover of bluegrass music and thankful for all people he has met through the music.



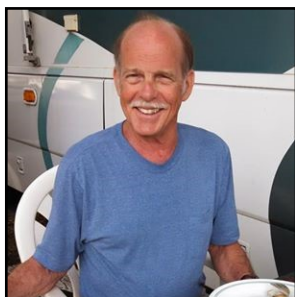
Oscar N. McKinney

Oscar was born in Harold, Kentucky in 1932 and raised there. He moved to Wyandotte, Michigan when he was twenty and worked at Chrysler Trenton Engine for 48 years. A self-taught banjo and guitar player, he also sang. He recorded his first album, My First Prayer, in 1972 with the Bluegrass Gospel Five, and later recorded two more albums. Oscar has performed in Michigan, Kentucky and Florida.



Ralph Mullins

Ralph Mullins was a Jackson area bluegrass musician who played with many people throughout his life. A superb banjo player and singer, always ready to share his talents with anyone that cared to listen; he was known as The Bluegrass Man. He helped many and was patient with anyone willing to learn.

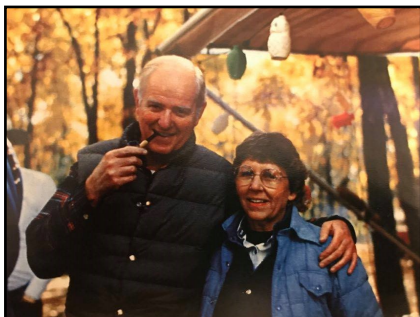


Bruce Pettinger

Bruce Pettinger played banjo for eighteen years with the Bluegrass Revival Band. They were a gospel group touring churches and other functions. Bruce can be found jamming at Charlotte, Marshall, and Kendalville festivals among others on the Bluegrass Trail. Roger has supported Wes in his work to continue the Charlotte Bluegrass Festival.

Wes Pettinger

Wes is a well known banjo player in our area. Wes also toured with the Edgar Loudermilk band. When Jim Wilder passed away, Wes moved mountains to keep the Charlotte Bluegrass Festival on track. With Wes at the helm, the Charlotte Festival also co-sponsors a regular jam at Elderly Instruments.



Roger and Sandy

Roger Schulze

Roger Schulze was known as “the Stringman” at the festivals. He had been a Gibson instrument collector for many years and made many friends with his knowledge and honesty. He is deeply missed by all of the pickers that knew him and his generosity.



Bruce and Sandy

Sandy Schulze/Pettinger

Sandy was married to Roger Schultz for 56 years and is no stranger to Bluegrass. They traveled the country attending Bluegrass events. During their travels, Sandy started a social club known as the “Winettes”. Roger passed in February 2010 from cancer and ultimately a stroke. Sandy and Bruce Pettinger married in September 2011. Both families are happy and she and Bruce

continue on the bluegrass trail together. Since their marriage, they have wintered in the South, mostly in Louisiana with many of their Cajun friends.