

Roy Clark Exhibit Officially Opened by the Legend Himself

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Seated from left to right are: Roy Clark and Jack Canine, ABM Founder and Board Member. Standing left to right are: ABM Board Members Paul Poirier; Lester Cowden, Jr.; Devin Tower; Michael Mason; Jack Murphy; Don Lewis; Johnny Baier, ABM Executive Director; Bob Alexius, ABM Board Member and Doug Parsons, ABM Board President.

Fans and supporters from across the country gathered at the American Banjo Museum on April 6th to meet the man himself, Roy Clark, during the opening of the museum's newest exhibit, "America's Super Picker: Roy Clark."

Clark graciously took photos with everyone in attendance, shaking hands and answering questions with that trademark smile and those shining blue eyes.

"It was truly an honor to meet Roy Clark," said Dustin Pyeatt, outreach

and development manager, American Banjo Museum. "Like everyone my age, I grew up watching Roy Clark and Buck Owens every Saturday night on Hee Haw. He was how most of my generation became familiar with the banjo."

The exhibit focuses on Oklahoma's own country music and entertainment legend and features stage costumes and an instrument from Clark's private collection. In addition to rare photos, "America's Super Picker: Roy Clark" features an exclusive interview where Clark discusses his career and music with American Banjo Museum Executive Director Johnny Baier.

The evenings event also included drinks, hors d'oeuvres and live entertainment from American Banjo Hall of Fame inductee Tim Allan.

"America's Super Picker: Roy Clark" exhibit is scheduled to run through March 2018. Visit americanbanjomuseum.com for more photos from the opening reception.





9 East Sheridan Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73104
405-604-2793
www.AmericanBanjoMuseum.com

MISSION

The mission of the American Banjo Museum is to preserve and promote the music and heritage of America's instrument: the banjo.

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Dustin Pyeatt, Development & Outreach Manager
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It's the most wonderful time of the year! Yes, I know we are nowhere near the Christmas season, but in the banjo world in general - and the American Banjo Museum world in particular, this time of year represents both a high point in musical activity and goings on at the museum as well as springboard for upcoming events. It all began in April with the opening of our new *America's Superpicker: Roy Clark* exhibit. Attended by over 100 VIP guests - including Roy Clark himself, the exhibit opening was nothing less than an historical event for our museum. From that milestone we focused our attention on our 2nd annual Americana Fest celebration. As the museum's most family oriented event during the year, *Americana Fest 2017* - held on June 24th - drew a capacity crowd that filled both the museum and its outdoor courtyard as they enjoyed music, crafts and summertime treats. Our ongoing ukulele and bluegrass jam sessions and *Pick A Tune With Lucas* educational events also continue to delight us with both additional attendance as well as the enthusiasm for music and the banjo which they generate. Looking ahead, our *BANJO FEST* weekend (September 7-9) - which includes the 2017 Hall of Fame inductions - promises to again be the highlight of the banjo calendar.

From the opening night reception with a special performance by Nitty Gritty Dirt Band founding member (and 2017 HOF inductee), John McEuen to the final notes of the Saturday evening concert starring the amazing Kruger Brothers, *BANJO FEST* is the 'must attend' banjo event of 2017. As the dust settles from that event, we'll be busy putting on the finishing touches on our new *Learning Lounge* for a November opening. This 'hands on' educational exhibit will not only share historical banjo information and insight, but will also give museum visitors a chance to try their hand at learning to play the banjo in just a few minutes time. And, after all that, it will be time for the other 'most wonderful time of the year.' Happy Summer!

Johnny Baier, Executive Director

ABM Membership

The American Banjo Museum wishes to recognize and thank new members and those that have renewed their membership the second quarter of 2017.

Individual Membership

Emil J. Chet Chessari
Terry Collins
Karen E. Hartman
Karen Lennox
Lana Pincumbe
Warner Zacher
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Charles & Melanie Speer

Family Membership

Dennis Lynch

Lifetime Membership

Ronald Victor Pifer

To become a member, gift a membership, or upgrade your current membership call 405-604-2793.



During the weekend of September 7th thru 9th, the focus of the banjo world will be on Oklahoma City as the American Banjo Museum honors the 2017 inductees into their Hall of Fame with three days of banjo-centric events. Honors for this year's inductees – John McEuen, Tony Trischka, Roy Clark, Paul Erickson and Joel Walker Sweeney have been a year in the planning and promise something for every musical taste.

“Each year we strive to honor banjo's best of the best from both the past and the present and this year is no exception,” said Johnny Baier, executive director, American Banjo Museum. “Like past inductees, each of this year's honorees has displayed a lifelong commitment to the banjo and changed the way the public sees and hears America's instrument.”

Festivities begin on Thursday, September 7th with an evening reception at the American Banjo Museum welcoming Hall of Fame honorees and guests. The evening will feature live music - including a special performance by Nitty Gritty Dirt Band founding member, JOHN McEUEEN as well as the presentation of the prestigious ABM Awards of Excellence.

The main event takes place

the following evening when inductees and guests venture to the spectacular VAST at the top of the Devon Tower in downtown OKC for the 2017 American Banjo Museum Hall of Fame induction ceremonies. Always a highlight of the banjo year, in addition to a reception, dinner and the award presentations themselves, this formal event will feature musical performances by Tony Trischka, John McEuen, Paul Erickson, Gary Davis and Bob Carlin. In addition to Hall of Fame honors for evening's special guest of honor, Oklahoma's own Roy Clark, presentation of the annual *Jack Canine Award* will go to internationally known banjo collector Jim Bollman. The major benefactor of the museum, Mr. Canine selected this year's recipient based on Bollman's decades long commitment to the preservation of the banjo's colorful history.

The party continues at noon the following day at the museum with informal performances by Paul Erickson and Gary Davis as well as an historical banjo presentation by noted scholar and performer, Bob Carlin.

The performance jewel of the weekend takes place on Saturday evening, September 9th at 7PM when the second annual *BANJO*

FEST concert takes the stage at the Hudiburg Chevrolet Performing Arts Center at Rose State College in Midwest City. Starring the amazing KRUGER BROTHERS, other performers include four-time national banjo champion, GARY “BISCUIT” DAVIS, and the jazz banjo trio of Paul Erickson, Lance Dieckow and Johnny Baier known as THE BANJO SUMMIT. Following the concert, the weekend concludes with a post-concert Afterglow party at the American Banjo Museum from 10PM until midnight.

“Our museum and Hall of Fame celebration brings people from around the world to Oklahoma City,” said Baier. “During this special weekend, the banjo spotlight is on our city and, as all of our Hall of Fame weekend events are open to the public, it's a great opportunity for Oklahoma City to show its support.”

Previously, the *National Four-String Banjo Hall of Fame* was established in 1998 to honor jazz age four-string banjo pioneers as well as the contemporary artists, educators, manufacturers and promoters who carried on the traditions of their predecessors. The American Banjo Museum was, in its infancy, an extension of that Hall of Fame. In the years preceding 2014, the Hall of Fame honored 71 individuals and entities in the four-string banjo world whose career accomplishments might have otherwise gone unrecognized.

As the museum grew to embrace all types of banjos and playing styles, it became clear that the Hall of Fame should evolve as well. As such, in 2013, the American Banjo Museum Board of Directors voted to establish an annual performance category to honor all styles of five-string banjo playing as well as opening the other previously

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Americana Fest 2017



Kyle Dillingham and Horseshoe Road perform to a packed house in Your Father's Mustache event room.

A new American Banjo Museum tradition was born last year with the inaugural Americana Fest, and this year's encore was even bigger!

Nearly 300 people came to the event on June 24th at the American Banjo Museum to enjoy some amazing bands and family fun. Oklahoma Bluegrass band Steelwind took the stage armed with two banjo players, Okie favorites Kyle Dillingham and Horseshoe Road were perfection and, all the

way from Birmingham, Alabama, The Steel City Jug Slammers brought their brand of new-style mountain music to Oklahoma for the first time.

"One of the best parts about performing at the American Banjo Museum is the crowd, who seem to always be ready to tap their toes and clap along," said Blake Parks of Steelwind. "We look forward to the next time we get to play the museum stage!"



Dee Paddack was honored with an Award of Excellence during Americana Fest for her 23 plus years of volunteer service to the American Banjo Museum.

On the first floor of the museum, our own Bill Bond played for guests and shared his banjo knowledge while, on the outdoor stage, local TV personality Lucas Ross played and sang for the kids. Also outside, kids enjoyed arts and crafts, lemonade, cookies, cotton candy and an old-time popsicle cart full of delicious frozen treats.



Board member, Devin Tower, demonstrates five-string playing to visitors during Americana Fest.



Summertime treats were enjoyed by all in the outdoor courtyard.

This year's event also featured drawings for great prizes, including passes to Oklahoma City River Cruises, Spokies Bicycle rental passes, tickets to the International Bluegrass Festival in Guthrie, a dinner for two at Fuzzy's Taco Shop, a year subscription to Oklahoma Today Magazine, lots of gift cards to SONIC America's Drive-In and, of course, a brand

new Deering Goodtime Banjo!

This year's Americana Fest was sponsored by Downtown OKC, The Bricktown Association, Fowler Auto Group, A-Plus Investments, BancFirst, and SONIC, America's Drive-In. This event was also made possible by a generous grant from the Oklahoma Arts Council.



Oklahoma's own Steelwind (left) and Steel City Jug Slammers (right) from Alabama were among the bands performing at Americana Fest.



Lucas Ross entertains in the outdoor courtyard.



Hundreds of families enjoyed the 2017 Americana Fest.

Why Museums Matter

There are more than 17,500 museums across the nation. Oklahoma is home to more than 500 of those museums, covering everything from art to history to science (though we're partial to the one with the banjos).

And museums also have a large economic impact, employing more than 400,000 people across the country and contributing more than \$21 billion to the national economy annually.

Museums also actually make you smarter as well. According to a 2011 study of 11,000 students and 500 educators at the Crystal Bridge Museum of American Art in Arkansas, exposure to a museum

increased the student's critical thinking skills, their level of social tolerance and historical empathy.

And, a visit to a museum can actually make you happier. A study by Harris Interactive found that spending money on experiences rather than material goods creates more happiness in the long run. The positive reinterpretation of your experience over time makes you happier than the rush of a one-time purchase.

Museums are places where the community can come together to see, hear and experience something outside of their normal lives. A place where they can step outside of themselves for just a

moment and experience beauty, laughter and sadness. Where they can be inspired and challenged. Museums aren't something to be taken for granted. They're not a line on a budget. They are our humanity. Museums show us who we were, who we are and who we can be. Without funding for museums, we lose what it means to be us. To be people, to be human.

Museums are not only important, but, supporting a museum through donations or membership is a good investment. It makes you happier, smarter more inspired and improves the community. Sounds like a good investment.

Better know a board member



Bob Alexius

In this ongoing series, we will introduce you to members of the American Banjo Museum's Board of Directors. In this column, we get to know Dr. Bob Alexius!

Q: Our first question is normally whether you play four-string or five-string, but, you actually play upright bass and tuba. Do you play any other instruments?

A: Just bass guitar. I played electric bass mostly through the 70's and 80's. However, I haven't taken it out of the case in years.

Q: You've played with a symphony orchestra in Memphis, jazz bands in New Orleans and with a rock-n-roll singer named Elvis Presley. What is your favorite band or style of music to play?

A: I enjoy playing all kinds of music but my favorite is jazz, progressive or traditional. Big band stuff is an awful lot of fun too. In Memphis, I got to play with several big-name bands - Stan Kenton (who

offered me the job with his band), Les Elgart, Buddy Morrow, Ralph Martye, Lester Lanin. That was great fun. I'm not big on rock.

Q: You've worked with Jerry Lee Lewis, Jackie Gleason and Elvis Presley. Which was the most fun to work with?

A: I toured with the Hal McIntyre band on a road show with Jackie Gleason's dance group, the June Taylor Dancers. I was 21 and they were beautiful. I had the time of my life! Jerry Lee Lewis was a character, banging on the piano with his fists, feet, elbows and butt. More show than music. Elvis was very nice but the little girls in the audience were screaming so loud you couldn't hear what you were doing.

Q: You've appeared on both American Bandstand and the Ed Sullivan Show. Which did you enjoy more?

A: Hard to say. On the American Bandstand, we played on a revolving stage with Harry James and Xavier Cugat. It was fun hanging out with those guys. It was a real thrill to play on the Ed Sullivan show. I was in the army with a traveling show group called the "Second Army Showmobile." Part of our show was chosen to be on the Ed Sullivan show. That was quite an honor and a lot of fun.

Q: You were teaching at a school in Memphis when Dr. Martin Luther King was tragically assassinated. What was the atmosphere like in the American south at that time?

A: Very tense. After the assassination about 2/3 of the faculty called in sick. This was a newly integrated high school and the reaction to the tragedy was unpredictable. It turned out interesting but O.K. The march supporting the Memphis garbage workers (Dr. King was in Memphis to lead this march) was VERY tense. My wife and I participated in this march (much to the chagrin of our racist neighbors).

Q: You're from New Orleans, lived in Memphis and you now live in Austin. All three are known as musical cities. Do you have a favorite?

A: Well, New Orleans is my home and I love the city and its music. My ten years in Memphis were great - working in a recording studio, playing with great musicians, playing in the symphony, getting to play with big names, etc. Austin has been my home since 1968 and while my musical experiences here may not have been as rich as the other cities, my career in education and promoting equal education opportunities has been rich and rewarding. Best of all, Austin is where I got into the banjo world!

Q: Among your many academic achievements, you also hold a Doctorate of Latin American History from the University of Texas. Have you ever dabbled in any Latin American musical styles?

A: No. I have played all the Latin music styles with various bands but I've never played in a strictly Latin band or pursued Latin music as a focused interest.

New Instruments on Display at ABM

The American Banjo Museum is spotlighting two unique instruments among its impressive collection of banjos. These two very special banjos are on loan to the museum and represent masterwork designs from Nechville Banjos of Bloomington, Minnesota and Bishline Banjos located in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

The “Merry” banjo from Nechville captures the spirit of the holiday season. This beautiful instrument was inspired by a gift of sparkly Christmas tree binding. The banjo depicts holly and ivy to create a flowing, natural design. Along with stunning details by several designers, the bridge of the instrument is made from a piece of Olive Wood retrieved from the 2,000 year old Garden of Gethsemane in Israel. Finished in early 2016, the “Merry” banjo took more than seven years to build.

“It is relatively easy to create good sound,” said Tom Nechville, owner and founder, Nechville Banjos, “but in the world of pro banjo making, good is not good enough. This is where the mixture of art and science meet folklore and faith.”

The second banjo is the Bishline 10th Anniversary Model. Only ten of these models have been made, and model #1 is on display at the American Banjo Museum. The Bishline 10th Anniversary Model’s resonator and armrest is made from Amboyna wood, one of the most expensive and sought-after woods in the world, originally imported from Ambon Island in Indonesia. The neck is made of old growth, Honduran Mahogany and the instrument also features mother of pearl inlay with raw brass and tortoise shell style tuning pegs.



“Rob Bishline built the 10th Anniversary Model to commemorate the official beginning of Bishline Banjos in 2006,” said Andy Oatman of Bishline Banjos. “Since 2006 Rob has built more than 1,200 banjos for dealers and custom clients. His trademark use of wood bindings and other natural and original components have earned him a reputation as one of the most unique banjo builders in the world.”

These two banjos will be on display throughout 2017 and are among the more than 400 instruments which make up the museum’s exhibits at any given time.

“We’re truly honored to be able to

display these two beautiful works of art,” said Johnny Baier, executive director, American Banjo Museum. “Tom Nechville and Rob Bishline are world-class craftsmen and these two instruments are prime examples of banjo making at its finest.”

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September 7-9, 2017
www.banjofest2017.com

Banjo Fest

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four-string banjo exclusive non-performance categories to all types of banjos. With this move the *American Banjo Museum Hall of Fame* was established.

At the American Banjo Museum, the artistry that goes into crafting highly ornate instruments and the skill and talent that goes into playing them is on full display. The American Banjo Museum brings history and art together in a song hundreds of years in the making.

HALL OF FAME EVENTS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC! For tickets, prices or more information on the Hall of Fame weekend, upcoming events, or to become a member of the American Banjo Museum, visit americanbanjomuseum.com or call (405) 604-2793.



9 East Sheridan Avenue
Oklahoma City, OK 73104

Upcoming Events

July

SATURDAY, JULY 1, 1 PM

Four-String Open Jam

Join other Four-String players for an Open Jam Session. Free admission when you bring an instrument and participate in the Jam Session.

SATURDAY, JULY 15, 2 PM

Education

For those that have never played the banjo and wanted to try, come "Learn to Pick a Tune with Lucas". Limited seating, by reservation only!

August

SATURDAY, AUGUST 5, 1 PM

Old Style Open Jam

Join other Old Style players for an

Open Jam Session. Free admission when you bring an instrument and participate in the Jam Session.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 19, 2 PM

Education

For those that have never played the banjo and wanted to try, come "Learn to Pick a Tune with Lucas". Limited seating, by reservation only!

September

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 1 PM

Ukulele Open Jam

Join other Ukulele players for an Open Jam Session. Free admission when you bring an instrument and participate in the Jam Session.

Banjo Fest

SEPTEMBER 7-9

See insert for more information

Welcome Reception & BBQ
Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony
Informal performances at the American Banjo Museum
Banjo Fest Concert

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2 PM

Education

For those that have never played the banjo and wanted to try, come "Learn to Pick a Tune with Lucas". Limited seating, by reservation only!

October

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1 PM

Bluegrass Open Jam

Join other bluegrass players for an Open Jam Session. Free admission when you bring an instrument and participate in the Jam Session.

**For more information on events call 405-604-2793
or email events@AmericanBanjoMuseum.com**