

48th ANNUAL CARTER FESTIVAL PRESS RELEASE (August 6, 2022)

HILTONS The Carter Family invites you to its' 48th Annual Carter Family Memorial Music Festival the first Saturday in August. Our festival is held annually to honor the historic Bristol Sessions of 1927 by the Victor Talking Machine Company. Ninety-five years ago, A.P., Sara, and Maybelle Carter made an historic trip from their humble homes at the foot of Clinch Mountain to Bristol, Tennessee. A trip that would take 30 to 40 minutes today, took them the better part of a day. The weather was extremely hot, Maybelle was eight months pregnant, Sara was nursing baby Joe, and the car - a Packard borrowed from Ezra (A.P.'s younger brother and husband to Maybelle who was A.P.'s wife Sara's first cousin) was jam packed full of instruments and family members. A.P., Sara, and Maybelle were well on their way to making music history – unbeknownst to them. They spent two nights with A.P. & Ezra's sister Virgie, fixed three flat tires, and then made the long journey back to Maces Springs to return to their everyday lives as mountain folk. No one could have been more surprised than the Carters when a 78 rpm record from the Bristol recordings was released by Victor several months later. Just as they changed the face of American music, their lives – and the lives of their descendants – would be forever changed as well.

Human beings need each other. Yes, technology and the internet have created new ways for us to connect, but nothing compares to people coming together in one place to celebrate as a group. Of course, the natural geography of Appalachia—and the hardships of country life—always had a way of isolating its' people; and the cultural heritage of Appalachians was born out of an inherent need to find human connection in even the most remote mountain hollows. This culture includes and extends to so much of our daily lives, from our family recipes to our houses of worship. Yet our traditional mountain music has reached far beyond Appalachia, and the same songs that helped our grandparents find a sense of meaning have now done the same for people all over the world. And while recording technology allows people to listen to our traditional music even from thousands of miles away, there is absolutely nothing like being right there—in the shadow of Clinch Mountain—to sing along and dance to these songs with others who love this music. This is one of the reasons why, after 48 years, the Carter Family Fold and its Memorial Music Festival has remained one of the most beloved institutions in all of music.

Janette Carter began the Carter Family Memorial Music Festival in order to honor the wish of her father, A.P. Carter. It was A.P.'s hope that the Carter Family's music - and Appalachian culture - would endure for future generations, and Janette devoted her life to making sure her father's wish would not be in vain. Now in its 48th year, the Carter Family Fold is run by Janette's daughter Rita Forrester, along with a host of other family and friends who are dedicated to the preservation of our cultural traditions. On Saturday, August 6, The Carter Family Fold invites you to attend its 48th Annual Memorial Music Festival and enjoy authentic old time and mountain music.

Gates open at noon, and guests will be allowed to tour the Carter Family Museum; visit the original A.P. Carter Birthplace log cabin; jam to a tune at the Pickin Tent. Limited outside food vendors and crafts will be on the grounds. Perhaps you may want to come early so you can visit the nearby Mount Vernon Church Cemetery and pay your respects to A.P., Sara, Janette, Joe, Gladys and many other Carters who are no longer with us or stay an extra day and attend Sunday service. The onstage music officially gets underway at 3:00pm, and will feature sets from four incredible old-time acts: the Whitetop Mountain Band; the Crooked Road Ramblers, the Hogslop String Band, and Ronnie Williams will also be onstage accompanied by friends to perform traditional Carter Family songs. Don't forget to bring your dancing shoes!

When life gets hard, our cultural heritage is there to remind us that we are not alone. And when you come to the Carter Fold, you will find many others who care deeply about our music and traditions; and are determined to have them endure for future generations. And, just as the Carter Family Fold has served as a place of homecoming for the descendants of the Carter Family, it has become an honorary home to thousands of other visitors from all over the world. No matter if you are from Virginia, Tennessee, or even from another country we hope you will feel welcome here. We look forward to seeing you at the 48th Annual Carter Family Memorial Music Festival!

Now known as the Carter Family Fold, music shows actually began in the one-room grocery A.P. Carter built and ran as a country store in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Presenting concerts each week was Janette Carter's way of honoring not only her family's legacy and our Appalachian culture, but a promise she made to her father just prior to his death in 1960 that she would see that his music lived on. Starting to present music shows in 1974, as her father presented in what he called the A.P. Carter Park, the early days of the Fold's weekly concerts were much like the first Carter Family 78. Janette had no idea what would happen; she just did the best she could with what she had. In the process, she created something that went further than anyone could have imagined. On this 95th anniversary of that first Carter Family recording, we invite you to come celebrate with us. Each note you will hear and each dance step you take, is like stepping back in time while embracing the future of Appalachian mountain music. Deeply rooted in the traditions of the past, mountain music is here to stay. Come be a part of living history and join us for this very special anniversary year and our annual festival.

This year's festival is dedicated to family members Flo Wolfe, David Jones, Tom T Hall, Fern Salyer, and Joey Salyer; devoted Board members and friends Howard Klein and Keith Sims; longtime volunteers Burdette McConnell, Blanford Collins, and Nelson Hayter - and all the other Fold family members we lost during the time we were closed for Covid.

Tickets are available at the gate only; all seats are festival seating. Admission is \$25 for adults, \$5 for children (ages 6-11), under 6 free. Gates open at noon. Music on the stage gets underway at 3:00 pm Saturday.

Performing will be:

Ronnie Williams & Friends
The Crooked Road Ramblers
Whitetop Mountain Band
Hogslop Stringband

On Saturday, music begins at 3:00 pm and runs until 6:00 pm., with a supper break from 6:00 to 7:00 pm. Our evening performance runs from 7:00 p.m. until 10:00 to 10:30 p.m. Ticket gates, craft and outside food booth/s open at noon on Saturday. Visitors may buy chances to win a homemade quilt to be given away after 7:00 pm; you do not have to be present to win. The Carter Family Museum and Carter Birthplace Cabin will be open from the time the gates open until 8:00 pm. There will be lots of music and jamming on the grounds in addition to scheduled performers inside the Carter Fold. A special area for jamming will be set up adjacent to the museum. Limited rough camping is available.

Attached are official biographies of the acts performing at this year's festival. If you would like more information on the acts or the festival, please contact a Fold staff member at 276-594-0676 or Rita Forrester at 423-914-2700. If there is no immediate answer on 276-594-0676, please leave a message and we'll call you back as soon as possible. For additional information, visit the Carter Fold website at www.carterfamilyfold.org/.

PERFORMER INFORMATION (Alphabetical Order):

Crooked Road Ramblers

The Crooked Road Ramblers play traditional old time dance music from the mountains of Virginia and North Carolina. Most members of the band are second and third-generation musicians who now play old time mountain music influenced by their families and communities. The Ramblers have played at Houstonfest, the Albert Hash Memorial Festival, the Wayne Henderson Festival, and of course at the Fold. They have won first place in the old time band category at Ashe County, Alleghany County, Laurel Bloomery, Fries



and the Union Grove Fiddlers Convention in addition to being named the old time instrumental group of the year at the 2014 Blue Ridge Acoustic Uprising.

Kilby grew up in a musical family. His parents are Emily Spencer and the late Thornton Spencer of the Whitetop Mountain Band – a band that has performed for over four decades. He’s been playing old time music most of his life, learning from his parents. Whitetop is one of two original bands who have played at the Carter Fold since shows began in the A.P. Carter Store in 1974. Kilby counts Johnny Miller, Dean Sturgill, Otis Burris, G. B. Grayson, and the recordings of Albert Hash as influencing his career. He’s collected and digitized rare local recordings for many years and serves on the board of the Field Recorder’s Collective whose mission is to preserve and release rare field and home recordings. Kilby started the Ramblers in hopes of carrying on the driving southwest Virginia “big” band sound that makes everyone want to hit the dance floor. Seeing Kilby fiddle will bring back fond memories of Thornton’s fiddling. He embodies the strong, mountain fiddler his father was.

Kelley Breiding propels the band forward with her clawhammer banjo playing and high-powered vocals. Kelley has won many blue ribbons for her banjo playing and also leads her own traditional country music group, Kelley and the Cowboys. The Cowboys are making quite a name for themselves and opening for some big country acts.

John Perry plays guitar and sings. He grew up playing with his brothers Buck and Arnold in a band called the New River Ramblers – which also featured Thornton Spencer, Jerry Moretz, and James Burris. They were frequent prize winners and they were favorites of dancers throughout the region for most of the 1970s until they later disbanded in the late 1980s. John’s guitar style gives the band much of its’ unique, driving sound. “High Lonesome” describes John’s singing very well.

Donald Hill is one of the foremost rhythm guitar players in the Blue Ridge in addition to being a wonderful vocalist. Growing up in a musical family, his father was Leon Hill, a well-known guitar player who played with the Whitetop Mountain Band, Fred Cockerham, Glen Smith, and many others. Donald took up playing at an early age and has passed his talent on to his two sons. Donald’s rhythm is like a wall of sound, and he makes it easy to play for any musician he backs up.

Karen Carr plays bass and sings for the band. She has won the Barbara Poole Memorial Bass award for best old time bass player at Galax twice and has rock solid rhythm in addition to wonderful runs. She comes from a musical family; Karen is a descendant of old time fiddlers Fred Cockerham and Wilson Ramey, both legends from the Low Gap, North Carolina area. Karen is always in high demand to play bass with both old time and bluegrass musicians and makes any band sound better when she steps in with her strong rhythm.

Wayne Dye plays mandolin and sings for the Ramblers. Wayne can play pretty much anything with strings on it, and he sings many vocal parts. He also grew up in a musical family. His father, Scott Dye, was a well-known banjo player who could play both clawhammer and bluegrass style banjo. Wayne, his father, and Trigg Fields were members of the Russell County Boys, a very popular band at dances and at fiddlers' conventions. The Russell County Boys played the Fold the first weekend in 2006 after Janette Carter's death.

HOGSLOP STRING BAND

The Hogslop String Band is a Nashville based old time string band comprised of five energetic young musicians hailing from Georgia, Tennessee, California, and North Carolina. Featuring Kevin Martin on fiddles, Daniel Binkley on banjo, Will Harrison on mandolin, Gabriel Kelley on guitar, and Casey "Pickle" McBride on the doghouse bass, these boys surely raise a ruckus.

Upon forming as a pickup square dance band in the summer of 2009, the Hogslop String Band has since become one of the most sought-after old time string bands of the Tennessee Valley area.

Known for their outrageous facial hair and a rollicking repertoire heavily based on Georgia and middle Tennessee fiddle tunes, these boys have provided entertainment for fashion shows, political conventions, and whiskey distilleries as well as countless weddings, festivals, and soirees.

Following in the footsteps of such country music luminaries as Uncle Dave Macon and Gid Tanner, they put on a high energy show easily appreciated by young and old alike. Despite an unkempt appearance, their undeniable charm is as certain to steal your heart as it will your daughter's.

"The Hogslop String Band is one of the most unique bands I have ever heard. Their music takes you back to a time when things were real and from the heart. These guys are very talented, and I recommend that you go see them. You will be thoroughly entertained." *Reggie Young – guitarist for Elvis, Willie Nelson, Johnny Cash, & Dusty Springfield.*

"Every member of the Hogslop String Band is individually talented and pretty much crazy. As a band, they're as authentic as it gets and an insanely good time." *Neal Cappellino – Grammy Award winning engineer.*



“Hogslop is the real deal - groovilicious honkin old time string band. Guaranteed old time awesomeness with these fellas around.” *Abigail Washburn – banjo picker extraordinaire.*

“One of the finest square-dance bands on the planet.” *Jack Silverman – Nashville Scene.*

WHITETOP MOUNTAIN BAND:

The fast-paced mountain music of the Whitetop Mountain Band of Grayson County is definitely a family affair, dominated by the presences of the nationally known Spencer family. While not every member of the group is of the Spencer clan, they may as well be, as the band is just as personally close as they are professionally solid. Whitetop, Virginia is an area rich in the tradition of old time music. This band has deep roots in mountain music. The group has done a great deal to preserve the Whitetop region’s style of old time fiddling and banjo picking, and they are legendary teachers of the style.



The Whitetop Mountain Band has been performing for over three decades, first making a name for themselves at the Carter Family Fold back when the A.P. Carter Store concerts began. The band features Kilby Spencer on fiddle. Kilby is the son of the late Thornton Spencer and his wife, Emily. Emily picks a hard-driving old-fashioned claw hammer banjo, while her daughter Martha Spencer plays everything from guitar to fiddle to banjo. Martha can’t resist the urge to join in on the dancing during the fast numbers, either. Debbie Bramer plays bass for the band and dances. Ersel Fletcher helps out on rhythm guitar and vocals. All the band members grew up immersed in old time Appalachian musical tradition from birth. Anyone can pick up a fiddle or banjo and learn to play, but the Whitetop Mountain Band proves that to truly excel at mountain music you must be “born into it.”

One of only two bands still performing at the Carter Fold from 1974 when shows began, the Whitetop Mountain Band has a dedicated fan base and receives high critical acclaim locally and throughout the nation. They have had the honor of playing such recognized events as the World’s Fair, the National Folklife Festival, Merlefest, and the Smithsonian. The band has toured England, Wales, Ireland, and Australia. The group

has a variety of recordings to their credit, and several members of the group have taught classes and programs on old time music. For more information on the group, go to <http://whitetopmountainband.tripod.com/>.

RONNIE WILLIAMS:

Ronnie has been playing since 1975. One of his best memories is playing for Sara and Maybelle at the Fold in 1976. He remembers playing Gold Watch and Chain and Black Mountain Rag for “Mommy and Maybelle” at Janette’s request. Ronnie plays a Gibson guitar similar to Maybelle’s, and he also plays autoharp and sings beautifully. He’s been a friend of the Carter Family for years – covering three generations. He often visited various members of the family – a tradition he continues to this day. A great cook, Ronnie often helps out in the Fold’s and the Carter Family’s kitchens. You won’t find anyone who knows more about the Carter Family and their music or anyone who plays it with more reverence than Ronnie Williams does.



48th Carter Family Memorial Festival
Appalachia Rising Stage
Time Schedule
Saturday – August 6, 2022

3:00 pm to 3:15 pm	Opening Announcements & Tribute Song
3:15 pm to 4:00 pm	Ronnie Williams & Friends
4:15 pm to 5:00 pm	Crooked Road Ramblers
5:15 pm to 6:00 pm	Whitetop Mountain Band
6:00 pm to 7:00 pm	Supper Break
7:00 pm to 7:15 pm	Opening Announcements, Tribute Song, Quilt Drawing
7:15 pm to 7:45 pm	Ronnie Williams & Friends
8:00 pm to 8:30 pm	Whitetop Mountain Band
8:45 pm to 9:15 pm	Crooked Road Ramblers
9:30 pm to 11:00 pm	Hogslop String Band

Breaks between sets allow time for sound set up and a chance for audience members to visit our outside vendors and artists' merchandise tables.