

# FINCASTLE BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL 40 Year Reunion



**September 3, 2005**



**FINCASTLE**  
**BLUEGRASS**  
Sept. 3, 2005 **FESTIVAL**  
**40 Year Reunion**

*WELCOME!!!*

Dear Bluegrass Festival Friend,

Welcome to the 40 Year Reunion Bluegrass Festival in Fincastle. This event has been coordinated by three community organizations - the Town of Fincastle, the Botetourt Kiwanis Club, and Historic Fincastle, Inc. and has received financial or in-kind support from a host of companies who are recognized in this program. We are indebted to all the corporate contributors with special thanks extended to The Bank of Fincastle and Santillane/Earth Movers, Inc., the major underwriters for the event.

Celebrating and commemorating the first multi-day, multi-band Bluegrass Festival that occurred in 1965 is the musical heart and soul of this day. Throughout the 12 hours, you will be treated to a steady stream of quality bluegrass music with appearances from some of the musicians who were here 40 years ago. Carlton Haney, himself, the first event organizer, has returned and will take the stage from time to time. From the music to the reminiscing, you will not want to miss a beat!

This program contains information to help you, your family, friends and other participants have a fun and safe time. We ask that you especially review the Festival Guidelines that are also posted at both Gates # 1 and # 2. Should you have questions at any time, please feel free to direct them to either Festival Volunteers (in orange vests) or Festival "Staff" (in yellow tee-shirts.) They are here to serve and assist you in the best way possible.

Sincerely,

2005 Fincastle Bluegrass Festival Committee



*This 40 Year Reunion Fincastle Bluegrass Festival is being presented through the joint sponsorship of Historic Fincastle, Inc, The Botetourt County Kiwanis Club and The Town of Fincastle. Proceeds from this event will go further the community service projects of each of these organizations.*

*HISTORIC FINCASTLE, INC: Our mission is to preserve, conserve, and sustain the historical, physical, cultural, and natural resources of the Town of Fincastle, Virginia and its surroundings.*

*BOTETOURT COUNTY KIWANIS: Thank you for supporting today's Bluegrass Festival. All Kiwanis Club proceeds help support youth and under privileged citizen in and around Botetourt County.*

*TOWN OF FINCASTLE: The Town of Fincastle supports cultural and fund-raising activities designed to increase community awareness, participation and resources for special area projects.*

# THE COUNTY OF BOTETOURT

IS PLEASED TO SPONSOR THE

## FINCASTLE BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL'S

### 40<sup>TH</sup> YEAR REUNION



&



OFFERS A WARM WELCOME

TO ALL PARTICIPANTS AND VISITORS.

*Botetourt*  
... naturally

### ***THANK YOU TO THE FRIENDS OF THE FINCASTLE BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL***

First and foremost we want to express our appreciation to **Carlton Haney** for his vision in organizing the first Fincastle Bluegrass Festival

Blue Ridge Sportswear  
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*Thank you to all the volunteers whose countless hours of service have made this event possible.*

## *In The Beginning.....*

*(excerpt from Muleskinner News, April, 1973)* Underbrush grew thick right up to the road, as if this were unexplored country, but just behind the brush was cleared farmland. A dusty lane led down to Mr. Cantrell's Horse Farm. It was Labor Day weekend, 1965.

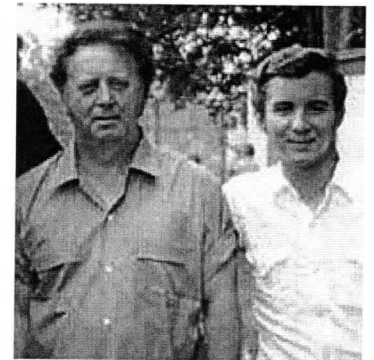
The crowd straggled in, if it can be called a crowd. There were maybe 150 the first night and never more than 1,000. Some were country-and-western fans making do with Bill Monroe. Some were curiosity seekers or just had nothing else to do. Many were uncertain folk music buffs, giving Bluegrass a try. Some were veteran festival-goers, already

ground-hardened from the Newport, Warrenton and Philadelphia folk festivals, a few of them building, though they couldn't know it, to Woodstock - the new tramps on a developing summer circuit.



Now who knows how many groves, parks and jamborees later, it is the festivals that are counted in the hundreds, not the crowds. The old hands as they make their plans for this summer, scan down lists of festivals on the internet, trying to decide which will be the most convenient or which most rewarding or novel. And they complain to themselves - or maybe just pretend to complain, by way of renewing a charter membership - that "the festivals aren't the same anymore."

It all remains a tribute, however, to the completeness of promoter Carlton Haney's vision, and risk, that Fincastle, the first festival, included all the elements that have since become standard and expected.



Carlton Haney & young Fred Bartenstein

# BOXLEY

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### COPY OF POSTER FOR THE 1965 FESTIVAL

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**LABOR DAY WEEKEND**  
**SEP. 3-4-5**

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Festival Tickets For All 3 Days \$6.00 - Per Day \$2.50 - Camping Grounds Included  
Programs Available By Writing Carlton Haney Box 7175 Hollins, Va.

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## PERFORMING SCHEDULE

- 10:00 National Anthem, Introductions  
Leslie Dunbar and Friends
- 10:30 The Wright Kids
- 11:00 Solid State
- 11:30 The Craig County Boys
- 12:00 The Virginia Mountaineers
- 12:30 Mixt Company
- 1:00 Bobby Atkins
- 1:30 Carlton Haney Tributes
- 2:00 Solid State
- 2:30 Craig County Boys
- 3:00 Virginia Mountaineers
- 3:30 The Lost and Found
- 4:15 Shallow Creek
- 4:45 Reno & Smiley Tribute
- 5:15 Johnny Staats and The Delivery Boys
- 6:00 Heather Berry & Virginia Carolina
- 6:45 Bill Monroe Tribute
- 7:30 The Lost and Found
- 8:15 Johnny Staats and The Delivery Boys
- 9:00 Accoustic Endeavors & Finale



# The First Blue Grass Festival

**On Labor Day weekend in 1965, a University of Rochester student found himself smack-dab in the middle of history in Fincastle, VA**

BY PHIL ZIMMERMAN  
Special to *The Breakdown*

It was a long, straight shot down I-81 to the Route 220/Fincastle exit. My music buddy Peter Shenkin and I had no idea what to expect. All we had to go on was our love of bluegrass music and a vague set of directions.

We took the Fincastle exit and began looking for Carlton Haney's first annual blue grass festival, which was being held on Cantrell's Horse Farm in Fincastle, Virginia. We found the turn-off and followed the dusty tire tracks across a pasture toward the tree line in the distance. Even before we reached the makeshift parking lot, we heard the thump of a stand-up bass wafting across the field on the hot late-summer breeze. Moments later we were navigating between small groups of musicians picking away. Back at school there were barely enough players to scrape together one band, but there we were, surrounded by bluegrass.

Forty years ago! Most of my memories from Carlton Haney's first festival in Fincastle have faded into general impressions, but a few memories still stand out. I'd been listening to Bill Monroe recordings for a few years by then, but had never



Ralph Stanley, looking cool in his dark shades.

seen him live. I was impressed by his regal stature, tall and straight, supremely confident, impeccably dressed, with his white Stetson to finish "the look." When he spoke, his voice was as musical as when he sang, rhythmic, lyrical, and right to the point. It made an interesting contrast to Carlton's slow North Carolina drawl, especially during Carlton's Sunday afternoon production of "The Bluegrass Story."

Jimmy Martin presented another type of interaction with Carlton. Jimmy was full of energy and attitude. I thought his wisecracking with Carlton bordered on disrespect, but I've since learned that that's just Jimmy's way. "Carlton told me to be serious," he said. "Well if I'm serious he's Roebuck!" he quipped.

The Stanley Brothers were very cool. They wore dark suits and ties, dark sunglasses, and loafers with white socks. Carter's singing was almost conversational in its intimacy, while Ralph's was more like the lonesome wind in the trees. The legendary George Shuffler was with them on his big Gibson Southern Jumbo guitar. George kept blinking his eyes rapidly, saying, "The sun, it effects my eyes."

During the Stanleys' Saturday night show, hundreds of moths were swarming around the bare light bulbs and small floodlights that lit the stage. At one point Carter opened his mouth to sing and inhaled one of the moths. He gagged and coughed it out, exclaiming, "Them *vaniller* bugs ain't too bad, but them chocolate ones is awful!"

Benny Martin was an absolutely commanding presence, physically and musically. He had a dashing swagger and was all over every tune he played. He remarked that, "Once you can play bluegrass fiddle, you can play any kind of music – jazz, classical, anything." Bill Monroe, on stage with him at the time, seconded that opinion.

The highpoint of the weekend for me was the Sunday afternoon Bluegrass Story. To kick it off, Carlton asked for complete silence from the audience. "We don't want to hear a sound," he said, "just the wind in the trees." Then Bill Monroe played the famous mandolin introduction to "Muleskinner Blues," and they were off! Bill was on stage for the whole show, with only a few minutes respite while the

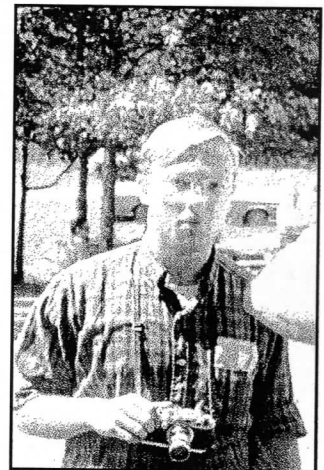
Stanley Brothers did two songs with just their own band. Otherwise, it was a parade of former Blue Grass Boys taking their place at the mic with Bill.

Ralph Rinzler was orchestrating things behind the scene, while Carlton was emceeing. Toward the end of the afternoon, Carlton introduced Bill's then-current band: Peter Rowan, Lamar Grier, Gene Lowinger, and Bill's son James William. Because I was seated at the edge of the stage taping the show for Ralph Rinzler, I could hear all the off-mic conversation. Carlton introduced Bill's son James, saying, "Here's a young man who in future years is really going to have to bear down." I heard Bill say, under his

breath, "He's going to have to bear down right now!"

The Bluegrass Story was the festival finale. After the reprise of Muleskinner, and the encore of John Henry, Carlton thanked everyone for coming and for being such a good crowd. "There wasn't no fights, no trouble, or nothin'," he noted.

All the way home, the sounds of the weekend were ringing in my ears. I even thought I could hear banjo picking in the radio static.



Phil Zimmerman, then a student at The University of Rochester with his trusty camera at the First Fincastle Bluegrass Festival.

Reprinted from  
**SEBA BREAKDOWN,**  
April 2005

## Festival Rules & Guidelines

The 40 Year Reunion Fincastle Bluegrass Festival is a family-style event and a big crowd is expected to celebrate this historic occasion. To help make the day as enjoyable as possible for all in attendance, we ask that you observe the following:

1. The festival will take place rain or shine - ticket refunds will not be given for any reason.
2. This is a one-day event only; we cannot accommodate overnight parking or camping. A contact list of available lodging facilities and campgrounds is provided on this website.
3. Food and non-alcoholic beverages can be purchased on site.
4. For the safety of the children, an adult must always attend children, ages 12 and under.
5. Motorcycle parking is available only in specified areas. Ask attendants upon your arrival.
6. No pets, bicycles, or other wheeled vehicles (with the exception of wheelchairs) can be inside the concert area.
7. Video recording is not allowed, with the exception of registered media.
8. Fireworks and campfires can be very dangerous, and liability issues preclude their use.
9. Beer and alcohol will not be sold at the festival. Any conduct that disrupts the listening pleasure of others in attendance will be brought to the attention of the assisting officers in the County Sheriff's department. No coolers will be allowed in concert area
10. Small shade canopies can be used as long as they do not obstruct the view for others.
11. Hold onto your ticket, you may need it for re-entry. **You must have your hand stamped for re-entry.**

**DRAWING - Drop ticket stub in crock located at entrance to performance area.**

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