

Ev Cowett's Summary of Bones Fests I to X

[10 point] Certain elements of each Bones Fest have remained the same over the 10-year span, but each fest has been uniquely different. Only Wilma Myers, Val Cowett and I have had the privilege of attending each of them. Something new and/or different has occurred at each of them making them particularly remarkable. I always look forward to "what will happen this time."

At Bones Fest I it was meeting Russ Myers and Dr. Fred Edmunds and sharing bones playing techniques, instrument construction material, musical preferences and having fun and fellowship. Very little has changed.

At Bones Fest II, hosted by the Cowetts in Bur-Mil Park, And by this time Martha Cowett had established a webpage for rhythm bones players called Rhythm Bones Central (now rhythmbones.org).

Bones Fest III was hosted by Russ and Wilma Myers in their almost one-century-old home overlooking the Blue Ridge Mountains. It was here that the boning world opened to all of us with the arrival of "Spike Bones" Muhrer, John "Mr. Bones" Cahill, David "Black Bart" Boyles, "T" Paul Dehon, Mel Mercier (from Ireland), Joe Birl, Sally and Terry Carroll, Vivian Cox and Matteo the classical castanet player. It was here too that the Rhythm Bones Society was founded. What a party and weekend to remember!

Bones Fest IV was hosted by Steve and Janet Wixson at their home over looking Chattanooga and in anearby Mountain Opry house. It was here that we first met Ida May Schmich who knocked our socks off; Barry Bones Patton, who has incredible speed; Gil and Linda Hibben who very soon became an important part of the Rhythm Bones Society; the brother/sister act of Jerry Mescher and Bernie Worrell playing synchronized bones tunes; and Bill Vits from the Grand Rapids Symphony with something different.

Bones Fest V, held in a barn on Red Apple Farm in Phillipston, MA, was a real blast. It featured the Dave Reiner band and introduced us to Don Decamp, Dave Gagne, Nick Driver (from England), Norm Conrad, Gerard Arseneault (from Canada) and the NH gang of three, Shorty, Ernie and Sky. A great weekend.

Bones Fest VI was held on the Guilford College campus in Greensboro, NC and hosted by the Cowett family. Performances were heard in a real planetarium. Dan Griffin, a CT rocker and Jeff Newman a TX copy of Don Decamp were great newcomers. Russ Myers was honored and designated Fellow of the Rhythm Bones Society. Brother Bones (Freeman Davis) was recognized on what would have been his 100th birthday with a special birthday cake. The Conga line was introduced by Gil Hibben as was the "pass-off" by Walt Watkins.

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