



Rhythm Bones Player

A Newsletter of the Rhythm Bones Society

Volume 4, No. 4 2002

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Executive Director's Column

Bones Fest VI is behind us and what a grand time we had. More than 50 players were on hand. Check our web site <rhythmbones.com> for more information.

Our new web master is Jonathan Danforth. Please send him suggestions at <jonofiddle@yahoo.com>.

Plans for Bones Fest VII are on the drawing board. Gil and Linda Hibben will host it in Louisville, KY on July 25-27, 2003. They will appreciate any thoughts you have on the event.

Several RBS members competed this year

in the Bones playing contest at the National Traditional Country Music Festival in Avoca, IA in August. Yirdy Machar won the contest while John Perona, Steve Wixson and Steve Brown placed in the top five. Congratulations to all.

It is time to renew your membership in RBS for the 2002-2003 year which began October 1 and ends September 30, 2003. We ended the year with 104 members and hope that each of you will renew. Dues will continue at \$20 payable to the Rhythm Bones Society. May your bones be with you, *Ev Cowett*

Highlights of Bones Fest VI

FINGERS TO THE BONE. The sounds of the bones and their accompanied music are still ringing in my ears. The three-day event at Guilford College with more than 50 bones players and many guests will long be remembered. Starting Friday night with a simple logo nametag, logo T-shirt, Fingers to the Bone Program, good food and drink at a bones jam session got everyone off to a great start.

Guilford College, our site host, catered to our every need. The beautiful grounds and excellent facilities for lodging, meals and meetings were wonderful and the Joe Bryan Jr. Auditorium with its excellent acoustics and seating arrangement were "out of this world" (a real planetarium). The friendship exemplified by Rebecca and James of the staff of this Quaker College will not be forgotten. (See photographic montage by Nick Worth on Page 6).

Last but not least were the Banjo Bandits, a Greensboro real-live traditional old-time band, were great. The principals, Ivy Lindley and Greg Speas became part of the Rhythm Bones Society throughout the week. (Their CD "Ain't Got No Use" is available through Little Rebel Records).

The only difference between Bones Fest VI and earlier Fests was the quality of bones play. As we get older we get better, or we may have actually practiced before coming to the Fest. I for one was impressed. Many of the Charter

Members were present including the original six Cowetts plus two additions, Rioux and Ramsey ages 6 and 8.

Mr. Bones Cahill wore a new costume depicting Uncle Sam and was impressive. Joe Birl is improving with age (86) and introduced his new bones collection (wood this time). His play and story telling are better than ever. Vivian Cox was like a schoolgirl again playing those old Ragtime tunes. Next year we will insist upon her "black light" performance which she

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Al Cowett was Master of Ceremonies for the second time

Editorial

The stories and news following Bones Fest VI would not fit onto six pages, so this issue is eight pages.

It is now a tradition that newsletter No. 4 of each year presents the highlights of the annual Bones Fest. This year is no exception and Ev Cowett has done it up in grand style. Of course, the Fest itself was the best ever if measured by attendance, facilities with great acoustics and quality of bones playing that improves at each Fest. Thanks, Ev, for hosting it.

Member Yirdy Machar contributed an article on his experience at Avoca. In addition to winning the Bones and Spoons Contest, he filled in for several performers who failed to make it for their own 30 minute shows. Yirdy with bones, spoons, concertina and harmonica put on several one-man performances. He is an entertainer.

The Board of Directors approved a logo for the Society and it has been included in the upper left corner on Page 1. The hands in the logo appear to be from the William Sydney Mount painting 'The Bone Player,' but in fact are the hands of Ev Cowett. This is a legacy from the man who organized the first two Bones Fests that led to forming our Society.

I arrived for the Fest on Thursday and Ev and some of his kids and I went to the coffee shop where the Banjo Bandits were playing. While we thought we behaved appropriately, Ev thought we needed to read Black Bart's *Responsibilities of a Bones Player*. Thanks to member Dave Boyles for permission to reprint it.

Ev Cowett, Martha Cowett and I were presented with RBS Meritorious Service Awards at the BFVI banquet. It is a great honor to be recognized by one's peers (and my beautifully framed award hangs on the wall by my desk), but it is also rewarding to see the enthusiasm and efforts of our

Letters to the Editor

Editors note: Paul Duhon performed at Bones Fest III in a

costume with pants that belted at knee level to make his legs look very short.)

Paul Duhon will be 85 in September and is finally getting old. He is still able to get around, but cannot play the bones because of arthritis in his hands. Attached is a check for his dues. I am attaching material for your review and consideration for the newsletter. He will be very happy if you include it.

I wish we could have attended the Bones Fest, but he is too feeble to attempt it. Best wishes. *Willie Duhon.* (See the article on Page 7.)

Interesting news. I've finally located one of Len Davies' relatives, his daughter. I'm hoping to get information on him for an article, some information on the plastic bones he used to make (I don't know if I told you he was a plastics engineer who designed and produced "laminated" plastic bones that sounded as good as ebony or bone). *Steve Brown* (See article on Page 5).

Last night there was a program of Spanish & Latin American music on WERU, our local community radio station. It made for great jammin' with my rosewood bones. I tend to use my aluminum bones on Reggae & Blues. On Thursday nights, following a Jazz show I do with a friend on WERU there is a great Bluegrass show called "Bronzewound." And sometimes there is live entertainment. Anyway it always is a great time to jam which I do at the station and on the way home.

The General Manager of the station, Matt Murphy of Irish descent, became interested in the bones so I made him a set of aluminum ones which he has been practicing on. One co-host of "Bronzewound" is also into the bones. So at times the radio station is ablaze with all of us rattling away in the studio as the "real music" goes out over the airwaves. *Parker Waite*

Recorded Bones Music

Bones and Jazz. Spike Bones demoed this CD at Bones Fest VI. To order, send a check or money order for \$15 to Spike Bones, 3301 S. Emerald, Chicago, Ill. 60616. Ev Cowett says he is addicted to the CD.

Rhythm Bones Player

Rhythm Bones Society
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The Rhythm Bones Player is published quarterly by the Rhythm Bones Society. Nonmember subscriptions are \$10 for one year; RBS members receive the Player as part of their dues.

The Rhythm Bones Player welcomes letters to the Editor and articles on any aspect of bones playing. All material submitted for consideration is subject to editing and condensation.

Rhythm Bones Central web site: rhythmbones.com

Websites of the Quarter

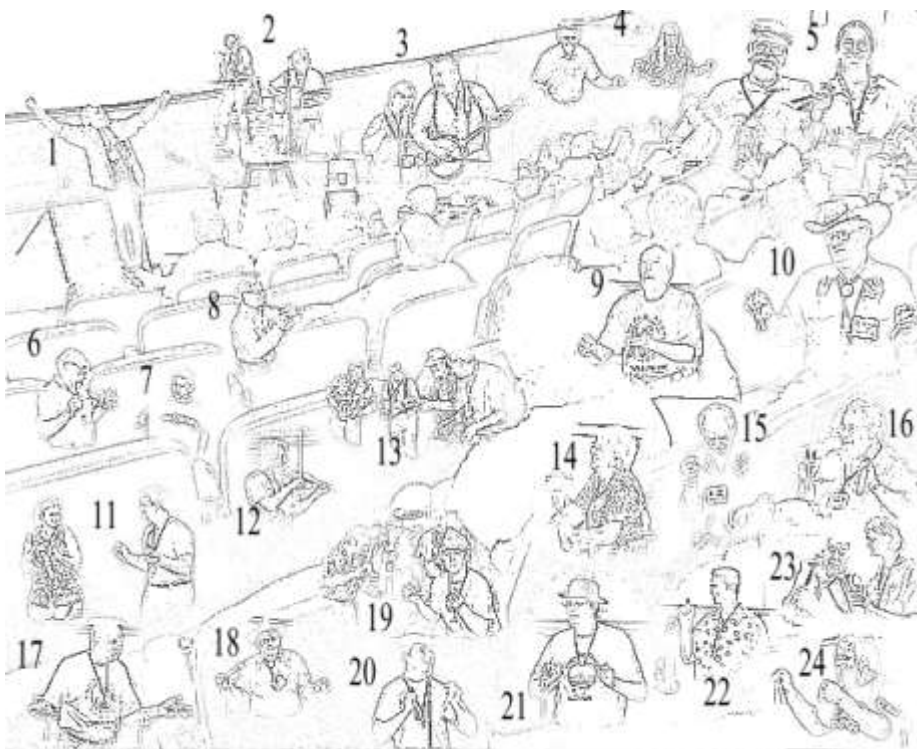
www.world-beats.com/cd_vid/VID_bones.htm. This website has a three minute video from Aaron Plunkett's *Bones from the Beginning* instructional video for two handed bones playing. The video was reviewed in Volume 2, Number 3 of the newsletter. RBS Member Aaron also has an historical and audio-visual tour of music and percussion from around the world at: www.world-beats.com. He has bones for sale. Great site!

www.basichip.com. Check out this website and click on 'Playing Dem Bones' for mp3 songs of Brother Bones and Ted Goon. There are short biographies of both of them and the mention of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Brother Bones. If you like

Old Time Country Festival - Avoca, Iowa - 2002

Never in my life (all 55 years of it) have I been in the company of more than two other bones players at any one time. As of August, this year, that statement no longer applies. I was at Tonder Festival, in Denmark, where I had been in the company of Mel Mercier and another bones player Cathy Jordan. Until that date Cathy was the only female bone player I knew that had not been taught to play by me. This statement, also, no longer applies for the following reason: On arrival at Avoca, after checking in and receiving my programme for participating in various shows, I soon met Jerry Mescher and his wife Sharon, and then his sister Bernie Worrell who was now the second female player I had not taught to play the bones.

This meeting was the greatest thing that could have happened to me as a stranger in a foreign country, and at a festival with a whole new genre of music that I had only previously heard via radio/tv or a few bands visiting Denmark to participate in various multi-music festivals. I had previously played bones with mainly Scottish Dance music and song (I was born in Scotland) and with Irish roots in my family it was natural to pursue my art within the Celtic Music Scene which, for me, involved singing, dancing, bodhran and bones playing (my father had played bones and harmonica in his youth - although, sadly I did not find out until he was 78 years old, by this time I had already been playing bones for over twenty years). Since coming to Denmark in 1982, and due to insufficient Celtic Music, I have had the opportunity to play with Traditional Jazz bands, Blues Bands, Pop Bands, Rock Bands, Scandinavian Traditional and other ethnic folk-music groups from various cultures. Meanwhile, back at the ranch, or to be more correct, the 27th annual National Old-time Traditional Country Music Festival



Index to photograph on Page 8. The montage was created by Everett Cowett's brother-in-law Nicholas Worth. To find a bone's players name match the number above with number in the Table below.

and Contests was already into its second day. At this time I had only thought about what I might do for the Bones contest which was still four days away on the coming Saturday, 31st August. My thoughts were to play the harmonica (on a neck holder) or to sing acapella as my own accompaniment. Thanks to the friendly help of the Meschers I was introduced to many musicians as well as other bones players as they arrived for the festival and that, combined with the many jam-sessions, a wonderful bones-workshop and listening to many of the music concerts, I started to formulate some new ideas of what I could do for the contest. I thought it would be better for me to find other musicians to accompany me as it would make it easier to concentrate on the more technical side of my playing without having to think of the song text or tune at the same time. This was the smartest idea as the contest was not for my singing or harmonica playing and as it was the first time in my life I had entered into any kind of solo competition (apart from Drum Major at a Pipe Band Championship), which

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Name Index to Photo on Page 8

1. Spike Bones
2. Banjo Bandits (Ivy and Greg)
3. Mary and Frank Sweet
4. Jerry Mescher and Bernie Worrell
5. Terry and Sally Carroll
6. Everett Cowett
7. Ramsey Cowett (Ev's grandson)
8. Hank Tenenbaum
9. Joe Birl
10. Will Kear
11. Martha and John Cowett
12. Jonathan Danforth
13. Dan Cowett, Parker Waite, Steve Brown and Jeff Newman
14. Vivian Cox
15. Don Decamp
16. Mike Hannan
17. Steve Wixson
18. John Davis
19. Dan Cowett, Spike Bones, Steve Wixson and Tommy Cowett
20. Dan Griffin
21. Mike Passerotti
22. Al Cowett (our great MC)
23. Joe Birl and Karen Worth
24. Mike Ballard

(Avoca—Continued from page 3)

is a change from performing a live show to an audience who do not sit with a note pad and give you marks for various technicalities of your performance - at least I hope they don't. During the few days prior to the contest I met with Steve Wixson, Steve Brown, Dr. Jerry Barnett, and a wonderfully old character called John Perona who were also RBS Members. As I shared lodgings at a local motel with Steve Brown I found out that he played a tin whistle and could play some Irish jigs. This was to my advantage as I love to play spoons for melodies in 6/8 time, and he agreed to accompany me for that part of the contest. I also had the pleasure of meeting another lovely harmonica player who had been playing for Jerry and Bernie's Bones Shows and workshops, by the name of Gordon MacMasters, and he certainly was an old-time master. As Jerry and Bernie had decided not to compete, I thought it would not be impolite to borrow their favourite accompanist. I still had not decided until half an hour before the contest started what I was going to do. It was then that I heard Gordon playing a wonderful old-time waltz, which made me decide what to do. I asked him to play it for me in the contest, and he agreed but knew an even nicer tune which he then played for me. As a contestant you are allowed three numbers and I had heard Gordon play another number which I knew and had learnt as a vulgar music-hall-style parody of the original song: "She Wore a Tulip." That was all I needed to finalize my programme for the contest. The first number was the waltz to which I played 8 bones (only because there was no more space available between my fingers) and got the impression that this was the first time it had been attempted in the competition. The second number was the Jig on the whistle by Steve Brown to which I played hand-made wooden spoons (as the contest was combined for bones and spoons I was not sure whether it was either/or or both so decided to be safe and play both.) For the last number, back to Gordon's harmonica and with his guitarist, Bernie and myself on the bones again (2x2), we let it rip on the "Tulip" tune

which I know as a song called "Nelly Hawkins" (I really had to hold myself back from outbursts of laughter as I was thinking of the text while playing) which was probably too rude to sing to such a pleasant audience of mostly "old-timers." All we had to do now was wait until the following day, Sunday 1st of September - the last day of the festival to hear the results of all the contests. This was a long drawn-out affair which included many guest artist performances, performances by the individual contest winners and the inductions to the Old-time Hall of Fame. This was previously awarded to Jerry Mescher, but on this occasion went to member Dr Jerry Barnett. Eventually they got around to the bones/spoons contest which we thought they had forgotten about, or maybe because it was the "world championship contest" they kept it towards the end. By this time the suspense was killing me, but it was worth the wait to find out I had gained first place and that three other members of the RBS were placed in the first five, namely: John Perona, Steve Wixson and Steve Brown. Maybe, as food for thought, the only two players who played both bones and spoons in the contest were awarded 1st and 2nd place ie: John and myself. All in all it was a great week of music and the friendly atmosphere of Bob and Sheila Everhart's Avoca Festival (moving venue next year to a larger area in Missouri Valley, Iowa) a great warm up for the "All Ireland Championships" in Abbey Fealle, County Limerick, on the first week-end in May 2003. I hope that there will be some contestants arriving from the USA to show their mettle. Looking forward to meeting some of you there or at the next Bones Fest in

Tim Reilly Missed BFVI

Tim Reilly missed Bones Fest VI due to a car accident on the way to the Fest. While the Fest was in progress, he dictated an article titled 'Bones at Sea' that will appear in the next issue of the newsletter. This is a well researched historical article, and is an important contribution to the newsletter. Tim, thanks and get well

Black Bart's Responsibilities of a Bones Player

The first time you develop and sense the vibrations of the bones in you hand, it feels good and you just want to keep shaking! It's sooo therapeutic!

However, that feeling and that sound, as fun as it is, is not so much fun for those unknowing souls around you.

Historically 'bones' have rated far down the line of recognized musical talents. Until you really get good at playing and can keep solid tempos, please be advised...I am simply warning all new bones players about this catharsis. So I suggest the following responsibilities a bones player should adhere to so that our reputation is not downgraded anymore than history already has done.

Practice. To practice by yourself in you car, in the privy, in the garage or basement, on the lake or in the woods is very nice.

Partners. Your spouse can become very annoyed—unless, of course, you get that person their own pair of bones!

Warning: It is not a good idea to shake them in your partner's face in the middle of an argument either!

Concerts & Pubs. Practice with recorded music when you can and nobody else is around. When you are in the audience don't just whip the bones out and play along with the band at your first concert or session. There is a courtesy to ask the musicians first because if your timing happens to be off it's hard for the band to focus and they may tell you. When you're ready, open sessions are a good place to start your public appearance. Approach it moderately until you know "you have it."

Control. There's a time to play and a time to sit out. The bones are a nice accent when played properly. Learn to play loud when the music is up and safe when it's down. Learn to vary the pattern. Stop periodically at the end of key phrases. Come back in on the chorus.

Final Responsibility. Finally, each bones player has a responsibility to police other players who get carried away (possibly after too much drink), to remind them of their bones manners when they appear obnoxious and especially if they have terrible rhythm.

Bones Fest Reflections

For me each Bones Fest has had some significant outstanding event, typically it was some player that just blew my doors off and brought Bones playing to a new height. This bones fest, although the playing was terrific, was a bit different. At one point I was asked what did I enjoy the most or find most impressive. With only a moment or two of thought I stated, rather biased, my nephew Ramsey's playing was the most impressive. Then I went home and thought about it and I have come up with something different. For me the most significant part of this Festival was all of the one on one stories I heard from the participants of the festival on how playing bones has touched, changed, and affected their lives. How playing the bones really makes a difference in their lives and how connecting with this group and this instrument is now a significant part of their life - and IT'S ALL IN A GOOD WAY! I am blown away, truly. I want to thank everyone who participated at the festival and shared their story with me. Thank!

Martha Cowett

I think we all owe Walt Watkins a big thanks for inventing the "pass off." I believe it's a major development in our Fest and gives us an opportunity to show our stuff and learn from the other players in a way we haven't been able to do in the past. *Steve Brown*

This past weekend turned out to be one of the highlights of my life! Everyone was so cordial to me and I really appreciate that. (This was my first Bones Fest.) I was very apprehensive about the whole thing not knowing how or if I would be accepted because of the way I play, but by Saturday afternoon I was feeling quite comfortable and was proud to play for everyone Saturday night. *Danny Aldridge*

I've been around long enough now that I'm never surprised when I meet a new group of folks with whom I share a common interest to find that our common interest is only the introduction to a broader friendship. The humor of the group was not

unexpected, given our unusual avocation, but the depth of the good humor exceeded my anticipation. I could name many who dazzled me with their skill and artistry, but that would be to belabor the obvious to those skilled in our art. Instead let me say that my fondest memory of Bones Fest VI will be the friendship and good will exhibited by everyone to each participant be they veteran Bone Festers or first timers like myself.

Finally, I must say that there could be no better ambassadors for our off beat hobby (that should be ON beat, I guess) than the Cowett Family. Rarely does one have the opportunity to meet a family group involved in something that brings such obvious joy to them all as this does. *Mike*

Bones Calendar

Bones Fest VII. July 25-27, 2003. Louisville, KY. Hosted by Gil and Linda Hibben.

Bones and Spoons Contest, August 25-31, 2003. This event previously held in Avoca is moving nearby to Missouri Valley, Iowa. Contact Jerry Mescher (sharon_mescher@hotmail.com)

Don Sarrall Dies

Don Sarrall, who graciously played banjo for Bones Fest IV in Chattanooga, died suddenly at home, June 2002, following his weekly performance at the Mountain Opry. Don was a champion claw-hammer style banjo player who also played the

Tips and Techniques More on Duplets

There were several people at Bones Fest VI who played a two-beat, double-beat, double-tap or what I called a duplet in the Volume 4, No 2 column, that is a triplet without the middle sound. I assumed that not many people played it but I was wrong. Russ Myers says he plays it so much he has trouble playing a tap. Steve Brown says he first heard it from Paedar Mercier and member Ronnie McShane, and later from John Burrill.

I asked several people how they

produce a duplet and they did not describe a technique that is easy to teach. Jerry Mescher uses his ring finder to provide extra control. Russ Myers turns the bones so they point towards his stomach with the side towards the ground. Steve Brown produces it by starting with the dominant hand, and doing kind of half a rattle, not going to far back to the left, enough to get one beat and back to the right to get the other. If you play a duplet, please share your

Len Davis Daughter Remembers Him

Dad did make 'learner bones' and for a while these were supplied through two British traditional musical instrument retailers - Dave Mallinson Music (now called The Music Room) and Hobgoblin. I've got a double set of the child size bones and pair of adult bones in my collection but as far as I'm aware all other pairs have been sold. He also sold them at workshops. They were made from a plastic called urea formaldehyde resin, which Dad was told was unbendable but he worked out a simple way of bending it (the method for which I know but he swore me to secrecy!). They were sanded down to look more like wood.

Dad appeared on a number of records. One or two by Sadie Green Sales Ragtime Jugband, one by Italian band Tre Martelli (this one is ace), one by Alias Ron Kavana (although this isn't very good, the bones are too quiet). My favourites are the live recordings though - I've got one of him playing with legendary Fairport Convention fiddler Dave Swarbrick and also the recording he made with Al Svendrowski, a harmonica player, in the Idlewood Inn in Pennsylvania (also on video). There are probably others but those are the ones I know about. I've also got a couple of radio interviews/sessions taped. Dad also appeared on What's my Line? (a quiz show) and a local news programme. *Louisa*

(Note: This is email Louise sent to Steve Brown. Steve says Louisa is fiddler and bones player for the Oddsodds, an English Irish band (sounds contradictory)).

Minutes of the General Membership Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Everett Cowett at 4:10 pm on August 3, 2002 in the J. Bryan Auditorium on the campus of Guilford College.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as previously published in the newsletter.

Ev announced that Gil Hibben will host Bones Fest VII in Louisville, KY. He asked for a straw vote on the best time for the Fest. The results were; Spring, 9; Summer, 14; and Fall, 7.

Elections were held. The nominations from the Board were presented and the floor opened for further nominations. With no further nominations made, the nominees were elected by acclamation (see Board minutes below for names.)

Ev announced that Jonathan Danforth will take over the website from Martha Cowett. There was a request that members be able to easily submit information including mp3 samples of their bones playing.

There was a brief discussion of future Fests. The Sweets suggested Florida. Mystic Seaport was also suggested.

Steve Wixson announced that the IRS has approved our application as a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization.

Regional meetings were discussed and the membership liked the idea, the west coast in particular.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:39 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Steve Wixson, Secretary

Minutes of the RBS Board of Directors Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Everett Cowett at 2:15 pm on August 2, 2002 in the Library in the J. Bryan Auditorium. All of the Board members were present except Mel Mercier. There were several members present as visitors.

Ev gave an overview of the Bones Fest VI plans.

There was a discussion of the

Logo. First there was confusion as to whether an email vote had approved the logo, and with that confusion it was concluded that a valid vote had not taken place. The only point of discussion was the type font for the words 'Rhythm Bones Society.' The motion was made, seconded and approved to authorize Ev to complete the Logo as he sees fit.

There was discussion as to the legality of our Society using William Sidney Mount's painting "The Bone Player." Ev asked Sally Carroll to seek permission from the Boston Museum.

Ev announced the email vote for the Meritorious Service Award for Steve Wixson. The award will be presented at the banquet on Saturday night. It was moved and seconded that the Meritorious Service Award be given to Everett Cowett for his efforts in organizing the early Bones Fests that led to forming the Society and for his leadership efforts. Motion approved. It was further moved and seconded that the Meritorious Service Award be given to Martha Cowett for her work in developing the website that is responsible for many people finding the Society.

Ev noted that several people who play related instruments (Jews harp and spoons) have approached him with the idea of broadening the goals of the Society to include these instruments. A discussion ensued and the consensus of the Board was that the Society should continue to focus only on Rhythm Bones.

The concept of small regional bones events was discussed. There are many people who want to meet more than annually and others who cannot attend the annual Fest due to the travel distance involved (ie, west coast). No motion was made, but this will be discussed with members.

The location and time for Bones Fest VII was discussed. Gil Hibben, a visitor, volunteered to host it in Louisville, Ky. The motion was made, seconded and approved for Gil to host the Fest. The Board has talked about a fixed annual date for the Fest, but has not set one. There are good reasons for Spring, Summer and Fall dates. A survey will be taken at the

Membership meeting.

The question was raised as to whether we should sponsor a bones contest during the Bones Fest. A discussion ensued that noted a strength of the Fest is the lack of competition such that almost every bones player feels comfortable performing in front of their peers. The consensus of the Board was no bones contest.

Ev called for the Board to serve as the Nominating Committee for election during the Membership meeting. Russ Myers declined the nomination for Assistant Director due to health reasons. The motion was made, seconded and approved to nominate Ev for Executive Director, Steve Brown, Assistant Director, Steve Wixson, Secretary/Treasurer, and Sally Carroll, Gil Hibben, Mel Mercier and Jerry Mescher as Board Members.

Ev announced that Martha Cowett asked that someone else take over the website maintenance. Jonathan Danforth, a visitor, offered to take the job, and was selected by consensus.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 pm.

Minutes of the Board Meeting Following the General Membership Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Ev at 4:54 pm on August 3, 2002 in the Library of the J. Bryan Auditorium. Gil Hibben was welcomed to the Board.

The motion was made, seconded and approved to create the membership category of Fellow. The motion was made, seconded and approved to designate Russ Myers as a Fellow of the Rhythm Bones Society for his efforts on behalf of the Rhythm Bones Society and for bones playing in general.

The motion was made, seconded and approved that the hands shown in the Society's Logo be those of Everett Cowett.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Steve Wixson, Secretary

(Highlights—Continued from page 1)

does at the cabaret where she works.

Russ Myers although suffering from health problems showed us that he can still change the pitch as well as before. Sally and Terry Carroll continue to improve their play. Spike Bones Muhrer was the showman of old with a new CD. If you have not listened to "Bones Meets Jazz" by Spike Bones, you are missing something very special. I could not believe my ears. This CD could put Jazz and Bones Playing on the map again.

Parker Waite still can play a hip-hop beat and Steve Wixson was doing new and unusual things as usual. Old standbys such as Walt Watkins, who I declare most improved player, Don DeCamp, the "Tiger Woods" of Bones, John Davis and William Kear, both two-handed players now, Jim Nelson from the underground, Jerry Mescher and sister Bernie Worrell were outstanding together and Michael Ballard bringing back that California touch. And don't forget Gil Hibben; host for BFVII, doing the Latin beat.

Although I am nostalgic about the past, it was the new bones players that I met that really turned me on. Dan Griffin (the rocker), Mary and Frank Sweet doing old-time music in costume, Hank Tenenbaum (where have you been with those quiet sounds), Jonathan Danforth (fiddle, vocals and new web page master), Jeff Newman (a copy of Don DeCamp), Karen Singleton doing bones and clogging and Danny Aldridge who thought he was holding the bones the wrong way. Mike Hannan, Mike Passerotti with the sound machine and Floyd Breedan (hope you are feeling better) were all great and enjoyed by everyone.

For those of you that I missed or those that I have not named who elected to jam with the group rather than play solo, thank you for coming. You helped make this Fest so wonderful. Next year we hope to see you on stage.

The banquet without speeches went over fairly well and we stayed more or less on schedule. Steve Wixson, Martha Cowett and Ev Cowett each received the Rhythm Bones Society

Meritorious Service Award while Russ Myers was designated FELLOW of the Society. Congratulations to all and thank you. This was followed by a tribute to Freeman Davis, better known as "Brother Bones," in honor of the 100th anniversary of his birth.

During the membership meeting on Saturday officers and board members were elected for the fiscal year 2002-2003. Gil Hibben will host Bones Fest VII in Louisville, KY on July 26, 2003. Mark your calendars for the best Fest yet.

Special thanks are extended to my family for bringing this event together. Martha for nametags and registration, Tom for the printed program, Al for T-shirts and MC activities, Dan for CDs, tapes and sound system, Val for food and beverages and John and the Cowett spouses for all of their support before and during the Fest. Without everyone playing a part nothing would have happened.

A special thanks also goes to Steve Wixson for all of his help during the year and the special Brother Bones event and birthday cake.

Steve and Dan Cowett, while hiding in the auditorium control room all day, recorded a sound track of the Fest, which is outstanding. Steve has titled it "Bones Fest VI Live." We don't know exactly what we are going to do with it yet but all that have heard it

Paul Duhon Update

Paul was born on September 28, 1917. He has overcome many health problems which started at birth. Shortly after he was born the doctor told his parents that he probably would not live more than six months. Evidently Paul did not know about this or just didn't agree because he is 84 years old now and has successfully tackled all obstacles while enjoying his life. He has accomplished a great deal and has touched the lives of many people in the US and Canada.

The favorite of all his activities was working at Acadian Village as a volunteer for over 20 years. This work provided a stage for him to entertain people with his bones playing. Playing the bones has been a



Paul Duhon performing at Bones Fest III
Photograph by Sally Carroll

big part of his life since he was 14 years old when an old black man taught him how to play the bones.

Paul has practiced bones playing for many years and has become very skilled at it. He has played with many local musicians of international fame such as: Michael Doucent and Bean Soliel, Jachary Richard, Jimmy Newman and Christi Guilory. In addition he has performed with the following star country music artists: Willie Nelson, George Morgan, Mark Chestnut, Eddie Raven and Roy Acuff.

A few years ago he went on a tour in Canada with A.J. Leblanc and other friends of Acadian Village. Naturally he brought his bones and play at every opportunity which included a feature on the Canadian TV network.

Paul loved to perform and entertain, but his main source of joy and satisfaction was going to Acadian Village every day to meet the tourists, act as a tour guide and play the bones for them.

Acadian Village allowed Paul to do what he loved. He wanted to do something to acknowledge what Acadian Village had done for him. He and his brother came up with the idea of a small museum to be named the "Tee Paul Duhon House" (in French—La Maison de Tee Paul Duhon). The little house is Paul's gift to Acadian Village in recognition of Paul's gratitude to Acadian Villiage and its staff. The museum was built by his brother Willie and dedicated on May



Rhythm Bones Society

1060 Lower Brow Road
Signal Mountain, TN 37377-2910

Address Correction Requested