

Monroe hosts bluegrass show during Opry celebration

Bill Monroe hosted the Earlybird Bluegrass Concert, which was part of the Grand Ole Opry's birthday celebration last month. The concert took place Thursday afternoon in the Roy Acuff Theater at Opryland prior to the Opry's anniversary show the following weekend.

Some of the best bluegrass entertainers from across the country participated in the event, which kicked off the Opry festivities.

Ralph Stanley, Jim & Jesse, The Bluegrass Cardinals, Mac Wiseman, Blue Velvet, Unlimited Bluegrass, Bobby Smith and The Boys from Shiloh, George Winn & The Bluegrass Pardners, Pine Mountain Bluegrass Boys, Wildwood Pickers, Snake in the Grass, White Mountain Express, John Cosby and The Bluegrass Drifters and Dana Cupp & The Detroit Bluegrass Band were among those scheduled for the enthusiastic crowd.

Art Menius was named full-time executive director of the International Bluegrass Music Association during the organization's World of Bluegrass 1986 Trade Show in Owensboro, Ky. Menius had served as acting executive director since November 1985.

"I'm extremely gratified by the opportunity to devote my full-time energies to serving our industry and promoting America's best family entertainment — bluegrass music," Menius said.

At a recent meeting, the IBMA board developed four primary projects for next year.

The Insurance and Trust Committee, chaired by Larry Jones, will study the possibility of group insurance programs for bluegrass professionals. The Bluegrass Trust Fund was created to assist bluegrass musicians with uninsured medical expenses. Sonny Osborne of The Osborne Brothers will be putting together a benefit show for the trust fund.

The IBMA is also developing plans for a major event next September which will include both activities and shows for both fans and industry professionals as well as a trade show.

In other business, vice-president Mary Tyler Doub was named chairman of the membership drive for next year. Director Pete Kuyken-

dall will chair a committee to select a historian and develop collection policies for a proposed bluegrass museum and archives in Owensboro.

The IMBA also recently announced that their revised bluegrass radio list is ready for release. The list includes call letters, frequencies, addresses, phone numbers, contact people and airtimes for more than 700 stations in the U.S. and in foreign countries.

The list is free of charge to IBMA members and is also available on labels for a nominal charge until January 1, when the fee increases to \$50. Other listings of bluegrass associations, as well as press contacts and record companies interested in bluegrass, are also available from the IMBA.

The Spirit of the Suwannee Campground in Live Oak, Fla., has a busy schedule of events this month. On Nov. 14 Bill Harrell and The Virginians will appear in concert. On the 21st The Seldom Scene will perform in the new Music Hall.

The semi-annual Pick-In or mini-festival sponsored by the Suwannee River Bluegrass Association will be Nov. 22 with several bands performing. (The line-up was unconfirmed at press time.)

On Nov. 23-26 the Spirit of the Suwannee's first Music School will be held. Certified instructors will teach participants how to play the juice harp, gourds, gut bucket and other bluegrass instruments. On Nov. 27 there will be a Thanksgiving dinner and pickin' in the Music Hall. For more information, contact Bob and Jean Cornett at Rt. 1, Box 98, Live Oak, FL 32060.

Jim & Jesse have signed with Rounder Records. Del & Jerry McCoury are also new on the Rounder label.

Music City Station, a booking agency based in Hendersonville, Tenn., has opened a branch office in Stuart, Fla., with Grace Ausburn as director.

The Chubby Wise Bluegrass Festival in Jacksonville, Fla., has been changed to Nov. 7. The event was originally slated for Sept. 14.