

# MMHF News

February 2019

www.mnmusicHalloffame.org

## Music and Memories – Nancy Buckentine’s Story

When asked about her start playing with old-time bands, Nancy Buckentine of Cologne, MN smiled and said, “My life has never been without old-time music.”

Nancy’s dad, the late Earl Schmidt, along with fellow musician, Jerry Schuft, started their own band just a few months before she was born.

Nancy fondly remembers times when the band was new and the guys would get together at her family’s house to practice. “The musicians always seemed to be having fun and the music was great!” she explained.

It was the stories of the fun with musicians, the places they played, and the people that her dad met that Nancy always enjoyed hearing.

As she grew up, she also met a lot of the musicians and people at dances, and it was always a happy atmosphere. Nancy remembers the times at Gibbon Polka Days in Gibbon, MN as being “...the best.”

Nancy started taking piano lessons at age 6, and also learned to play organ. She played her first church service at age 12 and continues to play in area churches.

“It was mostly by sheer mistake or pure luck that I started playing keyboard with an old-time band,” she said. It began with Nancy getting a telephone call from a good friend, Linda Schroeder, letting her know that Linda had given her telephone number to Leon Helget. He needed a keyboard player for his upcoming performance at Larry Olsen’s Music Fest in Lake Benton in May, 2009. He had already called a few people who were not available and Linda also had another commitment that weekend, but knew that Nancy had talked about wanting to play if she ever had the opportunity. “I was very surprised to hear from Leon,” Nancy recalls. “I explained to him that I played piano and always wanted the opportunity to play with a band, but never actually had done it and if he was willing to give me a chance, I would certainly give it a try.” Leon was desperate to find someone to play that weekend and agreed to give Nancy that chance to join the group.

Recalling that first job at the Music Fest, Nancy admits it was rough at best, but Leon was encouraging, and they made it through the weekend. “I really had a good time that weekend and felt I was experiencing the fun things that Dad had talked about when he had his band,” she said. Leon asked if she would be interested in playing future jobs that he had, and Nancy agreed. She continued playing with Leon and even had the opportunity to be on his latest recording, “Most Requested Concertina Solos – Leon Helget Style.”

In time, Nancy began to get calls from other band leaders to fill in, and she played with various groups in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa. In June, 2013, George Palma needed a full-time keyboard player and gave Nancy a call. She became a member of George’s Concertina Band and continues to work most of the jobs he books. She was also on his latest recording, “Something Special.” “I really enjoy playing,” said Nancy, “because music makes me happy. It stirs up the childhood memories of things that Dad shared.”

Unfortunately, Nancy was not able to share any of her experiences with her dad. He passed on December 11, 2008. Nancy added, “But it always makes me smile when someone shares a story about a dance that Dad played, or they tell me that Dad played for their wedding or anniversary. It really is the people you meet and the musicians you work with that makes this job fun.”

**Nancy Buckentine featured at MMHF Fundraiser** - An annual event to help generate funds for the Minnesota Music Hall of Fame will take place Sunday, March 3 from noon to 6 p.m. at Turner Hall, 102 South State Street in New Ulm. All musicians donate their time and talent to perform at this event. A concertina jamboree hosted by Nancy Buckentine will be held in the lower level showcasing the talents of many area concertina artists and groups. The day’s events begin with the Wendinger Band, performing from 12:00 - 1:30 p.m. Featured this year are a group of musicians who will be presenting and playing the music of the former Earl Schmidt/Jerry Schuft Band. The Schmidt/ Schuft Band played from 1960 to 1985. Brian Brueggen from Cashton, WI, owns Jerry Schuft’s concertina and has offered to play at this event. The times set for the Reunion Band are 1:45 to 3:00, and 4:45 to 6:00 pm. George’s Concertina Band will play from 3:15 to 4:30. Food and beverages are available and all proceeds are used for the MMHF Museum. Come join the fun on March 3, 2019 at the Annual MMHF Fundraiser!

## **Minnesota Music Hall of Fame Museum**

Hours: 10 – 2; Thursday - Saturday

**Starting Nov.15 - April 15**  
**Call for Appointment.**

Address: P.O. Box 1  
New Ulm, MN 56073

Phone: 507-354-7305

Email: mmhf@newulmtel.net



**MMHF Board Members:** President, Dayle Besemer, 507-359-1566; Vice President, Brian Filzen, 507-217-6970; Secretary, Alma Forst, 507-359-9039; Executive Director, Nathan Sperl, 507-; Carol Steinhaus, 507-276-5798; Peter Wendinger, 507-276-2094; Dr. Charles Luedtke, 507-359-2216, Leon Olsen, 507-359-7476; Mike Shaw, 320-587-7429; Nate Sperl, 720-331-9297 Linda Schroeder, 507-276-5587, Gary Schroeder, 507-766-0727; Jeanette Carson, 507-359-1566; Jeff Bragelmann, 507-354-7115;

**Assistant Executive Director: Bonnie Ubl – 507-766-4115**  
**& Museum Administrator**

**Dodie Wendinger Retires** - Dodie Wendinger's last official act as Executive Director was the Annual Meeting and Volunteer Party of the MMHF held at St. George. She and others reminisced about the 30 years since the inception of the organization and Museum. From a small group of people with a vision of preserving Minnesota's vast variety of music, their endeavors have grown to a Museum filled with musical artifacts and memories. What was a dream turned into reality for Dodie and the Board of Directors of the MMHF. Dodie was given a standing ovation for her many years of dedication.

We extend a warm welcome to the new Executive Director, Nathan Sperl, and Assistant Director, Bonnie Ubl. Nathan is a New Ulm native, earning a degree in music and is currently working on his Masters Degree in Ethno-musicology. He brings new ideas to the organization and has been busy updating some of our exhibits. He also installed a stereo system in the museum which plays on a rotation with a mixture of all our inductees' music.

A recent addition to the museum is "Whoopee John's" piano, which has been repaired and tuned by Bruce Melzer. Everyone is invited to come and entertain us with some tunes! We will re-open April 4th with our spring hours.

## MEMORIALS FOR 2018

### **In Memory of Judy Kadlec**

Wayne & Barbara Micka, Marville Schmidt, Wendinger Band & Travel

### **In Memory of Leon Helget**

Wendinger Band & Travel, Marville Schmidt, Nancy Buckentine, Ed & Caroline Mathiowetz

### **In Memory of Susan Sands**

Marville Schmidt, Nancy Buckentine, Wendinger Band & Travel

### **In Memory of Curtis Schuft**

Ed & Caroline Mathiowetz

### **In Memory of LeRoy Flor**

Ed & Caroline Mathiowetz, Gordy & Ruth Palmer, Jeff & Becky Braegelmann, Diane Neubarth, Julie & Monti Rasmussen, Alvin & Theresa Windschitl, Dr. T.H. Mohr

### **In Memory of Marlys Johnson**

Wendinger Band & Travel

### **In Memory of Leo Lentz**

Wendinger Band & Travel

### **In Memory of Lucille Braunreiter**

Wendinger Band & Travel, Joel Albrecht

### **In Memory of Ray Valek**

Ruth & Charles Oliver, Tom Wencl, Bruce & Bev Tenney

### **In Memory of Donna Groebner**

Opal Dewanz

## Upcoming Events:

### • March 3, 2019

MMHF Fundraiser & Concertina Jamboree, featuring Reunion Band of Earl Schmidt & Jerry Schuft and Turner Hall, New Ulm  
Noon - 6 PM



## *Minnesota Music Hall of Fame, Inc.*

### *\$1,000 Music Scholarship*

Download the application form:  
[www.mnmusichalloffame.org](http://www.mnmusichalloffame.org)

Contact the Museum for Eligibility Criteria

*Scholarship funded by the  
Minnesota Music Hall of Fame  
& August Schell Brewing Company*

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