Twelve Hall of Fame Pioneer Inductees honored

About 850 people attended the Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony at the Marriott Griffin Gate Resort in Lexington last Thursday night.

The ceremony was held to honor the twelve Pioneer Inductees into the Kentucky Music Hall of Fame.

The event caught the eye of ABC's national news and all local news agencies in the area.

The new Kentucky Music Hall of Fame and Museum, currently under construction at Renfro Valley, is on schedule with building construction, exhibit design and exhibit fabrication for a spring 2002 grand opening. Grand Opening is now scheduled for May 17.

"All of the committees are hard at work and the elements of the project are coming together for our new statewide museum," said David Jury, chair of the museum board of directors.

The museum is a 16,600 square foot facility, which utilizes the renovated Lair Stables, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, as the portal to the new statewide museum and Hall of Fame. While the various branches of country music will certainly take center stage at the museum, all forms of Kentucky music will be honored. Kentucky's contribution to American music-folk, gospel, bluegrass, country and jazz is immeasurable.

Included in the museum will be a music room where students and visitors will see, touch, hear and perform with five interactive exhibits beat, pitch, style, composition, melody, harmony and other elements of music. A functioning sound booth is planned where visitors may sing and record.

A historic time-line will include exciting exhibits and dioramas taking the visitor from the pioneer beginnings of Kentucky music at "Brush Arbors," to the first WHAS Radio studio in the 1940's to a "ballyhooing" vintage automobile. It was "ballyhooing" that promoted bluegrass and folk concerts on courthouse steps, town squares and ball fields all over the state.

The Hall of Fame will include exhibit cases of instruments, artifacts, costumes and memorabilia, and inductees will be honored with different colored acrylic plaques on glass walls that are designed like old show bills. The Hall of Fame room is a connector, between the refurbished Lair Barn and the new museum.

The museum is a non-profit corporation that has received two appropriations totaling $3.5 million from the Kentucky General Assembly in 1998 and 2000. Another $1 million has been raised in a private fund-raising effort. The museum is a $6 million project to be completed in two phases.

The twelve Pioneer Inductees are:

John Lee Lair (1894-1985), of Livingston. Radio Pioneer, Folklorist, Writer, Entrepreneur. Founder of Renfro Valley Barn Dance.

Lair was instrumental in discovering and developing the talents of many country music performers such as Lulubelle, Karl & Harty, "Red" Foley, Doc Hopkins, Linda Parker, "Whitey" Ford, Lily May & the Coon Creek Girls, Merle Travis, Homer & Jethro, "Slim" Miller and Old Joe Clark, among others. His Cumberland Ridge Runners (the first string-band on radio to feature Kentucky mountain music) were a mainstay on the WLS National Barn Dance in the 1930's.

Seeking to establish a base closer to home for the radio shows he was producing, Lair and many of his entertainers moved to station WLW in Cincinnati, Ohio. He felt that radio needed a little more realism, a little less showmanship and a lot more heartfelt sincerity. So there, at the Cincinnati Music Hall, the *Renfro Valley Barn Dance* was born in 1937.

In just two years, with the help of "Red" Foley and his brother, Cotton and "Whitey" Ford, preparations were completed for moving the entire show to its intended destination, Renfro Valley.

On Opening night, November 4, 1939, when John Lee Lair stepped to the microphone on the stage of the big barn and said: "This is the Renfro Valley Barn Dance, coming to you direct from a real barn in Renfro Valley, the first and only barn dance on the air presented by the actual residents of an actual community..."

A Kentucky tradition was born; a tradition that lives on today in Renfro Valley. A colleague once said of Lair: "John could be, on an instante notice, a writer, producer, cartoonist, editor, songwriter, salesman, architect and always a dreamer."

Clyde Julian "Red" Foley (1910-1968), of Blue Lick. An outstanding vocal talent in Country, Gospel and Pop music.

Foley was one of the most versatile performers of all time. One of several Kentucky musicians recruited by John Lee Lair, he was a star of the WLS National Barn Dance in the 1930's, a Grand Ole Opry headliner in the 1940's and also had his own network show, "Avalon Time" with comedian "Red" Skelton. In the 1950's, he hosted "Ozark Jubilee" and helped many young performers to get their start. He recorded such huge hits as *Old Shep* and *Smoke, Smoke, Smoke (That Cigarette)*, which topped the charts for 13 weeks in 1944. A string of hits followed including, *Chattanooga Shoe Shine Boy* (another 13 weeks at number one), *Birmingham Bounce*, *Midnight, Good Night, Irene* (duet with Ernest Tubb), and *One By One* (duet with Kitty Wells). But it was a gospel singer that "Red" really made his mark. His 1951 recording of *Peace In the Valley* was the first Gospel record to sell a million copies, and he was the number one sacred song performer for five consecutive years. He was elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1967, the first Kentuckian to receive that honor.

Bradley Kincaid (1895-1989), of Point Leavell. Folk Singer, Radio Pioneer, Songwriter.

Kincaid grew up strumming folk tunes, mountain ballads on an old guitar his father had obtained in exchange for a foxhound; Bradley would later dub this his old "houn' dog guitar."

Beginning in 1926, he became the first big star of country music on Chicago's WLS and National Barn Dance, known as "The Kentucky Mountain Boy." He received more than 100,000 fan letters a year, and when he moved to WLW in Cincinnati, he received 50,000 letters in his first month on the air.

He published some 13 songbooks, he spent his summer vacations traveling the Appalachians and collecting ballads and folksongs from those who still sang them. While on a personal appearance for WLW, he met Louis Jones and Joe Troyart and invited them to go with him on tour, which they did for the next three years, all over the New England states. Bradley nicknamed Louis Jones "Grandpa" because he said he sounded like a grumpy old man.

Kincaid later moved to Nashville and became a member of the Grand Ole Opry. He was a warm, and talented entertainer but modest and grateful for his fans. His best known recordings are, *Barbara Allen*, *The Fatal Derby Day*, *The Legend of the Robin's Red Breast* and the *Letter Edged in Black*.

H. Russell Farmer, Kentucky Broadcaster's Association "Stephen Foster Award."

The inaugural Stephen Foster Award, presented by the Kentucky Broadcaster's Association for outstanding Kentuckians affiliated with the broadcasting industry. Farmer is a producer/director at KET who has been largely responsible for creating and producing much of KET's music programming for 27 years.

Audiences tune in weekly for KET's highly popular series, "Jubilee," which features America's roots music from bluegrass to blues, folk, rock and jazz. Jubilee is in its seventh season and KET plans to release the program nationally this spring.

"Jubilee" would be the second nationally-released KET-produced music series, following the award-winning "Lonesome Pine Specials," produced by Farmer, that aired on PBS for seven years. "Lonesome Pine" garnered the CPB Gold Award, and it's one more series to add to the list of others Farmer has produced, such as the "Tour of Kentucky Folk Music," and "Kentucky Bluegrass."

Farmer also produces and directs the prestigious "In Performance at the Governor's Mansion" series. KET also selected Farmer to produce such high profile specials as the Emmy Award winning "An Evening with Richard Davis and Friends (jazz) and "Ladies of Note." He also produced KET's documentary on Jean Ritchie, "Mountain Born," which aired nationally on PBS, in addition to "An Evening at the Leeds Theater" (1993), "Hymnody of Earth" (1994), "The Tour of Kentucky Folk Life", "An Evening with Carl Hurley & Friends (through the 90's) and "Merlefest," among many others.

Rosemary Clooney (1928-), of Maysville. Pop/Jazz/Blues Singer of film & radio.

Clooney began her career at age 13, singing with her sister Betty on Cincinnati radio. Later became a band vocalist and rose to instant fame with her recording of *Come-On-A-My-House*.

She starred in a number of films, most notably *White Christmas*, co-starring with Bing Crosby in 1954, in which she was lauded for her performance of the ballad *Love You Didn't Do Right By Me*. In the 1950's, she was signed to co-host, with Bing Crosby, a songfest radio show, which aired on CBS radio.

She became the star of her own television series in 1956 "The Rosemary Clooney Show," which ran through 1957. In 1976, Bing Crosby asked her to join him on his 50th Anniversary tour; it would be Crosby's final tour and Clooney's comeback event. The highlight of the show was their duet *On a Slow Boat to China*.

The next year, Clooney signed a recording contract with Concord Jazz, one that would produce a string of more than a dozen successful recordings including *Everything's Coming Up Rosie*.

She was recently inducted into the National Broadcaster's Hall of Fame, and in 1995, ASCAP awarded her the "Pied Piper Award," describing her as "an American Musical Treasure" and one of the best friends a song ever had.

Tom T. Hall (1936-), of Olive Hill. Singer, Songwriter, Storyteller, Author.

One of eight children, Hall began playing at age 10. His early musical and DJ work was on WMOR in Morehead. He joined the army in 1957 and many of his songs in the 1960's were about his time in the army and Vietnam.

Upon leaving the army, he moved to Nashville in 1964, to work as a songwriter, and produced so many original songs he had to start singing himself to get them recorded.

His first recorded single, *I Washed My Face in the Morning Dew*, was a Top 10 hit, as was the next, *A Week in the County Jail*, which ascended to number one on the Country Charts.

He wrote *Harper Valley, P.T.A.*, which Jeannie C. Riley took to number one on the U.S. Pop Charts. His album *Storyteller* included one of this most popular songs, *Old Dogg, Children and Watermelon Wine*. He won a Grammy for *Tom T. Hall's Greatest Hits*, and hit the Pop Charts again in 1974 with *I Love*. A member of the Songwriters Hall of Fame.

Tom T. Hall has left a legacy as having one of the most enduring and recognizable voices in country music.

Bill Monroe (1911-1996), of Rosine. "Father of Bluegrass" Mandolin, Singer, Songwriter.

Monroe was credited with developing and perfecting the Bluegrass music form and taught it to many great names in the industry including his proteges Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs.

A descendant of the fifth president of the United States, Monroe began to concentrate on the mandolin at age nine because no family member played that instrument.

In 1932, the three Monroe Brothers toured for WLS Chicago. In the mid-30's he and his brother, Charlie toured as the Monroe Brothers and recorded for RCA-Victor.

In 1939, Monroe made his first appearance on the Grand Ole Opry. He and Charlie split and Monroe formed his first band, The Kentuckians, and then the Bluegrass Boys in the 40's. It was the leading influence of Monroe's driving mandolin and his high tenor voice, that set the Bluegrass Boys apart. It was while Flatt and Scruggs were with the band that Monroe first recorded his now immortal song *Blue Moon Kentucky*.

During the 40's, Monroe toured with his tent show, which included his famous baseball team and David "Stringbean" Akeman, who provided comedy and banjo playing. In 1974, he was elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame and in 1989 celebrated his 50th year as a member of the Opry.

Lionel Hampton, Governor's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Internationally acclaimed genius of the jazz world and undisputed King of the Vibraphone for well over half a century, Lionel Hampton began his phenomenal musical career as a drummer. Born in Louisville, the music of Louis Armstrong was a major influence in Hamp's young years. He had his first meeting with Armstrong in 1930 and Armstrong was so impressed he hired the young drummer to join his big band rhythm section.

It was Armstrong that turned Hampton onto the "vibes" and the first song they cut together was "Memories of You," which became a tremendous hit and became a classic throughout the years. Hampton joined up with Benny Goodman in 1936, and the Benny Goodman Quartet made immediate musical history and the "Swing Era" had begun with tunes like "Moonglow", "Dinah" and "Vibraphone Blues."

Hampton formed his own big band in the early 1940's and succession of highly successful records under his own name followed, including "Sunny Side of the Street", "Central Avenue Breakdown", "Flying Home" and "Hamp's Boogiee Woogie." The Lionel Hampton Orchestra had a phenomenal array of artists including Quincy Jones, Wes Montgomery and the legendary Aretha Franklin.

Hampton is also an accomplished composer. His original ballad "Midnight Sun" is a beloved classic in American jazz. Respected in the symphonic field as well, his two major works, "King David Suite", and "Blues Suite" are performed often by orchestras throughout the world.

Jazz giant Hampton has recorded innumerable prestigious albums over the years. Among those of which he is most proud are the Official American Goodwill Ambassador bestowed by President Eisenhower and Nixon, the Papal Medal from Pope Paul I, seventeen Honorary Doctorates and the Gold Medal of Paris, France's highest cultural award.

In 1992 he was awarded the highly coveted Kennedy Center Honors Award. He was overwhelmed to receive the National Medal of the Arts at the White House in 1997 from President Bill Clinton.

Bobby and Sonny Osborne (Bobby born 1931, Sonny born 1937-) Mandolin, Banjo, Bluegrass Songwriters & Singers.

The Osborne Brothers combined the "High Lead Trio" style of Bluegrass music. From 1956-59, they played the WWVA Wheeling Jamboree, and recording with Red Allen, had a 1958 hit on MGM with *Ohio More More*.

In 1963, they joined the Grand Ole Opry and had several country chart successes including *Rocky Top*, which has the distinction of being the state song in Tennessee.

Their song *Kentucky* was also the state song for The Commonwealth of Kentucky.

They toured with many major stars including Conway Twitty and Merle Haggard, and were the first group in Bluegrass at the White House.

They are the only band to win both the Country Music Association and Bluegrass Vocal Group of the Year in the same year.

Merle Travis (1917-1983), Rosewood Guitar Stylist, Singer, Songwriter.

The son of a tobacco farmer and coal miner, he got his start in 1938 when he joined the Tennessee Tom cats and from there the Georgia Wildcats and the Drifting Pioneers. He and Grandpa Jones did many radio shows together and recorded as the Sunset Sherd Brothers.

He co-wrote Capitol's first million-seller, *Smoke, Smoke, Smoke, That Cigarette* with Tex Williams and his eight-song, *Folk Songs of Our Hills* included *Nine Pound Hammer*, *Dark As A Dungeon* and *Sixteen Tons*.

He won acclaim for his portrayal of a young GI in the 1954 film *From Here to Eternity* in which he sang *Re-enlistment Blues*. He was also one of the Texas Playboys in the Clint Eastwood Film, *Honkytonk Man*.

Travis' *Walkin' The Strings* is a highly-regarded album of fantastic guitar solos. In 1948, he developed the solid-body guitar. He was elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1977.

Louis Marshall "Grandpa" Jones (1913-1998), Country Singer, Comedian, Banjo.

Jones was the youngest of 10 children of sharecropping parents who performed music locally.

He began on radio as "the younger singer of old songs" at a very early age, but received his famous nickname in 1935 while touring with Bradley Kincaid, who maintained that he sounded like a grumpy old man, hence he became "Grandpa" at age 22.

While working on a station in West Virginia, he met fellow Kentuckian "Cousin Emmy," who taught him to play the banjo in her exuberant frailing style, and the banjo became his primary instrument.

Moving on to WLW in Cincinnati, he was part of one of the great gospel quartets, The Brown's Ferry Four with the Delmore Brothers and Merle Travis.

Jones moved to Nashville in 1946 where he played with Pee Wee King's Band on the Opry and became a member of the Grand Ole Opry in 1950. He was part of the original cast of the popular country television show *Hee Haw*, which made him a household name, especially with his "While's for dinner Grandpa," which he wrote.

He was also a composer of songs, *Eight More Miles to Louisville* and the gospel standard *Failing Loves* were two of the most popular. He was elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1978.

Phil and Don Everly (Don 1937-, Phil 1939-) of Country Close Harmony, Doo Wop & Rock & Roll Country Pop Recording Artists/Songwriters.

Began performing at ages eight and ten with their musical parents, Ike and Margaret Everly. On their own while at high school, Phil and Don, as a duo, had the Top 10 Rockabilly chart 15 years before the rest of their peers.

Their first hit, *Bye Bye Love*, whose magic was felt in the country charts for less than a month, and remained in the Top 100 for 20 weeks, to become their first Gold record. They were the first members of the musical elite to be simultaneously in the Top 10 in the country and Top 10 in the Pop charts with *Bye Bye Love* and *All I Have To Do Is Dream*. They were selected by the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame as the most influential Rock and Roll duo.

They have sold over 35 million records, with Warner Brothers, Columbia and Elektra Records, and have had 26 Top 10 Country hits, including *Cathy's Clown*, *Bird Dog*, *Wake Up Little Susie*, *Devoted To You*, *Bowling Green*, *Love Hurts*, *Walk Right Back*, *Crying In The Rain*, *Let It Be Me*, *Lucille*, *Dream*, *Cathy's Clown*, *Bird Dog*, *Wake Up Little Susie*, *Devoted To You*, *Bowling Green*, *Love Hurts*, *Walk Right Back*, *Crying In The Rain*, *Let It Be Me*, *Lucille*, *Dream*, *Mama Tried*, *Roots And Branches*, *Lightning Express*, *Rip It Up*, *Ballerina*, *Lucille