

THE BONANZA STEAMERS

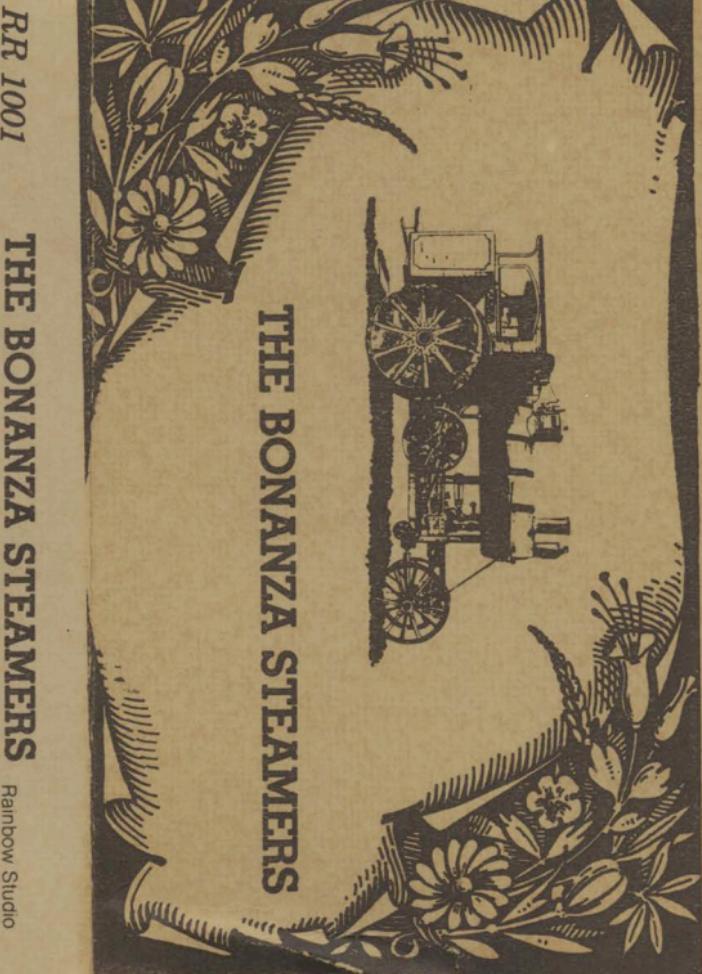
History

The "Bonanza Steamers" have become a traditional part of the famous Threshers Reunion held each Labor Day at Rollag, Minnesota. The group has also become very popular for performances at Bonanzaville U.S.A. at the Red River Valley Fairgrounds in West Fargo, North Dakota. In fact, the "Bonanza Steamers" derive their name from that popular tourist attraction.

Ever since their start in 1954, the "Bonanza Steamers" have been getting together to "Play Old Time Music, Just for Fun." That has always been, and always will be their motto. All five of the "Bonanza Steamers" are proud to say that they're teetotalers, and so, they are very selective about where they play. In addition to the Rollag Steam-threshers Reunion and Bonanzaville U.S.A., the "Bonanza Steamers" prefer to play for residents of nursing and retirement homes, as well as for members of senior citizens clubs in Minnesota and North Dakota.

It's hard to believe it when you listen to their songs, but only one member of the band can read music. Four of the "Bonanza Steamers" derive their excellent sound from playing by ear, and all five demonstrate a true love for the music they play.

The "Bonanza Steamers" had a lot of fun making this tape, and they hope that you'll enjoy it for many years to come. Whenever the band is in your area, we hope you'll make a point to see them for "Old Time Music, Just for Fun."



RR 1001

THE BONANZA STEAMERS

Rainbow Studio

SIDE ONE Accordion Waltz • Gray's Polka • Westphala Waltz •
Scottish in G • Sweet Bunch of Daisies • Silver Bells • Rusty's Dance
• Under the Double Eagle "March" • Goose River Waltz • Twinkle

SIDE TWO Five Foot Two • Nid Even • Red Wing • Nye Fishers

Valsen • Saturday Nite Waltz • Lars Scottish • Owl Waltz • Bond
Waltz • Kentucky Waltz • Casey's Old Time Waltz • God Bless
America

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Orville J. Ellingson, 66, accordian and bass drum. Orville is a retired farmer and electrician from Hickson, North Dakota. He has been interested in music since childhood, but his family had no means for purchasing instruments. Orville bought his first accordian in 1951. The "Bonanza Steamers" provide him with his first chance to play professionally.



Alf Berg, 62, Violin and bass guitar. Alf is an active farmer and television service man from Hillsboro, North Dakota. Alf still plays the same violin his parents bought for him many years ago. He began his musical career when he started playing the harmonic at age 14. Alf attained his degree in

English and music from Augsburg College in Minneapolis.



Grant Ellingson, 60, guitar. Grant is the manager of a farm supply store. He hails from Klamath Falls, Oregon. Grant started playing guitar at age 12. He put the instrument aside for many years, after enjoying limited time for playing during his years in the Army Air Force between 1942 and

1946. Grant's other hobbies include wood and metal working.



Kenneth Thompson, 65, Lead accordian. Kenneth is the composer of the "Goose River Waltz," which is included on this tape. He bought his first accordian in 1935, but put it in mothballs for several years while he raised his family and worked to support them. Kenneth says the accordian bug hit him

again in 1960, when he heard the excellent old time music being played at the Steamthreshers Reunion in Rollag, Minnesota.



Stanley Ellingson, 77, six-key harmonica. Stanley is the oldest member of the "Bonanza Steamers." He is a retired farmer from Wolverton, Minnesota. He started playing the harmonica when he was 15 years old. Even though he can't read music, Stanley is an accomplished musician.

After putting the harmonica aside for several years during his career as a farmer and machinery service man, Stanley picked up his favorite instrument again in his latter years, and joined the "Bonanza Steamers" in 1978.

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Art Direction & Design ROBERT WASHNIESKI

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