

At age of 90, Bill Dowdy still takes stage at LS Opry

Bill gets Hall of Fame honors as rhythm guitarist

At the age of 90, Bill Dowdy, still takes the stage the first Monday of every month for the Giddings Rotary Club's Lone Star Opry, previously known as Country Music Monday.

A native of Lexington, Bill has been playing rhythm guitar with the house band for the past 18 years.

Recently Mr. Dowdy was one of three musicians inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in Gatesville.

Although Bill wasn't a member of the original house band, he was here one evening to accompany the late Jimmy Hester of Lexington who had a guest appearance on the show.

Jim Siegeler of Giddings, who was a member of the band at that time, happened to hear Bill strumming the chords to "Stardust" backstage.

The two have been friends and band mates ever since. And Jim mentioned to house band

organizer Andy Smith that they ought to invite Mr. Dowdy to join them each first Monday.

Bill has been playing guitar since he was 12 years old, learning basic guitar chords from his father.

Although Bill attended college in San Marcos, he spent more time studying guitar chords.

World War II took Bill from college and put him in the Navy. While stationed at Pearl Harbor, he received his big band swing rhythm style with the 5th CB Hepcats, a serviceman's musical group featuring musicians from Charlie Spivak's Orchestra.

After his discharge in 1945, Bill returned home and became a full-time rhythm guitarist and vocalist, joining the Benny Murski and TC Bigley bands

See DOWDY, page 14



BILL DOWDY
... Hall of Fame recipient

Lexington man charged with aggravated sexual assault in Rockdale

A 24-year-old Lexington man was arrested in Rockdale and charged with attempted aggravated sexual assault. Justin Howard was arrested after



PAUL SCHLESINGER
... Hall of Fame recipient

In 1953, Bill did a stint with Jesse Lee and the Texas Valley Boys of La Grange and became proficient at bass.

The Valley Boys once played backup for nationally known artist T. Texas Tyler.

But by 1955, Bill was back with Mr. Wusterhausen, remaining with him until the mid-1960s when he broke his leg chasing a cow. That accident ultimately resulted in a 20-year retirement from the music business.

Then in the 1990s, Bill came out of retirement and joined the Jim Siegeler Orchestra in Giddings.

In 1997, Bill took an interest in helping aspiring fiddler Paul Schlesinger in the music business, and the two have played together ever since.

Mr. Dowdy returned to the country and western swing dance circuit in 2001 when he joined the Texas Pioneers.

In 2003, Bill's accomplish-

Rural mailbox damaged

Robert Albrecht reported his mailbox damaged on Christmas Eve.

Deputy Mike York investigated the call at 9:30 a.m.

GIVES SUBSCRIPTION TO ADAM JATZLAU

Floyd and Debbie are giving a year's subscription of the Giddings Times & News to Adam Jatzlau of Bryan. It is a birthday gift.

DOWDY

(FROM PAGE ONE)

operating around Brenham.

In 1950, he cut a record with Jimmy Heap and the Melody Masters and in 1951 joined Howard Wusterhausen and his Lone Star Ramblers.

ments were officially recognized when he was inducted into the Texas Western Swing Hall of Fame in San Marcos.

Bill and Paul released their CD, "Our Way," in 2005, and since then they often play as a trio with guitarist Ray Tesmer of Round Rock.

And he continues to play at the Giddings and Thorndale oprys, as well as playing with Paul's Knights of Texas Swing Band whenever possible.

Schlesinger inducted into Hall of Fame

Paul Schlesinger of Taylor, now also a well-known area musician, was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame of Gatesville.

Paul is a member of the Lee County Cowboy Church band, known as Second Chance, under the direction of Joe Boyd Reynolds. The group has been performing since 2010.

Paul is a frequent guest performer on the Lone Star Opry. He has his own group, the Knights of Texas Swing.

Both Paul and Bill have often worked with band leader Jim Siegeler.

It was Jim who was inspired to write "Lee County Waltz" while sitting in a deer blind out at Bill Dowdy's ranch in Lexington.

Mr. Siegeler was the first band leader to hire Paul, a gig they played in San Angelo in 1997.

Paul, who was born in 1970, not only plays the fiddle, but also sings and plays rhythm guitar.



**WE'RE READY
TO WORK
AS HARD AS YOU DO**

**Call 1.800.258.8302 or visit
us at www.intonline.com to
see what we can deliver.**

**OUR E-MAIL ADDRESS:
gtimes@verizon.net**