

BLUEGRASS BREAKDOWN

The Official Publication of the
CALIFORNIA BLUEGRASS ASSOCIATION

SPECIAL EDITION

April 1977



JIM & JESSE

W.D. Productions presents _____

jim & jesse & the Virginia boys

Friday, April 29 _____ 8:00 P. M.

Center for Performing Arts

san jose

Almaden & Park

_____ \$6.00 — \$5.00 _____

ADVANCE TICKETS AT TOP HAT AGENCY AND ALL OTHER MAJOR TICKET OUTLETS

Photo credits: cover, Bluegrass Unlimited, 1975 Special Program Edition
Page 3, Pickin', April 1976
Page 4, 5, and 6, Lars Bourne, CBA Art/Publicity Director
Page 7, sketch, Lars Bourne

Promoter: "W.D." of W.D. Productions is Wayne Dye.
CBA Member living in Mountain View

BLUEGRASS BREAKDOWN is published bi-monthly at 357½ Valley Street, San Francisco, CA 94131 by Burney Garelick, Editor. It is the official publication of the California Bluegrass Association, which was founded in 1975 by Carl Pagter and is dedicated to the furtherance of bluegrass, gospel, and old-time music. Membership in the Association costs \$7.50 per person per year; a spouse may be included for an additional \$2.50, and all children under 16 for \$1.00. \$3.75 of the initial \$7.50 is for a subscription to BLUEGRASS BREAKDOWN for one year. Non-members may subscribe to BLUEGRASS BREAKDOWN for \$5.00 per year. Each member family is entitled to receive a copy of each BLUEGRASS BREAKDOWN newsletter, as part of their dues, and to reduced admission charges to all CBA activities. Direct all membership applications and inquiries to the California Bluegrass Association, P.O. Box 11287, San Francisco, CA 94101. Second-class postage paid at San Francisco, California.

Brother acts--like the Monroes and Stanleys--have always been popular in country music, and they have formed the basis for many outstanding bluegrass bands. Jim and Jesse McReynolds have always had what is considered the most beautiful duet sound in bluegrass. Pure, clear, sweet, and smooth are some of the adjectives that describe this remarkable blend of Jesse's lead and Jim's tenor. It's an original bluegrass sound, distinct from that of Bill Monroe, Ralph Stanley, and Lester Flatt.

The story begins nearly half a century ago in the mountains of southwestern Virginia with the birth of James Monroe McReynolds followed two years later by that of Jesse Lester McReynolds. The brothers were raised on the string band music of their father and uncles and the radio broadcasts of the Monroe brothers. Jim took up guitar, Jesse the mandolin, and by the mid 40s they had formed their first band.

Their career ranged from old-time mountain music to western Sons of the Pioneers-type singing to bluegrass to modern country and back to bluegrass. It was all a matter of wanting to be professional musicians and being determined to survive as professional musicians. Through it all, they have maintained their own high quality standards of musical excellence.

Apart from their singing, their most innovative contribution to bluegrass is Jesse's mandolin style called cross-picking. This is a very complex technique that duplicates the finger-picked banjo sound of Earl Scruggs. Quite different from the standard picking of Monroe, Jesse's style showers your senses and dazzles your mind with glittering, sparkling, and shimmering sounds. Another innovation is melodic or chromatic banjo picking, developed by their one-time banjo player, Bobby Thompson. This



differs from Scruggs-style in that it allows the banjo to play fiddle tunes note-for-note, much to the delight of many fiddlers! (The style was developed simultaneously by Bill Keith in another part of the country and popularized by him.) Jim and Jesse made some of their finest recordings with Bobby Thompson and ever-popular fiddler Vassar Clements.

"I wish you knew
How hard I've tried to
tell you,
How hard I've tried to
get you off my mind,
I wish you knew. . ."

We wish you, Jim and Jesse, knew how delighted we northern California bluegrassers are that you are performing in our part of the country. It is not often that we enjoy the talents of those who have had a hand in developing and perpetuating bluegrass music. Although bluegrass does not flourish in California, the sentiments of its fans and the abilities of its pickers are ripe, and the soil is fertile--and your visit is like rain to a (literally) dry country--come back often and you'll see where the bluegrass grows.

also featuring _____

THE VERN WILLIAMS

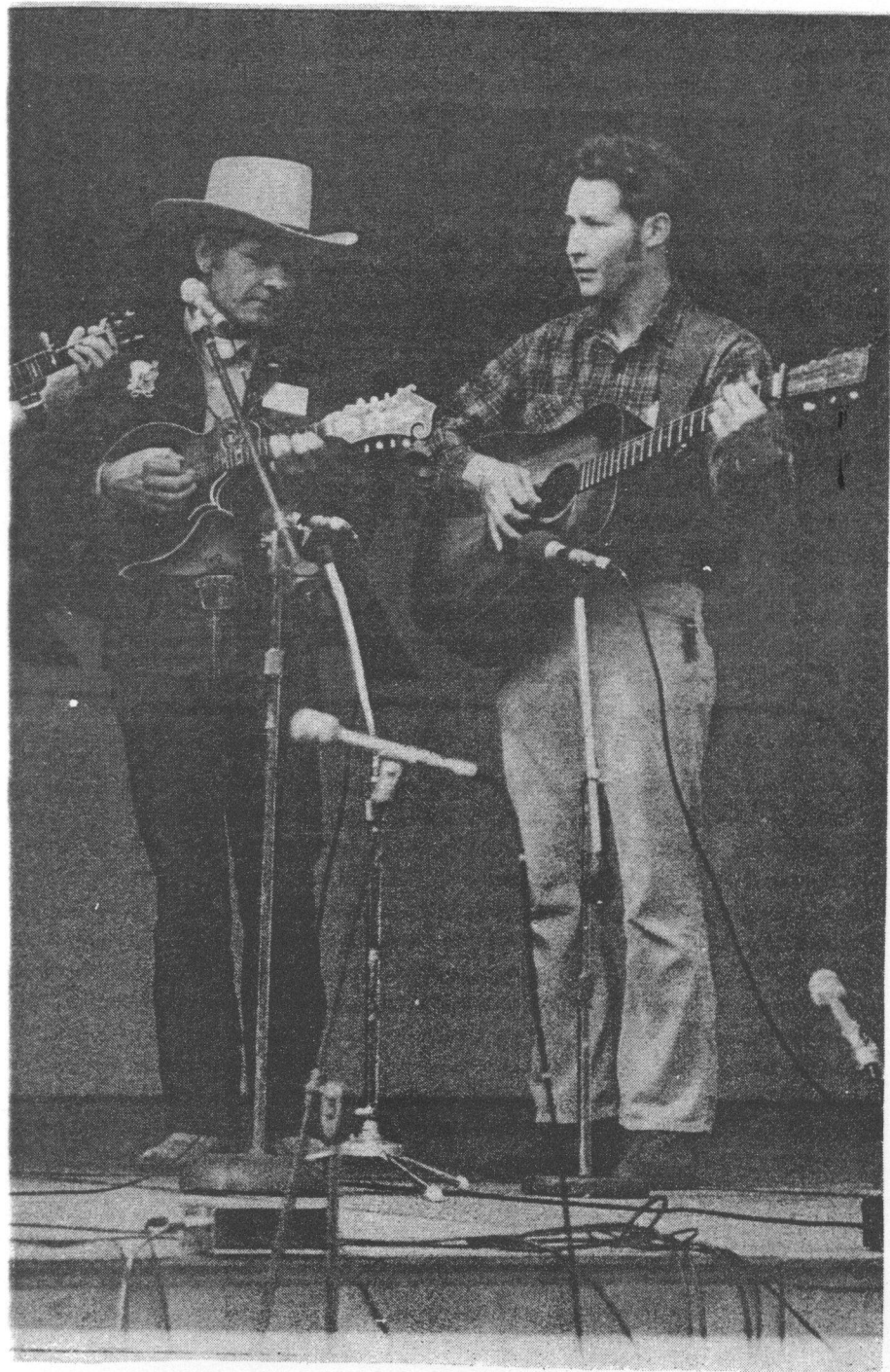
The Vern Williams Band is certainly one of northern California's finest traditional bluegrass bands. But anyone who has heard Vern's piercing and powerful tenor will not be surprised. It is often assumed that real bluegrass can only be picked by those who have lived in that "cabin on the hill"--that young, urbanized, Californians can't get it right. In the case of this band, Vern is the only one who could qualify as "real"; however, his natural talent has shaped the style of Delbert, his son, and Keith Little so that their picking and singing is as genuine as that of anyone from the rural south, where bluegrass took root. The result is a rare harmonic blend that is, in the inimitable expression of KFAT's Al Knoth, "really Fiiiiiiiiine bluegrass."

While Delbert and Keith are native Californians, Vern hails from Bullfrog Valley, Arkansas. Growing up in the Ozarks instilled a deep affection for mountain music and bluegrass, and Vern has been picking and singing as long as he can remember. The army brought him to California in the early 50s, and eventually he settled in Valley Springs, a small town near Stockton. In 1958 one momentous bluegrass meeting occurred: Vern was introduced to Ray Park, extraordinary fiddler and songwriter, now living in Placerville. The musical chemistry was perfect, and one of the finest duos ever to sing bluegrass resulted. Coincidentally, Ray grew up in Treat, Arkansas, practically the same "holler" back in the Boston Mountains. Each has vague re-



DELBERT WILLIAMS CHUCK WILEY KEITH LITTLE

LIAMS BAND



PTLE VERN WILLIAMS CHRIS BOUTWELL

membrances of having seen or heard the other picking, but they never knew each other. After finally meeting, they formed the Carroll County Country Boys and played throughout the Stockton-Sacramento area. Then, as Vern and Ray, they toured extensively, spent some time in Nashville, and recorded an album. In the last year or so, however, their performances as a duo have become increasingly less frequent, limited to spontaneous jam sessions, when the mood is right. It is evident that while remaining best of friends (more like brothers), they have each decided to go their separate ways--getting together occasionally for those special, unannounced bluegrass treats.

While Ray has done some solo gigs, some recording with Herb Pedersen, and some fiddling with the Slab Creek Boys, his son Larry's new bluegrass band, Vern has put together this super bluegrass band--with Delbert on fiddle, Keith on banjo, and Chuck Wiley on bass (himself a veteran bluegrass throughout northern California). During the past year guitarist Chris Boutwell, formerly with High Country, moved to southern California, and the band has been working with a variety of guitar pickers, searching for the right sound--and you'll hear that sound on April 29 in San Jose.

But hold on--as if Jim and Jesse and The Vern Williams Band were not enough--there's more to this concert presented by W. D. Productions. Just turn the page.

and the



JOE ZUMWALT

GERI KING

ROBBIE MACDONALD

PAUL KING

new tonto basin boys

and



**Cousin
Norman**


MC

AL KNOTH

KFAT-FM

94.5

SUNDAY EVENINGS - 6:30-9:00



Founded in 1975 and dedicated to the furtherance of Bluegrass, Gospel, and Old-Time music. Each member family is entitled to receive a copy of each BLUEGRASS BREAKDOWN newsletter, as part of their dues, and to reduced admission charges to all CBA activities. \$3.75 of the \$7.50 is for a subscription to BLUEGRASS BREAKDOWN for one year.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

This membership application is for single or family application. A family is defined as the two adult spouses and all children under the age of 16 years. There must be a main applicant at \$7.50 per year, and the spouse may be included for an additional sum of \$2.50. All eligible children may be included for the sum of \$1 (no voting right for children).

NEW ☐

RENEWAL ☐

Address (Street,
City, State, ZIP)

Tel. _____

MAIN APPLICANT NAME Last: _____ First: _____ \$ 7.50

INCLUDED SPOUSE (First Name Only) _____ \$ 2.50

ELIGIBLE INCLUDED CHILDREN	First Name	Birth Date	\$ 1.00
INSTRUMENTS PLAYED: _____	1. _____	_____	
_____	2. _____	_____	
_____	3. _____	_____	

List any services you can offer CBA (such as printing facilities, writing, artwork, advertising, sound systems, instrument sales and maintenance, etc.):

TOTAL ENCLOSED
(not to exceed \$11)

SEND CHECK OR MONEY ORDER
(do not send cash) TO:
Treasurer, California
Bluegrass Association,
P.O. Box 11287, San
Francisco, CA. 94101.

Information on new Band Membership Rate
available in next regular issue.

OTHER BLUEGRASS EVENTS:

April 23 - 1st Annual Competitive Bluegrass & Traditional Band Showdown, Landis Auditorium, Riverside City College, Riverside; 10:00-3:00; Admission \$1.00; Trophies & Cash Prizes; featuring Lost Highway; for information call 714/684-3240, ext 276.

April 29, 30, May 1 - 6th Annual Golden West Bluegrass Festival, Silver Lake, Norco; featuring Jim & Jesse and much, much more--you could leave right after the concert in San Jose!--3-day advance \$12, 2-successive days advance \$8; at the gate each day: \$4/Fri., \$5/Sat., \$5/Sun. Send check or money order to Dick Tyner, P.O.Box 341, Bonsall, CA 92003.

May 8 - Main Exhibit Bldg., Eldorado County Fairgrounds, Placerville; Noon--; Admission \$2.50 advance, \$3.00 at door; featuring Larry Park, Ray Park, Herb Pedersen, Vern Williams, South Loomis Quickstep, Slab Creek Boys, Dusty Rustlers, Sonny Monday, Val Peas, and The Countrymen; all proceeds go to Chris Reid, 7-year old who was very seriously injured in an automobile accident. Promoter: Larry Park.

May 15 - CBA Mini-Festival, Citrus Fair Auditorium, Cloverdale.

June 17, 18, 19 - CBA 2nd Annual Bluegrass Festival, Nevada County Fairgrounds, Grass Valley.

CALIFORNIA BLUEGRASS ASSOCIATION
357½ Valley Street
San Francisco, CA 94131

Second-class postage
paid at San Francisco,
California

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