

# **GOSPEL PROMOTIONS**

**(Late update: 10/26/22)**

**BIG GOSPEL SINGING ROUND-UP** - **Mount Orab** - was held each summer at the *Brown County Fairgrounds* in the 1970s. The area has also produced several families who sang gospel music.

**BLUEGRASS GOSPEL ROUNDUP** – **Canton**

**C & H GOSPEL MUSIC PROMOTIONS** – **Cleveland** – Managed by Lloyd E. Hux

**COGAR’S SINGING JUBILEE** - **Orrville** - promoted southern gospel music locally for over 24 years.

**DYNAMIC PROMOTIONS** – **Cleveland** - Gospel music promotion company which was organized in 1963 by Hilda Sanford, Sam Fisher and John Crockett

**FAIR PROMOTERS CLUB** - **Cleveland** - was organized by William “Skippy” Still, Odessa Still, Woddy Coleman and Ester Neal on July 7, 1958. They promoted such groups as the Highway QCs, Staple Singers, James Cleveland, Swan Silvertones, Blind Boys and Mighty Clouds of Joy.

**GREATER CINCINNATI SOUTHERN GOSPEL MUSIC ASSOC (GCSGMA)** – **Cincinnati** – Steve Wilson recently teamed up with the Harpers and several other groups in the area, and with the help of *Homer’s Restaurant* in Evendale, they formed the Greater Cincinnati Southern Gospel Music Association designed to promote and preserve southern gospel music in the Greater Cincinnati area.

**GUERNSEY GOSPEL JUBILEE ASSOCIATION** – **Cambridge** – an Annual Fall Gospel Sing featuring Southern Gospel Music is held at *Spring Valley Campground* which is located off of I-70 (Exit 178) at

8000 Dozer Rd, Cambridge. Admission was always free. Handicap parking and shuttle was available. Everyone was encouraged to bring a lawn chair and a friend! Come rain or shine!

**JLG MINISTRIES** – **Canton** – a Christian concert ministry founded by the James Lawson Family and based on the scripture Psalm 150 – “*Let everything this is alive praise the Lord.*” Our goal is to present the Gospel of Jesus Christ through “*Music with a Message.*” Our focus is to present the finest in Southern Gospel Music. James Lawson grew up listening to some of the all-time pioneers in Gospel Music such as the *Statesmen Quartet*, *Blackwood Brothers*, *LeFevres*, *Weatherfords* and the *Speer Family*. These “*Gospel Greats*” left an indelible impression that firmly established his roots in Southern Gospel Music. Thirty four years ago, James promoted his first Southern Gospel concert featuring the legendary *JD Sumner and the Stamps Quartet*, *LeFevres* and the *Rhythm Masters Quartet*. As James put it, “*it's always been my heart's desire to glorify Jesus through the ministry of music in some way.*” Following a 21 year leave from promoting Southern Gospel artists, James had a clear vision from God that opened the door to promoting once again. This is when James started his popular concert series called “*Gospel Music-Live!*” in the greater Akron/Canton areas. Also, he was the first promoter in the area to start *Christian Dinner Concerts* at the *Kaufman Center* in Hartville featuring the best of Southern Gospel Music. Over the past decade James has had the opportunity of working with just about every major group and with many Gospel Music legends. “*God can use us in different capacities and He can be Glorified!*” He continues his concert promotions and inspirational travel opportunities. “*God has richly blessed our ministry over the years.*” James Lawson (Gospel Music-Live!) has promoted and advertised events, concerts and banquets since the early 1970's throughout various locations throughout Ohio, Kentucky, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and New York

In March of 2013 *Singing News* received the following letter from Southern Gospel promoter, James R. Lawson: “*Dear fellow Associates of the Southern Gospel Music Industry: After 21 years involved in promoting "Gospel Music-Live" concert series with our home-base at the historic Canton Palace Theatre, Canton, Ohio, I have decided that God is leading me in a different direction. Exactly what that is, I am not sure at this point. Everything in life has a season and I feel that continuing to promote concerts on an individual basis has reached its maturity. Throughout the years, I have worked with well over 100 of the major gospel recording artists and many*

*of the all time legends. For this, I am very grateful and blessed. I hope to stay involved in the music industry in some capacity on a part-time basis."*

**NORTHERN OHIO GOSPEL SINGING ASSOCIATION** – **Castalia** – Managed by Ann M Piddock

**OHIO GOSPEL MUSIC ASSOCIATION (OGMA)**

**OHIO SINGERS MOVEMENT CHARTER** – **Cleveland** - Chartered on May 14, 1971, the organization assisted Gospel promoters and singing groups within the area. Founding members included LeRoy Gaynor, Charles Chamblier, Andrew Jackson, and Arthur Turner.

**SIMMONS, SONNY** – **Akron** - In 1973, an *All-Gospel Homecoming Concert* was held in **Marietta**. This event was promoted by **Sonny Simmons**, who was born in **Akron** and is one of Nashville's dynamic promoters.

**STOWTOWN RECORDS** – **Stow** - A number of groups came together to create a recording of some Fanny Crosby's hymns and songs which had never been put to music. This was produced with the help of StowTown Records an Ohio studio. Listed below are some of our Ohio heroes who were part of this undertaking. Executive Producer - Ernie Haase; Organ - Jason Webb; Art & Photography - Mary Alice Lovelace; Songs - Collingsworth Family, Guardians & Jim Brady Trio

**TGMA Gospel Music Promotions** – **Tiffin** - (419/448-9458 or 419/934-5456) Founded by Mark Glick

**WGNZ RADIO** – **Dayton** - Founded in 1968 as 250 watt daytimer WELX, the AM sister to WHBM-FM in Xenia also founded by Harry B. Miller just a few years earlier. WELX and WHBM (owned by Miller's company West Central Ohio Broadcasters Inc.) aired a mix of progressive jazz and soul gospel music throughout much of

the 1970s. Both stations miraculously survived the April 3, 1974 tornado which ravaged both Xenia and nearby Beavercreek. However, a fire destroyed the transmitter building which also housed its makeshift studio in 1977, hence both stations going silent. Both WELX and WHBM along with sister station WERM-FM in Moulton (near Wapakoneta) were all sold to separate owners. WELX was sold in 1979 to *L&D Broadcasters Inc.* (for Larue and Darnelle Turner) and returned to the air in 1980 airing soul gospel in the morning and early evenings and southern gospel in the afternoons. It was during the afternoon drive time when Rev. Norman Livingston of Dayton, a local independent church pastor who doubled as a southern gospel concert promoter took interest in the station, he became the afternoon co-host and eventually moved into managing and promoting the station in 1981 when soul gospel music was dropped in favor of full time southern gospel music. WELX also competed head-on for several years with crosstown rival WGIC.