



**William "Bill" Conly, Sr.
Celtic, Bluegrass, and Country Musician**

Mr. William Conly lived his life in Ringgold, Louisiana where most of the Conly descendants live today. He was a retired forester who loved to talk about two of his favorites, Irish and Bluegrass music.

The fascination with his Irish ancestry began with his great grandfather, Thomas Cullen Conly. In the 1830s, Mr. Conly came to the U. S. from County Antrim as a stow-away on a ship. Mr. Thomas Conly later married in Savannah, and moved his young bride to Ringgold, Louisiana.

Reflecting this Anglo-Irish ancestry, William Conly sings Irish songs, bluegrass, country, gospel, and he plays the guitar and the mandolin.

Bill's music career did not begin with the old ballads or even with the guitar. The first instrument that he played was a piano. As a student at LSU, he learned to play the guitar from his roommate. With the help of two nuns from Ireland, he developed as a singer of Irish songs. Reflecting this Anglo-Irish ancestry, William Conly sung Irish songs, bluegrass, country, gospel, and he played the guitar and the mandolin. Although traditional Irish folk music was Conly's favorite, he still enjoyed playing with the "Loggy Bayou Misfits," an old time Bluegrass group from Ringgold, Louisiana.

Mr. Conly, his son Bill Jr. and the "Loggy Bayou Misfits" performed at the Natchitoches-NSU Folk Festival, Slab Town Fest in Goldonna, Red River Revel in Shreveport, Enoch's in Monroe, the Texas Irish Festival, Civil War period dances, and other events throughout Mississippi, Alabama, Texas, and Louisiana. Mr. William Conly was the family historian, loved storytelling and he oozed knowledge about his heritage and community. His legacy will be passed on to his daughter Stacey Lee Conly and son Bill Conly Jr.

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