

Grimsley, Marcel "Tex"



Fiddle Player and Maker

Marcel "Tex" Grimsley hails from Shreveport, Louisiana. He has been playing the fiddle since he was seven and making fiddles since he was fourteen years old. Tex learned to play the fiddle from his uncle, Butch Spraggins. In the more than seventy years that he played Grimsley worked his way across the country. He and his wife Mary are self-described fiddling addicts.

Grimsley humorously explains the difference between fiddles and violins: "You carry a violin in a case, and you carry a fiddle in a gunny sack." In actuality, he explains, "There is no difference between the two."

Tex was stubborn about leaving any project unfinished. Once he started, he was reluctant to leave a fiddle or a song unfinished. "Something makes me whittle like it makes me play music, I can't quit. You have a feeling of doing something you've always wanted to do. And you're going to make a fiddle or bust."

Although Mr. Grimsley could have been more successful, he chose not to stay on the pro circuit. His wife, Mary, offers a good explanation why, "Hank's dead and other musicians such as Jim Reeves - airplane wreck, and on and on. Tex Grimsley is at home making fiddles and drinking coffee. Does that explain it?" His life was so busy between repairing and playing fiddles that coffee was all he really had time for.

Mr. Grimsley played with many top name performers across the country. He played with the Bailes Brothers, the Tennessee Mountain Boys and Kitty Wells, the Mercer Brothers, Hank Williams in Longview, Texas, and of course his band Uncle Tex and Texas Showboys was one of the first bands to perform at the legendary Louisiana Hayride. Additionally, he was a member of the New Red River Ramblers. Tex has won a few awards including being the Louisiana Fiddle champion four times. He played at Natchitoches-NSU Folk Festival and other festivals. Grimsley passed away in 2002.

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