

State Fair Masters

Traditional Arts Indiana and the Indiana State Fair wish to recognize individuals for their mastery of a particular tradition and for their dedication to sharing their knowledge at the fair, year after year. These men and women give generously of themselves by exhibiting, demonstrating, or performing at county and state fairs. They are well known by neighbors and friends in home communities for a particular skill and for their commitment to passing their excellence on to others.

To learn more about the State Fair Masters, please visit: <http://go.iu.edu/2b4e>

Or scan the code to access the link:



Traditional Arts Indiana Presents *The 2021 State Fair Masters*



Pioneer Village

Indiana State Fairgrounds

State Fair Pioneer Village

The 2021 Indiana State Fair marks both the 20th anniversary of the Traditional Arts Indiana State Fair Masters awards and the 60th Anniversary of this year's State Fair Master, the Indiana State Fair Pioneer Village. This double anniversary seems appropriate, since both the Village and the Masters Program seek to support the traditions and heritage of the Indiana State Fair. This is the first time a full program has been recognized with this award, which also seems fitting, as more State Fair Masters have been selected from Pioneer Village than any other area of the Fair.

Pioneer Village celebrates Indiana's agricultural heritage through antique tractor and farm implement display, as well as by hosting old-time craft and farm-life demonstrations. The roots of the Village date to 1961 when Mauri Williamson, then the Purdue Agricultural Alumni Association secretary, brought a collection of antique farming artifacts from the university to create an educational display at the Indiana State Fair. In 1968, the Fair built a barn dedicated to housing this unique collection, which made the Pioneer Village a permanent part of the annual event.



By the early 1970s, volunteers were showing fairgoers how the antique implements worked, musicians were performing traditional songs, and craftspeople were demonstrating pioneer crafts such as bowl hewing and blacksmithing. The Village had evolved from a display of artifacts into a vibrant community of demonstrators. From fiddling and quilting to threshing and storytelling, today Pioneer Village features dozens of musicians, artisans, and demonstrators who share their talents with fairgoers.



Past Fair Masters from Pioneer Village

- 2019 **Ellsworth Christmas** Pioneer Arts Demonstrator
- 2017 **Bill Bailey** Washboard and Spoons Player, Entertainment Coordinator
- 2015 **Mauri Williamson** Pioneer Village Founder
- 2011 **Harold Stark** Steam Engineer and Repairman
- 2008 **Gerry Gray and the Family Reunion String Band** Musicians
- 2007 **Noble Melton** Old-time Fiddler
- 2005 **The Piecemakers** Quilters
- 2001 **Keith Ruble** Bowl Hewer and Log Cabin Builder and Restorer

Photo captions: Cover, clock wise from top right : Volunteers at the entrance to the Pioneer Village, Possum Molly takes a break, Tim Nannet with a Farmall tractor, Tractors on parade; Inside left panel: Woodworker Dick Reel shows his woodburning talents, Harold Stark leads a tractor parade with his half-sized steam engine; Above: Weavers warp a loom; Below: Jane Eberhart and Roberta Smith of the Piecemakers take a break from demonstrating, Fiddlers young and old play a tune together.

