

For Immediate Release

Contact: Carol Lewis, 540-567-2561, carol@oriskanystrings.com

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Oriskany Strings Releases New Music CD Set

Local old-time stringband the Oriskany Strings has just released a two-CD set, titled *Live at the Rex Theater, Vols. 1 and 2*. Based on a recent two-hour radio show that the group performed, the CDs also feature guest artist James Christian from New Castle on guitar and vocals.

The group performed in January at the historic Rex Theater in Galax, Virginia, on the radio show Blue Ridge Backroads Live, which is performed before a live audience and broadcast each Friday night on station WBRF 98.1 FM. Their performance celebrates old-time mountain music and the slow-paced lifestyle lived in their tiny village of Oriskany in Botetourt County, Virginia.

“Oriskany is a place that time forgot, and we look at our concerts as a sort of musical tour of our little mountain town,” said Carol Lewis. “It has one church and a tiny little post office that’s open two hours a day, and not much else. But what it does have is a friendly spirit of neighbors helping each other—a spirit that’s been passed down through the years. And we try to reflect that in the music we play. I think you can really feel that spirit when you listen to the new CDs.”

The band, which has played together since 1997, plays mostly “roots” music that celebrates the memories and values of times gone by. They often dress in old-fashioned garb to suit the flavor of their music. The group plays traditional gospel songs, dance tunes, and ballads, as well as more contemporary songs with an old-time flavor. “We like all kinds of foot-tapping music,” said Rita Parady, who plays the Appalachian autoharp, sings both lead and harmony, and has written one song for the group.

The new CDs also feature songs written by local artist James (Junior) Christian. “James was an integral part of our radio show at the Rex Theater. He is an amazing songwriter,” said Lewis. “The crowd really seemed to like our rendition of his songs ‘Home I Used to Call Mine’ and ‘If Jesus Were Not Born,’ which are both on the CDs. He also does a great job singing and playing the popular song ‘Long Black Train.’”

The other members of the Oriskany Strings are Gene Guilliams, who sings lead vocals; Dick Parady, who sings back-up vocals and plays a long-neck Gibson banjo in the old-time clawhammer style; and Jack Lewis, who plays a unique two-string washtub bass fiddle that is an attention-getter for the group. Gene’s wife Elsie Guilliams serves as the band’s manager.

For additional details on the band’s CDs and its schedule of performances, visit their website at www.oriskanystrings.com. Visitors to the website can hear sound clips of all the songs on the albums and purchase the CDs online. *Live at the Rex Theater, Volumes 1 and 2* can also be purchased through the mail by sending a check for \$20 plus \$3 shipping/handling to Carol Lewis, 3578 Old Rail Road, Eagle Rock, VA 24085.

CONTACT:

Carol Lewis

(540) 567-2000/2561

carol@oriskanystrings.com

[High resolution versions of the attached photos are available for download at www.oriskanystrings.com/press]

caption for album cover: **The cover of *Live at the Rex Theater, Vol. 1*, a new music CD from The Oriskany Strings, shows the colorful Rex Theater marquee.**

caption for group photo: **The Oriskany Strings, taken in front of the historic Rex Theater in Galax, VA. Left to right: Jack Lewis on washtub bass, Carol Lewis on five-string banjo, Rita Parady on Appalachian autoharp, Gene Guilliams on guitar, Dick Parady on long-neck clawhammer banjo, James Christian on guitar.**