

Bluegrass lovers gather for jammin' sessions

By MAURICE PIFHER

Whitby's Charlie Hubbleday, who turned 79 on Jan. 17, says he comes because it's fun and he wants to learn more about banjo-playing.

Doreen Squelch of Brooklin says she likes the "informal" and "family" quality of the gathering.

Rod Craig of Hampton admits he is a veteran

performer and talks a little about the music he loves before being whisked off to provide his essential sound, the mandolin, in the "pickin session."

They're members of the Pineridge Folklore Bluegrass Society, and on the second Sunday of each month they gather, along with many others from Durham Region and beyond, for a session of bluegrass in



TAKING PART in a bluegrass jam session are (l-r) Jack Johnson of Oshawa, Dan Penney of Oshawa, Kenny McDonald of Toronto, Charlie

Hubbleday of Whitby, Jim Russell and Jack Russell of Oshawa, and Bob Prentice of Port Perry. Free Press photo

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the appropriate setting at Camp Samac.

They enjoy, and often play, the tunes of old favorites such as Bill Monroe, The Stanley Brothers, Reno & Smiley and Flatt & Scruggs.

"The music has always been a favorite of mine," says Jack Russell, self-taught banjo player. For a period at an Oshawa music

store, he taught club members Sally Short and Donny Adams until "they went way beyond me" in expertise. Short, for example, went on to become banjo-playing champion of Ontario.

Craig, vice president of the society, formerly played his mandolin for the Blue Mountain Boys of Oshawa in 1958-59.

"There were very few of us around here at the

time," he recalls. Nonetheless, bluegrass hit its peak in popularity, especially in the U.S., in the late 50's only to be suddenly submerged, along with other musical forms, by a new phenomenon Elvis Presley.

The Pineridge club started about 10 years when five couples got

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