

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2005

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1897

Sponsors: Representatives Kiser; Alexander, Black, Carney, Cunningham, Earle, Gulley, McMahan, Rhodes, Saunders, and Vinson.

Referred to: Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House.

May 11, 2006

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION ACKNOWLEDGING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE
2 MUSICAL GROUP KNOWN AS THE BRIARHOPPERS, WHICH PROVIDED
3 FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT FROM THE STUDIOS OF CHARLOTTE'S WBT
4 RADIO, AND HONORING THE MEMORY OF FORMER BRIARHOPPER
5 MEMBERS AND THE GROUP'S FOUNDER.

6 Whereas, in 1935, Charles Crutchfield, a radio announcer for Charlotte radio
7 station WBT, formed a musical group known as the Briarhoppers (WBT Briarhoppers)
8 to satisfy a potential advertiser, Consolidated Drug Trade Company of Chicago; and

9 Whereas, the Briarhoppers performed bluegrass and country music and
10 became a very popular group attracting scores of fans; and

11 Whereas, the first group of Briarhoppers were a Tin-Pan Alley musical group
12 that lasted from 1935 to 1941; and

13 Whereas, the Briarhoppers became a string band in 1941 and, with the
14 exception of a short period of inactivity, have continuously performed as a group,
15 earning the title of the longest performing bluegrass and country ensemble still active in
16 the music field today; and

17 Whereas, many legendary musicians performed as a member of the
18 Briarhoppers, including Charles Crutchfield, Johnny McAllister, Big Bill Davis, Don
19 White, Billie Burton Daniels, Eleanor Bryan Fields, Jane Bartlett, Clarence Etters,
20 Mildred and Floyd, the Oklahoma Sweethearts, Fred Kirby, Claude Casey, Roy
21 "Whitey" Grant, Arval Hogan, Nat Richardson, Sam Poplin, Homer Christopher,
22 Shannon Grayson, Fiddlin' Hank Warren, the Tennessee Ramblers, Homer "Pappy"
23 Sherrill, Dwight Moody, David Deese, and David Moody; and

24 Whereas, many talented artists appeared on the Briarhopper family
25 entertainment show, including the Original Carter Family, Bill and Charlie Monroe,
26 Uncle Dave Macon, Roy Acuff, and Little Jimmy Dickens, and classical musicians Jose
27 Iturbi and David Rubinoff; and

1 Whereas, the Briarhoppers entertained the troops during World War II and
2 polio victims during the 1940s and performed on Public Radio's "Prairie Home
3 Companion" and at the 1984 World's Fair in Knoxville, Tennessee; and

4 Whereas, the Briarhoppers participated in programs throughout the North
5 Carolina school system under the State-funded project "The Original Briarhoppers
6 School Program"; and

7 Whereas, over the years, the Briarhoppers have been recognized for their
8 contributions to the cultural and musical heritage of North Carolina and have received
9 the North Carolina Folk Heritage Award in 2003 and the Brown-Hudson Award from
10 the North Carolina Folklore Society in 2002; and

11 Whereas, the Briarhoppers were featured in an exhibit at the Levine Museum
12 of the New South in Charlotte and in "The Charlotte Country Music Story", produced
13 by the North Carolina Folk Society and Spirit Square in Charlotte; and

14 Whereas, the Briarhoppers are the subject of a new book written by Thomas
15 and Lucy Warlick, which covers their history; and

16 Whereas, only a few members of the early Briarhopper family survive today,
17 including Billie Burton Daniel, a resident of Wilmington and a 70-year member of the
18 group, Eleanor Bryan Fields, a member of the 1941 string band, and Roy "Whitey"
19 Grant, a Briarhopper since 1939; and

20 Whereas, the Briarhoppers deserve a heartfelt thanks for entertaining the
21 citizens of North Carolina and the world for more than 70 years; Now, therefore,
22 Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

23 **SECTION 1.** The General Assembly expresses its appreciation and gratitude
24 to the Briarhoppers for their contributions to the State's cultural heritage.

25 **SECTION 2.** The General Assembly honors the memory of Charles
26 Crutchfield, founder of the Briarhoppers, as well as the other former members of the
27 Briarhoppers who have died.

28 **SECTION 3.** The Secretary of State shall transmit a copy of this resolution
29 to the family of Charles Crutchfield, WBT/WBTV of Charlotte, the Levine Museum of
30 the New South, and the Country Music Hall of Fame.

31 **SECTION 4.** This resolution is effective upon ratification.