

Barry Lanham

Premier Performer and Instructor

Contact number: 270-314-4331

Barry Lanham: Barry@clogger.net

No contemporary performer and instructor is more closely associated with Kentucky's rich dance heritage than Barry Lanham, co-producer along with his brother Randy, of the acclaimed, *Kentucky Journey*, a ground-breaking, entertaining and educational one-hour show that captivated audiences when it was performed at Owensboro, Kentucky's beautiful RiverPark Center.

Passionate about his art

Barry Lanham is recognized among his peers for his passionate regard for Appalachian Clogging, a social dance said to have been introduced into the Appalachian Mountains as early as the 18th Century. His adroit footwork and imaginative adaptations of various mountain dance art forms (including clogging, flat-footing and buck dancing) make him one of the more respected — and sought after — performers and instructors on the clogging circuit.

He is ever mindful of the social significance of these hill-country dances, which encompass lively footwork and rhythms accompanied by old-time music. But clogging is also a contemporary and versatile dance form. Its improvisational and creative dance steps blend seamlessly with a wide variety of music genres from Bluegrass and Hip Hop to Country and Pop music.

Dynamic stage personality

During his live stage performances (most notably on the **Lanham Brothers Jamboree** show), the Daviess County, Kentucky, native exhibits a vivid, uninhibited and intimate portrayal of the captivating Appalachian dances. "My goal is to get the audience as enthusiastically involved as I possibly can," Lanham says. "I love to see them clap their hands, tap their feet and smile." Invariably, audiences respond with the warmth and ardor that Lanham inspires with his exuberant willingness to have some old-fashioned fun.

Unsurpassed instructor

As a dedicated instructor, Lanham ably conveys the historical aspects of mountain dancing while simultaneously offering the personal tutorial touch for which he is so well known. It is no coincidence that his vibrant and warm-hearted approach to his art makes him very popular with his students.

While he is a meticulous instructor, he also makes it clear that dancing is meant to be fun and he humorously challenges his classes to have just as much fun as he does. "I become very involved with each of my students," says Lanham, whose former and current pupils number in the thousands. "We have a good time together," he says, noting that Clogging is becoming increasingly popular not only because of its inherently vigorous style, but also because it is considered a healthy form of recreation. "It seems to draw people like bees to honey," Lanham says.

Totally accessible

Lanham is eminently approachable and his outgoing tutorial style not only enhances a student's opportunity to develop his or her talents, his impressive knowledge of the historical facets of Clogging and related mountain dances also gives each student a better understanding of just how our state's tradition-rich dances have evolved. "I want to emphasize that a student can learn and have fun at the same time," Lanham says. "I'm very committed to continuing this dance form through our young people." His unique approach to, and respect for, his art qualifies him as both a lay dance historian and an instructor extraordinaire.

Foot-Stompin' Success

Perhaps, the crowning achievement of Lanham's dramatic rise in the ranks of clogging masters has been the nurturing and development of the *Foot Stompin' Express*, his show-savvy dancing troupe. A select number of the *Express*, whose members range from age four to the mid-70s, recently returned from a triumphant weeklong jaunt to China. The dance troupe performed for, and instructed, students at the Shanghai International School. The *Foot Stompin' Express* also drew large crowds on the plazas of several Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) franchises in Shanghai, a city of 23-million people situated on the east coast of China.

And his outreach programs continue to expand. Lanham conducts weekly workshops in Daviess and surrounding counties and he is a regular dance instructor in both the Daviess County, Owensboro City school systems and RiverPark Center. He continually offers high quality instruction and delightful entertainment to all his students who are thrilled with his high-spirited enthusiasm and whole-hearted dedication.

How it all began

Clogging is the official state dance of Kentucky, but it had not yet attained that status when Lanham first became acquainted with its joyous and transforming rewards. He was, in fact, a college freshman at Brescia University in Owensboro, Kentucky, when he first saw Cloggers on the Grand Ole Opry television show.

"I was intrigued by what I considered a revolutionary style of dance," Lanham says. "I thought clogging was fascinating to watch and it was apparent how much fun it could be. I just had to learn more about it." Characteristic of the zeal with which he tackles a project, Lanham began taking clogging instruction under the capable and observant eye of Staci Austin. Within two years, he not only was a top-notch performer, but he was also a successful instructor in his own right. He then continued his study under the direction of David and Jana Grose as well as Dr. Steve Smith.

"When I first started clogging I was looking for a hobby and some stress relief at the same time," Lanham says. In doing so, he found his calling.

With a remarkable skill and nimbleness, Lanham was soon performing the more difficult dance steps and expanding his repertoire to include various phases of Irish and Canadian clogging, square dancing and mountain dancing. During his rewarding years as an instructor, Lanham has worn out any number of leather double-tap clogging shoes, but his enthusiasm for his craft has never worn thin — and has never worn him down.

If you are interested in learning the techniques and fancy footwork of Kentucky's historical Appalachian Mounting dancing, get in touch with Barry Lanham today. A

consummate dance instructor and premier performer, Lanham is a leading ambassador for Appalachian style dancing — and one who can make any workout session or personal appearance an enriching experience.