Bay, Mel (1913-1997) Encyclopedia Article

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Contents

Bay, Mel (1913-1997) Encyclopedia Article.....1

Contents.....2

Bay, Mel (1913-1997).....3

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Founder of Mel Bay Publications, Melbourne E. Bay was the most successful author and publisher of guitar method books in the late twentieth century. Born in Missouri, Bay became a popular self-taught guitarist and banjo player in the region. He established himself as a music teacher in St. Louis, and in 1947 began to write and publish guitar method materials; eventually he added instructions for playing other instruments, and by the 1990s his corporation also produced instructional videos.

Bay's books sold by the millions, and their quality earned Bay many awards and honors. Among others, Bay received the Lifetime Achievement Awards from the American Federation of Musicians and the Guitar Foundation of America, as well as a Certificate of Merit from the St. Louis Music Educators Association. St. Louis also celebrated Mel Bay Day on October 25, 1996. He died on May 14, 1997, at the age of 84.

Further Reading:

"Melbourne Bay." *American Music Teacher.* Vol. 47, No. 1, August 1997, 6.

"Passages: Melbourne E. Bay." *Clavier.* Vol. 36, No. 6, July1997, 33.