

Proclamation



Aeriah Benfield and Kenneth Benfield

Whereas: Although Aeriah and Kenneth Benfield made their living by farming, they mastered their unique autoharp playing styles, which captured the attention of musicologist Mike Seeger, who recorded them in the 1962 album, *Mountain Music Played on the Autoharp*, And,

Whereas: The recordings of Aeriah and Kenneth Benfield created great interest and acclaim from autoharp players listening to their precise lap-style method of clearly picking and defining melodies, while at the same time creating a full rhythm backup, And,

Whereas: The popularity of this father and son duo propelled them to national attention, when they were asked to perform and be recorded at the 1964 Newport Folk Festival, And,

Whereas: The popularity of the autoharp became additionally enhanced due to this duo's recordings being housed and retained, and made available through the Smithsonian Folkways Recordings,

Therefore, Let it be resolved that Aeriah Benfield and Kenneth Benfield be inducted with highest commendations as the 2022 posthumous members of The Autoharp Hall of Fame.

So it is proclaimed on this, the Ninth Day of June in the Year Two Thousand and Twenty-two.