RIDDLE OF THE FIDDLE

BY SHARON GOLDWASSER

When I play on my fiddle in Dooneys, Folk dance like a wave of the sea…
-William Butler Yeats, The Fiddler of Dooney

I love to lift my fiddle up to a group of children and ask, “Is this a fiddle or a violin?” It’s a trick question of course, because there is no difference at all between the instruments. Either way, it’s a wooden box with a slender waist, featuring a carved scroll-shaped head attached to a narrow neck. The strings stretch from the tailpiece to the peg box, where each winds around a wooden peg. A carefully shaped bridge lifts them above the body of the instrument. Scarping horsehair rubbed with a bit of rosin across the strings draws out the music. And what do I tell the children? “It’s just the way you play it” that makes it a fiddle.

Conceptually, the fiddle is simple in structure - the notes on each of its four strings can be easily fingered with the left hand while drawing the bow with the right to produce the sound. Yet it is capable of a remarkably complex range of expression, perhaps because its range and tone so closely resemble the human voice. The violin can blend with any style of music from folk to art music of Western Europe, to the quarter-tones of Arabic and Indian music to the lively dance tunes of Scotland, Ireland and North America. The sounds can range from short and separate (staccato) notes to sustained, full-length (legato) strokes, plus dozens of effects in between.

Fiddles go back a long time. The violin’s predecessors include bowed instruments such as rebecs and fidils, which appear in illustrations in medieval manuscripts. Simple bowed folk instruments like these are found throughout the world. These early versions may differ from their modern counterparts in the number of strings, design of body and placement of pegs. The family of viols, which were closely related to the violin and were popular in Renaissance and Baroque times, differ in having frets along the neck.

In the late 17th century, Stradivarius and other Italian instrument builders standardized the design into the elegant, wasp-waisted form of the modern violin. Just a few subtle variations on this design are found among patterns used by instrument makers today. Nearly all fiddles have a one- or two-piece back of maple, sycamore or Lombardy poplar. One of the most beautiful woods used today is called fiddleback maple. The top of the fiddle is built from a soft coniferous wood such as spruce or occasionally pine. The tailpiece, fingerboard and pegs may be of ebony. Rosewood or boxwood are sometimes used in tailpieces or chinrests.

The strings of early fiddles were made of sheep gut (not cat gut!). Gut strings are often chosen by classical violinists because of their warm tone, but fiddlers may prefer steel strings for their greater volume, or perlón (synthetic) core strings, which are less temperamental.

The earth keeps some vibration going, There in your heart, and that is you. And if people find you can fiddle, Why fiddle you must, for all your life. -Fiddler Jones from The Spoon River Anthology by Edgar Lee Masters

The strings of early fiddles were made of sheep gut (not cat gut!). Gut strings are often chosen by classical violinists because of their warm tone, but fiddlers may prefer steel strings for their greater volume, or perlón (synthetic) core strings, which are less temperamental. The bow gradually evolved from its original arc shape to a longer stick of wood with a slightly recurved bow. Pernambuco or brazzwood are often listed as the materials of choice for bows, though carbon fiber bows are starting to win fans due to their near indestructibility. Pernambuco actually refers to several separate species. When it comes to bows, the most highly prized horsehair comes from tails of horses raised in regions that endure cold winters. The hair of male horses is preferred to that of mares because it has less exposure to urine, which breaks down the fibers.

The light colored hair has a finer texture, which is better for tone production than coarser dark hair.

Once the design became standardized, violinists made their way across much of Europe and became popular for all kinds of music, including both court and country dances. In addition, fiddles and fiddle tunes journeyed across the Atlantic with colonists bound for North America. Gradually, the term “violin” became more closely associated with more formal (“classical”) music and “fiddle” has become associated with more popular (“folk”) and dance music.

To me, as much as anything, the fiddle is the voice of dancing. Fiddle music is at the heart of traditional dance music of many cultures from around the world, from the gypsies of Romania to the mountain folk of Appalachia. When the bow flies across the strings, and a cloud of rosin dust rises like smoke, feet seem impelled to lift and step across the floor.

So many different styles of music incorporate the fiddle that it’s hard to compare them. Social dances in England, Ireland, Scotland, Scandinavia, Canada and the U.S. all make use of the fiddle. Within each of these regional traditions there are subtle variations in style as well.

In the U.S., much of the early fiddling repertoire came from England, Scotland and Ireland. The English settlers in the 1600’s might have been familiar with country dances, such as those published in the first collection by Playford around 1650. From colonial times through the early 1900’s, fiddlers piled a variety of tunes such as jigs, reels, schottisches, clogs and hornpipes for community dances. Some of the earliest tunes, like Haste to the Wedding or Soldier’s Joy, are still played today.

“Northern” and New England fiddle styles tend to be similar to their origins, but are less ornamented than their modern Irish or Scottish fiddling counterparts. Many New England dance tunes overlap with the Celtic repertoires as well. In some ways, fiddling in New England might be considered the least regimented of styles. Evolving with the region’s contra dances, it features structured tunes that are especially good for dancing. The piano is a favored instrument for accompanying the fiddle, especially at contra dances.

In the southern regions of the U.S., a new dialect of fiddling developed. Perhaps due to more encounters with the syncopated rhythms of African music on southern plantations, fiddlers in Appalachia incorporated more syncopation into their bowing styles. The
EDITORIAL

A s you may or may not realize, FolkWorks is more than this newspaper. It is a non-profit organization whose mission is to spread the word about our folk/traditional music, dance and related arts. As an organization, we also produce concerts and dances. We are actively trying to reach out beyond our admittedly narrow focus and discover the variety of traditional folk cultures that exist in our community. We've gone to meetings where representatives of these diverse cultures are abundant. We are reaching out to meet and learn about these folks. Hopefully, in future issues of the paper, this experience will be reflected.

We would like to see more concerts of traditional folk musicians that are as diverse as our community.

So FolkWorks is growing. We use the newspaper as a means of communication. It is a way of getting the word out about what is happening. And the word is getting out. People are impressed by both the quality of the writing and the types of articles that we publish. We've had a successful fundraiser party that was a lot of fun. We've had a couple of really great concerts, with more coming up this month and next. And more people are becoming member/supporters. We would like to thank Z. Clark Bramson Projects and Paula Randol-Smith for the on-going support that they have given us, particularly by including us in their mailing for the Mountain Lion Weekend.

We know that everybody has very busy lives and that it is busy people who are able to fit one more thing in. So we are soliciting help from you.

Here are some ways that you can help:
• If you know of businesses that in any way have an interest in folk music, dance and related arts, ask the proprietors to advertise in the paper. We can also use donations from businesses. We are a 501(c)(3), so any contributions are tax-deductible.
• If you are interested in writing, we have lots of ideas for articles or we will entertain suggestions from you.
• If you have editing skills, help us edit.
• If you are interested in doing research in folk related venues, we need help verifying that our information is accurate and up-to-date.
• If you have several hours every couple of months, we need assistance distributing papers.
• If you have grant writing experience, help us research and write grants.
• If you want to volunteer once in a while, let us know. We always need help with mailings, concert setup, and other projects that come up.

So, thanks. And, as always, get out and support live music.
INTERVIEW

JAKE KRACK

May-June 2002

Heritage Center of Davis & Elkins College apprentice—Virginia fiddler Bobby Taylor through the Augusta Lester McCumbers. He recently completed an apprenticeship and continues to study with renowned West Virginia fiddler Bobby Taylor through the Augusta Heritage Center of Davis & Elkins College apprenticeship program.

G: I read on your website that you started off with classical violin lessons. What brought you to old-time music?

J: Well my dad was trying to teach himself to play when I was about 4 years old. And I was at the age where I wanted to imitate everything my parents were doing. So dad cut me out the shape of a cardboard fiddle and I so-called played on that until I was 6. And when I was 6, dad found a man who wanted to trade a fiddle for something. And dad carved limberdale in West Virginia, and he's the one who introduced me to the old masters here. And he gave me a tape of Melvin Wine, who lives here in West Virginia, and I started learning Melvin's tunes. So Brad kept saying, if you could go to one festival, go to Clifftop in West Virginia, 'cause Melvin would be there. So we went down there to Clifftop, to the Appalachian String Band Festival. We played a little bit and met some people and the whole time we were waiting for Melvin.Brad had given me a picture of Melvin and Mike Seeger and my goal was to get an autograph of Melvin. So Melvin came and we talked to him a little bit and told him I'd played the fiddle, and he asked, "Well, do you know any of my songs?"

And at that time I think I knew two, so I played those two tunes. And Melvin got me up to play at a workshop he was playing at that year and he invited me to his house, which was about 480 miles from my house in Indiana, and we didn't think we could swing it. Melvin was 85 at that time. So we went on and Brad taught me some more Melvin tunes and some other fiddle tunes, and the next year Clifftop comes around and we go down, and there's Melvin again. Well Melvin again asked dad when he was going to bring me to his house. And it was the second time asking us and we thought we'd better do it before he gets too old Melvin was 86 at the time and is now 93. So we went down to Melvin's in September, Clifftop was in August. And then I got a scholarship to the Indiana Arts Commission.

J: I was in August. And then I got a scholarship to the Indiana Arts Commission. And so we came down here about once a month for a year, and I was studying under Melvin and I was going to festivals and everything.

G: Wow, your parents were driving you down? They sound like good people.

J: Well, my mom and dad say that if it were hip hop music or something, you probably wouldn't see them at every festival with me, but we all happen to enjoy it, so we all take part and do it together.

G: Why do you think you never picked up the electric guitar instead? What is that you love about old-time music?

J: Well, everything! I like the sound of it, and I love playing it, and it's just the people you meet when you're doing it that make it fun.

G: Yeah, definitely. So do you play every day?

J: Yes, about an hour a day. For a while I was practicing more like an hour and a half, but since I got into my sophomore year in high school, it got harder and harder to practice and hour and a half and finish my homework, so I had to cut it back.

G: When you're practicing, do you play by yourself or with someone else when you're practicing?

J: Well you know when I started out with Brad, he said, "You know you really need someone on an instrument to practice with to keep the beat for you so you can get your rhythm down." So mom was the most viable candidate, so we all worked on mom, and she started to learn the guitar, and now she practices with me every night.

G: Wow, you have very devoted parents!

J: Over the years Dad got interested in making and repairing fiddles. He went to the Indiana University School of Music to learn how to make and repair fiddles from Tom Sparks. G: Wow, so you've had a big effect on your family!

J: Well, we affect each other. Dad has made the two vals I mentioned also.

G: Yes, and you can find all of the dates for the festivals on the first one as it is now.

J: I was 11, but don't let the age fool you. Dad says the music was just as good and just as hard driving on the first one as it now.

G: You know I loved your website. It has photos of you growing up with your fiddle, and some great photos from festivals, and it has samples from your CDs. Is your website the best place to find your CDs?

J: Yes, and you can find all of the dates for the festivals I mentioned also.

G: Oh, I can't help myself from asking you, what are your plans for the future? Are you going to start touring, or go to college? What's your plan?

J: My plan is to go to college. I don't really want to be on the road all the time. If you're not playing, you're on the way to playing somewhere. To me that doesn't look fun. Don't get me wrong, I love playing. But I'd rather jam and keep it for fun. So I'm gonna go to college and get a degree in some science like chemistry or something.

G: Wow! Chemistry, that's quite a departure.

J: Yes, it's quite a bit different than playing the fiddle.

G: I felt the same way when I went to college. I didn't want some academic teaching me about music. So I took a whole different course of study.

J: Yes, I've thought that I could take some folklore classes, and I'd probably learn a lot, but they'd maybe have some chapter about old-time music and I'd be sitting there grinning my teeth, so I don't even want to do it.

G: Do you still take fiddle lessons?

J: Well I've told you about my first two mentors, Brad and Melvin. Melvin is 93 now.

G: That's great, he's still alive!

J: Yes. My next mentor was 80 year old Lester McCumbers. And he lives just right up the road from us now. And my latest one is Bobby Taylor, and he's in his 40s, and he lives in St. Albans, West Virginia. They've all helped me a lot, and I've studied under all of them for years.

G: Well, here in Los Angeles if you want to learn to play old-time music you have to look long and hard to find other musicians to play with. It sounds like in West Virginia, people are playing it all over.

J: Oh yeah, it's all over. You know sometimes I've been criticized for playing just like my mentors, but that was the point. To learn to play just like them, to
WHAT LIES BENEATH: A REVIEW OF CHORD PATTERNS AND VARIATIONS

In the last issue, we "loured" the guitar with a G chord to illustrate the versatility and variations available in chord sounds and fingering up and down the neck. What was presented in that lesson can be generalized to other keys and other instruments. While you are learning to play your chosen musical instrument you will be acquiring the knowledge of those things that are peculiar to a particular key or to a specific instrument alone. As you practice, you will also become aware of those things that apply to all of music in general and, hence, to many other keys and instruments as well. This knowledge will supercharge your learning skills, move you past many of the barriers faced by other students, put your progress on fast-forward and keep your interest level up where it belongs.

In other words, you're learning and having fun. And, music should be fun!

With what you already know from previous lessons (available at www.folkworks.org) you should be able to pick up a guitar and find a 'G' chord just about anywhere you please on the instrument. Since you know that a G chord is made up of the notes G, B and D and that the guitar's open strings are E-A-D-G-B-E you can then draw a map (see Figure 7) to find every G-B-D grouping anywhere on the guitar. More importantly, you have gathered the general knowledge that this G-B-D grouping from a G major scale represents the 1-3-5 major chord structure for any major scale. That gives you portable knowledge that is applicable to major chords of any key on the guitar. Figures 1 through 7 are some examples of this.

Looking at the left side of Figure 1 near the beginning of the guitar neck, notice the patterns and how you can see familiar chord shapes at various positions along the neck. Notice also that the entire pattern repeats itself as you move past the octave at the twelfth fret. Look at Figure 2 and beyond and you will see that the overall pattern remains the same but gets promoted up the neck. It is much like a slide rule: you visualize the pattern and move it up or down the neck until you are in the proper key. So, remember—what you know about one particular chord can be applied to all other chords when shifted to the proper location along the neck.

So far we have applied all of this chord magic just to the guitar fret board, but other stringed instruments are also fair game. Pick up a mandolin, for example, and try to figure out several variations of a D major chord. Once we know that the mandolin strings are tuned to G-D-A-E (from lowest to highest) and remembering that the 1-3-5 major chord grouping for D major is D-F#-A we can produce Figure 8 which maps out all of the D's, F#'s and A's on the mandolin. Any comfortable grouping of the notes from Figure 8 will produce a D major chord on the mandolin. Just as an aside -- the fiddle/violin is tuned the same as a mandolin and, even though it has no frets and is not usually thought of as a chording instrument, visualizing the chords laid out on the fiddle will make learning it a lot easier.

Once again we get a glimpse of the sameness that lies hidden behind the music that at first appears to be so varied and different. The more you can see the underlying patterns in any body of knowledge, the faster and more vital will be the learning experience. So keep looking for the magic in all things and, of course, stay tuned….

CLASSIFIEDS

CELTICANA offers MUSICAL ENRICHMENT LECTURES on the history of the hammered dulcimer for your library, club or school. Contact Bea Romano at (562) 861-7049 or gailischoen@yahoo.com. For Sale: Handcrafted HAMMERED DULCIMER. Very Solid Needs bridges. $200 obo. Elaine at (562) 691-4701 or DEC-TILE@aol.com.

For Sale: UPRIGHT PIANO from the 20's, M. Schulz Co. Great condition (I think) $2,000.00. Call (818) 997-7718.

For Sale: MINOLTA COPIER (model EP4230) with cabinet stand, large glass for x 17, 50% to 200%, good shape, large but works. $100.00. Call (818) 430-6767.

For Sale: 21" HITACHI TV with remote. Tuner needs work. $50.00 (818) 908-8902.

For Sale: BELLINI TRUNDLE BED -hardly used $150 OBO Mail@FolkWorks.org.

Wanted: ELECTRIC GUITAR with amp wanted for beginning student. terry@stonepages.net or (818) 908-8902.

Krakk continued from page 3

keep the tradition alive and to someday pass it on. At the same time I’m blending these different styles into my own. That’s one of the many areas Bobby has helped me with.

G: Well yes, in many ways we’re all just the sum total of all the influences in our lives.

J: Yes, I’ve studied with each of these guys for years, and I don’t stop seeing them. We have friendships, we know each others families. You don’t just learn old-time fiddle music from them, but you learn about the hardships in their lives, and the good times. And just about every tune that you learn from them, there’s a story that goes along with it. There’s a memory from when they learned it, and what was going on at that time.

G: Well, I think it’s really exciting that you’re carrying on the tradition. You need more people of your generation getting involved.

J: Well there aren’t many.

G: Go tell your friends to start practicing!

J: Well, sadly, I don’t have many who know what I do. When I was younger they didn’t quite understand what it was. In Indiana it was a big deal. But here, everyone says, ‘Well, my uncle and my dad and my grandfather all play’ so it’s no big thing. And I like that, I don’t want anyone making a big fuss about my playing fiddle. My friends all say, “Jake, we love your music, and we’ll go out and buy your CDs, but nobody else’s. We like it as long as you’re playing it.” And they’re all starting to understand my ties to this music. They’ve pretty much stopped asking me why I don’t play sports.

Gaili Schoen plays old-time music with her band Turtle Creek in Southern California, and composes music for film. You can see her latest film Festival in Cannes now in theaters nationwide, or check out her website at www.gailischoen.com.
BY JOANNA CAZDEN

THE VOICES
IN MY HEAD

A FEW OF MY FAVORITES SING

I'm writing this shortly after the Grammy Awards. The annual music-biz bash got me thinking about my favorite singers: the voices I turn to for inspiration, solace (or just to remind me to practice!) There's no way I can pick one overall favorite — “no album of the year” or “lifetime gratitude award” here. Nor will I attempt to rank such a diverse group; my taste is openly eclectic, and the folk police had best stay home.

However, a bias is hereby declared toward healthy voices and sincere, humane souls. Since training and rehabilitating singers is my life work, I just can't tolerate strained, congested, or rough vocal sounds in my free time. This is also a list of the great singers that I've heard, and that my middle-aged brain can remember. So I'm sure there are many, many wonderful folks not mentioned.

All disclaimers aside, here we go, in no particular order: TRACY NELSON, country-blues artist beloved since my college days, who still has some CDs available. I don't know of any voice more balanced: rich at the bottom and sweet at the top. SHEILA CHANDRA, Indo- Celtic enchantress with superb breath and tone control, has a purity matched by Native America's warm songbird JOANNE SHENANDOAH.

SARAH VAUGHAN and ARETHA FRANKLIN bring unbeatably rich tone & power, and GLADYS KNIGHT'S hit “Midnight Train to Georgia” stands as a worthy classic. ELLA FITZGERALD of course takes honors for scat-flexibility and longevity in her craft; VANESSA WILLIAMS, ANITA BAKER, and DONNA SUMMER have more than paid pop dues.

I listen to RENEE FLEMING for equal parts classic prowess, jazz, and integrity, and CELCILIA BARTOLI has knocked my socks off more than once. KATHLEEN BATTLE's duo album with Christopher Parkening is a jewel, the only album played on my car radio (thanks, John Schneider of “Soundboard”) for which I immediately detoured to a record store.

JUNE TABOR does great deep tones and 'Round Midnight (but where on earth is the other half of her voice?); DOLLY PARTON cheers with high clarity and genticut guts. REBA McINTYRE'S a capella rendition of PATSY CLINE'S “Sweet Dreams” knocks off socks AND shoes. Feminist jazz pioneer RHIANNON gets my thanks for years of inspiration; she's still going strong in the Bay Area and worth catching when you can. HAZEL DICKENS and the late ROSE MADDOX keep American rural traditions in motion.

Turning from solo singers to groups: TAKE SIX's early recordings remain a potent brain-buzz, as does LE MYSTERE DE VOIX BULGARES. Among gentlemen: PLACIDO DOMINGO is my fave of the famous Tri Tenores, with extra points for having a muppet alter-ego Flamino. PAUL ROBESON and JOE WILLIAMS deserve honor among past masters; FRANK SINATRA rates credit for meaning every word he sang and for ALWAYS crediting his songwriters. STAN ROGERS and GORDON BOK anchor the bass in more homespun styles, while counter-tenor BRIAN ASAWA and male soprano SAVA are simply thrilling. MICHAEL CRAWFORD marries muscle and mastery, and JAI UTtal fans an unforgettable spiritual flame.

Among female voices, look for Gonna Take A Miracle, LAURA NYRO'S great collaboration CD with Patti LABELLE. And the Los Angeles cast album of GOSPEL AT COLONNAUS — an Oedipus tragedy re-framed in a Black church — raises all souls to high heaven.

Every once in a while, I leave out the TRIO albums from Dolly/ Emmy-Lou/ Linda? The material doesn't match their first collaborations (Sandman and How High the Moon) but nevertheless their voices are an elegant folk songbook. THE SWINGLE SINGERS are still harmonizing beautifully after all these years, and YEAH OK I'll mention BOBBY McFERRIN'S VOICESTRA for sheer virtuosity even though, frankly, his intellect leaves me cold.

The SWINGLE SINGERS are still harmonizing beautifully after all these years, and YEAH OK I'll mention BOBBY McFERRIN'S VOICESTRA for sheer virtuosity even though, frankly, his intellect leaves me cold. However, his collection of songs is extensive, and his interpretation is always fresh. I find myself thinking of him whenever I need a pick-me-up.

I listen to RENEE FLEMING for equal parts classic prowess, jazz, and integrity, and CELCILIA BARTOLI has knocked my socks off more than once. KATHLEEN BATTLE's duo album with Christopher Parkening is a jewel, the only album played on my car radio (thanks, John Schneider of “Soundboard”) for which I immediately detoured to a record store.

As warned, this is a purely subjective list, and your additions and suggestions are always welcome. I'd love to hear from you!
I was during the folk music revival of the 1960's and 70's that a group of young female vocalists emerged. These singer songwriters not only wrote original music, but also brought new and exciting arrangements of traditional songs and instruments to the folk music scene. Many of these new artists had not been around for several decades, and were basically unknown to the youth of that generation. In addition to the reintroduction of these songs, the invention of electric folk-rock also brought the folk music scene of that era to a high level of recognition here in the public interest. America and Britain sparked a female folk fad that has not abated. In the British Isles, many female folk performers appeared who have since become legends. Among these were Sandy Denny, June Tabor, Maddy Prior, Gay Woods, Mary Black, Dolores Keane, Máire Brennan and many more.

The Nordic Roots Festival, was recorded on April 22 and April 23, 2000, in Tallinn, Estonia. The groups members are: Olov Johansson-nyckelharpa, Mikael Marin-viola, Roger Tallroth-guitar, Svante Thuresson-pipes, octave mandolin; and Anders Ferrars-percussion. The new CD, Väsen-Live at the Nordic Roots Festival, was recorded on April 22 and April 23, 2000, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, during the excellent aforementioned festival that is held yearly and sponsored by NorthSide Records. This festival highlights many of the leading folk music groups from Scandinavia, some which make rare appearances in North American, and is a festival well worth attending. The Väsen Live experience can be exciting for dancers as well as individuals who are interested in their brand of complex music. The recording includes original pieces, some improvisations, and is crystalline, pure and distinctive. It is soothing, refreshing and is loud and clear. It is definitely unique. The group successfully combines elements of rock, classical, jazz, and progressive music with the traditional folk music that is at its roots.

This CD can be a good introduction to Väsen for the first time listener or for the seasoned veteran fan. But be forewarned: this not music for the meek. But it is an excellent offer to those who love to hear the challenges involved with the creation of invention. And it is also perfect for those who desire to listen to folk realms not previously explored until now. And it certainly is a must for the serious folk music collector. I could not recommend this CD more highly.

Artist: CARA DILLON
Title: I Was A Youth That's Inclined to Ramble
Label: ROUGH TRADE RECORDS \# RTADREC009
Availability: CARA DILLON is an import only, but can be obtained domestically through Tayberry Music: 306-367-9763, at Rough Trade Records web site at: www.roughtraderecords.com, in Amoeba Records, Hollywood, or the Cara Dillon website at: www.cara-dillon.com.

I Wish I Was a Valkyrie
I Am A Youth That's Inclined to Ramble
The Maid of Culmore
Donald of Glencoe
The Lark in the Thatched Roof
I Am A Youth That's Inclined to Ramble
The Spaniard

Music reviews written for this column mainly concentrate on the folk music realms of Celtic, but will also occasionally venture into the Nordic realms of Scandinavia, Eastern Europe and the Middle East. Although artists with a large folk music element will be included, the column will also be addressed. This column will not be closed to any female vocalists. These singer songwriters not only wrote original music, but also brought new and exciting arrangements of traditional songs and instruments to the folk music scene.

The purpose of this column is not only to review new releases by popular artists in the folk music realm, but also to highlight lesser known artists, those artists whose music releases would be overlooked by the local audio music shops due to domestic and/or international distribution restrictions. Although folk music bands from Los Angeles or Washington, D.C. would embrace these artists, if only they knew of their existence, and how to obtain their music. All artists in these music fields, whether established on major labels or independently produced are welcome to send FolkWorks their music for review consideration. (National distributors at: PO Box 1593, Downey, CA 90241-8032. Inquiries and/or feedback are welcome by writing to: FolkWorks or the reviewer at the previously mentioned mailing address or e-mail at: ancientchord@hotmail.com

The Rating guide has been eliminated since I am only reviewing in this column, recordings that receive my highest recommendation.
This is a good time to pause and consider that, before the early 1700’s, every bit of twine and rope, thread and yarn for bedding, sash, and clothing was made entirely by hand spinning. Sails, for example, took 1,000 yards of thread done entirely by hand. In Europe this led to a desirable cottage industry employing women and children. The wool-man or chandler’s shop would supply wool or flax by the pound and after it was spun it was exchanged for money or food. Women could add to the family’s resources and widows and children had a very real source of income if they lost a husband or father. Neighboring women were exempted from spinning, but they had access to silks and valuable fibers with which they created expensive cloth and embroideries.

In 1764, James Hargreaves, from Lancashire, England began perfecting his spinning machine known as the “spinning Jenny” (jenny meaning engine). At first he was attacked by a mob and his machines were destroyed because of the immediate threat of competition to home workers, but eventually his and other inventions soon changed the spinning economy. A spinning jenny had many spindles that could be turned by one hand. Twenty girls could do the work of 2,000 women and children. Further industrialization of carding machines and weaving looms forced women workers out of their homes and into dangerous mills where they were shut up from morning till night. Besides accidents from machinery, they suffered from high noise levels, plus the dust and lint, which eventually gave mill workers a lung disease similar to the “black lung” of the miners.

My husband’s family lives in the Lancashire town of Ashton-under-Lyne, England and for several generations members of his family have worked in the local cotton mills. Uncle Jim Ardern recounted how, as a child, he ran away from his weaving machine to fix threads and change bobbins. Several years ago we visited several restored working mills that are supported by the National Trust. At Quarry Bank Mill, Styal, Cheshire, we saw cotton textiles production as it occurred in the 1800’s. Dander and fluff filled the air in the carding and spinning rooms and we visited the dark attics that housed eight to twelve women workers. They were relieved from work only on Sundays when they were required to attend VISIBLE page 19
It’s appropriate that I’m fine tuning this column over St. Patrick’s Day weekend, as the first quarter of 2002 has been as great a time for fans of Irish music as there’s been in recent memory. Arguably the three finest bands currently playing Celtic music, Altan, Solas, and Danú, all have CDs out, all within a month of each other. Each has something unique to recommend it.

Danú remains all acoustic and old-school traditional on its new release *All Things Considered* [Shanachie] (!!), which features their new fiddler Oisin MacAuley on a mix of songs and tunes with Ciarán Ó Duibhghaill’s beautiful singing, including a guest spot by Liam Clancy at whose studio this was, like all their other CDs, recorded. Donnchadh Gough, the world’s most energetic bodhrán player, once again puts his all into every beat, and the band does their usual exciting variety of tunes from slow air to frenzied reel. Not quite as good as their second CD, *Think Before You Think*, but nearly.

Solas, on the other hand, shows us where the world of Irish music may well be headed. Their new CD has not a single traditional song or tune, but rather features great versions of contemporary songs. The *Edge of Silence* [Shanachie] (!), (give that rating a mental tweak if you simply can’t stomach the idea of a Solas record with no traditional material) definitely has its pleasures, including an original tune by accordion player Mick MacAuley in the daunting key signature of 15/8 and a version of Bob Dylan’s “Dignity” that has a lovely instrumental tag on it. They’ve been featured on National Public Radio and in many major newspapers, so if their stylistic shift was meant to bring some well-deserved attention their way, it’s doing the trick.

The best of the three, however, is *The Blue Idol* by Altan (!), who are about the halfway point Solas’s attempt at breakthrough and Danú’s steadfastness. The celebrity guests may bring them to an audience they might not otherwise find, but both Paul Brady and Dolly Parton are certainly quite familiar with traditional music themselves, and it’s such a good mix of everything they do well. Even a sax solo on the Gaelic song “Couch mo Lom Dubh Buí” works brilliantly. Both Danu and Altan perform versions of the traditional song “Uncle Rat”. Both learned it from Donnacha Gough, the world’s sheet master Jimmy Keane, Chicago singer/bouzouki player Pat O’Malley himself, with the strongest tenor ever to fill a smoky LA pub. Though his live set features lots of Van Morrison and Bob Dylan covers, as has become de rigueur on the pub scene these days, hearing him do mostly traditional songs is a rare treat, and the arrangements are often brilliant. Check the schedule page for Ken’s comings and goings, then go see him live and purchase the CD at the same time. You won’t regret it.

Finally, I simply must at least gently chide you, dear readers, for your lack of response to my last column. I certainly thought I’d provoke at least some of you by sticking up for rap music as a folk music form, but I guess you understood my point. What music moves one’s heart will always be a personal matter, so unless someone suggests otherwise, I’m going to continue to rave on about what moves me. Next time that’ll probably be the new Fairport Convention box set and the aforementioned Kate Rusby CD among others. See you then!

Rating scale:

- [!!]—Classic, sure to be looked back on as such for generations to come.
- [!]—Great, one of the year’s finest. If you have even a vague interest in the artist, consider this my whole-hearted recommendation that you go out and purchase it immediately.
- [—]—Good/solid, what you would expect.
- [X]—Avoid. Either ill-conceived, or artistically inept in some way

Dave Boyer is the bass player for LA Celtic band Cruicmor, an aspiring singer-songwriter, and a print journalist with over fifteen years experience. His column features happenings on the folk music scene both locally and nationally, with commentary on recordings, as well as live shows, and occasionally films and books. Please feel free to e-mail him at too many hatz@yahoo.com or write him c/o FolkWorks

On-going Storytelling Events

GREATER LOS ANGELES

**LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY STORYTELLERS**
2nd Thursdays • 7:30 pm
Temple Beth Tosh • 11827 Venice Blvd.
Audrey Kopp • (310) 823 7482
dekup@msn.com

**SUNDAYS ARE FOR STORIES**
2nd Sundays • 7:00 pm
Riverside Community Center
(714) 630-2052
info@rcc.us

**WHITTIER ADULT STORYTELLING GROUP**
Tuesdays • 6:00 - 6:30 pm
Los Nieto Neighborhood Center, 11640 E. Alameda Ave., L.A. (323) 629-4959

**LEVENT PARK GROOF WORKSHOP**
3rd Wednesdays • 7:00 pm
12th St. at the Block, Elyria, OH (440) 496-1960

**SOUTH COAST STORYTELLERS**
Saturdays & Sundays • 2:00-3:00 pm on the Boardwalk, South Coast Plaza
(949) 496-1960

**MISSION VIEJO STORYTELLING**
Every Monday • 6:00-8:00 pm
Borders at the Block, City Drive (714) 496-1960

**CORONA STORYTELLING**
Saturdays & Sundays • 12:00-2:00 pm
Borders, 2977 E. Lincoln Ave. (714) 946-1960

**ORANGE STORYTELLING**
Saturdays • 1:00-2:00 pm
Borders at the Block, City Drive (714) 496-1960

**ORANGE COUNTY**

**MISSION VIEJO STORYTELLING**
Every Tuesday • 6:00-8:00 pm
Borders, 2977 E. Lincoln Ave. (714) 946-1960

**CORONA STORYTELLING**
Saturdays • 12:00-2:00 pm
Borders at the Block, City Drive (714) 496-1960

**ORANGE STORYTELLING**
Saturdays • 1:00-2:00 pm
Borders at the Block, City Drive (714) 496-1960

**SOUTH COAST STORYTELLERS**
Saturdays • 3:00-5:00 pm
South Coast Plaza
(949) 496-1960

**LONG BEACH STORYTELLERS**
3rd Wednesdays • 7:00 pm
El Dorado Library, 2900 Studebaker Rd.
(562) 440-7300

**LONG BEACH STORYTELLERS**
3rd Thursdays • 7:00 pm
El Dorado Library, 2900 Studebaker Rd.
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Borders at the Block, City Drive (714) 496-1960

**ORANGE STORYTELLING**
Saturdays • 1:00-2:00 pm
Borders at the Block, City Drive (714) 496-1960
Cafe Largo • 437 N. Fairfax, Los Angeles • (323) 651-7073
Genghis Cohen • 740 N. Fairfax, Los Angeles • (323) 651-6063
Concasa • 266 W. 1st St., Los Angeles • (323) 930-1696
May Happenings at a Glance. Check out details by following the page references.

OGM: On-going Music-page 9 • OGD: On-going Dance-page 12 • SE: Special Events-page 20

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

May Picks

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ALMA y YURISKIEZ (SE)
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ALMA y YURISKIEZ (SE)
International (OGD) Mexican (OGD)
May 3-5 VILLAGE OF TALES STORYTELLING FESTIVAL
Armond Ogilvie (909) 646-8097 • www.ptorg.org
David Hoff - known for his jovial folk music and storytelling con-
cerns (North Carolina), Susan Klein - greatest oral history story-
ner, her wit, wisdom and far seeing eye (Matthew Vaughan). Angel L. Ayres - a veteran on Crandell, her performance is a whis-
mical blend of poetry, story & song played on autophone, gui-
tar, banjo, drums, and a dash of rapping.
Kevn Kinney - his vocal style an individual takes to the stage to bring,
folklore, history and caricatures of life to life.

May 4-5 CLAREMONT SPRING FOLK FESTIVAL
Larklin Park, 600 North Mountain Ave., Claremont (909) 621-2335 (Days) • (909) 978-5701 10am-6pm
Feldman & the Very Lonesome Boys, The Grasshoppers, Silverado, Sam Hill, Kane’s River, The Children’s School, 2225 Torrey Pines Road, La Jolla
Sardar (California).

May 9-12 CAMP RUIDE BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL
Parkfield, California 93450 • campruid@gmail.com • (559) 280-2054 • www.campruid.com
Kanse, The Grasshoppers, Silverado, Sam Hill, Kane’s River, The Children’s School, 2225 Torrey Pines Road, La Jolla
Sardar (California).

May 10-11 SAM HINTON FOLK HERTAGE FESTIVAL
The Children’s School, 2225 Torrey Pines Rd, La Jolla Deloria, John “Juke” Logan & Doug MacLeod, Deborah Coleman, John “Juke” Logan & Doug MacLeod, Deborah Coleman, John “Juke” Logan & Doug MacLeod, Deborah Coleman, John “Juke” Logan & Doug MacLeod, Deborah Coleman, John “Juke” Logan & Doug MacLeod, Deborah Coleman, John “Juke” Logan & Doug MacLeod, Deborah Coleman, John “Juke” Logan & Doug MacLeod, Deborah Coleman, John “Juke” Logan & Doug MacLeod, Deborah Coleman, John “Juke” Logan & Doug MacLeod, Deborah Coleman, John “Juke” Logan & Doug MacLeod, Deborah Coleman, John “Juke” Logan & Doug MacLeod, Deborah Coleman, John “Juke” Logan & Doug MacLeod, Deborah Coleman, John “Juke” Logan & Doug MacLeod, Deborah Coleman, John “Juke” Logan & Doug MacLeod, Deborah Coleman, John “Juke” Logan & Doug MacLeod, Deborah Coleman, John “Juke” Logan & Doug MacLeod, Deborah Coleman, John “Juke” Logan & Doug MacLeod, Deborah Coleman, John “Juke” Logan & Doug MacLeod, Deborah Coleman, John “Juke” Logan & 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Sauber’s out there.” So, like Dorothy, my quest took me they would say, rather reverently “You know Tom Virginia to Seattle, when I told people I was from L.A., I talked to in the national community from West began my field work in old-time music, no matter who June 8th. O brother, there is some great old-time music right here records and sent them home to Tom. Between the Ash Guard, he found that they sold records cheap at the PX, end of a week, you could have learned a lick or two. long engagement and, if you could get your older broth- the 1970’s revival of old-time string band music, the Ash Mike Sauber bought a banjo that Tom learned to play. 15-year-old Tom took to be a musical call to arms: folk him. At the end of the concert, Seeger delivered what Tom Sauber’s older brothers, Mike and Ed, had been fans of popular groups like the Weavers, and when Pete Seeger came to the Pasadena Civic, Mike took his kid brother Tom to hear him. At the end of the concert, Seeger delivered what 15-year-old Tom took to be a musical call to arms: folk music is not just for listening – go forth and PLAY! So Mike Sauber bought a banjo that Tom learned to play. The folk scene was really happening in L.A. and whenever his older brothers Mike or Ed went to the Ash Grove, L.A.’s now-legendary folk club, Tom would tag along. The two acts he was sure never to miss were folk legend and master of the flat-picking guitar, Doc Watson, and that band that was largely responsible for the 1970’s revival of old-time string band music, the New Lost City Ramblers. In those days, musicians like Watson would come to the Ash Grove and play a week-long engagement and, if you could get your older broth- er to drive you in from Alhambra every evening, by the end of a week, you could have learned a lick or two. When brother Mike joined the California National Guard, he found that they sold records cheap at the PX, so he bought New Lost City Ramblers and Mike Seeger (younger brother of Pete and member of NLCR) records and sent them home to Tom. Between the Ash Grove and the hi-fi and his brother Mike’s banjo, Tom Sauber’s lifelong career in old-time music was launched. 1966/67 was a watershed year for Tom. He started Cal. State L.A., grew his hair long and met Bill Bryson (now bass player for the well-known L.A. bluegrass band, The Laurel Canyon Ramblers). They started play- ing old-time music as a duet and that spring, they went to the Topanga Canyon Banjo-Fiddle Contest. Tom remembers that it was “very bucolic then” – smaller and actually held in the canyon. Tom played guitar in a band with some other guys he’d met at CSLA and entered in the beginning fiddle category. He might have placed, but that’s not the point. He had made contact with a whole community of SoCal people playing bluegrass and old-time music! Tom made his first pilgrimage to the Southeast in the summer of 1967. He visited Sam McGee and Doc Watson, a master musician in a variety of styles, a multi- instrumentalist (banjo, fiddle, guitar and mandolin) and singer. Old-time fans have heard Tom’s music most recently as one-third of Tom, Brad, and Alice, with Brad Leftwich and Alice Gerrard, or as One-Eyed Dog with Dirk Powell and John Herrmann. He has per- formed and recorded with Bluegrass musicians such as Byron Berline, John Hickman and Alan Munde, Cajun accordionists Joel-Simon, Joe Simien, and Wilfred Latour, and cowboy musician and singer Skip Gorman. He also plays old-time, bluegrass, and Cajun music with his 18 year old son, Patrick, who plays both bluegrass and old-time banjo, guitar, mandolin, bass and Cajun accordion. A native of Southern California, Tom has helped bring authentic traditional music to the film industry. In 1980, along with Roy Cowder and David Lindley, he played the music for the motion picture The Long Riders. He has also appeared in Bound for Glory, Memoirs, and numerous TV movies and series.
I first saw the Scottish Fiddlers in 1981, when a group of about twelve fiddlers and one guitarist carried their music stands onto the outdoor stage at the Topanga Banjo Fiddle Contest to entertain at the lunch break. They launched into the most amazing fast tune, changing to new tunes as they did their set. There were major, minor, and wild modal tunes, which made me want to jump up and down. Then they did a tune called a strathspey that was slower, with a very powerful rhythm that had the audience moving in tune with the music. Afterwards, their fiddler-leader—who had a fantastic mustache—invited all interested musicians to come and play with the group on Sunday afternoon in Highland Park. I went with my guitar to the next meeting. It was great to get lost in the middle of all that talent. Over the years, we did gigs at weddings and church suppers and marched in parades. But the most fun was at the Scottish Highland Games in Chino and Costa Mesa, where we could jam all day and perform our common repertoire when scheduled. Sometimes there were fiddle competitions judged by visiting Scottish fiddle champions, such as John Turner of Virginia and Alasdair Fraser from Scotland, who now lives near Grass Valley, California.

The Scottish Fiddlers of Los Angeles was founded in 1981, after the first Scottish fiddle competition sponsored by Clans of the Highlands in 1980, under the musical direction of Colin Gordon. One of the founding members was “Fiddler” David Fraser, whom you may know from his many years in the Scottish ceilidh band Glenfiddian. Another was Mary Ann Sereth, whom Scottish country dancers know as the leader of the Scottish dance band Mary Ann and Friends. Also, there was Colin’s wife, Shauna Pickett-Gordon, who provided piano accompaniment. Some of the early recruits were Jan and David Tappan, Sharon Newcomb, Margaret Oell, Chuck Lindahl, and me.

When Colin moved to the San Francisco area in 1990, Jan Tappan became our musical director. Jan had come across the Scottish Fiddlers a few months after they were formed. She met Colin Gordon at a Clans dinner about a year after she had begun playing her fiddle again after a 20-year lapse. She delved into Scottish music with great intensity, making four trips to Scotland in the 1980’s to attend fiddle workshops at Sterling University and at Sabhal Mor Ostaig on the Isle of Skye. Her experiences in these workshops made her realize that there was a need to bring teachers to California to make Scottish music more accessible to fiddlers here. This was much easier than sending everyone here to Scotland for workshops! So, in 1984, Jan Tappan, Alasdair Fraser, Sally Ashcraft, and Bonnie Thompson formed Valley of the Moon Scottish Fiddling School. Each summer, some of our group attends Valley of the Moon at Camp Campbell, which is set among the redwoods in the beautiful Santa Cruz mountains. There, for a week, they explore new bowings and learn fiddle tunes from Scotland, Ireland, Cape Breton, the Shetland Islands, Norway, and our own Appalachian Mountains.

The musical traditions of these countries have many connections and common roots. Jan Tappan says, “There is a great heritage of Scottish fiddle music, strathspeys, reels, jigs, marches, hornpipes, and slow airs dating back to the seventeenth century. Many of these early tunes have found their way into the American folk fiddle repertoire.” An article by David “Fidheal” Fraser states, “The Americanization of the Scottish fiddle probably began in the mid-18th century when many Scots migrated to Nova Scotia, Canada, and the southern United States. These people brought their fiddle music with them. Trace the source of the American fiddle tune Devil’s Dream and you will find it to be the Scottish Deil Anng la the Tainler. And of course Soldier’s Joy will also be found with its roots in Scotland.” Fraser also explains that, “apart from the melody, the most characteristic aspect of the fiddle music as played in Scotland is the rhythm of the ‘Scot’s Snap.’” The peculiarity lies in its dotted rhythm, the shorter note coming first. It is played on the fiddle with a peculiar flick or jerk of the wrist in the up bow. This rhythm is a staple of the Strathspey, but it is found in every form of Scottish music, and is recognized as an obvious trait of Scottish music.”

Brought together by our love of this unique and vibrant music, the Scottish Fiddlers of Los Angeles meet regularly to rehearse and to perform. Our 21st Spring Concert was held in April in Hermosa Beach. Much of the music we played is not heard anywhere else in the Southland. Much of the music we play is not heard anywhere else in the Southland. It is exciting music—some tunes are very ancient and some are recent but composed in the Scottish traditional styles. We love learning this music and sharing it with others. Watch for our booth and performances at the Loch Prado Scottish Clan Gathering and Highland Games May 4 & 5 in Chino and at the Scottish Games May 25 & 26 at the Costa Mesa Fairgrounds. We are also scheduled to play on Sunday, June 23, at 10 a.m. at the 20th Annual Summer Solstice Folk Music, Dance and Storytelling Festival held June 21-23 at Soka University in Aliso Viejo. In California, we are especially proud of Stacey Tappan, Jan’s daughter. She played and sang with her sister, Christina, at our concerts as a child and teenager. She is currently a young artist with the Chicago Lyric Opera. Another former youth member of our group, Angelina Spain, won second place in the junior division of the Scottish National Fiddle Contest when she was 17. Angelina’s 8-year-old sister, Gavriella Harmon, has been a soloist at several of our performances. She won “youngest fiddler” five years in a row at the Topanga Banjo and Fiddle Contest.

We are also proud of and inspired by our musical director, Jan Tappan. Besides working, raising a family, and leading our rehearsals and performances, she plays for Scottish country dance events, runs “Fiddler’s Crossing,” a mail order catalog for Celtic music books, recordings, and videos, and teaches Scottish fiddle workshops in Orange County and at the California Traditional Music Society in Encino.

So, if you’re ready to hear or play some Scottish music, the following resources will help:

Scottish Fiddlers of Los Angeles: for information on our activities or to be added to our concert mailing list, contact Jan Tappan at (626) 793-3716 or email fiddlers@earthlink.net.

Scottish Fiddler Workshops: Contact California Traditional Music Society regarding weekly workshops, (818) 817-7756. Or email Chris Hendershot at chris@hendershot@cybermail.com

Fiddlers Crossing: Celtic Music Books, Recordings, and Videos for fiddle, tin whistle, accordion, recorder, guitar, flute, piano, pipes, harp, viola, cello, bass, & singers! Email celtic@fiddlerscrossing.com or write P.O. Box 92226, Pasadena, CA 91109-2226 • (626) 792-6323


Valley of the Moon Scottish Fiddling School: on the web at www.valleymoon.edu
Under the banner "Forward with Scotland's Past," the BATTLEFIELD BAND has been performing on the international scene for more than thirty years. Inspired by their rich heritage of Celtic music and fired by the strength of the modern Scottish cultural scene, Battlefield Band mixes the old songs and tunes with new self-penned material, playing them on a unique fusion of ancient and modern instruments: bagpipes, synthesizers, fiddles, guitars, citterns, flutes, banjo, bass, whistles, bouzouki and bodhran.

The band grew up in – people liked to do square/flat dancing to fast fiddling. “Tom was fortunate to live in a musical tradition and Tom spent many hours playing banjo and fiddle. In the late 80’s Tom met old-time musician Brad Rightwich when he came out to play at the Summer Swannannoa old-time music camp in North Carolina. Brad, and Alice found themselves all working at the same town as Bill Monroe.”

As did many revival generation musicians, Tom felt the need to preserve Earl Collins’ playing on the1974 LP That’s Earl! Tom said that “it was obvious that it was something that needed to be done, and a bunch of the tunes quickly entered the standard repertoire. Collins liked to play really fast – it was part of the tradition he grew up in – people liked to do square/flat foot dancing to fast fiddling.” Tom was fortunate to record Earl when he was still playing banjo, and playing banjo to Earl’s fiddle.

It was around this time that Tom also expanded his musical horizons to Cajun music. While finishing up exams at UCLA, he and Chessie went and saw the great Cajun musician, Jo-el Sonnier, at a club in L.A. He learned to play Cajun accordion Contradancers are often treated to Patrick’s accordion playing during waltzes. While finishing up exams at UCLA, he and Chessie went and saw the great Cajun musician, Jo-el Sonnier, at a club in L.A. He learned to play Cajun accordion.

Clifftop and we had more fun. Sometime after that, Tom made it a point of seeking out as many SoCal Cajun musician, Jo-el Sonnier, at a club in L.A. He learned to play Cajun accordion. He’d just step back and catch it in his hip pocket.” He wouldn’t accept it head on, but bounce it off and slip behind. It was something that needed to be done, and a bunch of the tunes quickly entered the standard repertoire. Collins liked to play really fast – it was part of the tradition he grew up in – people liked to do square/flat foot dancing to fast fiddling. Earl was just a sweetheart – give him a compliment and he’d just keep on playing. Tom made it a point of seeking out as many SoCal Cajun musicians lives as they bring their mix of traditional and original material to performances around the world, including Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Canada, as well as more than 60 states in the United States. The band’s current line-up features one original member, one returning member, and two players who were not even born when the band started playing together then, after that, spent a few days at Swanannoa old-time music camp in North Carolina. Brad, and Alice found themselves all working at the same town as Bill Monroe.”

FILM APPEARANCES:

The Battlefield Band’s most recent recording is Happy Daze, which was released last year. It reflects the cultural vibrancy and self-confidence of a newly independent Scotland, and it’s the album that people make up the band. The album title reflects the pace at which this group of Scottish musicians lives as they bring their mix of traditional and original material to performances around the world, including Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Canada, as well as more than 60 states in the United States. The band’s current line-up features one original member, one returning member, and two players who were not even born when the band started playing together then, after that, spent a few days at Swanannoa old-time music camp in North Carolina. Brad, and Alice found themselves all working at the same town as Bill Monroe.”

Worthies: Songs and Tunes from Scotland in the Celtic Tradition, it contains Alan’s colorful tales of Scottish history and myth, bouzouki, banjo, and heartbreak- ing commentaries on immigration and economic hardships. The album title reflects the pace at which this group of Scottish musicians lives as they bring their mix of traditional and original material to performances around the world, including Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Canada, as well as more than 60 states in the United States. The band’s current line-up features one original member, one returning member, and two players who were not even born when the band started playing together then, after that, spent a few days at Swanannoa old-time music camp in North Carolina. Brad, and Alice found themselves all working at the same town as Bill Monroe.”

S O N G C A T C H E R continued from page 14

This page is a continuation of the previous page on SONGCATCHER, which was published last fall. Entitled Murry's Repose & Singing Hymns to the Storm, it was released in 1998. A long-awaited songbook was published last fall. Entitled The Scottish Songbook, it contains Alan’s colorful tales of Scottish history and myth, banjo, bouzouki, and heartbreak- ing commentaries on immigration and economic hardships. The album title reflects the pace at which this group of Scottish musicians lives as they bring their mix of traditional and original material to performances around the world, including Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Canada, as well as more than 60 states in the United States. The band’s current line-up features one original member, one returning member, and two players who were not even born when the band started playing together then, after that, spent a few days at Swanannoa old-time music camp in North Carolina. Brad, and Alice found themselves all working at the same town as Bill Monroe.”

Marty W o oley is a Ph.D. candidate in ethnomusicology at UCLA. She’s currently finishing her dissertation on American old-time music, tentatively titled, Conjuring Utopia: The Appalachian String Band Revival. 
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Leda & Steve Shapiro & All the FolkWorks Staff

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playing focuses more on the backbeat than northern playing focuses more on the backbeat than northern playing focuses more on the backbeat than northern playing focuses more on the backbeat than northern playing focuses more on the backbeat than northern playing focuses more on the backbeat than northern

Irish fiddling emphasizes melodic variation in tunes, and includes additional techniques for ornamenting the basic melody. For example, Irish fiddlers typically use rolls that allow for a more expressive performance, with notes that "roll" above and below the original tone. Or they may fill in an extra note to create a triplet. It is a mark of pride to "never play a tune the same way twice!"

Although historically ("traditionally") fiddlers learned their tunes by ear from other fiddlers, modern musicians have nearly unlimited resources for learning these tunes. These include historical and contemporary tune collections from print and computerized sources, archival and contemporary recordings, internet sound files, videos and exciting opportunities to participate in classes and workshops with master fiddlers.

Fiddling for community was something that contributed to the driving forces in keeping fiddling traditions alive and growing around the U.S., as well as Canada, Ireland and Scotland. When other forms of entertainment like movies and television replaced these community gatherings in many areas, fiddling began to dwindle in importance. However, in the 1970s, there was a revival of interest in getting back to people's roots. Perhaps this sparked an interest in seeking out old-time fiddlers in isolated places. In any case, fiddling traditions have taken on a new life. Parallel interest in participating in dance traditions, including American squares and contra dances, Irish sets and ceilis and Scottish country dances, to name a few, have helped encourage this revival. And those who play the fiddle will continue to delight dancers, listeners, and their own heart.

**When I play on my fiddle in Dooney, Folk dance like a wave of the sea; My cousin is priest in Kilvarnet, My brother in Moharobeah. I passed my brother and cousin; They read in their books of prayer; I read in my book of songs I bought at the Sligo fair. When we come at the end of time, To Peter sitting in state, He will smile on the three old spirits, They will all come up to me, With 'Here is the fiddler of Dooney'! And dance like a wave of the sea.**

_The Fiddler of Dooney_ by William Butler Yeats
opportunities for promotion.

Given several hours of schooling a day and had better church. Male workers had equally drab lives but were

Continued from page 7

May-June 2002

FolkWorks

yarn, a lace scarf, and socks."

"get on with it" at work, I am calm just spinning

portable; the roving compacts well in a purse and

and now I've added spinning. A drop spindle is very

full of long, long hours where we "hurry up and

this art.

instant connection through a mutual appreciation of

weavers in Switzerland and Scotland, and formed an

interest in spinning. Anne has met spinners and

of the fun and the good times shared through their

spinning bee in Virginia’s house. They joyfully told

She and Virginia Williams, another partner in the

complement her interest in fiber, color, and knitting.

Anne retired she thought learning to spin would

replied, "The friendships." Thirteen years ago when

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Weaver’s Cottage, a Santa Clarita shop that is a haven

needs of hand spinners.

fairs and stores dedicated to serving the interest and

completely disappeared from the scene. There are scores

Surprisingly, though, hand spinning has not com-

our disposable income buys disposable clothes.

ric took two weeks of spinning, one of weaving, and

was referred to as linsey-woolsey. A dress of this fab-

warp and wool for the weft. This homespun fabric

and homespun clothing for the entire family. A stur-

were responsible not only for sheets, but for blankets

and agreeable manner generously presented to Mrs.

Dover, some of whom brought…Flax and Cotton to

"…about 40 Ladies met at ye ministers house in

production, as this article from 1769 demonstrates

bees were held in every community with as many as

fifty spinners attending. Newspapers gave great

attention to this enterprise to encourage increased

increased, as this article from 1769 demonstrates

... about 40 Ladies met at ye ministers house in

Dover, some of whom brought…Flax and Cotton to

and...and after spending ye day in a very industrious

and agreeable manner generously presented to Mrs.

Belknap the fruits of their labor…they behaved with

ye utmost order and decency and were kindly and

plentifully supplied by those who were well wishers

Industry."

Even after industrialization of textiles came to the eastern United States, those on the move west had to set up home production as soon as they could obtain wool, cotton, or flax. The pioneer women were responsible not only for sheets, but for blankets and homespun clothing for the entire family. A sturdy fabric resulted from the combination of a linen warp and wool for the weft. This homespun fabric was referred to as linsey-woolsey. A dress of this fabric took two weeks of spinning, one of weaving, and one to cut and sew.

We now live in an age of instant gratification and our disposable income buys disposable clothes. Surprisingly, though, hand spinning has not completely disappeared from the scene. There are scores of guilds in every state, clubs, journals, festivals, fairs and stores dedicated to serving the interest and needs of hand spinners.

Why spin? Every spinner has his or her own story. When I asked Anne Seth, former partner in the Weaver’s Cottage, a Santa Clarita shop that is a haven for fiber and textile enthusiasts, she thoughtfully replied, “The friendships.” Thirteen years ago when Anne retired she thought learning to spin would complement her interest in fiber, color, and knitting. She and Virginia Williams, another partner in the store, chuckled as they recounted how they met at a spinning bee in Virginia’s house. They joyfully told of the fun and the good times shared through their interest in spinning. Anne has met spinners and weavers in Switzerland and Scotland, and formed an instant connection through a mutual appreciation of this art.

As for myself, I enjoy the feel of the fiber as it passes through my fingers becoming yarn. I love the rhythm and hum of the wheel, the anticipation of the lovely creation I will make. All the years I played music I sent my creative energy out into the universe. Now with that same creative impulse, using my wheel as my instrument, and fiber as my song, I form a visible and tangible record of my desire and need to be creative. I create a harmony of color and find the rhythm of the wheel a soothing tune.

I grow the historic dye plants and like to be a part of the whole design and creative process. Every rug, blanket or garment I make is imbued with my love of history and continuity, a melody that women have played throughout time. I share this enthusiasm by teaching and demonstrating at various schools and festivals. For a list of upcoming classes or demonstrations, please visit my web site at www.Natural-Fiber-Arts.com or even better, stop by our farm where I’ll be spinning wool from my own sheep. I still think it’s marvelous.

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**SPECIAL EVENTS**

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<td>CAPITOL RECORDS FESTIVAL</td>
<td>May 12</td>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>Various musical performances</td>
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<td>SAN FRANCISCO FILM FESTIVAL</td>
<td>May 12</td>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>Film screenings</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:30pm &amp; 8:30pm</td>
<td>Tori Amos</td>
<td>Capitol Records</td>
<td>Tickets: $30 each</td>
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<td>9:00pm</td>
<td>“And An Evening With”</td>
<td>Capitol Records</td>
<td>Free entry for ticket holders</td>
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<td>CASPER FUNK</td>
<td>May 13</td>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>Concert performance</td>
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**VENUS LOCATIONS**

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