Didgeridoos and Don’ts
A Talkabout with Didgeridude Jay Atwood

BY JOEL OKIDA

The mysterious drones and grunts emanating from the didgeridoo bring to mind the sound one would get if it were possible to goose a humpback whale. Or perhaps the snorted mantra of a yak meditating. In reality, the variety of tones can’t really be described in a metaphor. This speaks to the mystical, native Australian origins of the long, tubular instrument called the didgeridoo. There are references, in some northern Aboriginal lore, to its tone being the cumulative sound the creatures in the animal kingdom would make if all were in chorus.

Recently, Jay Atwood, solo artist, and didgeridoo player for Celtic band, The Wicked Tinkers, came up for air, and we asked him about the story behind this unique instrument and to find out why being long-winded can be a good thing.

JOEL: Do you think there’s a connection between the didgeridoos made in Australia and the variety of other instruments made elsewhere and out of any number of different kinds of material? Is there a connection between the pipe and how you play?

JAY: Yes, there are didgeridoos made from PVC (PolyVinyl Chloride) drain pipe to beautifully made wooden American pipes. Very popular, now, are the wooden agave pipes and yucca pipes. I play didgeridoos of all different sorts. I have about 15 didgeridoos that I play in various different ways. And, personally, I love the sound of the traditional instruments. The termite-hollowed eucalyptus has a truly unique sound. If I play with the Tinkers, the instrument we use was built to match the bagpipes, so it’s unusually low, but that’s what works for the band so I use it.

JOEL: There seems to be a cottage industry of didgeridoo-

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A Gander at Gamelan
Joan Baez Gets Barefoot Again

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Ross Altman’s How Can I Keep From Talking
Larry Wines’ Tied to the Tracks
Notes from Possum Pie Inn
Calendar of Events
On-Going Music & Dance
& much more...
THE STAIRWELL SISTERS: OLD-TIME STRING BAND
BREAKS OUT

BY STEVE GOLDFIELD

The Stairwell Sisters, from the San Francisco Bay Area, have been honing their traditional sound through six years and two widely acclaimed CDs, with a third on the way soon. Since their appearance at the International Bluegrass Music Association, they have been touring nationally on the festival circuit. The Stairwells will make their Los Angeles debut on Saturday, September 9, at the Coffee Gallery Backstage and at the Peter Strauss Ranch on Sunday, September 10. They are also playing the Red Barn farther north in Los Osos on September 8. Before that comes their first East Coast tour in August, including an appearance at Lincoln Center. They have toured in the Midwest and were named “band to watch” at Colorado’s North Fork Valley Bluegrass. In the fall the Stairwells will be in Texas. Other important gigs coming are opening for the New Lost City Ramblers at the Berkeley Old-Time Music Convention in September and playing at the mammoth Strictly Bluegrass Festival in San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park in October.

The band’s popularity is rooted in their old-time repertoire and their tight and personable stage presence. They have a very dynamic show which allows the personality of each band member to emerge and shine. The band was formed in San Francisco in 2000 after Lisa Berman and Sue Sandlin started singing together in a stairwell in the building where both worked as personable stage presence. They have a very dynamic show which allows the personality of each band member to emerge and shine. The band was formed in San Francisco in 2000 after Lisa Berman and Sue Sandlin started singing together in a stairwell in the building where both worked as graphic designers. Lisa had played with Stephanie Prausnitz and Martha Hawthorne in the Crooked Jades. When Martha found clogging teacher Evie Ladin, the band was complete and the personnel has not changed since. In their six years together, their music has deepened and grown, and audiences are responding enthusiastically everywhere they go.

Stephanie plays fiddle and grew up in the Bay Area, though she was living in Atlanta when she took up fiddling. Stephanie brings lots of great tunes to the band and claims to have the biggest mouth on stage. She is even a closet banjo player. Evie plays clawhammer banjo and also clogs on stage. She was raised on southern music and dance in New Jersey, where her parents’ house welcomed many traditional musicians and where Evie and her sister danced and sang from an early age. Martha, who plays bass, grew up in Orange County but made her way to San Francisco at the age of 18. Sue, on guitar and tiple (ed. a small chordophone in the guitar family), is from Fremont. Lisa plays dobro/slide, banjo, and guitar and started out in Chicago.

All five sing and blend voices in heavenly harmonies. Their sound has solidified and become richer and turned into their own unique music. They have thrived on the growing Bay Area old-time community. Band members have been active in organizing both the annual San Francisco Bluegrass and Old-Time Festival, held in February, and the annual Berkeley Old-Time Music Convention, held in September. The Stairwell Sisters have been receiving tremendous acclaim wherever they go. The San Francisco Chronicle described them as “a powerhouse ensemble whose vocal harmonies and stomping rhythms are abetted by Evie Ladin’s dexterous clogging.” The Old-Time Herald wrote, “Combine this band’s vocal prowess with skilled multi-instrumental chops and a hellbent-for-leather attitude, and you have a wild, funky recording... Britt, hard-edged, exciting ensemble singing...” In which the Sisters rocket into the high lonesome stratosphere.” Bluegrass Unlimited reviewed their second CD: “The Stairwell Sisters’ latest release, representative of their ever-expanding artistry and reputation...Feet All Over The Floor is old-time music at its finest and establishes the Stairwell Sisters as significant interpreters of traditional American music.” The San Jose Mercury News enthused, “Blazing a brilliant trail through a genre usually dominated by men [with] an energy that flows as much from the audience to the bandstand as among the players themselves... the new album captures the band’s close vocal harmonies, haunting ballads and lock-step square dance grooves with passion and precision.”

The band’s two CDs, The Stairwell Sisters (2003) and Feet All Over The Floor (2005) are both on Yodel-Ay-Hee. Evie Ladin’s instructional DVD and video, The Basics of Southern Appalachian Flatfoot Clogging (2002) is on Crosspule Records. The first CD has just one original, Down to the Door by Evie, but the second has six originals by Lisa, Evie, Sue, and Martha. The band’s original material is written seamlessly within the same tradition as the rest of their music. The Stairwell Sisters are truly bringing old-time and traditional entertainment to new places and audiences, and they are doing it with characteristic panache. More information about the band and samples from their recordings can be heard at www.stairwellsisters.com.

SATURDAY - September 9, 2006
COFFEE GALLERY BACKSTAGE
TWO SHOWS 7pm & 9:30pm
2029 North Lake, Altadena
Reservations: 626-398-7917
FREE 2pm – 4pm
Sponsored by the Topanga Banjo Fiddle Contest & The National Park Service.
Outdoor amphitheatre under the shade of giant old oaks.

SUNDAY - September 10, 2006
PETER STRAUSS RANCH
FREE 2pm – 4pm

Steve Goldfield is an old-time banjo player and fiddler who writes for Fiddler, Bluegrass Unlimited, and Old-Time Herald. As one of FolkWorks first writers, he penned American Music: Rooted in Cultural Fusion. He also started the old-time newsgroup rec.music.country.old-time.
**WHEN THE CHIT HITS THE PAN**

**OR WHAT I THOUGHT I KNEW ABOUT THE STEEL DRUM**

The sound of steel drums has always fascinated me but, in preparing for this article, I found that my assumptions about the music and the instrument were completely wrong. My impression was that of light-hearted island music using cheap instruments easily made from found goods. The music conjures up images of a relaxed island culture making music to the easy rhythm of the trade winds. Supposedly, steel drums came into being when islanders discovered that the empty 55-gallon oil drums left behind by World War II GIs could be used to make music. The actual story, however, is one of a world in turmoil, of nations battling for colonies, of slavery and of suppression.

It begins in 1498 when Spain laid claim to the island of Trinidad. Toward the end of the 1780s French planters brought a significant slave population to the island. Then, in 1797, the British defeated the French in Trinidad and put an end to slavery by 1837. The islanders still used drums for their dances and celebrations including Carnival that had begun as a procession of torch bearers. Once the tambourine started making music in the mid 1800s the British banned the drums on the grounds that they were too dangerous for celebrations including Carnival that had begun as a procession of torch bearers. These stick-bands came to be known as “bamboo tamboo” (from the French word tambour, meaning drum). Various island groups developed their own unique identifying rhythms that announced their presence as each subsequent one was criminalized. By the 1930s bamboo tambour bands had begun using empty biscuit pans and accidentally discovered that a dented pan produced two distinct notes or “ping-pong” as it was called. The birth of the “steel pan” (as it is known everywhere in the world except in United States where it is called the “steel drum”) is considered to be 1938 when bamboo tambour bands began to switch over to steel. In 1939, Winston “Specie” Simon invented and played the first tuned pan. After the WWII Carnival ban was lifted, Simon caused a sensation over to steel. In 1939, Winston “Spree” Simon invented and played the first tuned pan. After the WWII Carnival ban was lifted, Simon caused a sensation over to steel. In 1939, Winston “Spree” Simon invented and played the first tuned pan. After the WWII Carnival ban was lifted, Simon caused a sensation over to steel. In 1939, Winston “Spree” Simon invented and played the first tuned pan. After the WWII Carnival ban was lifted, Simon caused a sensation over to steel.

If you think you want to get an old 55-gallon oil drum and make a steel pan, you realize that the surface has been stretched thinnest at the center. To outfit a full steel band can cost tens of thousands of dollars. You can get an idea of current prices from his web site at www.mannet testeeldrums.com/MSDpricelist.htm.

**Table 1 – The Range of Instruments in the Steel Band**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument Name</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Musical Function</th>
<th>Skirt Length</th>
<th>No. of Drums</th>
<th>No. of Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Tenor (High Lead)</td>
<td>Soprano (D4 - F6)</td>
<td>Melody</td>
<td>5&quot;</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Tenor (Low Lead)</td>
<td>Soprano (C4 - E6)</td>
<td>Melody</td>
<td>5 1/2&quot;</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double Tenor (Double Lead)</td>
<td>Soprano/Alto (F3 - B5)</td>
<td>Melody/Counter Melody</td>
<td>6&quot;</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double Second (A4 - G6)</td>
<td>Melody/Counter Melody/Harmony</td>
<td>6&quot;</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triple Cello</td>
<td>Tenor (G5 - A4)</td>
<td>Harmony</td>
<td>17&quot;</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Cello</td>
<td>Tenor (Bb2 - Cs5)</td>
<td>Harmony</td>
<td>17&quot;</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triplephonic Tenor</td>
<td>Tenor (E2 - Bb5)</td>
<td>Harmony</td>
<td>17&quot;</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenor Bass</td>
<td>Tenor/Bass (F3 - E4)</td>
<td>Reinforce Bass/Bass Lines</td>
<td>17&quot;</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bass</td>
<td>Bass (Bb1 - E3)</td>
<td>Bass Lines</td>
<td>34&quot;</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WEB SITES YOU CAN VISIT:**

The most complete treatise I could find on steel pan construction and tuning is Ulf Kromman’s book which is available as a free download off the web at www.hotpans.se/pan/tuning/pdf/pantuning.pdf. If you want to experience the adjacent fifth arrangement and hear the steel pan as you try it, you can find a virtual pan at www.mathsyear2000.org/museum/gallery1/steeldrum. You can find a step-by-step process for making just one pan at www.mathsyear2000.org/museum/gallery1/steeldrum.

However, if you have made up your mind, you can find a step-by-step process in Ulf Kromman’s book (look below in Web Sites You Can Visit). Keep in mind that this complex process of sinking the bottom of the pan, marking notes, grooving, leveling, shaping notes, smoothing, cutting, tempering and so forth, is for making just one pan! Pans come in ten or eleven different flavors from the highest “ping-pong” to the lowest “boom.” The higher the note, the smaller the surface area required, so the high Tenor Pan has enough room for 29 notes. The lower notes require more surface area; thus, the Bass Pans may have as few as three to a pan and therefore can require up to nine or twelve big pans to create a full chromatic scale for the one instrument. The sides of the instruments, called skirts, are cut so the higher instruments have shorter skirts and the lower ones have longer skirts with the bass instrument keeping the entire skirt length from the original 55-gallon oil drum (see Figure 2). This is to properly delay the sound as it travels around the skirt and back to the sounding surface to avoid a phase differential that could cause sound cancellation due to destructive interference (see Table 1). Figure 3 shows that the notes on the Tenor Pan are laid out as adjacent fifths with the higher octaves farther toward the center. This centering makes sense when you realize that the surface has been stretched thinnest at the center.

The steel drum is the only globally adopted acoustic instrument to be invented in the twentieth century. The interaction of the notes produces overtones not found on other instruments. It’s what gives the steel pan not only its characteristic sound, but is the reason that it is complicated to make and tune. So please keep reading this column and, of course, stay tuned.

**Roger Goodman**

is a musician, mathematician, punster, reader of esoteric books and sometime writer, none of which pays the mortgage. For that, he is a computer network guy for a law firm. He has been part of the Los Angeles old-time & contra-dance music community for over thirty years. While not a dancer, he does play fiddle, guitar, harmonica, mandolin, banjo & spoons. Roger has a penchant for trivia and obscura and sometimes tries to explain how the clock works when asked only for the time. He lives with his wife, Monika White, in Santa Monica.

**WEB SITES YOU CAN VISIT:**

- [www.mannettesteeldrums.com/MSDpricelist.htm](http://www.mannettesteeldrums.com/MSDpricelist.htm)
Bake Me a Memory

When you come to visit, we’ll red up the haus and get jumbo sammies and Arns City Beer. Just cross the Mon dahntahn. We have spitzes and gimmies in the yard. Watch out for the jaggers and nebbey neighbors. The kids may shoot you with gumbands.”

If you drive to Pittsburgh from someplace else in Pennsylvania, you’ll find yourself in the Squirrel Hill neighborhood. Pittsburgh was born just south of here was named Andrew Warhola. He started his art career at the Carnegie Art Institute, and later dropped the “a” at the end of his name. His artwork can now be seen at the Andy Warhol Museum.

I have a special interest in Pittsburgh since this is my husband Bill’s hometown, and he speaks a bit of Pittsburghese himself. I still don’t know for sure if he’s saying “towel” or “tile” when he says “tawl.” This winter we revisited Pittsburgh. Driving in at night we knew we had arrived when we saw the giant neon ketchup bottle blinking and pouring out a red puddle to form the word “Helm.” The old factory with the sign still stands beside the Allegheny River.

Pittsburgh is a city defined by its rivers and hills. There are ninety six neighborhood hoods here, and some are composed of distinct ethnic groups to this day. Many immigrants from Europe, particularly Eastern Europe, arrived here during the ninetenth and early twentieth century and each group settled into its own district. Asian and Hispanic people are still traditionally non-existent. Pittsburgh has descends of Eastern European, while the North Side is German and Swiss. Gertrude Stein was born in the North Side as was Ukrainian and Slavic. During the potato famine, the Irish came and settled on the East Side in Oakland and Highland. Italians moved nearby to Bloomfield and Lawrenceville. Later, in the 1920s, many Jews came to the Squirrel Hill area. Further east is the East End, a lower class neighborhood called the Hill District where the late playwright August Wilson lived, and where his plays are set. Another famous Pittsburgher born just south of here was named Andrew Warhola. He started his art career at the Carnegie Art Institute, and later dropped the “a” at the end of his name. His artwork can now be seen at the Andy Warhol Museum.

Somehow our conversation turned to food and Flora described how she made a “cookie waterfall” that’s specific to Western Pennsylvania and very popular at weddings. Forty different kinds of cookies are used to cascade down in neat rows from the top of the cake. The “fall” is often quite interesting.

I regret to say that due to time pressures and obligations this will be my last regular article. Many thanks to FolkWorks for the opportunity to write about ethnic foods and traditions, which was actually the concept of editor Leda Shapiro. Also, a special thanks to my husband, Bill Mason, for all of his technical and personal support.

In 2002, Fron Heller retired as a social worker. Now she is attempting to find a new purpose in life. She and her husband Bill Mason. Pittsburgh is a unique place where the old neighborhoods haven’t changed much in many years. It can’t be called the “rust belt” any more, since the factories are long gone and it’s been cleaned up over the last few decades. It nostalgists is a longing for the past, then Pittsburgh brings it right home. The row houses and cobblestone streets, the rivers and many hills, the old taverns and traditional foods all still remain in pleasant place here. Visiting means gathering around the table to reminisce and eat food from the “Old World.” Whether we meet at a tavern or a private home, someone is always there to bake us a memory.

On the North Side of town the German immigrants have been busy brewing beer since the area was first settled. Before refrigeration, they actually dug caves into the sides of hills to keep the beer cool. Breweries flourished in the 1800s, but few survived Prohibition. The Pittsburgh Brewing Company, founded in 1858, is one of the oldest in the country, and is still making beer in the old building on the Hill District.

The lazy daisy cake made its appearance along with a fruit flan layered with fresh fruit, white chocolate, and a rich butter cream. Flora made a German potato salad, fruit salad with sour chicken salad, and a new recipe, a hot chicken salad with bread and melted cheese. She didn’t disappoint us for dessert. The lazy daisy cake made its appearance along with a fruit flan layered with fresh fruit, white chocolate, and a rich butter cream.

Violin music can be heard throughout the night, we knew we had arrived when we saw the giant neon ketchup bottle blinking and pouring out a red puddle to form the word “Helm.” The old factory with the sign still stands beside the Allegheny River.

At Max’s Allegheny Tavern, I buy turkey kielbasa, which isn’t quite like the Polish sausage, which Bill pronounces in correct Pittsburghese as “kullBASSI.” While there are variations of kielbasa, it’s usually a U shaped smoked garlic sausage made of pork. Max’s Allegheny Tavern has an unusual one which is a combination of pork and beef. Here in Los Angeles, I buy turkey kielbasa, which isn’t quite as tasty, but much less fatty and still quite good. Cabbage and potatoes also play a big part in these dishes. Kielbasa with sauerkraut is a standard at our house. Rows of sausage, chopped onions and apple are browned in a pan, and then drained sauerkraut and some caraway seeds are added. The whole thing is simmered for thirty to forty five minutes with a little water. Panduki is another variation, with kielbasa, green cabbage, onions and potatoes, also sautéed and then simmered until done. Holuha is stuffed cabbage which can be made with meat and rice, or as a vegetarian dish with mushrooms and rice. You will find many of these dishes on Fridays in Pittsburgh. Bill would bring his own contrast to a Russian Orthodox Church to buy pierogi. These little Polish dumplings have a variety of fillings such as potato and cheese, onion and cabbage, or prunes. Today we buy the potato and cheese filled ones from the freshest section of the market. Besides being very good, they take about three minutes to cook. Try them with a little butter and parmesan cheese on top. Or fry them, and add butter and garlic at the end, or serve them in a tomato sauce.

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Folk / Americana Radio on the Web, Part Two

L ast time, we surveyed the internet’s offer- ings of folk / Americana and alt-country radio shows on varied-format broadcast / internet radio. That included a look at Southern California and LA-based shows, since we are presently bereft of a full-time Americana or folk sta- tion here. Next, we’ll remain the same old place to hear artists who are performing locally or headred here on tour, so remember to support your local shows. We did miss those on two stations, so let’s get back to the rounds and more. A new for- mula, “In to the station’s presentation of” is often used, politics, social issues, war and peace (the with nods to historical counterparts, and themes famous, some not, emphasizing them as storytellers music of modern-day folk troubadours, some 10pm brings the finest Celtic music hour, which isn’t aired in LA; 7- for the desired sections. There, you can download 9am -noon is great, as is evenings folks. Miranda Leonard and Neal Losey serving up acoustic and 3-5pm is Blues Disease, with Skeeter Mann and Angie Evans. Check the Site has options for listening.

Check their weekday schedules. 7-9pm, the Fringe, with Mary Lou Cameron. That one offers some of the “net’s finest alt-country. Carl says, “It’s a gold mine of new and unheard music.” hundreds of different stations, popular everywhere, but unavailable on LA broadcast radio. Site has options for listening.

http://radio.kyln.org – this Central Coast station spon- sons the annual Live Oak Music Festival. It’s most- ly classical, jazz, and NPR, but offers a few good folk shows. Tuesdays, 8-10pm, Pickin’ Up the Tempo, “Little Robbie” Kimball with coun- try, alternative folk, and eclectic. Thursday, 8- 10pm, Glenn Horn’s Basically Bluegrass offers BG standards, new progressive BG and related acoustic music. Saturday brings four shows: 7:30- 8am, Katz Pajamas with Michael Katz offers sto- rytelling, some musical, from around the world; 1- 3pm is Sonnie Brown’s Minstled Song Show with music of modern-day folk troubadours, some popular, some not, emphasizing them as storytellers with roots to historical counterparts, and themes includes politics, social issues, war and peace (the show is somewhat LA doesn’t have – a local lead- in to the station’s presentation of A Prairie Home Companion). When it’s time for Nightshift at 9pm, then 9-11pm is the Night- day Ride of rootsy blues. Our Saturday Tradition 9am -noon is great, as is Sunday Folkss (same hours) preceded by Walkin’ the Floor 6-9am, noon-3pm Sunday is Bluegrass Ramble, and 3-5pm is Sunday’s Horne. With either rootsy music, jazz and global music, you’ll wish LA had this station.


http://www.folkworks.com – site for the two shows. Classic Heartland, George Fair’s weekly show, and Country Music Then and Now, weekly- ly with Skeeter Mann and Angie Evans. Check the site for schedules.

INTERNET RADIO NETWORKS WITH MULTIPLE STATION LINKS

www.warpradio.com – same note as shout- cast.com (above). You’ll like some of the 300 sta- tions here.

www.shortcast.com – this network includes some Americana stations; access them with the Americana link, using the genre button.

www.warpradio.com – public radio from Knoxville, Tennessee, and 103 stations, popular everywhere, but unavailable on LA broadcast radio. Site has options for listening.


SHOWS ON DEDICATED WEB SITES

www.prairiehome.org or www.phc.mpr.org – home site for A Prairie Home Companion offers podcasts, streams of the most recent show and some archives.

www.woodsongs.com – home site for the Woodsongs Old Time Radio Hour. Michael Jonathan’s fantastic popular weekly show is all live performances. It’s internationally syndicated on over 400 radio stations. Though not still aired in LA, it’s available online at various times.

www.mountaintage.org – home of the West Virginia-based, nationally syndicated Mountai- n Stage, weekly 2-hour live performance show with 4:5 performing guests. On 103 stations, popular everywhere, but unavailable on LA broadcast radio. Site has options for listening.

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http://www.925theoutlaw.com – Texas Outlaw and alt-country radio from the Lone Star State. Carl says, “One of the most listened-to internet radio sta-
SEPTEMBER 9th – SATURDAY – 8pm
The Lone Hill Ramblers bring alive traditional music of the Southern Appalachians - from an exuberant dance tune by the full band to a mournful fiddle solo. Drawing on more than a half century of combined old-time experience, the Ramblers present a variety of regional tunes and songs with fiddle, guitar, and various forms of banjo. Its music as vibrant and engaging now as it was a hundred years ago. Step back in time for an evening with the Lone Hill Ramblers. Paul Jarrell (fiddle); Steve Lewis (banjos); Joe Wack (guitar, fiddle, banjo).
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“Li’l Rev is a Jewish Pete Seeger: a voice that just pulls you in, a raconteur, a folksinger in the classic tradition of songs of justice, dignity, and Jewish heritage.”
- Rabbi Larry Midler
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I'm a recent conversation, a friend of mine and I discussed how we hear music, whether our love for music is instinctive or an intellectual one. As a music writer, of course I have to admit that I can get very "heady" about the music I like. And yet, though it makes up only a small part of my ancestral heritage, I never had to think about whether or not I liked Irish traditional music. It's always had immediacy and sounded, as if it were the music of my soul. And I know I'm not alone. There's something about Irish music at its best that's instantly recognizable, that defies too much intellectualizing. I can say it's breathtakingly beautiful at first listen, and of course the omnipresent John Doyle shows up too. flat tracking two reel sets with bassist Steven Heller. From delicate to complex, from slow waltz to frenzied reel, it's all here, played with talent and joy. Also on Shanachie are a couple of older CDs that I have just caught up with, both from the world's finest traditional bands. Solas's Waiting For An Echo (?) is Solas as we've come to know them, a mix between traditional and contemporary jigs and reels, and songs in Irish and English. Many of the instrumental tunes are self-written, and the only remaining original member, guitar and multi-instrumentalist Seamus Egan, has led the band in an ever-more cosmopolitan direction, with hints of Italian, American, and other ethnic musics. Those wanting the old Solas style can have plenty of that as well, between the opening reel set, a frenzied polka, and a lovely bunch of songs, sung beautifully by Deirdre Scanlan.

Since this release, in fact, Solas have switched labels from Shanachie to Compass, celebrating by releasing Reunion: A Decade of Solas (!!!) which is a CD/DVD combo live album featuring every current and former member of Solas plus a few guests. While the songs are good, starting with Woody Guthrie's Pastures of Plenty, the best thing about it is how the instrumental tunes don't sound at all messy. Three guitar players playing at once don't step on each other's lines, and it all works as a whole. They seem to accomplish a lot of what's great about them in a mere 78 minutes (plus there's a nice selection of bonus tracks on the DVD side) featuring songs and tunes from some very brand new ones. There's still nothing happening in Irish music today to match the awesome power of John Doyle and Seamus Egan playing together again. It's a joyful sound, and one we haven't heard for a while.

Dánið on the other hand, gets a bit more contemporary with their versions of Bob Dylan's Farewell Angelina and Paul Brady's Follow On about their When All Is Said and Done [Shanachie] (!!!). Singer Muiríean Nic Amlaith is well-integrated into the band at this point, with track after track alternating songs with tunes before ending with an air/jig set. Of the five songs, two are in Irish and three in English. Nonetheless the instrumental tunes have the same fire as Dáinið of old, starting with a rousing reel set, and including a jig set with guitarist Gerry O'Connor on banjo. All in all, it's a rather pleasant 50 minutes.

Dáinið also has a full-length live video, One Night Stand (!!!), on Shanachie, and it features a lot of bonus material. The live performance is great, of course, featuring guests such as Sharon Shannon and Phil Cunningham, but the extras are a lot more extensive than is usually the case with live videos. All band members are interviewed extensively about their musical history and inspiration, and plenty of off-stage material is included. Thrill as bodhrán player/piper Donnchadh Gough wrestles playfully with various band members! Delight as Liam Clancy talks about watching the band members grow up into the unique individuals and master musicians that they are today! Very much like spending the day with the them, really.

It's been a pleasure to do an all-Irish edition again, especially catching up with our 2005 releases I'm just now hearing. Next time will be mostly American music; unless another Celtic release comes along that I have to tell you about right away. 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.
[!!]—Very good, with considerable appeal for a fan of the artist(s). If you purchase it, you likely won't be disappointed.
[!!!]—Good/solid, what you would expect.
[—][—]—Avoid. Either ill-conceived, or artistically inept in some way.
A HAWAIIAN MUSICAL TREASURE: GENOA KEAWE

BY AUDREY COLEMAN

It was a few minutes before six on a tropical December evening in 2001 when Michael and I strolled onto the Moana Terrace of the Marriott Waikiki. We managed to claim one of the few remaining tables and approached the platform to dance hula to Auntie Genoa’s singing. Sometimes Auntie would gently encourage them, “Come on, dear, come right up…” I particularly remember a lithe Japanese woman with short-cropped hair, moving in flowing curves, her chin was upturned to the sun. Her expression was serene as she danced to a voice that seemed to float right up… I particularly remember a lithe Japanese woman with short-cropped hair, moving in flowing curves, her chin was upturned to the sun. Her expression was serene as she danced to a voice that seemed to float up to the sky.

Since that first encounter with the magic of Auntie Genoa, I have had only one other opportunity to attend her legendary show by the Marriott Waikiki. That second time, when she came to our table, I told her how we had scheduled our five day trip around seeing her Thursday night show. She leaned over with a smile and I kissed her on the cheek. I will never forget the softness and sweet fragrance of her cheek. The picture Michael took of me and said, ‘Why are you crying? You’re not supposed to cry!’ and I said, ‘I cannot sing the song. It’s too high for me.’ The audience was laughing at me.”

Fortunately for her future audiences, young Genoa recovered from that embarrassing incident, and at age 12 joined the choir of the local Mormon Church. She loved singing the hymns. At the same time she was a devoted fan of radio personality Johnny K. Almeida, a blind singer-composer who broadcast a Hawaiian music show from Honolulu. She taught herself the Hawaiian language, opening up a new repertoire.

Another important influence was singer Alice Namakelua, a composer of Hawaiian songs. She had a high voice, an old style soprano, said Keawe: “She liked my singing and she helped me with the Hawaiian words and phrasing. That’s the only way I learned to sing Hawaiian songs is from Alice and my mother-in-law.”

However, it was composer/performer/broadcaster John K. Almeida who led Genoa to embrace the Hawaiian music she is so well known for today. She had been singing pop material with local bands since in the early 1940s and my mother-in-law.”

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It was a composition of Johnny Almeida that Genoa Keawe chose for her first recording in 1946. Malie Swing was an immediate hit on the “49th State” label. Malie is a vine with long, shiny fragrant green leaves, often used in the making of leis made for important occasions and hula dancing.

Born in 1918, the youngest of 12 children, Genoa Keawe grew up in the Honolulu area and in Laie, on Oahu’s north shore. The earliest songs that attracted her were in English. In fact, although her parents spoke Hawaiian, their children were forbidden to speak it in the schools. The songs she loved were light, romantic and often witty compositions that emerged at the height of the hapa haole repertoire. Especially during the early decades of the 20th century, following the 1893 American annexation of Hawaii. Because of this foreign influence, they were termed hapa haole songs, literally “half-British.” When I asked Auntie which song she had particularly liked as a girl, the familiar soprano voice launched into a well known hapa haole number, Little Brown Gal: “It’s not the islands fair that are calling to me… It’s not the halym air nor the tropical sea… It’s a little brown gal in a little grass skirt in a little grass shack in Hawaii…”

She also remembers being fascinated as a child by recordings of European-American yodeling and wanting to sing that way herself. As a young girl, she prayed constantly to be able to sing with a beautiful voice.

Then there was her passion for hitting high notes, which got her into trouble at a Christmas party talent contest she entered at age seven or eight. Auntie recalled, “They said anybody who wants to come up and sing, just come up and join us. I stood up in front of the audience and I started singing… Down the chimney white and black comes dear old Santa Claus Leading with his big moustache…”

“Then I’d start the next verse another notch higher, and then another notch higher until I couldn’t sing because it was too high for me. So I had to sit down and I cried right in front of the audience. My sister came in front of me and said, ‘Why are you crying? You’re not supposed to cry!’ and I said, ‘I cannot sing the song. It’s too high for me.’ The audience was laughing at me.”

Luckily for her future audiences, young Genoa recovered from that embarrassing incident, and at age 12 joined the choir of the local Mormon Church. She loved singing the hymns. At the same time she was a devoted fan of radio personality Johnny K. Almeida, a blind singer-composer who broadcast a Hawaiian music show from Honolulu. She taught herself the Hawaiian language, opening up a new repertoire.

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However, it was composer/performer/broadcaster John K. Almeida who led Genoa to embrace the Hawaiian music she is so well known for today. She had been singing pop material with local bands since in the early 1940s when one day Almeida, who was broadcasting on KULA radio, asked for “anyone who could sing” to come to the station and perform. Genoa Keawe happened to be hanging out with some girlfriends, who dared her to take the radio host up on his offer. She did just that, singing a hapa haole song titled “For You Let,” which she dedicated to her niece Momi Bee, then celebrating her tenth birthday. (Momi now performs with Auntie Genoa at the Waikiki Marriott every Thursday night and will be with her for the Whitter College show.)

Johnny Almeida was so taken with Genoa’s voice that he asked her back to perform on his show numerous times. “Oh, he was a wonderful enter-tainer,” she recalled. “He played the banjo, the mandolin. He composed songs.” He influenced her to focus on a Hawaiian language and hapa haole repertoire and helped her polish her musical phrasing.

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LEARNING SONGS FROM RECORDINGS

This is a very special column aimed at a small, elite group of individuals: the few that know less about music than I do.

All of us that play musical instruments or sing have, at one time or another, been drawn to a recorded song, and tried to learn how to play it. Are you one of those folks with a great ear that can figure out songs just by hearing them? No, me neither. Early in my musical life, I often sat in wonder while listening to a recording, wishing I could play just like the record. (Records were like CDs, only they had grooves in the vinyl and you laid a needle in the grooves and the sound came out of speakers. Really.) I still have those same wishes, but with time, effort and a lot of help from others, I learned how to unlock some of those “secrets” to learning a song from a recording.

As usual, it all starts with the “folk process.” This is what describes the method of how songs are passed from hand to hand, with each adding their own element to the original composition. Before the advent of radio and records, folk songs were passed down through generations.

But once the phonograph record was popularized, a whole new world of music was opened up. Now, you may be saying that today the internet is full of sites that offer lyrics, tablature or notation of popular songs. And you are correct. But a little detective work will show that if you look after something that is obscure, or a non-hit, not as many doors will open. And if you do find the song you wish to learn, you’ll find that quite often, not only will the tablature and lyrics be flawed, but that another 987 sites have the same incorrect tab and lyrics, because one guy figured it out wrong, but posted it anyway. Then another site “borrowed” it, often without checking it or crediting the guy who messed it up originally. I would suggest that you use internet tab and lyric services as a starting point, but to move beyond it to learning songs on your own. You’ll be glad you did.

In today’s world, there are a lot of different recording/instructional devices that allow you to change the speed of a recording without altering the key, in order to assist you in learning songs from recordings. These are great if you plan to learn a lot of songs from recordings. Musicians that play in a pop cover bands probably love these types of machines. But there still is some musical muscle that can be built by doing it the “old fashioned” hard way.

Using the guitar, as an example, one has to figure out the key of the recorded song. In this day of electronic tuning devices, it may be hard to believe that sometimes records are out of tune. This may have been due to the lack of sophistication of the artist, or it may have been a record company’s decision to speed up the recording slightly to make it more exciting, resulting in that standard progression in the key of G moving to G (Chelford). First, make sure your instrument is in good tune. Then noodle around in the keys that you are familiar with and that you can locate the key. If you’ve played the guitar and you start at the first fret on the bass E string and move up to the 12th fret without locating any notes that seem in tune, then either your instrument or the recording is not tuned to standard A 440 tuning. I then usually play around with the bass E string on my guitar. I flatten it a taste and then move up that neck. No dice? Then I sharpen my E string slightly and take that trip again. Nine times out of 10, one of these methods will do. So once I found out that the basic key (or 1 chord) is in the key of C, for example, then I can make a good guess that somewhere in the song I should have a F and G chord, since they are tied to that “root” chord of C.

I can guess that if I sense a minor chord, it will probably be either an Am or perhaps an Em since they are the related minors in the key of C or something like that. I thought I knew what I was talking about for a minute.

A word about keys: if it’s in Eb or Bb or other “non-guitar friendly” keys, chances are that it’s being played with a capo, in a “standard” key like G or C. Try that out, because Bob Dylan didn’t really record your favorite song on his first record smacking an Eb barre chord. I promise.

This takes a pretty good ear. An Em chord can sound a lot like a G chord, especially if it’s played in passing. My wife has a better ear, so I’ll ask her. But usually the best bet is to just play the melody a couple of times. Hopefully, if it’s all right, they’ll confirm you’re playing the right notes. Once you have the basic chords and/or melody, you can invest some time embellishing the chords, possibly adding transition chords or altering the time signature of the song. Make it your own: you owe it to the folk process, after all.

If you’re attempting to learn a song with lyrics, then you can go to your reliable internet lyric site, and possibly learn the wrong ones. I find I have a much stronger ability to really learn and remember lyrics if I transcribe them from the recording in longhand, then use music processors to “clean them up.” Computers are helpful here. When you’re listening to a CD, most music reproduction software allows you to drag the status bar back as many times as you need to hear that one line you can’t quite make out.

All of these concepts take some time and effort, and are easier for some folks than others. Practice may not make perfect, but it helps. Your ear can be trained, and soon you’ll be standing in line at the supermarket listening to the latest acoustic pop hit on the piped in music, thinking “Pretty standard G to Em to D changes” just like a pro.

Artist: FIDDLERS BID
Title: NAKED & BARE
Label: GREENTRAX www.greentrax.com

BY LINDA DEWAR

Shetland is a part of Scotland, but it’s just different. Like its neighbor island, Orkney, it was part of Norway until some time in the mid-1400s, and its language and place names are as much Scandinavian as they are Scottish. It’s also relatively isolated from mainland influences, or at least it was until the advent of television, the internet, and other useful electronic interlopers. Or at least it was until the advent of television, the hardanger, a type of fiddle with five harmonic responses as a starting point, but to move beyond it to learning songs on your own. You’ll be glad you did.

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CD REVIEW

CD from Fiddlers Bid? Everything. Naked & Bare is a great CD to listen to, but it’s also a great example of the past and the evolving future of Shetland fiddling. This band has been together for fourteen years now, and somewhere along the way they moved on from “up and coming” and “amazing kids” to take their rightful place along Shetland tradition-bearers like Aly Bain and Catriona Macdonald.

Their playing is true to the music’s tradition, but not mired in the past. Their style is definitely Shetland, but with the addition of bass guitar and harp it’s also modern. The selection of traditional tunes is excellent, and includes many that are rarely heard. Some of the best tunes on this album, though, are those written by band members Andrew Gifford, Chris Stout, and Catriona McKay, who have managed to move beyond the tradition forward and give it their own spin. Naked & Bare is also a winner for its wide variety of tunes. From waltzes to reels, polkas to jigs, this album is a showcase for the talented performers of these seven gifted musicians.

As always, a word about the packaging. I love good liner notes, and these are great, with plenty of detail about the origin and story of each tune. And extra points for “earth friendly” materials, too.
CD REVIEWS

Artist: CHARLIE MUSSELWHITE
Title: DELTA HARDWARE
Label: REAL WORLD RECORDS www.realworldrecords.com
Release Date: MAY 2006
BY DENNIS ROGER REED

Charlie Musselwhite brings to mind the blues. Blues harmonica. Weary, lonesome blues. But Musselwhite’s long career has traveled well beyond those blues borders, with forays into genres such as Cuban. His most recent Delta Hardware is a step back into those deep blues of his early career, with themes based on recent national tragedies like Katrina’s wrath on the American South, and Musselwhite’s move into more topical, politically based music. It’s his second record on Peter Gabriel’s Real World label. Musselwhite is a consummate harmonica player. With the possible exception of the late Paul Butterfield, Musselwhite is probably the best known blues harmonica player. Like Butterfield, Musselwhite traveled to Chicago in the 1960s. However, Musselwhite had a Southern background, born and raised in Mississippi. Musselwhite left Chicago for Northern California in the late 1960s, and still makes that area his home. He’s had a long and successful career, playing with artists as disparate as Tom Waits, Ben Harper, Bonnie Raitt and The Blind Boys of Alabama. He has garnered 19 W.C. Handy awards, and 6 Grammy nominations. Delta Hardware harks back to Musselwhite’s earliest recordings. The band is small, tight and raw. Although the recording primarily features Musselwhite’s originals, the flavor is very 1960s rocking blues. And for the first time, Musselwhite moves into political commentary in the lyrics to some of his work, including Black Water and The Invisible Ones. Both tunes were inspired by the devastation created by Hurricane Katrina, and the drama that played out following that disaster. Musselwhite is backed by his road band and the recording snaps and crackles with the band’s energy and chops. Chris "Kid" Andersen plays guitar, Randy Bermudes is on bass, and June Core is on drums. Musselwhite penned all but two of the ten songs on the CD. Church is Out kicks off the CD, and Musselwhite sings over an infectious distorted guitar riff. It’s blues, but with a kicking pop/rock edge. Billy Boy Arnold’s One of These Mornings follows, and Musselwhite wraps his vocals with tasty harp work, and Andersen plays single note slide guitar with a nice taste of Muddy Waters. Blues for Yesterday recasts the "Elmore James" format, and Andersen channels Canned Heat’s Henry Vestine with his raw solo. All in all, Musselwhite and his hot touring band have created a solid blues recording. The "live" sound of the CD portends well for Musselwhite’s live act. If you like this CD, catch them the next time they hit town.

Artist: THE KAHUNA COWBOYS JUG BAND
Title: CACTUS ISLAND STOMP
Label: KAHUNA COWBOYS RECORDS
Release Date MARCH 2006
BY DENNIS ROGER REED

Music can be fun. In fact, for most of us, it’s supposed to be. Modern popular music occasionally forgets that fact, and it’s up to good time outfits like The Kahuna Cowboys Jug Band (KCJB) to remind us that tapping toes, shaking shoulders and goofy grins are perfectly acceptable responses to music. It helps that KCJB are an auteur musical congregation that actually enjoys what they do, and do it well. KCJB is a San Diego, California area based group that draws from blues, Western swing, Hawaiian island music, jug band music, string band music, jazz, hokum, cowboy country AND western music. Although they are heavily tied to the music of the 1930s, they also bring a refreshing spin from gathering these sources into one mix.

The band is a trio, and along with big hats, alpaca chaps, and superior amounts of facial hair, they use colorful pseudonyms. “Double D” is Dana Duplan, the CKJB’s lap steel and lead guitar player. Dana is also the band’s historian and musician. “Rustin’ Russ” is Russ Lewark, on washtub bass. He shares the vocals and is not only an excellent guitar fingerpicker, but also owns an impressive collection of Hawaiian koa wood guitars, bass. He shares the vocals and is not only an excellent guitar fingerpicker, but also owns an impressive collection of Hawaiian koa wood guitars, recently featured in Acoustic Guitar Magazine. And finally, “Doctor B” is Lester Brooks, who plays rhythm guitar, ukulele, jug and harmonica in the band, as well as the musical saw and horns. It’s not uncommon for as many as twenty instruments to be trucked on stage during a CKJB performance.

While comparisons could be made to the Even Dozen Jug Band, the Jim Kweskin Jug Band, or the Lovin’ Spoonful, CKJB have their own identity. They have a stronger Western swing/cowboy/Hawaiian influence than many jug bands. The group’s adherence to their repertoire is humor. A band writes a good portion of their material, and it sits well among the other covers. Not too many bands write songs like I’m Gonna Padle to Haw-y-yah or You Gotta Shave Those Legs. I think I laughed the hardest at one of their arrangements of a traditional number, Lonesome in the Saddle. It’s lonesome in the saddle since my horse died…

If you’re terrified of the word corny, or you don’t like to laugh when music is on, perhaps you need to look elsewhere. But if you enjoy a good laugh, love the various music of the 1930s and appreciate hot pickin’, the CKJB is for you.

Artist GARY INNES
Title HOW’S THE CRAIC?
Label SKIPINNISH RECORDS
BY RON YOUNG

The term “craic” has entered the lexicon in the last few years, and as a founding member of a local organization of the same name, the meaning is not entirely lost on me. To the uninitiated, craic is an Irish term which usually refers to conversation, but it is also frequently applied to a fun time involving music. It has also been known to be associated with the consumption of certain beverages, often of the alcoholic variety.

Scottish piano accordion player Gary Innes hails from Spean Bridge near Fort William, in the western Highlands. His CD How’s the Craic? will stimulate much in the way of craic, and is well worth a listen. I met Gary recently at a Scottish Festival in Northern California, where he was also being utilized as an expert on the Scottish game of Shinty, (best described as a version of Field Hockey, in much of the same way that that American Football could be described as a version of Rugby, if you get my drift). His live performances were nothing short of brilliant, and I could hardly wait to hear his CD. Best of all was the chance to see and hear him perform in an informal Ceilidh session, where he had to adapt very quickly to the styles of various musicians that he has never even seen or played with before.

Gary can play with great sensitivity, but he also takes no prisoners, and this is a fun album to listen to. He plays the “box” in an open and aggressive manner that’s reminiscent of Phil Cunningham’s balmy days with the Silly Wizard. In fact, the liner notes for How’s the Craic? include a bit of high praise from Cunningham himself. Innes has put together a fine blend of traditional Scottish musicians and singers that make this album much more than just an accordion CD. He utilizes his thirteen great guest musicians ranging from Capercaille’s Donald Shaw to ex-Tannahill Weavers piper Duncan Nicholson, to great effect, and the result is highly satisfactory.

Among my favorites of the twelve tracks is The Wee Purple Fella, a tune that Innes composed in honor of his new accordion, which is indeed vividly PURPLE. The Scots Gaelic song Filioro is wonderfully sung by Mod winner Darren Maclean, and there’s a brilliant jig set that includes Michie’s Jig, Porto the Rat and Roaring Bar Maid, all wonderful tunes that are sadly not elaborated upon in the liner notes.

Gary’s web site can be found at www.garyinnes.com, and the CD can be ordered from Skipinnish Records at www.skipinnish.com. This is fine Scottish foot stompin’ music and is a CD that is well worth the purchase price.
like instruments and modified ones that are available. Do you think that this
play?

musical instrument is what is started my interest in Aboriginal culture.

body told me how circular breathing worked, I became really fascinated. That
mind. Then I realized that he had never stopped to take a breath and I was try-
ber the evening of the big final bonfire. In the morning the bonfire was this
Man out here except smaller, about 2,000 people, called Starwood. I remem-
ber the first 3 years. That first festival was where I actually met the Wicked
notes. I went to that festival the first 3 years. That first festival was where I
actually met the Wicked Tinkers. It is now in northern California and known
as the Jammin’ Tree Festival (www.jdidjfest.com). 

Do you see the didgeridoo creeping into other kinds of music such as
Native American, taiko, Afro-Cuban, etc.

I think you can use it in any one of those things, although not so much in jazz or classical Western music which is written out already. It’s a fairly inflexible for Western styles of music. It’s also fairly quiet, so as soon as you get 5 or 6 other instruments playing, unless you’re heavily miked, you’re going to lose it. I think that it will remain something of a curiosity in the
Western musical traditions. Today, I hear it more and more in rave or house music, which are heavily drone and rhythm based anyway and in a lot of the psy-trance, Goa or club music.

So who do you look to as far as good didgeridoo players today?

My favorite is Steven Kent, a Northern California classically-trained
musician and a musical director. I believe he played French horn first. There are very few very few players that are as profoundly expressive percussive and medi-
tative styles. He is an amazing player and he has a band called Trance-
Mission. I like some of what they do, but I love him as a solo player.

What is the best way for someone interested in playing to get started?

Contact someone who knows how to play. If you don’t know any-
one, in the Los Angeles area, contact someone at LA Outback (www.laoutback.com). They are a tremendous resource. If they can’t do it themselves, they can recommend to you someone who can.

BOOKS ON THE DIDGERIDOO


Didgeridoo - Ritual Origins and Playing Techniques by Derek Schellberg

Interesting books on Aboriginal culture:

The Songlines by Brucke Chatwin

Interesting books on Aboriginal culture:


Marko Johnson’s Didjbox: www.didjbox.com

The only limitation of the didgeridoo is that it is primarily based on
one note, although, you can overlap notes—trumpet-style. You can get 2 or
3 other pitches to come out of it. The way you vocalize into it, you can get a
whole different sound. It’s a very labile instrument, and you can do any rhythm you can think of. There’s also the issue of finding a didgeridoo in the right key. It’s one thing that beginning players, if they don’t have any musical experience, just don’t get.

Currently, there seems to be an interest in the music as well as the
playing of the didgeridoo. Do people come up to you at concerts and show an
interest in it?

I find that more and more people are becoming aware of the instru-
ment. There’s an emergence of it which is mainly due to the fact that it is

No survival at a Scottish festival. At the Highland Games where everything is
Scottish, Scottish, Scottish, there’s the weird guy on stage playing the giant
didgeridoo. People are sometimes upset to see it. I also think there’s an aware-
ness going around just because there are good players out there. I think the
very first Survivor television show in Australia had a really big impact. I believe it was David Hudson who played the didgeridoo for that show. The
Ozzy Osbourne video, which was used and Outback Steak House commer-
cials. I think it’s more of an ‘Australia-philia’ thing going on, it was a sound
that you suddenly heard in commercials.

In the musicians’ union book, generally, if there

important for Aboriginal didgeridoo players, they can sing you the pattern that they are going
to play on the instrument before they do it. It’s like the way the Indian drum, the
table, is taught. A tabla player can sing the part as well as play it.

Didgeridoo players use it as a kind of sung
thing. In Western white guy drum circles, it’s all improvisational.

What are the limitations and what are the unique features of the didgeridoo and where do you think it can be used?

The only limitation of the didgeridoo is that it is primarily based on
one note, although, you can overlap notes—trumpet-style. You can get 2 or
3 other pitches to come out of it. The way you vocalize into it, you can get a
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Aside from the more unique Tinkers’ drums and bagpipe, are there other instruments that are played along with the didgeridoo?

The traditional Aboriginese play clapsticks (two short wooden
sticks), which are sort of like claves, and known in most countries as tam-tams. There’s also the bull-roarer (a big piece of wood on a string that gets whirled
around and around) which is sometimes used ritually and sometimes used before
or after a song, but generally not during a song. They also do a lot of body
percussion and clapping. It’s all very planned out. I can’t really speak
with. There’s two parts to it. If you are not saying “this is a traditional
Australian didgeridoo player, they can sing you the pattern that they are going
to play on the instrument before they do it. It’s like the way the Indian drum, the
table, is taught. A tabla player can sing the part as well as play it. Didgeridoo players also use it as a kind of sung
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JOAN BAEZ GETS BAREFOOT AGAIN

BY ROSS ALTMAN

“I’ve got to go to the bathroom,” were Joan Baez’s first words to me. None of the others had noticed her because with my enlarged prostate I always have to go to the bathroom. She walked down a dirt road toward me as I was entering the South Central Farm, a fourteen-acre oasis of green in the middle of a concrete jungle along the Alameda corridor in downtown Los Angeles.

I had seen her picture on the front page of the LA Times the day before and could not pass up my chance to meet the most gifted folk singer of our generation. In the photograph she was sitting in the walnut tree that became the symbol of our uphill struggle and to believe that one day the poorest of the poor will be able to rise above their condition. I was walking toward the walnut tree inside and found a bench to sit on and anticipate the arrival of folk music’s still reigning queen.

I was not prepared to meet royalty, and did not have all my social graces in place. I finally approached her. After a few minutes of fawning over her like a puppy, I asked if I could interview her for FolkWorks and she immediately recoiled as if doused with cold water. She said she was having trouble breathing (the air was fine—the clear implication was that I was an overweight man), and then from some of the local lead-

ers. I noticed Joan Baez right off her shoes and socks, then tore up her feet into the ground. It reminded me of one especially touching moment from her early concert album when she told the audience she was having such a good time it would all be right if she removed her shoes. So I knew this augured well—she now felt at home. For some reason, it also signified to me that, like someone else rolling up their sleeves, she was now ready to go to work and that she was fully committed to this struggle to save the farm. Like in the days when she was our Madonna, Joan Baez was barefoot again.

Finally, only three people away from your intrepid reporter, there was Herself, singing with the gentle beauty and purity that had lived through hun-

dreds of struggles, that had sung for the Free Speech Movement in Berkeley with Mario Savio, had marched to Montgomery with Martin Luther King, had supported her former husband David Harris when he went to prison as a draft resistor during the Vietnam War, had introduced Bob Dylan to her audi-
cences on her concert tours in 1963, and had sung in jails and for human rights from Berkeley to Bangladesh. I was on Cloud Nine, just hanging on to who-

ever was next to me so I didn’t float away.

When it came my turn to introduce We Shall Overcome by saying that it was the song that Joan Baez had sung at the March on Washington on August 28, 1963, that it had traveled around the world and inspired countless people seeking social change, and that it was a great honor to sing it for Joan Baez. Then I started to strum my twelve-string and play the tune on my harmonica, just to calm my nerves. Somewhere in the middle of the second verse I realized that Joan was singing along with me. The day was improv-

ing.

After the service, I kept to myself, not wanting to impose anymore on Joan. But when she left the tree she walked up to me and shook my hand, saying I had done a good job on We Shall Overcome. I had rebounded from my gauche attempt to corner her into an interview an hour before.

Then the unexpected, the unplanned, the strange and preordained hap-

pened right in front of my eyes. She suddenly announced to John Quigley that she wanted to climb the walnut tree again. While the cameras crowded around to capture the scene, Joan Baez climbed Jacob’s ladder. We are climbing Jacob’s ladder/We are climbing Jacob’s lad-


er/We are climbing Jacob’s ladder

As the song’s powerful melody kept building Joan started singing along with me: Every rung goes higher and higher/Every rung goes higher and higher... even as she was going higher and higher. She was smiling, climbing and singing all at the same time. I felt like I was climbing with her.

Later, after the cameras had left, and she had returned to terra firma she walked up to me again and this time gave me a heart-felt hug and thanked me for “serenading me up the tree.”

Oh, did I mention, I also got her autograph in one of my most precious books—it’s called New Folks and is the first time that her music appeared in a book.

Well, the farmers have since been evicted, the bulldozers are beginning to level the property, and by the time this appears in print there may be nothing left of the South Central Farm. But I’m still out there on their vigils, with fel-

low troubadour “Banjo” Fred Starner, and Dele and Rufina and Tezo, who are awaiting one more court date to see if there may still be a way to save the farm.

Joan Baez planted a seed while she was here, as she has been doing all across the country for forty-five years. She gave us the hope to continue an uphill struggle and to believe that one day the poorest of the poor will be able to rise above the chains of their own labor as well as those higher up on the ladder of opportunity.

She gave us the hope that we could all climb Jacob’s ladder.

And for one magical day I got to sing with her.

We shall overcome.

Ross Altman has a Ph.D. in English. Before becoming a full-time folk singer he taught college English and Speech. He now sings around California for libraries, unions, schools, political groups and folk festivals. You can reach Ross at Greengroosem@aol.com.
What is Gamelan?

Gamelan is the name for various musical ensembles in Indonesia and Bali, and is most reminiscent of an orchestra. “Gamelan” comes from “Gambel” in Balinese, which means “to play, musically.” Gamelan specifies reference to the instruments that make up the ensemble, including sets of tuned bronze gongs, gong-chimes, metallophones (xylophone-like instruments elaborately decorated with metal bars), two-sided drums, flutes, bowed and plucked string instruments, and sometimes singers (Yee-Ser Seng). Gamelan music is often written to accompany colorful dance dramas or shadow puppetry. It originates from the diverse regions and villages of Java and Bali, and is now played, appreciated and integrated into music scenes all over the world.

Like music from many cultures, Gamelan is rich with spirituality and ritual. The Indonesians believe that spirits guide each Gamelan instrument. Those who play must show respect by first removing their shoes, and avoid stepping on the instruments and placing things on or around the instruments. When these patterns in numerous modes are internalized, they can be repeated until it is deeply instilled in the musicians’ minds, hearts and souls. After one phrase is learned, the teacher moves onto the next. The melodies phrase by phrase; melody first, then percussion parts and finally punctuating instruments (especially the gong). Each phrase is played repeatedly until it is deeply instilled in the musicians’ minds, hearts and souls.

To best understand the sound and experience of Gamelan, one must learn the structure of a piece and perform it without much practice (Deschênes). The uniquely Balinese version of Hindustan, “Pélog” has seven notes, but most pieces use a subset of five (it is a pentatonic – five tone – scale involving semi-tonal intervals). “The basic seven intervals, where 1 equals approximately half step, 2 equals an approx. whole step, and 3 equals an approx. minor third, are 2 3 1 3 2.” (Bali & Beyond) “...a five tone scale consisting of, approximately, whole step and minor third intervals. The basic order of intervals from low to high, where 2 equals an approx. whole step and 3 equals an approx. minor third, is 2 3 2 3 2.” (Bali & Beyond) To Westerners, it sounds like the scale on the black keys of a piano, played out of tune.

How does one learn to play Gamelan?

Traditionally, Gamelan musicians rarely use notated music, and Gamelan is taught by rote, from teacher (guru) to student. The students learn the melodies by phrase by phrase; melody first, then percussion parts and finally punctuating instruments (especially the gong). Each phrase is played repeatedly until it is deeply instilled in the musicians’ minds, hearts and souls. After one phrase is learned, the teacher moves onto the next. The teacher must be highly skilled and patient. Many modern groups in Western society do not make Gamelan their livelihood, but instead one of their “projects” or extra-curricular activities. “This lack of practice means that, unless it is notated or recorded, a large amount of traditional repertoire will fast disappear.” (Wayan Purnama)

Gamelan Ensembles in California:

To understand the sound and experience of Gamelan, one must attend a performance. Gamelan ensembles are abundant throughout California, and their musicians want to educate, enlighten and introduce you to Gamelan. “We both lose ourselves and find another in the luxuriant sound of Gamelan.” Ethnomusicologist Judith Becker.

Bali & Beyond - a Los Angeles based performing arts Company inspired by the cultures of Indonesia, tours nationwide, featuring a variety of traditional and contemporary Gamelan music, Shadow Theater, and educational presentations. - www.balibeyond.com

Ohio State University School of Music in 2002, and after writing this article, Lisa Forstein moved to Santa Monica. She is the Managing Editor of the Iranian Jewish Chronicle. Lisa Forstein is a writer, vocalist, composer and world percussionist based in Santa Monica. She is the Managing Editor of The Iranian Jewish Chronicle. She participated in an intensive 1-month Balinese Gamelan workshop at The Ohio State University School of Music in 2002, and after writing this article, she is inspired to do more with Gamelan in her music.
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FOLK HAPPENINGS AT A GLANCE

Check out details by following the page references:

OGM: On-going Music - pg. 15
OGD: On-going Dance - pg. 18
SE: Special Events - pg. 30-32
FOLK HAPPENINGS AT A GLANCE

Sunday

1. HARVEST MOON DANCE FESTIVAL and OPEN DANCE (SE)
2. MASON DIXIE (SE)
3. AMERICAN FOLK SONGS READ ALoud (SE)
4. BLUEBIRD JAM (SE)
5. ARKANSAS-FLAT ROCKS FESTIVAL (SE)

Monday

1. COWBOY FESTIVAL (SE)
2. WOODS FOLK FESTIVAL (SE)
3. WOODS TYE FOLK SHOW (SE)
4. WOODEN SPOON SHOW (SE)
5. BURLINGTON FOLK FESTIVAL (SE)

Tuesday

1. BYRDSONG FOLK SONGS READER (SE)
2. BELLE MARIE (SE)
3. BELOIT FESTIVAL (SE)
4. COWBOY FESTIVAL (SE)
5. JASPER FOLK FESTIVAL (SE)

Wednesday

1. OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY (OGM)
2. UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON (OGM)
3. IRISH SESSION (OGM)
4. BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL (SE)
5. COWBOY FESTIVAL (SE)

Thursday

1. BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL (SE)
2. COWBOY FESTIVAL (SE)
3. JASPER FOLK FESTIVAL (SE)
4. IRISH SESSION (OGM)
5. IRISH SESSION (OGM)

Friday

1. FLAMENCO NIGHT (SE)
2. FLAT ROCKS FESTIVAL (SE)
3. BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL (SE)
4. IRISH SESSION (OGM)
5. OLD TIME JAM (OGM)

Saturday

1. OLD TIME JAM (OGM)
2. IRISH SESSION (OGM)
3. BLUEGRASS JAM (OGM)
4. IRISH SESSION (OGM)
5. BLUEGRASS JAM (OGM)
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The Secret Museum

A few nights ago my wife and I, along with a couple friends wandered off to somewhere strange and exotic in the city of Santa Monica. It was after a birthday party and we needed to get away from the chaos of the pier. We don’t know the area too well, but we were in a popular locale they call the “promenade.” There were long lines of well-dressed hipsters vying for entry privileges to swank bars and crowded lounges, street performers galore, people buying more expensive things to add to their collections of whatever, and a lot of distracting signs, sounds, and slow-moving humanity. It was claustrophobic and wondrous. I’ve seen Mongolian throat singers, amateur bluegrass bands, costumed wise-men and broke street magicians at this promenade. Folklife, good and bad, can be found here. Anyhow, my mind was on other things. We were on the hunt for a record store.

We found a Tower Records and decided to go in. The store appeared empty as we browsed, until my wife whispered something into my ear. I turned around and stared: Before me was a living pop culture phenomenon. I was in awe, while the rest of my group appeared totally unmoved. If anything, they shook their heads in disgust. I, however, couldn’t believe it. The closest thing we have to American royalty was standing a few feet away, and all by herself. There were no bodyguards or entourage to speak of. Not even a small canine. Her only company was her mobile phone. She slowly slinked her way down the aisles, pretending to browse while she chatted secretly into her communication. There were so many questions I wanted to ask her but only one was burning at me: I wonder if Paris Hilton has ever heard of the Secret Museum of Mankind? After the sudden adrenalin spike, I realized that probably nobody at the entire promenade would know what I was talking about. So why would Paris Hilton? After all she looks like a busy person. I didn’t bother to ask her.

I wish I had.

Lurking in the corners of the internet, hiding away in certain record stores, and prestigiously displayed in a few geeky home CD-libraries you can find a temporary gateway into the Secret Museum of Mankind. It is not well known in these parts but it should be. Most lovers of old-time music don’t even know it exists. It’s shame.

Eccentric collector Pat Conte has procured many sonic gems for his “secret museum” over a number of years. Apparently, few have glimpsed his collection of exotic sounds and echoes of bygone eras and distant lands. There is no attempt to provide an academic reading of the material in the liner notes. In fact there is really no context for his selection process at all. There are just a few notes about each track, many “colorful” photographs, and the rest is up to your imagination. Although I have a background in ethnomusicology and religious studies, I still feel like a sheltered 19th century westerner lining up at the medicine show hoping to catch a glimpse of the Hindustani fire-eater or snake charmer when I listen to this series. It’s refreshing to trek throughout the globe as an armchair time traveler every three minutes, with very little cultural reference to influence my experience. I don’t feel that ignorance is bliss, but it’s both enjoyable and challenging to tune in and ponder the tapestry of sounds that this series offers without the distraction of an ethnomusicologist’s handbook. After all, this collection presents a different kind of listening experience.

Conte leaves you with little time to breathe. For one moment, you are burning at me: I wonder if Paris Hilton has ever heard of the Secret Museum of Mankind? After the sudden adrenalin spike, I realized that probably nobody at the entire promenade would know what I was talking about. So why would Paris Hilton? After all she looks like a busy person. I didn’t bother to ask her.

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The result is mesmerizing. Each CD offers an ancient whirlwind of exotic sounds and echoes of bygone eras and distant lands. There is no attempt to provide an academic reading of the material in the liner notes. In fact there is really no context for his selection process at all. There are just a few notes about each track, many “colorful” photographs, and the rest is up to your imagination. Although I have a background in ethnomusicology and religious studies, I still feel like a sheltered 19th century westerner lining up at the medicine show hoping to catch a glimpse of the Hindustani fire-eater or snake charmer when I listen to this series. It’s refreshing to trek throughout the globe as an armchair time traveler every three minutes, with very little cultural reference to influence my experience. I don’t feel that ignorance is bliss, but it’s both enjoyable and challenging to tune in and ponder the tapestry of sounds that this series offers without the distraction of an ethnomusicologist’s handbook. After all, this collection presents a different kind of listening experience.

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I wish I had.
THE INEDIBLE NATIVE PLANT CLASS

O
d one day as a teenager, I rented a boat on the Santa Monica Pier with friends and rowed around inside the breakwater. Upon returning to the dock, Sylvelin and I hopped out, but Helen cried “I’m drifting!” We could have reached her with an oar but Sylvelin, gasping “somebody’s got to do something!” plunged into the water to rescue her. This is the way of the inveterate volunteer — we hear a cry for help and leap mindlessly into action.

That’s how I happened to volunteer to help teach a three-hour class in edible native plants. I can say this for myself: I ignored the first cry for help, emailed last winter to local Master Gardeners by Tracy, our University Extension rep. A second email — obviously everybody had ignored the first — came from our beloved president, reminding us of our fine reputation as educators and begging us not to fail our community or Tracy. Perhaps, she suggested, we’d be more comfortable volunteering as a team.

Five of us succumbed. We began meeting at Arlene’s — a pleasant house filled with artwork, quilts, and baskets — to outline the class, collect plants, and divvy up jobs. Bill potted the plants for door prizes. Andy checked laws and divvy up jobs. Bill potted the plants for door prizes. Andy checked laws and we met at Arlene’s for fine-tuning. She read her introduction about how her father had taught her to eat safely from the wild, finishing with “then you’ll talk about poison oak, Valerie, and Andy will take them for a walk.”

"Wait,’ I said, “what comes after your introduction?”

"After?” she asked.

"Yeah, when do you talk about cooking roots?"

"As we go along, I guess,” she replied vaguely. “It’ll be a small group. We’ll just chat about recipes.”

I went home, uneasy about what could be a fundamental flaw in our class. I called Tracy the next day. Twenty-five people had already signed up, too many to “chat with.” “Send pictures,” she said. “I’ll make a slide show. Big pictures might help.” I called Arlene but her phone was out of order. I tried her cell phone. “Yeah,” she said, “my house burned down. But don’t worry, I’ll be there.”

Well, she was and she wasn’t. She’d lost everything she owned, her cat and her friends and rowed around inside the breakwater. Upon returning to the dock, Sylvelin and I hopped out, but Helen cried “I’m drifting!” We could have reached her with an oar but Sylvelin, gasping “somebody’s got to do something!” plunged into the water to rescue her. This is the way of the inveterate volunteer — we hear a cry for help and leap mindlessly into action.

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Well, she was and she wasn’t. She’d lost everything she owned, her cat had run off, and all her notes were destroyed. Sixty-five attendees were sympathetic but eager. She rambled through her introduction, then tried to hand the microphone to me. I sidestepped and Tracy flicked on the slide show.


I’d planned only a few comments about poison oak and plant identification and knew about nothing first-hand except blackberries so what, I wondered, was I supposed to do with this microphone? Suddenly everything I’d read about poisonous plants came pouring out — gastric distress, liver failure, blindness, death. I gave them my “draw-to-learn-and-live pitch. “Learn the leaves of plants,” I said, “because, when you’re looking at berries, there aren’t any flowers. Learn family characteristics and avoid anything in the Pea, Lily, and Carrot families unless you’re an expert.” The audience looked unhappy.

Finally, I handed the mike to Andy, who talked about getting permission from multiple and overlapping bureaucracies to forage on public lands. “Meet me outside after the door prizes and we’ll go for a walk.” The audience brightened.

Then, unexpectedly, a local botanist/contradancer stood up and urged that, instead of eating our lovely endangered native plants, we simply enjoy the thrill of finding them. “If you want to eat wild plants,” he said, “see me afterwards for a list of plants that need extirpating.”

The walk, though, was what we’d hoped the whole class would be, an informal exchange of knowledge. One lady said that Lewis and Clark had used the large, soft thimbleberry leaves as toilet paper. A gentleman said that, when he was young, he occasionally got an especially piquant black-berry. Then someone said, “watch out for spiders” so he did, and never again got that extra thrill.

We got compliments about our presentation, but I imagine the candid reviews were more like: “Well, they said some plants were edible, but too much trouble to bother with, and that other plants were edible but indistinguishable from deadly ones and we shouldn’t eat anything anyway because they’re all endangered.”

Meanwhile, I’ll continue telling my granddaughters that most plants are toxic and singing them Let it Be, Malvina Reynolds’ urgent song about a flower in the forest. And the next cry for help? I won’t hear it.

W

Valerie Cooley is living in Coos Bay, Oregon. When she’s not playing with her beautiful and brilliant young granddaughters, she paddles her kayak on the bay, watches birds, gardens, and contradances once a month.

Valerie Cooley
CARNEGIE HALL AND CULTMINATION

H e is seven years old, blind, and deathly afraid of dogs, including our mellow Muttl, who adores children. We secure Muttl behind the hallway gate and it still takes Nuri ten minutes to feel safe enough to enter the house. We are not going to try to change Nuri’s mind at this point. Children own their fears and their tears. We’ll wait till Nuri, who is autistic, verbal, and totally delightful, to grow older and a bit more rational. Nuri is here to continue his piano lessons, which officially ended when the music program at Frances Blend School was cancelled.

At first I was reluctant to give private lessons in my home. But some of my students and their parents were so upset at the cancellation of the music program, which included piano lessons, that they convinced me to accept their children as private students. I agree with misgivings. These are not affluent families. I hated to charge them for what had been free. So I made the fees as low as possible and still felt unworthy and uncomfortable.

Nuri sits at my baby grand, which now sports the familiar Velcro circle on middle C. He is reviewing all his pieces from books by Schaum, Alfred, and a wonderful, old, out of print beginning piano book that my daughter used, thirty-five years ago. Nuri also reviews some pieces I wrote for him. He remembers almost all of them.

Against the wall, at a right angle to the piano, is my Roland, my favorite multi-cultural specialty, a guilt trip. (“Maybe if I were a better teacher you wouldn’t sing, and the song sounded lovely.

We practiced and practiced, every day for a week, and you know how much I value practicing.

It paid off. Graduation Day was cool and balmy, and the sky was beautifully “forspacious.” The children sang like angels, and my antique pump organ sounded just right. The flag salute was my very favorite part. The little boy said, “PLEASE STAND—PLACE YOUR HEART OVER YOUR HEAD!”

I think he was absolutely right, and precociously profound! Let’s all remember to do just that!

Uncle Ruthie is a singer, songwriter, storyteller, recording artist, Special Education music teacher for blind children and a poet. Her radio show can be heard every Saturday morning at 8:00 am on KPFK 90.7 FM. In her spare time she will be writing this column and sharing her thoughts on music and life with our readers.

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UNCLE RUTHIE
Notice the use of English in this Hawaiian-language song, a feature found occasionally in Hawaiian songs even today.

Translation:
Sweet and lovely
Sweet and lovely
Ke naipo ko e hālai
In the maile's fragrance
Ho'opio ke 'ala
A delightful odor
Sure I ka pili pōli...
That clings to the bosom...

Genoa Keawe's career took off. She recorded over 140 singles on the "49th State" label alone, and then moved on to Hula Records. She backed up other singers on many recordings, too. Eventually, in 1966, she started her own record company, Genoa Keawe Records which her son Eric Keawe manages.

She formed groups — Genoa Keawe and her Hula Maids, Genoa Keawe and Her Hawaiians, and Genoa Keawe and Her Polynesians. They delighted audiences in Honolulu at venues such as Club Polynesia, the Aloha Grill, the Ko'okahnai Sands, Fort DeRussy Officers Club, the Ala Moana Hotel Poolside, and the Hawaiian Regent, now known as the Marriott Waikiki Resort and Spa — to name a few.

Genoa's son Eric shared memories of a tour that took Auntie Genoa and her Hawaiians to Southern California over 30 years ago. In 1967 they did a one-month stint at Hop Lui's "Latitude 20" Night Club in Torrance, California. Eric was 11 years old. "It was a buzzing place with a lot of locals coming and going. Performances were full almost every night from Tuesday to Saturday. It was fun. On our off days we'd go to the horse races or down to Tijuana, Mexico."

Aside from listening to Auntie Genoa's lovely voice, audiences enjoyed the solo spots she gave her musicians, who included her husband Edward Keawe on bass, Auntie Pua Rogers on guitar, Uncle Benny Rogers on steel guitar, and Lena Motta on ukulele. Eric recalled the comic performer of the great Auntie Naughty Abbie. "She always stole the show with her hilarious Princess Paupae song. She did other songs like The Cock-eyed Mayor of Kannakakai and Coconut Willie."

One of the hula dancers featured in that show 30 years ago will be performing on October 28 show at Whittier College, Auntie Mapuana Yasu. Another old-time hula dancer, Auntie Florence "Flo" Koanui will join her. The latter two were recorded live. I also recommend Genoa Keawe by Request (Genoa Keawe Records, 1998), Genoa Keawe: Aloha to Aloha Grill (Genoa Keawe Records, 1979), and Genoa Keawe and Her Hawaiians (U'ili Productions, 1996). The latter two were recorded live. I also recommend Lovely Hula Hands (Cord International/Hana Ola Records), a marvelous compilation that includes Genoa Keawe along with Johnny Almeida, Naughty Abbie, and other top Hawaiian musicians from years past. Of course, nothing can replace seeing and hearing Auntie Genoa in performance. On October 28, we are likely to hear her signature song, "Alikā," which describes a ship sailing the Arctic (of all things)!

It's the one in which she holds a high note for something like a minute, then moves up a note and holds it even longer.

Can she still hold notes that long? Will people from the audience rise up and dance hula in the aisles? Her son Eric has no predictions. "There may always be surprises for all of us. Auntie Genoa's shows are very luau style, which means anything can happen."

The box office number for the Ruth B. Shannon Center for the Performing Arts at Whittier College is 562-907-4203. Find more information on the Center's Aloha Series on-line at www.shannoncenter.org.

Audrey Coleman is a writer, adult educator, hula student, and passionate explorer of world music and culture.
The Fowler is hosting the debut of the travel exhibit "Being Tuareg: Sahara Nomads in a Modern World" running from October 29th to February 25th. The exhibit will begin with a look at how Tuareg decorative motifs and leatherwork have been utilized in present-day fashion design, and the popularity of Tuareg craftsmanship in folk art galleries. There will be videos of Tuareg people explaining how it is to be Tuareg in the modern world.

The next week will showcase the workshop of the Oumba and Ouhoulou family of Agadez and Niamey, Niger. They are inadan, a social subgroup of Tuareg who are traditionally smiths and artists. While they are practicing Muslims today, the inadan are likely descended from Jews that were ejected from 14th and 15th century Morocco. 30 years' worth of their collection is included in the exhibit, as well as a video showing the family at work together producing some of the items.

After that specific in-depth view comes a broader range of mid-20th century objects, including swords, silver jewelry and wooden tent poles. Swords are a highly prized possession among the Tuareg, and are considered to be protected by the victories of its past owners. Some silver amulets contain protective verses of the Koran, and some are in the geometric form known as the “cross of Agadez”. There are several styles of tent poles that are not only functional but carved with geometric forms.

The final space will be devoted to a well-appointed Tuareg tent made from multiple goat skins and its furnishings (leather saddles and cushions, musical instruments, wooden storage poles...), accompanied by a video from a 3-day wedding complex containing traditional elements with modern.

If this intrigues you, perhaps you’d be interested in venturing up to Ojai and visiting Leslie Clark's Nomad Gallery. In addition to her own paintings and prints of Tuareg and Wodaabe people of Niger, she has her handcrafts and CDs of their music for sale. She is the founder of The Nomad Foundation, dedicated to preserving cultural and artistic traditions in Africa, and has been traveling to Niger for the past 12 years. She also leads tours to visit and live with them during their fall rain return festival season, when the Tuareg have camel races and the Wodaabe have their traditional male beauty pageant, the Gerewol. Additionally, she leads tours of Niger’s Southern Tenere desert (the next will be February 3rd, 17th, 2007), and humanitarian expeditions to help with the work of the Nomad Foundation, which built and established a school and gardens, dug a well, distributes vitamins, began a women’s embroidery co-op, and helps with herd replacement. For details and itineraries, visit her website below.

Now, from the “Blue People” to the Orange Crate.

Artistry of the Orange: California Vintage Fruit Labels from the Collection of the Los Angeles Public Library is on view in the first floor galleries of the Central Library. First there was the “Naturalism Period” of 1885-1920 which focused on California scenery, pioneer heroes, Native Americans, flowers, birds, animals, and growers’ families. Then, between 1920 and 1935 there was more of an advertising aspect. Wider distribution came from railroads and an advertising boom in newspapers and magazines. The California lifestyle and youthful health and energy were emphasized. Finally, between 1935 and 1955 modernization of photographic techniques allowed for the use of colored pencils and changed the look of the labels. Cartoon characters appear, oranges and lemons are shown more prominently, and brand names are presented in block letters. Go down and have a look at them in all their glory.

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Brooke Alberts is a songwriter and has a Masters degree in Medieval Studies.

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CITY
Partnerships come in various flavors, depending on your goals and the structure of your band. Where all of you share in the decision making and there is no “leader,” per se, a simple general partnership will work. You don’t technically need any paperwork to form a general partnership. The fact that all of you are working together and that you share your profits and losses equally is enough. California has a number of “default” rules concerning the formation of partnerships as well as the rights of individual partners. Under the default rules, when a partner leaves the band (also known as the partnership), the partnership is dissolved unless the written partnership agreement says otherwise. Hence, the need for a written agreement.

Let’s assume that the sound equipment was bought by the partnership using partnership funds (for example, money generated from gigs the band has played). Now let’s assume that a member leaves and that the partnership has no written partnership agreement. Under the default rules, here’s what would happen: the partnership would “dissolve” meaning it would enter into a phase in which all of the assets of the partnership would be sold for the purpose of paying its creditors and, eventually, the partners. Hence, here the sound equipment would most likely be sold in order to pay off any creditors and to pay the individual partners for their interests in the band.

Now, let’s assume the same facts, except that the partnership had a written partnership agreement. Most of these agreements provide that if one partner leaves, the partnership does not dissolve. Rather, a partner will be paid an amount equal to the value of his or her share in the band. The agreement can provide the financial terms for valuing the exiting partner’s interest as well as repayment (i.e., a lump sum or payments over time). In your situation, it seems to me that a written partnership agreement would be in order, as it would anticipate any disputes that should arise when one of you leaves the band as well as the status of the band’s assets.

This same scenario applies to most other assets of the band. For example, who owns the band’s CDs? Who owns the band’s name? If a band member leaves, what will he or she be entitled to with respect to CD sales? How about CD’s that are recorded after the band member leaves? What about compilations—who can give the right to use tracks on a band album to the producer of the compilation album? What about band arrangements of music? Who owns them? All of these questions have been the subject of contentious litigation and can be addressed up front in a written partnership agreement.

There are no real standard partnership agreement formats, as with the formation of corporations. Have a competent legal practitioner prepare the document—although to save money you can do most of the legwork yourselves. I’ve given you some of the issues to resolve. Sit down with your bandmates and think through each of these issues. Put it down in writing and give the end result to your lawyer. Good luck!
Looking for some light reading to occupy you as you enjoy these last few days of summer weather? May I humbly suggest one of my favorites, a hysterically funny book entitled Dave Barry’s Book of Bad Songs, by (you guessed it) Dave Barry. We all know there are some sticklers out there, and when Barry asked readers of his weekly syndicated column to submit their nomin- es for the worst song, they didn’t let him down. He took the results of the survey, organized them and added his own brand of satirical humor, and compiled them in this book. Here’s one of the older examples:

“The number two song in the survey was Yummy Yummy (I Got Love in My Tummy), the 1968 hit by Ohio Express. This is the same group that later did Chewy Chewy, which is not to be confused with another recently released song, Sugar Sugar which was performed by the Archies, who were so soul-free they made Ohio Express sound like Wilson Pickett.”

*******

Here’s a great “happy ending.” Last year, Mary Travers (of Peter, Paul and Mary) had a bone marrow transplant, which I mentioned several times in this column. She’s now fully recovered and back on a light touring sched- ule. At one point she had to stop. For a friend in need, the tour was postponed. And in June, the trio were awarded the Sammy Cahn Award by the Songwriters Hall of Fame, in recognition of the musical impact they have made. This year Mary has returned to the stage, and the group is back on tour. They recently played under a stage nickname, in his case “Fidele Zizi.” This was all well and good until one day in the 1980s he introduced himself by this nickname to a receptionist at the French music performing rights society (SACEM) office. At which point the entire secretarial staff burst out in laughter. Turns out his nickname in French means literally “faithful wee-pee.” Apparently it doesn’t have quite the same meaning in Kinshasa!

I’ve never had a humble opinion. If you’ve got an opinion, why be humble about it? - JoAnn Baee

*******

I worry that the person who thought up Muzak may be thinking up some- thing else. – Lily Tomlin

*******

A song has a few rights the same as ordinary citizens... if it happens to feel like flying where humans cannot fly... to scale mountains that are not there, who shall say it? - Charles Ives

*******

Back in 1998, I went to a concert by the brilli- ant Irish band, Dann. Or, at least, by a portion of Dann, as several of the band members were unable to get visas in time for the tour. A couple of years ago, it happened again. I was ready and eager to hear Dougie Maclean as part of the Old Acoustic Music Series, but at the last minute his tour was cancelled because his visa didn’t come through in time. Unfortunately, this has been an all-too-common occurrence, as touring musicians seem to have gotten the “short end of the stick” from US Immigration.

Thanks to Senator John Kerry, there is light at the end of the tunnel. On May 25th, the U.S. Senate approved a provision to require US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to process visa petitions for artists of cultural importance, and support was provided by several key artists’ organizations who joined together as the Performing Arts Visa Task Force.

*******

“I went out today and got from my local farmer’s market some stuff for a huge sheep’s pie. They also make their own rice pudding. So I got rice pudding and a big jug of strawberry milk. You see, that is my treat. That is what you get for play- ing traditional music. Shepherd’s pie, strawberry milk, and rice pudding: You can- not set your sights any higher than that as a traditional musician.” - Johnny Cunningham

*******

“I don’t understand why people like me. It doesn’t make any sense!” – Clay Aiken

Linda Dewar is a singer and a player of various instruments with strings and keys. She can be heard playing mostly Celtic music at small gatherings and large festivals here and there in California. You can find her first solo CD Where the Heart Is at www.cdbylinda.com
Some people are just destined to make music together. Think Peter, Paul and Mary, or Phil Cunningham and Aly Bain. Back in the mid-1980s, an young Irish expat named James Keigher found himself living in LA and looking for something to do. He wandered into a pub one day, and there he met a fellow exile, a Scot named Donnie Macdonald. They got to talking over a pint (and no doubt another, and another...) and discovered a mutual fondness for playing and singing traditional music.

Over the next couple of years, James and Donnie became fast friends, sometimes working at odd jobs together and often playing at the same festivals and sessions. In 1968, they decided to pool their talents, and they became the duo that is still known today as Men of Worth, a name taken from a song written by Archie Fisher. That decision was the beginning of what would become a long and productive partnership, and this year finds Men of Worth celebrating their twentieth anniversary making music together. In that time, they've recorded nine albums, performed in countless concerts and at Scottish and Irish festivals all over the US, and expanded their repertoire to include conducting music-oriented vacation tours of Ireland and Scotland.

Some things have changed... their hair is not as dark, and there were those few years a while back when they were affectionately known as “Men of Girth.” Their music has evolved and matured, but it remains as it began: simple, traditional, and honest. Play all nine of their albums in chronological order, and you'll hear them progress from straightforward arrangements of traditional Irish and Scottish songs, through their first original offerings, and on to the occasional addition of backing musicians like Scottish fiddler John Taylor. Today, their repertoire still includes traditional songs and tunes, but it’s expanded to include the work of some of the best songwriters in Scotland and Ireland as well as a steadily growing body of original work.

As songwriters, Donnie and James each have their own distinctive style, yet each writes as if he were hearing the voice of the other in his mind. James’s songs are often personal, reflecting his life and childhood in a small Irish village. He has a gift for turning a chance happening into an entertaining lyric, as he’s done with the song Sorry State, a tongue-in-cheek description of two ladies he overheard gossiping about him in a grocery store. While he has written some memorable songs in English, Donnie is most at home with the cadences of his native Gaelic language. As it happens, his mother left a legacy of poems written in Gaelic, and he has put many of these to music.

The real essence of Men of Worth is found in their live performances. It’s clear that after twenty years these two are still enjoying what they do. They’re funny guys, and they can’t get up on a stage without sharing a good laugh or two with each other and the audience. And there’s passion in their performance. When they play, you can sense the delight they find in the music and the range of emotions they touch in their lyrics.

So what’s next for Men of Worth? For now, the music and the craic will continue. These days, James and Donnie divide their time and effort between their music and the travel tours that they conduct in Ireland and Scotland. Whichever they’re doing at a given moment, their purpose is the same—have a great time, invite a bunch of people along, give them something to think about, something to laugh about, and something to remember.

Men of Worth will be performing at the Seaside Scottish Highland Games in Ventura on October 14th and 15th, including a concert on the evening of the 14th. Visit their web site at www.menofworth.com for information on other performances or to buy CDs.

Linda Dewar is a singer and a player of various instruments with strings and keys. She can be heard playing mostly Celtic music at small gatherings and large festivals here and there in California. You can find her first solo CD Where the Heart Is at www.cdbaby.com/lindadewar.
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www.radiorevisited.com – offers original radio programs from the 1930s, ’40s and ’50s.
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www.harrisradioso.com – Peter Harris’ show, recommended by singer-songwriter Melineh Kuriand, has a rotating schedule of indices, including many folk and roots Radio Network artists.
www.artistlaunch.com/enchantressradio – Enchantress Radio from Pittsburgh delivers all women artists on several stations. One show, the weekly Artists Launch, has featured notable local performing songwriters like Amilia K. Spicer and Che Zuro. That show had 382,000 listeners in its first ten months.
www.live365.com/stations/aaronchilds – Aaron Childs’ show from Jackson, Michigan, together with Nette Radio, is the most eclectic on our list. He plays blues, rock, jazz, alternative, electronica, roots rock, and Americana.
www.renegaderadio.net – NetteRadio is Annette Conlon’s weekly two-hour internet radio show from Dallas, TX, Wednesday, 6-8pm. Often very rock-oriented, Annette’s show is dedicated to promoting unsigned women musicians across all genres from piano to punk. She includes discussion of current events and upcoming showcases around the country. Annette says “it’s like hanging out with friends from college, or whatever, listening to music and gabbing away.”
Rebroadcast Sunday, 5pm on the all-women-all-day Nowhere To Go Radio, www.ntradio.com.

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www.americanaroots.com – cazine site with news, features and music reviews. Also has a link to their internet music stream, broadcasting very good Americana music.
www.americanaroots.ca – Bliss, entertainment writer for the in-print Pasadena Weekly, also operates LA’s Americana, all-country, roots and blues information network. There’s an extensive calendar of upcoming local performances, info on radio and TV appearances by artists, local venue addresses and dozens of links to other Americana-related sites.
www.freighttrainboogie.com – great site for all things Americana, including news, CD reviews, an internet store in connection with Amazon.com, and links to its two internet radio broadcasts.
www.nodepression.net – web home of the magazine, No Depression, widely regarded as the “bible” of Americana and alt-country music. Has archives, some of the best writings on the genre, from past issues and music samples of important new artists. Consider subscribing to the print-media magazine.
www.radiorevisited.com – recommended by storyteller Terry Rezek, this one has lots of info links.

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Joellen Lapidus
Joellen Lapidus is one of the pioneers of contemporary fiddle playing and construction. She is the author of the instruction book, Lapidus on Dulcimer. Her playing style is a blend of traditional Appalachian, Indian, Arabic, jazz, classical and pop music that gives the dulcimer a new range of rhythm, melodic and tuning possibilities. Returning to her first musical loves, the accordion and clarinet, Joellen also teaches a high energy Klezmer Band Workshop at McCabes. For dulcimer lessons or a Klezmer Band Workshop call her at 310-474-1123.

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Pennies From Heaven

T he US Treasury now says that it costs more to make a penny than a penny is worth, so they are abandoning their production altogether and eventually phasing them out. The LA Times has already moved the song “Pennies From Heaven” as a featured cent in the “Two Cents” column, an editorial that stakes out the rational position that the penny is no longer a meaningful unit of currency. The arguments make themselves: we all do what we can to avoid being paid our change in pennies, usually giving the store an extra cent so that we can be paid the next higher unit of currency, rather than having to absorb four pennies in change. Andy Rooney on Sixty Minutes made a convincing case that people no longer go through the trouble of picking up a penny they see on the ground—they walk right by, even if it is a lucky penny.

Economically speaking, I am prepared to defer to Uncle Sam, The LA Times, and Andy Rooney. But as a songwriter, I do what I do best: I Protest. I have no idea what removing the penny would do to our economy, but I can say with some authority that it would decimate our language, rob our history, and desacrate our most cherished institution: I refer, of course, to the Library of Congress.

Next to the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Gettysburg Address, I would put Franklin’s Poor Richard’s Almanac on the top shelf of defining American documents, those without which we could no longer be sure what it means to be an American.

It was Franklin who said in that book that a penny saved is a penny earned. Put that basic principle of personal finance on one side of the balance beam, and then on the other side put the collected works of John Maynard Keynes and John Kenneth Galbraith, and watch them be sent skyward by Franklin’s proverb. Do we want our children and their children to have to look that up in a dictionary, because they no longer know what a penny is?

How about a penny for your thoughts? The next time you are sitting across from your loved one, and an annoying silence descends upon the conversation, try leaning across the table and saying a nickel for your thoughts. It won’t bring you closer together. A penny will.

This is a European trick. Someone you know saves a few cents to buy an inferior air conditioner, only to have it break down on the first hot day of summer, you will say to yourself penny wise, pound foolish. You won’t say, “a quarter wise, a dollar foolish.” We still owe something to the British, even after the Revolution.

No one ever found “a lucky nickel.” You find a lucky penny.

James Joyce once published a small chapbook of poetry with the lovely title, Poems a Penny Each. Should we now have to put an asterisk in the title? It was a lucky penny, but even if you added “a cent” at the end of the line, as John Kennedy was assassinated—He was a Friend of Mine. Dylan’s words moved the audience to tears: He was a friend of mine/He was a friend of mine/He died without a penny/He didn’t have a dime/He was a friend of mine. Would we now have to gloss the third line when it is reprinted, so people will know what it used to mean?

Everyone who loves folk music knows that Stephen Foster died with 38 cents in his pocket, and the title of an unfinished song: Dear Friends and Gentle Hearts. Will we soon need to footnote that anecdote, when we retell the Gettysburg Address, I would put Benjamin Franklin’s proverb. Do we want our children and their children to have to know that anecdote, when we retell the Gettysburg Address, I would put Benjamin Franklin’s proverb. Do we want our children and their children to have to get up the phrase ten cents on the dollar to describe a bad debt; let us not give up the memory of The Penny Arcade, even if we have to pay a dollar for what used to cost a penny; let us not force the 99 Cent Stores to rename themselves the One Dollar Stores; let us not force Phillip’s Restaurant to raise the cost of the famous 9 cent cup of coffee to a dime, let us not force libraries to put the wonderful novel The Year of the Zinc Penny (1943) in Special Collections for rare books because no one gets the title; let us not allow God’s forces not encourage the US Post Office to once again raise the price of a first class stamp by one penny, because 39 cents is no longer a possible transaction.

Let us not remove Abraham Lincoln’s distinguished profile from where it belongs—on our basic unit of currency.

Let us not be penny wise, pound foolish. A penny for your thoughts.

Author’s note: To express your opinion on this weighty matter, simply email me at ross @ getyourwaves.com. Also, for the record, in last issue’s column about Joe Hickerson, his dates of attendance at Oberlin were inaccurate—he attended from 1953 to 1957. However, he did add his two cents to Pete Seeger’s Where Have All the Flowers Gone in 1960, as stated, Joe heard the song as a camp counselor at Camp Woodlawn, and made his changes after Pete left. The song was originally copyrighted in 1961.

Ross Altman has a Ph.D in English. Before becoming a full-time folk singer he taught college English and Speech. He now sings around California for libraries, unions, schools, political groups and folk festivals.

NEW MUSIC COURSE –UCLA
THE INSIDER’S GUIDE TO MUSIC MANAGEMENT
X 447.3 MANAGEMENT 2 UNITS $395

The music manager’s role is crucial to a musician’s career success. Yet very few people who enter the entertainment industry have any idea what a manager does or how one can help their career. This course is designed to explain the management side of the music business. Find out what music managers do, why they are important, and how to avoid management pitfalls. Lectures, discussion, and industry guests address such topics as when to get a manager, the music business only looks glamorous from the outside: the real deal, the role of the manager in the inside world, and going up the ladder with a manager. Elective course in Certificate Program in the Music Business.

Mike Gormley, President of the management firm L.A. Personal Development, where he oversees the careers of such clients as Lisbeth Scott, Ronny Cox and Quincy Coleman. Mr. Gormley previously managed Lowen & Navarro, the Bangles, Oingo Boingo, Angelique Kidjo, Concrete Blonde and Wayne Fontana.

Mike is president on the Board of Music Manager’s Forum and A.W.OMen In Music and is past president of the Conference of Personal Managers. He is also on the Management/Legal Advisory Committee for AFTRA.

Contact UCLA Extensions Division./ Reg# S4446B / UCLA: CS76 Young Hall Wednesday, 7-10pm / October 11-November 15, 6 mtgs.
SPECIAL EVENTS continued from page 32

FRIDAY OCTOBER 6

GONEWOMAN

with The New Black

Folk Works presents Gone Woman, a fiercely original all-woman string band. Hailing from Chicago, they are the brainchild ofcenters Dolly Woods and Lisa kay, who also play with Handsome Dickman and The Two Charms. This is a New England premiere, and the band is via the region for the first time.

SUNDAY OCTOBER 8

SHERRY NORTON

with Mark Morris Dance Company

Sherry Norton is best known for her percussive guitar style and her distinctive and compelling vocal performances. She is a leading exponent of the blues revival movement and has earned critical acclaim for her live performances and recordings. Norton has collaborated with a number of esteemed musicians, including Mark Morris, and has been praised for her ability to blend traditional blues with contemporary elements.

MONDAY OCTOBER 9

TAIYAKA  ABE

Taiyaka Abe is a renowned singer and songwriter from Japan. She is well-known for her soulful voice and her expressive, energetic performances. Abe has released several albums and has gained a following for her powerful sing and her engaging on-stage presence.

TUESDAY OCTOBER 10

BETH RYAN

Beth Ryan is a talented singer-songwriter who has made a name for herself with her soulful, heartfelt music. She is known for her powerful voice and her ability to connect with her audience through her songs. Ryan’s music is a blend of folk, country, and blues, and she is a popular performer in the region.

THURSDAY OCTOBER 12

LAURA MURPHY

Laura Murphy is a multi-talented musician who is well-known for her dynamic guitar playing and her mesmerizing vocals. She is known for her energetic on-stage presence and her ability to engage her audience. Murphy has released several albums and has gained a reputation for her diverse and captivating style.

FRIDAY OCTOBER 13

GREG MCKAY

with Greg’s Extended Family

Greg McKay is a seasoned musician who has been active in the music scene for many years. He is known for his versatile and engaging style, and he is a respected performer in the region. McKay has released several albums and has gained a following for his unique approach to his craft.

SUNDAY OCTOBER 15

OCTOBER 17

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 18

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 18

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 18

THURSDAY OCTOBER 19

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SATURDAY OCTOBER 21
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 1
7:00pm ROB WEDG (www.krock.com) $15
Walter Martin, Alas, I Am Bowed, St. Paul and the Broken Bones, The Raines, Mavis Staples, Alabama 3, Mud Morganfield
Caffé Femmish
8:00pm ANNA NICKELS (www.annanickelssays.com) $15
Walter Martin, Alas, I Am Bowed, St. Paul and the Broken Bones, The Raines, Mavis Staples, Alabama 3, Mud Morganfield
Caffé Femmish

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2
9:00pm & 11:30pm MILLPOND MUSIC FESTIVAL $15
Eric Bibb, Sleepy La Floresta, Daniel Lanois, Steve Earle, The Sadies, Samwich, The Rough Trade
Embarcadero Marina Park South, San Diego

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 3
10:00am TALL SHIPS FESTIVAL $3/Free 12 & under
Caffé Femmish

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 6
7:00pm & 9:00pm AL STEWART (www.alstewart.com) $24
Walter Martin, Alas, I Am Bowed, St. Paul and the Broken Bones, The Raines, Mavis Staples, Alabama 3, Mud Morganfield
Caffé Femmish

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7
7:00pm & 9:30pm HOT CLUB QUARTET $15
Walter Martin, Alas, I Am Bowed, St. Paul and the Broken Bones, The Raines, Mavis Staples, Alabama 3, Mud Morganfield
Caffé Femmish

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8
7:30pm JIM CURRY (jimcurrymusic.com) $15
Walter Martin, Alas, I Am Bowed, St. Paul and the Broken Bones, The Raines, Mavis Staples, Alabama 3, Mud Morganfield
Caffé Femmish

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 9
9:30am & 11:30am JUMBO SHRIMP CIRCUS $8
Walter Martin, Alas, I Am Bowed, St. Paul and the Broken Bones, The Raines, Mavis Staples, Alabama 3, Mud Morganfield
Caffé Femmish