



A Publication of Your  
Nashville Old-Time  
String Band Association  
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ASSOCIATION  
EVENTS

1<sup>st</sup>-Thursday Jam  
January 4

Slow & Regular Jam  
6:30 to 8:30 PM  
Two Rivers  
Mansion



2<sup>nd</sup>-Thursday Jam  
January 11  
Regular Jam  
6:30 to 8:30 PM  
Buchanan  
Log House



3<sup>rd</sup>-Thursday Jam  
January 18  
Slow & Regular Jam  
**with Martin Fisher**  
6:30 to 8:30 PM  
Two Rivers  
Mansion



4<sup>th</sup>-Thursday Jam  
January 25  
Performance Group  
Rehearsal  
& Singing  
6:30 to 8:30 PM  
Buchanan Log House



4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jam  
January 28  
2 to 5 PM  
Hosted By  
Michael Ann and  
David  
Carpenter

# The Old-Time Times

JANUARY 2007

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## Guest Lecturers at Breakin' Up Winter

~Mary Lou Durham

*The Roots of Old-Time Music* is the eagerly anticipated original element of the Breakin' Up Winter weekend festival coming up March 2-4, 2007. It is the daylong series of morning lectures and afternoon music demonstrations held yearly since the beginning of the festival in 1995. Over the course of its history, we've had ethnomusicologists from all over the United States give talks on regional styles, movements in the genre, periods of development, and many other topics.

For this year's morning session we're pleased to present lectures by George Gruhn, Joyce and Jim Cauthen, and Kerry Blech.

**George Gruhn** spoke a few years ago at Roots Day, to our delight, and is a source of torrents of information about vintage and collectible acoustic fretted instruments. He owns Gruhn Guitars on Broadway, a mecca for those of us looking for older acoustic instruments, and is the author of beautifully illustrated and thoroughly researched books about their history and development.

As George states on the Gruhn Guitars Web site, "Guitars, which I feel are the ultimate collectible, can be looked at, touched, listened to, and played. At the same time, they are beautiful pieces of art that can be appreciated on so many levels. A guitar responds to the individual player and sounds completely differently when you play it than when you listen to someone else play it . . . There is, therefore, greater depth of appreciation with musical instruments than with almost any other collectible, perhaps even more than with painting and sculpture."

"There are many books in George Gruhn's office, but the one that got him started is an old one: *The Field Book of Snakes of the United States and Canada*. Herpetologists have carefully classified snakes so that if you meet a snake you've never seen before, you can figure out its lineage from *The Field Book*. When Gruhn took up an interest in guitars at college, he began to apply this systematic approach to musical instruments. 'It's easier to learn massive amounts of information in patterns than in random facts,' he says. This was a new way to approach vintage guitars, banjos, and mandolins, and now Gruhn is an acknowledged leader in his field." (*The Nashville Business Journal*)

This year George will speak at 9 AM on Friday, March 2, 2007.

**Joyce and Jim Cauthen** have attended BUW most years since its beginning. They have lectured and held a singing workshop, hosted cabin jams, and contributed to the quality of the festival by consulting with us over the years. It's hard to be more integral than that!

One of our Notsba friends has said that they are "all things Alabama," and you can get a picture of what he means by looking at what the Cauthens have brought to our attention in their work over the years.

Here is a small part of what **Joyce Cauthen** has published:

*With Fiddle and Well-Rosined Bow: Old-Time Fiddling in Alabama*, University of Alabama Press, 1989.

"The Legacy of a Neighborhood: Uncle Plez Carroll and Charlie Stripling" in *The Old-Time Herald*, Vol. 7, No. 8, Summer, 2001.

"Fiddle Tunes for Mining Towns" and "The Ballad of John Catchings" in *Spirit of Steel: Music of the Mines, Railroads and Mills of the Birmingham District*, produced by The Sloss Furnace Association, 1999.

*Benjamin Lloyd's Hymn Book: A Primitive Baptist Song Tradition*, Alabama Folklife Association, 1999. Joyce served as project director and editor of this collection.

"Singing 'Dr. Watts': A Venerable Hymn Tradition Among African Americans in Alabama" and "Shape-Note Gospel Singing on Sand Mountain," in *In the Spirit: Alabama's Sacred Music Traditions*, Black Belt Press, 1995.

*Presenting Traditional Artists: A Handbook for Local Arts Agencies*, Jackson: Mississippi Arts Commission, 1994.

"Boogie and Blues from Alabama: Albert Macon and Robert Thomas," in *Living Blues*, January-February, 1992.

"And Bring Your Fiddle: The Role of the Old-Time Fiddler in Alabama Community Life," in *Alabama Heritage*, Summer 1989.

"A 'Peculiar Wiggling of the Bow': Old-Time Fiddling in Alabama," originally published in *Alabama Folklife: Collected Essays*, Alabama Folklife Association, 1989.

*Possum up a Gum Stump: Home, Commercial and Field Recordings of Alabama Fiddlers*; record album and 24-page booklet, produced by Brierfield Ironworks Park; funded by National Endowment for the Arts and Alabama State Council on the Arts, 1988, and reissued as a CD and Cassette by Tannehill State Park in 1995.

*The Stripling Brothers: Complete Recorded Works in Chronological Order, Vol. 1, 1928-34 and Vol. 2, 1934-36*, in *Document* 8007, 8008.

**Jim Cauthen** is a gifted and skilled fiddler with a wide repertoire of tunes both popular and regional and obscure and demanding. He has decades of playing and is a member for many years of the *Red Mountain White Trash* and more recently, *Flying Jenny*. He will demonstrate the tunes and styles discussed in Joyce's lecture.

There's more, too, and you will come away from the Cauthen's lecture-demonstration excited by their process of finding, recording, and learning about the cultural context and importance of the art they bring to light.

Here is what David Lynch, of The Old-Time Music Home Page and Lynch Graphics, has to say about **Kerry Blech**: "He has shared some great old stories with me and has been most helpful in steering me toward old-time music resources and artists with whom I was not yet familiar. He's also been very gracious about sharing his compendious music collection, which is almost as extensive as the old-time music knowledge contained in his brain! I can't help but think of Kerry whenever I taste a good Slivovitz or play a long stretch of C tunes. Including Kerry in the on-line Old-Time Fiddlers Hall of Fame is my way of not only acknowledging his fiddling talents, but also thanking him for his invaluable assistance and his overall contribution to Old Time Music."

Kerry writes articles and reviews for *The Old-Time Herald* and *Victory Music Review*, and for five years, he produced a weekly folk radio show on WKSU-FM.

The notes by Kerry (on Rounder Records' homepage) about the *The North American*

*Traditions Series* show the passion he feels for the depth and detail that the series notes present. One cannot help but know that he feels this historical information places the music in a context that was and is, even now, alive. Kerry brings his zeal for every aspect of his subjects to us in a format rich with anecdotes, humor and wisdom.

Our guest lecturers have an intense belief in the importance of sharing what they have worked most of their lives to learn and understand. We are blessed to have in them such good and knowledgeable friends to illuminate the music we all love. □

### **Notes About Presenters for the Saturday Morning Workshops**

~Mary Lou Durham

We are having two workshops that are bound to give us some good practical information.

**Chrissy Davis-Camp** will discuss how bands can work with callers at dances. Chrissy is in demand as a caller all over the region and has been gathering experience as a dancer, dance caller, and musician since she was very young. She maintains an ever-expanding connection to the music, plays guitar, and has been a player in dance bands over the years. She has an on-going dance class for young people and can frequently be heard leading us with humor and warmth at the Nashville Friday contra dances.

We're delighted that Chrissy has been leading our Saturday night dance for many years. As a person with experience in all aspects of contra and square dance calling, dancing, and playing, Chrissy is eminently qualified to help bands perfect the art of working with callers to play for dancers.

**Rebecca Holbrook** will talk about massage and self-maintenance for musicians. Rebecca is a practicing massage therapist in Huntsville Alabama. She is also a banjoist who is very attentive to the musician's body's needs. In her group's Web site she is listed as providing Reiki and sports massage.

Rebecca graduated from the Tennessee Institute of Healing Arts in Chattanooga in

1990. She then went on to complete a one-year course of study on injury rehabilitation with Dr. Ben Benjamin. Her other training includes Neuromuscular Therapy with Judith Walker, Zentherapy (deep tissue work) with Dub Leigh, Myofacial Release with John Barnes, Chair Massage with David Palmer, Reiki, and various other allied modalities. Rebecca taught and graduated a class in 1991 in conjunction with the Tennessee Institute of Healing Arts, and she graduated several massage therapy classes at the Healing Arts Center, Huntsville, Alabama. She is a member of AMTA.

We think you will find Chrissy's and Rebecca's workshops to be valuable and fun elements of Breakin' Up Winter 12. □

### **Breakin' Up Winter: Your Questions**

~Phil Sparks

I recently sent out a call for your questions concerning Breakin, Up Winter. This call was motivated by some excellent question that had already come in. Well, here they are—with the best answers I could find.

**Question 1:** If I did not receive a BUW flyer, how can I obtain one?

**Answer:** Go to [www.nasvilleoldtime.org](http://www.nasvilleoldtime.org). The flyer is posted there, and you can download it. If you print it from the Web site, you will need to use legal size paper. Also, you can contact us by e-mail through the Web site, and we will send you one.

**Question 2:** Who will be the musicians and presenters?

**Answer:** Charlie Acuff (health permitting), Clyde Davenport, and Dan Gellert will be the musicians. Kerry Blech, Joyce and Jim Cauthen, and George Gruhn will be the presenters.

Chrissy Davis-Camp and Rebecca Holbrook will hold workshops, Martin Fisher will demonstrate old-time recording equipment, Roby Cogswell will serve at the MC of Roots Day, and Timothy Reynolds will lead sacred harp singing on Sunday morning.

You can read more about these fine folks in this edition of *The Old-Time Times* as well as in the December '06 issue and the BUW flyer.

**Question 3:** I wondered if you could give me a little more info on the cabins at BUW.

**Answer:** Most of this information is in the BUW flyer, so forgive me if I repeat it. First, we must all realize that the park has only 13 cabins. Moreover, 3 or 4 of them are used to house our presenters and performers. The demand for the remaining cabins is high.

The park gives Notsba the responsibility of assigning the cabins during BUW, so you cannot call ahead and reserve one now. What we do is this: We ask everyone who wants a cabin to submit his or her name. Then we have a lottery—we draw the names out of a hat to see who will have a cabin. People who enter the lottery must send in a check for the cabin, just in case they win. If they don't win, their check is returned.

The drawing will be held at the Notsba Board meeting on the evening of January 15. The exact time and place of that meeting will be announced soon. Any Notsba member who would like to attend is welcome.

The cost is \$230 for Friday afternoon through Sunday morning. You can add Thursday night for an extra \$105.

Needless to say, the vast majority of the people who enter the lottery ARE NOT assigned a cabin.

NOTE: Please be aware that if you do win a cabin, you will be encouraged to open your cabin to jamming. (March can be chilly in Tennessee.)

**Question 4:** Assuming I am not one of the cabin lottery winners, what are the other lodging options?

**Answer:** There are three other housing options:

1. The camp grounds will be open for tent, trailer, and RV camping. Tent campers must be prepared for the possibility of cold weather. The trailer and RV spots have water and electricity hook-ups. Currently, the park will not allow us to reserve RV spots, but we are working on that.

2. The Group Lodge is open for bunk house style living at only \$11 per person per night. There are two large rooms with about 40 bunk beds each. We designate one room as "Early Risers" and the other as "Night Owls" to give folks the maximum opportunity to catch enough winks. One advantage of staying in the Group Lodge is that our delicious meals are served there. *NOTE: These beds can be paid for in advance or when you arrive at BUW.*

3. Several motels are available just 7 miles away at Exit 238 on I-40. Two of these, Comfort Inn (615-444-1001) and Comfort Suites (615-443-0027) give BUW attendees a special rate. NOTE: There's a big NASCAR race track near Lebanon. If a race is held that weekend, all rooms could be taken. **Reserve your room as early as possible, and be sure to ask for the special BUW rate.**

**Question 5:** How do I know when and where the jams are going to be?

**Answer:** In my opinion, this is the most important question of all. If BUW is about anything, it's about jamming.

Most of the jams are spontaneous. It's catch as catch can. A few of the jams ARE scheduled. The program you will be given with your registration packet will list the scheduled jams.

Also, the folks who win the cabin lottery are encouraged to open their cabins for jamming. We are working on a way to let you know which cabins are available and for which times.

The March edition of the *Old-Time Times* will have an article on jamming opportunities at BUW. Free copies will be available at the BUW registration table.

**Question 6:** Will we have name tags so everyone will know who everyone is?

**Answer:** Yes, every registration packet comes with metal button giving the person's name. Most people wear them with pride. If you do not preregister, you can pick up a blank button and write your name on it when you register.

**Question 7:** Will it be possible to buy meal tickets on the first day of BUW?

**Answer:** Our wonderful caterer, The Mad Platter, has to plan our meals in advance. They agree to offer a certain number of meals for a certain (quite reasonable) price. For that reason, we must sell the meal tickets well in advance, no later than February 14. If you can't make plans prior to February 14, some nice restaurants are available in Lebanon, just 7 to 10 miles from the park. If you win a cabin in the lottery, you can cook in the cabins. If you stay in the Group Lodge, you can bring a cooler.

If you can possibly purchase your meal ticket in advance, *do it*. The food is great, and meal time is a wonderful opportunity to meet new friends.

**Question 8:** Will it be possible for people to join The Nashville Old-Time String Band Association at Breakin' Up Winter?

**Answer:** Yes, just go to the registration table.

**Question 9:** Will John Hatton be at this year's BUW?

**Answer:** Yes, he will be there with the world's most amazing collection of old-time CDs, tapes, LPs, books, etc. Be sure to bring bags and bags of money with you!

If you come up with additional questions, please send them to me. I will do my best to provide good answers. □

### **The President's Corner**

~Jim Hornsby

2006 was a good year for the Association. We increased our membership, made some new friends, played at some new events, learned some new tunes, and enjoyed a lot of good old-time music. Our newsletter and Web site drew more well-deserved praise, and we became a bit more comfortable operating as a nonprofit organization.

The board of directors will meet on January 15, 2007. One order of business will be to draw names for the BUW cabin lottery. I wish everyone who wants a cabin could have one, but as you know they are limited, so we'll do

our best to make the distribution as painless as possible. Winners of the lottery will be notified as soon as possible after the drawing.

Mary Lou Durham did a great job on the BUW flyers again this year. You should have gotten yours in the mail by now. If you didn't and need one, contact us by e-mail at the Web site ([www.nashvilleoldtime.org](http://www.nashvilleoldtime.org)), and we will get it out to you ASAP.

Pat Gill and Mary Lou have done a wonderful job as cochairpersons for the BUW Committee. They have had some good help in putting the 2007 festival together, but when it gets right down to it, they are the two people who made it happen. If you like the festival and have some fun while you are there, be sure and tell these two ladies how much you appreciate all the hard work they put into it.

The new program of having a guest leader for our Two Rivers Mansion slow jams will begin this month with Martin Fisher as guest leader on Thursday, January 18<sup>th</sup>. I can't think of anyone better suited to get us started.

Martin is one of our best fiddlers with a solid, melodic technique that consistently adds depth and stability to our performances and jams, and he knows some neat old-time tunes that I don't hear other people play.

In addition to his musical abilities, Martin has a unique perspective on, and knowledge of, old-time music recordings. As the BUW flyer points out, he will be at BUW with some vintage equipment for wax cylinder recording. With some coaxing, he might tell us a little bit about recordings of yesteryear and how he does it now.

Thanks to all of you who have helped the association move forward in 2006. If you haven't contributed some time this past year, please make it a new year's resolution to participate in 2007. It is your Association, and it needs your active support to keep it working.

On behalf of all our members, best wishes for the New Year. I look forward to it being our best yet. □

## An All New Pegram Jam Site

~Kirk Pickering

To celebrate five years of music making in Pegram, we are pleased to announce the unveiling of the ALL NEW Pegram Jam Web site. All credit goes to our dear Susie Coleman. She put countless hours into this project, and she did a magnificent job.

There are some new features, and of course the old archive of tunes is still available. Please have a browse around, and let us know what you think. Point your Web browser to this link: <http://www.peggramjam.com/index.php>.

You can probably leave off the "index.php" part, as the Web server should automatically redirect you to the proper location. The above link should work no matter what. □

## Memphis Area Dulcimer Happenings

~Lee Cagle

Learn to play the dulcimer you got for Christmas. Mountain Dulcimer New Players classes will be offered January 8, 22, and 29 from 7 to 8:20 PM at Singleton Community Center, 7266 Third Road in Bartlett. Basic tuning, strumming methods, and reading tablature will be covered. The cost is \$65 for residents and \$70 nonresidents. No music experience is needed, and some loaner instruments will be available.

On Friday, January 12, and Saturday, January 13, The Memphis Dulcimer Gathering will host The January Gathering featuring Lee Cagle and Larry Conger at AgriCenter International, 7777 Walnut Grove Road, in Memphis. I will teach three workshops for beginning level players, and Larry Conger will teach three workshops for intermediate to advanced players. The cost of the event is \$90 for the three workshops or \$35 per workshop if you do not attend all three. If you register early, the cost for all three workshops is only \$75. On Friday evening there will be a jam session at the AgriCenter in Building C, upper level, beginning at 7:30 PM. This event is free and open to the public. All acoustic instruments are welcome.

On Saturday night, Lee and Larry will present a house concert beginning at 7 PM. The cost is \$10 per person. For more information contact me, Lee Cagle, at 901-372-0510 or [www.leecagledulcimers.com](http://www.leecagledulcimers.com). □

## A New Notsba Member

We extend a warm welcome to one new member this month, someone who has long been a good friend of Notsba:

Larry Vito

We thank you for joining us and for supporting old-time music. We hope you will be an active member and will participate in our jams, our performances, and our festival, Breakin' Up Winter. □

## Directions to the Jams at Buchanan Log House

From more or less the center of Nashville, take I-40 East. From I-40 East, take the Donelson Pike Exit (Exit 216C), and merge onto Donelson Pike. Go about 0.4 mile on Donelson Pike, and turn right onto Elm Hill Pike.

Go 0.5 mile on Elm Hill Pike to the Buchanan Log House, on the left at 2910 Elm Hill Pike. □

## Direction to the Jams at Two Rivers Mansion

*From the south or east of Nashville,* take I-40 East to Briley Parkway North.

Go about 3.6 miles on Briley Parkway and take the Two Rivers Parkway Exit. (Expect delays. This area of Briley Parkway is under construction.) Follow Two Rivers Parkway East for about 0.7 mile to McGavock Pike, and turn left (north).

Go about 0.4 mile on McGavock Pike, past McGavock High School, to Two Rivers Mansion at 3130 McGavock Pike. It's the second drive on the left past the high school. A large sign and two stone pillars mark the entrance.

*From I-65 North,* take Briley Parkway East for 5 or 6 miles. (Expect delays. This area of Briley Parkway is under construction.) Exit at

Two Rivers Parkway. Then follow the directions given above. □

### Directions to the 4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jam

This month's 4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jam will be hosted by Michael Ann and David Carpenter. It will be held in Bowling Green, Kentucky, on the campus of Western Kentucky University. We will meet in the Pioneer Log Cabin, which is immediately next to the Kentucky Building (also called the Kentucky Museum).

From Nashville, take I-65 north to Exit 20, and go west on the William H. Natcher Parkway (formerly the Green River Parkway). From the parkway, take Exit 4 and turn right (north) onto Highway 31-W. (There is a sign for Western Kentucky University at this exit.)

Take 31-W to University Boulevard, and turn left (west). Follow the boulevard to the Pioneer Log Cabin and the Kentucky Building (about 4 miles from Exit 4). Both The Pioneer Log Cabin and the Kentucky Building are on the right. On the left, you will see a large parking lot. Park there.

CAUTION: You will see The Pioneer Log Cabin just BEFORE you reach the Kentucky Building. After you pass the Kentucky Building, you will see a second log cabin, but that's the wrong one. □

### Hosts Needed for 2007 4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jams

Please contact Darlyne Kent (615-868-9951 or [dkent@davidsonacademy.com](mailto:dkent@davidsonacademy.com)) to schedule your home for a 2007 4<sup>th</sup>-Sunday Jam. The months of May, June, July, August, September, and October are still open. □

### A Penny Learned: Dealing with a Dead E String

~Woody McKenzie

One of the more common problems fiddlers encounter is a less than responsive E string. The problem could, of course, be with the fiddle itself. Let's face it, not all fiddles are good fiddles, but before you give up on your fiddle, you might consider the following suggestions:

1. Try changing the string. Sometimes a string can be just bad.

2. Is your bridge too thin? A stiffer, thicker bridge might help.

3. Sometimes it's possible to increase the treble on a fiddle by moving the sound post a little closer to the bridge.

NOTE: Generally, the sound post is centered on the treble foot of the bridge and is situated just behind it, about half the thickness of the sound post away. Unless you have worked with a sound post before, you might leave this work to your friendly neighborhood luthier.

4. You might also try cutting a new sound post that fits snugly slightly closer to the middle of the fiddle. Again, this task might best be left to a luthier. □

### Please Contribute to Your Newsletter!

If you have information or an article you want to submit, or if you have ideas for improving the news-letter, contact Phil Sparks.

If you have a tidbit on picking, learning tunes, caring for instruments, etc, please submit it for the "A Penny Learned" article.

*The submission deadline for February's newsletter is Sunday, January 28.* □

### General Contact Information for The Nashville Old-Time String Band Association:

E-mails for All Members

[friends@nashvilleoldtime.org](mailto:friends@nashvilleoldtime.org)

Jim Hornsby, President

[friends@nashvilleoldtime.org](mailto:friends@nashvilleoldtime.org)

615-650-2328

Ed Gregory, Web Master

[edgregory@comcast.net](mailto:edgregory@comcast.net)

615-889-5566

### HELP!!!!

If you know about an upcoming old-time music event, don't assume that we already know about it. If it's not posted on our Web site ([www.nashvilleoldtime.org](http://www.nashvilleoldtime.org)), we need the information desperately. *Please help us keep our old-time community informed.*

You can reach Phil Sparks, the editor of this newsletter at:

[kpsparks@msn.com](mailto:kpsparks@msn.com)

or

615-797-4356

or

2020 Claylick Road

White Bluff, TN 37187 □

## Classified Ads

### STRING BAND MUSICIANS FOR HIRE

Notsba members are willing to perform for the public for a small fee. All of our earnings go to the organization, none to the pickers. If you know of someone who might make use of our services, contact Don Kent at [www.nashvilleoldtime.org](http://www.nashvilleoldtime.org), or call him at 615-868-9951. □