



Old-Time Times

October 2005

A Publication
of Your
Nashville
Old-Time
String Band
Association

UPCOMING
ASSOCIATION
EVENTS



Thursday
October 6
Slow Jam
6:30 to 8:30 PM
Stratford High
Cafeteria



Thursday
October 13
Regular Jam
6:30 to 8:30 PM
Stratford High
Cafeteria



October 23
4th-Sunday Jam
1 to 5 PM,
Hosted by
Kurt Anderson

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EVENTS

Tennessee

Tennessee Fall Homecoming
Museum of Appalachia, Norris, Tennessee
October 6-9

Billed as one of the most extensive and authentic gatherings of old-time musicians and pioneer-type craftspeople in the country. It features over 300 traditional, folk, early country and bluegrass musicians. For details, visit the Festivals & Contests page at www.nashvilleoldtime.org

Cannonsburgh Harvest Days and Fiber Festival
Murfreesboro, Tennessee
October 22

Traditional handcrafts, clogging, and performances by the 2004 Tennessee State Champion String Band, Delmer Holland and the Blue Creek Ramblers (featuring Rebekah Weiler on banjo.) For details, visit the Festivals & Contests page at www.nashvilleoldtime.org

Alabama

Tennessee Valley Old-Time Fiddlers' Convention
Athens State University, Athens, Ala
October 7-8

For many old-timers, this is a favorite annual trek. First organized in 1924 and rejuvenated in the 1960s. Features contests for fiddle, banjo, mandolin, guitar, dulcimer, harmonica, dobro, bands, singing, and buck dancing, culminating with the crowning of a Fiddle King. For details, visit the Festivals & Contests page at www.nashvilleoldtime.org

(continued on next page)

North Carolina

Halloweenfest Old-Time Music Competition

Brevard, NC
October 29

The individual competitions will be held at the gazebo in front of the Transylvania County (really!) Courthouse on Main Street. The string band contest will be held on the campus of Brevard College. For more information and a registration form, email Mary Gordon at celestial@citcom.net
Or call 828-884-3575

An Electric Fiddle for Old-Timers?

~Phil Sparks

Most of you will be horrified to learn that I have purchased an electric fiddle. Have I gone mad? Yes, long ago, but this time, there is a method to my madness.

Several months ago, I saw an ad in *Fiddler Magazine* for a \$75 double fiddle case. I called and ordered one, along with a \$55 single fiddle case. They also advertised an electric fiddle for \$175. After placing my order for the cases, I asked the man about the electric fiddles. He promptly told me I could have one for \$150, so I ordered it too.

The double fiddle case was not to my liking. It had limited cargo space, just barely enough room for a tuner and rosin. Luckily, I found someone who was willing to pay me what I paid for it, so it's gone. The single fiddle case is great. I still have it.

As for the electric fiddle, they sent me a green five-string fiddle instead of the red or black four-string fiddle I ordered. I returned it, but they were temporarily out of electric fiddles, so my replacement came only about a week ago—and I love it.

Why do I like it so much? It has a regular jack to connect it with a normal amplifier, but it also has a small built-in amp powered by a nine-volt battery. I can plug a set of lightweight headphones (included) into it, flick a little switch, put the headphones on, and practice anytime, night or day, without bothering anyone. Unless you have the headphones on, it makes about as much noise as an unplugged solid-body electric guitar. Kitty can watch TV, work on the computer, write letters, or whatever, and I can still practice without fear of being rude.

What's more, it seems to be well built, with an ebony fingerboard, nice tuners, and a comfortable chinrest.

If you are interested in having your own electric fiddle or one of their cases, call Julliard's Music at 712-253-1614 (in Sioux City, Iowa). A recording will ask you to leave your phone number and a message. Give your number, and tell them you want to order something. They will call you back in a couple of days to take the order.

They guy I talked too was extremely nice, and I'm convinced that they are honest, but they are trying to do a low-overhead, volume business with this bare bones approach. He told me, for example, that they make only \$8 on each case they sell.

They no longer advertise through *Fiddler Magazine*. The way I check their inventory out is I go to Ebay, search "electric violin" find one that Julliards offers, bring it up, and then click on the option that lists all of Julliards offerings. They even have a double violin-mandolin case for \$75.

Any questions? Call me at 797-4356. □

Granville Visit

~Darlyne Kent

Saturday, October 1, a small group represented the Nashville Old Time String Band Association by playing music for a fall festival held in Granville.

Granville is located northeast of the Carthage area on the banks of the Cumberland River.

Originally developed as a riverboat stop, the town has retained much of its small-community charm. Several of the buildings are still used today as antique stores, and museums. □

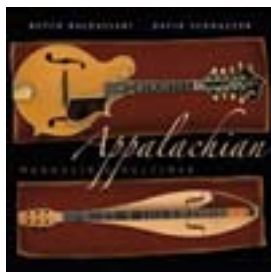
CD Review:

Appalachian Mandolin and Dulcimer

~Ed Gregory

Butch Baldassari – mandolins

David Schnauffer - dulcimers



If you are a fan of acoustic traditional music, those two names alone ought to be enough to send you searching for this new release.

Disclaimer: I'm Butch's new Webmaster. But my fan status began several years ago after I followed a friend's advice and let Butch's superbly clean mandolin be my guide in the realm of picking old-time on the mando.

My awe at what David Schnauffer can do with dulcimers took hold when he took the stage several years ago to open the Blair School of Music's then-brand new auditorium.

So I had high expectations of this CD even before it was released. Baldassari and Schnauffer get an A+ for exceeding all of my hopes. I lost a good part of an afternoon, but I mean that in a good way.

The album is structured a bit like the great *Tone Poems* project by Tony Rice and David Grisman where each master of his own instrument played a variety of different models to get the best acoustic marriage for each tune. In this new CD, as in *Tone Poems*, the matches were well made.

I went first to the tunes I know a bit on either mandolin or fiddle: June Apple was fresh and

crisp, Wayfaring Stranger had a familiar strangeness presented on an octave mandolin and bowed Tennessee music box circa 1870. Flop-eared Mule was spunky, and Cold Frosty Morning has never sounded so much like it's title.

Other tunes on this CD include Ground Hog, Muddy Roads, Tater Patch, Black Mountain Rag, Drunken Hiccups, Wolves-a-Howling, Wild Rose of the Mountain, Cheep Mountain, and Pretty Saro.

It's a musical conversation, with the Italian-born mandolin and Germanic dulcimer intimately sharing tales of life in Appalachia.

The tunes are all masterfully performed and blended, but with a clarity that makes them approachable. This is certainly the kind of music I want to play.

□

Please Contribute to Your Newsletter!

If you have information you want to submit, or if you have ideas for improving the news-letter, contact Ed Gregory.

If you are willing to review a CD or a book, contact Ed Gregory.

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

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), we need the information desperately. *Please help us keep our old-time community informed.*

You can reach Ed at:

edgregory@nashvilleoldtime.org

or

615-889-5566

or

Ed Gregory

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Playing Out:

Who is Playing Where When

~Ed Gregory

October 8 – Small-Time String Band will be performing in the historic restored site at Cumberland Furnace, just past Charlotte, TN.

October 22 – Blue Creek Ramblers, featuring Rebekah Weiler on banjo, perform at the Cannonsburgh Harvest Days and Fiber Festival at Fall Creek Falls.