

BLUEGRASS BREAKDOWN

VOLUME 5 Number 3

MAY-JUNE 1979



GRASS VALLEY 1979

EMPTY NOW BUT WAIT 'TIL JUNE 15!

California Bluegrass Association

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Special thanks to all our contributors. Photo of Rosebud's by Gene Tortora. Most Artwork by Lars except for Fiddle Strap ad by Barbara Mendelsohn.

Please send all manuscripts, photos, artwork, tabs, etc., etc., to Steve...all contributions of Foster's Lager go to Lars.

THIS N' THAT

I received the April '79 issue of Friends of Mtn Music, only to find that it is the last one. Editor Judy Sult said that FoMM was aquired by Tyner's Golden West Bluegrass magazine, mainly for financial reasons. I really enjoyed that little magazine, and I'm sure it will be missed.

* * *

CEDAR HILL has decided to break up. Their last gig was at Rosebud's last month. Five good musicians are now available for other bands, if you want to consider the brighter side of things.

* * *

Rich Wilbur has left OLD FRIENDS, the guitar spot being temporarily filled by Dave Thompson of HIGH COUNTRY.

* * *

HIGH COUNTRY has finished work on an upcoming record, and should be out before the next issue of the BGBD goes to press. Congratulations!

* * *

Congratulations to Valerie Mendel of ANY OLD TIME. She just got a new baby boy, Ethan. Barbara Montoro has been playing bass with the band in Valerie's absence.

* * *

A couple of events came to my attention too late to be put anywhere else, so here they are:

On May 3 there will be a mini-folk festival in the Wheeler Auditorium at UC Berkeley. Tickets will be available from BASS, and information from the SF Folk Music Center, 415/441-8910. The festival will feature Wade and Julia Mainer & Mainer's Mountaineers, Tracy And Eloise Schwartz, The Golden Eagles, and Queen Ida.

Hartnell College in Salinas is presenting "The Robber Bridegroom," a musical using banjo, guitar, mandolin, two fiddles, and bass. Tony Trishka appeared in this musical on the east coast, and should be interesting, as it presents bluegrass in a different context. There are some original tunes, but I'm told that a lot of it is based on old time fiddle tunes. The shows will be May 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, and 12, beginning at 8 pm except Sunday May 6, which is at 2:00.

Bill White joined Norton Buffalo, Bonnie Raitt, and Joan Baez at the anti-nuke rally in San Francisco. He was also on TV recently. Glad to see that Bill is bringing the music to ever-wider audiences!

* * *

Sally Van Meter has left the GOOD OL' PERSONS to return to Chico and wrap herself around her pedal steel guitar. Her banjo and dobro talents with the PERSONS will be truly missed.

* * *

Eric Thompson and Susie Rothfield (OLD FRIENDS and ANY OLD TIME) are moving to upstate New York to join forces with Mac Benford of HIGHWOODS STRING BAND fame. We wish both of them the best of luck. You can see what a beardless Eric looks like, along with a clean cut David Grisman in the April issue of Pickin'.

* * *

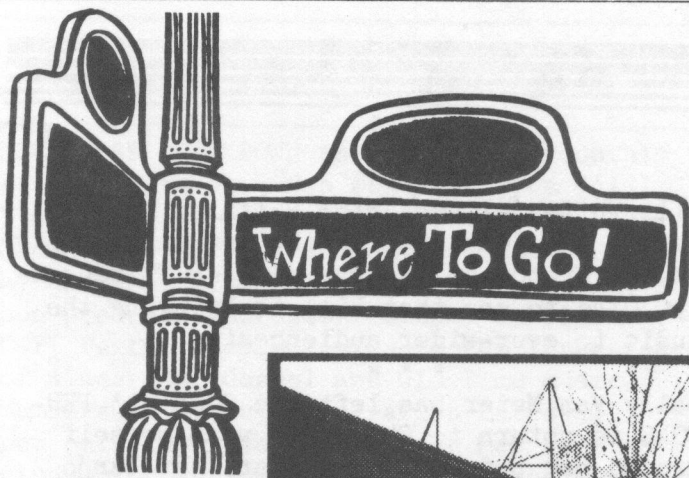
Alan and Monte Hendricks of SOUTH LOOMIS QUICKSTEP got a real nice write up in the April issue of Pickin' on their banjo-making operation. Should start them on the way to fame and fortune.

* * *

Rick Shubb told me the following anecdote, which he claims is true because he saw it: Rick was at a bluegrass festival in 1966 that feature, among other performers, BILL MONROE & THE BLUEGRASS BOYS. Bill was on stage when he invited Rudy Lyle, ex-Bluegrass Boy, to come up and play Rawhide (which Rudy had recorded with Bill). Rudy didn't have a banjo, since he had been out of circulation for awhile, so he had to borrow one. Unfortunately, he borrowed Don Reno's banjo. Rudy put on a capo at the 5th fret to play in C, but since Reno doesn't use a capo, there wasn't a 5th string capo. Somehow, they managed to get Carlton Haney to come up and hold his first finger on the 5th string, and so become a human capo! And that's just how Rudy was able to play his break to Rawhide (Believe it or not!).

* * *

DONE GONE is nearing completion of a soon to be released record. Be sure to buy as many copies of the record as you can.



by Laurie
Lewis

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Rosebud's Ice Cream Parlor & Tavern, in historic downtown Benicia, has been featuring "traditional and contemporary acoustic music" on a regular basis since late in 1977. Since the summer of 1978, when HIGH COUNTRY began playing there once a week, weekends have been mostly given over to bluegrass music.

Rosebud's is managed by Bob Polito and booked by Phyllis Nurot, a brother - sister team. Bob works behind the counter making delicious sandwiches, quesadillas, espresso, various ice cream concoctions, and serving a wide variety of imported and domestic beers. The entire menu is available up through the first set of music, then your choices are limited, Bob says, "depending on my mood." Usually, you're safe ordering beer or ice cream.

While Rosebud's is frequently packed on weekends for the bluegrass bands, Bob is quick to point out that the majority of the business is really done in the daytime. He sees Rosebud's as a necessary community center, a gathering place for Benicians. Bob insists he is no businessman. His original reason for taking over Rosebud's was to "make a cultural extension of traditional music into outlying areas" and to create a community center. I would say he has accomplished both aims.

Rosebud's Ice Cream Parlor & Tavern

through the tourist trade. There are 22 antique shops, nearly all of them lining 1st Street, where Rosebud's is located. It would be a nice place to spend a summer day - picnic, visit the historic sites, cruise the avenue, and listen to some music at night over a beer float or two.

Now for the specs. The Rosebuds' sound system, which was generously loaned by Frank Wheeler of Fairfield, has six microphone inputs and a monitor speaker. The club only has 3 good quality microphones and stands, on loan from Bill White, so bands wishing more should bring their own. There is also a fan to cool the performers on the sultry summer nights, so "every band is guaranteed at least one fan nightly." The club holds approximately 100 people, and the weekend cover charge is usually \$2.50 per person. Eighty percent of the door goes to the band, and twenty percent goes to Phyllis for advertising and booking expenses. I asked her how bands would go about getting booked at Rosebud's. "They call me up and either talk me into it or not," she said, adding that a tape was always helpful. She and Bob collaborate on who to book. For interested bands, Phyllis can be contacted through Rosebud's.

Music begins at 9:00 on Friday and Saturday. Thursdays in May will be an "open mike night," and beginning in June, BACK UP AND PUSH, a string swing band, will be playing every Thursday. The cover charge for that night will be a bargain at \$1.50 or 1 1/2 gallons of gas.

Phyllis sends out a calendar on a bi-monthly basis. If you're interested in getting on the mailing list, there is a sign-up sheet at the door, or you could call or drop them a postcard with your name and address.

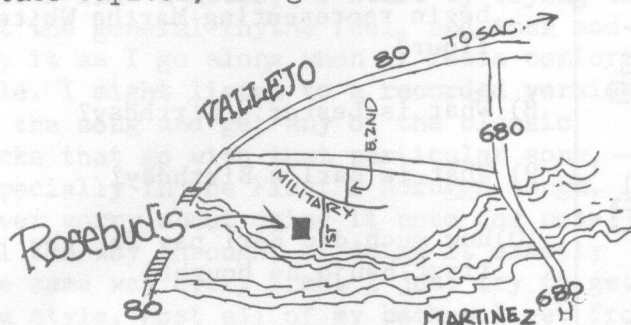
Saturday, May 12th, there will be a benefit for Rosebud's featuring a night of music with Bill White and DONE GONE. All proceeds

will go to Rosebud's. This is definitely a club worth supporting, and a fine place to listen to your favorite music. You can find a complete schedule elsewhere in this issue. See you there!

(If you have any suggestions for clubs that you would like to see an article on, send them to Laurie - her address is listed with the other CBA directors.)

The Rosebud's atmosphere is definitely family-oriented. Most nights one can find Phyllis' two kids curled up asleep on the pool table (though how anyone can sleep through Vern Williams' singing is beyond me). The place is decorated with many antiques, and an enormous moose head dominates one wall. There is a table directly beneath it for the brave (or foolhardy) to sit at.

Something should be said about the town of Benicia. It's basically a sleepy river town with the boast of being the oldest state capitol, and gets most of its income



ROSEBUD'S SCHEDULE

MAY

- 4 -ANY OLD TIME, old time music
 - 5 -THE VERN WILLIAMS BAND, bluegrass
 - 11 -BACK UP AND PUSH, string swing
 - 12 -BILL WHITE & DONE GONE, bluegrass
(benefit concert for Rosebud's)
 - 18 -DOUG STROBEL & JOE MILLER, folk, blues
 - 19 -HIGH COUNTRY, bluegrass
 - 25 -DAROL ANGER CELLO QUARTET, modern jazz
 - 26 -OAKUM, bluegrass and swing
- OPEN MIKE ON THURSDAYS: 3,10,17,24

JUNE

- 2 -SHUBB-WILSON TRIO, bluegrass-jazz
 - 8 -LENNIE ANDERSON & FAITH PETRIC, folk
 - 14 -DAROL ANGER, TONY RICE, TODD PHILLIPS,
& MIKE MARSHALL
- THURSDAYS: BACK UP AND PUSH

Hotflashes

KATHY TYLER: NEW CBA DIRECTOR

Upon moving to Southern California to work for Dick Tyner on the GOLDEN WEST BLUEGRASS magazine, Burney Garelick resigned as a director of the CBA. At the March board meeting, the directors chose Kathy Tyler, the treasurer of the association, to fill the vacant seat. Kathy, along with her husband Toby and niece Kathy Schoggins, can be found at nearly all CBA events, hard at work at the door or behind the scenes helping everything to run smoothly. Kathy has been involved in the CBA, giving freely of her time and talents, for almost as long as the CBA has existed. She would welcome any comments or suggestions you may have for the board.

South Loomis Quickstep will have their first record coming out June 1st. or thereabouts. Will be on the Grass Mountain label out of Texas. Tiny Moore and Mark O'Conner will be doing the fiddling. Look for it in your local Bluegrass record store.

Kathy Kallick & Laurie Lewis will be teaming up for an evening of hot duet singing at the Freight & Salvage on Wednesday, May 16th. They will be joined by Tom Bekeney, Steve Pottier (a rare guitar playing appearance), Gene Tortora and Beth Weil.

RENEWAL

Check your membership card, or look in the lower right-hand corner of your BLUEGRASS BREAKDOWN address label to determine when your current membership expires. a 5/79 would mean that your membership is good up through May '79 and that you should renew before June 1st. There is a 30 day grace period before you are placed in the Inactive File. Of course, you may rejoin at any time, but it's easier for our records if you renew before you have expired (your membership that is). And thanks for your support!

Jacky Tar

Tablature of the month by
JOHN BLASQUEZ

Harmony

J.B.

John Blasquez of SPUR OF THE MOMENT contributed this tablature. John writes, "Jacky Tar is probably an old Irish sea song. It has a distinctive nautical feeling. In the old days a sailor was often called 'tar.'"

Besides playing in his band, John teaches

Bluegrass Trivia Quiz

FLATT & SCRUGGS:

- 1) What years did Flatt & Scruggs record with Bill Monroe?
- 2) What year did they start their own band?
- 3) When did they break up?
- 4) What was their first country hit?
- 5) Who were the original Foggy Mountain Boys?
- 6) Before playing guitar and singing lead for Bill Monroe, Lester played _____ and sang _____ with Charlie Monroe.
- 7) What year did Flatt & Scruggs begin representing Martha White flour?
- 8) What is Lester's Birthday?
- 9) What is Earl's Birthday?
- 10) How much did Earl pay for the first banjo he bought?
- 11) In October, 1955, Earl was in an auto accident and was unable to play for a period of time. What was the name of the banjo player who took Earl's place?

See Page 10

fiddle, mandolin and guitar fingerpicking in Walnut Creek. He says that if anyone would like to contribute a tune that is played on one of these instruments, he would be glad to write it out from their playing. If you have any contributions, send them to the CBA PO Box for consideration. Thanks!

Playing Backup In A Bluegrass Band

BACK-UP BANJO



In this second article about bluegrass backup, I asked several banjo players to discuss their thoughts on the subject. I found their comments very informative, and really enjoyed the interviews. Here is what they had to say:

LARRY COHEA

(Larry plays banjo for HIGH COUNTRY.)

"First of all, I try to listen to the rhythm of a song - certain songs will have a unique feel that I try to emphasize. For example, a song might have a medium tempo with a bouncy feel, or it might be a slow song that you would use a teardrop backup on (playing on 2 strings, using chord positions like a dobro). I start by trying to get the general rhythm feel, and then modify it as I go along when it feels comfortable. I might listen to a recorded version of the song and get any of the classic licks that go with that particular song, especially in the Flatt & Scruggs songs. I never worry about doing it note for note all the way through, or doing it exactly the same way every time. I just try to get the style. Most all of my backup I get from the 1950's Flatt & Scruggs band. I know all the cliches and use them a lot because I really like them. My main concern is playing in time with good tone. I don't try to make a big statement of my own, but just try to make the band sound good.

"Almost all of my backup is working out of chord positions. I guess most banjo players do, like J.D. or Sonny or Earl. Sonny also goes into more of his own style, but he does use a lot of chord position backup. I try to emphasize the color note - the tonic note of the chord you're in if it's a major chord, or the 6th or 7th if it's not. You get the 6th and 7th by fretting the fifth string with your thumb. Another thing I try to do on medium or slow songs is to bring the volume up between the words of the song and lower it when the words are being sung. On faster songs this is harder to do, so I try to play rolls, and try to vary the rolls to make it interesting.

"Sometimes I play a walking backup between chord positions using rolls or vamps by playing a run on one string, and play a chord position of each note (ed. note: the famous run down the neck in Dixie Breakdown would be an example of this idea). Another thing I do is to use the cliché licks, but start them at different times, even on a different chord, and run it through the chord change. Actually, if you just pick up a few of the things to do in the backup out of chord positions, it will go a long way."

ROBBIE MACDONALD

(Robbie is the banjo player for the NEW TONTO BASIN BOYS, and has been playing and teaching in the Bay Area for many years.)

"I think the most important thing is to develop the ability to listen to the rest of the musicians. You have to develop a subjective way of complimenting the other members of the band. By this I mean that what you play is completely dependent upon what the others are playing, and you try to make your combined individual efforts create an overall effect.

"If I had to limit this description to one word, texture would be the word I would use. Texture is the layering of tones and rhythms. You need to discern, for example, whether to add a rhythmic or a harmonic effect, and that all depends on what the other musicians are doing. Rolls give you one kind of rhythmic sound - sort of a tumbling, rolling effect, whereas pinches would be more of a percussive sound. Scruggs is a master of managing to play a harmony line behind the lead. I guess what I'm trying to say is that you need to develop an instinct for supplying the needed qualities in the band sound. The band should create a broad range of tones, and texturing is the layering of tones. It's also thinking in terms of sounds rather than notes---rolls, long slides, pinches. Slides give a slinky texture - Scruggs used forward and backward slides masterfully for a swoopy or breathless effect, where lots of notes might have made the sound more machine-gun like.

"I think it's very important that you don't play melody behind the melody. You can follow the general line of the melody with a counter-melody, using some of the harmony notes. This can apply rhythmically also - listen to the lead rhythm and then supply a counter rhythm or a continuation rhythm. This is texturing by adding sub-layers of rhythmic and harmonic backup.

"Tone quality is important in backup (as it is in lead), but it is one of the most underrated aspects of playing. The banjo is inherently notey, and a common mistake of beginning banjo players is to play too many notes. The thing about the playing of great banjo players like J.D Crowe, Earl Scruggs, and Sonny Osborne is that they get such fat notes, Drawing as much tone as possible out of their instrument. This gives it more of a relaxed quality. I think it's important for lead and backup to achieve a maximum fat tone. With a fat tone, you need fewer notes to fill in to make your playing sound complete. Dynamic slides use the full effect of few notes and lots of tone to achieve this. Picking the strings close to the neck on these slides helps with the sustain.

"Backup is often pieces and fragments (as opposed to lead playing) to avoid cluttering the overall band sound. It's definitely a mistake to put lead thinking into backup. The idea is to fit your notes around the lead - too much will interfere, too little leaves holes. Listen for holes to fill and try not to duplicate the other fills. You really have to develop a bit of humility - each situation is different and you develop this subjective, moment-to-moment complimenting of the other musicians to achieve a compounding effect for the band sound. You sort of build a sound by fitting your notes around or between the other notes. The best advice is to remember that less is required than you might think. Pinches are good - in the right place they augment the rhythm, and they are very emphatic, especially in the pause right after a vocal. If you play a lower volume backup on the vocal and increase it for the breaks, the dynamics creates an exciting transition, a surge. Once the break is going, back off to let the lead take its course. It's really important to emphasize the transitions, and the beginning and ending of the tune also. When you end, make it clear. Usually you bring

the volume up at the end, and you could try to play a different inversion of the final chord than what the others end on in order to make a fuller sound - a more complete final chord.

"I would like to emphasize the point of subjectivity. It all depends upon what's going on around you as you are playing."

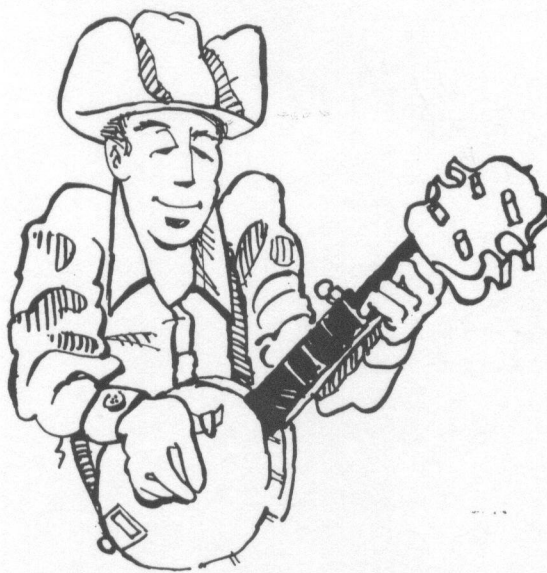
JOHN HICKMAN

(John has played with CORN BRED and SUNDANCE, and has a solo album with Rounder.)

As the banjo player, I try to listen to the other musicians in the group I'm playing with for a "Band sound". The best band is the one that has five (or however many) musicians working to produce a whole, rather than "every man for himself" with each one trying to show how much he knows.

I listen for holes; maybe at the end of a vocal line or in transition from vocal to instrumental break. These are chances to add sound; to enhance the sound. The banjo is bright and percussive by nature so you have to be careful not to over power what's in front.

While the fiddle is in the lead if it's mostly playing notes I'll try to chunk; one method is to chord in the same position as the fiddle. For instance, if the fiddle is noting in the second position of that chord, I'll go to the second position of the chord on the banjo, and so on. If it is doing long bow double stops or noting on an up-tempo number I like to roll in the first position.



When the mandolin is in the lead I usually resort to simple chunking to fill in what the mandolin would be doing if it were chunking rhythm. Occasionally, if the mandolin is playing slow tremolo or fast tremolo I'll switch to a roll pattern.

If you're just getting started at working on backup listen to Earl Scruggs. The Mercury period before the dobro is the best but anything up to about 62 or 63 is good. Earl is the one who wrote the book on backup banjo. J.D. Crowe and Sonny Osborne each have over 50 hours of Earl on tape that they study constantly.

The two most important aspects of backup (or any aspect of the music) are timing and taste. Get your timing down first. If it's wrong there's little point in playing. Taste comes later, with experience. Three or four notes played just right at the right time can be much more effective and more impressive than a barrage of fireworks.

Listen to a lot of banjo players; watch them work. Then go back and listen to Scruggs again.

RICK SHUBB

(Rick has played with many bluegrass bands and has been playing banjo for over 20 years. He currently plays in the SHUBB-WILSON TRIO. I asked Rick about playing backup in a bluegrass context.)

"First we should talk generally about some qualities which are essential in playing music with other people. Sensitivity..patience..restraint..responsiveness..flexibility..qualities which, I'm sorry to say, don't always seem to be associated with banjo playing these days. But a good musician will exercise all of these in relating to other musicians. It's most important to keep listening and add just those facets of your own style which will make the most satisfying overall sound. Relax, don't create a pressure to urgently prove yourself, but really get into feeling the pulse of the rhythm and the blend of tones. Don't think too hard about licks and rolls and fingerings and patterns..if you're ready to play with people, those mechanical considerations should be filed away in the back of your brain by now, not up front distracting you from your real job..listening to exactly what's happening now.

"Bluegrass is a style that is easily reduced to formulas and rules. They become the guidelines which define the style, and when you're learning to play they must be thoroughly studied and absorbed. There's no substitute for that phase of learning, it's the foundation you build on.. but it's not the end. Listen to Earl Scruggs about 18 hours a day. The old stuff. But listen deeper than just his notes. Try to imagine how his hands must have felt when he was producing that TONE. Imagine you're hearing Lester Flatt sing "Baby Blue Eyes" for the first time, and you have to decide how it goes on the banjo. No record to listen to, no tablature. Just you and Lester. Scared? Earl wasn't, even though he was playing a style nobody else played. Do you see what I'm getting at? Scruggs is so much more than his licks. Learn as many of them as you want to, but realize that what you're after is what's behind them.. the integrity of style, the continuity, that powerful, subtle rhythm..what genius. Listen through his hands all the way to his soul, because that's what he's really offering. Then move on. because you can't BE him. But if you can be you as solidly as he is him, you'll have really learned the lesson.

"Help! Keep me on the subject. You did ask about backup, right? It's just that it's hard to isolate that particular aspect of playing when it is so dependant on an overall musical attitude. Listen to yourself as a part of the whole group and be willing to create a sound that is a blend of the personalities involved. Don't get caught with your ears at home on the record player and miss reality.

"Much of playing backup has to do with exploring contrasts in texture. It's important to not get tangled up with the lead, so any time you sense that happening, avoid melody notes, but mainly try to emphasize the rhythmical differences between instruments (including the voice). You can usually play a more complex, forceful line behind a fiddle or voice than behind a mandolin or guitar, because there is greater contrast with the longer sustained notes. Some people feel that an upbeat chop always has to be present in a bluegrass band, and while it's usually carried by the mandolin, should be picked up by either the fiddle or the banjo when the mandolin is doing something else. I think it sounds good for that chop to be there often, but not neces- 9

sarily always. For example, when the mandolin begins a break I often find it effective to chop chords for the first few measures so there won't be a jarring shift in rhythm, but then phase into a slightly more elaborate backup over the course of the break. It's most important, of course, to remain supportive and not competitive. Keep paying attention and always be responsive to the lead. That is not to say that backup must be devoid of character, far from it. You don't need to sacrifice your personality to be supportive, just be careful that you are not competing for attention with

the lead. But a lead should not be played oblivious to the backup, either. How many times have I said "keep listening" now? That sounds so obvious that it almost feels stupid to keep saying it, except that people don't always do it. But any time good musicians get together they will, and they'll discover the subtleties of each other's musical personalities, and blend them to form something new. It's one of the greatest pleasures I know about."

Every musician is unique, and to back someone up in a rigid, pre-conceived way would be missing the point.

LIFE FESTIVAL 6/29-7/1

Ruben Sarkesian, violin, **John Sahakian**, oud, **Jerry Ayvasian**, dumbek: Armenian traditional music, for dancing, by noted Fresno recording artists, with wide influence.

Traklska Grupa: Balkan. Hector Bezanis, gaida, Brad Wright, gadulka, Dwight Rowe, on tambura, & Warren Casey, tupan.

Le Camembert: S. French & Sicilian polkas, bourrés, waltzes & tarantellas. **Arrigo d'Albert**, *vielle*, **Robt. Thomas**, cabrette, zampogna, **Will Spires**, fiddle, **Wendy Newell**, accord.

Katarina Burda: Moroccan & Atlas Berber & Sahara Blue People dances taught & performed. Shikatt, guedra, ahouch stylings. May bring **Mustapha Abu Hijab**, Palestinian village musics on double-reed mijwiz, shebabi, ney & argheel.

Lourdes Rodriguez: Fluid gypsy flamenco dancer/teacher in Salinas area. Excellent.

Charlyn Sawyer: San Francisco expert in traditional belly-dance & flamenco forms.

Roberto Zamora: village flamenco singer, dancer & guitarist. Studied with Pepe Rios, & 4 yrs. in Spain; Seville & Morón's old styles.

Solomon, Fred Mejia, Armando Tojaco: Masters at N. African, Middle Eastern & more.....

Addit'l Staff: May include a **Gamelon & A Greek Band** & Armenian dance teacher/artist, **Tom Bosigian** & some '78 people

AMERICAN HERITAGE 7/6-7/8

Cajun Night
Bon Ton Marc's Zydeco Fever Band: Fri. stomp onstage, y'all come dance right after **Les Blank's** film, "Always for Pleasure" of New Orleans back street life at Mardi Gras & S. Louisiana supper feasts at our kitchens.

Mitch Greenhill, Mayne Smith: old-style country & blues to new inventive forms.

Jim Borsdorf, Nancy Bray: Old-Timey String band music with pep & good fun.

Frankie Armstrong, Brian Pearson: From England, powerful ballad-singers in trad. unaccompanied styles, bringing **Jan Somerland**: versatile Swedish recording artist & instrumentalist, to USA.

Old Mother Logo: S. Cal. String band.

Brendan Smith: today's C & W, with his own twisted wit & sharp observations.

Marc Silber: Soulful, eclectic blues guitarist, singer & purveyor of Moose brand strings.

La Flor Perdita: Mexican border music, with Lee Birch, Mary Haas & Marc Poschman.

Dick Holdstock, Clark Branson: Sea-Chantey sing-alongs & gen'l ballads too.

Dave Ricker: lots to trade, of classic string band fiddle & banjo techniques.

Brother Lee Love: Defies description!

ANSWERS TO FLATT & SCRUGGS TRIVIA QUIZ

- 1) 1946 & 1947
- 2) 1948
- 3) January, 1969
- 4) Foggy Mt. Breakdown
- 5) Lester, Earl, Howard Watts (Cedric Rainwater), and Jim Shumate.
- 6) Mandolin, tenor
- 7) 1952
- 8) June 19, 1914
- 9) January 6, 1924
- 10) \$10.95
- 11) Donnie Bryant

Suggest sources for reading about Lester and Earl are: Pickin' article on Lester Flatt February, 1979, Bluegrass Unlimited article on Lester Flatt October 1974, and the biographical portion of the Earl Scruggs book on playing the five string banjo.

To place your ad in the BLUEGRASS BREAKDOWN please note the following rates:

Camera-ready copy: \$30/full page 8½ x 11
\$20/half page
\$10/quarter page

Design, layout and/
or nonscreened photo(s): \$40/full page
\$25/half page
\$15/quarter page

Classified ads: \$2.00
up to and including
3 column lines; 50¢
per line thereafter.

OLD TIME MUSIC

Hosted by KATE BRISLIN

SWEET'S MILL FESTIVALS 1979
(June 29-July 1, July 6-8)

Folk Music & Dance in the Woods

Every year for the past 15 years or so, Sweet's Mill has been the sight of a summer event that's somewhere between a folk festival and a musician's spiritual retreat. It's comprised of 100 acres of woodland at the 4000 ft. level of the Sierra foothills, several miles east of Fresno. The Sweet family ran a sawmill here in the 20's. The old mill is now a rustic lodge, expanded by the Byxbe family many years ago. This lodge and the nearby lake and outdoor dance/concert stage now form the hub of Sweet's Mill's social and musical activity.

The summer activity takes place over two consecutive weekends and the week in between. The scheduled concerts and workshops happen on the weekends, and hence the majority of people come for these "festivals." The week in between is thus less crowded, and less structured, and takes on the aspects of a lazy summer vacation communal-style. Traditionally, the first weekend is cross-cultural in nature, often with an emphasis on Balkan and Mid-Eastern music and dance. The second weekend is of American music and dance, the emphasis ranging from blues and cajun to bluegrass and old-time (and sometimes all and more! See the schedule of this year's lineup below).

There's reputedly something about the air, something about the place itself that makes going to Sweet's Mill a very unique and special experience, whether one goes just for a weekend or stays during the week as well.

See Page 10



One going to Sweet's Mill should be prepared to camp outdoors, as van campsites are limited. Usually cars and vans are unloaded and parked in a nearby lot. There is swimming in the lake, and lovely areas to explore on hikes, so the necessary shoes, clothes and protective lotions (sun, bugs) should be brought. The weather is warm to hot, cooling in the evening, and in the evening a flashlight comes in very handy (it isn't so good for warmth, but it might help to find one's campsite, or better yet someone else's, which could prove good for warmth). Food! Last but not least. There are several delectable concessions-in-the-woods provided by the regulars to the Mill, and relying on them is encouraged since this is a critical fire area and no open fires or hibachis are allowed. Also, it's nice to not have to bring so much gear and use so much water. But for those who want to do their own cooking anyway, camp-stoves with shovel/rake brought from home are okay. No pets.

This year's Sweet's Mill begins June 29 and ends on July 8. Fees are \$35 per adult per session (three sessions: weekend of 6/29-7/1; folk life campout of 7/2-7/5; weekend of 7/6-7/8). Children 6-11 are 1/2 price; age 5 and under free. Some special rates for families are available. It's best to register in advance, before June 17, as fees are \$40 at the gate. Anyone interested can send names, addresses and phone numbers of everyone in their party, along with fees to: Michael & Rita Byxbe, 1321 Bonita Ave., Berkeley, Ca 94709, and enclose a self addressed stamped legal size envelope. They return a receipt/ticket, map and more information. The weekends officially begin at noon on Fridays, and end at 5 pm on Sundays. The campout in between begins at noon on Monday. Those pre-registered are welcome before noon. Phone (415) 527-3717 for more information.

(The Old Time Music column is hosted by Kate Brislin of ANY OLD TIME. If you have any contributions, suggestions, questions, etc., they would be most welcome. Call (415) 387-9648 or write 133 Lake St., San Francisco, Ca 94118.)



Record Reviews

Hosted By:
SUE SHELASKY

LEROY MACK - "Hound Dog Ramble"
Sierra Briar 6798

As the liner notes and the biography sent with this record stress, LeRoy Mack is best known for his Dobro work with the Kentucky Colonels in the early and mid-60's; this record shows that his playing can more than stand on its own. The material on this first album is mostly country-derived, including two original tunes, LeRoy's Ramble and Buck's Run (not the Buck White tune). However, the material is superceded by how he plays the tunes--he combines full tone with interesting and varied technique, and is fluent in the quasi-banjo style developed by Buck "Josh" Graves (via Earl Scruggs), with soulful and dynamic interpretation of the slower tunes such as Amazing Grace and Poor Willie.

It is worthy to note that LeRoy clearly stands out in this album, even though he is assisted by an impressive list of backup musicians--John Hickman on banjo, and Byron Berline on fiddle are well-known to most bluegrass fans, as is Vince Gill (on guitar) in Southern California. Craig Wilson of Bakersfield is certainly unheralded but one of the best mandolin players on the West Coast. Dave Hatfield on bass rounds out a solid band, presenting a really good instrumental album that will be of interest to many bluegrass listeners and not just students of the Dobro.

Tunes:

Hound Dog Ramble	Home Sweet Home
Fireball Mail	The Year Clayton
Poor Willie	Delaney Died
LeRoy's Ramble	Buck's Run
Silver Thread and	Foggy Mtn. Rock
Golden Needles	Black Mtn. Blues
Joybells	Amazing Grace

(Record review by Lemoore Hanford)

CORN BRED - 'It's Hot"
Sierra Briar 4208

Corn Bred, a well known if intermittent band from the LA area, presents a collection of little-recorded country material in this, their first album. Other than Doc Watson, few bands have tapped the wealth of potential bluegrass material provided by the Delmore Brothers; Corn Bred can be commended for their efforts (4 selections). On the whole, they fit all of their material (even Elton John's Dixie Lilly) into a tasteful tradition-oriented bluegrass sound. The singing is characterized by nicely blended duets and trios, with a somewhat softer sound than many of the archetype southern bands. The band doesn't have the heavy, pulsing sound of a vintage Flatt & Scruggs or Bill Monroe band, but they have their own distinctive sound, a bit on the mellow side. A special treat is the traditional "Cowboy Waltz" with words by one M.Heron; this version which they call "Log Cabin Home in the Sky" is one of the more exceptional pieces of new material to come along in recent years.

All of the musicians give excellent performances, but John Hickman's banjo playing has a dominating presence. His playing stands out on backup as well as lead and follows the melodies and rhythms of the individual songs rather than resorting to lick-oriented abstractions. John Hickman is a modern banjo player who effectively combines traditional and progressive influences into coherent music. Jody Cifra plays straightforward fiddle that emphasizes vocal phrasing, reminiscent of the early bluegrass fiddlers such as Benny Martin and Chubby Wise. Tom Sauber, a veteran LA area bluegrass/old time musician, plays solid mandolin (one of the many instruments he plays) and combines vocals most effectively with the guitar player Daryl Boom. George Hickman, John's brother, has the uncommon 12

ability to fit the electric bass into the acoustic rhythms of a bluegrass band.

"It's Hot" isn't really hot in the strict sense of the word but is one of the better examples of California bluegrass--Corn Bred doesn't resort to many devices that bands seem to thrive on these days (rock & roll, jazz or other musical influences). They do manage to present non-commonplace material in a bluegrass context, which is probably a more demanding feat than using musical gimmicks.

Songs:

Sweet Dixie	Dixie Lilly
God Don't Work the	Mississippi Shores
Night Shift Anymore	Kentucky Mountain
Midnight Train	Preparation G
Soldier and the Lady	Log Cabin Home in
Ookpic	the Sky
You'll be Rewarded	Weary Lonesome Blues
Over There	

(Record review by Selma Fowler)

CORN BRED - "It's Hot"

(We received two reviews of this record, and thought it would be worthwhile to include both of them.)

It seems that the fellows in CORN BRED wanted to have something a little different with their album and I think they have succeeded. From the cover art to the liner notes to song selections and arrangements and even the record itself, they have managed to put together a pretty unique and very entertaining package. (In fact, the record is getting air play on some LA area AM stations(!) and John Hickman told me he feels that the packaging has a lot to do with it.) The cover is not what might ordinarily be expected from a bluegrass band in it's choice of colors and it's design and the overall effect is quite catchy. The liner notes are done in a tongue in cheek manner (which accounts for the lump under Darryl's mustache) and the record is pressed in red vinyl which looks good enough to eat. (In fact, on my copy it is stamped next to the label with the legend "not to be taken orally.")

The liner notes promise us a mixture of traditional and recent songs rather than "reheated bluegrass classics" and this is exactly what we get. In fact, Sweet Dixie

is probably the only offering that really has a bluegrass source. The Delmore Brothers are responsible for four of the songs and they all adapt well to the bluegrass format. The band bats .500 on their "recent" songs; Dixie Lilly is by Elton John and they do a nice job of it including a tasteful "jam" that ends in fade-out. The one clinker on the album (to me) is God Don't Work The Night Shift which is, I guess, a comment on organized religion today. (Anyone around here who watches Channel 30 knows that even if God Don't Work The Night Shift, The Silver Fox sure does!) Instrumentally there is the excellent job on Sweet Dixie. John Hickman is certainly the cleanest and most accomplished banjo player in Southern California. Ookpic starts out slow, which is what I'm used to, and then takes off in the middle. The first listening I was a little disappointed but by the second time around it seemed to be OK. Darryl mentions that they belatedly discovered that Ookpic is an Indian fertility drug and boy, were they sari because it caused them to have a nehru escape from an unwanted pregnancy. (I wasn't supposed to mention this last but nowadays, even in Bluegrass there are no sacred cows.) Lastly is Preparation G which was written by mandolinist Tom Sauber who got the basic melody ideas from his eighty-three year old neighbor Pola Royed who, along with her now deceased brother Hemmie had a Vaudville act in the 20's known as the Royed Twins. It's a great tune but would probably have a little more pizzazz if it was one key higher.

Now for the bad part: the band is no longer together. It's sad too, because they had a good band and were always a treat at the festivals. Thankfully, we have this album to remember them by. Yes Darryl, it's definitely "worth a listen."

(Record review by David Dickey.)

(If you have any suggestions for records to be reviewed, or would like to participate as a record reviewer, contact Sue Shelasky--her address is with the other CBA directors in the front of this issue.)



FIELD GUIDE TO WESTERN BANDS



ANY OLD TIME

- MAY 1 - Bluebird Cafe, Santa Barbara
 - May 2 - Golden West College, Huntington Beach: Nat'l Women's Week
 - May 4 - Whole Earth Festival, Quad, UC Davis, 12:30-3 PM
 - Rosebud's, Benicia, 9 PM
 - May 5 - Paul's Saloon, San Francisco
 - May 12 - The Well, Mendocino
 - May 18-20 - Blitz Festival, Eugene, Ore.
 - May 27 - Santa Barbara Folk Festival
 - June 2 - Moraga Concert Hall, Seabright and Broadway, Santa Cruz. KUSP live radio concert 8 PM.
 - June 15-17 - Grass Valley Bluegrass Festival, Nevada County Fairgrounds
 - June 22 - Freight & Salvage, Berkeley
 - June 23 - Paul's Saloon, San Francisco
 - July 1 - Wild Blue Yonder, Fresno
 - July 13-15 - Vancouver Folk Festival, BC
- For bookings, call 415/653-9061 (East Bay) or 415/387-9648 (San Francisco).

ARKANSAS SHEIKS

For bookings, contact Karana Hattersly-Drayton, 415/791-8476.

BEAR CREEK BOYS

Friday's, once a month at JJ'S Pizza Parlor, Portola Ave., Santa Cruz. (Phone the BEAR CREEK BOYS to find out the exact Friday.)

May 19 - BLUEGRASS JAMBOREE, Morgan Hill

For bookings, contact Joe Kimbro, 408/427-3531.

BILL WHITE

May 12 - Rosebud's, Benicia, 9 PM

Benefit concert for Rosebud's

May 18 - Freight & Salvage, Berkeley

June 15-17 - Grass Valley Bluegrass Festival, Nevada County Fairgrounds

For bookings, contact Bill, 415/530-7192.

BUFFALO BUTTER BAND

For bookings, contact Carmon Brittain, 707/485-0258.

THE CAFFREY FAMILY

For bookings, contact Patty Caffrey, 415/564-1464.

COLBY MOUNTAIN

Every Tuesday - Nellie's Restaurant, 126 W. 2nd St, Chico

Every Thursday - Canal Street, Chico

Most every Saturday - Old Navy Inn, Chico

For Bookings, contact Larry Mitchell, 916/343-6290.

COUNTRY HAM

For bookings, contact Carl Pagter, 415/938-4221.

DONE GONE

Thursdays - Paul's Saloon, San Francisco

Friday's - Red Vest Pizza, El Cerrito

May 10 - Red Vest Pizza

May 11 - Marshall Tavern, Hwy 1, Marshall

May 12 - UC Santa Cruz, 2-5 PM

Rosebud's, Benicia, 9 PM, Benefit for Rosebud's with BILL WHITE.

May 13 & 16 - Paul's Saloon, SF

May 18 - Blitz Festival, Eugene, Oregon

May 20 - Bluegrass Jamboree, Oakdale Park

May 26, 27 - Ghost Mountain Bluegrass Festival, Pollock Pines

June 2 - Freight & Salvage, Berkeley

Corn Roast, Amador Park, Pleasanton, 11-4, public welcome.

June 6 - Chuck's Cellar, 4926 El camino, Los Altos, 9:30 PM

June 9 - Doug Kershaw concert, Lido Mansion, Courtland, 3 PM

June 16-18 - Grass Valley Bluegrass Festival, Nevada County Fairgrounds

For bookings, contact Max Berueffy, 415/383-1736.



EASY MONEY

For bookings, contact Lachlan, 415/325-1685 or 415/326-6200, x3815.

EASY PICKIN'

For bookings, contact Paul Blackwell, 916/474-3255.

FIRE ON THE MOUNTAIN

For bookings, contact Susan Charnett, 916/265-6324 or 916/265-4258.

FOGGY MOUNTAIN CLOGGERS

June 16-18 - Grass Valley Bluegrass Festival, Nevada County Fairgrounds.
For bookings, information and clogging lessons, contact Franchion Mason, 415/828-9016.

FRANK WAKEFIELD

For bookings, contact Frank, 415/655-8639.

FRESH PICKED

For bookings, contact Joyce Hennessey, 415/526-5027, or John Kasley, 758-0872.

GLORYLAND

For bookings, contact The Storehouse, 565 Howe Av, Sacramento, 95825
916/920-5606.

GOOD OL' PERSONS

every Thursday - Red Vest Pizza, El Cerrito, 8-11 PM
every Sunday - Paul's Saloon, SF
June 16-18 - Grass Valley Bluegrass Festival, Nevada County Fairgrounds
For bookings, contact Kathy Kallick, 415/474-5368 or Paul Shelasky, 415/892-1265.

HIGH COUNTRY

every Wednesday and Friday - Paul's Saloon, San Francisco
every Saturday - Red Vest Pizza, El Cerrito, 9-12 PM
June 16-18 - Grass Valley Bluegrass Festival, Nevada County Fairgrounds
May 19 - Rosebud's, Benicia
For bookings, contact Butch Waller, 415/776-6713.

JAY QUESENBERRY & THE PRIDE OF KENTUCKY

June 16-18 - Grass Valley Bluegrass Festival, Nevada County Fairgrounds
For bookings, contact Jay, 408/227-2819.

JIM ROBINSON

Trinity River Inn, Big Flat. Hwy 299 between Eureka and Redding.
For bookings, contact Jim, 916/623-6354.

THE LEATHERMAN BOYS

For bookings, contact Mike or John, 408/268-6984.

THE HIGH WINDOW BOYS

For bookings, contact Walden Dahl, 714/989-8294.

LOST HIGHWAY

For bookings, contact David Dickey, 714/888-9066.

MINDIGO STRING BAND

every Sunday - The Bucket, Palo Alto
For bookings, contact Jerry Hagelstein, 415/747-0812 or Michelle LeComte, 415/747-0876.

NEW TONTO BASIN BOYS

May 26, 27 - Ghost Mountain Bluegrass Festival, Pollock Pines
June 15-17 - Ghost Mountain Bluegrass Festival, Nevada County Fairgrounds
For bookings, contact Joe Zumwalt, 415/967-4306.

OAKUM

May 26 - Rosebud's, Benicia
May 30 - Freight & Salvage, Berkeley
June 15-17 - Grass Valley Bluegrass Festival, Nevada County Fairgrounds
For bookings, contact Al, 415/548-3111.

OLD FRIENDS

every Tuesday - Paul's Saloon, SF
For bookings, contact Gene Tortora, 415/981-4396, or Laurie Lewis, 924-7156.

OVERLOOK MOUNTAIN BOYS

May 19, 20 - Bluegrass Jamboree, Morgan Hill, at Oakdale Park.
May 26, 27 - Ghost Mountain Bluegrass Festival, Pollock Pines
June 15-17 - Grass Valley Bluegrass Festival, Nevada County Fairgrounds
For bookings, contact Jack Sadler, 408/354-9359.

PICKIN' AND GRINNIN'

Thursdays - Mainstreet Tavern, Salinas
For bookings, contact Eric Liners, 408/449-3745 or Gary Harrington, 663-5226.

RAY PARK

May 26,27 - Ghost Mountain Bluegrass Festival, Pollock Pines.
For bookings, contact Ray Park, 2815 Morrene Dr, Placerville, Ca 95667.

RIVER CITY RAMBLERS

May 6 - Stockton Mini-Festival, Stockton Rod & Gun Club (see details in this issue!)
For booking, contact Cathy Del Chiaro, 916/457-0640 or 457-5755.

SAWTOOTH MOUNTAIN BOYS

For bookings, contact Steve Waller, 503/838-4095.

SHUBB-WILSON TRIO

May 18-20 - Blitz Festival, Eugene, Ore.
May 26 - Freight & Salvage, Berkeley
June 2 - Rosebud's, Benicia
For bookings, contact Rick Shubb, 415/526-2995.

SIERRA MOUNTAIN BOYS

For bookings, contact Leonard Johnson, 1140 Bennet Ct, Fremont, 94536.

SOUTH LOOMIS QUICKSTEP

May 6 - CBA Festival - Stockton Rod & Gun Club, 1 PM
May 12 - Reno
May 16 & 18 Bitter Creek Tavern, 9-1
May 19 - Sodbuster's Ball - Marysville
3 to 7 PM...Bitter Creek Tavern,
9 to 1
May 28 to June 9 - Deadwood, South Dakota - Dakota Territory Saloon
June 15, 16, 17 - Grass Valley
June 18 to 23 - Weiser Idaho
June 30, July 1 - After the Gold Rush, Arnold, Calif.
Aug 3 - 4 - Ghost Mountain Ranch

SPUR OF THE MOMENT STRING BAND

Friday & Saturday - Pizza Machine, corner of Contra Costa and Concord Blvd, Pleasant Hill, 7:30 - 10:30 PM
For bookings, contact John Blasquez, 415/935-9295.

THURSTON'S BLUEGRASS BAND

Me 'n Ed's Pizza, Hanford
For bookings, contact Gordon Thurston, 209/935-0382.

A TOUCH OF GRASS

every Friday - Danville Hotel, Danville
May 10 - Chuck's Cellar, Los Altos
May 6 - Sunset Magazine Camper Show, Menlo Park
May 19,20 - Bluegrass Jamboree, Morgan Hill, at Oakdale Park
For bookings, contact Bob Lawrence, 415/328-2130.

TWO DOLLAR BILL

For bookings, contact Al McQueary, 408/263-0843.

THE VERN WILLIAMS BAND

May 5 - Rosebud's, Benicia
May 26,27 - Ghost Mountain Bluegrass Festival, Pollock Pines.
For bookings, contact Vern, 209/772-1357.



2nd Annual
GHOST MOUNTAIN
BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL

Featuring: THE VERN WILLIAMS BAND *
HERB PEDERSON & RAY PARK * DONE GONE*
OVERLOOK MT. BOYS * BILL WHITE *
NEW TONTO BASIN BOYS * FOGGY MT.
CLOGGERS

Tickets: \$7:50 per day - \$12.50
two days. C.B.A. members with current
cards: \$6:50 per day - \$11.00 two
days.

FOR INFORMATION, CALL: (916)487-9761

Bluegrass Down South

by David Dickey

As winter segues into spring things begin to pick up (what else do you expect) for the bluegrass scene. Festivals, contests, get togethers, celebrations, parades, you name it, they all start to happen.

THE CALICO HULLABALOO was held recently and was quite a success. Among a myriad of activities were bluegrass concerts by DICK TYNER & TRAIN 45, THE HIGH WINDOW BOYS, and BODIE MOUNTAIN EXPRESS.

Coming up (as we go to press) will be the 13th GOLDEN WEST BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL at Norco with DON RENO & THE TENNESSEE CUT-UPS headlining; CALICO SPRING FESTIVAL on Mother's Day weekend; IDYLLWILD INVITATIONAL banjo and fiddle contest the following weekend; JACK RAMSEY'S 4th ANNUAL BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL at Chuck's Hidden Lake, Porterville with MAC WISEMAN headlining, June 2 & 3; and TOPANGA CANYON banjo and fiddle contest in July.

After an absence of almost two years THE PENNY UNIVERSITY has re-opened in a new location in San Bernardino. Over the years it played host to the likes of BILL MONROE & THE BLUEGRASS BOYS, THE NEW LOST CITY RAMBLERS, and such local favorites as POA PRAETENSIS, WILD HICKORY NUTS, HOT OFF THE PRESS, and PAIN IN THE GRASS as well as featuring folk, blues, flamenco, and other forms of "alternative" music. Response has been so good that owner CARL YETZER is already looking for a larger location.

Local banjo whiz CRAIG SMITH is currently touring the east coast in a group fronted by JACK SKINNER, formerly of SUNDANCE. Craig hopes to land a job with a serious east coast band when the tour ends in September. We wish him the best of luck but we'll miss him.

Attention mandolin players: GEOFF STELLING, creator of the STELLING banjo has just recently finished his first mandolin. It is a round hole model and is a nice looking and sounding instrument. Plans are in the

works to produce an f-hole model as well. Geoff welcomes inquiries from interested parties.

THE BOTTOM DOLLAR BLUEGRASS BAND has been wowing audiences in the LA area of late. The group is lead by veteran mandolinist ROSS LANDRY and features the considerable talents of BRANTLEY KEARNS (who needs no introduction to Bay Area fans) on fiddle and Bill Bryson, original bass player for THE BLUEGRASS CARDINALS and author of the truly great song "Girl at the Crossroads Bar" on bass.

If you're going to visit Knott's Berry Farm soon, make sure you go by the wagon circle between shows. You'll hear a tape loop that has a bunch of bluegrass tunes, the best of which are the instrumentals culled from the two albums by HIGH COUNTRY. Their versions of "Sally Ann", "Big Sandy River", and "Little Rabbit" are all on the tape and each gets played a couple of times before the show starts.

REAL HAPPY ENDINGS: In the last column I mentioned the story of VICKY MILLER who had her STELLING banjo stolen at the Norco festival and then the collection that was taken up for her. Well, Vicky now has a new STELLING banjo compliments of all the festival goers and GEOFF STELLING.

UNCLASSIFIED ADS

STRING BASS, plywood. \$300. Good bass for beginner. Tel. 415/924-7156, leave a message for Steve.

JODY STECHER AND RY COODER use THIN MAN STRINGS! Quality at realistic prices: Guitar, Phosphor Bronze \$3.50/set, Bronze \$3.25, Electric \$3, E. Bass \$13, Bass (Spirocore) \$51, Mandolin \$3, Banjo \$2.25, Violin, Dr. Thomastic Ropcore \$12.50, and many more. Tax and postage included; 3,6,&12 set discounts, and single strings too! Free prices, write: Larry White, 433 Adams, Oakland, 94610. Tel. 834-3351.

SPECIAL EVENTS

MAY

- 4-6 5th UCLA FOLK FESTIVAL, Royce Hall
Tickets from UCLA Ticket Office
825-2963 or at mutual agencies.
Traditional music competition May 5:
Write D.K. Wilgus, Folklore and Mythology, UCLA 90024 for more info.
- 4-5 CALIFORNIA STATE OLD TIME FIDDLER'S CHAMPIONSHIP CONTEST, Sonora County Fairgrounds. For more info, contact Ray Ratliff, 5101 53rd Av, Sacramento, 95823.
- 11-13 CALICO SPRING FESTIVAL, Calico Ghost Town (near Barstow). Amateur competition Saturday, Professional contest on Sunday morning. Concert Saturday evening. For more info, call (714) 254-2122 or 383-1912.
- 19-20 IDYLLWILD BLUEGRASS INVITATIONAL, Idyllwild County Park, Idyllwild. Banjo, fiddle, and mandolin contest on Saturday, Bluegrass band contest on Sunday. For more info, contact the park department.
- 18-20 BLITZ BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL, Eugene, Oregon, at the Lane County Fairgrounds. Featuring ANY OLD TIME, SHUBB-WILSON TRIO and more. For more info, contact George Relles, 2021 Kincade, Eugene, Oregon.
- 26-27 2nd ANNUAL GHOST MOUNTAIN BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL, Pollock Pines, featuring the VERN WILLIAMS BAND, RAY PARK and HERB PEDERSON, DONE GONE, FOGGY MTN. CLOGGERS, the NEW TONTO BASIN BOYS, and the OVERLOOK MOUNTAIN BOYS. For more info, call 916/487-9761.
- 19-20 BLUEGRASS JAMBOREE, Oakdale Park on Watsonville Rd, Morgan Hill. Benefit for the DeBolt family, featuring DONE GONE, BEAR CREEK BOYS, TOUCH OF GRASS, LEATHERMAN BOYS, and TUMBLEWEED. Tickets available at the gate: \$5 adult; \$2.50 Senior; \$2 children 12-17. For more info, call (408)779-2429.

- 6 CBA MINI-FESTIVAL - Stockton Rod and Gun Club, featuring SOUTH LOOMIS QUICKSTEP and the RIVER CITY RAMBLERS. Tune up for Grass Valley and join in the pickin'! Sunday 1-6pm
- 27 SANTA BARBARA FOLK FESTIVAL, Montessori Center School. For information, contact Peter Feldman.

JUNE

- 2-3 JACK RAMSEY'S BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL, Chuck's Hidden Lake, Porterville. Featuring MAC WISEMAN (Sun only), PACIFIC-LY BLUEGRASS, LAST CHANCE, LOST HIGHWAY, and more. For more info contact Jack Ramsey, 16425 Ave 352, Visalia 93277. Ph (209) 798-1256.
- 10-17 HUCK FINN JUBILEE, Mojave Narrows Regional Park. For more info, contact Don V. Tucker, 825 E. Third St., San Bernardino 92415. Ph (714) 383-1912.
- 15-17 4th GRASS VALLEY BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL, Nevada County Fairgrounds, Grass Valley. Sponsored by the CBA. Featuring: ANY OLD TIME, DONE GONE, GOOD OL' PER-SONS, HIGH COUNTRY, OAKUM, OVERLOOK MOUNTAIN BOYS, SOUTH LOOMIS QUICKSTEP, DAMASCUS ROAD, FOGGY MTN. CLOGGERS, NEW TONTO BASIN BOYS, PACIFIC-LY BLUEGRASS, TRAIN 45, JAY QUESENBERRY, and BILL WHITE. Complete details in this issue. More questions? Call the CBA Hotline (415) 366-3754.
- 29-30 SWEET'S MILL FESTIVALS 1979. See Kate Brislin's OLD TIME MUSIC column for a description. Advance registration through June 17. For more info, phone (415) 527-3717.

JULY

- 1-8 SWEET'S MILL FESTIVALS 1979. (See above and OLD TIME MUSIC column.)
- 8 19th ANNUAL TOPANGA CANYON BANJO and FIDDLE CONTEST, UCLA Athletic Field, 9:30 am-6:30 pm. For info: (213) 828-4497.

DEADLINE

Please submit copy for ads, articles, gig listings, reviews events, etc. on or (preferably) before the 15th of the month preceding publication. This lead is necessary to allow time for preparation and printing of the BLUEGRASS BREAKDOWN. Mail all contributions that are not directed at particular staff members (eg, if they have their own column they may prefer to get mail directly) to CBA, PO Box 11287, San Francisco, Ca 94101. If you are confused, mail it to that address anyway, and it will be routed to the right people. Please make checks for ads or renewals to the California Bluegrass Association.

THE CALIFORNIA BLUEGRASS ASSOCIATION'S STOCKTON MINI- FESTIVAL

May 6

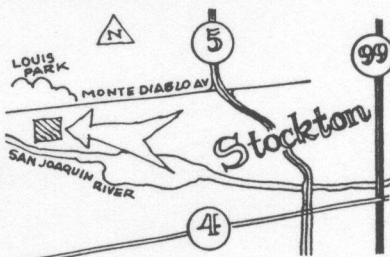
SUNDAY 1 to 6 PM

Featuring

South Loomis River City Ramblers

**Stockton
Rod & Gun
Club**

\$4 · \$2 · \$1 UNDER 13
General Members & SENIOR
CITIZENS



CLUBS

BLACKSTONE HOUSE, 251 N. Blackstone, Fresno. A variety of activities--folk, bluegrass, blues, jazz, astrology and tarot. For information and/or bookings, contact Sue Lyon, 251 N. Blackstone, Fresno, Ca 93701, or call 209/264-1628.

BLUE RIDGE PICKIN' PARLOR, 5521 Reseda Blvd, Tarzana, Ca 91356. Everything for the picker and Monday night jams too! For information call 213/345-1977.

FREIGHT & SALVAGE, 1827 San Pablo Av, Berkeley, Ca 94702. Bluegrass, old timey, jazz, etc. For the current monthly schedule, write or call 415/548-1761.

THE OTHER CAFE, 100 Carl (at Cole St), San Francisco, Ca. A variety of entertainment from bluegrass to comedy. Shows at 9:00 PM. For schedule call 415/681-0748.

PAUL'S SALOON, 3251 Scott St, San Francisco. Bluegrass 7 nights a week, Monday night is jam night. For schedule, call 415/922-2456.

THE FLOWSHARES, Fort Mason (Bldg. 312, Room 3-g), Laguna & Marina, San Francisco. Sunday evening concerts and other special events. Coordinated by the San Francisco Folk Music Club, 415/661-2217

RED VEST PIZZA PARLOR, 10616 San Pablo Av, El Cerrito. GOOD OL' PERSONS on Thursday, DONE GONE on Friday, and HIGH COUNTRY on Saturday. Good pizza and good music!

ROSEBUD'S ICE CREAM PARLOR & TAVERN, 433 First St, Benicia. Bluegrass on Saturday nights, folk and jazz on Thursdays and Fridays. Home of the famous (or infamous) Beer Float - guaranteed to make you sit up and take notice! Phone 707/745-9988.

PJ'S RED VEST PIZZA PARLOR, 1865 Ygnacio Valley Rd, Walnut Creek. Featuring SPUR OF THE MOMENT STRING BAND on Saturdays from 7:30 to 10:30 PM. A new place to hear bluegrass in the east, east bay.

PIZZA MACHINE, corner of Contra Costa and Concord Blvd., Pleasant Hill. Featuring SPUR OF THE MOMENT STRING BAND on Fridays and Saturdays from 7:30 to 10:30 PM.

FORTH ANNUAL
JACK RAMSEY'S
BLUEGRASS
MUSIC FESTIVAL
AT
CHUCK'S HIDDEN LAKE
PORTERVILLE, CALIF.

SATURDAY JUNE 2
SUNDAY JUNE 3

SHOW STARTS
12:30 P.M.
SATURDAY -

2 day advance....\$9.00
At the Gate.....\$10.00
Saturday.....\$5.00
Sunday.....\$5.00
Children under 10 free
with parent. 65 and
older FREE without
parent.

LAST CHANCE

LOST HIGHWAY

THURSTONS BLUEGRASS BAND

TABERNACLE BLUEGRASS

Featuring
Grand'Ole Opry Star

MAC WISEMAN
(Sunday Only)

PLENTY OF FOOD
AND SOFT DRINKS!!

LOTS OF SHADE !!

No alcoholic beverages
Bring blankets, lawn
chairs etc., for seating.
Please leave all pets
at home.

TRAIN 45

HUMBLE CREEK

PACIFIC-LY BLUEGRASS

DAMASCUS ROAD

SURPRISE!



Write to: Jack Ramsey 16425 Ave. 352 Visalia, Ca. 93277

GRASS VALLEY INFO

This information sheet has been prepared to answer some of the questions you may have about the 4th annual Grass Valley bluegrass festival. If you have further questions, or need more information, please feel free to call or write to the address and phone number below. See you at Grass Valley!

DATES: Friday, June 15 thru Sunday, June 17, 1979 and
Friday, September 14 thru Sunday, September 16, 1979
Gates open Friday at 9:00 a.m.
Last show ends Sunday at 6:00 p.m.

LOCATION: 17th Agricultural District Fairgrounds (Nevada County)
Grass Valley, Ca. (see map on reverse)

TICKET INFORMATION:

PRICES:	Fri only	Sat only	Sun only	Fri & Sat	Sat & Sun	3-day at gate	3-day in advance
CBA member adult	\$4	\$7	\$5	\$11	\$11	\$16	\$10
General public adult	4	7	5	11	11	16	14
All children (under 13)	***** F R E E *****						
All seniors (over 64)	***** F R E E *****						

Note that member discounts are available only on 3-day advance tickets

Dogs are discouraged. If you bring a dog, it must be on a leash or confined at all times. A charge of \$4.00 per day will be made for each dog.

Advance tickets:

Send check or money order made payable to California Bluegrass Association, along with quantity, dates, and type of tickets desired (adult/child; member/non-member). Please include your name, address, and telephone number. Mark envelope "GRASS VALLEY TICKETS" and mail to:

Kathy Tyler
36381 Barnard Street
Newark, Ca. 94560
(415) 792-3183

CAMPING: Camping facilities and camper hook-ups are available on a first-come, first-served basis. There is no additional charge for camping. A Friday admission entitles you to camp until 9:00 a.m. Saturday. A Saturday admission entitles you to camp until 9:00 a.m. Sunday.

SEATING: On the ground. Bring blankets, lawn chairs, etc. if you wish.

FACILITIES: Rest rooms with sinks available, plus portable facilities throughout the fairgrounds. No showers. Hotels and motels throughout the area - make reservations early.

FOOD: There will be food concessions available at the festival, or you may prepare your own meals. There are also a number of good eating places close by in Grass Valley and Nevada City. No open campfires are permitted on the fairgrounds. Bring a hibachi or campstove.

Further information about festival rules, scheduled band playing times, and so forth will be available in an official festival brochure to be distributed at the gate.

The ONE & ONLY: the ORIGINAL!!

Gen-U-ine
Dee-Luxe

FIDDLE STRAP

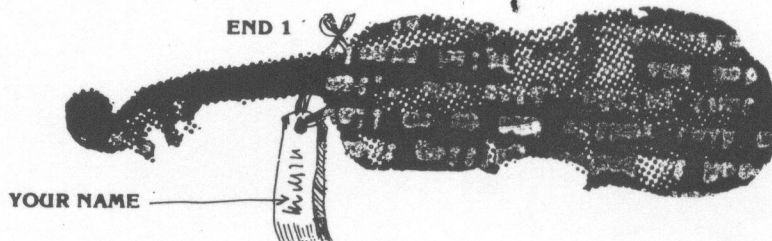
BEWARE OF IMITATIONS

★ends "fiddle fatigue" forever★

PAT. APP.: Barbara Mendelsohn, F.I.D.
Hand-crafted: by John Herrick-Leatherworker extraordinaire

DIRECTIONS FOR USE:

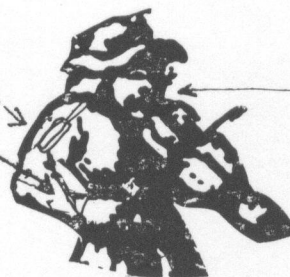
A. Attach End 1 to neck of fiddle.
Tie in attractive bow.



B. Attach End 2 to right wrist,
passing strap around back of neck.

RUBBER BAND ("Sup-hose for the fiddler")

LEATHER THONG (slips around wrist
for wearing comfort.)



STRADIVARIUS SAYS:

"This is the greatest advance in violins since the discovery of the bow."

SVEN ASMUSSEN SAYS:

"This is the greatest advance since jazz"

KENNY BAKER SAYS:

"This is the greatest advance since bluegrass"

YEHUDI MENUHIN SAYS

"This is the hottest thing since Beethoven."

LETTERS!

Dear Mr. Pottier,

As a dues-paying member of the California Bluegrass Association, I am entitled to receive the newsletter. I have not in fact received the current issue if such an issue was indeed printed.

Please send me the March-April BLUEGRASS BREAKDOWN to which I am entitled at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,
Burney Garelick

(Editor's note: Sometimes the postal system is at fault, and sometimes it will be the human errors involved in sending out 500 BREAKDOWN'S, but there will probably be a few people who don't get their copy. If you don't receive your breakdown within two weeks of the first of the month of publication, please write and we will try to straighten it out. No one is ever intentionally left out.)

To Whom It May Concern:

Enclosed you will find a money order for \$7.50 to extend my membership in the CBA for another year.

Congratulations on the March-April issue of the BLUEGRASS BREAKDOWN. To me, this issue was the best issue that has been put out for a long time. It seems that the recent issues before this were too "cute" and not very newsworthy. It is refreshing to see all the informative and interesting articles. I especially enjoyed the rhythm guitar symposium and I hope that you will continue this format, maybe with other instruments as well as approaches to singing and songwriting.

Recently, some friends and I formed a bluegrass band which we call "Pickin' and Grinnin'". The band consists of Eric Liners on Dobro, banjo, mandolin, guitar and vocals; Gary Harrington on guitar and lead vocals; and myself, Doug Clark, on mandolin, guitar and vocals. Presently we are playing on Thursday nights at the Mainstreet Tavern in Salinas. We would appreciate it if you

could include us in your "Field Guide to Western Bands" section of the BLUEGRASS BREAKDOWN. For bookings contact Eric Liners 408/663-5226.

We would like to be considered for future CBA sponsored events so we'll be sending a cassette tape soon.

Bluegrassly yours,
Doug Clark

(Editors note: Swell letters like this don't come cheap, but it was worth every penny! Seriously, we appreciate your comments on the BGBD, and yes, I do plan to continue the articles on backup, focusing on different instruments--it's been worth it to me even if I didn't print the interviews!)

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Robert Scoville

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Corte Madera, California 94925
(415) 924-5922



25% discount on strings to CBA members
"We understand a fiddler's demands"

BY-LAW CHANGE

In February, there was a mail-in ballot for a proposed by-law change that would move the date of the annual membership meeting and election of new CBA directors from February-March to October, beginning in 1979. The results of the election were: 318 yes (for the change), 4 no, 1 neutral. The ballots were all validated for current membership prior to counting the votes. This is well over the quorum needed for a valid election, so the next election/membership meeting will be held in October this year.

RADIO ADDENDA:

Ken Thorley hosts a bluegrass program every Tuesday afternoon from 4:30 to 7:30 on Station KSFS, the SF State station that broadcasts VIA the Viacom cable system in San Francisco

Bluegrass on your wireless

KALW (91.7 FM) San Francisco
Saturday - 5:00 PM, Sunday - 9:00 AM
NPR Folk Festival USA

KDVS (91) FM) Davis
Thursday - 3-5 PM
Bluegrass with Steve Robinson
Saturday - 9- Noon
Bluegrass, Folk, Irish with Steven White

KCSM (91.1 FM) San Mateo
Thursday - 9:00 PM
Folk Festival USA

KFWD (100 FM) Santa Barbara
Sunday - 8:00 AM
Bluegrass Breakdown with Peter Feldman

KKUP (91.5 FM) Cupertino
Saturday - Noon- 3 PM
Far Flung Folk Festival
Saturday - 3-6 PM
Bluegrass with Marty Kemmeries
Sunday - 2- 5 PM
Traditional Folk with Mark Ortiz
Sunday - 9 - Midnight
Cupertino Barndance with Steve Hathaway

KFAT (94.5 FM) Gilroy
Sunday 6 - 9 PM
Bluegrass with Cousin Al Knoth

KLIL (94.6) Ukiah
Saturday - 9 - 10 AM
The Country You Remember w/Bob Brittain

KPFA (94.1 FM) Berkeley
Alternate Fridays - 3 - 5 PM
Pig In A Pen with Ray Edlund
Alternate Sundays - 11 AM - 1 PM
Folk, Blues, and Jazz w/Chris Strachwitz

KRED (1440 AM) Arcata
Saturday - 8 - 12 PM
Bluegrass with The Wildwood Music Co.

KSON (1240 AM) San Diego
Sunday - 9 - Midnight
Wayne Rice Bluegrass Special
Featuring Pacific..ly Bluegrass

KVCR (91.9 FM) San Bernardino
Saturday 6 - Midnight
Bluegrass Alive with Uncle Bill Eason
and Nick haney

BLUEGRASS BREAKDOWN

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