DINIEGRASSO

November/December 1984

Volume 10, Number 6



The Country Gentlemen

Plan now to attend their concerts all over Northern California, but especially at the Montgomery Theater, San Jose Convention Center on November 9. See Page 5 for full details

Board Meeting Summary Meeting of September 16, 1984

A short discussion of the Labor Day Festival was held while the ballots were being counted by Steve Pottier and Mary Gibbons. September loss was estimated at around \$9,000. Publicity was excellent in certain areas and good response came from it.

Ballots being counted, the board was reelected with the exception of Mike Johnson, who did not run. Midge Hobbs and Steve Hogle were the newly elected directors.

Officers of the Association were elected and appointed. (See separate story).

Board M/S/C to forgive any expenses or debt incurred by the CBA, up to \$300 towards the Bill White Benefit.

Country Gentlemen have confirmed and sent in contract for the June Grass Valley Festival. Some discussion was held on possibly having the Lewis Family and Osborne Bros. together for the June 1986 show. Other names discussed included Ralph Stanley, Bill Monroe, J.D. Crow, Tony Rice and others.

Meeting of October 14, 1984

All present except Ray Edlund, Fred Volz and Butch Waller.

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Thanks

Thanks to Glenn Christensen, Ken Donnell, Matt Thompson and a host of others in getting this issue out. Many thanks to my wife for understanding.

Deadlines

Deadline for stories, gigs, etc., for the January/February issue of the *Bluegrass Breakdown* will be on Thursday, December 20. Printers like holidays and we need to get it in early. Dates for January through June should be sent in for the Special Events listing.

California Bluegrass Association

Bluegrass Breakdown is published bimonthly at 735 College Street, Woodland, California, 95695, by the California Bluegrass Association. The CBA is a non-profit organization founded in 1975 and is dedicated to the furtherance of Bluegrass, Old Time, and Gospel music. Membership in the CBA costs \$10.00 a year and includes a subscription to the Bluegrass Breakdown. A spouse's membership may be added for an additional \$2.50 and children between 12-18 for \$1.00 per child. Children 12-18 who wish to vote will have to join for \$10.00. Names and ages are required. Band memberships are available to bands with three or more people for \$5.00 per band member. Subscription to the Bluegrass Breakdown is available only to foreign locations. Make checks payable to California Bluegrass Association and mail along with the membership application located on the inside of the back cover to the address below. Second Class postage is paid in San Francisco, California and at additional mailing offices. Bluegrass Breakdown (USPS 315-350). Postmaster, please send address changes to:

Bluegrass Breakdown P.O. Box 11287 San Francisco, CA 94101-7287

CBA Board meetings are usually held the second Sunday of each month and all members are invited and encouraged to attend. The meetings are held at the CBA office, above the 5th String Music Store, corner of Adeline and Ashby, Berkeley, CA. Directly across the street from the Asbhy BART station.

Board of Directors and Officers of the CBA

Esther Anderson Membership Vice-President 2025 Clement St., Apt. 3 San Francisco, CA 94121

Jim Armentrout Activities Vice-President 1844 48th Avenue San Francisco, CA 94122

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*Steve Hogle

*Bob Lawrence President 1624 Candace Way Los Altos, CA 94022 (415) 962-8341

*Carl Pagter Chairman of the Board, 1809 Meadow Lane Walnut Creek, CA 94595 (415) 938-4221

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*Fred Volz Vice-Chairman of the Board Publicity Chairman 8215 Colonial Drive Stockton, CA 95209 (209) 473-3212

*Butch Waller 721 Rand Avenue, #3 Oakland, CA 94610 (415) 763-2580

*Indicates a member of the Board of Directors

Special Events

- Nov. 2-3 3rd Annual Western Open Fiddling Contest Redding Civic Auditorium. Full information: (916) 547-3064 or 357-3396.
- Nov. 4 Jean Ritchie at Plowshares, Fort Mason Center San Francisco, (415) 441-8910.
- Nov. 10 Green Grass Cloggers will be performing at the NACA Showcase in San Jose, CA. Nov. 17 at Prescott Arizona, Yavati College and Nov. 18 at Yuma, Arizona, Arizona Western College Info: (704) 254-7259, P.O. Box 1861, Asheville, NC
- November 9-10-11 Wickenburg, Arizona Bluegrass Festival. Over \$6,000.00 in cash prizes for fiddlin, mandolin, flatpick guitar, and banjo picking. Com-

Board Meeting Summary

Continued from Page 2

A recount of the ballots was done by Esther Anderson and Mike Johnson. This included ballots counted in September, plus ballots found at Post Office. Results of the September election went unchanged in the new count.

Long discussion of the pros and cons of another Fall

Grass Valley Festival took place.

M/S/C to have a scaled down version of the Labor Day festival in Grass Valley in 1985 and to appoint a committee to locate another location for the festival for the last weekend in August, 1986.

Board voted to help fund additional power at Grass Valley through a loan agreement with the Fairgrounds -

the loan to be deducted from the June rental.

M/S/C to raise the food concession fee to \$125 plus a ticket for each worker for the June festival. Non-food fee would be raised to \$50 plus tickets. September festival concession fees would be the same as the 1984 september fees.

M/S/C to raise June festival ticket prices by \$2.00 per category. This is for June only.

Bill White Benefit was a financial success for Bill. (See

separate story)

M/S/C to budget no more than \$2250 for the Country Gentlemen concert on Nov. 9. Net profit to be divided as follows: 30% to C.G., 20% to SCBS and 50% to CBA. M/S/C to approve the concert and profit split.

Next meeting set for Sunday, November 18, 1984

November Board Meeting

Next meeting of the Board of the CBA will be November 18 at 1:30 p.m. at the office in Berkeley. This is a change from the regular second Sunday due to a holiday on Nov. 11.

petition also in specialty instruments, old-time bands, specialty vocals, bluegrass bands and family bands. Info: Chamber of Commerce, P.O. Drawer CC, Wickenburg, AZ 85358.

- Nov. 12 8th Annual Farewell Reunion Concert of the Bluestein Family with Jean Ritchie. Wesley Methodist Curch, 1343 E. Barstow Ave., Adult -\$6; FFS members \$5. and 12 and under - \$3. Tickets: Archers Music 855 E. Fern, Fresno or mail order: 624 N. Wilson, Fresno 93728
- April 26-28 Golden West Bluegrass semi-annual Bluegrass Festival, Norco. New location. Headlines Jim and Jesse. Keep this date open for a good show.
- June 14-15-16 June Grass Valley Bluegrass Festival Headliner will be The Country Gentlemen. First call for bands is in this issue. The top Bluegrass Festival in California. See next issue for complete information.
- August 30-31, September 1 Labor Day Family Bluegrass Campout at Grass Valley Fairgrounds. Format and lineup will be in the March/April issue of the Breakdown.

CBA looking for bands for 1985 Grass Valley festivals

If you would like to have your band considered for upcoming CBA events (especially June and September 1985 Grass Valley), it would help to send some information on your band, and a cassette tape of about five (5) songs/tunes that would be representative of your material and personnel. The tape does not have to be a high quality studio demo - it could be taped in your living room on a portable cassette recorder (of course, if you have a better quality tape, send that one).

If you have submitted a tape and information sheet in the last year and have not changed personnel and musical style, there is no need to send new material. The ones on file will be heard by the committee.

Deadline for consideration for both 1985 festivals will be December 1, 1984. Bands will be selected and contracts issued by the end of January 1985.

Send information and tape to:

California Bluegrass Association P.O. Box 11287 San Francisco, CA 94101-7287 Attn: Band Selection Committee

Labor Day Grass Valley proves mellow weekend

Labor Day - Bluegrass - good fellowship - Grass Valley - Mellow - terrific pickin' - enjoyable, well-played music.....

I suppose one could go on and on about the Labor Day Festival at Grass Valley. It was a festival like a person dreams about - a headliner, The Country Gazette, that represented the best of the eastern bands, a line-up of almost every top west coast group, the fabulous Rose Maddox, Bill White, the Foggy Mountain Cloggers, and a host of other goodies.

The small crowd, approximately 1000, meant the CBA suffered a financial loss, but it also showed that the audience was made-up of hard-core bluegrass fans - not the beer-drinkin', whoop-it-up, KFAT type pseudo-bluegrass crowd found at some other festivals.

Perhaps because of the travel of a number of bands in June and other commitments, some really outstanding groups were on the bill - Good 'ol Persons, High Country, Eighth Avenue String Band, Arkansas Shieks, Sidesaddle, to name a few. Added to this were a couple of first time bands that pleased the crowd - Bluegrass Monarchs and the new version of Done Gone.

Because of the size of the June festival, I usually don't get much of a chance to hear the bands nor to get the full feel for the festival. Due to the smaller September crowd, I got to hear a number of bands, a lot of pickin' and just enjoyed the whole thing.

Sidesaddle continues to fascinate me. Perhaps it is the flashing lights and other paraphernalia, but I think it is because you can tell they enjoy what they are doing. Not only that, but with every appearance their vocals and music get even better. Who can resist a band that has such a "hot" sponsor - or is it vice-versa, in Taco Joe. I love their feel for just doing things because they want to, not because that is how "bluegrass" must be done.

Just the opposite - I sit in awe everytime Good 'Ol Persons and High Country play. Over the seven years that I have really "watched" Butch Waller and Company, and Kathy Kallick and Friends, you can't help but be impressed with their outstanding playing, singing and following of the "traditional" forms of bluegrass. The neat part for me is that they do this without being imitators, just the opposite - they improvise and improve on it. Both groups continue to write and play outstanding new songs at every festival.

It was a first time to hear the Bluegrass Monarchs and Heartland. Fortunately I was able to hear a little of each and, noting the audience reactions, other enjoyed them as well. While I am not a swing lover, I have several daughters who are. They loved every minute of the antics of Eighth Avenue. They provide a super show for the audience.

Perhaps that is just the thing I noticed about the entire line-up. They all played the audience for everything you could imagine. The audience responded continually.

Rose Maddox gave one of her greatest performances. Backed by Bill White and most of the finest band members at Grass Valley, she held the audience from the first word. Her gospel set was outstanding. Rose gave more of herself this festival than any I have seen her at before. Her vocal

workshop was attended by over 100 people - eager to her every word and song that she did.

The workshops were well attended and many came away with new techniques and understanding about instruments or dancing styles.

I almost forgot my own crazy favorite. While the Arkansas Shieks don't fit the bluegrass mold, I enjoy their varied music and enthusiasm. After all, much of the music they play pre-dates, in form, the old-time and bluegrass music everyone else plays.

For me the nice thing about the festival was the feeling. It is a feeling that I always get at Grass Valley - family. From the moment you are greeted at the gate with a smile and a hello, right through seeing old friends, it is more like a reunion than something new. I frankly look forward to seeing the dedicated bluegrass fans year after year. To hear how things are going, the new family members, job changes, etc., because CBA has become a huge extended family of people who love the best music around.

Well, I am getting a little mushy - but I think you know that for me the Labor Day festival was a great time. For the 1000 or so attending, it was the same. Next year in September it will be a little different, but that is another story.

1985 Labor Day Festival to continue

Reflecting the overwhelming desire of the members at the 1984 Labor Day Festival and those who have written in, the CBA Board voted to hold a 1985 Labor Day show, but to change the format.

Most people feel the Labor Day show has always been a mellow, laid-back, family oriented event. This particularily true this year. Suggestions made by the people at Grass Valley to insure a continued event were to eliminate headliners, use the best West Coast bands, have more workshops and clinics, offer perhaps contests for bands, individual instruments and vocals. Cost savings would also be made in other areas to try to balance or nearly eliminate the loss the show has produced the last few years.

The Board also voted to rename the event to the Labor Day Family Bluegrass Campout. In a further motion, the Board authorized the Labor Day show to move to a new location and date in 1986. The new date would be the weekend prior to the Labor Day weekend.

A committee has been appointed to find a new location for the event, as the Grass Valley site is not available during late August due to the Nevada County Fair. Members of the committee are Don Powell, Steve Hogle and Kathy Tyler. Help is needed from the membership to find a location and to help in the revamping of the Labor Day show. Those interested in helping or having suggestions should contact Don Powell at (916) 662-2906 or 662-5691. You can also send a letter to 735 College Street, Woodland, CA 95695

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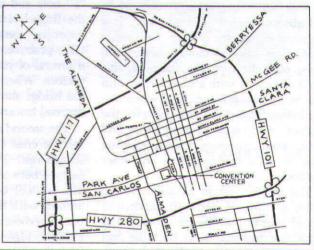
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Traveling Luthier

Repair Workshop:

Fitting Fiddle Bridges

by KEN DONNELL

This is a job which some persons spend several years learning to master, yet in others ways, fitting a bridge can be a simple task. A complete discourse on the subject would require much more space than I have available, so I'm only going to cover the basic theories and most expedient methods by which you can make a new bridge for your instrument.

Bridge blanks are available in several name brands, and can be found at almost every music store. Purchase at least three of the "unfitted" variety (this means there is more wood on the feet than on a "fitted" bridge), so that if you make mistakes in your first attempts, there will be another blank handy. Opinions vary as to whether bridges with or without the ebony inserts sound better, and you may need to experiment in order to determine which best suits your needs.

The first step is to fit the feet to the soundboard (top). Approximately 80% of the energy produced by the strings passes through the bridge before being amplified by the top and back, so a tight fit is essential for the efficient production of volume and tone. Putting on an ebony mute shows how little volume and tone is produced when vibration of the bridge is inhibited. It is imperative that the feet of the bridge make firm and continuous contact (no gaps) with the top. Traditionally, this job is done only with a sharp knife, and can be quickly accomplished when one has had sufficient practice. But, for the layman who doesn't want to spend days, weeks, or even months learning how to fit a bridge, there are other methods.

The most common alternative is to place a piece of 150 grit sandpaper (rough side up) on the soundboard and draw the feet across so that the feet assume the contour of the top. Draw the feet across the sandpaper from one direction at a time, so that a rocking



motion is avoided that would leave the centers of the feet higher than the edges. Be certain that the area of the top where you are working is between the two notches in the center of each "F" hole and in line with the edges of the fingerboard, or else you'll get an improper contour. Even this method takes practice, so don't be discouraged if several of your first attempts are imperfect. When both feet fit properly, the bridge should lean slightly ('pp. 5 degrees) towards the tailpiece.

The second step is to cut the contour for the crest of the bridge where the strings rest. This is the principal difference between a violin and a fiddle. The contour on violin bridges is more arched, with the bass strings higher off the fingerboard than the treble strings. Fiddle bridges tend to have less arching with the strings lower and more evenly contoured to the curvature of the fingerboard. Lowering the height of the

strings will tend to decrease the volume of your instrument. A flattened arch will make individual string separation more difficult when bowing, but makes double-stopping less difficult. Thus, there is no standard contour for fiddle bridges, and using a coping saw and sandpaper, you should make it to best suit your playing style.

Cut the string notches with a needle file spacing them 12mm apart on center with the outside strings 7mm from the edges. Now string up the instrument to



THREE BRIDGES: the top is an unfitted blank, the bottom right is a fiddle bridge and on the right is a violin bridge.

make certain that the feet fit properly and give it a thorough playing to be certain that the contour of the bridge is right. If so, the difficult work is done and you only have to shape and thin its

Continued from Page 6 various parts until the job is complete.



SANDING THE contour of the top onto the feet of the bridge blank.

The thickness of the bridge at its base should be 3.5 to 5mm, while the crest should be 1.5mm. The edges of the feet should be app. 1mm. These dimensions are relative, and should not be followed strictly. The thickness of the bridges various parts can greatly alter the tone and balance, so you should shape these parts to have the tonal and visual effect you desire. Thin the bridge only on the side towards the fingerboard (usually away from the brand) using successively finer grits up to 400 grit. The feet and other parts are easiest shaped with various needle files.

It's difficult to describe these finishing touches, as I achieve them with "feel" rather than measurement. So, I suggest that you carefully analyze as many bridges as possible so you can learn how to improve your work. The ability to manipulate the tone and volume of a fiddle through alterations to the bridge is an art which people spend years, or even lifetimes perfecting. Don't expect immediate success in these endeavors, but rest assured that whatever efforts you do make will only deepen your understanding of how your instrument functions.

Until then....HAPPY PLAYING.



Country Ham "Songs of Yesterday"

Vetco 522

Side One: Rolling Hills and Cedar Fences, You Are My Flower, Sugar In The Gourd, Sweeter Than The Flowers, Little Annie, The Pain He's Caused, Shoo Fly. Side Two: I'll Never Be Happy, Sunny Side Of Life, Heel and Toe Polka, A Flower Blooming In The Wildwood, Love Me Now, The Little Rosewood Casket, I Would Not Be Denied, Sail

Away Ladies.

As usual a Country Ham album pleases me - partially because I need the lift the toe-tapping melodies and vocals bring, partially because of the records technical excellence, and a great deal because of the superb playing and singing by the group.

I always look forward to each Country Ham record. On each I discover new favorites or a tune that stirs old memories. Judie Cox Pagter has added two of her songs to some true songs of vesterday, many heard here for the first time in years.

In contrast to my favorite complaint about the absence of liner notes - the ones included here reflect the exhaustive research and writing of Carl Pagter. They tell you what you want and need to know about each cut.

collection. It can be the source of many hours of enjoyment and, perhaps, the source of some new songs to play.

Bits & Pieces

Golden West to continue

Despite the rumors, Dick Tyner's Golden West Bluegrass festivals will be continuing.

The only change will be the location. Tyner has severed his connections with Silver Lakes Park and found another larger park near Norco. The new park has a better audience area and "many, many trees", states Tyner.

His next show is set for April 26-27-28, 1985 and will feature Jim and Jesse.

On a personal note, Tyner is close to earning his law degree and is devoting full time to this effort.

Local groups featured in Bluegrass Unlimited

Bluegrass Unlimited has done an outstanding review of High Country's new album and Good 'ol Persons received a smashing write-up, with color picture no less, in the same publication.

It looks like BU has finally realized that the West Coast does in fact have outstanding bands. Isn't it great they found out our secret!!



Ralph Stanley "Child Of The King" Rebel (REB1619)

"Live at the Old Home Place'

Rebel (REB1627)

Side One: My Lord Will Send A moses, Model Church, When I Bid You All Add this pleasurable record to your Adieu, I'd Be Willing To Go All The Way, Everybody Wants To Go To Heaven, I'm Willing To Try.

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Discography

The Osborne Brothers

by Matt Thompson





THE OSBORNE BROTHERS-Bobby and Sonny Osborne have always been the subject of controversy among bluegrass fans. They have made use of non-bluegrass instruments such as drums and steel guitars, have used electric hook-ups on their own instruments, and have chosen material that strays from that of traditional bluegrass. On the other hand, Sonny is a master of the banjo and Bobby is one of the BEST mandolin players in bluegrass, as well as possessing what may be the most amazing

tenor voice the music has ever known. They have added greatly to the vast variety of styles that exist in this musical realm. If you enjoy inventive banjo and mandolin playing and superb singing, you'll enjoy the Osbornes. When you listen to the Osborne Brothers, expect to **hear** the Osborne Brothers--they are unique.

Bobby and Sonny have made some recordings independently of each other, (for example, Sonny recorded with Monroe - see MCA 110 - and Bobby recorded with the

Lonesome Pine Fiddlers), but I will not list those in this article. Instead I will focus on the recordings they have made together.

While still in his early teens, Sonny made a number of recordings featuring his banjo. Brother Bobby appeared on a number of these and you may find them interesting. A three-volume set of this material has been reissued on the Gateway label entitled **The Early Recordings of Sonny Osborne** (Gateway Classics, Vol. 1-3).

Bobby, and later Sonny, joined forces with Jimmy Martin in the early 1950's and together performed some of the best bluegrass of the day. Some of their recordings can be found on the import album Jimmy Martin and the Osborne Brothers (CC 14) as well as on Jimmy Martin with the Osborne Brothers (ACM 4). Both albums are probably in limited supply but are well worth owning. Included on these albums are such classic songs as "20/20 Vision," "She's Just a Cute Thing," and "Blue-eyed Darling."

The brother's first important recordings together were for MGM Records, where they recorded four albums - all unfortunately now out of print. Their first album, entitled Country Pickin' and Hillside Singin' (MGM 3734) was recorded along with Red Allen, with whom they had been teamed up with for some time. The album's twelve songs included the tour-de-force "Ruby" and the beautiful highlead trio on "Once More." All of the songs have been reissued on a fine album entitled The Osborne Brothers and Red Allen (Rounder Special Series 03) along with four other cuts not included on the MGM album. This re-release is worth buying just for the song "Once More." The other three MGM albums were recorded without Red Allen, who chose to follow a

Their second MGM album, entitled **Bluegrass Music** (MGM 4018) helped them make their mark in bluegrass with such songs as "Each Season Changes You" and "Fair and Tender Ladies." Six of the twelve songs on this recording have been reissued on a Rounder record entitled **The Osborne Brothers** (Special Series 04)

more traditional path.

along with songs not found on previous MGM album releases. These two Rounder albums are highly recommended as an important chapter of bluegrass history.

Bluegrass Instrumentals (MGM 4090) featured the instrumental skills of Bobby and Sonny. Although the album is not available today, three of its twelve songs can be found on the second Rounder reissue. The album is flawed by a somewhat loud drum, but the Osbornes' playing is inventive and worth checking out. Cuttin' Grass - Osborne Brothers Style (MGM 4149) was the last of the MGM album releases. These albums are now high-priced collector's items and are very difficult to locate.

The majority of the Osbornes' albums were recorded for Decca (now MCA) Records. Their first album, **Voice in Bluegrass** (MCA 105) is worth owning just for three of the twelve songs - "Pathway of Teardrops," the incredibly beautiful "Kentucky," and "This Heart of Mine (can Never Say Goodbye)."

Up This Hill and Down (Decca 4767) is quite possibly the best of their work for Decca, however it has not been reissued as have some of their other Decca albums. Includes "Big Spike Hammer" and "I Know What it Means to be Lonesome."

Modern Sounds of Bluegrass (Decca 4903) has been reissued on Pickwick SPC 3738, with the exception of two of the twelve songs. This album introduced their new "modern" sound and includes the hit song "Roll Muddy River." A good album.

Yesterday, Today and the Osborne Brothers (MCA 119) contains traditional bluegrass on side A and their modern sound on side B. "Rocky Top" and "My Favorite Memory" spark this album. Be sure to include this one in your collection.

Favorite Hymns (MCA 125) is a fine gospel album showcasing the Osbornes' beautiful singing. It includes "What a Friend We have in Jesus," "Light at the River," "Rock of Ages" and "Will You Meet Me Over Yonder."

Up to Date and Down to Earth (Decca 5128) strays further from bluegrass than any of their past albums. Definitely not traditional bluegrass, but it is still a good album, although not available now.

Ru-be-eeee (MCA 135) with its electric-country theme, includes yet another version (not the best) of their big hit song. Bobby's voice is in fine form on "Listening to the Rain," and Sonny is featured on a Spanish-styled instrumental called "Siempre."

The Osborne Brothers (Decca 5271) is yet another album that has not been rereleased. Included on it is the popular "Georgia Pineywoods."

Country Roads (Decca 5321), like their previous releases, has more of a country theme than bluegrass. It includes the beautiful "Beneath Still Waters." Not available.

Bobby and Sonny (Decca 5356) is the last of their Decca releases and includes the songs "Knoxville Girl" and "Arkansas." Not available.

The Best of the Osborne Brothers (MCA 2-4086) is a double album set including some of their best Decca work. This collection, which is available, is special because it contains songs from various out-of-print albums. ("Beneath Still Waters" from Decca 5321; "Making Plans," "Hey Hey Bartender," and "Up This Hill and Down" from Decca 4767; "Son of a Sawmill Man," "You Win Again" from Decca 5128; and "Georgia Pineywoods" from Decca 5271). A fabulous collection!

Bluegrass Express (MCA CORAL CB-20003), a reissue of Decca material, contains some songs from out of print albums as well as a few not previously released.

Midnight Flyer (MCA 311) was their first album after the company became known as MCA. Fine singing. Out of print.

Fastest Grass Alive (MCA 374), out of print, is my least favorite of the Osborne releases. It does include the instrumentals "Side Saddle," "Sledd Ridin'," "The 7th of December" and "M.A. Special."

Number 1 (CMH 6206) was their first record release for their new company, CMH, a label for which they still record. The album includes songs such as "Leavin's Heavy on my Mind" and "Memories Never Die" as well as two fine mandolin instrumentals by Bobby. All of their CMH albums are currently available.

From Rocky Top to Muddy Bottom (CMH 9008) is a double album set featuring the songs of Boudleaux and Felice Bryant. It's a nice collection but it leans more toward the country theme. It includes the song "Georgia Girls and Country Boys."

The Bluegrass Collection (CMH 9011) is a superb double album set containing twenty-four recordings of traditional bluegrass songs in a traditional bluegrass setting. The singing is as great as ever and the pickin' is made even better with the twin fiddles of Kenny Baker and Blaine Sprouse. You'll love this album which includes "Kentucky Waltz," "Sunny Side of the Mountain," "Your Love is Like a Flower," and "Rank Strangers." Indispensable!

The Essential Bluegrass Album (CMH 9016), is another outstanding

collection. This double album set, recorded with Mac Wiseman, includes the songs "Shackles and Chains" and "The Bluebirds are Singing for Me." Well worth owning.

Bluegrass Concerto (CMH 6231), the group's first instrumental album since their MGM years, contains traditional numbers as well as some fine originals. This is not, however, your typical instrumental album. All of the cuts include a string section (violins, viola, cello) dubbed in by Buddy Spicher, as well as some complicated arrangements. This does not hurt the album, but rather helps to make it an interesting listening experience. Songs include the "Tina Rene Waltz" and "Shawnee" which are especially nice.

I Can Hear Kentucky Calling Me (CMH 6244) again features slick string arrangements throughout the album. Unless you are dead set on a straight, hard-driving traditional bluegrass sound, you should find this album an enjoyable listening experience. The title song and "Don't Let Smoky Mountain Smoke Get in Your Eyes" highlight this album. A good job.

Bobby and his Mandolin (CMH 6256), their latest effort for CMH, is a long-overdue album featuring the influential "bouncy" mandolin style of Bobby Osborne. The fourteen songs are all traditional or original fiddle tunes with able help from fiddler Kenny Baker. This album is a must!

Bluegrass Spectacular (RCA AHL1-4324) is basically your typical live album with special guests Mac Wiseman and the Lewis Family. Songs include "Love Gone Cold," "Old Flames Can't Hold a Candle to You," and "Bluegrass Melodies."

I believe this listing includes all of the Osborne Brothers albums to date. (I did not include 45's in this article.) Now we have only to wait for their next release. In the meantime you **could** search for some of their "pre-Osborne Brothers" recordings.

While I admit that my tastes lean more toward music such as that of the Stanley Brothers, I enjoy a wide variety of artists, including the Osborne Brothers. Don't let the mention of drums and electric guitars scare you off. Listening to these two performing their traditional and contemporary music is one of life's pleasures. Happy listening!

Yours in bluegrass, Matt Thompson

(Ed. Note) Matt Thompson writes for the Minnesota Bluegrass Assn. publication and at your editor's request, his eight part series is running in the Breakdown.

Reviews

Continued from Page 7

Side Two: I'm A Child Of The King, One Greater Than David Is Here, I Wonder If Mother Knows, The Family Who Prays, If I Could Crown You Mother, It Must Have Been Jesus.

Side One: Swinging A Nine Pound Hammer, I Ain't Wost, Mr. Stanley Sing On, Roll In My Sweet Baby's Arms, We'll Hear The Stanleys Sing Again, Act Naturally, Don't Step Over An Old Love. Side Two: Next Sunday, Darling, Is My Birthday, Waiting For A Train, On Heaven's Bright Shore, I Don't Want Your Rambling Letters, Amazing Grace.

Rebel Records has released two new Ralph Stanley masterpieces - Child Of The King is a gospel album that rings with the intensity, conviction and lonesome sound that epitomizes Ralph Staley gospel arrangements.

Of note are the four a cappella cutsthey are excellent and harken back to a more primitive time in America. The harmonies are such that you are emotionally caught up into them.

While I like Bill Monroe, I have always felt more akin to Ralph Stanley's form of bluegrass. It reflects the stark realities of the mountains of Virginia, West Virginia and Kentucky. Instrumentally, Curly Ray Cline's fiddling, Ralph Stanley's banjo and Junior Blankenship's guitar add an excitement to this recording that approaches perfection.

Live At The Old Home Place is another of the album's Stanley has released that have been recorded at his festivals at McClure, Virginia. Cuts on the album feature Dave Evans, Larry Sparks, The Boys From Indiana, the Marshall Family and others.

While it is great to hear more Stanley numbers and the other groups are also outstanding, a live outdoor album of a festival is just that. You don't get the spark of the festival or the spontaneity that happened.

If you had to pick, buy the Child Of The King. If you want all of Stanley's records, by all means get Live At The Old Home Place. They are both good Stanley discs, but the gospel one is beyond comparison.





Jim Moss "Tanyards" Bluegrass Fiddle

Blueberry Records (BB145)

Side one: Arkansas Traveller, Forked Deer, My Resting Place, Cherry Blossom, Tanyards, Old Blue Hen.

Side two: Bluegrass Blues No. III, Florida Blues, New Sailors Hornpipe, Chicken Reel, Real Foot Reel, The Bakers Boarding House.

Buddy Spicher Fiddle Classics Volume One

Flying Fish (FF278)

Side One: Lime Rock, Devil's Dream, Chicken Reel, Arkansas Traveler, Sally Goodin, Bitter Creek, Billy In The Low Ground, Paddy On The Turnpike.

Side Two: Westfalia, San Antonio Rose, Chamaine, Sweet Georgia Brown, Over The Waves, Sadness.

Perhaps it was too bad these two records arrived at the same time - even more so that they contained several identical tunes. The urge to compare them was too much.

While I enjoyed Jim Moss's record, it

lacks the depth, flair and showmanship of the Buddy Spicher offering. Having followed Jim's career in various bands in Northern California, it has been a pleasure to see him improve. While the record is backed by some outstanding men: Jesse McReynolds, Bob Black, Dave Thompson, Roy Husky, and Kenny Baker, the bottom line is the playing of Jim Moss. He just doesn't have the experience to carry the record and it lacks a depth of feeling and expression. This is not to say, don't buy this record just the opposite. It is enjoyable and one you can sit back and listen to with pleasure. It just isn't a Kenny Baker album or a Buddy Spicher.

While I like some numbers on Buddy Spicher's album, others are overplayed and overproduced, sounding more like another Nashville special (a la Dick Clark). In Spicher's album you get that depth lacking in Moss's, but again you have to be picky about which cuts you will end up playing more than once.

A major gripe I have about many of the album's coming out now is the lack of liner notes. It couldn't cost that much to get a set on each back cover something that would at least let the listener know about the tune, arrangements, musicians playing for each cut, etc. It just adds class to a record.

Don Powell

Deer, My Resting Place, Cherry Blossom, Help needed for Banjo stamp

Help is needed from members of the CBA to lobby the US Postal Service to issue a commemorative stamp honoring the Banjo.

Currently a proposal is before the Citizen's Stamp Advisory Committee to issue such a stamp. The banjo is America's only native instrument and it would be appropriate for the US Postal Service to recognize this fact.

Letters in support of this proposal are needed now. Write to:

Citizen's Stamp Advisory Committee

US Postal Service Stamps Division 475 L'Enfant Plaza SW Washington, DC 20260

Attend the Country Gentlemen Concert

November 10 Paul's Saloon, San Francisco

Record Reviews

Dan Crary "Guitar"

(Sugar Hill SH-3730)

Side One: Cotton Patch Rag, Stanley Brothers Medley (Fling Ding, Hard Times, Daybreak In Dixie), Sweet Laree, Memories of Mozart.

Side Two: The Green In The Blue Medley (The Strayaway Child, An Druimfhionn Donn Dilis, McCahill's Reel), Tom and Jerry, Bill Monroe Medley (Get Up John, Gold Rush, Roanoke).

Personnel: Dan Crary, Guitar; Sam Bush, mandolin; Mark O'Connor, fiddle; Bela Fleck, banjo; T. Michael Coleman, bass.

By GLENN CHRISTENSEN

Folks like Dan Crary can make my job difficult. As a record critic, I can rave on for many a paragraph about an album that is poorly recorded or hastily thrown together (some years back I was threatened with a libel suit after one review I did of a particularly horrible album, but my publisher reminded them it was only my opinion.). But what is a reviewer to do when faced with an album that is flawless? Alas, I am reduced to giving you a run-down of each tune, and I promise not to say "This is ______" (great, perfect, beautiful, etc.) too many times.

For those who may not be familiar with the work of Dan Crary (where have you been?), he can normally be found in the Berline-Crary-Hickman group on several albums, and is just about the hottest flat-picking guitarist in the business today. My first exposure to Crary was at a folk/bluegrass festival down L.A. way some seven or eight years ago when he got on stage all by himself and sang and picked and I said to myself, "that there boy's gonna go places". Ol' Dan didn't make a liar outta me!

Next time you're settin' around jawin' with some knowledgeable types, stick this record on -- side one -- and watch the smiles and listen to the comments about how wonderful Doc Watson can play after all these years, because that's just what this album sounds like when it starts off. Crary picks just as intricate and forceful as Watson, and every bit as beautiful.

The Stanley Medley is a lot more bluegrassy than the opening number, and features some mightly fine mandolin work, which is kind of odd since the Stanley's never used much mandolin, and Ralph doesn't even to this day. There's also a nice bit of banjo work here that is handled so well by Bela Fleck, probably one of the most innovative banjo pickers around today. Dan sure knows how to choose a back-up band!

Collectible Dealers Directory planned

Record Finder Publications is now compiling the National Directory of Collectible Record Dealers.

Persons who are interested in being listed should send for complete information. Those interested in securing the publication or in receiving Record Finder, should also write to the company.

Record Finder Publications 2305 Hungary Road Richmond, VA 23228

There's a lovely waltz (a Dan Crary original) that follows the Stanley bit that really shows off Dan's mastery of the guitar, and then we are presented with the greatest, most perfect, most beautiful...uh, oh yeah, I said I wouldn't use those terms. My apologies. Anyway, Memories of Mozart turns out to be the highlight of the album, and well worth the price. Even if you don't like classical music (which I do). you will be fascinated by the way Crary turns this ancient piano sonata into a guitar piece for the 80s. I think even Mozart himself would approve of this. Dan's guitar fairly jumps from your speakers and makes you sit down and listen, and the other instruments seem to have been mesmerized by the power of his performance because they all come across with equal dynamics. This is a piece of music that should be in every home regardless of your musical preference.

Side two continues with a three-part Irish medley that features the magnificent fiddle of Mark O'Connor. I really mean magnificent, too -- just listen to it! As I mentioned earlier, Dan really knows how to pick a band.

After a relaxing guitar and fiddle piece, the album closes out with the Monroe Medley, in which Sam Bush does a credible job playing the Master's instrument. A couple of interesting points in this set are 1) hearing Gold Rush done so slow as to make us think there is no gold left in them that hills, and 2) the nice surprise of the twin fiddles in Roanoke (where DID that other fiddle come from?).

This is not just an album for Crary fans (if you are one, you probably already own one), but is a guitar lover's delight. If you don't know anybody who has a copy of this album so you can hear it first, never mind. Just go buy it. Extremely highly recommended!



FIELD GUIDE TO WESTERN BANDS

ARKANSAS SHEIKS (707) 763-5447 [Petaluma]

BERLINE, CRARY & HICKMAN (213) 986-3791 [Van Nuys]

BLT (408) 378-3107 [San Jose] Mondays - The Mother Lode, Cupertino

BLUE FLAME STRING BAND (415) 535-2432 [San Francisco]

BLUEGRASS MONARCHS (408) 372-1461 [Pacific Grove] Fridays - Kalisa's, Cannery Row, Monterey

BLUEGRASS ONE (415) 364-6624 [Bay Area] Tuesdays - Paul's Saloon, San Francisco

Bluestein Family 8th Annual Farewell Concert - Nov. 20, Fresno Wesley Methodist Church

CHARLIE'S BAND (Sawplayer Charlie Blacklock) (415) 523-4649 [Alameda]

COUNTRY HAM (415) 938-4221 [Walnut Creek]

DR. CORN'S BLUEGRASS REMEDY (503) 645-0575 [Portland, OR]

8TH AVENUE STRING BAND (916) 872-8536 [Chico]

FIDDLE DUSTERS (707) 422-7838 [Fairfield]

FINGER PICKIN' GOOD (503) 474-2214 [Grants Pass, OR]

FOGGY MOUNTAIN CLOGGERS (415) 828-9016 [San Ramon]

GOLD RUSH (503) 266-5061 [Portland, OR]

GOOD 'N' COUNTRY (503) 686-9325 [Eugene, OR]

GOOD OL' PERSONS (415) 832-2176 [San Francisco] Friday's at Red Vest Pizza Parlor, El Cerrito

GRANT STREET STRING BAND (415) 548-3021 [East Bay]

GRASS MENAGERIE (408) 358-1524 [San Jose]

HEARTLAND, (415) 935-9295 [Walnut Creek] Saturdays - Carrousel Pizza, Concord Sundays - Paul's Saloon, San Francisco

HIGH COUNTRY (415) 763-2580 [San Francisco]
When in town - Wednesdays and Fridays at Paul's
Saloon

HIGH MOUNTAIN RAMBLERS (503) 779-2532 [Medford, OR]

MOUNTAIN VIEW CLOGGERS (209) 688-8809 [Tulare]

MUSIC FARMERS (209) 268-5202 [Fresno]

NEW DONE GONE BAND (415) 661-3518 [San Carlos]

PAINT THE TOWN (415) 661-0682 [San Francisco]

RAY PARK (714) 840-3146 [Huntington Beach]

RYE GRASS STRING BAND (503) 938-7403 [Milton Freewater, OR]

ROGUE VALLEY BLUEGRASS BOYS (503) 826-4927 [Medford, OR]

SAWTOOTH MOUNTAIN BOYS (503) 838-4095 [Monmouth, OR]

SHOWDOWN (415) 567-6112 [San Francisco]
Tuesdays - Tucker's Tavern, Fairfax
Saturdays - Onest Pizza, Alameda Southshore Mall
Park & Otis Streets, Alameda

SIDESADDLE (408) 353-4408 [San Jose]

Nov. 10 - Down Under Saloon, San Jose Nov. 17 - Benefit concert for Old Mother Logo, Moraga Hall, Santa Cruz

Dec. 1 - Freight & Salvage, Berkeley Dec. 8 - Down Under Saloon, San Jose

Dec. 31 - Down Under Saloon, San Jose

SLIDE MOUNTAIN BOYS (702) 329-8411 [Reno, NV] Ongoing - The Passage Hotel, Truckee, CA The solid Muldoon Saloon, Virginia City, NV

SPRING MOUNTAIN HARMONY (209) 784-8268 [Porterville]

SUNNY SOUTH (503) 281-9901 [Portland, OR]

SWINGADEROS (415) 886-1205 [Hayward]

A TOUCH OF GRASS (415) 962-8341 [Los Altos]

THE LEWIS FAMILY (404) 359-3767 [Lincolnton, GA]

THE PHIL SALAZAR BAND (805) 653-2380 [Ventura]

Nov. 1-2 - Taco Grande, Ventura

Nov. 8-9 - Taco Grande, Ventura

Nov. 12 - The Peppermill, Santa Paula

Nov. 15 - Taco Grande, Ventura

Nov. 16-17 - Red Baron, Oxnard

Nov. 22 - Taco Grande, Ventura

Nov. 23-24 - Red Baron, Oxnard

WESTERN PACIFIC (408) 427-3531 [Santa Cruz]

WILD OATS (707) 822-6264 [Arcata, CA]

Nov. 3 - Ferndale Fairgrounds, 1:30 p.m.

Nov. 11 - Ritz Club, Eureka

Nov. 15 - Silver Lining, Arcata Airport

Nov. 16 - Silver Lining, Arcata Airport

Nov. 17 - Eureka Municipal Auditorium

Nov. 25 - Ritz Club, Eureka

Nov. 29 - Jambalaya Club, Arcata

Nov. 30 - The Depot, Humboldt State University

Dec. 9 & 23 - Ritz Club, Eureka

Dec. 20-21 - Silver Lining, Arcata Airport

Dec. 27 - Jambalaya, Arcata

BILL WHITE (415) 530-7192 [Oakland]

VERN WILLIAMS BAND (209) 772-1357 [Valley Springs]

WINTERING SOUTH (503) 276-0640 [Pendleton, OR]

Advertising Rates

Current rates for placing an advertisement in the Bluegrass Breakdown are as follows:

Full Page -- \$80.00 Half Page -- \$50.00 Quarter Page -- \$30.00 Business Card -- \$15.00

The size of the image area for a full page ad is 7¼ by 9¾; half page - 5 by 7½; quarter page 3½ by 5. Art work should be very clear black and white layout and all photos should be screened.

The current rates for classified ads are based on $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches of typed copy and are as follows: \$3.00 for the first three lines and 50ϕ for each additional line. Make checks payable to the California Bluegrass Association and send check and ad to:

Don Powell Bluegrass Breakdown Editor 735 College Street Woodland, CA 95695

CBA Election Results

In perhaps one of the more interesting elections in recent years, the California Bluegrass Assocation selected nine directors: Ray Edlund, Midge Hobbs, Steve Hogle, Bob Lawrence, Carl Pagter, Don Powell, Kathy Tyler, Fred Volz, and Butch Waller.

What caused the election to be interesting was the post office putting the ballots into a sack instead of the mail box. The ballots put into the box were counted and the results were as shown above. Then the sack arrived. After a recount, the results remained the same.

The nine directors then elected Board officers for the year. Bob Lawrence was named president; Carl Pagter was elected Chairman of the Board; Fred Volz, vice-chairman of the board and publicity chairman; Esther Anderson was named vice-president, membership; while Jim Armentrout was selected as vice-president, activities; and Diana Deininger was elected as secretary. Steve Hogle will assist Jim Armentrout and Midge Hobbs will assist Don Powell, who was named as 1985 festival coordinator.

The only position not filled was treasurer. Mike Johnson has announced his retirement from that position effective January 1, 1985. Currently the Board is receiving nominations for that vital position. Johnson will help during the transition and will aid with the computer assisted program of accounting for CBA that he has developed.

Anyone interested in working with the position and who has a background in banking, etc., should contact Mike Johnson.

\$\$\$ Needed for White Record

Contributions are desperately needed for the Bill White Recording Fund. Current funds are around \$400.; not enough to perserve Bill's music for both this and future generations.

The money is needed for the cost of studio time, mixing, mastering and pressing of the records.

While some studio time and possible mixing time has been pledged verbally, at this time nothing in writing has been committed. Bill White's harmonica has been a part of CBA since the beginning of the organization. His music has inspired large numbers of fans, who flock to his workshops and gigs.

Send donations, which are tax deductable, to the CBA-Bill White Recording Fund, % Mike Johnson, 9025 Alcosta Blvd., San Ramon, CA 94583. Make sure the check or money order lists CBA so that it will be tax-deductable and can be properly deposited and recorded.

Band Contest Planned for Fall Festival

Never played Grass Valley - here's your big chance!

One new feature of the Labor Day Weekend Grass Valley show will be a band contest. Winner of the contest will win a cash prize, as will the second and third place bands, and a spot on the Sunday show.

Interested bands should contact Carl Pagter. Band contestants will be limited to bands not selected for the June and Labor Day Grass Valley shows.

Turn Your Radio On





BAY AREA STATION

KCSM 91.1 FM Phone: (415) 574-6427

1700 West Hillsdale Blve. San Mateo, CA 94402

Sunday, 12 noon - 5 p.m. Bay Area Bluegrass - with alternating hosts Pete Lude, Barbara Whitaker, Karyn Cap and the last Sunday of each month, Cousin Al Knoth.

KSTN FM 107.3

Sunday, Midnight to 4 a.m., The Bill Robinson Show, the best in old time country and gospel music.

KPFA 94.1 FM Phone (415) 848-6767 2207 Shattuck Ave.

Berkeley, CA 94704

Fridays, 2:30-4:30 p.m. Pig in a Pen with Ray Edlund. A fine presentation of bluegrass and old time music. On alternate Fridays: Panhandle Country with Tom Diamant--western swing, blues, and Bluegrass.

Sundays, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.: A variety of blues, Tex-Mex, Cajun, etc., with Chris Strachwitz.

KALW 91.7 FM

Phone: (415) 648-1177

2905 21st Street San Francisco, CA 94110

Saturdays, 3-5 p.m.: National Public Radio presents A Prairie Home Companion. This show is broadcast live from the World Trade Center in St. paul Minn. Garrison Keillor, a wild and crazy kind of guy, features good quality acoustic music [swing, old time, bluegrass, ragtime, etc.] in a format reminiscent of early radio shows. A very entertaining program.

KKUP 91.5 FM

Phone: (408) 253-0303 Cupertino, CA 95015

P.O. Box 547 Cupertino, CA 95015

Mondays, 6-9 p.m.: Alternating Mondays - The Quickstep
with Karen Quick and Brother Glenn's Mostly Blue-

grass Show with Glenn Christensen.

Saturday, 3-6 p.m.: High and Lonesome, bluegrass with Rick Nagle.

Sundays, 9-12 p.m.: Cupertino Barn Dance with Stompin' Steve Hathaway-cowboy and country music.

Mondays (alternating) 10 p.m.-2 a.m.: Indigeneous Folkmusic and old time Bluegrass with Ed Cirimele.

STATIONS OUTSIDE THE BAY AREA

KAZU 90.3 FM

Phone: (408) 375-3082

P.O. Box 206 Pacific Grove, CA 93950

Monday, 9-12 a.m.: Monday Morning Folk Show with J.T. Mason.

Tuesday, 9-12 a.m.: Folk Music Around the World

Wednesday, 9-12 a.m.: Pickin' in the wind with Peter Figen

Fridays, 9-12 a.m.: Singing Stone--traditional and contemporary folk music with Rick Wolter.

KBOO 90.7 FM

Phone: (503) 231-8032

20 S.E. 8th Avenue Portland, Oregon 97214

Wednesday, 10 p.m.-1 a.m.: Music From the True Vine, Traditional and contemporary bluegrass. Alternating hosts are Jim Seafeldt, Dave Elliott, Caroline Skinner, and Michael O'Rourke. On occasion, live bluegrass.

KCBX 90.1 FM

Phone: (805) 541-1295

1026 Chorro Street San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Thursday, 8-10 p.m.: Basicly Bluegrass with host Duane Inglish.

KCVR 1570 AM

Phone: (209) 368-0626

Box 600 Lodi, CA 95241

Saturday 11:45 a.m.: All gospel show with host Bill Robertson. Tune-in for outstanding music.

KCHJ 101 A.M.

Phone (805) 725-8676

Avenue 16 & Road 112, Delano, CA 93215

Daily 11:05 a.m.: The Bluegrass Show with Richard Swanson. Recorded and Live Bluegrass for approximately one hour.

KERG - Sterero FM 100

Telephone (707) 923-2052

Box 7, Garberville, CA 95440

Sundays 2-4 p.m.: "The Bluegrass Show" with host Ron

Stanley - bluegrass and bluegrass gosnel

KHSU 90.5 FM Phone:

Phone: (707) 826-4805

Humboldt State University

California Bluegrass Association Membership Application

Quackenbush

Show with Tim Quackenbush

Saturday, alternate weeks, 10 a.m.-Noon: The Bluegrass

Saturday, Noon-2 p.m.: Country Music with T.J. & Annie

Phone (415) 553-2129

500 8th Street

San Francisco

Saturday, 6 p.m.: A Prarie Home Companion.

KQED 88.5 FM

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Membership Number	No. of votes		Expiration Date	No. of Tickets
Last Name First Name				
Address				
City State ZIP				
Telephone (include area code)		Bands of 3 to 7 members may join at the CBA Band Rate.		
		Write for more information to the address below.		
Spouse's Name	SINGLE - \$10.00	Send check or money ord	der for memb	ership to:
Children (Name & Birthday)	SPOUSE - \$2.50	Treasurer California Bluegrass Association If a senior, list birth date:		
AGES 12-18 (Non-voting)	CHILDREN- Non-Voting 12-18			
AGES 12-18 (Voting)	(each) - \$1.00	P.O. Box 11287		
	Voting 12-18 - \$10.00	San Francisco, CA 94101-7287		
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