



# NEWSLETTER #306

June - July 2010

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**BLUEGRASS 2010** Some interesting facts about the state of Bluegrass music appear in the recent quarterly newsletter put out by the **IBMA (International Bluegrass Music Association)**. Those who read *Bluegrass Unlimited* magazine will note that 490 events are listed in the magazine's annual "Festival" issue for 2010. According to the IBMA's data base, there are **1,371** Bluegrass groups playing the music professionally or semi-professionally, and this does not include bands outside the USA! We hesitate to guess how many of these groups have recordings available, but we're certain it's a large number judging by the number of new CDs we receive each month.

**BLUEGRASS TRIVIA GAME** Here is something new for Bluegrass music fans: a board game called "**BLUEGRASS ROUTES**". It is modeled after the highly popular *Trivial Pursuit* games, with several hundred questions—these range from easy and obvious to tricky and difficult even for the "hard-core", long time Bluegrass fan. Looks like a lot of fun for fans of the music. Nicely produced, it comes in an attractive box with expanding game board, question cards & instructions, etc. This would make a nice Christmas gift for Bluegrass fans. Those interested can order directly from **BOB IERY, 9340 US 52, MANCHESTER, OHIO 45144**. The price is \$ **39.49** which includes shipping and handling in the USA. [www.bluegrassgame.com](http://www.bluegrassgame.com)

**BLUEGRASS MUSIC PROFILES** While we were sorry to note the demise of the magazine *BLUEGRASS NOW* some months ago, we are glad to see that a relatively new publication—*BLUEGRASS MUSIC PROFILES*—has been expanding its coverage and has many good, interesting features. Those interested can contact the bi-monthly magazine by writing to **BLUEGRASS PUBLICATIONS, PO BOX 850, Nicholasville, Ky. 40340**, or online to [www.bluegrassmusicprofiles.com](http://www.bluegrassmusicprofiles.com)

**ALAN MASTIN** We are very sorry to report the death of **ALAN MASTIN**, who passed away on May 2 of an apparent heart attack just a short time after returning from a personal appearance. Alan was the bass player for over 20 years with the Virginia band *BIG COUNTRY BLUEGRASS*, which had just recently signed a recording contract with **REBEL RECORDS**. Mastin was just 54 years old.

**CONDENSING OUR MAILING LIST** Those who receive a hard copy (paper) Newsletter please note that we will be condensing our mailing list after this issue, dropping the names of all those who have not placed an order in the past year and a half. If you think you are in this category and wish to keep getting the Newsletter, either send in an order now or let us know that you want to stay on our active list. Thanks.

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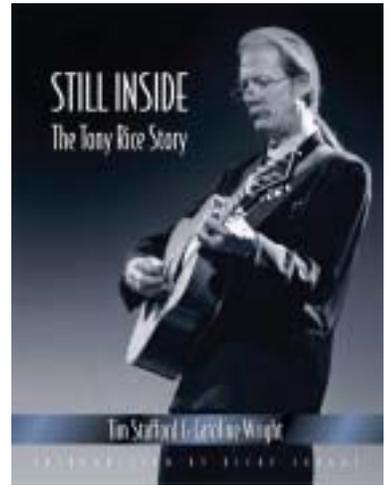
## TONY RICE MONTH at COUNTY SALES

Celebrating the recent release of the book “**STILL INSIDE—The Tony Rice Story**”, County Sales is offering several records that feature significant helpings of great guitar picking from this amazing musician, including his first album (see below).

**THE BOOK:** Tim Stafford (a noted guitarist himself), and Caroline Wright have put together this fascinating 316-page account that documents the life and musical career of Rice, probably the most respected of all the guitarists in the history of Bluegrass music. From Tony’s own words, plus commentary & quotes from literally scores of other musicians, friends and family members, we learn a lot about Rice’s musical tastes and accomplishments. For example, an extensive & seemingly comprehensive discography lists *181 recording projects* done with various other artists and groups—besides 19 of his own albums, and not counting compilations!

We learn of his quest for privacy, his distaste for electric instruments, drums and “rock” type material in Bluegrass, his respect for the audience in his choice of attire (yes!), and his preference to remain in the background rather than be an M.C. or spokesman for any group. But this book does not just dwell on Rice’s musical skills and achievements (vocal as well as instrumental): it gives us a good idea of a complex and sensitive person who loves animals, enjoys working on delicate watches, and is skilled as a photographer. We can thoroughly recommend this book as **MUST** reading for any and all those who appreciate this fine artist. Our price: **\$25.00**

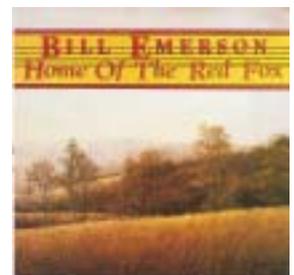
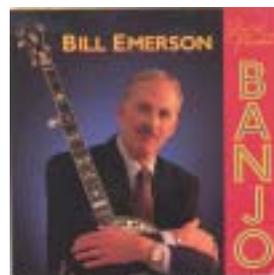
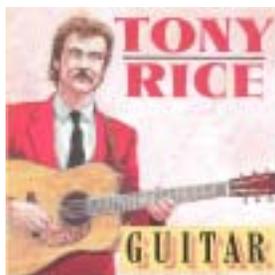
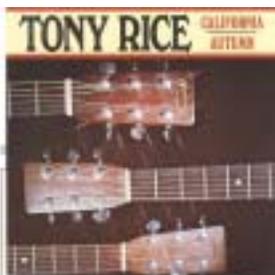
**NOTE: THIS MONTH ONLY:** If you purchase this book before AUGUST 13, 2010, you can pick out, **FREE**, any ONE of the following REBEL compact discs featured below. (these can also be used toward the special offer)



OUR SALE PRICE on the CDs below is just **\$8.00 each**, this month only!  
(these can also be used toward the special offer)

- REBEL-1582 **TONY RICE: GUITAR** Originally issued only in Japan, this was Tony’s first album. It appeared first on the KING BLUEGRASS label here, then was bought out by Rebel. With J. D. Crowe and Larry Rice, it includes classic cuts of FREEBORN MAN, DOING MY TIME, SALT CREEK etc
- REBEL-1549 **TONY RICE “California Autumn”** Produced by John Starling of the Seldom Scene, there are lovely instrumental cuts of RED HAired BOY, BEAUMONT RAG, BILLY IN THE LOW GROUND, plus fine vocals (YOU DON’T KNOW MY MIND, GOOD WOMAN’S LOVE)
- REBEL-1666 **LARRY RICE “Artesia”** Tony plays on half of brother Larry’s album, which also features Mary Chapin Carpenter, Sammy Shelor, and Rickie & Ronnie Simpkins.
- REBEL-1734 **LARRY RICE “Notions & Novelties”** Tony appears on 7 songs & tunes here, including COO COO’S NEST, CODY CODY, and AUNT MARY’S SPRING
- REBEL-1801 **LARRY RICE “Clouds Over Carolina”** Tony picks superb guitar on 7 tracks of this, the last recording made by his late brother.
- REBEL-1651 **BILL EMERSON “Home Of The Red Fox”** Tony plays great guitar breaks on every one of the tracks of this all instrumental disc (see quote below)
- REBEL-1671 **BILL EMERSON “Gold Plated Banjo”** Tony again plays lead guitar on all tracks.

Those who were not aware of Tony’s presence on the Emerson records, check out this direct quote from Tony in the book (Page 130): *“One of my prize works is [Bill] Emerson’s album called “Home Of The Red Fox”. There were some magic moments on that record”.*



**ROU-0633 BLUE HIGHWAY “Some Day”**

This group has to be something of a rare phenomenon, with its 5 members having stayed together for 15 years. Along with their longevity, their standout arrangements, vocals & instrumental work have been models for many of today’s active groups and they continue to produce stunning, powerful Bluegrass music that can appeal to traditional and contemporary fans alike. Before fans get too excited, let them be aware that this is essentially a re-issue, or “retrospective” album, with only three new songs here. But it’s a heck of a retrospective, full of top material that includes several really great songs & performances: THROUGH THE WINDOW OF A TRAIN, MARBLETOWN, STILL CLIMBING MOUNTAINS, SEVEN SUNDAYS IN A ROW, WONDROUS LOVE and the superb SOME DAY (a piece that came out on Rebel early in the band’s career—the versions are very similar). As always the vocals are shared by three great singers, *Wayne Taylor, Tim Stafford and Shawn Lane*, and there is plenty of first rate dobro work by *Rob Ickes*. Other cuts include MONROBRO, SYCAMORE HOLLOW, ELZIC’S FAREWELL, WILD URGE TO RAMBLE. **\$ 13.50**



**GT-2151 ALLEN SHELTON “At His Best”** The late Allen Shelton was known for his dynamic 5-string banjo work, playing in the bands of *Jim Eanes* and later *Jim & Jesse*, among others. This budget priced CD features 10 instrumentals, including his early Starday cut of BENDING THE STRINGS. Two tracks with *Jim Eanes’* band are DIN-E-O and ROUND TOWN GIRLS—fiddle favorites in the area that Shelton came from (Reidsville, N.C.). The other cuts—including an instrumental version of LITTLE LOG CABIN IN THE LANE—all seem to be accompanied by Jim & Jesse’s band, with Jesse doing some of his trademark cross picking on the mandolin. On at least 3 of the tunes Shelton makes use of a 5-string resonator banjo (?)—these never had the bounce that Shelton’s straight 5-string banjo tunes did. **\$ 11.00**

**REB-1837 JUNIOR SISK & RAMBLER’S CHOICE “Heartaches & Dreams” Junior**

*Sisk* has one of the finest groups going today, and this new release is a very strong follow up to his last project “*Blue Side Of The Blue Ridge*” (REB-1825, \$ 13.50). This is powerful, straight ahead traditional Bluegrass, and *Sisk* has the perfect voice for tough, mountain style music, which this is. *Junior* has picked out a smart selection of a dozen good songs, ranging from WORKING HARD AIN’T HARDLY WORKING, Tom & Dixie Hall’s TRAIN WITHOUT A TRACK to the fine gospel numbers LET THE LIGHT SHINE DOWN and THE LOWEST VALLEY. A strong new recording from one of the most popular bands on the scene today. **\$ 13.50**

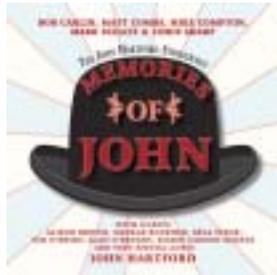


**BOOK: LOUISIANA BLUEGRASS “The Early Years”** by Ron Yule (Fiddle Country Pub., 2009) 218 pages. The state of Louisiana is not generally thought of as a hot bed of Bluegrass activity. It’s true that the **KWKH LOUISIANA BARN DANCE**, located in Shreveport, was a very popular radio station for several decades, and many top names in Bluegrass appeared on shows there including artists like *Jimmy Martin, Mac Wiseman, Johnnie & Jack and The Bailes Brothers*. But I was stunned to see the scores of Bluegrass bands from Louisiana that researcher Ron Yule has documented in this book, which he has divided into sections on “First generation” and “2<sup>nd</sup> Generation” artists. Some of the better known names covered here are *Buzz Busby, The Cox Family, Byron Berline, Buck White, Luke Thompson, Allen Shelton, Jim Smoak, Clyde Baum, Monroe Fields and a young Alicia Nugent* (who started with a group called *Southland Bluegrass* in the mid 1970s). There are literally dozens of mostly obscure groups that have played in the state over the years, and amazingly Yule has gathered photos of just about all of them (much like his previous works, such as “Louisiana Fiddlers”). In addition to details & personnel of all these bands, Yule has sections on Luthiers in Louisiana, Festivals, and even recordings (pre-1985). As Yule himself states in the preface, this is truly a labor of love, and Bluegrass fans and pickers from the Pelican state will be fascinated by the information and photos presented here. **\$ 27.50**

**N1YK-2009 NO ONE YOU KNOW “She Waits”** For a group that “no one knows” this is surprisingly strong contemporary Bluegrass from a band that is apparently from West Virginia. Instrumentally the group is sound and the three lead singers are quite competent. The songs—all written by *Ramie Bennett, Rachel Burge* and mostly bass player *Don Anderson*—are solid enough to carry the 13-track record, though it would have been nice to hear how the group would deal with a couple of well-chosen standards. The group features Banjo, Guitar, Mandolin, Dobro and Bass, and guest *Nicky Sanders* (of the Steep Canyon Rangers) supplies excellent fiddle work as a guest. MANDY, LOVE IS LIKE A TRAIN, WISHING WELL, LAST GOODBYE, etc. **\$ 13.50**

**UBI-002 ADAM HURT “Perspective”** Hurt is one of a growing group of good young clawhammer banjo pickers on the Old-Time scene today. He does an excellent job with the 14 tunes here, most of which are recognizable standards like LOST INDIAN, FORKED DEER, SAY OLD MAN, NEW RIVER TRAIN and FLOWERS OF EDINBURGH. But Hurt also reaches out by including his version of *Bill Monroe’s* GOLDEN WEST (this cut includes the brilliant Bluegrass guitarist *Kenny Smith*). Most of the tunes include backup guitar from *Beth Hartness*, and some feature *Stephanie Coleman* on fiddle. It’s nice to see banjo tunings supplied for each piece, plus the sources (which include *Emmett Lundy, Wade Ward, Bob Walters and Ed Haley*). **\$ 13.50**

**COMPASS-4539 MEMORIES OF JOHN** It’s hard to believe it’s almost 10 years since *John Hartford* passed away. He had many, many friends and inspired a lot of people with his enthusiasm as well as his music. His love of steamboats on the Mississippi River was just one example of how much he loved old things and the old days (he actually became a licensed steamboat pilot). This new tribute album—very nicely produced by Toshio Watanabe and Chris Sharp—is a warm, thoroughly successful project that Hartford himself would probably be very happy with.

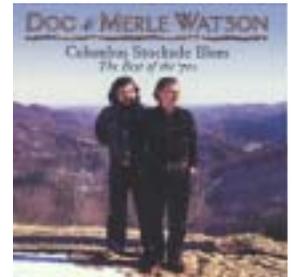


It features 15 songs & tunes by a group of good musicians who knew John well, including several who made up the core of his traveling band in its later years: *Bob Carlin* (banjo), *Chris Sharp* (guitar), *Mike Compton* (mandolin) and *Mark Schatz* (bass), along with *Matt Combs*, who does an excellent job on fiddle. Eleven of the tracks are by “The Stringband”, and these include neat old timey versions of THREE FORKS OF SANDY, LORENA, HALF PAST FOUR, THE GIRL I LEFT BEHIND ME, and two lovely waltzes: DELTA QUEEN WALTZ and ROYAL BOX WALTZ. Other guests featured include *Tim O’Brien* (a very nice vocal on LORENA), *Alison Brown, Alan O’Bryant and Bela Fleck*. A couple of previously unheard Hartford songs by John himself make a welcome addition too. **\$ 13.50**

**GT-2130 LONESOME PINE FIDDLERS “Starday Collection”** The *Lonesome Pine Fiddlers*, featuring the Clines (Ezra and Curly Ray) and the Goins Brothers (Ray and Melvin), hit their peak in the late 1940s with some fairly well distributed RCA Victor records. They then reappeared on the recording scene with several albums in the early 1960s for the Starday label when Starday impresario Don Pierce sensed a growing interest in Bluegrass music (which the major labels were pretty much ignoring). These recordings are somewhat different in sound from the old Victors, but it is still solid & respectable Bluegrass with some good songs like OLD REUBEN, BRINGIN’ IN THE GEORGIA MAIL, and DEATH CAME CREEPING IN MY ROOM. **\$ 11.00**

**RAVEN-319 DOC & MERLE WATSON “Columbus Stockade Blues”—The Best of the ‘70s.**

Doc Watson has recorded extensively over the years, and we can’t think of any of his records that were less than excellent. We still like best his early records for *Folkways* and *Vanguard*, plus his later albums for *Sugar Hill*: sandwiched somewhere in the middle were several recordings made for the *Poppy* and *United Artist* labels—these are what have been sampled here for this generous 30-track presentation of music that Doc made in the 1970s—mostly with his son Merle. The songs & tunes are typical of Doc’s repertoire, some blues, some tunes with old-time banjo, and even some excursions into a more contemporary vein like IF I NEEDED YOU, ALL I HAVE TO DO IS DREAM and Tom Paxton’s BOTTLE OF WINE. Mostly, there are a bunch of good old songs & tunes like WILD BILL JONES, WALK ON BOY, RAIN CROW BILL, FLORIDA BLUES, BIG SANDY, DOC’S RAG, SHADY GROVE, etc. Our only complaint here is with the sometimes heavy percussion, which does nothing to enhance the performances. **\$ 15.00**



**RHY-1053 BILL EMERSON & SWEET DIXIE “Southern”**

**Bill Emerson** is one of the most respected 5-String banjo players of all time, and it is somewhat amazing that he still has the technique, drive and taste that puts him at the top of his game after more than 50 years in the business (it was 1957 when he and *Charlie Waller* started the famed *Country Gentlemen*). After an excellent outing on the Rebel label in 2007 (REB-1823 BILL EMERSON & THE SWEET DIXIE BAND, \$ 13.50), Bill follows up with another strong effort featuring a somewhat different cast of characters. The guitar work and most of the lead singing is handled by *Tom Adams*, and he sounds fine. *Wayne Lanham* on mandolin and *Teri Chism* on bass round out the group (Ms. Chism does three lead vocals and most of the harmony singing. Significant and fine work on the fiddle is supplied by guest Rickie Simpkins. A good array of songs include numbers written by Vince Gill, Carl Jackson, Pete Goble and Marty Stuart, and well-played “old timers” I DON’T CARE ANYMORE and Alton Delmore’s MIDNIGHT TRAIN add to a superior recording **\$ 13.50**

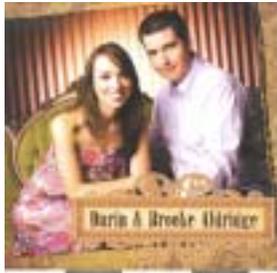
**VAM-08 BILL & MAGGIE ANDERSON “The Master’s Garden”**

A pleasant album of country style gospel songs played by this duo that has at least half a dozen other CDs out. Maggie plays the dobro and Bill the guitar on such songs as I AM A PILGRIM., RING THE BELL, BORN AGAIN, TRAMP ON THE STREET, FALLEN LEAVES, etc. **\$ 13.50**

**SIG-209 CROOKED STILL “Some Strange Country”** This, the 5<sup>th</sup> recording to be issued by this distinctive band, is quite similar in style to their previous releases, all of which we have given high praise to. Check out our web site reviews of any of their other albums for an idea of what makes this group so distinctive. As before, the singing is handled in superb fashion by Aoife O’Donovan, and Tristan Clarridge’s cello is a key part of the overall sound. In our opinion, the biggest difference between this disc and the earlier four is in the choice of material. While the group still features a few of the ancient classics that they do so well (HENRY LEE, I’M TROUBLED, and GOLDEN VANITY), many of the other songs lack the definition and impact of most of the tracks on their earlier records. Still, they handle everything well. COLD MOUNTAINS, CALVARY, YOU WERE GONE, DISTRESS, etc. **\$ 13.50**

**MH-1259 DARIN & BROOKE ALDRIDGE**

This strong second release from this duo could well establish them as a group to be reckoned with in today’s Bluegrass scene. Darin Aldridge was known to a certain extent for his mandolin picking and singing in one of the last *Country Gentlemen* bands before *Charlie Waller*’s passing; now he is teamed up with his wife, who is an excellent singer. Their solos and duets are lovely, and they have picked their songs very well—it’s all pretty new contemporary material that works beautifully for them. *Jerry Salley* was a writer or co-writer on three of the songs here including the superb a cappella gospel song I’M BUILDING ON THE ROCK OF AGES (Salley helps with the vocals on this and a few other tracks). Another standout song is *Tom & Dixie Hall*’s LET’S NOT GO THERE. It’s all fine Bluegrass and we think we’ll be hearing much more from this group. **\$ 13.50**



**RHY-1060 AUDIE BLAYLOCK & REDLINE “Cryin’ Heart Blues”** Blaylock—who has been a member of such bands as Jimmy Martin and Rhonda Vincent—continues to maintain a strong group and always seems to come up with excellent songs for his albums. Some of the neat pieces heard here include LET’S PART THE BEST OF FRIENDS, TROUBLES ROUND MY DOOR, YOU CAN KEEP YOUR NINE POUND HAMMER, and two great Jimmy Martin numbers DRINK UP & GO HOME and PRAY THE CLOUDS AWAY. Good solid traditional Bluegrass here, recommended. **\$ 13.50**

**QFP-030 EMORY LESTER “Reminiscing today”** Ace Canadian musician Lester plays just about all the instruments on this mostly instrumental 13 tune collection on which the majority of the pieces are his own compositions as well. His two sons—Josh & Justin—join him on two tracks, playing guitar and bass. For the most part Lester features the mandolin, but he plays fiddle, banjo, guitar and a couple other instruments as well. The music has a contemporary, almost New Age moody flavor, but it is very nicely done and should appeal to those who enjoy a more mellow, acoustic sound. Nice work on the standards (HOME SWEET HOME and JUNE APPAL) and the classical JESU, JOY OF MAN’S DESIRING. **\$ 13.50**

**SUG-4055 SAM BUSH “Circles Around Me”**

Sam Bush is known as one of the masters and leaders of so-called “Modern Bluegrass”, but most fans know he can play wonderful straight Bluegrass if and when he wants to, and this 15-track album contains enough interesting material to appeal to most traditional Bluegrass lovers too. His band includes the fine banjo picker *Scott Vestal* as well as *Byron House* on bass and *Stephen Mougin* on guitar. In addition he is joined by *Del McCoury* on two of the best cuts on the album: ROLL ON BUDDY and MIDNIGHT ON THE STORMY DEEP.

There’s a good version of DIAMOND JOE, and an interesting BALLAD OF STRINGBEAN & ESTELLE and equally nice treatments of two old hard-edged Bluegrass songs, YOU LEFT ME ALONE and OUT ON THE OCEAN. There’s also a fine minute and a half rendition of the Texas fiddle tune APPLE BLOSSOM on which Sam plays fiddle—this has the late *Courtney Johnson* on banjo, so it must be a leftover from a very old session. For the modern fans there are a number of contemporary pieces such as THE OLD NORTH WOODS, BLUE MOUNTAIN and GOLD HEART LOCKET. If you let the disc play out after the 14<sup>th</sup> and “last” track, you will also be treated to a long and well played version of a blues tune, HOT TAMALES & THEY’RE RED HOT. *Jerry Douglas* appears on a couple of tracks as well. A first-rate, enjoyable album that we recommend. **\$ 13.50**



**RPB-0901 KEVIN FORE & FRIENDS “Frolic In Round Peak”** The relatively young Mr. Fore joins a growing list of musicians who have embraced the old time sounds of the Round Peak area of North Carolina (Surrey County) and are carrying it into another generation. Fore, who also builds banjos in the style of *Kyle Creed*, plays his fretless banjo on the 21 tunes here, and is joined by several good fiddlers like *Kirk Sutphin*, *Benton Flippen*, *Emily Schaad*, *Jeremy Stephens* and *James Burris*, as well as other musicians like *Tom Mylet*, *Chester McMillan*, and *Riley Baugus*. An enjoyable old-time recording, well done. RED BIRD, LOST INDIAN, PRETTY LIL GAL, FORKED DEER, SALT RIVER, LOGAN COUNTY BLUES, etc. **\$ 13.50**

**RHE-100 REDHEAD EXPRESS “He Gave Me All”**

With almost nothing in the way of notes and/or credits, it's hard to figure out exactly what's going on here: it appears that this band is from Missouri and it looks like there are 9 family members involved one way or the other, though three young boys are heard in just one number at the end of the 15-track disc. This album is all Bluegrass gospel, and judging from a secular recording that the group has issued, much of the lead singing and lead guitar is handled by Kendra Walker, assisted by 4 (or 5?) sisters on the other instruments, and Brett Walker (father?) taking lead on a couple of songs. While some tracks are just average, the majority are quite nice, especially SWEET BEULAH LAND, ANOTHER DAY, JESUS HOLD MY HAND, FAR SIDE BANKS OF JORDAN and the title tune.. Other tracks include LIVING PRAYER, LILY OF THE VALLEY, VACATION IN HEAVEN, and the disc ends with two patriotic cuts and the youngsters “bonus track” I AM A CHILD OF GOD.

**\$ 13.50**

**REBEL- LP-1834-1 STEEP CANYON RANGERS “Deep In The Shade”**

It's been a long, long time since we reviewed an LP (vinyl!) in these pages, but amazingly some 33 1/3 LP albums are making a reappearance in the market place among a hip, younger crowd in particular. Granted it is a limited, niche market, but having a substantial, well mastered and nicely packaged LP in one's hands again is a good felling! Most LP advocates claim that the vinyl records have a warmer and more natural sound than compact discs—we won't get into that argument but will say that this record sounds great. It doesn't hurt to be listening to a superb Bluegrass band at its peak, and this collection of excellent songs is just that. After a year of touring major markets as backup band for *Steve Martin*, the Rangers have honed their sound, while adding new arrangements and material: if you're not already familiar with this North Carolina band see them in person or pick up this fine disc. It includes their songs HAVE MERCY, THE MOUNTAIN'S GONNA SING, TURN UP THE BOTTLE, THERE AIN'T NO EASY STREET (This Side of Town” and SYLVIE.

**LP: \$ 15.00**

**SHS-2009 DENNIS MODLIN & THE BACK CREEK STRING BAND “Appalachian Fiddle Tunes”**

Dennis & Karen Modlin are joined by 6 others in this pleasant 15 track disc of old time tunes featuring Dennis' fiddle, mandolin & guitar, Karen Modlin's banjo and Robert Norman on guitar.. Singing is average and the recording quality is a little funky in places. The group is from North Carolina. COO COO BIRD, ELZIC'S FAREWELL, BIG SCIOTA, THE BLACKEST CROW, I'LL FLY AWAY, etc **\$ 13.50**

**JSP-77130 GENNETT OLD-TIME MUSIC**

**1927-1934** 20 or 25 years ago Old-time music fans and collectors would salivate at seeing a collection like this—now it's “ho-hum, we've heard most of these tracks already” etc. But a set like this will still warm a lot of hearts. The Gennett label, based in Richmond, Indiana, could not compete with Columbia or Victor as far as sales went, but as far as music went, Gennett more than held its own, as its studios in southern Indiana were closest to the rich lode of great rural music to be found in the South and Southeast. England's JSP label has another winner here, with some 99 songs & tunes on 4-CDs, at a hugely bargain price. As



is JSP's usual custom with anthologies, there is a concentration on 3 or 4 artists, with some odds and ends used to fill each disc where necessary. Here are the groups featured in this well-remastered set: *DA COSTA WOLTZ, FIDDLIN DOC ROBERTS, THE RED FOX CHASERS, and RUTHERFORD & FOSTER*. If you have already bought the wonderful complete *Red Fox Chasers* set on Tompkins Square label, you can ignore Disc “B” of this collection, as all 22 pieces by this great band are also on the Tompkins Square set, along with more. Disc “C” is devoted to the great Kentucky musician, *Fiddlin' Doc Roberts* (14 cuts) with some *John Hammond, Ted Gossett and Taylor's Kentucky Boys* thrown in for good measure. Disc “A” focuses on the Kentucky singer *John Foster* (19 cuts) with many featuring the wonderful fiddling of *Leonard Rutherford* (check out RICHMOND BLUES, TAYLOR'S QUICKSTEP, TWO FAITHFUL LOVERS and LET HER GO I'LL MEET HER). And Disc “D” is split between *DaCosta Woltz* (12 cuts) and *Byrd Moore* (12 cuts). There are a few rare tracks where the sound is painfully rough, but in general it is all good listening, with many gems—no fluff or filler material here. A wonderful Old-Time set! **4-CD Set, \$ 27.50**

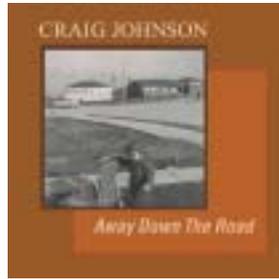
**MMCD-79 BENTON FLIPPEN & THE SMOKY VALLEY BOYS “Fiddler's Dream”**

Benton Flippen is one of the last remaining old-time fiddlers from the Round Peak area of North Carolina that produced such musicians as *Fred Cockerham., Tommy Jarrell, Kyle Creed and Ernest East*. On this very nice 24-track collection recorded in 2003 he is still in good form, and is solidly but unobtrusively backed by banjo, 2 guitars and bass fiddle. Tunes include SOLDIER'S JOY, BREAKING UP CHRISTMAS, PEACOCK RAG, WHISTLING RUFUS, CHINESE BREAKDOWN, etc **\$ 13.50**

**MC-0809 MONROE CROSSING “Heartache & Stone”** This is the 9<sup>th</sup> album from this Minnesota based Bluegrass band led by *Art Blackburn* and featuring the singing (and fiddling) of *Lisa Fuglie*. Members of the group have written most of the songs, though there’s a solid version of Monroe’s *WHEN YOU ARE LONELY*, plus a nod to two other native Minnesotans, *Becky Buller* (*RAVEN TRESSES*) and *Prince* (*PURPLE RAIN*). *POTTER’S FIELD*, *MASON HARRIS*, *PATIENCE*, etc. **\$ 13.50**

**5SP-6001 CRAIG JOHNSON “Away Down The Road”**

This will be a special record for many in the old-time community, not only because the 56-year old Johnson passed away just a few weeks after this CD was released, but also because it is just a very nice recording of a warm and sensitive musician. Johnson, who was a member of various bands, (most notably the *Double Decker String Band*) has a wonderful collection of 22 songs & tunes here, with a good amount of variety, and he plays banjo, fiddle and guitar on different pieces. He sings in a distinctive, high pitched voice that is especially emotive on songs like *LITTLE DAVID*, *OLD PAINT*, the nostalgic *NEW HARMONY* and a lovely version of *BONNIE BESS*. There are some neat fiddle tunes, banjo pieces (with tunings supplied) and Johnson even takes a bold crack at a couple of classic blues songs, *CAIRO* and the haunting *Skip James* masterpiece, *CYPRESS GROVE*, and he handles these more than adequately. His notes pay tribute to the many old-time musicians who influenced him, including *Virgil Anderson*, *Luther Davis*, *Kahle Brewer*, *Clyde Davenport* etc. **\$ 13.50**

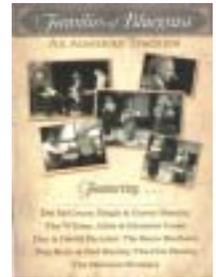


**HMG-1005 DONNA ULISSE “Holy Waters”** After two nicely done straight Bluegrass albums, the Virginia-born Ulisse tackles an all Bluegrass gospel project, with much the same lineup of backing musicians that appeared on her first two records: *Rob Ickes* (dobro), *Scott Vestal* (banjo), *Andy Leftwich* (mandolin & fiddle) and *Byron House* on upright bass. Keith Sewell has again done a nice job of production and the overall sound is quite consistent with Ms. Ulisse’s first two recordings. As on her earlier albums, she has written almost all of the songs, and while they are fairly strong, my guess is that 3 or 4 more “standards” would have made some of these stand out more, creating an even stronger album overall. By far the most impressive track is the one song that Ulisse did not write, *Carter Stanley’s WHO WILL SING FOR ME*—Donna’s rendition of this classic is wonderful. Ms. Ulisse—who is related by marriage to *Carter Stanley*—is a fine singer who has made the transition from country to Bluegrass: she seems quite at home in that genre now. *HE WILL*, *THIS CRAZY WORLD*, *LORD I’M YOURS*, *MY JESUS*, etc. **\$ 13.50**

**JJ-1385 (DVD) BLUEGRASS EXPRESS** Little by little, various artists, labels and others have been turning up film and video footage that has survived the years, and this new item—issued by *Jesse McReynolds*—is a welcome addition to the DVD library. It was shot for TV back in 1972, making it some of the earliest Bluegrass music to be available in a visual format. On this 14 track tape—which features good color and good sound—*Jim & Jesse* were the hosts for this 30-minute show that they shared with *Bill Monroe* and *Lester Flatt*. Each group does a few numbers of its own before teaming up for a couple of “special” songs: Flatt joins the McReynolds brothers for *SALTY DOG BLUES* and teams with Monroe & The Bluegrass Boys on *I WONDER WHERE YOU ARE TONIGHT*. One of the treats of this kind of offering is the chance to see certain sidemen in action, and here are some of the musicians who show up here: from Monroe’s band at the time: *Kenny Baker* (fiddle), *Jack Hicks* (banjo), *Joe Stuart* (guitar) and *Monroe Fields* (bass). In Flatt’s band were *Haskell McCormick* (banjo), *Paul Warren* (fiddle), *Roland White* on mandolin, and *Jack Martin* on dobro. Jim & Jesse featured *Vic Jordan* on banjo, *Jim Brock* on fiddle, the late *Keith McReynolds* on bass and *Carol Johnson* with a harmony vocal part. A very enjoyable DVD. **DVD: \$ 18.00**

**DVD: FBG-001 FAMILIES OF BLUEGRASS**

Here’s another neat entry from the group of Bluegrass DVDs that have been coming from *Ronnie Reno’s Man-Do-Lin* label. Reno has included three vintage cuts by *Reno & Smiley and the Stanley Brothers*—these are really great tracks but they have been issued previously, and many, if not most of our customers may already have them. But there are 14 more songs & tunes, mostly in color, that feature material by others like *Del McCoury* (*A GOOD MAN LIKE ME*), the *Cox Family* (*USING MY BIBLE FOR A ROADMAP* and *EVERYBODY’S REACHING OUT FOR SOMEONE*), *Don & David Parmley* (*MOUNTAIN LAUREL* and *HOME ABOVE*), *Ralph Stanley* (*MOUNTAIN FOLKS* and *RANK STRANGER*), the *Osborne Brothers* (*ROCKY TOP* and *MIDNIGHT FLYER*), plus *The Whites*, *The Reno Brothers* and *Ramona Jones*. It’s great to see all of these artists in action, in nice color and sound! **DVD—\$ 18.00**



**SR-1962 JAMES ALAN SHELTON “Where I’m Bound”** James Alan Shelton—long time lead guitarist for *Ralph Stanley*, has another well done, enjoyable album featuring his guitar work (including much of his clean, trademark cross picking). Shelton plays a bit of banjo, mandolin and bass too, and gets some nice help from fiddler *Dewey Brown* and *Audey Ratliff* on mandolin. A nice selection of 14 tunes includes *CHEROKEE SHUFFLE*, *ROSE CONLEY*, *BUCKAROO*, *HOME SWEET HOME*, *DANNY BOY*, *AULD LANG SYNE*, *PASTURES OF PLENTY*. *CATCH THE WIND*, etc. **\$ 13.50**

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