



The Folk Club of Reston-Herndon

Preserving the traditions of Folk Music, Folk Lore, and Gentle Folk Ways

www.RestonHerndonFolkClub.com

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August 12 Showcase – Scott Malyszka

Here is my autobiography. It is mostly accurate. Every paragraph is based on a true story.

I was born in a trailer in western Pennsylvania. The next day, a tornado flipped the trailer on its side, so a bunch of neighbors came over and tipped the trailer back up the way it was supposed to be. The aluminum sides of the trailer were all dented, but we couldn't help that. When I was in the ninth grade, one of the other kids on the school bus said that it looked like someone got drunk and tried to take a hammer to our humble home. That was a proud day for me.

I wrote my first song when I was four, but I got in trouble for it. I wrote it on the bathroom wall in the All Souls Elementary boys' room with a crayon. Our teacher, Miss Doorstop, did not approve of vandalism. She also did not approve of the profanities that I used in my song - especially the one that I used to describe her, though my intentions were pure. I learned at a young age that it is a sin to make other people laugh. I stopped writing songs for the time being, but I did keep the guys in kindergarten chuckling by singing "Smoking In the Boys' Room" while we were all lined up in the restroom waiting our turn.

I was a flop at the fifth grade talent show when I tried to play the piano. In seventh grade I was the best flute player in the school band and orchestra. In eleventh grade the band director threw things at me and almost kicked me out for being the worst baritone sax player he'd ever heard. He even had the trombone section rough me up one day after school in hopes that I would wise up. In college I played flute in several classical ensembles and studied classical guitar for a few years. You win some, you lose some.

When I was twenty-one, I didn't have anything better to do, so I went to seminary. I won an award for being one of the top students in biblical studies, but the joke was on them. I was actually quite gifted in Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic, Akkadian, and Pennsylvania Dutch not due to hard hours at study, but because I was secretly attending a Pentecostal Mennonite church to receive the gift of tongues. No one at the seminary ever suspected the miraculous source of my good grades, though the president did talk to me a few times after hearing that I was an amateur blasphemer. None of the charges stuck, and I still hold my Master of Divinity degree.

I ran for president in 1992, but Ross Perot paid me off to drop out of the election. Somehow he still lost. But I took the money and lived in Israel for about six months. My upstairs neighbors were from Minnesota and were looking for a guitar player, so we started a bluegrass gospel trio. We played at several churches in the Jerusalem area in 1993. We even played at a Hebrew-speaking church in the West bank in a town called Tartoon; the pastor decided to let us play once he had certified that we were all saved. I have since learned that one does not need to be saved in order to play bluegrass music. Blues maybe, folk music definitely, but not bluegrass.

Enough autobiography for now. For this showcase set I will play a few songs from my new CD, "I Don't Have Friends Anymore." I will also play some new original songs to try them out on you all. I love the enthusiasm and friendliness here at the Folk Club, and I hope that I can put a few good numbers out there for your ears to enjoy.

I play a 6-string dreadnaught guitar made by Mike Mears, a.k.a. Windy Hill Guitar Works, located in Fairfax Station VA. See his gorgeous work at <http://www.windyhillguitarworks.com>.

I also play fiddle and 12-string in a string band called Feel the Wag. The band features Bud Burwell on hammered dulcimer, Bill Smoot on mandolin, and Al Bernier sometimes on guitar and mandolin. We jam and practice almost every week at Reston's Used Book Shop in the Lake Anne Village Center. We will probably be at the Bluemont Fair in September, so come give us a listen there. Or hire us for a house concert if you dare. You can get in touch with me about my CD, booking a gig, or whatever else at <http://www.feelthewag.com>. My CD will be available soon at cdbaby.com and other music websites.

Old-Time Fiddler – Luther Davis



Luther Franklin Davis (1887-1986) was a real Old Time fiddler. Not to be confused with more modern country styles like bluegrass, the music of the late 18th and early 19th centuries was focused on simple melodies, performed by solo artists who embellished their playing with unique bowing techniques to add color and flair. In the early 1800's, a particular style of fiddle playing, unique to the area in southwest Virginia near the modern city of Galax, was codified by a fiddler named **Greenberry "Green" Leonard** (b. 1810). In the 20th century this style became known as the "Galax style". Luther was a link in the gathering and passing on of this traditional style, learning some of his music from fiddlers who'd learned directly from Leonard, including **Emmett Lundy** and **Friel Lowe**.

The first time Luther saw a fiddle was when he was 7 years old. In those days, schools were largely one-room structures, dotting the countryside, and served as local centers for community activity. On the last day of school, "**Uncle**" **Spottswood Blevins** played for the entertainment, along with his son, Sam on the banjo. Having played only harmonica up to this point, Luther decided he wanted to play the banjo. He salvaged an old tin bucket, from which he cut a pan, and his father helped him carve a neck from poplar wood. His mother twisted horse hairs together and coated them with beeswax to make the strings.

Luther's musical interests were fostered by his supportive parents. His father was an avid and studied singer, with songs for just about every activity or occasion. Once, while plowing a field with his father, an old song, "Cindy" came to mind. Forgetting all else, Luther stopped his team of horses, and ran across the fields to get his banjo to learn to play the tune. When he returned to the field, his father was sitting on the plow beam and asked him what happened. Luther explained, "Oh, I just happened to think of a tune that I wanted to play." His father replied, "Hmmm...", and they went back to plowing.

Luther played banjo until he was about 15. At that time, he was playing regularly with friends **Jim Blevins** and **Fred Wilson**. Since they all played the banjo, Jim wanted Luther or Fred to learn the fiddle. They both started learning, and began visiting and studying regularly with **Isom and Fielden Rector**, who had learned much in the mid-1800's from **George Suttle** (a contemporary of Green Leonard). The boys (and especially Luther) were perfectionists, who would stay all night with the Rectors, if necessary, to learn a new tune properly. Eventually, they got to where they were adding their own embellishments, much to the interest of their mentors, who were duly impressed.



Luther played often at local activities with friends Jim and Fred or with Isom and Fielden Rector until about 1930, when many factors combined to minimize his opportunities to play. During this period, up until the 1970's, he served in several capacities. He often judged the fiddle competition at the Galax Old Fiddler's Convention, though he did not have enough appreciation of more modern styles to hold his interest, and eventually stopped going. He was also a deputy sheriff and a county supervisor later on, but it was as an auctioneer that Luther achieved greatest fame during this period. People would come from all over to see and hear him entertain the crowd. His imposing presence and ready wit kept the crowd enthralled.

In later years, Luther became an influence to younger players, such as **Tom Carter**, **Blanton Owen**, **Alice Gerrard**, and **Don Mussell**. His desire to play was still strong, and though he diligently strove to impress on the younger players how to play the tune with the correct embellishments, he was wistfully regretful of no longer being able to play as he used to. (Continued on next page)

(Luther Davis – continued)

Luther passed away just 5 days after his 99th birthday, and today his legacy, and the old-time music traditions he treasured are carried on by those who were fortunate enough to have known him. Most of the info for this article came from “The Old Time Way”, a booklet and LP combo released in 1986 by Andy Cahan and Alice Gerrard. If you ever find a copy, you can learn much more about Luther.

My thanks to **Alice Gerrard**, **Don Mussell**, and all those who contributed to “The Old Time Way”. Visit Don’s website for a personal perspective on Luther:

http://www.well.com/user/dmsml/luther_davis

<http://www.alicegerrard.com>

MUSICAL NOTES

Folk Club Anniversary Party – August 19th

The Folk Club will be celebrating its 21st anniversary at the Tortilla Factory this month. We’ll be following our standard party night music format (single-song slots), and giving out CD’s as door prizes. Come on out and help us party!

Folk Club Campout – August 30th – September 1st

The annual campouts are one of the oldest traditions of The Club, having been held in one form or another since 1986. Dave has been hosting the get-togethers since 1990. Come help Dave and Beth (and everyone else!) celebrate their annual Labor Day Folk Club Campout. Meals are provided (for a small contribution charge), so pack up your tents, drinks, and instruments and come on out to the beautiful Double Trouble Estate in Stephenson, VA. See Dave or Beth at The Club for more info, and be sure to make your reservations by August 27th.

Special Note for Maggie Sansone Concert

There will be no open mike on September 9th, the night of the Maggie Sansone & Friends concert. Stage requirements for the 4 players unfortunately won’t allow space for players before the show.

ALL AROUND THE TOWN

That’s right – they don’t just play at The Folk Club!

Larry Mediate

Featuring the Zen Consultants: Jerry Bresee, Bernie Muller-Thym, Tony Donnelly and Ron Goad.

Friday, August 29th 7:00 PM at Bangkok Blues, Falls Church VA. <http://www.bangkokblues.com/>

Bangkok Blues is a smoke free venue!

T.M Hanna, www.birdphluph.com

Somos El Mar, www.schoolshows.com/somoselmar

Demetrios Liadis

www.myspace.com/demetriosjam or call 571-247-8969

Tomy Wright

Contact Tomy at tomy@tomywright.com, 301-637-5707

www.tomywright.com

Ron Goad – hosting the following SAW events:

- Every Monday 8pm, showcase at The Brewer’s Alley, Frederick, MD. <http://www.Brewers-Alley.com>

- 3rd Thursday and 4th Tuesday each month 7:30-11pm, variety showcase at Bangkok Blues, Falls Church, VA.

<http://www.bangkokblues.com>

- Last Saturday each month 12:30-4:30pm, theme shows at Red Rocks Café, Centreville, VA.

<http://www.restaurant.com/redrocks>

Contact Ron at MisterGoad@aol.com

Beth Benedetto

Online at www.cookstudios.com. Click on Celtic Juice, YouTube, selection #1: "Sean-nós singing with Beth Benedetto".

Chelle Fulk (with Keltish) Contact Chelle at 703-471-1968, or check the website at: <http://www.keltish.com>

Doris Justis

<http://www.dorisjustis.com> - Folk, original, and contemporary music

Lee Bock

<http://www.leebocksongs.com/>

MONTHLY MILESTONES

Born This Month:

8/1/1931 – “Ramblin” Jack Elliot

8/1/1942 – Jerry Garcia

8/4/1901 – Louis Armstrong

8/8/1944 – John Renbourn

8/12/1929 – Alvis Edgar “Buck” Owens, Jr.

8/14/1941 – David Crosby

8/22/1917 – John Lee Hooker

8/27/1925 – Carter Stanley

And In Passing:

8/6/1973 – Lizzie Douglas (a.k.a. ‘Memphis Minnie’)

8/9/1995 – Jerry Garcia

8/13/1951 – Dan Fogelberg

8/15/1958 – “Big” Bill Broonzy

8/16/1938 – Robert Johnson

8/16/2005 – Vassar Clements

8/19/1959 – “Blind” Willie McTell

8/21/1918 – Orville Gibson

8/29/1976 – Jimmy Reed

Quote for the Month

“The love of music does not require perfection. It waits to be surprised by it, but does not expect it in every case.”

~ Garrison Keillor

THE FOLK CLUB OF RESTON-HERNDON

Meets Tuesday nights, 7:30pm at The Tortilla Factory
648 Eldon Street, Herndon, VA

President: Ray Kaminsky

Treasurer: Dave Hurd

Board of Directors: Sue Beffel, Bill Davis, TM Hanna, Lynn Jordan, Ellen Kaminsky, Chris Kramer-Harnage, Sue Schier, Ron Goad, Bob Hampton

Publicity: Sue Schier

Bookings: Ray Kaminsky

Newsletter: Bob Hampton, Dan Grove, Ray Kaminsky, Dave Hurd

Newsgroup: Dianne Lafleur

Website: Bob Hampton

FOLK CLUB FORMAT

Most Tuesday nights the Folk Club is an open-mike format with a signup board. Each performer has 12 minutes, which includes setup time. On the 2nd Tuesday of the month, we feature a "Showcase" of a Folk Club member in a 25-minute performance.

SHOWCASE PERFORMANCES

To be in the Showcase you must: 1) be a Folk Club member who has not done a showcase in the last 6 months; 2) fill out a lottery slip and place it in the "drawing bucket"; 3) Win the drawing on the night of the current month's showcase; and 4) be prepared to be featured in the next newsletter!

NEWSLETTER PUBLICATION

Folk Club members are encouraged to submit performance calendars, classified ads, articles, reviews, artwork and other music-related items to newsletter editor Bob Hampton at bhampton@ossva.com. Information should be received 1 week prior to the end of the month for the next month's newsletter. Items will be published on the basis of music-related interest, timeliness, and available space.

GET YOUR TICKETS IN ADVANCE

Advance ticket purchases for Guest Artist concert performances can be made on Tuesdays at the Folk Club or by prepaid mail. Contact Dave Hurd, 110 Devil's Backbone Overlook, Stephenson, VA 22656, (540) 722-0146

FOLK CLUB MEMBERSHIP

If you enjoy the music and company, become a member! The cost is nominal, just \$15 per year. Along with the opportunity to participate in Showcase drawings, you get a \$1 discount on the ticket price of guest artist concerts (up to

2 tickets per show). Buy 2 tickets to every show and you've saved a bundle! Join up on Folk Club Tuesdays, or call a board member for info.

NEWSGROUP

The Folk Club newsgroup is a great way of keeping in touch with what's happening around town and beyond. Just go to: <http://launch.groups.yahoo.com/group/FolkClubofRestonHerndon/>

WEBSITE

The Folk Club has its own website at:

www.RestonHerndonFolkClub.com

INFO LINE

For general folk club information contact Sue Schier at (703) 435-2402



Classifieds



FOR SALE:

Thomas Electric Organ (transistor), circa 1970's - "Lawrence Welk" Model. Excellent condition, sounds great. Has music rhythm box and chimes, as well as the complex tone settings. Dual keyboard, built-in Leslie. Size is approximately 52"Lx28"wx44"h. No bench. Would be great for a small church. If you can't figure out a way to haul it, I probably can. Call Dianne Lafleur at 443-543-7017 or 703-477-0900.

FOR SALE: Fender Acoustasonic 30 Acoustic Amplifier - barely used \$225.00 Contact Demetrios 571-247-8969 or meetro@msn.com

SEEKING MUSICIANS: Cornet and harmonica player, experienced, seeks working performer, group, or band based in NoVA (Vienna). Jazz, rock, blues, folk, pop, country. david@savageheart.com

WANTED: Your old guitar strings! The Second Strings Project has distributed over 10,000 sets to the world's most depressed regions. Send complete sets only to Kevin Deame, 28 Ladd, Ellington, CT 06029, or give them to Ray Kaminsky at The Club



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c/o Dave Hurd
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