

THE HOLLER

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Editor- Chick Cavallero

The Blues and Black History Month

February...Black History Month- a time when the Blues should be even more celebrated and recognized. The history of the Blues can't be separated from the shame of the Slave trade which brought millions of Africans across the Atlantic to this country starting in 1619. Black men and women were torn from their culture and enslaved but despite the living hell they were subjected to they still managed to weave that culture into the distinctive sound of their music. Many of the instruments that created that sound, like the banjo and the drum were rooted in Africa and even such unique aspects of the Blues like call and response were born in Africa.

The Blues were born in the darkest corner of the land that boasted of 'Freedom'. The Blues developed its deep emotional power and richness in a land where the Black race worked the richest soil in the country for the benefit and



**2013 KBA -BLUES SOCIETY
OF THE YEAR**

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CONTRIBUTERS TO THIS ISSUE: *Chick Cavallero, Michael "Hawkeye" Herman, David Booker, Jack Grace, Todd Beebe, Janice Harayda, Tarry Underwood, Rick Witt, Peter "Blewzzman" Lauro, Scott Fitzke, Jamie Crow, Kyle Deibler*



prosperity of white people. Tobacco and cotton grew in that ground, but something else grew as well- Blues music.



In 1865 slavery was abolished but Americans in the defeated South still hung on to ways to get their free labor. Free Black men found themselves in prison farms, and that experience soon became the foundation of many blues songs. Jim Crow continued to 'legalize' centuries old violence against freed Black Americans and Blues became the safest way to tell the stories of their pain and suffering.



1916 marked the beginning of The Great Migration started in 1916 and over the next 50 years over six million African Americans



left the South hoping to escape the systematic oppression and segregation. Many of them were guitar-playing



troubadours searching out musical careers during the 1940s and 50s. A large number found themselves in the larger cities like Chicago. They performed in the clubs and even in the streets. As their stage grew, Blues music grew in popularity. Muddy Waters and Howling Wolf were stars in the Chicago where Chuck Berry created a new blues sound. It was so powerful it gave birth

to the biggest white artists like Presley and Dylan, the sound even crossed the Atlantic again and created the Beatles and the Stones. Yes, the blues had a baby and called it rock and roll. That's not just a clever saying that's a fact,



Blues is a powerful mixture of so many emotions and passions. The blues is the sound of heartbreak and misery and lonesome despair. The blues is the voice of jubilation and celebration, the sound of survival and even freedom. The blues is the devil's music and selling your soul to play the guitar like no one else ever did. The blues are the booming rich voices found in a Black Baptist church, the voices of the marchers marching to overcome oppression. The blues is the downhome music of juke joints and backwoods fish fries laced with corn liquor. The blues is a Saturday night in Chicago wearing your fanciest threads and tearing it up in clubs like Theresa's Lounge. The blues is Delta country roots music, the blues is West coast swing, the blues is piedmont picking, the blues is urban Chicago, the blues is acoustic, the blues is electric, the blues is all encompassing. It is the wellspring of every American form of music, it spawned

jazz and rock and roll, but also country and folk music, and hip-hop and rap. The Blues have made a huge impact on the music of today. The blues have a story to tell, a history of the mistreatment of people and how they have endured and survived and just as important, we can all learn from the blues. Martin Luther King Jr. said, "Jazz speaks for life. The blues tells the story of life's difficulties-and, if you think for a moment, you realize that they take the hardest realities of life and put them into music, only to come out with some new hope or sense of triumph. This is triumphant music."



"The blues are the true facts of life, expressed in words and song, inspiration, feeling and understanding." — Willie Dixon

Race Records and the Newspapers

Race Records were a fact of the music industry in the early years. Not just with the racist treatment of the Recording industry and records that blatantly touted "Race Records" and stereotypes but in the media. And not just the Jim Crow newspaper of the South.

Here are a few articles from around the

Members of the Memphis "Jug" Rhythm band were wishing today that their head "jugger" had been "jugged."

Four colored players in the band, which has been "persuading" music out of jugs, washboards and other charivari material at local night clubs, were stranded in Rapid City today because their white-manager had gone off and left them stranded.

The men, left without transportation or pay, went to the police station yesterday and told Chief Len Rogers of their troubles. They complained that their manager, whose name was not secured by police, had been touring the country with them. Over the weekend, he disappeared with the car and what wages they claimed were due them.

The four colored boys were planning to hitchhike to White-wood today to secure some clothing they have stored there, and then expect to head wearily toward Memphis.

August 17th, 1936 from the Rapid City Journal, Rapid City, South Dakota

NEGRO TROUPE TO STAGE PROGRAM AT CITY HALL FRIDAY

A troupe of negro entertainers, headed by "Blind Boy" Fuller, well-known recording artist, will present a free program of entertainment at the City Hall at 8 o'clock tomorrow night, it was announced today.

Featured along with Fuller will be Sonny Boy Terry in a program which will consist of vocal and instrumental numbers and several novelty features.

Sections will be reserved by the sponsors of the program in the hall for both white and colored persons.

**The Daily Times News,
Burlington, NC November
18th, 1939**

country showing just how the blues and blues musicians were covered. The performers are always identified as "colored performers" and even the audiences are often identified as "white" and "colored". The blues has always mimicked the country's shameful history.

BLUES' RECORDS FROM THE CHICAGO WHIP

The New York Recording Laboratories, producers of Paramount phonograph records, each week insult the members of the black race with their dirty and groveling records. Last week they offered for the choice of our people a record that is calculated to appeal to ignorant, superstitions and southern traditions. It was an insidious song styled the "Graveyard-Bound Blues." White people are more superstitious than black people and they fear the graveyard and the dead more than we do, but they feel and believe that we are a "child race" and that they can get us to buy records portraying fanaticism, fear, superstition and ignorance. When they tire of that they use licentious and degrading selections hoping to appeal to the brute sides of our natures. The Paramount records are doing us as much harm as Thomas Dixon's book, "The Klansman," and are spreading a deadly propaganda against us through the world of music. Sooner or later we will decry the evil genius of such concerns and view them as they are—cold blooded exploiters who play on our delicate emotions and tender sensibilities.

The Pittsburgh Courier, January 24, 1925, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

—O— NEGROES RECORD FOR PHONOGRAPH CO.

ITTA BENA, Miss., April 18.
— Ralph Lembo and his troupe of oclored artists have returned from New Orleans where they have been for the past few days making phonograph records, and the recording manager of the Columbia Company stated to Mr. Lembo that he has a great preacher in Rev. C. T. Thornton, and also a great artist in Rev. Frank Cotton. Mr. Lembo is expecting a wire from New York in regard to his records.

This is the first time that any one from the Mississippi Delta has engaged in the making of phonograph records, and will advertise the Delta.

The Greenwood Commonwealth,
Greenwood, MS - April 18th, 1927

Extra! Extra!!

The recording colored singer, Blind Willie Johnson, will be here in person at New Jerusalem Baptist Colored Church, Saturday, night, Oct. 28th. Dont fali to hear him. Reserved seats for white people. Admission 10c. 7:45 p. m. is the hour.

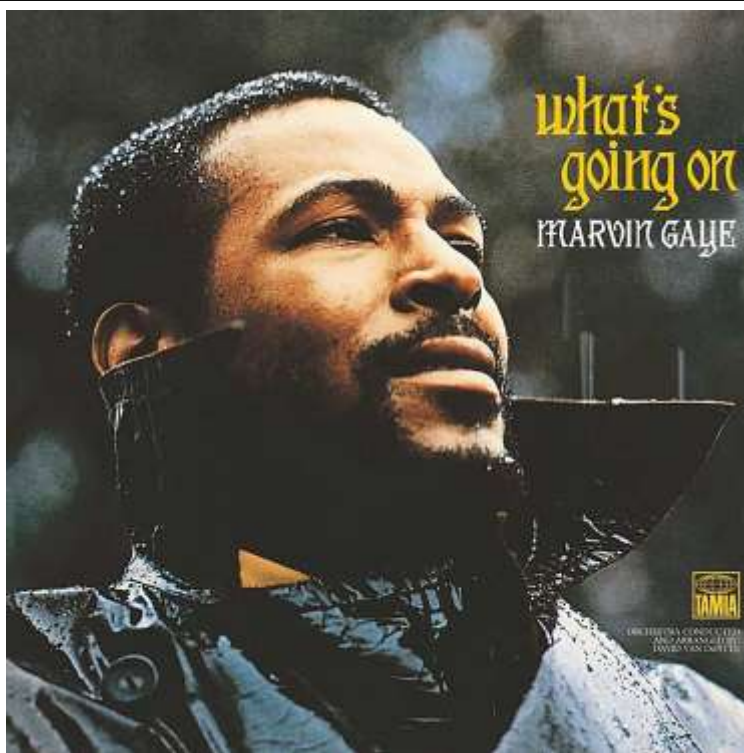
Shiner Gazette, TX October 26th, 1933 Shiner, Texas

What's Going On?

Compiled by Chick Cavallero

As the 60s became more and more turbulent, Marvin Gaye became unhappy with how Motown was treating its artists, especially how they were ignoring substance and a message in its music and focusing solely on commercialism. With the War in Vietnam taking over the country's focus Gaye became disillusioned and wanted to do something. So when Obie Benson of the Four Tops wrote "What's Going On" and asked Gaye to record it he jumped at the opportunity. Marvin made the song his own. He mixed the war references with racial strife and his own private demons. Then he took the arrangement and had the Funk Brothers (Motown's session crew) cut a jazz-inflected rhythm track that grabbed your attention. He thought this would be the perfect song to sum up his and all of America's. But when he played the recording for Berry Gordy the Motown guru, Gordy refused to release it claiming it wasn't commercial enough and

would never make any money.

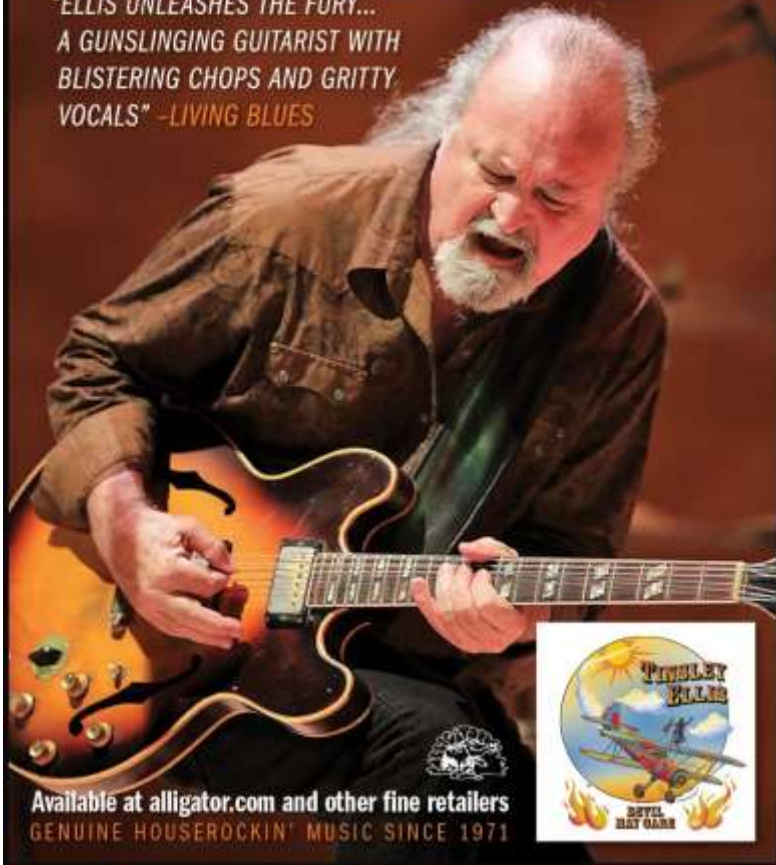


Barry Gordy's initial reaction to the song was "the worst thing I ever heard in my life"; Smokey Robinson told Gordy – " (it's no use –) like a bear shitting in the woods, Marvin ain't budging". Gaye protested the best way he could. He refused to release ANY other records for Motown until "What's Going On" was released. It took a few weeks of panic and tense moments for Motown but Gordy finally gave in and released the record. What happened?

"What's Going On" hit #5 in the charts and low and behold, Berry Gordy was suddenly a huge backer of music with a message. Marvin Gaye put together a number of similar social conscience songs with a message and Motown released its first "concept" album. Songs written from the point of view of a Vietnam Veteran. Gaye based the songs on letters he received from his brother who was in Vietnam. The album became a huge hit, selling over 2 million copies and set about a decade of socially themed soul music!

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QUOTES from The Tinsley Ellis website:

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Ellis mixes soul and fire." –
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*"Rugged, burning and
riveting...Tinsley Ellis is a
powerful and commanding
presence, both on guitar
and as a gruff, full-throated
vocalist. He's the hardest-
working man in blues-
rock...It's impossible to not
enjoy the ride." –Blues
Music Magazine*



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CONCERT & PERFORMANCE PHOTOGRAPHY

See Rick's work on page 42 with his photos of the Tommy Castro Show in December at The Oriental



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Memphis Minnie — Blues Giant

By Michael "Hawkeye" Herman
<http://www.hawkeyeherman.com/>

"One of America's finest acoustic guitarists and blues educators."

For those of you who are not aware of the woman who was among the first



twenty performers elected to the Hall of Fame in the inaugural W.C. Handy Awards in 1980, who won the top female vocalist award in the first Blues Unlimited Readers' Poll in 1973 (finishing ahead of Bessie Smith and Ma Rainey), let me take a few moments to explain this woman's massive contribution to the blues.

Universally regarded as one of the greatest blues artists of all time, Memphis Minnie (1897-1973) wrote and recorded hundreds of songs, among them the famous, "Bumble Bee Blues," "Me and My Chauffeur," "Black Rat Swing," "I'm Talking About You," and "What's The Matter With The Mill?" Blues people as diverse as Muddy Waters, Koko Taylor, Johnny Shines, Big Mama Thornton, and Chuck Berry have acknowledged her as a major influence. At a time when most female vocalists sang Tin Pan Alley material, Minnie wrote her own lyrics and accompanied her singing with magnificent guitar-

playing. Thanks to her merciless imagination and dark humor, her songs rank among the most vigorous and challenging poetry in any language.

Although organized feminism was at its lowest ebb, Memphis Minnie, a black working-class woman, called no man her master, defied gender stereotypes, and exemplified a radically adventurous lifestyle that makes most careers of the 20's and 30's seem dull by comparison. At a time when women were "kept in their place," both personally and professionally, Memphis Minnie helped to make it okay for her sisters to be tough, outspoken, and play a mean guitar. Johnny Shines recalls, "Any men fool with her, she'd go for them right away. She didn't take no foolishness off of them." She was more than just a guitar hero. She was capable of modernizing her style and ably adapted to newer trends, which helped account for her years of popularity. Memphis Minnie was one of the few figures to make the successful transition from the rural, guitar dominated blues of the 1920's to the urban nightclub styles of the 1930's.

Born Lizzie "Kid" Douglas, in Algiers, Louisiana, on June 3rd, 1897, her family moved to Walls, Mississippi (just outside Memphis), in 1904. She was the oldest of thirteen children. She got her first guitar as a Christmas present in 1905, and began to teach herself to play. She ran away from home at the age of 13, and began to perform on the streets of Memphis, and neighboring communities, as "Kid" Douglas, eventually working in tent shows throughout the South for Ringling Brothers Circus. She settled in Memphis between 1916 and 1920, and began to play on Beale Street and in its saloons and bars. In her early years, she often played lead guitar and sang with Willie Brown and Willie Moore, two Delta blues heavy hitters who were pals of Son House, and mentors of Robert Johnson. While living in Memphis, she formed a partnership with Kansas City Joe McCoy, who became her husband. Her first recordings, in 1929, "Bumble Bee Blues" / "I'm Talking About You," were hits, and between 1929 and 1941 she was one of the most prolific blues recording artists, producing over 150 songs. Her songs were even covered by the western-swing bands of Bob Wills, Milton Brown, and the Maddox Brothers and Rose. In 1930, she moved to Chicago, where she became a mainstay of the blues community. In Chicago, in 1933, she won first prize in a local blues singing contest over Big Bill Broonzy (!!) with whom she would later tour. In 1935, she left Joe McCoy, and the tight guitar duet work they had created, and began working with rhythm sections on records designed for dancing and jukeboxes. In 1941, after she acquired an electric guitar, she had another major hit, "Me and My Chauffeur," which made all the jukeboxes, as well as the hit song, "Black Rat Swing." She remained active into the mid-1950's. She returned to Memphis, and in failing health, became inactive in music, confined to various local nursing homes. Memphis Minnie suffered a fatal stroke on August 6th, 1973. She is buried in New Hope Cemetery, Walls, Mississippi.

Sources: 1. *The Blues Who's Who*, by Sheldon Harris, Arlington House Pub., NY, NY. 2. *Nothing But the Blues*, by Lawrence Cohn, Abbeville Press, NY, NY. 3. *Woman With Guitar: Memphis Minnie's Blues*, by Paul and Beth Garon, DaCapo Press, NY, NY.



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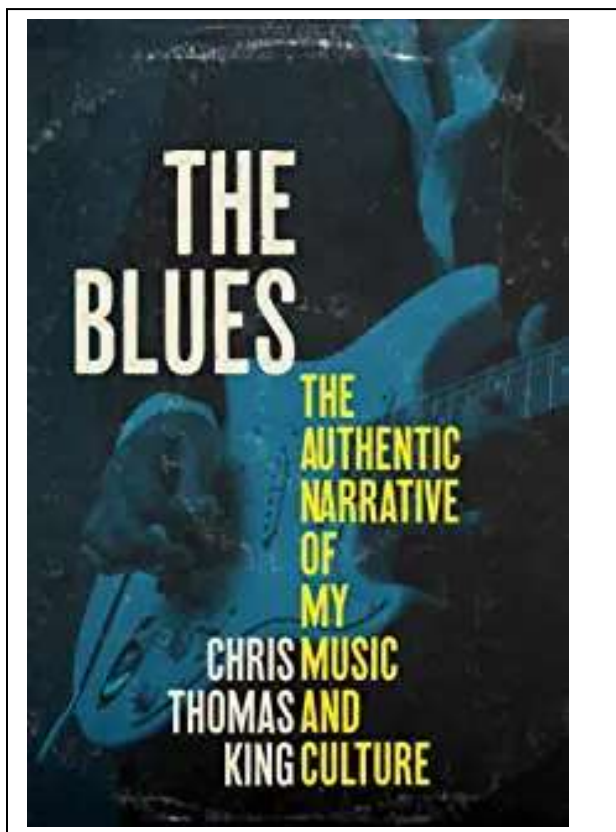
Colorado Blues fan's choice for all real estate needs"

The Blues - The Authentic Narrative of My Music and Culture Chris Thomas King

Book Review by Jack Grace

Chicago Review Press Incorporated - 2021

Chris Thomas King is a bluesman, actor, and now an author. He pioneered blues-hip hop music but is best known for his acoustic folk-blues owing largely to his portrayal of Tommy Johnson in the movie *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* King also played Lowell Fulsom in the movie *Ray*.



I think of the book, *The Blues*, as really being two distinct books. The first half is a very interesting treatise on the origins of blues music. It contains a lot of relevant history and dispels many accepted ideas about the origins of the blues. The second half of the book is an autobiography of King growing up in Baton Rouge with deep family roots in the blues.

My review is going to begin in reverse order because his life story leads to his search for the beginnings of the blues and because it establishes him as someone with the street cred to understand and know the subject.

King was born in Baton Rouge, LA, in 1962. His father was a well known local bluesman performing as Rockin' Tabby Thomas and the Mighty House Rockers. King's father gave up touring due to financial pressures and worked in a

factory. Music was too powerful of a siren so Tabby saved money from the factory job and opened a juke joint, Tabby's Blues Box. The juke joint ran continuously from 1979 to 1999 in its first location and another five years in a second.

That is the world in which King grew up. He learned the blues from his father and the other bluesmen playing at the club. King helped to run the club and played rhythm guitar behind his father.

In search of a larger audience, King moved to Austin and found some acceptance there. Eventually he won a recording contract with Warner Records. It seemed he was on his

way to the big time. But, he persisted in pushing his vision of blues combined with hip-hop. Warner thought it had signed a traditional blues artist so lost interest. Two years later King left again for Europe with less than \$200 to his name. He eventually signed with House of Blues but that deal died when his major patron was forced out of management.

King's big break came with landing the role of Tommy Johnson in *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* He soon learned that actors are treated much better than aspiring blues artists. He rode the wave created by *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* to a successful acting and recording career.

In 2005, Hurricane Katrina flooded King and his family out of their house in New Orleans. He spent the next ten years piecing together the origins of the blues whenever he was not performing.

That leads us back to the first half of the book. He refutes what he lists as three myths about the blues. One, the blues originated in Mississippi. King writes, "The blues was invented in the 1890s, by Black Creoles in New



Orleans, Louisiana." Second, blues is sad melancholy music. Not so according to King. "The blues became a term of enlightened Creole pride, an expression of humanity in defiance of a totalitarian government towards its Black citizens. The blues expressed rebelliousness, rejecting social control by the church and a racist Christian ethos in pursuit of equality and happiness." Third, the more primitive the music is, the more authentic it is. King argues that the blues originated with accomplished urban musicians who embraced improvisation rather than playing music strictly as written.

King names Buddy Bolden, Jelly Roll Morton, and King Oliver as the true founders of



the blues. He also credits Lonnie Johnson as the rightful King of the Delta Blues guitar although Johnson was from New Orleans. Mississippi John Hurt, Muddy Waters, and B.B. King all count Lonnie Johnson as one of their biggest influences. How could that be?

Lonnie Johnson was a very innovative acoustic blues guitarist. His music went viral (in today's terms) throughout the Mississippi Delta and Hill Country through records. Musicians in these places could not afford horns or pianos but, by way of Sears, they could afford acoustic guitars. Most would have learned the music by ear and then would make it their own.

As we know, the blues became very guitar centric in Mississippi and even more so, when electrified, as it moved to Chicago and other large cities.

There is a lot of history in the first half of this book, even going back as far as the Spanish and French colonization of the Gulf Coast, for blues enthusiasts to gnaw on. The second half, King's autobiography, enables us to accompany a modern bluesman in the struggle to make a living in his chosen profession.

King gave an eleven minute Ted Talk entitled "The Blues Was Born in Louisiana, Not Mississippi." It is well worth watching to get a flavor and taste of this insightful book.

https://youtu.be/Cy_tXHpiDd0

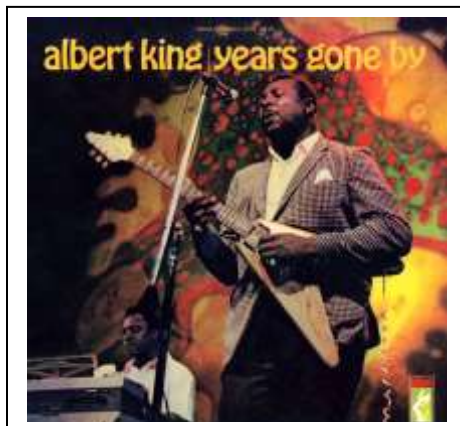
Albert King: The Velvet Bulldozer

by Todd Beebe

(reprinted from May 18, 2012 BG: Blues And Music News.)

In the history of the Blues, the name Albert King will always be known as one of the great guitarists, a man who helped define the style. At 6 ft. 4 in. and weighing in at 250 pounds, Mr. King's towering presence was only matched by his intimidating prowess on the 6 string. Playing his guitar "upside down" (he was left handed but played a guitar strung right handed), he incorporated a unique minor tuning combined with extreme string bends and a tone from Heaven to lead him to be called "the Velvet Bulldozer."

Albert Nelson King was born in Indianola, Mississippi on April 25, 1923. He started with music by singing in a family Gospel group. Soon, however, the Blues came calling, and he found himself drawn to its power by great artists like Blind Lemon Jefferson and Lonnie Johnson. Albert's first real group, The In The Groove Boys, began to make a name for themselves after relocating to Osceola, Arkansas. By the dawn of the 1950's he would move again; first to Gary, Indiana, then St. Louis, Missouri. For a short time he actually played drums behind bluesman Jimmy Reed.



Eventually, King landed in Chicago and cut his first single for the Parrot label. It was around this time he began using the instrument he would become known for: The Gibson Flying V guitar. His was a 1958 that he lovingly named "Lucy." With it's distinct "V" shape, the guitar looked like a mere toy in the hands of the giant Albert King- and the two became a match made in Blues heaven.

King played up and down the Blues circuit during this time, paying his dues. He did have one early hit, 1961's "Don't Throw Your Love On Me So Strong," which became a hugely popular and remained on King's set list for the rest of his life. But it wasn't until 1966, when Albert signed with the great Stax label in Memphis, Tennessee that the real

sparks began to fly. He was backed up in the studio (as well as on numerous live gigs) by the great Stax house band, Booker T. & the MG's. Together they cranked out the Blues like a well oiled machine, with monster hits like "Born Under A Bad Sign," "Crosscut Saw," and "As The Years Go Passing By." Many of the songs they produced are now considered Blues standards.

These tunes, along with Albert's earlier work, influenced a whole new generation of Rock guitarists. As the late 1960's psychedelic scene dawned, he found himself a hero to the likes of Jimi Hendrix, Michael Bloomfield, Jeff Beck and Eric Clapton, who did his



Albert with The Doors-Jim Morrison and Robbie Krieger

own cover version of "Born Under A Bad Sign" with Cream. This opened up new audiences for King, as he was booked alongside many Rock acts of the day at great venues such as Bill Graham's Fillmore East and West. Said Graham, "Albert was one of the artists I used many times for various reasons. He wasn't just a good guitar player; he had a wonderful stage presence, he was very congenial and warm, he was relaxed on stage, and he related to the public. Also, he never became a shuck-and-jiver." Albert was now exposed to a whole new generation as he jammed onstage with everyone from



Hendrix and Janis Joplin to the Doors.

Graham's words are indeed true. There was no room for "shuck-and-jive" in Albert King's world. His no-nonsense, hard working attitude saw him play the Blues and carry its torch through numerous musical fads and trends. None of that mattered to him. He was a Bluesman, and wasn't ashamed to let the world know it. On many live recordings King tells the audience, "we're here to hold down the Blues end of things!" Albert was a true master of his craft who could play to any audience. He could share the bill with numerous acts of other styles, yet go out and play straight Blues for that same crowd and win them over. He brought new fans to the Blues.

The 1980's saw King touring and continuing to influence an even newer breed of Blues musicians, with Stevie Ray Vaughan at the top of that list. Check out the great "In Session" CD/DVD of the 2 greats playing together. It is hands down some of the greatest Blues ever recorded, a lesson in how it's supposed to be done.



In the 1990's King talked about retiring, but he never showed signs of doing so. On December 21, 1992, Albert King died in Memphis, Tennessee. No one ever bent the strings on a guitar like Albert. Anytime anyone picks up a guitar and attempts it, even if they've never heard the name Albert King, they are keeping his spirit alive. His style is one of the most copied in the music field, without a doubt, and for good reason: Albert King was never a follower. No trends, no jive, just pure, real Blues, straight from the heart. That kind

of honesty lives forever. That's why Albert King lives forever.



Stevie Ray Vaughan with Albert



Todd Beebe is a full time musician/teacher in the Chicago area and a staff writer at BG: Blues And Music News. His first exposure to music was hearing his Grandfather's bands playing Traditional Country music by the likes of Hank Williams Sr., The

Carter Family and Jimmie Rodgers. Tracing the roots of that music lead him to his love of the Blues. Check out more interviews, articles and music with Todd Beebe at

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CBS Solicits Board Nominations for 2022

As the Colorado Blues Society heads into its 27th year, we are looking for dedicated members to guide the organization. The challenging dynamics of “keeping the blues alive”, requires board members with up-to-date skills and energy to give their time and talents to support the CBS mission.

This is a commitment to work together to make a difference. If you have a passion for the blues, experience in business or non-profits, event organizing, computer or IT skills, a financial, accounting or educational background along with the capacity to serve in a volunteer position, please run for election to the CBS board.

Nominations for the CBS Board are underway and will close on February 28, 2022. All CBS members are eligible for candidacy. Any member may be nominated by another member or by self-nomination. If the nominee is not a member or your membership has lapsed, the nominee may join or renew between now and January 30th. Please provide the name, address, phone number and email address of the nominee. The election voting shall begin on March 1, 2022, through March 15, 2022.

In addition to at-large Board Members, CBS has the following officer positions up for election/re-election:

President, VicePresident,
Secretary, Treasurer

Newly elected and re-elected board members will begin their two-year term on April 1, 2022. All board members are

expected to serve on a committee or special task force and be an active member by attending monthly board meetings and participating in CBS events.

Nominations should be emailed to CBS Secretary Scott Fitzke at sfitzke@fsmllaw.net.
Cc: CBS Vice President Robert “Wolf” Perlman at upamtn@comcast.net.

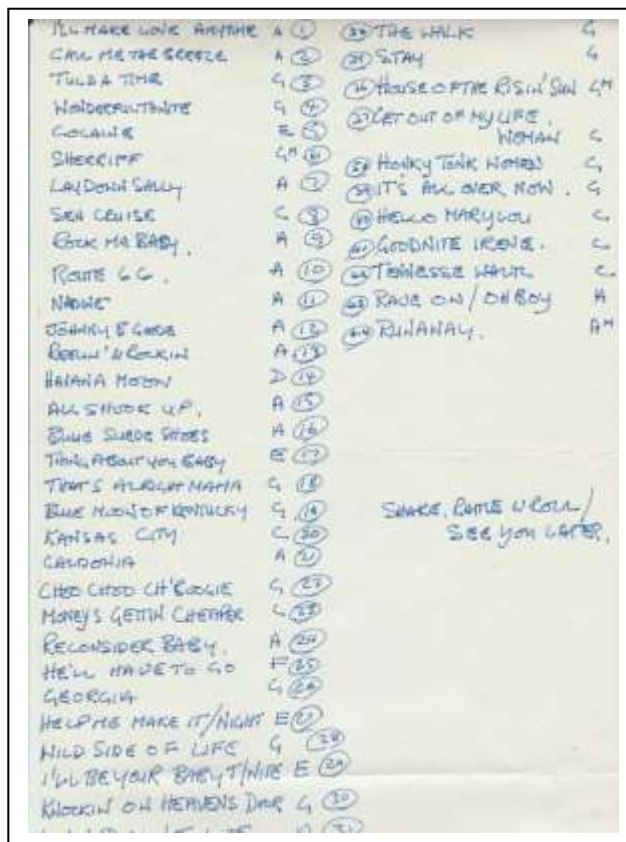


David Booker's Stateside Chronicles

Part 1

By David Booker

As we enter into my "Stateside Chronicles" a little reminder about the combo I had in London, the aforementioned Regulars, a pub, and occasional college gig band. Here's a photo and the actual song list I used, as you can see, we needed no rehearsal for these tunes and the Country tunes were to stand me in good stead as I plunged in headfirst into Colorado music.



David Ferretta

Details of my flight from London and my arrival at Stapleton Airport have been erased by the passage of time, but I did find my way to my buddies house (Dick Brown) and I do remember the huge suitcase containing everything I had and all the cash I could muster to sustain me, while I set out to start all over again and find work. The 100 Lp's I shipped beforehand were there to greet me as I unpacked and set up house in Dicks basement. I remember asking myself over and over, what the hell have I done? I remember heading down to Ferretta's music store owned by New Jersey folkie/picker David Ferretta, he was in the store, and I told him I was a bass

player/vocalist and I'd just arrived from U.K and was looking for a gig. He told me to pin my name, number and details on the notice board and wished me good luck, I recall going round to other music stores and leaving my details in a similar fashion!

It's still unclear in my memory how this panned out, but somehow, I got a gig with a Western Swing Band called Rage Of The Sage, Bob Peters, Vicki Taylor, Jim Stahlhut were all jazz musicians playing country to make a buck (Their break tunes were Charlie Parker tunes!) I'd gone down to Wedgles on Broadway, and kitted myself out with a Left-handed Telecaster bass exactly like the one I had sold in UK, and a bass amp. We played a few gigs, the tunes were right up my street, Wynonie Harris' Bloodshot eyes comes to mind, it was covered by Asleep At The Wheel and had great chord changes, I was getting it together and gigging in the USA! The most memorable gig was a cowboy bar in Granby, because right afterwards they cancelled a full calendar of gigs! Sacrilege in my book! I guess they'd been having trouble with their drummer who was also fairly new and not easy to swing with (I hope it wasn't me!). This was a pretty devastating start to my musical career in the U.S!

I met a guy called Brett Swales a good guitarist and singer he'd gotten a weekend gig in South Forks Colorado, and we hired Alan, a guy from the Oak Creek Canyon Band to play drums, we assembled a set list while driving down there and it went really well, we called ourselves the Country Wizards!

At a chance gig at the Wild Wild West Bar, with Brett I met a drummer/singer called John Homerski (R.I.P Nov 2021) After a gig as a reformed Rage Of The Sage for one night with Stahlhut, a guy called Gordon on guitar, and John on drums at Pistol Pete's, John suggested we get his musical Army buddy in from back east on guitar and form something, I guess he,



like me had noticed everyone was so non-committal in Denver and John convinced me he could book like hell. I had nothing to lose, so in a couple of weeks we got Jeff Michel on guitar, rehearsed ferociously, and found we blended well not just musically, but vocally too. We got a Photo promo shot, agreed on the name

Payday, for the band and quickly hit the road. Gigs in Greeley like Giollotis, Kerseys Lounge, a gig in Limon and the memorable Shads Lounge in Sterling were the early gigs. Let me tell you about Shad's gig! We arrived late afternoon to set up, and asked where Shad was, the bartender pointed to the floor and there was Shad, passed out cold in his cowboy boots, the bartender said he's always passed out its Friday, and not to worry we were still all set to play that night. Shad was carried out, we played the gig, got paid and got the heck outta' there!



The gigs began to improve, we worked endlessly on vocal harmonies usually in the van while driving, soon we sounded really excellent-a Country Power trio! We hit all the Ramada Inns in Colorado and cowboy bars in Wyoming, all too numerous to remember now, we were making good money.



David Booker

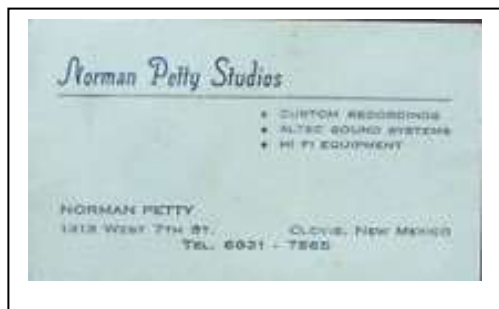
John wanted to expand to a 4 piece, but Jeff and I didn't, nevertheless we tried a guy called Pete out on Steel and Fiddle, Jeff and I did not care for him at all and after a week's gig in Portales New Mexico Jeff and I decided to form a duo without John. We had gotten in touch with an agent who we called weekly (kinda' like Charlies Angels!) to get the new schedule for the next set of dates. We replaced John with a Roland CR 8000 drum machine which we put



DAVE BOWKER & JEFF MICHEL

through my bass amp, I had bought a new Fender 4x12 combo and we continued on gigging.

PORTALES, CLOVIS, NORMAN PETTY and BUDDY HOLLY



Backing up slightly here, while gigging in Portales, I ventured to nearby Clovis to track down Norman Petty (Norman recorded most of the Buddy Holly hits of the 50's in his original studio in Clovis) I asked at the local music store where I could find him and it was very apparent that Petty was not popular with the locals, it was only later I learned that Petty had withheld thousands of dollars of Buddy's royalties

forcing him to accept that fateful winter tour in February 1959.

While the courts deliberated on whether Buddy was going to get the money, he had to in the meantime, pay bills, as he had married and moved to New York where he could write and while the Crickets had to Lubbock Texas, their hometown. The tour hit Clear Lake, Iowa on February 2nd,



Buddy Holly's last bus ride



The Buddy Holly crash site, February 3, 1959

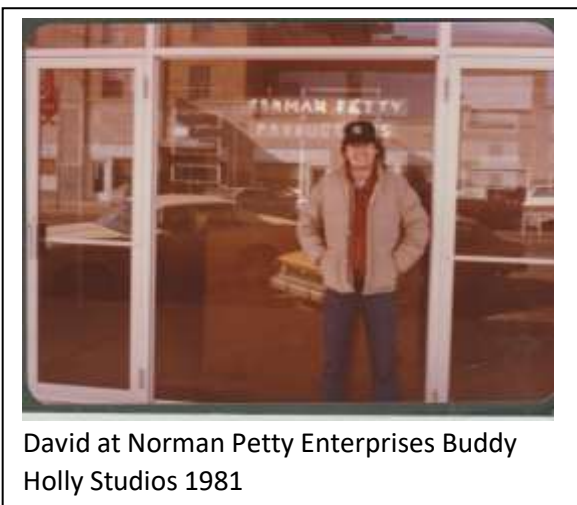
further his career, elected to move back

conditions were brutally cold, the heaters on the buses had long broken down and after the gig at the Surf Ballroom its now common knowledge that Buddy, along with The Big Bopper, and Ritchie Valens tried to fly out after the show in the early morning of February 3rd, 1959. Their remains were found in a field, hours later along with the wreckage of the aircraft, the Bopper had been thrown 40 yards or so into the next field and died on impact, the 19-year-old pilot also perished that night. This tragedy could have been avoided had Petty coughed up the dough he owed Buddy instead of trying to control him by not paying up.

Of course, I had no idea that this was the case at that time as I gamely knocked on the door of an old movie theater that housed the current Norman Petty Enterprises. The door opened slowly, and I said "Norman"? he said "yes," and I said "Hi, I'm from England" realizing it wasn't any of the locals hassling him he opened the door and let me in. I explained I was playing a gig in Portales and I HAD to come to Clovis to breathe in a little history, I said "I just wanted to look you up I'm a big Buddy Holly fan", he was very pleasant, and said "come into the office" I pulled out a cassette of my demos I'd recently made in UK



Norman Petty Enterprises original Buddy Holly Studios 1981



David at Norman Petty Enterprises Buddy Holly Studios 1981

with the Regulars, he had a listen and said "I could publish these but you won't get a penny as it could take a very long time to place anything" (he was letting me down easy but at least I got him to listen to my stuff!) He suggested he would like to show me around, the building was a converted bland looking movie theater from the outside, but as he opened the door to the theater itself he said "welcome to my mortgage mountain" the seats were covered in crushed red velvet and where the screen was, there was now a full soundstage for recording, we went upstairs to the vicinity of the old projection room which housed a state of the art 48 track mixing board, on either side of the control

room area there were isolation booths for recording acoustic instruments it was quite mind blowing, it makes you wonder in retrospect if this was all done with Buddy's money, we'll never know I guess. As we were descending the stairs, he mentioned that Linda Ronstadt visits frequently, and that Paul McCartney was just here last week, "folks come and go here but nobody knows " I read later that McCartney owns the Buddy Holly catalog now, I wonder if he was there to do the deal at that time? I mentioned I had taken some snapshots of the old studio down the street he said I'm

going down there right now , I'll show you where it all happened, "see you in a few minutes" I drove back down there and sure enough had a look inside, it was kinda' dark and a lot of stuff was covered up but I got a good glimpse of the place and REALLY soaked it all in. In the documentary produced by Paul in the 80's - The Real Buddy Holly Story, the camera takes you inside the original studio and its pretty much the same way as I saw it.

After the Portales gig was over Jeff and I Rehearsed with the new drum machine, they were much easier to operate than they are now I was in



David and Jeff on the job in Gallup, NM

charge of starting and stopping, and hitting the fill button we had every song logged so we could get fast continuity between songs. The 'Charlies Angels' agent had us working places like Grants, Albuquerque, Gallup New Mexico, Flagstaff, Sedona, Arizona, Lake Charles Texas, Guymon Oklahoma week after week, month after month, I was making money. The Guymon Oklahoma stay I could write a whole book about! I had only been in the States a few months I was playing nice gigs in a tight duo week after week the enthusiasm and accolades we got from the locals everywhere we

went was thrilling, I was living the dream.

After 9 months of non-stop gigging Jeff and I agreed to take a break when we finished our upcoming gig in Albuquerque. We were starting to drive each other nuts and getting on each other's nerves this decision cleared the air a bit. One time when the day was breaking, I woke up about 6.30 AM, Jeff was driving I said "where are we? Just coming into Lubbock Texas" said Jeff I said, "Drive to the graveyard, NOW he said, "What do you mean?" I said "you'll see GO!" so he did! I had no idea where to find Buddy Hollys grave but in the early morning light, I saw it I said "Jeff, Buddy Holly is here" it was one of those moments, he said "Good move Dave I thought you were losing it but I'm glad we made the time to come here", I dusted off Buddy's gravestone plaque and tidied it up and we took some photos. We then continued driving to the gig, I was elated.



David at the Buddy Holly grave at dawn, Lubbock, Texas

In September 1981 we finished 2 weeks at the Holiday Inn in Albuquerque, Jeff split back to Altoona PA, we had agreed to call each other in a month or two but although we have spoken on the phone several times Jeff never came out west again.

I took a short vacation in Nashville to see my buddy



The Ryman, Grand Ol Opry

Mac the drummer from Limey who was now working with Country legend Don Williams I HAD to go to the Ryman then to Wyoming,

Jackson Hole, Old Faithful, Devils Tower, Cody-the Irma Hotel, Buffalo Bill Museum, then moved back to Denver, not to Dicks house but a house off South Federal. I was driving around one day wondering what comes next, I had been listening in the car to an AM station playing some jazz and occasional blues with some current pop stuff in between, KJJZ, I kinda' liked



The Capt at the Buffalo Bill Museum in Cody, Wy



The Captain's First Solo Shot

it, I thought what the hell I'm going down there to investigate. I walked in there, the offices and control room were set up next to a giant radio mast just off Dartmouth and Federal right near where I lived, The offices and broadcasting facility was a large trailer house! I found out later it was the old KFML waveband AM 1390 a daytime station that went off the air at sundown. I said I'd like to see the owner please, the receptionist said who shall I say is here? I said David Bowker from London England the boss, Denny Workman, came out to see me, I said, "Hello I'm Dave Bowker and I believe I should be on the air on your station." He said what experience do you have? I said no radio

experience, but I have over 20 years on a live mike playing shows and entertaining people. He said, "I like your voice let's do a voice test in the production room," so he takes me in there, slides a blank cart in the recorder and gets me to read something, it felt pretty good, he says, "I love it you start tomorrow \$850 a month" It was 1981 money.

My first hour on the air was tough, I'd never cued up dual turntables before and the controls were confusing, but he popped his head in the door after about 15 minutes and said, "You're a hit, the phones are lighting up!" It felt wonderful!

He said, "We have to find you an on-air handle something that sounds British, how about Captain Crumpet?" I said, "I can't do Crumpet, but The Captain moniker might work" That's how I became the Captain!

My boss, Denny Workman, decided he wanted to do a morning show and call it Jazz in the air with The Captain and The Bear (his moniker) so we had this simulated sounds of jet engines taking off to a "different destination" every morning some listeners believed we were actually flying and were calling in to ask how we made it back in every day at 6.30 am to take off again. Unreal.

Denny said you seem to know a lot about the blues why don't you do a blues show on Saturdays? after a few weeks he called me into his office and said the blues show (which I had called the Captains Red Hot Blues Show in honor of Dewey Phillips' famous 50's Red Hot & Blue Memphis show) is getting Arbitron Ratings which meant we were showing up in the high end of listenership, which was unheard of for a small station like KJJZ.



Captains Red Hot Blues Band every Sunday at Aspen City Limits

June, my birthday was approaching, I came up with the idea of forming a band for a one-off show at the newly opened Straight Johnsons, Denver's only Blues Club which happened to be one of our advertising sponsors. After speaking to the

owner (Denny Sheneman -another Denny!) We decided on The Captains Red Hot Blues Show Birthday Party, and invite listeners to come down and meet the Captain on his Birthday. I had to find some players and quick! I made one announcement on the air and the first person to call was JD Kelly (Downey) He said look no further I have a full band ready to go, so I thought, well why not its only for one night right? I said you got a bass player; we need a guitar player coz I'm a bass player. I had an archtop electric, so



Captains Red Hot Blues Band same Aspen gig as photo before

it was decided I was to be the guitarist for the night.

We had one rehearsal and realized we were gonna' have to "wing it" for the night. We had Steve Weist trumpet (R.I.P) JD, trombone (R.I.P) and 'Fast' Freddie Kinlaw, Sax (R.I.P) Mike Berry, Drums, Steve McQuery Keys, and Mr. Ludwig Bass. With no time to write horn arrangements, I made a makeshift song list of Chuck Berry and Blues Shuffles and we all agreed to meet at 'Straights'.

KJJZ had a cool banner ideal for the stage, but Denny said no so I shrugged it off. I got to the gig early and decided to take a nap in the basement thinking it would be a pretty lame night even though I'd pushed it a bit on the air! This was going to be the test to see if anyone really was listening. I woke up after a couple of hours to see if anyone was around, to my absolute amazement the joint was packed and more people were outside waiting to get in! the band had arrived and we all changed into our stage gear, The receptionist had also arrived and had called the boss to get his ass down to Straight Johnsons! After the first set, he showed up I recall his mouth was open, and I said we sure coulda' used that KJJZ backdrop and walked off. It was an astounding night;

everyone had come to see who this English Captain guy was! Well, I was now the leader of a 7-piece Blues Band!



Captains Red Hot Blues Band at Indian Springs Resort, yep, the horns went in the pool.

NOTE:

I wrote a separate story about Dr John and the Captain's Red-Hot Blues Band which is included in this issue on page 33. We'd gotten tight and were still working on the music

when Dr John came to town, read on!

NEXT TIME:

- Things deteriorate at KJJZ Radio Station
- The Red-Hot Blues Band finds a terrible manager, but a great agent
- We work the Blues Show into the Ski Areas and Denver's night life and develop into a wild act
- Gil Asakawa becomes our savior journalist covering our every move at WESTWORD
We go through more Drummers than Spinal Tap, but we finally find our man
- We back Solomon Burke, Bo Diddley, Rufus Thomas, The Drifters, and open for Delbert McClinton, Rare Earth, and more
- Captains Red Hot Blues Band wins the FIRST EVER BEST BLUES BAND award at Westword 1984

A Harmonica Was Good Medicine When He Got Cancer

Lessons by America's top blues harpist, Jason Ricci, helped a writer after chemo

By Janice Harayda

Editor's note- This is a reprint from The Riff ([The Riff \(medium.com\)](http://TheRiff.medium.com)) an interesting eZine headed by Noah Levy you should check out. The author Janice Harayda and Noah were kind enuff to allow this reprint.



Jason Ricci's signature harmonica / Blue Moon Harmonicas

Suppose you had a serious injury or illness that ruled out all of your favorite musical activities. You couldn't go to concerts, jam with a band, or sing along with the SiriusXM tunes in the car — because you couldn't get out of bed.

How could you keep your mind musically active when your body had lost a step?

Journalist Jeremy Clarke faced a similar question after surgery and chemo for metastatic prostate cancer — and found an answer that might also work for other illnesses and certain kinds of injuries.

While convalescing, Clarke discovered that he enjoyed playing the harmonica in bed. That realization led him to YouTube tutorials by America's №1 blues harpist, Jason Ricci, a performer on Johnny Winter's Grammy Award-winning album [Step Back](#) (which also included Eric Clapton, Joe Perry of Aerosmith, Billy Gibbons of ZZ Top, and others).

Clarke discovered that YouTube had "hundreds if not thousands" of harmonica lessons that he could watch for free and teachers who offered personal instruction for a fee. He darted among the options until he came upon Ricci's online tutorials. Clarke chose Ricci, who also sings, as "my harmonica mentor, guru and anointed one":

"Sometimes he makes a tutorial in which he also talks about his life. Don't devote your life to this thing unless you are OCD and don't mind being poor all your days like him, he says."

So Clarke spent his bed-bound days "with this totally nice guy bouncing around in his chair because he's so excited now that he's clean while taking us painstakingly through his tongue-blocking technique."

Clarke doesn't say so directly, but Ricci's upbeat approach may have helped as much as any musical pointers he offered.

For more about Ricci's award-winning work and his harmonica lessons via Skype, visit his [website](#).

Chick's Note on Jason Ricci-

*This article by Janice reminded me of some earlier times here in Colorado where Jason was a frequent performer at our festivals and the Boulder Outlook, a legendary venue no longer here. There was another time Jason helped out a cancer patient. The song "Holler for Craig Lawler" on his **Done With the Devil** album was for a cancer patient/harp playing fan here in Colorado. I remember the night we even skyped Craig into the Boulder Outlook when Jason and New Blood were playing and the whole bar was "hollering for Craig Lawler". Jason has certainly battled more than his share of demons, but beside his amazing mastery of the blues harp he is a super guy with a heart as big as his talent.*



Jason at the Boulder Outlook in 2010

Colorado Blues Society Lifetime Achievement Award- Al Chesis

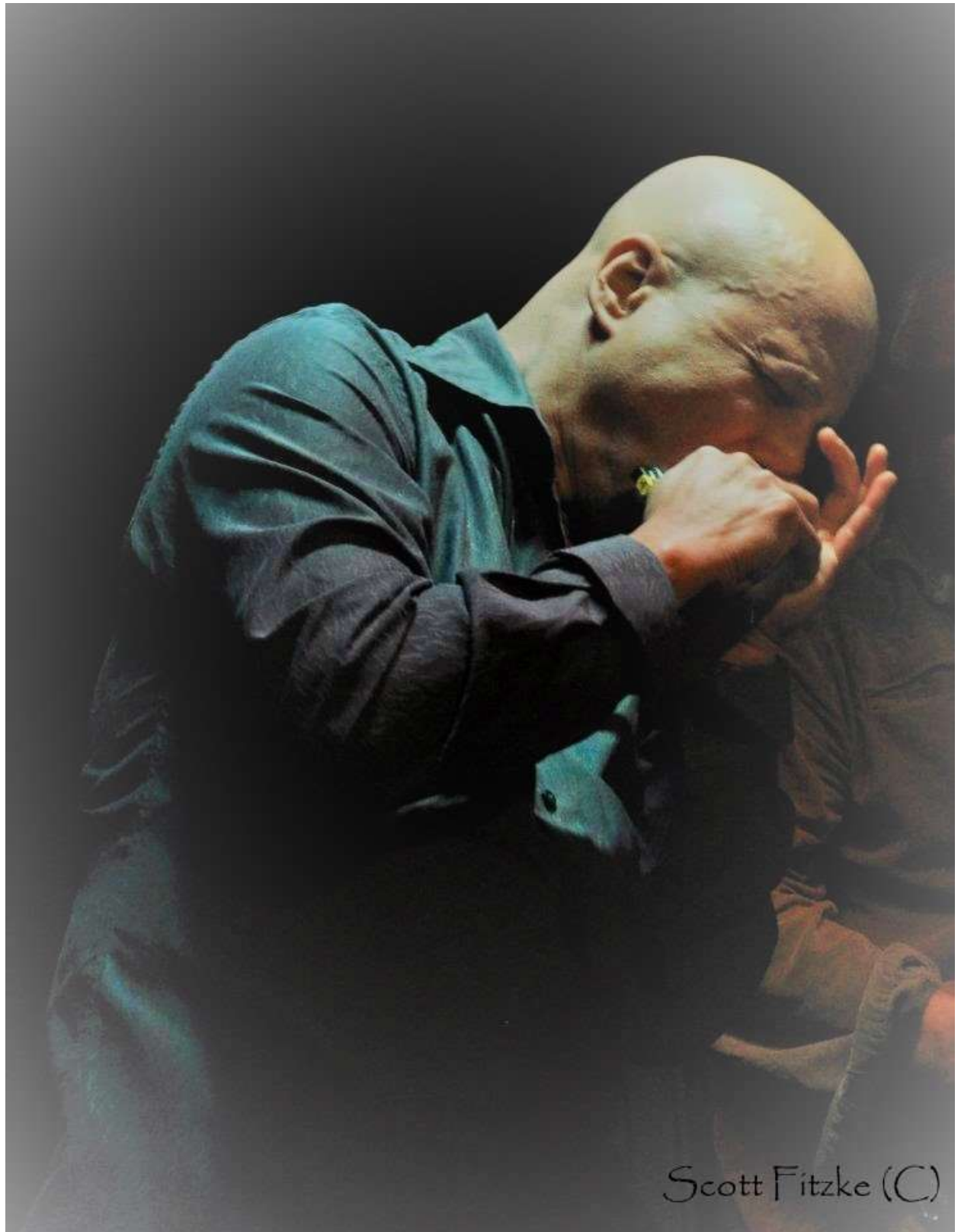
The Colorado Blues Society announces **Al Chesis** as the recipient of its Lifetime Achievement Award. For nearly forty years, Chesis has enriched the blues genre within Colorado and beyond.

Since the mid-1980's after moving to Denver from Washington, D.C., Chesis has been a constant in the sphere of Colorado's premier blues entertainers.

Throughout his professional career, Chesis has:

- Achieved harp playing brilliance and fronted The Delta Sonics four-piece blues band.
- Averaged several hundred shows per year in prepandemic times with a rigorous touring schedule and multiple shows a night to gain reputation for The Delta Sonics as Denver's hardest working blues band.
- Earned the prestigious [Hohner Harmonicas](#) endorsement in 1992.
- Opened shows for countless blues notables such as BB King, Albert Collins, Elvin Bishop, Taj Mahal, Charlie Musselwhite, Canned Heat, Robert Cray, Jimmy Vaughn and others.
- Toured nationally with Muddy Waters' son Big Bill Morganfield, appearing at venues in Canada, numerous states, as well as at the prestigious Chicago Blues Festival in 2002.
- Been featured at SPAH (Society for Preservation & Advancement of Harmonica) in (2006)(2015) and Mark Hummel's Harmonica Blowout in 2009 with Kim Wilson, Magic Dick, Jason Ricci and Mark Hummel.
- Done studio work for two PBS movie soundtracks and Denver area radio stations, including KBCO, KUVO and the FOX.
- Supported myriad blues dignitaries as the mile high 'go-to' band for Big Bill Morganfield, Steadyrollin' Bob Margolin, Ronnie Baker Brooks, grammy - nominated Lurrie Bell, and grammy -nominated John Primer. Chesis also guests on Big Head Todd's album "Black Beehive".
- Appeared with blues legends during their lifetimes notably the late Pinetop Perkins, Willie "Big Eyes" Smith, James Cotton, Hubert Sumlin and Bo Diddley.
- Six Westword Magazine designations as best blues band in Denver. The Delta Sonics made the semi-finals at the International Blues Challenge in Memphis 2012.

January 9, 2022



Al Chesis by Scott Fitzke

Colorado Blues Society Lifetime Achievement Award - Mr. David Booker

The Colorado Blues Society announces Mr. David Booker as the recipient of its Lifetime Achievement Award. Through six decades, David has sustained the blues through nonstop musical happenings.

David Booker grew up in Manchester, England, immersed in the burgeoning blues and rock scene of the 1950s and 60s. He has played and written about the blues and other Americana music forms, including jazz, country and western, rock, folk, and Cajun since the 1960s.

David spent time in San Francisco early in the 1990s as part of The Dynatones band, including their 1991 "Chopped & Channeled" CD.

In the 1990s, David toured Holland four times with the Alleygators Duo.

Since moving to the Denver area, he has performed in solo, duo, trio and full-band formats in many venues and festivals around Colorado.

His previous local bands include The Captain & the Red Hot Blues Band, The Captain & the Red Hot Flames. Throughout his professional career, Booker has:

- Opened concerts for blues legends Koko Taylor, Albert Collins, John Mayall, Robert Cray, Dr. John, Delbert McClinton, Commander Cody, Los Lobos, AC Reed & the Spark Plugs, Little Charlie & the Night Cats, among others.
- Performed on stage with notable entertainers and musicians including Dr. John, Lonnie Brooks, Jorma Kaukonen, Dan Fogelberg, and even Peter Fonda.
- Won the 2012 Best Blues Jam award from Westword magazine.
- Hosted the Monday night blues jam at the venerable El Chapultepec for over a decade.
- Has performed at the Mercury Café more than 20 years with the Swingtet.
- Written and published many concert and recording reviews for the Colorado Blues magazine, Holler.

January 9, 2022

Note from The Holler editor- Chick Cavallero: If you want to know more about this fascinating musician you can read about him in past The Holler ezines. Starting with the August/September 2020 issue of The Holler, David has been sharing his musical journey that started in Manchester, England. That first chapter was called **1960's American Folk Blues Festivals and Manchester Memories** and we have had a new chapter in every The Holler since. He is just starting in this issue with some of his American adventures. You can read any past chapters you missed in The Hollers that are kept on the coblues.org website.



David Booker photo by Jamie Crow

Colorado Blues Society Lifetime Achievement Award-Michael “Hawkeye” Herman

The Colorado Blues Society announces Michael “Hawkeye” Herman as the recipient of its Lifetime Achievement Award.

Michael “Hawkeye” Herman was born in Davenport, Iowa on January 11, 1945. As a teenager growing up in Iowa, he discovered blues music on late night radio by listening to broadcasts from Memphis, New Orleans, Chicago, Detroit, and points beyond the Quad Cities.

Hawkeye got his first guitar at age 14 and has been performing since. Chasing his dream in a move to San Francisco in 1968, he sought out and learned from the icons of blues music. Mentors included Son House, Brownie McGhee, Bukka White, Mance Lipscomb, Furry Lewis, Lightnin’ Hopkins, John Jackson, K.C. Douglas, and Sam Chatmon.

Throughout the Bay Area blues scene, Hawkeye became a staple performer as both a solo artist and a backup guitarist for Charles Brown, Haskell “Cool Papa” Sadler, Sonny Rhodes, Jimmy McCracklin, Buddy Ace, Boogie Jake, and numerous others. Around 1984 he started touring outside of California across the United States, Canada and Europe.

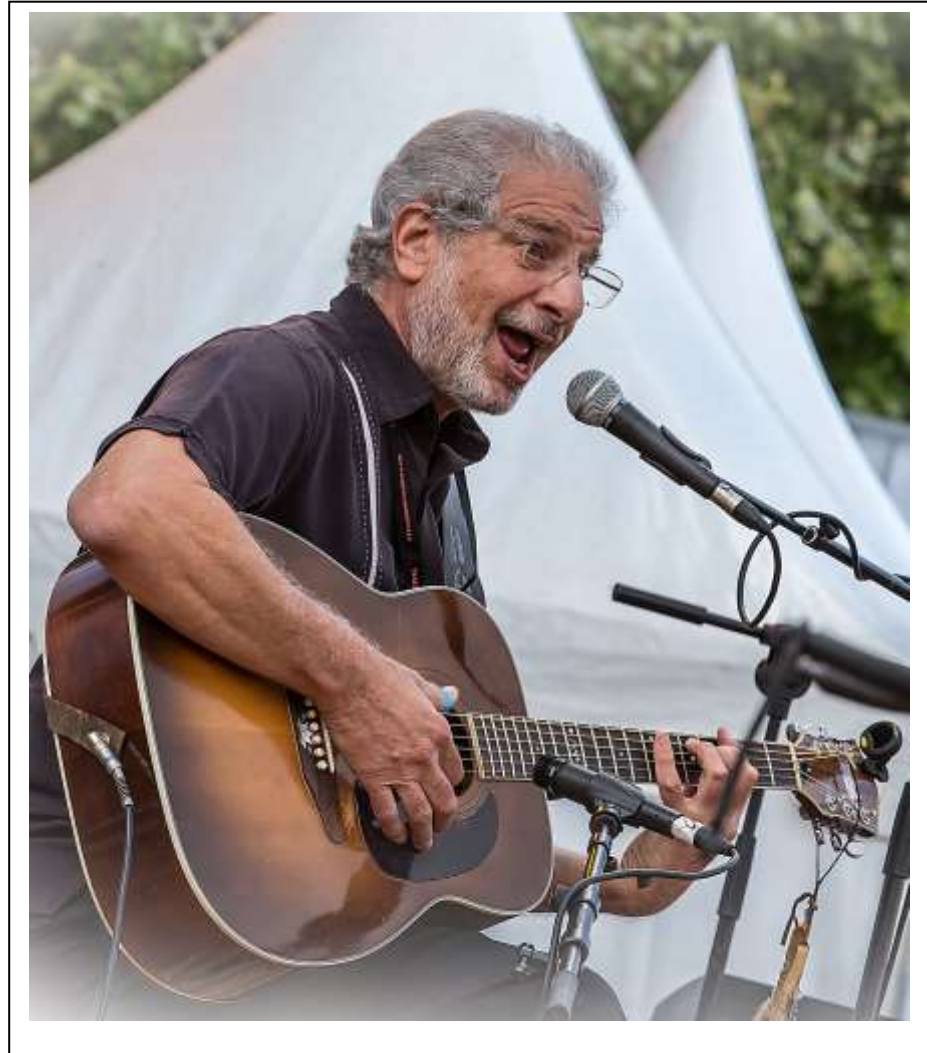
Through Hawkeye’s vision, he collaborated with David McIntyre, the founding President of the Colorado Blues Society, to create the first chartered blues society in Colorado. Hawkeye provided the templates for by-laws and a charter, and the first officers and directors were elected at a meeting in April 1995. The new Colorado Blues Society would start a newsletter called HOLLER to provide members with articles and a concert calendar and also start a Blues in the Schools program

As a music educator, Hawkeye has taken his love of blues music to students of all ages. Hawkeye started the “Blues in the Schools” program in 1980 before most blues support organizations and festivals existed. Hawkeye and McIntyre, joined forces to produce the first Blues in the Schools program and bring blues music to

more than 25,000 children in Colorado. The Blues Foundation in Memphis presented Hawkeye its prestigious Keeping the Blues Alive Award for achievement in education in May 1998.

Hawkeye was the composer, musical director, and musician for the hit play El Paso Blue, which has had successful runs in San Francisco, Seattle, San Diego, Chicago, Portland and at the Kennedy Center in Washington DC. For his artistic ingenuity, Herman received the prestigious Barrymore Theater Award for Best Original Music in a play for the 1999 2000 season, and at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, OR.

Hawkeye served for six years on the Board of Directors of the Blues Foundation in Memphis and was chairperson of the Foundation's education committee.



Michael "Hawkeye" Herman has been called the "Midwest's Blues Ambassador," where enthusiastic audiences have come to know and appreciate his talent, dedication and captivating performances.

In 2004, the Iowa Blues Hall of Fame inducted Michael "Hawkeye" Herman into membership.

January 9, 2022

Such A Night (and Day!) Dr. John in Denver with The Captain

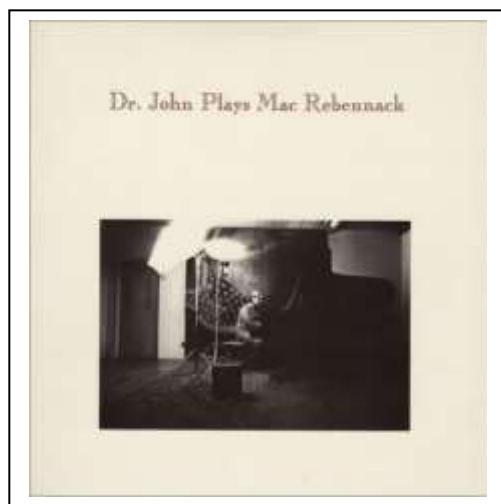
By David Booker

It's July 1983, I'm the morning DJ (5.30 am-10.30 am) on KJJZ AM 1390 Radio a daytime station playing a jazz, blues-rock mix, one minute you could be listening to Eddie 'Cleanhead' Vinson, followed by 'Man Eater' by Hall & Oates, it was one of those situations I had to deal with. On Saturdays I'd get to 'sleep in' and do my blues show at 5pm. One of our main sponsors/advertisers was Straight Johnsons,

Denver's only Blues club owned by the unforgettable Denny Sheneman. He had already had the Legendary Blues Band (Muddy's Band) and Homesick James with Johnny Long (I have a story about THAT one too!) AC Reed & The Spark Plugs, Albert Collins, Koko Taylor, Bo Diddley, Fabulous Thunderbirds, Rufus Thomas, Screamin' Jay Hawkins Buddy Guy & Junior Wells were all booked in there at one time or another and with luck I'll be getting to those stories down the line!



The Captain's Red Hot Blues Band, original linrup 1983



Dr John was on a solo nationwide tour, no band, just him and a piano. He was touring promoting his solo piano Lp *Dr John Plays Mac Rebennack*. Denny asked us to open for him on a Saturday, and asked me to drive the Bluesmobile to Stapleton Airport to pick him up from his flight from L.A. The Bluesmobile was a replica of the Ackroyd/Belushi car featured in the Blues Brothers movie, black and white, spotlight, everything! The mission was to take him to his hotel then to the radio station where he had agreed to an interview with yours truly on my Red Hot Blues Radio Show,

then take him back to the hotel to rest up before the gig later that evening.

I drove out to the airport totally wiggled out about picking up THE Dr John. there was no trouble identifying him, the beret, voodoo walking cane, beads, were exactly what I was looking for, I said something like "Hello welcome to Denver" or something like that, then we walked to the car. Before you know it, he asked me if I'd read the John Broven Book, South To Louisiana, I told him that I had, and while driving, I dropped a few names like Lee Dorsey, Professor Longhair, Johnny Vincent/ Ace Records etc...

Realizing I had half a brain, he casually mentioned from the back seat he had a "toothache", but he seemed to be doing ok by the time we checked him into the Broadway Hotel opposite Straights.

At 5pm we went on the air, he's in the chair opposite me in the studio, the mikes are on, and I'm taping the proceedings on cassette tape (which I still have - since he passed, I had another listen, a lovely souvenir of that day). The interview goes well and though I'm gushing and nervous, I pull it off ok, he's laid back on the show but mentions he has a "toothache " again! I get the hint, and make a mental note to try to get him something for it! While on the show we talked about his newly recorded forthcoming as yet untitled 2nd Solo Lp. He wants to call it Hobos and Mojos, but tells me the record company didn't buy it, it eventually comes out as "*The Brightest Smile In Town*" and subsequently years later I have 2 Volumes of David Booker CD's called *Hobos & Mojos* (Thanks Mac.) We finished the interview and I finish the show with Fyo' *On The Bayou*, by the Neville Brothers.



Red Hot Blues Band First gig at Straight Johnson's

Fast forward to 9pm in Straight Johnsons, it's show time for the opening act namely us, the Captains Red Hot Blues Band (named after my weekly radio show the Captains Red Hot Blues Show). Halfway through the set it's going quite well, suddenly the Dr climbs aboard the Grand Piano and just says "I wanna play wid' choo guys" we launched into Caldonia and it sounds great, so here I am a transformed bass guy only been playing guitar "properly" for less than a year, and I'm playing

with Dr John! Next thing we know we were in a wild version of "Right Place -Wrong Time" with many wrong changes, but at this point it didn't matter! I think we played a couple more; he left the stage, and we finished the set, there was a break before his main solo set Phew!

Now about that "Toothache"

We have several ne'er do well connections, hangers on -call em' what you will at this time and a particular character (Lets call him "Brad") supplies "medication" for the doctor, in fact, for all the band as well! So here we are partying with Dr John in his hotel room after the gig!

At about 4 am, I take a deep breath and say "guys I'm outta here" or words to that effect, I left clutching my newly signed 'Gumbo' Lp, and signed picture of the Dr. He wrote some cool stuff, here's what is on the picture.

'To Dave The Captain with love from the Doctor DRx John The Nite Tripper (signature)

On the LP he wrote.

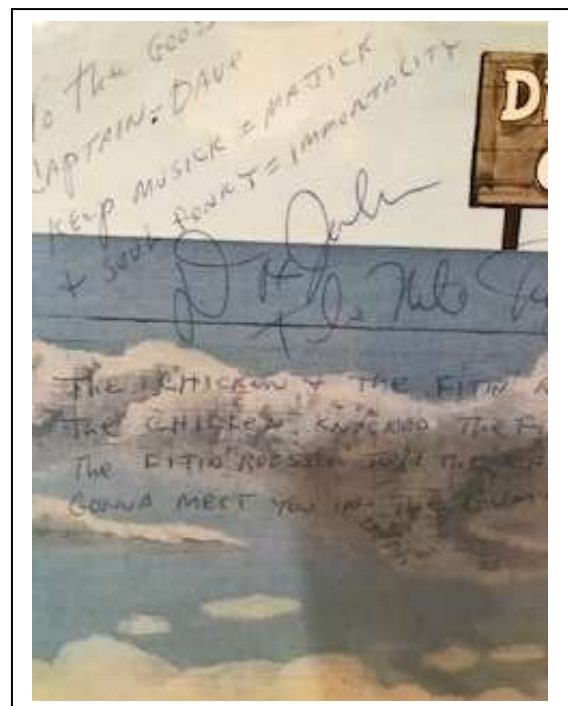
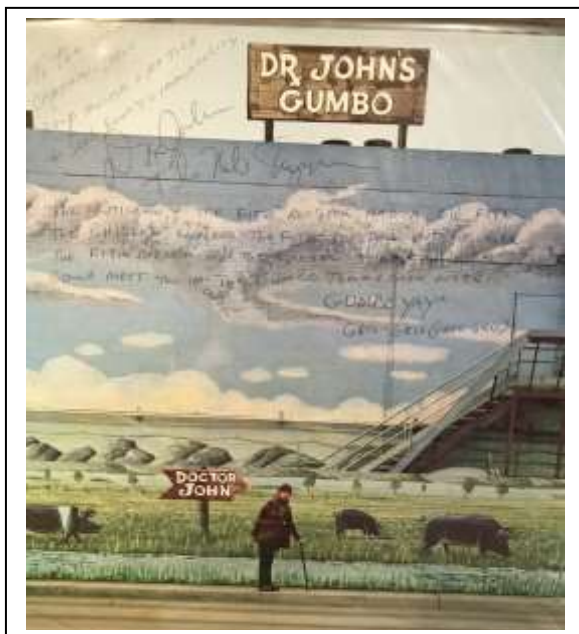
'To the good Captain Dave Keep Musick= Majick+ Soul Fonky= Immortality

DRx John The Nite Tripper (signature)

The Chicken & The Fitin' Rooster had a big fite, The Chicken knocked the Fitin' Rooster out of site

The Fitin' Rooster told the Chicken thats all right, gonna meet you in the Gumbo tomorrow nite

Gumbo Ya Ya Gris -Gris (Gree Gree).





**The Captain's
RED HOT
BLUES BAND**

MANAGEMENT BY
JACQUE
WIRTH & ASSOCIATES
303.424.1314
DENVER, COLORADO 80204

Left to right- Steve Weist trumpet/keys R.I.P., Ludwig Hnatkowycz bass, JD Kelly trombone R.I.P., Freddie Kinlaw saxes, John Budd Drums and 'The Captain' laying down



Seen Any Good Shows?

I am hoping to start a new section in the Holler with CBS members telling me about some good shows you have seen. But I need YOU to do the work! Share these shows with your fellow CBS members and friends. Write me a short review and include some pix, I would love to include them in the next issue of The Holler. December had some awesome shows, and here are reviews on 3 of them.

Kerry Pastine & The Crime Scene Christmas!

By Chick Cavallero with **ALL** photos by Tarry Underwood



Soiled Dove is perfect for music-excellent sound system, and the room has an intimate feel to it yet has plenty of room with lots of tables with unobstructed views plus a dance floor. Plus great food and excellent bar service.

We have the Kerry Pastine & The Crime Scene Christmas CD and it's a standard for us at this time of year so it was really great to catch these tunes live. First off, Kerry is an incredible performer, commanding the stage with her

Kerry Pastine & The Crime Scene has become a tradition in Denver. My wife, Patti, has been wanting to catch this show for years and thanks to Jennifer and Tarry Underwood we finally did. Tarry scored us a table close to the stage and it was an awesome evening with good friends and incredible music. And a HUGE THANKS to long time friend and CBS photographer, Tarry, for the great pix ion this review.

The show was December 2 at the Soiled Dove Underground, which was the perfect venue for this show. The layout of the



personality as well as her incredible voice. Covid had brought their performances to a halt and you could feel the love pouring out from her to finally be doing what she loves again.

The Crime Scene Christmas is a Rockabilly Christmas. Plenty of Christmas tunes cut in their own imaginative style with Run, Run Rudolph and Winter Wonderland were the only 'traditional' tunes but there's nothing traditional about the way they performed them. Plenty of new twists and turns and Rockabilly bounce and flash. With a solid rhythm section and husband Pauly "6 String: Shellooe" playing electrifying guitar, the stage was on fire all evening.

You got a super dose of what this talented band is all about. Some of the most steamy and sultry Christmas carols you can imagine as Kerry can sizzle like no one else! Plus some tender moments seeing the love between Kerry and her daughter, Joy Espinoza. Their duo numbers were so emotional it brought out tears. Plus a tribute to the king of



surf guitar, Dick Dale. That one really put a smile on my face as Pauly hit every frenzied note and beyond to send chills down my spine, Damn he can play! His guitar always has the fullest, richest tones and the way he and Kerry interact on the stage is a treat to see!!!!

It amazes me of all the talent that Kerry Pastine has. We all know her as the super blues/rockabilly writer/singer/ performer, but check out her paintings some time (yep we

have one), she is amazing. On top of that she is also an author (yep have one of her books), and has been helping people for over 15 years as a Life Coach, teacher and life designer. A renaissance woman who can do



All Kerry Pastine & The Crime Scene photos by Tarry Underwood

pretty much anything she puts her mind to! Do yourself a favor and pick up the Crime Scene Christmas CD and make sure you catch next years show.

Tab Benoit's Swampland Jam

Review and photos by Jack Grace



Tab Benoit's Swampland Jam December 2, 2021 Reviewed by Jack Grace Tab Benoit kicked off his Swampland Jam tour on a warm December evening at the Saenger Theater in Mobile, Alabama. As if his Voice of the Wetlands Allstar lineup of Big Chief Monk Boudreaux, Johnny Sansone, and Waylon Thibodeaux weren't enough, Samantha Fish opened the show.

Mobile is a gritty, Gulf Coast port city with a New Orleans-like vibe. The historic

Saenger Theater building was a perfect place to kick off the tour. I have to tell you, though, if Benoit and his crew thought they needed a first night to work out the kinks, they need not have bothered. This show rocked from the minute Samantha Fish took the stage to the final second of the Swamp Jam encore.

Fish was a pro. Her set began right at 7:00 p.m. and lasted one hour. Her stage presence was powerful - belting out her songs and playing some seriously fine guitar. She brought out her cigar box guitar for the last song and wowed us with her deft slide work.

It occurred to me during her set that had Billie Holiday been born 75 years later and had learned to rock, she would have wanted to be

Samantha Fish. At times, I could hear Holiday's soulful voice and phrasing in Fish's vocals.





Tab Benoit came on after a half hour break. I was wondering how he can follow Fish's show? No worries. Benoit upped the power level a notch and continued to pour it on.

There are some guitarists noted for playing one kind of guitar and making it an extension of themselves. Think Hendrix and Jeff Beck with their Stratocasters. B.B. King with Lucille,

his semi-hollow body Gibson ES-355. Add Benoit and his Fender Telecaster Thinline to that list. He not so much plays the guitar as he simply lets his soul come through it.

Benoit's playing was so intense that, by my count, he broke three, maybe four, strings. Each time he continued playing amazing solos - never slowing down in the song. Then, his guitar tech would bring him a second Thinline for the next song. Those two guitars rotated throughout the set.

The first formation in the set was as a trio. Then, Sansone and Thibodeaux joined in. Big Chief Monk Boudreaux was added to the mix and sang two songs. Fish plugged in for the last song. After the conclusion of the set, everyone came back for a twenty minute jam that soared. No one left anything "on the field." It was an excellent night for swamp blues!



The Saenger Theater - All Tab Benoit SwampLand Jam photos by Jack Grace

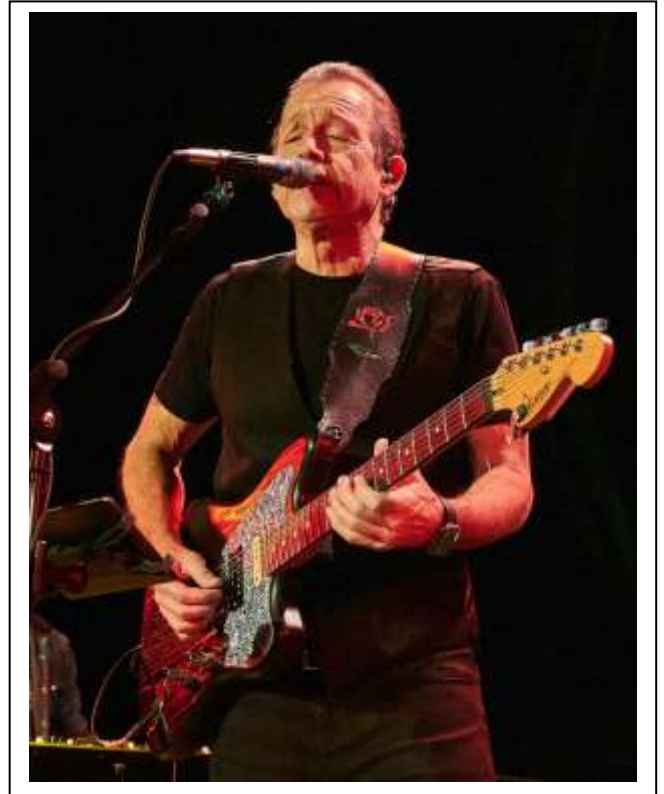
Don't Be Zaggin' When You Should Be Ziggin' -Tommy Castro and the Painkillers

Review and All photos by Rick Witt

Tommy Castro and the Painkillers, Thursday, December 2, The Oriental Theater, Denver, CO. **Tommy Castro**, Guitar and Vocals; **Bowen Brown**, Drums; **Randy McDonald**, Bass; **Michael Emerson**, Keyboards

There's a reason Tommy Castro and the Painkillers' 2019 live album is (aptly) called *'Killing It Live'*. That's what this legendary bluesman and his band do, every night. And Thursday, December 2 at the Oriental Theater in Denver, was no exception. Despite battling a painful throat that worsened as the night wore on, Tommy and crew delighted the Denver crowd with an eclectic set (two sets, actually) of both old and new.

The show was billed as a release party for the new album *'Tommy Castro Presents A Bluesman Came To Town'*. *Bluesman* was actually released on September 17, so most of the faithful in attendance didn't need introductions to the handful of songs played from it. Both the title track and the infectiously bouncy *'I Caught A Break'* were part of the band's first set, while lead track *'Somewhere'* showed up in the second. And while



Jimmy Hall, the harmonica player on the album, wasn't in attendance, Tommy had invited another Jimmy to join the group on stage to fill in. Denver's own Jimmy Junior absolutely rocked it.

The Oriental crowd was raucous, from the opening cover of Albert King's '*Night Stomp*' through an impromptu selection of songs where Randy McDonald



took over lead vocal duties as Tommy's voice began to give out. Before that happened, Tommy brought down the house with a blistering version of '*Serves Me Right to Suffer*'.

And though his voice eventually did give out, his guitar playing was typical Tommy, with sizzling solos, straight ahead rock and roll hooks, and irresistibly funky grooves.

Unfortunately, the band wasn't able to return to the stage for an encore following their second set. With the crowd waiting, Tommy did come back on stage to apologize, stating that he just didn't have the voice to do any more. It was difficult to tell what pained him more – the physical pain of his throat, or the disappointment of not being able to wrap up the show the way he wanted to. But even though the crowd might have missed out on a song or two, no one left disappointed. It was a terrific show from a legendary performer, and an exceptional way to spend a Thursday night in Denver.



All Tommy Castro photos by Rick Witt

CD Reviews

Zac Harmon ***Long As I Got My Guitar***

Catfood Records

Publicity: Blind Raccoon

Peter "Blewzzman" Lauro © October 2021

Blues Editor @ www.Mary4Music.com

2011 "Keeping The Blues Alive" Award Recipient



Prelude

As is known, when Zac Harmon jumped into the blues pool back in 2005, he didn't just make a splash - he created a tsunami. His debut release - "*The Blues According To Zacariah*" - not only won "Best New Artist" in the XM Radio Awards, but the release also brought home the gold in the "Best New Artist Debut" category at the 2006 Blues Music Awards. With that said, it was well before all that when he blew the Blewzzman away. That happened on May 1, 2004, at the Beale Street Music Festival during the Memphis In May festivities. As the 2:00 PM opening act in the Blues Tent, with a lineup that

also featured; Delta Moon; Robert "Wolfman" Belfour; Renee Austin; Ellis Hooks; Eric Sardinas; and Bernard Allison; Zac Harmon & Mid South Blues Review put on a powerfully energetic and incredibly entertaining performance that I actually believe may have stole the show. As the set ended, I'll never forget the tribute he paid to his then right hand man - harmonica player Jeff Stone. After the last song, Zac walked over to Jeff and put his arm around him as he told the crowd "This man is to me what Junior Wells was to Buddy Guy." What a classy compliment from and to a real class act. From that day, until this day, I'm still a big fan of these fine artists and gentlemen.

Review

That was a seventeen years, hundreds of shows, and a lot of albums ago. Now, Zac is back with what I believe is his ninth release - the one he says "*Is probably the most memorable record of my career*" - "*Long As I Got My Guitar*". Eight of the disc's ten tracks are originals with seven being penned by Zac and label owner, executive producer, and bassist, Bob Trenchard; and one written by Zac and Corey Lacey.

On nine of those tracks, Zac Harmon - on lead guitar and vocals - is joined by Bob Trenchard on bass; Richy Puga on drums; Jimmy McGhee on guitar; and Dan Ferguson on keyboards. Collectively, they are known as The Rays. Appearing on the other track are Zac's touring band: Chris Gipson on bass; Jamil Byron on drums; and Corey Lacey (on other tracks as well) on keyboards and background vocals. Other performers include SueAnn Carwell on background vocals and Munyungo Jackson on percussion.

Just hearing the name of the opening track kind of lets you know there isn't much explaining to do here. The song is called "*Deal With The Devil*" and anyone who knows anything about blues folklore knows how that turned out. Musically, it's a rhythm fueled blues rocker with Bob, Richy and Munyungo in a progressive groove on the percussion and Zac - who while flirting with a falsetto vocal style- nails a handful of stinging guitar licks. Nice opener.

Simply because of it is old school fifties style R&B type presentation, "*Crying Shame*" is surely one of my personal favorites. Everything about this toe tapping, head bobbing song just reeks of smoothness. Had I been seeing this one done live, I'd be stretching my neck looking all around the stage for the accordion player. Since none was credited, I'm just going to assume that Dan is baffling me with some masterful organ work.

Before I get to the real title of this one, its alias could very well be "The Axman's Anthem", and here's why.....

"I had to pawn my watch, I had to pawn my ring;
I don't care what time it is, it don't mean a thing.....
"I lost all my money, there went all my friends;
They didn't care for me, it was all just pretend.....
"They cut off my cable, and repossessed my car;
Knocked on my door, I can't take it no more.....
"But I'm still a star, "*Long As I Got My Guitar*".

Now that you know some of the title song's lyrics, it's the song's guitar work you really need to hear. After all, Zac still has his guitar and is still indeed a star.

"*New Year's Day*" - it's not just the song's title but it's a day that most of the world thinks will suddenly and magically change everything. Break it to them gently, Zac:

"*It's New Year's Day and nothing's changed;
everything remains the same.
I got no plans, I got no solution;
I got no New Year's resolutions.*"

And there you have it.

On the other hand, the song does make some cool musical changes: with Zac's

scorching guitar intro - and several times throughout the song as well - it's got a strong traditional blues vibe; the soulful lead and backing vocals give it a definite soul blues vibe; and with the rhythm and percussion groove the rest of the band have going on you'll surely feel the funk.

The disc closes out with a ballad on which Zac pretty much lays out his own epitaph. Wanting to be remembered for his good deeds more than his sins, since he won't be passing this way again he's requesting to scatter his "*Ashes To The Wind*". From Zac's somberly sung opening lines; to his mid song spoken words; to the songs powerful crescendo; and the addition of SueAnn's heavenly sounding background voice, as well; this one is all about the vocals.

Other tracks on "*Long As I Got My Guitar*" include: "*People Been Talking*"; "*Soul Land*" (Sandy Carroll); "*Love For You Baby*"; "*Waiting To Be Free*" and "*Imagine A Prayer*" (Sandy Carroll & the album's producer, Jim Gaines).

To find out more about Zac Harmon, just go to - www.zacharmon.com. Remember, wherever you go and whoever you contact, please let them know The Blewzzman sent you.

Mississippi MacDonald 'Do Right, Say Right'

**Another Planet Music, LTD
Released November 19, 2021
By Chick Cavallero**

I have to admit this is someone I never heard of before Betsy Brown and Blind Raccoon Records sent me this CD and all I can say is Thank you Betsy for the introduction. Wow! This is one killer album with 9 sparkling cuts.

Oliver "Mississippi" MacDonald is from the United Kingdom, and what he has put together here is a classic slow blues album, not a hint of blues rock. It is obvious he has been greatly influenced by BB King as his music focuses on great vocals, soulful blues, smooth flawless guitar riffs, and a horn infused background. When MacDonald describes his music he says, "It's modern, it's not musical archeology, it's authentic and celebrates a rich and fantastic tradition, It's soul-blues, and you've got to put your best into it."

MacDonald is a 3 time nominee at the British Blues Awards. He started playing at 11 and grew up loving the blues and meeting many of the US blues giants like BB King, Pinetop Perkins, Willie Big Eyes Smith and Otis Clay. Listening to this new album you would swear he is straight outta Chicago or Memphis, certainly not from London!

He is backed by a tight and talented band made up of Phil Dearing (keyboards and guitar plus the album producer), Elliot Boughen (bass), Mark Johnson-Brown (drums), and Lucy Dearing (backup vocals). They do a great job of supporting the sound MacDonald wants, the rhythm section is always there where it's needed, never in your face, and Dearing's piano adds much more than his rhythm guitar does. Added in are



those BB King horns, always providing a subtle background and never blaring. Through that Mississippi MacDonald weaves a constant flow of bending guitar notes stretched to the limit that mesmerize you without any unnecessary shredding involved. His solos become flurries that are stylish and well thought out, never there to show off. He also has a big soulful voice that completes the mix.

I'm not going to go into each song. All 9 are special and picking any over the others is impossible. MacDonald wrote the first 8 while the last one ***Your wife is Cheating on Us*** was written by Denise Lasalle. The opener

I was Wrong sets the tone for the entire album. It's a laidback with horns, with the sweetest blues guitar riffs and MacDonald's soulful singing. ***Drinker's Blues*** adds a gospel twist to straight up blues. ***I Heard It Twice*** and ***That's It I Quit*** are a couple shuffles with the later having a distinct Texas feel to it. The rest all fall in line as all being straight ahead pure blues, no surprises outside of just how good it is all done.

Mississippi MacDonald sums up this outstanding album—"Blues is often misunderstood. It's not sad music-there's great humor, great joy and there's a celebration. When the chips are down and it looks like you can't go on, there's always something-there's always a little light shining through. There's no heartbreak or bad luck that a horn section, a Hammond organ and a few Albert King licks can't cure. And that's what this record is all about." Do yourself a favor and check this guy out, you won't regret it.

Dionne Bennett

'Sugar Hip Ya Ya'

Hunnia Records and Film Production 2021

Publicity and Promotion: Blind Raccoon

Reviewed by Jack Grace

So here is an interesting concept, take a British/West Indies singer to Budapest where she enters a studio staffed with top level Hungarian musicians steeped in blues and jazz and records ten songs; eight of which were written by Hungarian Little G Weevil. The result would be world music? Well, it is more Chaka Khan meets the Blues Brothers, Bob Marley, and Sly and the Family Stone.

A little background is helpful in understanding the influences in this high powered



album. Describing Dionne Bennett as “high energy” does not capture her persona. She is more like a sparkler - radiating energy and light. Bennett began performing live at fourteen and released her first soul single at fifteen. She has her own radio show in Wales and is also a vocal coach. Here is where the influences begin coming together. Bennett toured in the Chicago Blues Brothers theatrical production for eighteen months. The production has been touring Europe successfully for over thirty years. She knows and feels blues and soul music.

Some three years ago, she met and became friends with Little G. His approach to producing an artist is to get to know them well enough to write songs specifically for them. Little G assembled a group of studio musicians easily on par with the best blues and soul bands: Laszlo Bordodi on guitar, Matyas Premecz on the keys, Attila Herr on bass, and Lajos Gyenga on the drums. All are simply stellar musicians. Throw in Tamas Sovari on trumpet and Zoltan Albert on sax and that full soul sound comes alive.

The album opens with “Tell Mama” which was originally performed by Etta James. Everything just works perfectly. The horn section sounds like it came straight out of the Blues Brothers, the bass and drums are driving the song just the way they should, the Hammond B3 floats like a siren, and the guitar is searing.

Next up is the eponymous “Sugar Hip Ya Ya” written by Little G who also sits in on lead guitar. Funk meets the blues head on. The background singers add power. There is no sitting down for this one.

Check out the official music video for “Sugar Hip Ya Ya” Dionne Bennett - Sugar Hip Ya Ya <https://youtu.be/cIlnFJgXK3c>

Little G Weevil

‘Live Acoustic Session’

Hunnia Records and Film Production 2021

Reviewed by Jack Grace

Little G Weevil is a bluesman from ... Budapest. He's not an expat that left the U.S. to live in Hungary, the 44 year old Weevil was born in Budapest. He moved to Birmingham, AL, in 2004 where he lived for 8-9 months. Then, relocated to Memphis where he gigged on Beale Street until 2006 when he left for London. Weevil returned to the U.S. in 2009 and lived in Atlanta for ten years. Due to family illness, he moved back to Hungary in 2018 where he currently resides.

Weevil switched from the drums to guitar when he was sixteen and fell deeply in love with the blues. His devotion to learning acoustic blues on the guitar led to his winning first place in the 2013 International Blues Challenge as "Best Guitarist" in the solo category.



English is a second language for Weevil, he picked it up on the streets of the U.S. As expected, given his residence in the South, one hears a faint Southern accent but mostly one hears a bluesman's gruff voice. Listen to him and be surprised he is not from the Mississippi Delta or Hill Country.

Live Acoustic Session was recorded during the pandemic. Weevil did not embrace live streams or other virtual means of conveying music due to his concerns about the sound quality. After four months of no gigs, his producer suggested that Weevil come to the studio and record a live session. The result is sixteen songs - twelve originals, two traditional, one R.L. Burnside, and one John Lee Hooker song. His acoustic guitar playing is excellent. He tells stories between the songs so it feels like he is playing a house concert in your living room. Sometimes you can hear him turn the pages on his music stand.

Weevil says he writes songs about real things that happened to him. Nothing is fictional. His songs are right in the pocket of the best traditional blues. "When the King Was Told" has deceptively simple guitar licks that are played exquisitely. To me, "Apple Picker" has the coolest licks and most innovative chord placement. "Fastest Man" is a song

about Lance Armstrong. That is not a well covered topic in the blues genre but the song works well. “On My Way to Memphis” has some of the juiciest playing.

The album is intimate but sonically limited to Weevil's singing and acoustic guitar. He does not play slide or harmonica on this recording. Fortunately, his playing is varied and lively enough to keep one's interest. My view is that Live Acoustic Session does not push the blues into new directions but establishes Little G as a true keeper of the flame

Carolyn Wonderland

‘Tempting Fate’

Alligator Records 2021
Reviewed by Jack Grace

I'm going to offer a little advice to anyone that is about to play this CD. Don't put it on as background music while you discuss the vicissitudes of life. Instead, consider icing down some favorite beverages, open the back door and invite the neighbors over (so they won't complain about the volume), and get ready to party.



John Mayall is known for including some of the best blues/rock guitarists in his band. Eric Clapton, Peter Green, Jesse Ed Davis, Coco Montoya, Walter Trout, and Buddy Whittington. Guess who was his lead guitarist from 2018 to 2021 - Carolyn Wonderland. Most of the aforementioned guitarists include licks from the old blues masters in their playing. One can hear the influence. The inclusion of those licks and styles is admirable but can sound a little familiar. Wonderland's playing is deliciously original. I don't hear anyone else in her playing.

Tempting Fate opens with “Fragile Peace and Certain War.” Simply put, it rocks. It burns. Her lap steel must have been smoking by the end of the recording. Wonderland's singing has the power of Janis Joplin but with more versatility. This lady doesn't hold back.

“Texas Girl and Her Boots” has Marcia Ball joining in on piano. ‘Nuff said. You know this one has to boogie. Those Texas girls like their boots and they know how to walk them.

“Broken Hearted Blues” is indeed a heartbreaker accompanied by stellar blues guitar. Wonderland’s Gibson Blues Hawk wails and cries. She sings, “I must have been blinded by my love for you.” And, “I got my eyes wide open to what I should have seen all along.”

For sheer coolness, Wonderland throws in a Billy Joe Shaver song, “Honey Bee.” She might be the second best person in the world to sing a Shaver song. She has the perfect inflection and phrasing but with more power and energy.

I once thought the definitive version of Bob Dylan’s “It Takes a Lot to Laugh, It Takes a Train to Cry” was done by Leon Russell. Not anymore. Wonderland alternates singing verses with Jimmy Dale Gilmore on this one. Cindy Cashdollar is on lap steel. Wonderland just kills it with her Blues Hawk. Bob has to be smiling.

There are ten songs on this album. Six were written or co-written by Wonderland. In addition to her top notch singing and playing, she is a surprisingly good song writer. This lady has it all. Turn it on at the appropriate volume and see what the neighbors think

Grant Dermody and Frank Fotusky

‘Digging in John’s Backyard’

Self-Produced

Publicity-Pati Devries/Devious Planet

Release date January 14, 2022

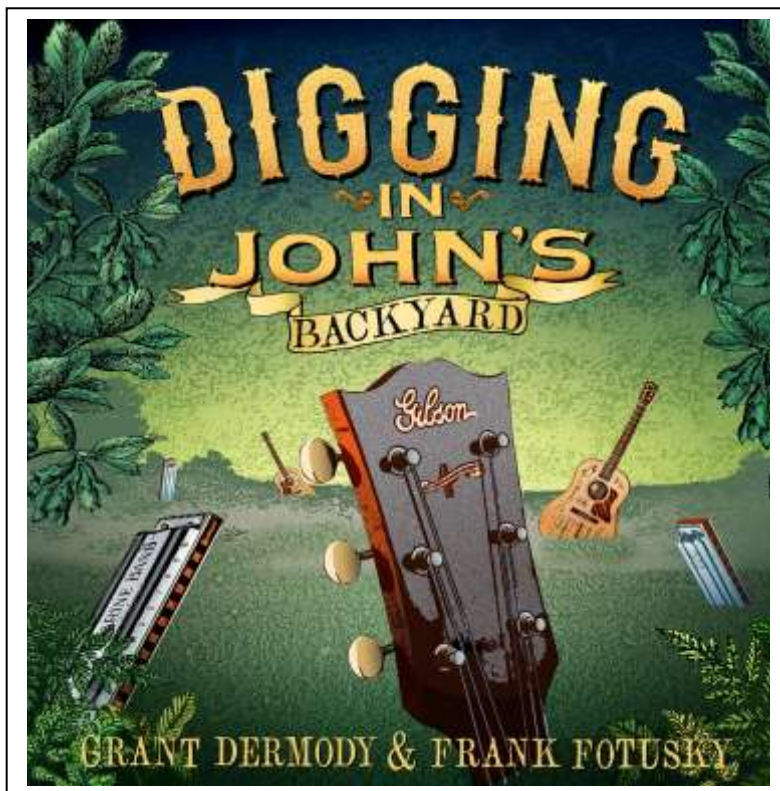
By Chick Cavallero

This is a labor of love between Grant Dermody, a harmonica master, and Frank Fotusky, one of the slickest acoustic blues guitarists in the genre. They have dedicated the album to John Jackson and it’s his backyard they are digging in. Jackson’s music was steeped in the Piedmont style, rich country blues that thankfully was re-discovered in the folk revival of the 60s. Jackson had been playing country blues in the 40s and after he had given up in 1949, Arhoolie began releasing his music again in the 60s.

On **Digging in John’s Backyard** Dermody & Fotusky do their best to keep Jackson’s sound alive and well here in 2021. Both men met Jackson thru different routes in the 1990s and were influenced heavily by him as he became both a mentor and a friend to them. This is a tribute to the country blues Piedmont style and John Jackson’s spirit can be felt from the opening note on Arthur Phelps’ ***Hey Hey Daddy Blues*** to the closing notes on the traditional standard ***Alberta***. All in all, 45 minutes that give a rich sampling of Piedmont blues.

The second cut is Sonny Boy Williamson’s ***Peach Tree Blues***. Grant Dermody got his start playing harp in the electric amplified Chicago style but when he started teaching

harmonica in the 1990s he evolved over to playing acoustic blues and the rich Piedmont Delta blues is felt on this one. Grant gives Sonny Boy his due.



The album is a collection of music whose authors create a who's who of country blues masters, some names from the deep past: Blind Blake's ***Police Dog Blues***, Charley Patton's ***Shake It and Break It***, Reverend Gary Davis' ***Death Don't Have No Mercy***, Leroy Carr's ***Papa's On The Rooftop***, and Skip James' ***Hard Time Killing Floor Blues***. I have to admit, I'm no expert on Country or Piedmont blues and this album was an excellent showcase of the styles. You can pick up on the overlap between many of their artists and the influence they had on each other.

Dermody and Fotusky have the talent and love of the genre to pull this unique presentation off.

Their passion for the music and love of John Jackson, the Piedmont master, come pouring out on every cut but especially so on Jackson's own *Boats Up The River*. The mastery of Frank's Piedmont picking and Grant's country harp are the perfect way to show their love and respect of the mentor who united them.

One further note is that John Cephas was another Virginia blues master who influenced these two modern-day Piedmont bluesmen. They both met Cephas in the 1990s when meeting Jackson and John Cephas actually played on the first couple albums that Grant recorded. Cut number 10 on the album is ***Seattle Rainey Day Blues*** by John Cephas and they do an excellent version of it.

John Jackson and John Cephas are two Blues giants no longer with us but it is comforting to see we still have some masters of the acoustic style to carry on the Piedmont tradition, and introduce it to a new generation of blues fans.

Jon Spear Band

'B-Side Of My Life'

Self Released

Publicity: Blind Raccoon

Peter "Blewzzman" Lauro © November 2021

Blues Editor @ www.Mary4Music.com

2011 "Keeping The Blues Alive" Award Recipient

As they get ready to celebrate their tenth anniversary at the turn of the new year, my partner Mary and I would like to be some of the first to say "Happy Anniversary" to the Jon Spear Band. Additionally, with the band's fourth release - "B-Side Of My Life" - being the third consecutive release of theirs that we've had the pleasure to work with, we'd also like to say "Thanks for all the good music".

Along with longevity, the Jon Spear Band has had success with stability, as well. Going back to 2015, when I first reviewed "Old Soul", the band has - and still consists of: Jon Spear on lead vocals and rhythm, acoustic, baritone and lead guitars, Dara James on lead vocals, rhythm and lead guitar, and harmonica; Andy Burdetsky on lead vocals and bass; John Stubblefield on drums and backing vocals. Their latest project also includes guest Skip Haga on keyboards. "B-Side Of My Life", which pays homage to the flip side - or as Jon calls it, the "underdog" side - of the old 45 RPM records, consist of eleven new originals and two covers.

On the title track - "B-Side Of My Life" - referencing "Rock Around The Clock"; "Green Onions"; "Tequila"; "Be-Bop-a-Lula"; and "Unchained Melody"; all top ten hits that were released as the B side of a 45, believin' he'll start winnin' when his life starts spinnin' on the B side - Jon's wishing he could put his life on a record and flip it over. Be careful what you wish for Jon, as the saying goes - "the grass isn't always greener on the B side." One thing for sure is that since this is an album and not a 45, with Andy & John's rockin' rhythm; Skip's frolicking piano leads; Dara's smokin' harp blowing; Jon's wailing Johnny Be Goode type guitar licks and vibrant vocals; track #4 is a smoker for sure.

With a frightening title like "Snakes and Spiders", the opening strumming of Jon's relaxing acoustic guitar work seems to temporarily take away some of that edge created by the title. That is until Dara jumps in with jarring vocals and jolting guitar as he descriptively belts out the song's lyrics, which actually require some reading between the lines.

One of the most fun and very relatable (in many ways) songs is "My Old T-Shirts". Having reached the stage of his life where most of his clothes are out of style and undersized, Jon's about to give most of the stuff that he doesn't wear enough to his local Good Will store. On the other hand, there's a stack in the back of his closet he's gonna keep till it hurts, and those of course, are his old T-Shirts. The ones from: the shows he's seen; the places he's been; the festivals and saloons; Beale Street, Bourbon Street and everywhere he's put his feet; and even the one from his football team that hasn't won a big game since 1992. These, and many more, are pages in his book of memories that will never be forgotten, 'cause they're printed on cotton on the T-Shirts in his room. Musically, the tandem guitars - this time with Dara on lead and Jon on rhythm - are fabulous, as usual; and along with Skip's lively piano leads, the Rhumba style rhythm Andy is laying down on the bass and drums, this one's a sure dance floor filler.

Being one who not only enjoys sharing the guitar work, as we've seen by having three different vocalists take the lead on many of these songs, Jon Spear enjoys sharing that duty, as well. Having said that, on his rendition of Bruce McCabe's "Darker Side" - a song that Johnny Lang introduced us to on his first release - Dara James just outright nails it. With his powerful and emotional vocal presentation and his stunning and masterful guitar leads, this one's all him.

Oddly enough - for me anyway - "The Muskie Grind" is a song about a fish and the trials, tribulations and addictions of those trying to catch them. Should you happen be one of those who does go after the

ferocious Muskellunge, with the advice and equipment instructions Andy's giving, this one might be considered mandatory listening. As Rick Bowen so playfully said on the one sheet, "The Muskie Grind" could very well be the anthem for the Fishing Channel.

The disc closes with a song about everyone's favorite time - "Time For The Blues". It's a swinger about a little juke joint on the edge of town where people go when they're feelin' down. That said, before they go, they make sure they've put



on their dancin' shoes. The jumpin' vibe the band's got goin' on, along with the names all the vocalists are dropping, give the song an old school feel; and while you're shaking along to it, the catchy chorus line will have you singing along, as well. Another real fun song.

Other songs on yet another outstanding release by the Jon Spear Band include: "Big Talk"; "Heartbeat Like A Samba"; "The Shaman"; "Yellow Moon" (A. & J. Neville); "Follow The Light"; "Kick In The Head"; and "Can't Have Nothing".

Having already garnered a Blues Blast Award Nomination back in 2016, I'm thinking "B-Side Of My Life" is not only worthy of repeating that, but opening some eyes of the Blues Music Award nominators, as well. Best of luck, Jon.

To find out more about the Jon Spear Band, just go to - www.jonspearband.com. Remember, wherever you go and whoever you contact, please let them know The Blewzzman sent you.

DEADLINE FOR THE **NEXT** HOLLER?



Deadline for the next issue (**April/May 2022 issue**) is **March 1, 2022**. Here is your chance to write about the music you love...and your chance to see your name in print! Write about anything involving the Blues- a show you saw, favorite performer, festival, favorite club, why you like the blues and when you started liking the blues, your Blues 'Bucket list', take a stab at reviewing a new CD you might have. **Anything**. I want it your words, and hopefully we can have someone each issue with a different perspective on things. Include pix you took as well. I want THE HOLLER to be a mix of all things 'Blues' and a mix of different ideas and views. Send your ideas to chick1951@hotmail.com



The Blue Star Connection Mission: To provide access and ownership of musical instruments for children and young adults (Blue Stars) fighting cancer or other serious life challenges.

Blue Star Connection is a 501c3 program that has served over 1000 Blue Stars, 100 hospitals, and dozens of music therapy and community organizations across the country.



Visit **Bluestarconnection.org** for details and to make a donation!

THE Boulder DRUM SHOP

TRIBES

The Boulder Drum Shop and Tribes Custom Drums endorse, sponsor and appreciate the Colorado Blues Society, Blue Star Connection and the wonderful, caring family of blues artists who donate their time and energy to promote worthy humanitarian causes that enhance the lives of those in need.

thedrumshopboulder.com

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RUF Records is a great friend to the Colorado Blues Society and has made generous donations to help CBS in our effort to support the Blues!

DISCLAIMER NOTE: *The opinions, beliefs and viewpoints expressed by the authors in this publication do not necessarily reflect the opinions, beliefs and viewpoints of The Colorado Blues Society or official policies of The Colorado Blues Society. The Colorado Blues Society makes no representations as to accuracy, completeness, correctness, suitability, or validity of any information in this publication and will not be liable for any errors, omissions, or delays in this information or any losses, injuries, or damages arising from its publication.*

Colorado Blues Society President's Corner

Fellow Blues lovers,

The New Year has barely begun and already our community is dealing with challenges we've never dreamt possible. The impact of the Marshall fire will be felt for years to come as many of our friends lost everything without a chance to truly evacuate their properties given the rapid spread of the fire. Kudos to KGNU and other area entities who are in the midst of developing support networks as best they can to organize relief efforts. I'm grateful for the friends whose homes were spared from the fire and heart broken for those who lost everything. Definitely not the start we all were hoping for in the New Year.

We're looking forward to the Member's Choice Awards January 9th at the Buffalo Rose as we honor Micheal "Hawkeye" Herman, David Booker and Al Chesis for their lifetime contributions to the Colorado Music Scene and we commend Dazzle for their extraordinary efforts to organize last year's food pantry that provided supplies for so many musicians who were in need. Hector Anchondo headlines a stellar day of entertainment along with: Deborah Stafford & the Night Stalkers, Lex Quasar & the Sonic Stomp and our youth act, Blue Shoes. We all are looking forward to celebrating the best of our Colorado Blues Scene and thank you in advance for coming out to celebrate CBS's efforts to recognize the acts chosen to receive the awards this year as chosen by you, the members of the Colorado Blues Society.

The year ahead definitely has its challenges. The new Omicron covid variant has led to the Blues Foundation making the difficult decision to postpone this year's International Blues Challenge with the intent to schedule it for later in the year. With the current state of affairs in Tennessee, it was the right thing to do though it definitely has had an impact on all of us who are planning to attend the event in support of our entries. When we all can be safely gathered on Beale Street, we will, but this is a reminder to everyone that we're far from over in dealing with the Corona virus. So get vaccinated, get your booster and together we will get through this one day at a time.

There are bright spots on the horizon. Greeley will be announcing its line up soon, Marc Gitlin will be re-opening Nissi's at a new location after being dark for two years, a new club, the Immortal Bar, opened in Johnstown. There will be other announcements as the year progresses and we all need to continue to support the clubs and the music we love.

Wishing you an amazing 2022!

Kyle Deibler, CBS President

MUSICIANS! VENUES!

GET YOUR BLUES GIGS POSTED

Did you know you can have your gigs posted on the Colorado Blues Society Calendar?

Posting your gigs alerts blues lovers to your shows.

The Blues Calendar is sent out weekly via an email blast to over 1700 blues lovers around the state as well as CBS members.

AND it is announced weekly on the Blues Legacy show on KGNU Community Radio (www.kgnu.org)

All YOU need to do is email your gigs to calendar@coblues.org in this format:

Date, Act, Starting Time, Venue, City

Your shows will be listed for FREE!

*"The blues. It runs through all American music. Somebody bending the note. The other is the two-beat groove. It's in New Orleans music, it's in jazz, it's in country music, it's in gospel." – **Wynton Marsalis***

*"The blues is losing someone you love and not having enough money to immerse yourself in drink". – **Henry Rollins***

*"I realized I was tired of singing about trees and flowers. I wanted to sing about real life. From then on, nobody could tell me anything was better than blues". ~**Robert Cray***

*"If T-Bone Walker had been a woman, I would have asked him to marry me. I'd never heard anything like that before: single-string blues played on an electric guitar". ~**B. B. King***

Colorado Blues Society Mission Statement

The Colorado Blues Society is dedicated to preserving Blues heritage and increasing awareness of and appreciation of the Blues as an indigenous American art form (the wellspring from which all contemporary popular American music originated)

Musicians/Bands etc...

50 Shades of Blue
Al Chesis and The Delta Sonics
Alfonzo
Backbone Devils
Blues*Wa*Feeling
Bruce Cook
Cary Morin
Cass Clayton Band
Clay Kirkland Band
Danny Ford Band
Dan Treanor
David Booker
Deborah Stafford and The Night Stalkers
Doc Brown's Blues Band
Eddy's Blues Zephyr
Erica Brown
Felonius Smith
Hogback Blues Band
Incoming Groove Band
Jack Hadley
Jenn Cleary
Johnny Johnston
Kerry Pastine and The Crime Scene
King Cake
Mad Dog Blues
Malkasian
Mojomama
My Blue Sky
Ori Naftaly
Peaches Embry and The Rhythm Train
Randall Dubis
Reckless and Blue
Reverend Nathon
Robert Wilson Blues Band
Sammy Mayfield
Scott "Shack" Hackler
Shaun Murphy
Spidercat
Super Saxy Entertainment
Supertonic
The Johnny O Band
The King Stan Band
The Lionel Young Band
The Rhythm Allstars
Three Shots
West Side Joe & The Men of Soul
Whiskey Pickles Band

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CBS Business Members

Buffalo Rose

119 Washignton Street
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303-278- 6800

Greeley Blues Jam

<https://greeleybluesjam.org>

Snowy Range Music Festival

Telluride Blues and Brews Festival

<https://www.thebluesjam.com/>

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Get Connected Events

<https://www.getconnectedevents.com/>

TJMusic.net

<https://www.tjmusic.net>

The Blues Jam

<https://www.thebluesjam.com/>

THE COLORADO BLUES SOCIETY ON RACISM

The Colorado Blues Society acknowledges that the art form we love and know as 'The Blues' was originally created by and remains an artistic expression of Black artists and musicians as their artistic response to slavery, oppression and injustice. The Colorado Blues Society will not remain silent in the face of the recent and past senseless murders of Black Americans in our communities, whether the cause be overt racism, implicit bias, or systemic racism. We stand with the musicians and members of our communities in expressing our sadness and outrage at prejudice and injustice towards the Black community and the lives that were taken so unjustly. The Colorado Blues Society grieves with the families for their losses.

BLUES BROADCASTS

Colorado Blues Radio, updated April 13, 2021

compiled by Jim Primock



SUNDAY

Midnight to midnight, Worldwide Blues (all day Sunday) internet-only radio from Colorado Springs, www.kcosdigitalmedia.com

2-4 pm, every other week, Blue Dog with Bob Mather KOTO 91.7 & 89.3

Telluride & Ophir, 89.5 Norwood, 105.3 Down Valley and online at www.radiorethink.com/tuner/index.cfm?stationCode=koto

8-10 pm, Strictly Blues with Kai Turner "The Blues Vassal" KRFX 103.5 Denver, and online at www.thefox.com or with the iHeart Radio app

9-10 pm, The Nine O'clock Blues hosted by Marc Applegate KJAC, 105.5 Greeley, 88.9 Steamboat Springs, 94.3 Summit County, and online at ColoradoSound.org

10 pm-midnight, Blues Mix with several hosts KHEN 106.9 Salida; online at <http://www.khen.org/live>

MONDAY

11am-12pm "Community Blues hour" sponsored by Pikes Peak Blues Community Jazz 93.5 Colorado Springs

11 pm-midnight, Jazz, Blues, & Country Mix with several hosts KHEN 106.9 Salida; online at <http://www.khen.org/live>

TUESDAY

10 am-noon, Blues Kitchen with Chef Mike KDNK 88.1; 88.3; 88.5; 93.5FM Carbondale; online at www.kdnk.org

11am-12pm "Community Blues hour" sponsored by Pikes Peak Blues Community Jazz 93.5 Colorado Springs

1-4 pm, Blues & Other Colors Tuesdays with Todd & Cynthia KVNF 90.9 Paonia; 89.1 Montrose, Delta, Cedaredge, Olathe, Norwood, Nucla; 98.3 Crawford; 90.1 Ouray; 99.1 Grand Valley; 88.7 Lake City; 88.9 Ridgway; online at kvnf.org

7-9 pm, Barrelhouse Blues with Rob Rawls KSUT 91.3 Ignacio, 89.3 & 90.1 Durango, 88.1 Pagosa Springs, 91.5 Silverton, 100.1 Cortez/Mancos, 91.9 Dolores online at <http://ksut.org/listen>

WEDNESDAY

7-10 AM The Wolf's Den with Wolf online at: <https://blues-at.co.uk/>

11am-12pm "Community Blues hour" sponsored by Pikes Peak Blues Community Jazz 93.5 Colorado Springs

6-8 pm, House Rent Party with Jeff Koepke KRFC 88.9 Fort Collins; online at krfc.fm

8-10 pm, Trinidadio Blues with Ken Saydak KCRT Trinidad 92.5; 99.3; 100.3; online at kbkzradio.net

11 pm-midnight, Evening Blues with several hosts KHEN 106.9 Salida; online at <http://www.khen.org/live>

THURSDAY

11am-12pm "Community Blues hour" sponsored by Pikes Peak Blues Community Jazz 93.5 Colorado Springs

3-4 pm, Blues & Rock Mix with several hosts KHEN 106.9 Salida; online at <http://www.khen.org/live>

7-9 pm, Building the Blues with Erik KHEN 106.9 Salida; online at <http://www.khen.org/live>

8-11 PM The Wolf's Den (Rebroadcast) online at: <https://blues-at.co.uk/>

9-9:10 pm, Blues Bites from the Red Rooster Lounge (1 or 2 songs) KJAC Greeley 105.5, and online at ColoradoSound.org

9-11 pm, Blues with Suz KDNK 88.1, 88.3, 88.5, 93.5FM Carbondale, and online at www.kdnk.org



FRIDAY

8-10 am, Luigi's Blues Review KBUT 90.3 Crested Butte, 88.7 Gunnison, 94.9 Jack's Cabin, and online at KBUT.org

11am-12pm "Community Blues hour" sponsored by Pikes Peak Blues Community Jazz 93.5 Colorado Springs

Noon-1 pm, Beale Street Caravan KOTO 91.7 & 89.3 Telluride & Ophir, 89.5 Norwood, 105.3 Down Valley and online at www.radiorethink.com/tuner/index.cfm?stationCode=koto

6-9 pm, Blues Legacy with several hosts KGNU 88.5 Boulder, 1390-AM Denver, and online at www.kgnu.org

9-10 pm, Beale Street Caravan KHEN 106.9 Salida; online at <http://www.khen.org/live>

SATURDAY

Noon-1 pm, repeat of Friday night Beale Street Caravan KHEN 106.9 Salida; online at <http://www.khen.org/live>

4-6 pm, All Blues with Sam Mayfield KUVO 89.3 Denver, 88.5 Vail, 89.7 Breckenridge, and online at kuvo.org

6-8 pm, R&B Jukebox with Easy Bill KUVO 89.3 Denver, 88.5 Vail, 89.7 Breckenridge, and online at kuvo.org

7-8 pm, Blue Plate Special with Jeff Bieri KRCC 91.5 Colorado Springs, Pueblo, Lake George, Florissant & Hartsel, 88.5 Westcliffe & Gardner, 89.1 La Junta, KWCC Woodland Park, 89.9 Limon, 91.1 downtown Trinidad, 91.7 Trinidad & Raton, 94.1 Walsenburg & La Veta, 95.7 Salida Buena Vista & Villa Grove, 105.7 Canon City, and online at <http://mod.krcc.org>

9-10 pm, Blue Horizon Show with Cheryl the Bluebird KAJX 91.5 Aspen, KJCX 88.9 Carbondale, and online at aspenpublicradio.org/listen-live



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Time...Here's a
"Blast from the Past"
of a youthful Al
Chesis. Yep, one of
our newest Lifetime
Achievement Award
recipients...you can
guess on the years.
Congrats Al, an
honor well
deserved!!!*