

recorded LIVE at the ^{second} ~~SECOND~~

SACRED STEEL CONVENTION

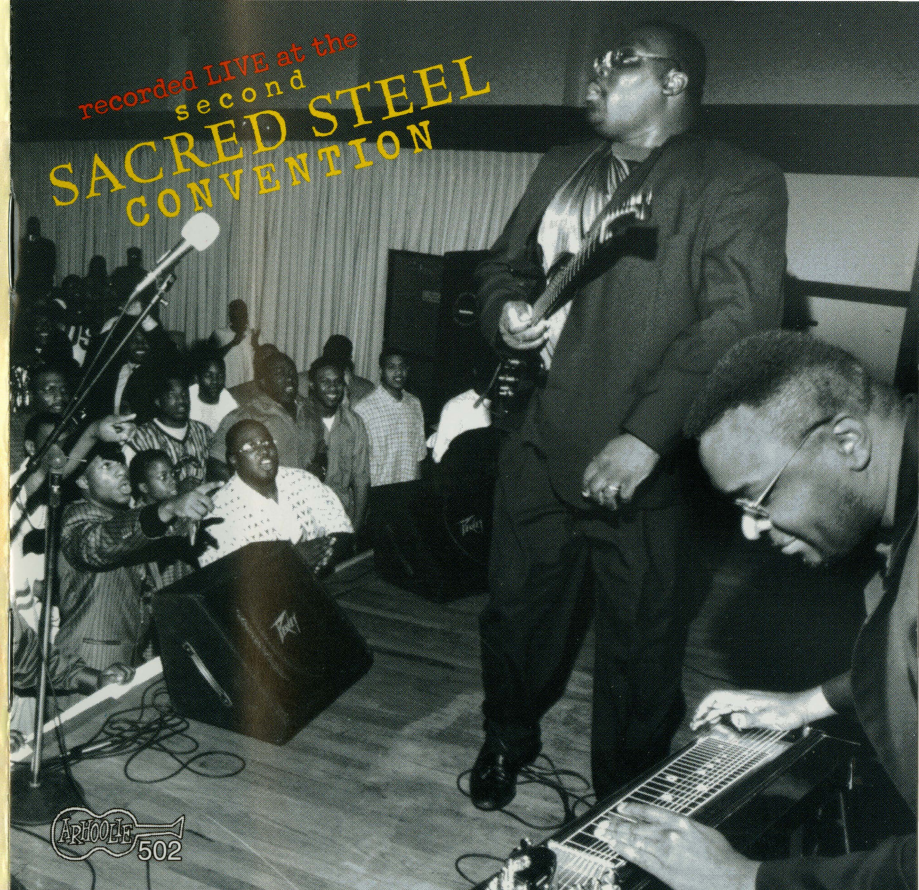
- 1 **Where Could I Go But To The Lord?** - "Brother" Sam Baldwin, vocal; Darick Campbell, lap-steel; Chuck Campbell, pedal-steel; Phil Campbell, guitar; Carlton Campbell, drums.
- 2 **Sign of the Judgement** - Marcus Randolph, pedal-steel guitar; Duane Snelling, Sr., vocal; Danell Snelling, guitar; Michael Randolph, bass; Carlton Talley, drums.
- 3 **You've Got To Move** - (McDowell, Davis) Robert Randolph, pedal-steel guitar; Danyl Morgan, bass and vocals; Marcus Randolph, drums.
- 4 **Then Comes Joy** - Elton Noble, lap-steel guitar and vocal; Jay Caver, guitar; Dante Harmon, drums.
- 5 **I'll Just Wave My Hand** - Calvin Cooke, lap-steel guitar; Grace Cooke, vocals; Jay Caver, guitar; Carlton Campbell, drums.
- 6 **What He's Done For Me** - Lonnie "Big Ben" Bennett, pedal-steel guitar; Cheryl, Sierra and Sherrie Bennett, vocals; Levi Bennett, drums; Daric Bennett, bass.
- 7 **Amazing Grace** - Dan Tyack, pedal-steel guitar; Chuck Campbell, pedal-steel guitar; Phil Campbell, guitar; Carlton Campbell, drums.
- 8 **Praise the Lord Everybody** - Dante Harmon, pedal-steel guitar; Brian Render, guitar; Keshia Hunter, bass; Brian Bush, drums.
- 9 **If I Couldn't Say A Word** - Lamar Nelson, pedal-steel guitar; Kinton Johnson, guitar; Andy Mims, bass; Marcus Randolph, drums.
- 10 **Footie's Medley** - (PD, James Cleveland, Henry Mancini, & Robert Postell. Arr. by R. Covington) Reggie "Footie" Covington, lap-steel guitar; Jay Caver, guitar; Carlton Campbell, drums.
- 11 **In The Morning When I Rise** - Darryl Blue, lap-steel guitar; Ann Jacobs, vocal; Phil Campbell, guitar; Carlton Campbell, drums.
- 12 **I Need Thee** - Rayfield "Ray Ray" Holloman, pedal-steel guitar; Danell Snelling, guitar; Andy Mims, bass; Duane Snelling, Jr., drums.
- 13 **What Is This?** - Lisa Lang, lap-steel guitar; Otis Thames, vocal; Cynthia Posey, keyboard; Chris Brinson, drums.
- 14 **God Wants Your Soul To Be Holy** - Elder Jerry Taylor, vocal; Bryan "Josh" Taylor, lap-steel guitar; Dante Harmon, drums; Phil Campbell, guitar; Andy Mims, bass.

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**SACRED STEEL
CONVENTION**



The Second
Annual
**SACRED
STEEL
CONVENTION**

MARCH 30-31, 2001
Sanford Civic Center
Sanford, Florida

In the 1930s brothers Troman and Willie Eason introduced the electric steel guitar into House of God, Keith Dominion worship services, where the musicians "make a joyful noise unto the Lord" and congregants praise Him by singing, shouting and dancing. The instrument rapidly gained popularity within the church and soon came to dominate all other instruments in that



(l to r) Cynthia Posey & Lisa Lang

sect as well as in Church of the Living God, Jewell Dominion, a related sect. A strong and unique steel guitar musical tradition developed in both Dominions and has been transmitted through four generations of inspired musicians. This album presents some of the best mature artists and emerging younger steel guitarists from those traditions.

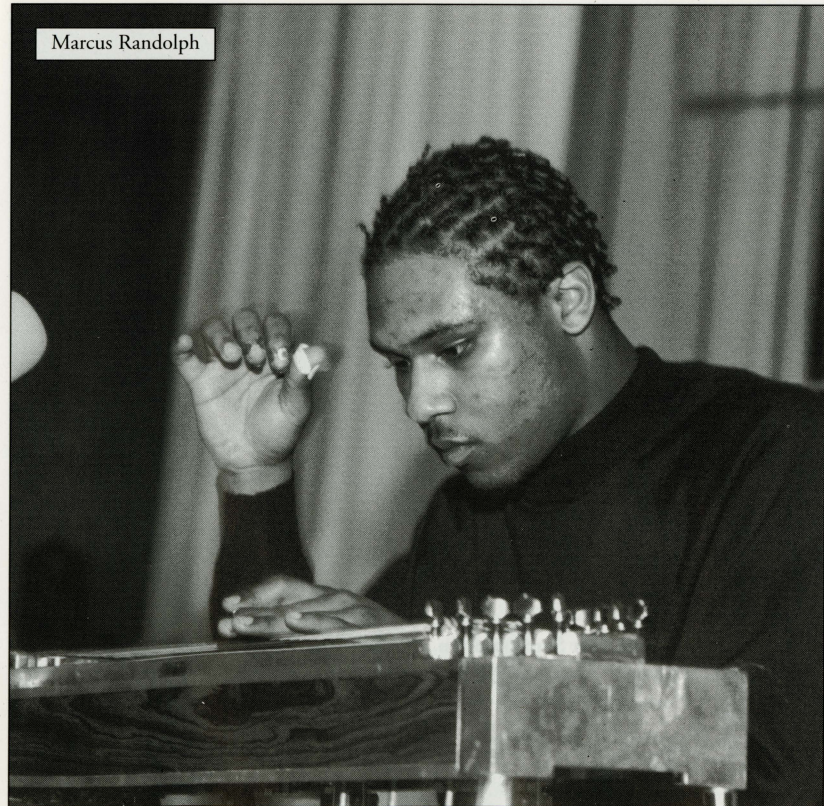
The annual Sacred Steel Convention was conceived by Marcus Hardy, a young House of God steel guitarist from the quiet northeast Florida town of Crescent City. The first convention was held at the placid, stately campus of Rollins College in the Orlando suburb of Winter Park. It was a magical event where a dozen or so steel guitarists shared their compelling music with one another and a small audience. They played with all the passion of a House of God worship service, but since the musicians rather than the ministers were in control, they were subject to none of the usual constraints.

The second annual Sacred Steel Convention was moved to the spacious Civic Center in nearby Sanford, Florida. It too was a magical event. The audience

grew to several hundred. The number of steel guitarists who presented showcases tripled. Veteran steel guitarists **Calvin Cooke** of Detroit, Michigan and **Elder Acorne Coffee** of Blythewood, South Carolina were honored with **Sacred Steel Heritage Awards** for their lifetime contributions to the tradition. Several deserving players grinned from ear to ear as they were awarded steel guitars, amplifiers and accessories through the **Arhoolie Foundation's** newly-established **Sacred Steel Instrument Fund**. History was made when Lisa Lang became the first woman steel guitarist to showcase her talents and **"Footie" Covington** was the first from the Jewell Dominion to play. Dick Sanft, who has been making Hawaiian music on the steel guitar for nearly 60 years, gave everyone a taste of the sound that spawned all other steel guitar styles. The variety and depth of talent was simply amazing. And never has there been a more supportive audience. They cheered the musicians on, shouted and screamed with excitement and danced with abandon.

The **Campbell Brothers** are the foremost ambassadors of the House of God

Marcus Randolph





(l to r) Chuck Campbell & Dan Tyack

steel guitar tradition. Since they began to tour in 1998, they have received standing ovations and critical acclaim at festivals and concerts throughout the United States, Europe and Africa. **Brother Sam Baldwin**, veteran quartet singer from the vibrant Jacksonville, Florida gospel scene joins them here for a rousing performance. Brother Sam honed his falsetto chops and showmanship singing and touring with the

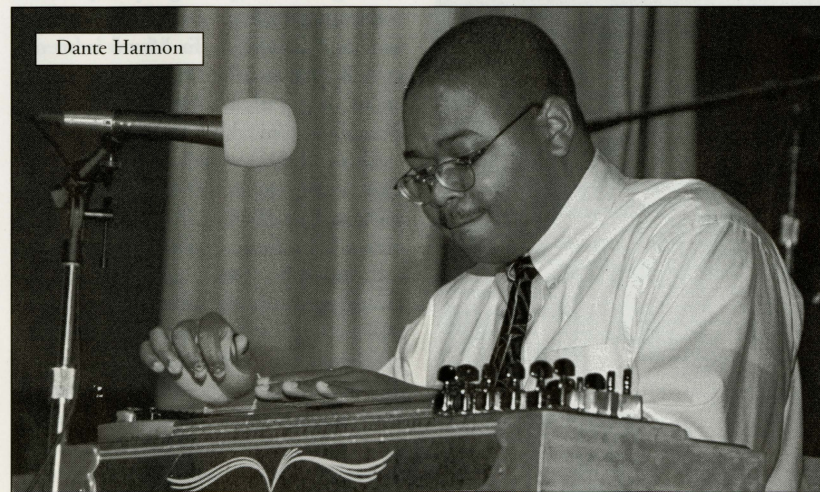
Gospel Keynotes in the 1950s. Lap-steel master **Darick Campbell** works closely with him to create a soulful call-and-response as the pair brings the audience to its feet with their interpretation of "Where Could I Go But To The Lord?"

Marcus Randolph (b. 1981) of Irvington, New Jersey is the drummer in **The Family Band** that backs up his cousin, pedal-steel phenomenon **Robert**

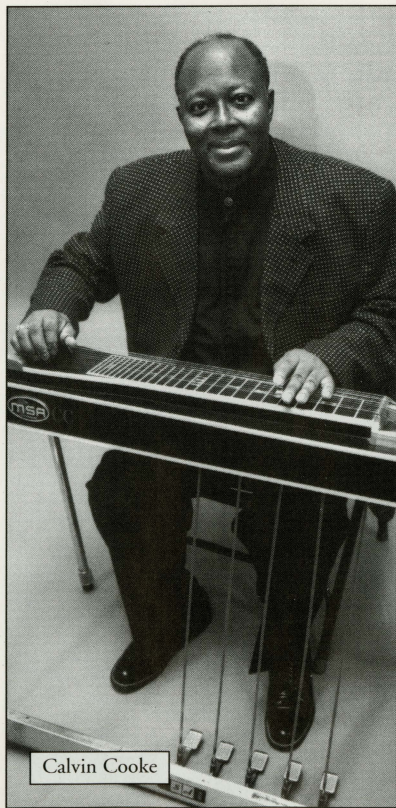
Randolph. Marcus began to play the drums when he was six, but has only been playing steel for about 5 years. He credits Robert and veteran House of God musician Elder Maurice "Ted" Beard, Jr. as the major influences on his steel guitar playing. After a powerful, brief vocal introduction by his uncle, **Duane Snelling, Sr.**, Marcus tears into his testifying version of "Sign of the

Judgement." Marcus's brother, **Michael Randolph**, on bass and cousin, **Danell Snelling**, on guitar join forces with drummer **Carlton Talley** to create a formidable rhythm engine.

New Jersey pedal-steel prodigy **Robert Randolph** is the first House of God steel guitarist to pursue music as a full-time profession. He has rapidly achieved renown touring coast-to-coast with The



Dante Harmon



Calvin Cooke

Family Band, which features his cousins **Danyel Morgan** as vocalist and bassist and drummer Marcus Randolph. In the spring of 2001, Robert teamed up with the North Mississippi All-Stars to front *The Word*, an album which rose to the number one spot on the Billboard blues charts. Unlike his country music counterparts, who sit staidly at their pedal-steels, Robert is all over the stage, stomping shouting and dancing between picking rapid-fire runs. He makes his 13-string monster growl and scream. "You've Got To Move" is an old song Robert and The Family Band bring up to date with his blistering steel and Danyel's soulful falsetto.

Elton Noble, who lives in Ft. Pierce, Florida and ministers at the House of God in West Palm Beach, "has church" as he makes his vintage Fender lap-steel weep and moan to give us a taste of his preaching combined with some poignant steel work. He then breaks into a bit of hot praise music for "Then Comes Joy," which he plays in the classic form developed by the late Henry Nelson decades ago; no chord changes and drive, drive, drive. Although Elton acknowledges his debt to

Nelson and Nelson's son Elder Aubrey Ghent, his own playing is distinctive and always spirited.

We join **Calvin Cooke**, his wife, **Grace Cooke** and the **Sacred Steel Ensemble** as they bring the energy level to a boil in "I'll Just Wave My Hand." One of the most influential steel guitarists in the House of God, Calvin paid his dues traveling with various bishops and playing the General Assembly in Nashville, Tennessee for more than forty years. He recalls many times when he would return from a weekend road trip of over a thousand miles and be dropped off at the Chrysler plant just in time for work Monday morning. At a concert in Philadelphia a few month prior to the sacred Steel Convention Dan Tyack gave Calvin the vintage Fender eight-string he plays here. Calvin was moved to tears.

Lonnie "Big Ben" Bennett of Rochester, New York played a big part in the 2001 Convention. He served as co-producer and had a major role in organizing the Sacred Steel Instrument Fund. It's all in the family as his wife **Cherlyn** and their two daughters, **Sierra** and **Sherrie** join vocal forces with sons **Daric** on bass and **Levi** on



Darryl Blue

drums to give their stirring rendition of the staple praise number "What He's done For Me." An inventive and highly skilled steel guitarist, Lonnie credits his brother-in-law, Calvin Cooke, as a major influence. Following in his father's footsteps, Levi has become quite the steel player. Look for him to showcase at the 2002 Convention.

Lamar Nelson, just twenty at the time of this performance, calls Union City, New Jersey home. Lamar is a cousin to the late Henry Nelson and names Calvin Cooke as a major influence on his pedal-steel playing. He plays his ten-string instrument in the E7th tuning Calvin introduced to House of God steelers. Although those familiar with Calvin's licks will recognize some of them quoted here, Lamar brings his own fresh approach as he skillfully renders his impassioned instrumental version of "If I Couldn't Say a Word."

Reggie "Footie" Covington, who hails from Lansdale, Pennsylvania, made history as the first steel guitarist from the Church of the Living God, Jewell Dominion to play at the Sacred Steel Convention. It was also his first time playing outside church. Footie uses the classic Jewell Dominion

outfit established by Bishop Lorenzo Harrison: an eight-string lap steel played through an enormous Morley rotary-wah pedal. "Footie's Medley" begins with a lyrical and almost new-age sounding interpretation of the old standard "Lord Lift Us Up Where We Belong" followed by James Cleveland's "Jesus Is The Best Thing." He then treats us to what could be the most soulful version of the "Pink Panther Theme" ever heard. As the crowd begs for more he serves up "Rock Force," a popular praise piece composed by Jewell Dominion guitarist Robert Postell.

Pedal-steel virtuoso **Dan Tyack** of Bellevue, Washington has toured with some of the top country stars as well as with the renowned contemporary western swing band Asleep at the Wheel. From his earliest associations with the pedal-steel guitar Dan has worked to liberate the instrument from the shackles of Opryland. When he first heard House of God steel it resonated deep within. The Campbell Brothers and Dan quickly became close friends. Within a few months they invited him to perform with them at festivals, concerts and church

services, then to play on their groundbreaking *Sacred Steel for the Holidays* album (Arhoolie CD 504). Dan has spent some time listening to the gospel vocal phrasing of Aretha Franklin, among others, as evidenced in his inspired and deftly played instrumental version of "Amazing Grace." Dan was the first to donate instruments to the Sacred Steel Instrument Fund.

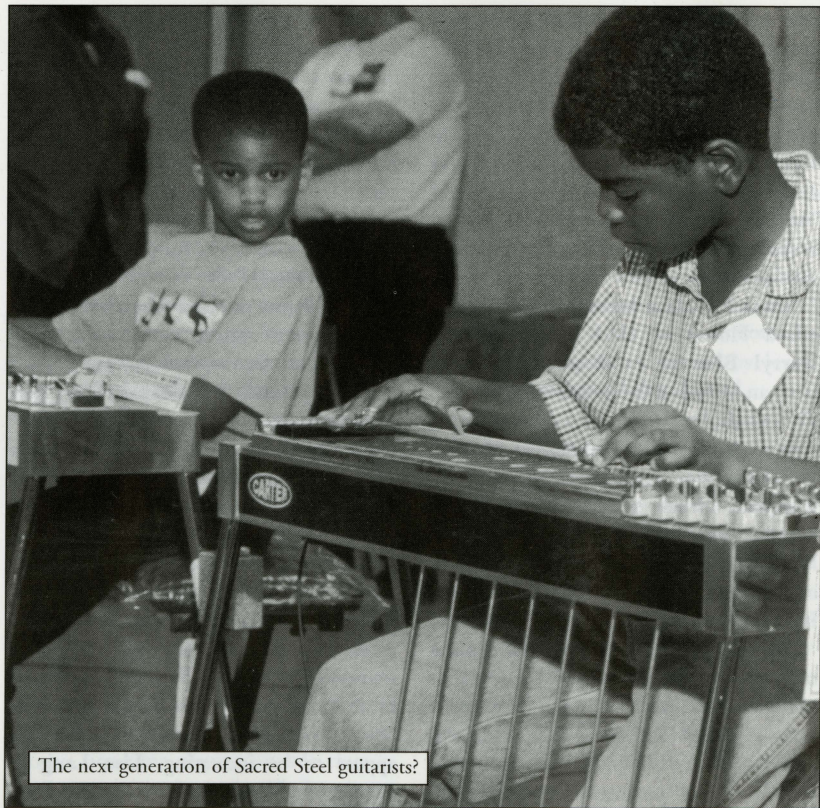
South Florida is home to a number of gifted House of God steel guitarists. **Darryl Blue** of Ft. Lauderdale comes from an extended family full of musicians. The Campbells are his cousins. Elder Aubrey Ghent was his musical mentor. Today Darryl serves as steel guitarist at the Pompano Beach House of God. His cousin, **Ann Jacobs**, belts out "In the Morning When I Rise" as Darryl breaks into some hot praise music on his vintage Fender lap-steel.

Dante Harmon is a talented young multi-instrumentalist from the Atlanta suburb of Duluth, Georgia. Like many other House of God steel guitarists, he was influenced by Calvin Cooke and Ted Beard. Most recently he has been

absorbing the style of Jewell Dominion steel guitarists such as Ronnie Mozee. In the past few years he has built a national reputation as a first-rank steel guitarist who never fails to take a House of God, Keith Dominion congregation just a little higher on their spiritual journey. Dante and his tight band breathe new life into the often heard praise number "Praise the Lord Everybody."

The House of God churches of the Northeastern states, particularly New Jersey and Pennsylvania, are major breeding grounds for talented young steel guitarists and **Rayfield "Ray Ray" Holloman** of Bristol, Pennsylvania is one of the most promising. Just sixteen at the time of his performance of "I Need Thee Every Hour," Ray Ray plays with maturity, grace and passion that belie his youth. Ray Ray and his contemporaries will shape the tradition in the 21st century.

While the House of God steel guitar tradition has historically been dominated by males, a few women have always been among their ranks. Today their numbers appear to be increasing. **Lisa Lang** of Miami, Florida enjoyed full support from



The next generation of Sacred Steel guitarists?

the audience as she became the first woman to play a showcase at the Sacred Steel Convention. Lisa credits fellow Ft. Pierce native Elder Aubrey Ghent with teaching her much about playing the lap-steel as well as the keyboard. She took up the steel only about five years before her stirring, wah-drenched performance of "What Is This?"

Otis Thames belts out the vocals, while his daughter, **Cynthia Posey**, lays down a shuffle on the keyboard. **Chris Brinson** of Leesburg, Florida, an inspired young steel guitarist and multi-instrumentalist, beats out a groove on the trap set.

Bryan "Josh" Taylor of Miami is one of the hottest young House of God steel guitarists in the South. Teamed with his minister/singer father, **Elder Jerry Taylor**, the pair never fails to evoke the Holy Spirit with their impassioned music and song. They are joined here by master guitarist Phil Campbell, drummer Dante Harmon (also a fine steel guitarist and keyboard player) and bassist **Andy Mims**. Elder Taylor combines his fiery vocals with Josh's blistering, syncopated improvisations as the pair renders an interpretation of "God Wants Your Soul To Be Holy" that just

about burns the house down as they close the Friday night show. Josh sees himself as a musical conduit through which the Holy Spirit flows. "When the Spirit falls heavily," he explains, "the anointing controls my playing."

Eventually the convention ended and we all had to return home. Inspired by what they heard and saw, steel guitarists young and old from Miami to Seattle sat back down at their instruments with recharged enthusiasm and passion, eager to express what they had experienced in Sanford. The performances captured on this CD and the few photos in the booklet help those of us who had the incredible experience of attending the 2001 Sacred Steel Convention to recall those two days and nights of inspired music, fellowship, joy and surprises. For those who were not there, this album provides just a taste of a musical and spiritual feast. For information about the next Sacred Steel Convention visit www.sacredsteelconvention.com, or contact **Marcus Hardy** at 386-698-2547.

Robert L. Stone
Gainesville, Florida
February, 2002

Recorded by: Buddy Ray, Mirror Image Studios, Gainesville, FL.

Mixed by: Buddy Ray and Robert L. Stone.

Executive producer: Chris Strachwitz

Production Assistant: Erik Keilholtz

Cover photo: Phillip and Chuck Campbell

Tray card photos: Robert Randolph and the Family Band

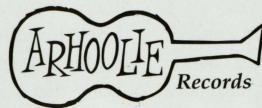
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To learn more about the Sacred Steel Instrument Fund contact the Arhoolie Foundation at www.arhoolie.org.

Links:

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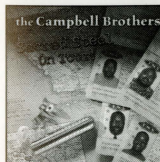
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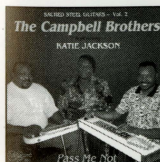
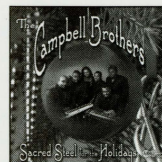
Recorded LIVE at the First Annual Sacred Steel Convention "Train Don't Leave Me" (vol.6) features: Dante Harmon, Josh Taylor, Calvin Cooke, Aubrey Ghent, Ted Beard Jr. & more



CD 503

the Campbell Brothers
"Sacred Steel On Tour"
(Sacred Steel vol.7)

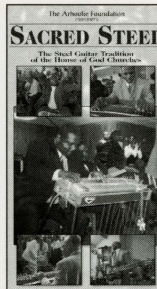
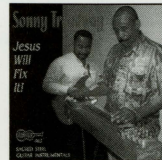
CD 504
the Campbell Brothers
"Sacred Steel for the Holiday"
(Sacred Steel vol.8)



CD 461

the Campbell Brothers
w/ Katie Jackson
"Pass Me Not"
(Sacred Steel vol.2)

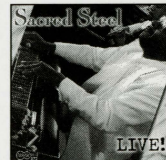
CD 462
Sonny Treadway
"Jesus Will Fix It"
(Sacred Steel vol.3)



AFV 203

Sacred Steel, video features: Maurice "Ted" Beard, The Campbell Brothers with Katie Jackson, Calvin Cooke, Willie Eason, Aubrey Ghent, Glenn Lee, Robert Randolph, historic video footage of Henry Nelson and more!

presented by
The Arhoolie Foundation
color, 55 minutes



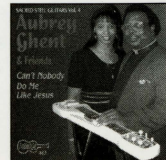
CD 472

Sacred Steel, Live! (vol.5)
features: The Campbell Brothers, Katie Jackson, Denise Brown, Willie Eason, Ted Beard, Calvin Cooke, Robert Randolph, and more!



CD 450

Sacred Steel vol.1
features: Willie Eason
Sonny Treadway,
Glenn Lee, Henry Nelson,
Aubrey Ghent



CD 463

Aubrey Ghent
"Can't Nobody Do Me
Like Jesus"
(Sacred Steel vol.4)

recorded LIVE at the SECOND

SACRED STEEL CONVENTION

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"Brother" Sam Baldwin, vocal; Darick Campbell, lap-steel;
Chuck Campbell, pedal-steel.

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3 You've Got To Move - Robert Randolph and the Family Band

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The Second Annual Sacred Steel Convention was
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with Lonnie Bennett, Co-producer

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