

Oldtime and Country Style Music of Berkeley

*Berkeley  
Farms*



Cover by: GLOBE PROPAGANDA

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FA 2436  
STEREO

with: LARRY HANKS, BAYOU CROAKERS, NEW TRANQUILITY  
STRING BAND AND FRIENDS, FRONTIER CONSTABULARY, PHIL  
MARSH AND THE HOPELESS LOVERS, MIRIAM, RITA AND JANET,  
SPARE CHANGE BOYS, WALT KOKEN, FRESNO PHILHARMONIC.



## SIDE A

1. Sally Goodin-Larry Hanks and Ron Tinkler, jew's harps. Vocal and intro, Hanks.
2. Apple Picker's Reel (Hanks)-Larry Hanks, vocal and guitar.
3. Fisher's Hornpipe-Holly Tannen (dulcimer) and Larry Hanks (mandolin).
4. Ruach Na Marku-Bayou Croakers. John Paul (accordion), Will Spires (melodeon), Sue Draheim (fiddle).
5. Bayou Pon Pon-as above with triangle by Sebastian Melmouth.
6. Sally in the Garden-New Tranquility String Band (and friends). Sue Draheim (fiddle); Will Spires (second fiddle); Larry Hanks (jew's harp); Eric Thompson (lead guitar); Dave Ricker (mandolin); Ron Tinkler (second guitar); Mac Benford (5-string banjo); Holly Tannen (dulcimer); probably others.
7. Boatman-as above, A6.

Time: 15:00

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701 SEVENTH AVE., N.Y.C., U.S.A.  
DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

Credits: Instigator, co-ordinator & editor — Mike Seeger; Notes, written and compiled — Rita Weill; Tracks B1, 2, 3 recorded by Peter Weston and Robert Shumaker at Pacific High Recording, San Francisco. The remainder were recorded by Dave Wirt and Reg Paradis at Guerrage Productions, Berkeley. Our thanks to both for their respect for the musicians regardless of any dollar value of their music. Recording was done primarily by the artists and engineers but with special help of Mitch Greenhill and Mayne Smith.

## SIDE B

1. Peyote Cowboy (Greenhill Open Range Music)-Frontier Constabulary. Mitch Greenhill, vocal and first lead guitar; Mayne Smith, steel guitar; Mark Spoelstra, second lead guitar; Michael Walsh, bass; Michael Woodward, drums.
2. Hopeless Love-(Marsh and Sonka)-Phil Marsh and the Hopeless Lovers. Phil Marsh, vocal and guitar; with Gary Salzman, Brian Voorhees, Peter & Lee Bouterse Berg, Miriam Stafford, Miles Sonka.
3. Loving Henry Lee-Miriam Stafford, first voice and banjo; Rita Weill, second voice; Janet Smith, third voice and guitar.
4. Policeman-Spare Change Boys. Hank Bradley and Jody Stecher, fiddles; Hank, lead vocal; Eric Thompson, guitar; Walt Koken, 5-string banjo.
5. Beasties in the Sugar (Bradley)-as in B4 but with Jody playing mandolin.
6. Walking in the Parlor-Walt Koken, 5-string banjo.
7. White Cockade-Fresno Philharmonic. Larry Hanks, Ron Tinkler and Genny Haley, jew's harps.

Time: 16:00

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COVER DESIGN BY GEORGE HUNTER



# Berkeley Farms

(Oldtime and country style music of Berkeley)

with: Larry Hanks, Bayou Croakers, New Tranquility String Band and friends, Frontier Constabulary, Phil Marsh and the Hopeless Lovers, Miriam Rita and Janet, Spare Change Boys, Walt Koken, Phresno Phil-harmonic

Instigator, co-ordinator and editor-Mike Seeger. Notes, written and compiled-Rita Weill. Tracks Bl,2,3 recorded by Peter Weston and Robert Shumaker at Pacific. High Recording, San Francisco. The remainder were recorded by Dave Wirt and Reg Paradis at Guerrage Productions, Berkeley. Our thanks to both. Recording was done primarily by the artists and engineers but with special help of Mitch Greenhill, Mayne Smith and Mike Seeger.

# FREIGHT AND SALVAGE

1827 San Pablo Ave.

Berkeley 546-1761

doors open 8:00  
Music at 9:30  
(Tuesdays 9:00)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>CLOSED MONDAY</b> Best show in town → 50¢ ← Stay home & practice up for the hoot. AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE ACHIEVED INSTANT SUCCESS AT FRIELIGHT HOTS: Deryl Ives Mac Seeger Sandy Riverbelle Smiley Grass Boys Genghis Cohen Wild Bill Hackett & the Boys in the Bank Leadbottom Joshua Benford Greg Poole & the North California Ramblers Uncle Dave Polacheck June Apple The Greene Hornet Gentry Haley & the Comets New Lost City Library California Tarheels "M.C.'d by the illustrious Mike McQueen direct from the dragstrip to you."	<b>alice stuart</b> and the TOWLETTES <b>JOEY KROCHER</b> Eric Thompson GUITAR DUOS <b>GENTRY HALEY</b> <b>LARRY HANKS</b> COUNTRY SOUTHERN PICKERS BROTHER, TROUBLE! <b>Jim Ringer</b> <b>Ron Linker</b> "You must have seen it!" Katy Jago Sunny Goodier <b>Joy of Cooking</b> CAPITAL RECORDING STORES	<b>alice stuart</b> and the TOWLETTES <b>SQUARE DANCE</b> Uncle Bert's Steamroller Dance Band <b>SMITH WEILL</b> <b>MINNEN</b> OLD-TIME SOUTHERN BROTHER, TROUBLE! <b>Fat City String Band</b> and dance music!	<b>KENNY HALL</b> and the Sweet's Mill String Band <b>SHUBB</b> <b>WILSON SHUBB</b> <b>EASTWAY</b> <b>SILVER</b> STREET THEATRE, SONG, CRIMINAL MOVIES <b>FRONTIER</b> electric country rock featuring Mayne Smith & Mitch Greenhill	<b>PEOPLES' INTERNATIONAL</b> SERVES STRONG MEXICANIAN BAND with folk dancers Jazz to Bluegrass	

## Introduction

One of the distinguishing features of a non-industrialized culture is that its music is woven into the whole cloth of its daily life. Music is one of the threads of a community's life-style, and can be found more readily off-stage than on.

Although Berkeley is not the country, but is a complexity of cultures and counter-cultures, with many stages and performers of various persuasions... its musical scenes weave a tapestry that covers the community and binds it together with grace, style, humour and rich aural hues. Hence, we call this album, "Berkeley Farms," rather than "Turn On, Tune Up, Drop In" or "Area Code 415" as was suggested.

The lives of the musicians represented here, range well into their private and global community in many ways, but folk music provides the warp and woof of their activities.

### Freight and Salvage:

A small storefront room on San Pablo Avenue, once the receptacle for unclaimed freight and salvage, is now a modest and excellent receptacle for the folk musicians of Berkeley. It provides a musical and social forum for local and visiting musicians, whose interests lie primarily in traditional music.

There is little separation between audience and performer here, there being as many folkies onstage as in the house. Often, half the beholders end up on the low platform, playing with the scheduled performer.

Nancy Owen, owner, house-sister and cook extraordinaire, supports us, and we support Freight. Noone

tries to get in free. Audiences wash the dishes, sell Nancy's pastries and coffee, drop the money (such as it is) into her kitchen drawer and return to their seats, when the show onstage resumes. Nancy refuses to advertise, beyond sending a monthly calendar. (also made by musicians with an art bent) to her clientele, knowing that bigger is rarely better.

It's most scenic aspect can be found in the back room's graffiti-covered walls, revealing more moral judgements on music than on sex. Just about every musician has been taken down a peg or two here. The ceiling, however, reveals the following plaintive query: "Hey! When does this stuff take effect?"

Everyone remembers the recent Ralph Stanley engagement. The band was attired in brocade and dubious facial expressions amid a sea of denim and fringe. No doubt Berkeley's reputation had preceeded us...Did we carry bombs in our instrument cases? When the audience requested the best old-timey songs and fiddle tunes, they relaxed. Their exit was made grinning, to the only standing ovation in Freight and Salvage's history.

### Social Functions:

All private parties or dinners end up with everyone picking and singing. Community festivities such as the annual Renaissance Faire find the same musicians attired in super old-timey garb, making music. The streets and campus are filled with all sorts of music, including Berkeley's finest, busking for fun, sun and money. A real musician must make music for its own sake; hence the cooperation and lack of factions. Local weddings feature pipers hidden in the woods, a string band playing the bride to her groom with anti-marriage folk-songs, the minister being a friend ordained for the occasion in the Universal Church, playing banjo or fiddle or saxophone and then beginning the vows, the feast table groaning under home-made breads and fresh fruit. Even the flying wedge of guests rushing the tables without ceremony, can



usually be seen begging with music on less special occasions!

All sorts of musical specialties are not only respected, but are assimilated, in Berkeley life. A country string band learns Cielidh music and plays regularly at real Irish dances in San Francisco, a Croatia band's songs are enjoined by those who generally sing Anglo American music, a Black preacher's songs are backed by a number of blues guitarists, and so forth. This musical stew can be seen and experienced at another important function for local musicians, that takes place every year in the mountains near Fresno, as well as in the East Bay Area.

#### Sweet's Mill:

Virgil Buxbe...the Don Quixote of Sweet's Mill, his sylvan digs in the Fresno mountains, runs a two-week folk-music camp out, annually. Musicians come from Berkeley, Los Angeles, San Diego and interim parts, to skinny-dip and pick, hike and pick, cook out and pick, visit and pick, make domes and pick, dance and pick, make pottery, tie-die, do carpentry and pick.

#### Berkeley Old Time Fiddler's Convention

But the place where it all converges is at the Berkeley Old Time Fiddler's Convention, created as a group effort, by the musical community for the musical community and of the musical community.

Conceived in the back of a Volkswagen bus, on the way to a party in Marin County, in 1968, by a group of people who wanted to retain the good music and interplay they'd witnessed at Southern fiddle-banjo contests, without the competition and corruption extant there. They wished to avoid the effects of regionalism that decreed there was a right way to play a tune and a wrong way, as well. After all, they felt, who could pinpoint one tradition for Berkeley? So it happened with but one rule, "No fair 'lectric instruments." Our first one was "The 35th Annual." At the sign-up tables, people asked "Who's sponsoring this?" The answer given was, "Nobody! We're just having it, that's all." The judges were chosen for their musicianship and their inherent sense of the absurd. Bribes were openly solicited, the judges preferring a particular brand of booze. First prize was 3 lbs. of rutabagas, second prize was 5 lbs. of rutabagas. This tactic, in addition to the judge's being encouraged to render arbitrary decisions, was designed to deflate competition and tension. Naturally, everything was free. In fact, one year, so many people gave us money to help defray costs, that the board (everyone who wanted to be on it) quit because it didn't have the slightest idea of what to do with it. Everything had been volunteered by the participants.

The Berkeley Old Time Fiddler's Convention is held in Provo Park, bounded by the Police Department, City Hall, Jail and Berkeley High School. If a newcomer arrived here on the right day, there would be no faster, more accurate way for him to understand where the Berkeley music scene is at, in every way. It's fun to see who catches onto the spirit and who doesn't. It's simply that music, here, is artistic and social communication rather than a consumer commodity.

Here are some of the anecdotes that have taken place since 1968 (35th Annual), 1969 (22nd Annual), 1970 (17th Annual) at our yearly get together.

1. First prize went to a regular on the folk scene, who was in Geneva, Switzerland at the time, teaching mathematics. The judges' ruling: "We felt the

ultimate thing a banjo player could do, in terms of good taste, was to be at least 8,000 miles away."

2. Another prize went to someone because he had travelled the farthest to attend. But he lost points because he was from New York City.
3. So many musicians kept re-forming instant bands, that Willy Spires won The Face in the Crowd Award, and Hank Bradley won Best Supporting Actor.
4. Another instant band of 40, calling itself "The Family Cow," played Phil Marsh's motown arrangement of "Catch a Falling Star and Put it in Your Pocket" with folk instruments, culminating in a solo of Dynamite Annie's expression on an alien instrument to her - a fiddle, all the while an 8 month's pregnant band member twirled a baton and did a belly dance. They were disqualified for unlawful assembly.
5. Jean-Paul was disqualified for dropping Chinese yen in the judges' bribe box.
6. Boom-Boom Shubb won for playing "Arkansas Traveler" on the bass fiddle.
7. Sue Draheim won for her good legs and traditional hip action.
8. Jody Stecher won 5 points for every fret missing on his fretless banjo. His prize, a normal looking custard pie; when cut open, revealed a multi-coloured psychedelia inside.
9. Dave Polacheck impressed the judges with his Uncle Dave Macon sweatshirt and by never once looking at the audience while picking.
10. One year a fourth prize was included because the judges felt that at least one prize should be awarded for quality. Noone remembers who won it!
11. Sandy and Jeanie Darlington won with "The Lone Pilgrim", because "they have soul."
12. Everyone on this album has performed at The Berkeley Old Time Fiddler's Convention. The anecdotes could go on forever, but my favorite concerns a consummate musician with "The Golden Toad," who got onstage with a three-string violin of ancient ancestry, and gave a dissertation as to its lineage and evolution. He ended his remarks by noting that it was probably the only ture fiddle at the convention. He then played an exquisite mediaeval dance tune that enthralled everyone. He was disqualified for not having a real fiddle.

As of this writing The Berkeley Old Time Fiddler's Convention has become such a legend that the City Chamber of Commerce (missing the entire point) urges us to continue several national television stations and The Canadian Film Board are making plans to film this year's event.

We just may not hold our convention this year, because of it. If a community function becomes too large, then rules must be made. None of us wishes to change the character or function of our traditional party.

However, we have promised Mike Seeger, that when he comes out west to our festivity, we will name it The First Annual Berkeley Old Time Fiddler's Convention, so he won't feel as if he had missed anything....

by Rita Weill - July 27, 1971



# Biographies

## LARRY HANKS

Born: 1939

I've lived in Berkeley since I was six years old. There was always plenty of music around my house, while I was growing up. Phonograph and my Mother played piano and I sang in the church choir. I had a uke when I was 12. Through school I played drums. Fooled around on piano. Folk music entered my life when I was in college. I learned guitar. Records, well, I sought out Woody Guthrie stuff. Also Cisco Houston and Oscar Brand. There was something, especially in Woody's music, that was necessary for me, then. He was Folk Music to me. I also listened to Pete Seeger. I liked songs that said things about the world. I liked country music style. Used to take the country music from Joan Baez records. I began picking up songs as fast as I could, never mind the source!

In the mid-fifties, I began playing on radio station K.P.F.A.'s program, "Midnight Special". Many of today's Berkeley musicians performed on it, while still in high school. I then branched out and appeared at Peace rallies, benefits for Salvation Army etc. I got my first guitar in '58. When I returned from Europe in '61 I moved to San Francisco. Played local coffee houses. In 1964 I performed with Roger Perkins. From 1967, Since I started working at Lundberg's music store I have tried to keep up. I appear at Freight and Salvage regularly and am involved with the S.F. Folk Music Club, since '65. It has been a consistent influence. I also frequented Fox Hollow, the past two years. This summer I am taking off in a converted school bus with many Bay Area musicians to make instant folk festivals and see the country. I'll be back for the Berkeley Fiddler's Convention, of course.

NOTES ON SONGS: I was picking apples in Sebastopol. Its like trying to write a song or a poem really directed and you try to get away from it, after you try for awhile, and it all sort of happens later. In this case I was in a fit of exhaustion, in the top of an apple tree. It just came out of my mouth. The song, not the tree. It was late in the afternoon; an eruption of joy! Apple Picker's Reel. Sally Goodin. I learned from a Woody Guthrie record. White Coackade I learned from Kenny Hall.

## RON TINKLER

Born: 1941, Glendale, California

My Grandmother was a guitar player and she had two brothers who played fiddle and banjo in North Texas and in Southeast Oklahoma. My father played Jimmy Rogers and Hank Williams stuff on guitar. I had a heavy musical family. Mostly Country and Western. I started in a random way, on guitar, in the People's key of G, when I was ten years old. At twelve, I started steel guitar lessons from a woman in Fresno. I kept with her until I was sixteen. By that time I was playing with some friends in a Hawaiian band and in a C&W band. I was influenced by Harry Owens and Hilo Hattie!

In high school I played saxophone in the school band. I also had a country rock band then. We played lots of Buddy Holly, Jerry Lee Lewis and Elvis material. From there I went into jazz. I played guitar and string bass with three others and stuck with it a couple of years. Not too much country music then... I had a friend who played a la Merle Travis and another who played guitar and sand C&W. He developed a nice style because his two middle fingers were gone. He played a la Carter Family. One was from Texas and one was from Tennessee.

I did the whole Folk Revival trip: Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Burl Ives, in pre-Kingston Trio days. But always kept up my interest in Country and Western music. Took up dobro in 1960. I was bowled over by folk music because it was so close, in certain ways, to C&W. Then I realized that lots of what I'd thought of as C&W was folk music. I got folk music into perspective and really dug it!

In 1961 or 1962 the Fresno Folk Music Club started. Virgil Buxbee was into it. Mark Spoelstra was living there then, as well. We imported a lot of music from Berkeley in the persons of Larry Hanks, Cathy and Carol, etc. I met Kenny Hall in '63. He still lives in Fresno. For many years I used to come up to Berkeley twice a month for music. I got reacquainted with Jim Ringer, whom I'd known a little in school. Jim, Kenny and I played music a lot in Fresno and at Sweets Mill. I knew Humbeads already, through Sweets Mill. In fact, I knew many of the Berkeley musicians because of Sweets Mill. Jim, Kenny and I got bigger gigs, you know, San Diego Folk Festival three years in a row, Freight and Salvage, University of Oregon, etc. We called ourselves The Sweets Mill String Band. Me on guitar and banjo, Jim on guitar and vocals, Kenny Hall on mandolin and

Harry Leidstrand on fiddle. We play anything we really like. Old Timey early C&W a la the Blue Sky Boys...a little of this, a little of that. Kenny Hall has been my heaviest musical influence, though. He's a wealth, for sure!

We are travelling East this summer with other bay area musicians in a school bus, calling ourselves the Portable Folk Festival. We expect to have a great time, make lots of music, both for free and for fee. Whee!

## HOLLY TANNEN

Born: 1947 in the heart of the old South (New York City)

I left New York at age 16 to come to college at Berkeley. I did ny undergraduate work at U.C. and at Reed College. I graduated in psych..my field being animal behavior. Did graduate work at U.C. Davis in Zoology.

While I was in high school I played classical music. I got into folk music as everyone else did in my school, when Joan Baez's first record was released. I sang lots of ballads but never in public because I was too shy.

The change came in Berkeley, through Dr. Humbead's New Tranquility String Band, whom I met while they were begging on campus in 1968. I started following them around and learning their tunes. I was playing dulcimer. Dulcimer isn't a traditional string band instrument; its a solo instrument. So I had to adapt my style to a band style that utilized rapid chord changes. I tuned it in D with the top two strings in D and bottom string on octave below. I had an extra fret put in so I could hit a major 7th. In this way I could play melody on most fiddle tunes in D and a kind



of chordal back-up by barring across all three strings with three fingers and hammering on with my thumb (Editor's note: Holly can keep up all night, with vigor with any string band's playing). By keeping the bar chords down I can also play in A, Am, G and Em.

I've played Freight with, among others, Ellen Bush (The Silver Lizard String Band), the Colby Streeters, Kenny Hall, Larry Hanks, Janet Smith and Rita Weill.

While I was at Davis, I ran the Coffeehouse on campus. I brought traditional music to people who'd never heard it before, through Humbead, Alice Stuart, Rita Weill, Larry Hanks, Janet Smith, Hank Bradley and Jody Stecher and The San Francisco Folk Music Club.

RECORD NOTES: Fisher's Hornpipe (key of D): Larry plays the melody line on mandolin. I play chords and as much of the melody as I can fit in. I was told that hornpipes were impossible to play on dulcimer. That's why I learned to play it!

#### JOHN PAUL

Born: 1938, Los Angeles, California

I heard nothing that approximated music until I was sixteen. At that time, I contracted spinal polio for the second time, and couldn't get around. A friend brought me old Caruso records and my Mother bought me a Zenith Cobramatic phonograph for my birthday. I collected about 2,000 cylinders and disks mostly classical and music hall stuff, piano solos by Percy Granger, Mainer's Mountaineers, Vernon Dalhart were among them. I didn't play music yet...just listened to music until I was about twenty years old. A night watchman at a college in Bakersfield gave me a 4-string banjo. A friend of mine had a tenor uke and we used to play local bars for change and for drinks.

When I came to Berkeley in 1961, a German jazz musician gave me a 6-string banjo and a jazz guitar. I played mainly for myself; mostly jazz. I hung out with Berkeley folk musicians alot. I used to go to K.P.F.A. to perform on Midnight Special. I worked at Lundberg's guitar store for a few years and also did alot of bumming around the Western states.

The Cabale, run by Rolf Cahn, opened in 1962. I was there every night, for about four years, playing, listening, messing around. Then The Golden Toad got started. We played the streets with out varied repertoire of international music that spans centuries. At various times, along with Bob Thomas' collection of bagpipes and flute instruments, my accordion, the far out singing, Spires' fiddle playing and all, we have had a whirling dervish and a magician who completed his act by conjuring up a flock of doves inside of Freight and Salvage. They flew all over the place. It was quite peaceful.

Before Golden Toad, I was living in Laganitas (Marin Co.) and one day I spied a fantastic accordion circa 1902 in an antique store. Up until that time, my conception of accordions was Oh Lord, "Lady of Spain" played too fast. I never dreamed of playing such a thing! But it was so beautiful, I finally bought it and began to play it. At first I played what I could remember from my old record collection.

Later, I got into Cajun music. With The Golden Toad, I played some Bohemian, German, French, Mexican, British and Irish music and lots of Cajun numbers.

When I'm not playing music, I make batik tools, fix instruments and make leather things, such as belts and pouches. Every year I have a stall at the Renaissance Faire in the woods of Marin County.

Rauch Na Marku: An accordion polyglot duet. Learned from a 1925 Okeh recording. Bohemian melody. I really identify with this tune.

Bayou Pon Pon: Louisiana Cajun tune. Learned from an Arhoolie recording of Dewey Balfa and Nathan Abshire.

#### WILL SPIRES

Born: 1943, La Jolla, California

I was raised with folk music records all around me at home. My parents were into Classical music and folk music. There was a piano, guitars, mandolins and other instruments....I have sung, all my life. Family singing during my early years. In 1960 I took up guitar and mandolin.

I came to Berkeley in 1964 for nice ladies, music and other natural products.

In 1965 I began playing fiddle and concertina. Important influences have been The New Lost City Ramblers for fiddle music, and Alf Edwards and A.L. Lloyd on recordings for concertina.

I lived in the bottom apartment on Colby Street and was in most of the bands that sprung up featuring the residents of the top apartment. Some of the bands I've played in here in Berkeley are, The Golden Toad, New Tranquility String Band, The Floating Lotus Opera Company, The Irish Band, The Grainneog Ceilidh Band and lots of one-gig bands for particular performances. I've had much busking experience and am among the vanguard of competent Berkeley music beggars.

Besides this record, I played a couple of ballads with Rita Weill for her album on Takoma Records in 1968.

#### SUE DRAHEIM

Born: 1949, Oakland, California

I've lived around the Bay Area most of my life. There wasn't much money at home. I had to talk my parents into letting me take fiddle lessons. I started that when I was eight years old. This was public school instruction. After three years of that, I began private lessons. I stopped when I was fourteen, and didn't touch the violin until I was 19.

\*  
I moved to Colby Street when I was eighteen years old. It was there that I met Jim Bamford. He taught me my first fiddle tunes (as opposed to the classical violin music I'd learned).

This was in 1967. I met MacBenford shortly after that and the three of us played together as "Dr. Humbead's New Tranquility String Band", or "The New Tranquility String Bean." We picked around town, at The Coffee Gallery, Lion's Share, Berkeley Folk Festival and The Sky River Rock Festival, with steady gigs on the Berkeley campus, begging. By then, Will Spires had joined the band.



The Summer of 1969 Mac and I travelled East and I won first prize in the fiddle contest at Pulaski, Virginia.

When Jeremy Kammerer took up residence at Colby Street, upon his return from Ireland, he began teaching us Irish music and introduced us to Joe Cooley and Kevin Keegan (Ed.'s note: two fine traditional musicians from Co. Clare and Co. Galway). We began playing Ceilidh music with them at Harrington's Pub in San Francisco, once a week.

Jody Stecher, Eric Thompson and Willy Spires got a band together for The Dickens Fair in San Francisco last December. They called it The Irish Band. We played in this band at Freight and Salvage, as well.

I played with Walt Koken, Jody Stecher and Bob Potts as a band in Summer of 1970. When Mac Benford got back from the East, he joined it. After a while Jody left. In October, this band evolved into The Fat City String Band (Walt, Bob, Mac and Larry Hanks). Oh, in the past I also played with Eric and The Edsels and Mac and the Trucks.

As for records, in addition to this one, I played "Peeler's Creek Waltz at Galax with Buddy Pendleton and it was recorded by Janet Kerr for Leader Sound, in England. John Cohen recorded many of us (Eric, Will, Bob, Holly Tannen, Kenny Hall, Mac, Jody, Hank Bradley, Larry Hanks, etc.) for Vanguard, I guess.

I'm leaving for Ireland and points West, in June. I have a one-way ticket, but will most likely return to Berkeley after a while.

\*Colby Street, where Sue lives, is and always has been infested with fine Berkeley musicians, including at one time or another, just about everyone who appears on this record.

#### ERIC THOMPSON

Born: 1946, Stockton, California

I've been near the Bay Area nearly all my life. My parents had all sorts of records around the house: Leadbelly, Pete Seeger, Merle Travis, Cisco Houston, Woody Guthrie, etc. In high school I discovered the existence of The New Lost City Ramblers and Bluegrass music. This must have been around 1961. I learned rhythm guitar from NLCR records. I got right into it, collecting records and tapes; everything I could get my hands on. Haskell McCormick, Hoyt Skoggins, Bill Monroe, Reno and Smiley, Osborne Bros., Flatt and Scruggs. The first lead guitar player who influenced me a lot before I discovered Doc Watson, was Don Reno. Also Jesse McReynolds.

At that time in Berkeley, people my age who were into music were Rick Shubb and Sandy Rothman. I hung out at Lundberg's a lot. I used to take the train up from Palo Alto to do this! In those days I picked with Gerry Garcia some. Gerry and David Nelson and I were in a Bluegrass outfit in Palo Alto called The Black Mountain Boys. I was 17. The following year I went to New York. Had a band called The New York Ramblers (with Winnie Winston, David Grisman, Fred Weiss, and Gene Lowinger). I met Jody Stecher around then but hadn't yet picked with him. Did an old time banjo project for Elektra that year. Came west that summer (1964). Towards the end of that year I played in Mother McChree's Uptown Jug Champions Band (Grateful Dead, later). I met Richard Greene in '65. Listened

to the Stonemans a lot. In '66 I returned to school in art history. One day I walked into Lundberg's and a chick said "Paul Rothchild's looking for you". Found him. "You wanna record in Nashville?" It's a secret. Can you play in many keys? Pick things up fast?"

So I went to Nashville and accompanied The Charles River Valley Boys on their album, "Beatle Country".

The Diesel Duck began in '67 with Hank, Sue Rosenberg (my wife, now), Sue Draheim and Mac Benford and Rick Shubb. Eric and the Edsels in 1969. I started officially playing with Humbead in '69 at the second Sky River Festival up in Washington. In spring, '70 I played first gig with Jody Stecher at Freight. We've been playing there just about every month since then. In December '70 I began playing Irish music with Jeremy Kammerer and Sue Draheim, Sue Thompson and Jody.

#### DAVE RICKER

Born: 1937, Boston, Massachusetts

I came to Berkeley in 1948 and started playing music in 1951. I started, actually, at age 11, with a guitar and then started banjo when I was thirteen. From what was passing in public circles as folk music, I got into Old Timey music in 1961. I began listening to lots of old timey records and collecting music in 1964. I've been playing the fiddle since 1965. For the past few years I've been into Irish traditional fiddle music.

In 1968 and 1969 I formed The All Go Hungry Hash House band with Phyllis Ricker, Jack Link and Holly Tannen. We were regularly featured outside of Berkeley's Co-op markets and on campus.

Berkeley has always provided plenty of places (but usually one at a time) for folk musicians to meet with one another and pick. Among these places, over the years, I played and listened at The Blind Lemon, The Cabale, The Jabberwock and Freight and Salvage. They have all been main ingredients in Berkeley's musical sandwich.

Many of use old timers had regular performing experience once a week throughout the 1950's on radio station K.P.F.A.'s program, Midnight Special. Among those regulars were myself, Dave Fredrickson, Miriam Stafford, Rolf Cahn, Barry Olivier, Jim Stein, Ken Spiker, Rita Weill, Mayne Smith, Neil Rosenberg, Dave Jones and Tom Gibbs, Janet Smith, Pete Berg, Billy Faier and new blood as more folkies came to Berkeley.

#### MAC BENFORD

Born: 1940

I started playing banjo in 1961. I was working in a summer camp on Cape Cod. A friend, there, had a guitar and also a tape recorder with tapes of The New Lost City Ramblers. They just blew my mind. I'd never heard anything like that before. I decided I'd start in with banjo and stick with it. I tried Bluegrass first. Played about three years or so in college and right after. Then I got a teaching job (English) and for the next three years, pretty much ignored the banjo. Then I decided that I needed a rest, so in 1967, I came to California. First I settled in San Francisco and then, in Berkeley. Most everyone was



playing Ole Timey, not Bluegrass, so that's what I got into. Jim Bamford, Sue Draheim and I played and busked a lot. In those days, begging young musicians were a rarity.

In 1968 Dr. Humbead's New Tranquility String Band began and I played in it until Spring of 1970. I formed Fat City String Band in November of 1970 with myself, Walt Koken, Bob Potts and Larry Hanks. We are going East this summer to have a good time playing and carrying on.

NOTES ON SONGS: Boatman. Learned from Franklin George on the Kanawha label.

Sally in the Garden: Got to us from a Dave Ricker record via the Hollow Rock String Band. Its not the Crockett Family version. Ours is an art music version. Very square! This is the New Tranquility String Band's epitome of everyone playing lead at once.

The fact that I haven't the slightest idea how these tunes were introduced shows that so many of us all knew the same tunes. No one paid much attention to their source of learning them. Many people play notes and don't bother about anyone else's style.

#### THE FRONTIER CONSTABULARY (Now "The Frontier")

From a letter from Mitch Greenhill, May, 1971:

"WHO IS THE

Peyote Cowboy?

-FRIEND OF THE FRONTIER

-SPIRIT OF SWEETS MILL PAST

"He would not rest or be contented

Until he crossed the Turkish Sea"

-Miss Colleen

...Michael Walsh and Mark Spoelstra were in the band at the time (when this recording was made) and we called ourselves Frontier Constabulary...We spent our weeks much as did my grandfather, the Cantor, and his orthodox friends - playing music, so the congregation can get off. Only we do it at any of the hip honky-tonks scattered through the hills. It's not a bad life..."

#### MITCH GREENHILL

lead and harmony vocals, lead guitar (acoustic and electric), songwriting

Born in March, 1944, Mitchell grew up in Boston. Since his father was manager for numerous musicians, Mitch was exposed to a rich variety of sounds, and got a chance to play with the likes of Lightnin' Hopkins and the Rev. Gary Davis. He started performing at age 14. Later he played regularly at Cambridge's Club 47 and expanded his knowledge of traditional and "commercial" styles of picking and singing, particularly in the blues idiom. In 1968, after finishing at Harvard, he moved to California to seek a career among the recording studios and musicians that abound here; before long he teamed up with Mayne and Mark and moved to Sonoma County.

Mitchell has the most extensive recording experience in the band. As a teenager he recorded with Sylvia Mars and Jackie Washington on the Folk Lyric label, and more recently he accompanied Rosalie Sorrells on her Folk Legacy album. His own albums on the Prestige label are Pickin' the City Blues (14026) and Shepherd of the Highways (7438 - with sidemen Geoff Muldaur,

Jeff Gutcheon, and Fritz Richmond). The Mercury subsidiary, Fontana, has released singles of his songs, "There Ain't No Instant Replay in the Football Game of Life" (1636), and "Far Out on the Oceanside" (1656). Mitchell also produced and arranged the recent Eric Von Schmidt album on Mercury, and has written and produced a number of soundtracks for television commercials.

#### MAYNE SMITH

Lead and harmony vocals, pedal steel guitar, dobro rhythm guitar (acoustic and electric), songwriting

Mayne was born in March, 1939, and spent most of his childhood in Austin and Minneapolis, where he began singing in church choirs at the age of 10. He started fooling with the guitar not long after, and when his family moved to Berkeley in 1953 he soon became active in the growing urban folk music revival. By 1959 he was playing the banjo and dobro, concentrating on acoustic country music; he performed solo and with various bluegrass bands on a semi-professional basis for the next ten years. During the same period, he collected an M.A. in Folklore (his thesis was on bluegrass), wrote articles for Sing Out! and the Journal of American Folklore, and edited college textbooks in the social sciences. But in 1965 (now living in Los Angeles) he had started writing songs seriously, and this led him more and more away from the bluegrass field and finally convinced him to become a full-time musician. In 1969, he moved back to Berkeley where he shortly got involved with Mitch and Mark Spoelstra and started learning the pedal steel guitar; Sonoma County became his home soon after the full band got rolling.

Mayne has recorded as a sideman with several folk-rock groups on Capitol records and plays dobro on a new movie soundtrack written and produced by Barry Melton. His songs have been released by the Stone Ponies (Capitol 2763) and Kaleidoscope (Epic 26467). The 1970 Country Music Who's Who reproduces a foldout "Chronology of Country Music" prepared by Mayne.

#### MICHAEL WOODWARD

drums, smiles

Michael was born in April, 1944, and raised in central Michigan. In high school, his dedication to drumming and thorough musicianship was inspired by his band director, jazz trumpeter Floyd Mead, and Mike played in dance combos, percussion ensembles, show and concert bands. In 1962, having graduated, he moved west on his own and became first among The Frontier's members to settle in Sonoma County. In succeeding years he studied philosophy at Sonoma State College, held a variety of day jobs, and played a lot of casual dates around Santa Rosa. In 1968 and 1969, Mike traveled with two short-lived rock groups, Six Penny Opera, and Truck. Jamming with friends one night, he met a bassman named Lee Poundstone, and later the two of them worked as rhythm section for John Lee Hooker for several nights at Cotati's hip honky-tonk, The Inn of the Beginning. Soon after the grapevine put Mike in touch with Mitchell in late 1969, he joined The Frontier and was responsible for bringing Lee to a rehearsal a month or so later.

#### PHIL MARSH

Born: 1943, Nebraska

My family used to sing in the car. I was a radio freak. My Grandpa was a country fiddler. I took up violin as



a kid because I'd burned my hand and needed to exercise it. I played drums in school, but I gave it up for girls. When I was 18 or 19 I went to Europe. Played the Kazoo and sang harmony on the streets for about 10 months to make money. That's when I started learning guitar and played folk songs like everyone else for millions of years in my life. I came to Berkeley in 1961 to go to California.

The Siffle Band (Cleanliness and Godliness) involved a floating cast of thousands. People would squish each other, trying to get to the mike. It stabilized around me and Dan Paik, Carlin Arriola, Will Scarlett, Dynamite Annie Johnson, Richard Saunders; later, Hank Bradley, Brian Voorhies, Gary Salzman, Tom Ralston and Lewis Aissen.

We busked a lot on campus, the streets, political rallies. Eventually it evolved from, say garbage can to drums, from folk music to arrangements to compositions and then went electric to compensate for having drums! It was a very personal trip; not showbiz. As it reflected ongoing personal musical growth, it got pretty chaotic at times! Since the Skiffle Band broke up, I've been with The East Bay Sharks. We do street theatre, music that takes in Brechtian compositions, folk and old rock and roll. When we aren't on the street, we play at Freight and Salvage. It's political, of course.

In 1969, Rolling Stone Magazine published a phoney super-star review. So I got together with Brian the Fox, Langdon Winner, Salzman, Vic Smith, Anna Rizzo, and Annie Johnson and, as a joke, sort of a lark, we made three tracks to play on the air. This was recorded in Reggie Paradis' garage (where most of this record was made) in Berkeley. Brian did the Dylan and Jagger vocals. We played in super group styles. The cuts were, "Can't Get No Nookie", "Cow Pie" and "Duke of Earl". Then record companies came around and people called radio stations and all Hell broke loose! It was pretty funny. The stuff I'm into now is more ideologically oriented.

NOTES ON SONGS: Myles Sonka and I wrote "Hopeless Love" together. We wrote it in order to have an original tune to play. We did it to see what would come out of us. I really like this song because of the rapport that comes out when we play it. It's talking about a way of feeling. At the time, I was thinking of Curtis Mayfield and Myles, and Hank Williams.

#### PETER BERG

Born: 1940, Los Angeles

1.

Listen: The Blue Sky Boys The Carter Family Bill Monroe Jimmie Rodgers Hank Williams.

11.

McKinley Morganfield Smith Casey Blind Lemon Jefferson Blind Willie Johnson Robert Johnson Rich Amerson B.B. King Lightning Hopkins Ray Charles Joseph Spence Bunk Johnson Bessie Smith Johnny St. Cyr Jelly Roll Morton Sidney Bechet Thelonious Monk Duke Ellington Charlie Mingus Richard Davis Eric Dolphy Roland Kirk.

111.

Ba-Benzele Pygmies The Humpback Whales and almost any music of non-industrialized peoples. Karlheinz Stockhausen.

Editor's Note: please run these names together in each category without commas separating them.

#### LEE BOUTERSE BERG

Born: 1942, Cleveland, Tennessee

My parents were into church music. Dad's first church was in Kentucky. He was an ordained Baptist Minister. He was a Navy Chaplain during the war and while he was away, I was born. My four brothers and I made backyard dishpan bands, staged shows and so forth. Family singing was mostly hymns. The first other music I heard was on an old crystal set. The Firestone Hour. From the very beginning, I loved foreign music, especially the wierd variety of harmonies possible. My family was sent to Italy and there I really got into that Italian emotional state that produces music. That's always stayed with me. Music was always in my life somehow. I was always aware of it. I sang with my brother Kurt a lot. Harmonies always fascinated me. I was always aware of the possibility of using more than one voice and also of the importance of back-up singing to the whole of a sound. We lived near Nashville for a couple of years and I loved to listen to the Grand Ole Opry. Our family bounced around a lot.

In 1958 we came out to California and settled in San Diego. Then in Oceanside. There was a lot of folk music around. In high school I was most deeply into jazz. But there were plenty of folk records around, too. There were some really vital folk festivals around that time, Alameda Riddle, Stanley Bros., just all kinds of heavy music. I came to Berkeley in 1962 to attend college. I had a scholarship, I was known as a promising student. I flunked out the first semester. Berkeley blew my mind. You could be as many people as you wanted; there were so many different scenes going down!

I'd go into the Jabberwock from time to time. Peter Berg and I were improvising music. It was a good experience, all that atonal stuff freed me from the limitations of singing a song. Phil Marsh has been a heavy influence. I find myself always singing harmony; its my natural hum, if you know what I mean...I'd like to skewer a sound in music and twirl it out into the atomosphere with a different twist. That's love! That's feeding the hungry. But I don't like the dishwashing aspects like tuning up. It takes too long.

NOTES ON SONGS: "Hopeless Love". It was a sound/texture thing. Phil's voice bounced like a rubber band and we provided a trickling brook, a little echo of voices. I remember the feeling of space in it. Like an open crochet. While we were singing it, I wondered if the threads would meet. I had my baby on my lap. He slept through the whole thing.

#### MIRIAM STAFFORD

Born: 1936, New York City

As a child I used to listen to C&W music on the radio. An older woman, named Elberta Barron, who was from Georgia and who worked at our house, used to teach me religious songs. She bought me my first instrument, a uke. I was 12. At Commerce High School, there were no extracurricular activities, so the kids used to mix it up in the auditorium after school and play all sorts of music. It was my first exposure to ethnic music, through drumming, latin American material and so forth.

When I was 16 I went to college at Ypsilanti in Michigan. I got interested in Pentacostal music through a church there. I did research on Gospel music and Spirituals and started learning these songs. I met some anthropologists who played me tapes of early '78's, Uncle Dave Macon and other banjo players. In



1954, in Greenwich Village I got my first banjo. I was 17. I left for Europe. I played by ear. A big influence was Bob Rivera, a banjo playing friend. Then I became interested in Ballads...the Sharpe collection. Vance Randolph collections and Child. I played at local parties and in co-op houses.

I came to live in Berkeley in 1957. Through Billy Faier I discovered Barry Olivier's hoots at Northgate cafeteria and Midnight Special on KPFA radio. Tom Bebring introduced me to Dave Fredrickson and Peter Berg. There were lots of family type music marathon parties at that time. I went to work for Campbell Coe repairing musical instruments. The Cabale was functioning then. A small folk coffeehouse. I met Toni Brown. We began to explore country music dance halls around the Vallejo area. White Pentacostal music in Richmond churches. I played the Jabberwock in Berkeley too. I heard lots of Okie music in Martinez, while I was teaching there. I use music a lot in my school teaching. Taught banjo to the kids. I will always go to see certain musicians when they come to Berkeley: Lightnin' Hopkins, Mance Lipscomb, Fred McDowell, Libba Cotton, Roscoe Holcomb, Bill Monroe, Ralph Stanley. Other influences were, Carl Dukatz, Steve Talbott, Carl Granich and Doug Brown.

NOTES ON SONGS: Lovin' Henry Lee. I play banjo on this cut with Janet Smith on guitar and Rita Weill. We sing together from time to time and did a gig at Freight with solos, duets and trios.

#### RITA WEILL

Born: 1940, St. Louis, Missouri

I come from a totally non-musical family, but my Mother had a fine appreciation for it. I grew up listening to the old Vox record series on Mozart, Beethoven, Stravinsky and the like. Ballet was my early passion so I heard plenty of music. Used to go to hear Josh White at the YWHA in New York City.

I was fortunate enough to be able to go to camp in Maine in 1947, a wonderful place called Ironwood. One of the counselors was John Seeger. That's where I became aware of a body of music called Folk Music. I hung around an itinerant trumpet player and fiddle player from New Orleans, named Sid Locker. He disappeared suddenly. I think he was fired for being drunk too often. But I never forgot him.

In 1949, we moved from New York, to Berkeley. One day I was noodling around in a record store and picked out a Folkways album to play in a booth. It was Leadbelly. I was nine years old. Well, that man just turned my head absolutely sideways. From then on, I sought out more and more folk music via records. I was like a sponge. Picked up everything I heard. I was good at languages and dialects and was able to reproduce everything I heard pretty well.

When I got to high school, I fell in with Neil Rosenberg, Mayne Smith, Scott Hambley and a bunch of others who were into music. We had jam sessions every single week-end. I learned whatever was going down. It was grand fun. We all played and sang the same songs. But as we got older, we branched out and began specializing. Scott Hambley went into Bluegrass. So did Mayne. So did Neil, for that matter. I was in to Israeli and Mexican folk music in those days. But I always got a special feeling listening to English ballads and Elizabethan stuff.

We all played and sang on KPFA's radio program, Midnight Special. I met Rolf Cahn there, and Miriam Stafford, Dave Fredrickson etc. I'd borrow a faked

I.D. and go to Jack's Waterfront Hangout, a dive on the San Francisco embarkadero, to hear Barbara Dane, Jesse Fuller and Rolf Cahn and K.C. Douglas. Berkeley was mostly blues in the '50's.

We were allowed to get into The Blind Lemon to hear folk music, too....If we didn't try to drink beer. The Berkeley music community was fairly tight. The same people were at everything. I began singing Bluegrass in the late '50's because that's all there was and it was such an infectious sound.

Went to Europe, Middle East and Africa, did the usual street singing for pocket money, sang at Place du Contrescarpe and dubbed films in Paris. Sang everywhere. Had regular gigs in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Got in an auto crash going to Nazareth to sing. Came back to America. A year later I went to L.A. to work at The Ash Grove. Well, that was my whole life for the next five years or so. Went on a Peace March that started in San Diego and was to terminate in Vallejo. I didn't take my guitar. When asked to sing, I just automatically chose English ballads and sang them unaccompanied. Was offered a singing engagement at The Ash Grove. Learned all the ballads I could. Preferred Irish ones because they were so eerie and harder than any British ones I'd heard up until that time. I wanted a challenge. Had a fine time, for many years, singing at Folk Festivals, Hoots, concerts, night clubs, on radio and T.V. I did some collecting in the Ozarks and in West Ireland.

Moved back to Berkeley in late 67. John Fahey phoned and asked me if I'd like to make a record album. I hadn't sung in 2 years but said sure. That got me back into music in an active way. My heroes are Roscoe Holcomb and Niclas Toibin.

Freight and Salvage has provided a magnificent service to the many local musicians, giving them a meeting place and a chance to stay in good form. It really supports us in those ways.

NOTES ON SONGS: I have always wanted to sing American string band material but singing unaccompanied Irish ballads didn't exactly make me in demand for string bands! On this record I decided to try it, just for fun. Janet Smith, an old friend, plays guitar and Miriam Stafford, another old friend plays banjo. We just got together and did it! Got this variant of Young Hunting from the Folkways anthology. Loving Henry Lee.

#### JANET SMITH

Born: 1941, Dallas, Texas

The first folk music I ever heard was as a child, listening to Richard Dyer-Bennet, Burl Ives and Leadbelly records. Later, in Minnesota, when my brother, Mayne, was taking guitar lessons, I was exposed to more folk music, through his interests. I took piano all through junior high and high school. I moved to Berkeley in 1954 when I was 13 years old.

What I looked forward to were the folk music parties that were Mayne's involvement with Neil Rosenberg, Tam Gibbs, Nina Edises, Scott Hambley, Carl Granic, Doug Brown, Rita Weill and John Thomas, among others. To them, of course, I was just Mayne's little sister. I used to listen to them on "Midnight Special" a radio program on K.P.F.A. Other performers included Miriam Stafford, Rolf Cahn, Toni Brown, Peter Berg, Dave Fredrickson, Jesse Fuller and Barry Olivier.

At the end of high school I started guitar. It was my Mother's idea to help me, "meet people"! Mayne



went off to college at Oberlin and left his guitar. I began lessons from Barry Olivier. My aesthetic in those days ran towards Elizabethan songs, English ballads and the like. I just kept experimenting. I met Joan Baez at Oberlin in 1960. She came to our dorm hoot. She asked me to send her a tape, which I did. She used "Babe I'm Goin' to Leave You" on her next record.

When I returned to Berkeley I sang at various places. I worked at Cal, making scientific illustrations. After that, I went to Italy. There, I continued my art activities. This was in 1965. I played three nights a week at The Folk Studio for the equivalent of \$4.15. I met, Andrea Corvasce, who is now my husband. I decided to start my own folk music club because I was hungry for real folk music. It was called, IL NOCCILO, The Nutshell. I recorded songs for Parade Records, and did a children's series on Italian radio. From these experiences I learned how important it was to me to be in a musical environment that fitted me. I returned to Berkeley. I missed American folk music. I had missed the communication of being with other musicians who knew about the Carter Family, for example. Up until then, I didn't realize how important, psychologically, my American music was to my feeling of well-being.

#### HANK BRADLEY

Born: 1940, Oakland, California

Junior high school violin lessons caused revulsion which silenced me for eight years. In Monterey, at Junior college, a roommate presented me with an arch-top guitar. So I taught myself chords on it, bought a four-string plectrum banjo and played Ragtime around Monterey. Eventually I made friends with Peter Stampfel and Dick Graham and learned what the fifth string on a banjo was for, and how a fiddle sounded. Got a five-string and commenced stealing off of Wade Ward and Roscoe Holcomb records, until I was drafted. Two years at Fort Bragg in North Carolina allowed me a dozen weekends in the mountains trying to duplicate the overwhelming joy at finding the Galax Fiddler's Convention (1964). I hung around Buddy Pendleton, Otis Burris and the Mountain Ramblers and had a fine time with Roscoe Russell, who makes Dreadnought ukes at Galax.

Since returning to Burklye, I've just followed my ears, trying to play what sounds good. Did one record with The Cleanliness and Godliness Skiffle Band. I like musical preposterousities.

Lord knows how many musical gods inhabit my pantheon.... Jelly Roll Morton, Clifford Hayes, J.S. Bach, The Beatles, Clarence Ashley, Maynard Kiser, Don Hall, Pece Atanasovski, Doc Watson, Fred Price, The Poplins, Ron Hughey, John Hurt, Dock Boggs, Kelly Harrell, Bill Monroe, Vasser Clements, Kyle Creed, John Summers, The Band, and Mobeh Aocb among others.

Now I'm working in Kansas and making music whenever I can. I'll be going back west for a couple of weeks for Sweet's Mill. Last year I went to Macedonia to play with a band all around.

NOTES ON SONGS: I thunk up Beasties in the Sugar at the Renaissance Faire in Marin County, feeling guilty as hell for being too modern. Policeman: From a Tommy Jarrell record.

#### JODY STECHER

Born: 1946, Brooklyn, New York

I come from a musically active family. My mother sings and works with children in rhythmic expression.

My Father is a physicist whose specialty is sound wave phenomena. He's a good autoharp player. We always had all sorts of instruments lying around the house. I started guitar when I was 11. Listened to Brunswick re-issues of Uncle Dave, and Bradley Kincaid. Lots of Leadbelly and Guthrie. Dock Boggs was the first banjo player I heard on record. At 12 I began fretless banjo. The first three years I played alone. I developed my own style, based upon Bogg's playing. At 14, I started playing mandolin and in high school I formed a Bluegrass band. I used to go down to Washington Square to meet other musicians. We played gigs at libraries, schools and at political rallies. I used to visit Gerde's Folk City on hoot nights and play. In spring and autumn, I went to Sunset Park for Bluegrass. First Fiddler's convention until 1965 at Union Grove.

Came west to Berkeley in summer of 1964. I got together with Eric Thompson and Gerry Garcia. We formed The Asphalt Jungle Mountain Boys. I returned, subsequently, to New York to go to C.C.N.Y. again but I returned to Berkeley a bunch of summers.

My Father's father was a fiddle player. I had his fiddle. Its been during the last three years that I've gotten into fiddle. I came to Berkeley the last time, to study at the Ali Akbar Khan school, playing sarod.

NOTES ON SONGS: Beasties in the Sugar. We'd never played Hank's tune until we recorded it for this record. We are primarily a begging band, you see.

Policeman. Hank learned it from a Tommy Jarrell record, "Down to the Cider Mill" on County. I really liked the way Hank did it. I was strictly playing second fiddle on this one!

#### WALT KOKEN

Born: 1946, Columbia, Missouri

My Mother taught piano at home, so there was always music to be heard. When I was pretty young she bribed me by telling me, "If you'll take piano lessons, I'll give you a trumpet." I said ok even though I didn't WANT a trumpet. I took piano lessons for awhile, though I'd have preferred to have been outside, playing baseball, at the time. In school I took flute. I guess they needed a flute player in the band class.

Eventually my brother broke his arm and was told that he needed to exercise his fingers, so he got himself a guitar. He told me, "Hey, Walt, why don't you get a banjo and we'll be like The Kingston Trio or Duo." My Dad brought me a tenor banjo. I bought some folk song books and just started whanging away. But very quickly I wanted a 5-string banjo instead. My brother gave me a Pete Seeger banjo book and then everything started clicking.

In 1965 I was living in Ithaca, New York and someone turned me onto a Wade Ward record. I was gone! I met George Dorian, a fiddle player whose Mother was from Nova Scotia and he started teaching me fiddle tunes. We got a band together called The Mudthumpers and played all old-timey material. In 1968 we started out for Alaska and ended up in Berkeley. Its magnetic. We played up and down the coast.

Soon after arriving in Berkeley we met Humbead's crew. It was the closest thing to what we were trying to do, musically. They influenced me to hang out in Berkeley for the music and life-style. I played with Hank Bradley and Jim Bamford and Mac Benford and a revolving cast, depending upon who was around. I met Bob Potts, the fiddler, in Summer 1970. He and Mac and I got together and formed Fat City. Freight and Salvage and Berkeley itself have provided a place where I could keep it together, too.



## A Few Personal Notes...

For me the idea of making this LP was initiated by being with many of these musicians at Freight and Salvage and at gatherings afterwards. My purpose in recording here, as ever, is to share music I enjoy with others and to give some background and social setting which complements the music on the disc. The main difference here from previous "documentaries" is that these are friends and contemporaries with whom I share a similar musical esthetic although we have reached this point from different origins. This recording to me outlines the creativity and joy in the true maturation of rural musics played by (mostly) city folk. In retrospect this LP concept was deeply affected by Moses Asch's earliest anthology albums and it is fitting that this should appear on Folkways.

The Bay area (and Berkeley especially at the time this LP was assembled) is one in which the making of many kinds of informal music is important. In warmth humor and musicality it reminds me of the Galax, Virginia area of years ago. And during the hectic days of planning and recording the music, it felt like a renaissance of older music and life styles, brought up to date (and beyond). The excitement of it paralleled in my imagination those first days of recording of rural music by the commercial companies in the mountain south during the 1920's.

We were fortunate in recording during a time of great musical ferment when most of the best musicians were in town playing in a variety of combinations. Now, two years later Sue Draheim is in England playing with a group there; Mac Benford and Walt Koken (with Bob Potts they're Fat City String Band) are in the East playing fiddler's Conventions; Holly Tannen may be going to England; The Frontier (as they are now called since Mark's departure) lives north of San Francisco and are hopefully going to record soon; Hank Bradley has moved to Kansas but not for long; and so forth. There is still much good music around Berkeley and there are more and younger people taking up the music now, starting from a point that it's taken many of us twenty years to get to.

### Miscellaneous

This LP recorded February 1970 at a converted garage (Guerrage Productions) Berkeley and Pacific High Recording Studios (San Francisco). Our thanks to both.

Initial selection of musicians and songs was by musicians and myself as most participants knew each others material well.

Title suggested by George Hanter

Biographical notes from interviews by Rita Weill with musicians are included for interest and to indicate cross-section of background and esthetics.

Limitations of LP due mostly to my lack of time were especially in the area of women's voice and song and also in Blue Grass. Perhaps this will encourage others to produce LP excursions like this unhindered either by shortsighted commercialism or by our occasional lack of faith in the music itself. And we will continue to explore and develop and enjoy some of the less traversed fields of what used to be entirely rural music.

This is a cooperative venture with musicians, producer, recording studios, annotater, and cover artist

taking only one LP each and expenses which at this point are:

- \$25 - phone
- 33 - tape costs
- 42 - tape dup
- 31 - postage and photo-copying
- 50 - cover expenses

There is now only the problem of what to do with the royalties and I will be open to all suggestions. The two suggestions so far have been to put on a nice party. Perhaps we should record it...

New Freedom, Pa.  
14/June, 1972

### Side A

1. Sally Goodin-Larry Hanks and Ron Tinkler, Jew's harps. Vocal and intro, Hanks.
2. Apple Picker's Reel (Hanks)-Larry Hanks, vocal and guitar
3. Fisher's Hornpipe-Holly Tannen (dulcimer) and Larry Hanks (mandolin)
4. Ruach Na Mark, Bayou Croakers, John Paul (accordion), Will Spires (melodeon), Sue Draheim (fiddle)
5. Bayou Pon Pon- as above with triangle by Sebastian Melmouth
6. Sally in the Garden - New Tranquility String Band (and friends). Sue Draheim, fiddle; Will Spires, second fiddle; Larry Hanks, Jew's harp; Eric Thompson, lead guitar; Dave Ricker, mandolin; Ron Tinkler, second guitar; Mac Benford, 5-string banjo; Holly Tannen, dulcimer; probably others.
7. Boatman - as above A6

Time: 15:00

### Side B

1. Peyote Cowboy (Greenhill Open Range Music) - Frontier Constabulary, Mitch Greenhill, vocal and first lead guitar; Mayne Smith, steel guitar; Mark Spoelstra, second lead guitar; Michael Walsh, bass; Michael Woodward, drums.
2. Hopeless Love- (Marsh and Sonka)-Phil Marsh and the Hopeless Lovers. Phil Marsh, vocal and guitar; with Gary Salzman, Brian Voorhees, Peter and Lee Bouterse Berg, Miriam Stafford, Miles Sonka
3. Loving Henry Lee-Miriam Stafford, first voice and banjo, Rita Weill, second voice; Janet Smith, third voice and guitar
4. Policeman-Spare Change Boys. Hank Bradley and Jody Stecher, fiddles; Hank, lead vocal; Eric Thompson, guitar; Walt Koken, 5-string banjo
5. Beasties in the Sugar (Bradley) - as in B4 but with Jody playing mandolin
6. Walking in the Parlor-Walt Koken
7. White Cockade-Phresno Philharmonic-Larry Hanks, Ron Tinkler and Genny Haley, Jew's harps

Time: 16:00





"Serious deliberation on contestant-  
Fiddlers Convention



"Judge Jon Lundberg pouring a bribe  
(from a paper bag) into his silver  
whiskey flask as Judge Campbell Loe  
observes with great personal inter-  
est." - Fiddlers Convention



# 35<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL **FREE** BERKELEY FIDDLERS CONVENTION

SATURDAY JUNE 8

ALL 1968 DAY

PROVO PARK

ALLSTON & GROVE

EVERYONE WELCOME ~ bring your pet instruments  
and we'll have us some GOOD MUSIC ~ BANDS,  
come aboveground and SHOW YOUR STUFF.

## CONTESTS

FIDDLE  
CONTEST

BAND  
CONTEST

BANJO  
CONTEST

BEFORE BERKELEY'S FINEST

FEARLESS AND INCORRUPTIBLE





## JUDGES

JOH LUNDBERG

JOHN CAMPBELL

CAMPBELL COE

WINNER IN EACH DIVISION TO RECEIVE A VALUABLE

  PRIZE :    
FIVE (5) POUNDS OF PRIME RUTABAGAS

WARMUPS CONTINUOUS FROM DAWN  
CONTESTS TO COMMENCE AT ONE O'CLOCK SHARP



## bands

	NAME and manager	HEADQUARTERS
1	The Finger of Scorn	THE LA SIESTA MOTEL
2	The Golden Bells & Footprints	Albany
3	3030's Appliances	Sunnyvale & Fremont
4	Dr. Humboldt: New writing style band	60th + Colby St Oakland
5	THE SIX RIVER FERRY	SIX RIVER 29 HAROLD ST S.F.
6	The Stayton Family	542 N. 4th St S.F.
7	The Junior Woodchucks	Gregory City
8	Desel Ducks	Wheeler + Essex
9	HUMPHRIES BROTHERS MOONSHINE TRIO	EL CERRITO

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## fiddlers

	NAME	HEADQUARTERS
1	Kenny Hall	FRESNO
2		
3	Hank Bradley	Wheeler & Essex Berkeley
4	Dan Chandler	1245 Grove Berkeley
5	Susan O'Hara	60th + Colby Sts Oakland
6	Colleen Allen	Berkeley Gilman + San Pablo
7	Bob Thomas	Berkeley University + McGee
8	John Coffey	Dwight College Berkeley
9	Dave Tucker	EL CERRITO

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## banjo pickers

	NAME	HEADQUARTERS
1	HANKS Mc GROS	Adams + Buchanan Albany
2	Hot Lips Hannah	Montana
3	THE POISON COYOTE KID	PESCADERO
4	Pat Macdonald	Summit Baroque
5	Jeff Olpin	Berkeley
6	THE RICKSHAW DELEGATION	OAKLAND
7	Dave Rickard	EL CERRITO
8	Mac Benford	Colby + 60th
9	Jim Benford	Stuart + Alameda

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