

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FTS 31072

TOM MORGAN

Bluegrass with Friends and Family



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1983

WALKER EVANS, 1936

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

MUSIC LP

TOM MORGAN

Bluegrass with Friends and Family

Bluegrass record produced by RED ALLEN



Scott, Rick, Mary and Tom Morgan and Ed Cullis—Tivoli Theater, Chattanooga, Tennessee, 1982

SIDE 1

- I Wonder If You Feel The Way I Do
(author unknown) 2:15
Redwing (Traditional) 2:35
Old Country Church (Vaughn) 2:50
Pig In The Pen (Traditional) 1:24
Take Me Back To Happy Valley
(John Lair) 3:27
Back Up And Push (Traditional) 1:56

SIDE 2

- Maple On The Hill
(Gussie L. Davis) 2:55
Little Willie and Little Maggie
(Traditional) 3:33
Farewell Blues (Shobel/Mars/Roppolo)
(ASCAP) 2:32
Love And Wealth (Ira and Charles Louvin)
(BMI) 2:47
Are You From Dixie (Cobb/Yellin)
(ASCAP) 2:52
Ages and Ages Ago
(Ray Whitley/Gene Autry) 2:44
Dixie Breakdown (Don Reno)
(BMI) 1:30

Old material originally recorded at Ben Adelman's studio in Takoma Park, Maryland in May 1963. Ben Adelman, Engineer. Remastered and bass added at Vassar's Recording Studio, Mt. Juliet, Tennessee in December, 1982. Frank Evans, Engineer.

New material recorded at Vassar's Recording Studio, Mt. Juliet, Tennessee on December 3rd, 1982. Frank Evans, Engineer.

Mixed by Frank Evans, and Tom, Mary and Scott Morgan.

Cover and layout by Ronald Clyne.



Mary and Tom Morgan at Morgan Springs, Tennessee

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43 W. 61st ST., N.Y.C., 10023 N.Y., U.S.A.

The Washington D.C. area was the center for a lot of exciting activity in bluegrass music in the sixties. Not only were there a large number of musicians of exceptional ability, but an unusually large and devoted following for the music at that stage of its development.

On May 18th, 1963 a group of six of these exceptional pickers gathered at Ben Adelman's Studio in Takoma Park, Maryland and recorded the six numbers presented here as Side 1. The personnel included Tom Morgan, vocals; Red Allen, guitar and tenor vocals; Frank Wakefield, mandolin and baritone vocal, Carl Nelson, fiddle; Kenny Haddock, Dobro; and Bill Emerson, banjo and baritone vocals.

Bill Emerson had been banjoist and one of the founding members of the original Country Gentlemen band. After recording some landmark cuts with the Osborne Brothers, Red Allen took up residence in the Maryland suburbs and worked with WWVA Jamboree and nearby festivals, along with mandolinist Frank Wakefield.

Carl Nelson had moved up from his native Hardy, Virginia and worked dry-wall installation and finishing by day, but pitched in on fiddle with various bands to play the small clubs featuring this unique musical form. A network of friends of the music had been organizing between Baltimore, Washington and the Virginia suburbs thru chance meetings at picking parties and the clubs, and the mutual desire to share their enthusiasm, was the foundation upon which Bluegrass Unlimited Magazine would soon be built.

Side 1 was conceived as one side of a joint album to be

Air Force, and moved our family and instrument building and repair service back to the small community of Morgan Springs, Tennessee where my ancestors settled the area over 100 years ago. The idea was especially appealing since we could concentrate on many aspects of the rural music tradition in the Cumberland Mountain region, rich in history and resources. An added bonus was the opportunity to pass on our music and building skills to nearby children thru Artist in Schools programs.

In 1978, Scott built himself a "coffin-body" (or mountain style) guitar which he plays today, and branched out into varied singing parts, both with our group and a group of his own. As a Christmas gift, Mary and I built Scott a mandolin in 1980, and that has added a new dimension to his seemingly boundless musical quest and abilities.

Our son, Rick, joined our family ensemble as bass player in 1978 to fill an existing vacancy, and for his initial public performance played a live TV show proving that under some pressure he was the man for the job.

Where are those performers from Side 1 now? Carl Nelson is still active with the Bill Harrel band; Kenny Haddock lives in Northern Virginia and appeared at the recent Country Gentlemen 25th Reunion Show at Wolftrap Park, as did yours truly and Bill Emerson who is one of the guiding members of the U.S. Navy group, Country Current; Red Allen now resides in Dayton, Ohio and continues to record and produce albums and play occasional festival dates. Frank Wakefield now resides in California and has a group entitled "The Good Ole Boys."



Frank Wakefield, Red Allen and Bill Emerson—Washington, D.C. 1962

shared with Bill Emerson, and the session was recorded without a bass (to be dubbed in later) so I could concentrate on the vocals at hand. Although the original idea of a shared album never materialized, the Master Tape remained in storage with several students of the art who were aware of its existence lobbying for its eventual release.

Besides playing bass with various groups around Washington, I was able to develop skills in building and repairing the instruments used to play bluegrass music, and this brought us into direct contact with many of the local and traveling performers. This opportunity to get acquainted with countless individuals in the field of traditional music has been a very rewarding fringe benefit thru the years.

About this same period, I became interested in the use of the autoharp in Carter-style playing, and designed and built a revolutionary carved-top model for my wife, Mary, which she still plays. Our son, Scott, was learning to play several instruments, primarily guitar, and I welcomed the chance to perform a softer form of bluegrass with my family, plus have a stronger influence in a group's sound, singing and playing guitar.

By December of 1972, I had earned retirement from the

My love and support of traditional bluegrass has not diminished during the almost 20 years since Side 1 was recorded, although time may have mellowed the drive and vocal range of the principals from the D.C. days, and the missing bass part was finally dubbed in at Vassar's Recording Studio in Mt. Juliet, Tennessee in December of 1982.

For the new material found on Side 2, Rick plays upright bass, Scott lead guitar and mandolin and sings lead, tenor and baritone, and our friend Ed Cullis provides the low and regular 5-string banjo. Ed was among the earliest bluegrass banjoists in the Chattanooga area, and we were happy to have him join us at this session. Mary plays autoharp and sings lead, and I've added rhythm guitar and lead and low-tenor vocals for the old-time instrumentals and songs which are representative of the music performed by The Morgans today.

We welcome the opportunity to offer you a sample of vintage bluegrass from 1963, as well as a portion of the stylings we still feature in 1983, and sincerely hope you will find this a pleasant listening experience.

Tom Morgan
Morgan Springs, Route 3
Dayton, Tennessee 37321



Frank Wakefield, Tom Morgan, Red Allen and the late Robby Robinson—Walter Reed Hospital, 1964