

Rising Fawn Gathering



Norman & Nancy Blake
Boys of the Lough
James & Rachel Bryan

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In summer 1978 the artists booked at Winnipeg Folk Festival included Norman and Nancy Blake and also the Irish/Scottish group Boys of the Lough. Naturally they met up and played music together after hours. This led eventually, through a common association with the Rounder Record label, to successful joint concerts on the 6th and 7th of April, 1984 at Paine Hall in Harvard, along with James Bryan who was by now playing with Norman and Nancy. Following an evening or two of swapping tunes at parties and in the Blake school bus, we all agreed that we must do a joint recording.

Well, just about everything you could think of got in the way. Tich Richardson was killed later in September of that year. Later on James Bryan stopped touring with Norman and Nancy. Other agendas crowded all of us. Time passed and the Gods rearranged the pieces on the gaming board, making changes in both camps.

Then, in March 2006, the Boys played Collegedale, TN, not too far from the Blakes' home. Norman, Nancy and James (now with them again) and James' wife Pattie and daughter Rachel came along and we did some catching up and renewed dormant friendships. When Nancy came on down

to a concert we had at Georgia Tech in Atlanta that December, Cathal was chatting in the backstage with her and revived the idea of the recording project, which she had kept simmering in her letters to us over the years. Everyone concerned was canvassed about it and said yes. So we finally got four clear days at the house in northwest Georgia in October, 2007 and did it. We worked in a large loft room and the sound engineer Butch Hause, who had driven out from Colorado with the gear, set up a studio in there.

We had one of the best times in our whole lives. The social side was brilliant too, with lovely food from some of the ladies in the circle and joke-telling sessions that had us helpless with laughter. We all came away with rough mixes for a new

CD which held great promise. One thought that kept coming back to me was that we did a much better job on the project than we all would have done if we were 23+ years younger. The maturity was evident in the way there were no ego issues and team play was all. And of course the passing of time allowed us to include 20 year old Rachel, unborn in 1984, and the younger "Boys" as well.

Dave Richardson,
Boys of the Lough
Edinburgh, Scotland





The Sweet Sunny South

W.L. Bloomfield

Norman Blake, guitar, vocals

Nancy Blake, cello

Dave Richardson, concertina

Malcolm Stitt, guitar

Kevin Henderson, fiddle

James Bryan, fiddle

Rachel Bryan, mandoline

Cathal McConnell, flute

Brendan Begley, accordion

Originally entitled *Take Me Home* was written by W.L. Bloomfield in 1853 and arranged by Eugene Raymond in 1856. I have arranged the order of verses to my own liking. Charlie Poole and Red Patterson's Piedmont Log Roller's serve as my basic melodic models. N.B.

O'Connell's Trip to

Parliament/The Twin Katties

Traditional

James Bryan, fiddle

Rachel Bryan, fiddle

Kevin Henderson, fiddle

Dave Richardson, mandoline

Nancy Blake, mandoline

Brendan Begley, accordion

Cathal McConnell, flute

James Bryan introduced this set into the music we played together at Rising Fawn. The tunes are favourites of his, learned from the playing of Sean Ryan. The name of *O'Connell's Trip to Parliament* dates back to the victory of Daniel O'Connell, in the Clare by-election of 1828, part of his campaign for Catholic Emancipation. More than one tune of this title exists, including a march that Cathal McConnell learned from his father, Sandie. Other names

for the tune we play here are given in Volume II of Brendan Breathnach's collections of Irish music. Cathal recalls learning *The Twin Katties* from a cassette tape sent to him by the outstanding Donegal fiddler Tommy Peoples many years ago. The tune can be found under several titles in the collections of O'Neill and others and several recordings have been made over recent decades. D.R.

Castleberry's March

Norman Blake

Blake & Blake Music, BMI

Norman Blake, mandoline

Nancy Blake, cello

Malcolm Stitt, guitar

Rachel Bryan, guitar

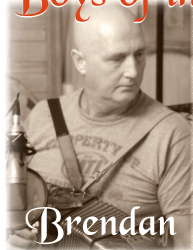
Dave Richardson, mandoline

James Bryan, fiddle

Kevin Henderson, fiddle

A mandolin piece I composed

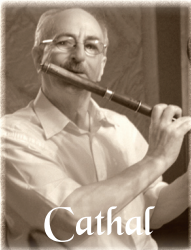
Boys of the Lough



Brendan



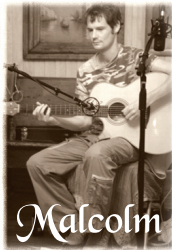
Dave



Cathal



Kevin



Malcolm



in honor of our neighbor of 33 years. Clyde Castleberry – A man of the soil who has farmed all his life. No better friend could be had than Clyde. N.B.

Da Unst Bridal March

Traditional

Kevin Henderson, fiddle

Norman Blake, dobro

This outstandingly beautiful tune was noted down by tune collector Pat Shuldham Shaw from John Stickle on the island of Unst in Shetland, 1947. It was used as a processional tune at Shetland weddings. Versions of the tune exist elsewhere, including Northumberland, and it is very old, appearing in the 1678 collection John Playford's *Musick's Handmaid* under the title *A Scottish March*. The

setting recorded here by Kevin and Norman is surely a new direction. D.R.

The Stockton & Redesdale Hornpipes

Traditional

Dave Richardson, mandoline

Cathal McConnell, flute

Norman Blake, guitar

Nancy Blake, cello

Brendan Begley, accordion

Kevin Henderson, fiddle

Two favorite traditional hornpipes that Northumbrian small pipe players include in their tune books, suitable for the clog dancing which is a tradition in the north of England. Stockton is a small town in County Durham in the northeast of England. Redesdale runs from the hills of the Scottish border south through Northumberland to join the North Tyne at Bellingham. The tune was adapted and renamed by Northumbrian pipers from the



James Hill composition *Underhand* which was first written with the parts as played here reversed and initially in B-flat. The fiddler Hill was no stranger to the beer tents of Newcastle Races and may personally have seen the famous racehorse Underhand win the Northumberland Plate on the Town Moor in 1857, 1858 and 1859. A letter affirming the *Redesdale* as a Newcastle hornpipe known as *Underhand* and written by Hill dates from 5th July 1928, from piper Tom Clough to Wm. Cocks, the collector of Northumbrian pipes. D.R.



The El Paso Waltz

D. Richardson, Gilderoy Music

James Bryan, fiddle

Dave Richardson, mandoline

Kevin Henderson, fiddle

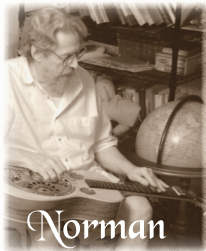
Nancy Blake, cello

Norman Blake, guitar

Rachel Bryan, guitar

A tune of Dave's which he played onstage until 1984 with his late brother Tich and was learned by Norman, Nancy and James during the joint concerts with them in spring 1984. Dave and Tich, along with then fellow band members of Boys of the Lough, Aly Bain and Cathal McConnell,

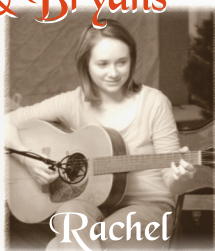
Blakes & Bryans



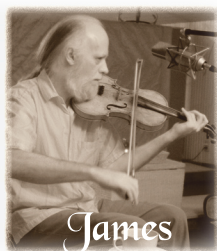
Norman



Nancy



Rachel



James

were created Honorary Citizens of El Paso in 1983 following a number of appearances at the Border Folk Festival down on the Rio Grande from the mid 1970's onward. They held the city and its festival in great affection. The tone that James produces on this tune gives it a very special feel. D.R.

The Bonny Bunch of Roses

Traditional

Norman Blake, guitar, vocals

Nancy Blake, cello

Dave Richardson, concertina

Kevin Henderson, fiddle

Cathal McConnell, whistle

Brendan Begley, accordion

James Bryan, fiddle

Rachel Bryan, mandoline

This song appeared on BroadSides and in the *Forget Me Not Songster* and other songsters in the early

nineteenth century. Versions in oral tradition have been found from Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Scotland, and England. The text of this version was collected by Anne and Frank Warner from the singing of Yankee John Galusha of Minerva, New York in 1941. The Warners state it was also sung by Charles Tillett on the outer banks of North Carolina. The roses are England, Ireland, and Scotland. A fact stressed by most traditional singers in their introductions of the song. The Napoleon of this song



is the Emperor's son by his second marriage to Mary Louise of Austria who was kept a virtual prisoner in the Austrian court at Vienna. He died of TB at the age of 21. N.B.

Joe Bane's/The Gypsy Princess

Traditional

Brendan Begley, accordion

Kevin Henderson, fiddle

Nancy Blake, cello

Malcolm Stitt, guitar

Dave Richardson, mandoline

James Bryan, fiddle

Rachel Bryan, fiddle

Norman Blake, guitar

Cathal McConnell, flute

Brendan introduced us to these two fine tunes. Joe Bane was a musician from County Clare in Ireland. The Gypsy Princess was learned by Brendan from

accordion player Dennis Doody from Brosna, County Kerry, over twenty years ago. D.R.

The Teelin March

Traditional

James Bryan, fiddle
Cathal McConnell, flute
Nancy Blake, mandoline
Norman Blake, guitar
Rachel Bryan, mandoline

Cathal recorded the *Teelin March* on the Boys of the Lough title *Welcoming Paddy Home* many years ago. He had learned the tune from Altan founder members Frankie Kennedy and Mairead Ni Mhaonaigh who in turn had learned it from the fiddling of Con Cassidy from Teelin in Donegal. A version noted down from Con Cassidy can be found in the 1979 collection *The Northern Fiddler* under the title *Brass Band March*. D.R.



Eamon An Chnoic (Ned of the Hill)

Traditional

Malcolm Stitt, guitar
Norman Blake, dobro

Malcolm and Norman get together here for a duet version of this Kerry variant of an old Irish song about a patriot on the run from English soldiers. It was a great favourite of Brendan's mother who's version in her native Kerry Irish is the basis for this instrumental. D.R.

While the Band is Playing Dixie

Traditional

Norman Blake, guitar, vocals
Kevin Henderson, fiddle
James Bryan, fiddle
Nancy Blake, guitar, vocals
Dave Richardson, concertina
Rachel Bryan, mandoline
Cathal McConnell, whistle
Brendan Begley, accordion

Published in 1900 and composed by Joseph F. Hortiz. Recorded in 1902 by Harry MacDonough, also by Sara & Maybelle Carter in the mid-60s. Not a Civil War song, but one of the many Spanish American War songs as evidenced by the line, "Tho, I'm far across the foam." Also, the historic time



line seems to indicate the Spanish American conflict. N.B.

Derry So Fair

Traditional

Brendan Begley, accordion
Nancy Blake, cello
Malcolm Stitt, guitar
Kevin Henderson, fiddle
Norman Blake, guitar
Rachel Bryan, mandoline
Cathal McConnell, vocals

Most emigration songs date from the days of sail and the difficult transatlantic passage associated with that means of transport. This more recent tale of a young emigrant from Ireland to America, that Cathal learned from Donegal singer Packie Manus Byrne, dwells more on what happened after the young Irish girl actually arrived in America. D.R.



This is something I have wanted to hear for a long time. Thanks to everyone for a dream come true.

Nancy Blake

Rising Fawn, GA

Today I look back to October, a year ago, and a session Nancy and I had the pleasure of hosting in our home, here in Rising Fawn, GA with the Boys of the Lough and our long time friend, James Bryan and his daughter Rachel.

We first met the Boys years ago in Canada at one of the major folk festivals. We were impressed with the parallels in our music and theirs. We quickly became friends and in 1984 played at Harvard University on a double bill with them. Nancy has wanted to do a session with them ever since. She went to one of their shows in Atlanta, GA and lo and behold she and Cathal McConnell fell to making plans to record. And here are the results.

Thanks to all the Boys – Dave, Cathal, Malcolm, Kevin & Brendan and to James & Rachel Bryan. Also much thanks to Pattie Bryan, Bill & Nancy Martin, our daughter Joy & her husband Joel Eastman for all the kitchen and cleaning and cooking duties that helped make everything possible. And thanks to Nancy's brother Jeff Short for his moral support. Also to Butch Hause for driving all the tech from Colorado and recording us in our loft, and to Sarah Lincoln for coming to shoot pictures of the session. What more can I say — it was a once in a lifetime experience! We will treasure always. Good friends. Good Music.

Norman Blake

Rising Fawn, GA

Traditional selections adapted and arranged by

Gilderoy Music and Blake & Blake Music

Produced by Nancy Blake

Executive Producer: Scott O'Malley

Recorded & Mixed by: Butch Hause, The Ranger

Station for Plectrafone Records

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Kathleen Collins, Victoria Ward

Norman and Nancy Blake

with special friends

Rachel and James Bryan

Norman and Nancy Blake are represented by

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1. The Sweet Sunny South
2. O'Connell's Trip to Parliament /
The Twin Katies
3. Castleberry's March
4. Da Unst Bridal March
5. The Stockton & Redesdale Hornpipes
6. The El Paso Waltz
7. The Bonny Bunch of Roses
8. Joe Bane's / The Gypsy Princess
9. The Teelin March
10. Eamon An Chnoic (Ned of the
Hill)
11. While the Band is Playing Dixie
12. Derry So Fair

Rising Fawn Gathering



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1. The Sweet Sunny South 5:53
 2. O'Connell's Trip to Parliament /
The Twin Katies 2:51
 3. Castleberry's March 3:09
 4. Da Unst Bridal March 2:57
 5. The Stockton & Redesdale Hornpipes 3:28
 6. The El Paso Waltz 2:56
 7. The Bonny Bunch of Roses 5:54
 8. Joe Bane's / The Gypsy Princess 4:07
 9. The Teelin March 2:40
 10. Eamon An Chnoic (Ned of the Hill) 3:01
 11. While the Band is Playing Dixie 4:57
 12. Derry So Fair 6:01
- Total Time: 49:20

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