

CLASSIC * BLUEGRASS FROM SMITHSONIAN FOLKWAYS

1. EARL TAYLOR AND THE STONEY MOUNTAIN BOYS * WHITE HOUSE BLUES 1:58 2. THE JOHNSON MOUNTAIN BOYS * OUR LAST GOODBYE 2:32

(C. Stanley/Ft. Knox Music, BMI- Trio Music Co., BMI)

3. BILL MONROE AND HIS BLUE GRASS BOYS * WHEN HE REACHED DOWN HIS HAND FOR ME 2:44

4. HAZEL DICKENS AND ALICE GERRARD * TINY BROKEN HEART 3:01

(Hill-Louvin-Louvin/Acuff-Rose Music Inc., BMI)

5. RED ALLEN, FRANK WAKEFIELD, AND THE KENTUCKIANS * NEW CAMPTOWN

RACES 2:31

(F. Wakefield/Wynwood Music Co. Inc., BMI)

6. HARLEY ALLEN-MIKE LILLY BAND ★ SUZANNE 2:37

7. THE NASHVILLE GRASS * I HEARD MY MOTHER CALL MY NAME IN PRAYER 3:07

(R. Smiley/Jaymore Music, BMI)

8. THE FRIENDLY CITY PLAYBOYS * TEARDROPS IN MY EYES 2:26

(R. Allen-T.Sutton/Acuff-Rose Music Inc., BMI)

9. SNUFFY JENKINS & CUMBERLAND GAP 1:31

10. RED ALLEN AND THE KENTUCKIANS & LIVE AND LET LIVE 2:44

(G. Sullivan-W. Walker/APRS, BMI)

11. ROGER SPRUNG AND DOC WATSON * THE WORLD IS WAITING FOR

THE SUNRISE 2:37

(E. Lockhart-E. Seitz/Chappell Music Ltd. PRS)

12. HUGH MOORE * HELLO CITY LIMITS 2:19

(J. Elgin-B. Martin/Ft. Knox Music Inc., BMI- Trio Music Co. Inc., BMI)

13. THE COUNTRY GENTLEMEN * (LEGEND OF THE) BROWN MOUNTAIN LIGHT

(S. Wiseman/Unichappell Music, BMI) 2:32

14. RONI STONEMAN ★ LONESOME ROAD BLUES 1:10

15. DOC WATSON * THE TRAIN THAT CARRIED MY GIRL FROM TOWN 2:16

16. THE NEW LOST CITY RAMBLERS ★ THE LITTLE GIRL AND THE

DREADFUL SNAKE 3:29

(A. Price/Tannen Music Inc., BMI)

17. THE STANLEY BROTHERS ★ LITTLE BIRDIE 2:37

18. THE STANLEY BROTHERS * RABBIT IN A LOG 2:20

19. DAVID AND BILLIE RAY JOHNSON ★ GREY EAGLE 2:47

20. CULLEN GAYLEAN AND THE VIRGINIA MOUNTAIN BOYS * WAYFARING STRANGER 5:07

21. THE LONESOME STRANGERS * BILLY IN THE LOWGROUND 1:00

22. HAZEL DICKENS * THE REBEL GIRL 2:57

(J. Hill; arr. H. Dickens/Happy Valley Music, BMI)

23. SMILEY HOBBS & TRAIN 45 2:19

24. THE LILLY BROTHERS AND DON STOVER * 'NEATH THAT COLD GREY TOMB OF **STONE 3:03**

(H. Williams-M. Foree/Acuff-Rose Music Inc., BMI- Hiriam Music, BMI)

25. BILL MONROE AND HIS BLUE GRASS BOYS * GET UP JOHN 2:36

(B. Monroe/Unichappell Music Inc., BMI)

INTRODUCTION

JEFF PLACE

When one thinks of bluegrass record labels, Folkways is not one that comes to mind first. In reality, among its 2,200 titles, Folkways released many of bluegrass music, including some of the most influential early bluegrass LPs.

Moses Asch (1905–1986) founded Folkways in 1948 in New York. He had been involved in the record business since 1939 with his former Asch and Disc labels. In 1940, acting on a tip from Broadway producer Sy Rady, Asch recorded blues songster Lead Belly, his first stab at American vernacular music. During the 1940s, Asch was to release recordings by other well-known folk musicians such as Burl Ives, Pete Seeger, Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee, Woody Guthrie, and Virginia mountain singers Hobart Smith and Texas Gladden.

Throughout the history of his Folkways label, Asch released old-time music. One of the first Folkways records was a square dance album by Paiute Pete (Folkways 2001, 1950). Harry Smith's legendary compilation, the *Anthology of American Folk Music*, released in 1952, made available for the first time in decades vintage recordings of mountain music and string bands from the 19205–30s. It was thus no stretch that Asch would release bluegrass.

In the mid-1950s, Earl Scruggs's innovative style of three-finger banjo playing had caught on among urban banjo players during the folk song revival. In 1956, at the suggestion of Pete Seeger, Asch wrote Seeger's brother Mike, in Baltimore, with an offer: "Pete suggested that you might be able to get recordings of people in your area who play banjo in the Scruggs style. I would be interested and have about \$100.00 for expenses for such a project. Let me know if anything turns up" (Moses Asch to Mike Seeger, letter in Ralph Rinzler Archives, 9/13/56). The result was American Banjo: Three-Finger and Scruggs Style (Folkways 2314, 1956), the first full-length bluegrass LP. This project marked the beginning of a distinguished career for Mike Seeger as a performer, recordist, and compiler. Seeger was responsible for recording and producing the majority of the important bluegrass on Folkways in the late 1950s and early 1960s. He recorded many of the bands he had heard around the Maryland area for another important release,

Mountain Music Bluegrass Style (Folkways 2318, 1959). Seeger was also involved in recordings by the Lilly Brothers, The Country Gentlemen, the Stoneman Family, Dock Boggs, Elizabeth Cotten, and others. As a musician and member of the New Lost City Ramblers, Seeger was also one of the more prolific recording artists on the label.

Seeger brought his friend Ralph Rinzler (1934–1994) in to help with the notes to the Scruggs banjo album, and Rinzler also began to produce recordings for Folkways. As a chief talent scout for the Newport Folk Festival, Rinzler was the first to discover and record Doc Watson in 1960 (Folkways 3255, 1961; SFW 40029, 1994). Others like John Cohen, Ed Kahn, and Peter Siegel also produced bluegrass during this time. Seeger's bandmate John Cohen co-founded with Rinzler and Izzy Young the Friends of Old Time Music to bring traditional musicians to New York. Some of this material saw release on Folkways (1964).

Asch also began to release albums by urban bluegrass banjo player Roger Sprung, a mentor to many of the younger New York players, the first album by Hazel Dickens and Alice Gerrard (1965), two of the first women to front a popular bluegrass band, and the legendary *Bluegrass* (1964) album by Red Allen and Frank Wakefield.

The next decade saw sporadic bluegrass releases by Folkways. In 1966, Eric Davidson, an old-time musician and biologist, traveled south from New York, and with the help of his wife Lyn and Paul Newman, recorded old-time and bluegrass musicians in the rich musical environment around Galax and Independence, Virginia. He compiled five albums by Glen Neaves, Cullen Galyean, Bobby Harrison, and the Virginia Mountain Boys. Davidson also provided numerous recordings of old-time music to Asch both as a recordist and as a performer with the Iron Mountain String Band.

Suddenly in the late 1970s, and until Asch's death in 1986, Folkways began to release bluegrass at an unprecedented pace: 36 titles in eight years. Red Allen and his sons released eight titles (together and apart). Allen also brought Asch projects by Curly Seckler and the Nashville Grass and another by Tom Morgan. Many of the other newer Folkways titles came from North Carolina and a small studio called Star Recording in Miller's Creek, run by musician Marshal Craven, including recordings by local musicians David Johnson, Hugh Moore, Sagegrass, and others. North Carolina producer John Craig

brought a number of projects from Star Recording to Asch. Folkways also released recordings by Smokey Joe Miller, Half and Half, and six recordings by Iowa performer Bob Everhart during this period.

In 1987, Ralph Rinzler, then Assistant Secretary for Public Service at the Smithsonian Institution, negotiated the donation of the Folkways label to the museum, and the following year saw the founding of the Smithsonian Folkways record label. From its beginnings Smithsonian Folkways has set out to reissue material from its vast archives with expanded liner notes and updated sound. As the first reissues were being planned, Rinzler made a point of being involved, and bluegrass was a priority. Frequently after his day job was over, Rinzler would venture over to the archives and help put together reissues of bluegrass recordings he had worked on initially. Occasionally present for advice were old friends Mike Seeger and John Cohen. Seeger and Cohen themselves also continue to revisit their old recording projects and have been working to reissue their classic material. The year 2001 saw the release of John Cohen's *There Is No Eye: Music for Photographs* (SFW CD 40091), a collection of his recordings of traditional musicians accompanied by some of his stunning photographs in the booklet.

Apart from his Newport Folk Festival work, Ralph Rinzler had managed both Bill Monroe and Doc Watson, produced numerous bluegrass records, and been co-promoter of the first bluegrass festival in 1965. During his career he recorded over 800 reels of concerts, back porch picking parties, and interviews. These recordings now reside in the Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives and Collections at the Smithsonian's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. Before his death in 1994, he went through all of his reels of Bill Monroe (with various personnel including duos with Doc Watson) and put together a two-CD series called *Off the Record* (1993).

In the last 14 years, Smithsonian Folkways has seen the reissue of most of the Country Gentlemen recordings, many of Mike Seeger's bluegrass compilations, the Doc Watson Folkways recordings, the classic Allen-Wakefield material, and an anthology of Hazel and Alice. We will continue to mine the vaults for new collections in the future and remain committed to this thriving American musical form. This collection introduces the breadth of bluegrass in the Folkways catalogue.

THE SONGS



LEE MICHAEL DEMSEY AND JEFF PLACE



1 WHITE HOUSE BLUES (also known as "MCKINLEY BLUES")
EARL TAYLOR AND THE STONEY MOUNTAIN BOYS

Earl Taylor, vocals and mandolin; Walter Hensley, vocals and banjo;
Sam Hutchins, vocals and guitar; Vernon "Boatwhistle" McIntyre, bass
From Mountain Music Bluegrass Style (1959) Folkways 2318, reissued as (1991) SFW CD 40038.

In 1958 and 1959, Mike Seeger recorded a number of bluegrass bands from the Maryland–Virginia area. At this time very little bluegrass music was being recorded on long-play albums. He took the project to Folkways, and it was released in 1959. Of the groups Seeger recorded, only two were full-time musicians, the Lilly Brothers and Don Stover, and Earl Taylor and the Stoney Mountain Boys.

Earl Taylor (1929–1984) and the Stoney Mountain Boys began to play the Baltimore–Washington area in 1957. Taylor, a native of Rose Hill, Virginia, had just completed a stint in Jimmy Martin's band and was heard on Martin's first eight singles. The group was selected by Alan Lomax to perform in his Folksong '59 concert at Carnegie Hall, sharing the stage with Jimmy Driftwood, Muddy Waters, Memphis Slim, and others. Even with all the stellar performers, Taylor's group was the hit of the evening (Rosenberg, 1985).

The song "White House Blues," about the 1901 assassination of President William McKinley by anarchist Leon Czolgosz, has become a standard in both string band and bluegrass music.



2 OUR LAST GOODBYE THE JOHNSON MOUNTAIN BOYS

Dudley Connell, vocals and guitar; Tom Adams, vocals and banjo; David McLaughlin, vocals and mandolin; Eddie Stubbs, vocals and fiddle; Earl Yager, bass

From Folk Masters (1993) SFW CD 40047; recorded at Wolf Trap Farm Park, Vienna, VA, 1992.

Guitarist Dudley Connell (b. 1956) was born in West Virginia but raised in Gaithersburg, Maryland, a Washington, D.C., suburb. In 1975, shortly after graduating from high school, he formed the Johnson Mountain Boys with friend, Ron Welch. As the 1980s dawned, the Johnson Mountain Boys were considered by many to represent the future of bluegrass. In an era of innovation in the genre with various elements of rock and jazz entering the music, the Johnson Mountain Boys were touted for their allegiance to the genre's traditional sound. The membership changed, but the core group of Connell, Eddie Stubbs (b. 1961), Tom Adams (b. 1958), and David McLaughlin (b. 1958) were consistent for most of their history.

After playing hundreds of shows a year, the band officially retired in 1988. They performed occasional shows in the 1990s, releasing the album *Blue Diamond* in 1993, but in 1995 the band finally ended. Connell became the lead singer of the Seldom Scene and has also pursued side projects with the band Longview and as a duo with Don Rigsby. Adams left to join Blue Highway and then later to play with Rhonda Vincent. McLaughlin teamed with Josh Crowe as a duo and has continued to perform and be involved in studio work. Fiddler Eddie Stubs (b. 1961) is a noted country music historian, radio host, and announcer for the Grand Old Opry.

This Stanley Brothers tune was performed as part of radio host Nick Spitzer's series "Folk Masters" at Wolf Trap Farm Park. In 1993, Smithsonian Folkways released a CD highlighting 22 of the best performances from the shows.



3 WHEN HE REACHED DOWN HIS HAND FOR ME BILL MONROE AND HIS BLUE GRASS BOYS

Bill Monroe, vocals and mandolin; Mac Wiseman, vocals and guitar; Don Reno, vocals and banjo; Benny Martin, vocals and fiddle

From Off the Record, Vol. 1: Live Recordings, 1956-1969 (1993) SFW CD 40063.

"The Father of Bluegrass," Bill Monroe was born in Rosine, Kentucky, on September 13, 1911. There was music all around the house, and young William soaked it up. He was influenced by his uncle, Pendleton Vandiver (Uncle Pen), a fine Kentucky fiddle player. Bill would have taken up the fiddle but his brother Birch, being older, beat him to it, so Bill took up the mandolin at age eight. Bill later began playing guitar behind Arnold Schultz, a Black musician, at area dances and picked up a blues influence that would later carry forward in his music. Three of the brothers, Charlie, Bill, and Birch, performed as the Monroe Brothers in 1927. Birch gave it up after awhile, but Bill and Charlie became a popular country music act, making some classic recordings for RCA's Bluebird label from 1936 until they split up in 1938.

Charlie formed the Monroe Boys (and later the Kentucky Pardners), while Bill went to Little Rock, Arkansas, to form the Kentuckians. Bill wasn't happy with the sound of that band so he moved to Atlanta and put together a new sound: a combination of blues, country, folk, old-time music, and Celtic fiddle music. At this point he formed the Blue Grass Boys, named after the "Bluegrass State," his birthplace, Kentucky. The band, with an ever-changing membership, continued to tour and record until Monroe's death in 1996.

Gospel songs have always been a cornerstone of bluegrass music. A group within a group, the Bluegrass Gospel Quartet became a mainstay of Monroe's band beginning as early as 1940. Their four-part harmonies are still frequently used in bluegrass circles today. Included here is one of Monore's more obscure gospel recordings.



4 TINY BROKEN HEART HAZEL DICKENS AND ALICE GERRARD

Hazel Dickens, vocals and bass; Alice Foster (Gerrard), vocals and guitar; Lamar Grier, banjo; Billy Baker, fiddle; David Grisman, mandolin From Won't You Come and Sing for Me? (1973) Folkways 31034, reissued as Pioneering Women of Bluegrass (1996) SFW CD 40065.

Hazel Dickens (b. 1935) and Alice Gerrard (b. 1934) blur the distinctions between old-time country music and bluegrass music. They carried forward the Appalachian mountain style, itself influenced by old English ballads, melded it with the high lonesome sound of Bill Monroe, and created their own special sound. Their two recordings for Folkways in 1965 and 1973 were unique in that very few women were involved commercially in bluegrass in those days. Hazel and Alice opened doors for a new generation of women in traditional music, paving the way for artists like Emmylou Harris, Alison Krauss, Iris DeMent, Lynn Morris, Lucinda Williams, Gillian Welch, and the Judds.

Hazel Dickens went on to a successful solo career with many albums on the Rounder label. Her work has also been heard in the motion pictures *Harlan County, U.S.A., Matewan,* and *Songcatcher*. Among many honors, she was a 2001 recipient of a National Heritage Award, presented by the National Endowment for the Arts. For more on Dickens see track 20.

Alice Gerrard, though less active as a recording artist, has continued to perform. She also founded the *Old Time Herald* magazine in Durham, North Carolina, and has edited it since the mid-1980s. She received the Distinguished Achievement Award from the International Bluegrass Music Association in 2001.



5 NEW CAMPTOWN RACES RED ALLEN, FRANK WAKEFIELD, AND THE KENTUCKIANS

Frank Wakefield, mandolin; Red Allen, guitar; Bill Keith, banjo; Fred Weisz, bass From *Bluegrass* (1964) Folkways 2408.

Born in 1934 in Tennessee, Franklin Delano Wakefield played harmonica and guitar as a child, but switched to mandolin as a teenager. He formed a gospel band with his brother Ralph in 1950. The 17-year-old made a magical connection with Red Allen (1930–1993) in Dayton, Ohio, in 1952, and their musical partnership lasted more than 20 years. Red Allen, Frank Wakefield, and the Kentuckians recorded for various labels over the years. Wakefield has also recorded a number of solo projects. Bluegrass traditionalists have admired his playing, but his breakneck, improvisational stylings have also inspired modern pickers like Sam Bush and Ronnie McCoury. "New Camptown Races" became Wakefield's signature tune. First recorded with the Kentuckians in the 1950s for the tiny mail order record company, Kentucky Records (and later re-issued by Rounder Records), this version comes from a 1964 session, featuring the equally legendary banjo playing of Bill Keith.







6 SUZANNE HARLEY ALLEN-MIKE LILLY BAND

Harley Allen, vocals and guitar or mandolin; Mike Lilly, vocals and banjo; Scott Adams, vocals and mandolin; Larry Nager, bass; David Moore, Jr., fiddle From Suzanne (1985) Folkways 31049.

The Harley Allen–Mike Lilly Band was among the most popular acts on the bluegrass festival circuit in the 1980s. Harley, a guitarist and the son of legendary singer Harley "Red" Allen, was the youngest of four musical brothers. He played in the family band in the 1970s. Striking out on his own in the 1980s, he formed a band with banjo player Mike Lilly in Dayton, Ohio, in 1983. Harley had some success in the 1990s as a country music artist but fared far better as a Nashville songwriter of songs recorded by Garth Brooks. Alan lackson, and Linda Ronstadt.

Mike Lilly is a noted banjo player who got his start with Larry Sparks and the Lonesome Ramblers. He's worked with mandolin player Wendy Miller and even toured with The Country Gentlemen

7 I HEARD MY MOTHER CALL MY NAME IN PRAYER THE NASHVILLE GRASS

Curly Seckler, vocals and guitar; Kenny Ingram, vocals and banjo; Willis Spears, vocals and guitar; Johnny Warren, vocals and fiddle; J.Y. Gray, bass; Gene Wooten, dobro From China Grove, My Home Town (1983) Folkways 31095.

Born in 1919 in North Carolina, John Ray Sechler (with an "h") formed the Yodeling Rangers with his brothers in 1935. Curly played tenor banjo. At age 19, he got his first big break, working with Charlie Monroe and the Kentucky Pardners (after Bill and Charlie Monroe split up their brother duo). In 1941, he left Monroe's outfit and teamed with fellow Kentucky Pardner, Tommy Scott (who recorded three albums for Folkways in the 1980s). At this point he switched from banjo to mandolin. The next year he joined Cas Walker's band and by 1947 worked with Mac Wiseman's band, the Country Boys. Seckler went to Georgia in 1948 and worked with a young duo of brothers, later to become bluegrass stars of the highest magnitude, Jim and Jesse McReynolds. He joined Flatt and Scruggs in 1949 and, with occasional forays into other projects, worked with them into the 1960s.

In 1969, the legendary bluegrass band Lester Flatt, Earl Scruggs, and the Foggy Mountain Boys went their separate ways. Earl and his sons formed the Earl Scruggs Revue, and went in the direction of rock, with drums and electric guitars, although maintaining a bluegrass influence. Lester Flatt (1914–1979) stuck to the roots of bluegrass and formed Lester Flatt and the Nashville Grass. By 1979, Curly Seckler was about to take over a prime position in that band. He had been a member of the Foggy Mountain Boys since 1949, and when Lester Flatt's health began to fail, he asked Seckler to help out. Flatt continued to do shows with the band when he was able, and before his death in May of 1979, Lester Flatt asked Curly Seckler to take over the band and see their traditional bluegrass music into the future.

As leader of the Nashville Grass after Flatt passed away, Curly Seckler made a valiant effort to keep things going, and although the group remained fairly successful, they were losing money on the road. In 1981, Willis Spears became lead vocalist, and this helped boost the group's success. By 1987, the band was called Curly Seckler, Willis Spears, and the Nashville Grass, but Curly soon retired to Nashville. He came back to record a tribute album to Lester Flatt with Willis Spears in 1990 for the Rebel label.

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8 TEARDROPS IN MY EYES THE FRIENDLY CITY PLAYBOYS WITH WARREN PINNIX

Warren Pinnix, bass and vocals; Archie Callahan, fiddle; Billy Edwards, banjo; Ronald Pinnix, guitar From The 37th Old Time Fiddler's Convention at Union Grove, North Carolina (1962) Folkways 2434-

One of the groups Mike Seeger and Lisa Chiera recorded at the 1961 Union Grove Fiddler's Convention was the Friendly City Playboys. The liner notes to the 1962 LP provide very little information about them. We are told they were from Kernersville. North Carolina, and the leader was Warren Pinnix.

9 CUMBERLAND GAP SNUFFY JENKINS

Snuffy Jenkins, banjo; Ira Dimmery, guitar

From American Banjo: Three-Finger and Scruggs Style (1956) Folkways 2314, reissued as SFW CD 40037 (1990).

In 1956, Mike Seeger produced the first bluegrass LP American Banjo: Three-Finger and Scruggs Style, which illustrated the style of banjo playing of North Carolinian Earl Scruggs as performed by others. The style had caught on with both bluegrass fans and young folk song enthusiasts. Many thought it originated with Scruggs, but of those who played in the style before him and influenced him, Dewitt "Snuffy" Jenkins (1908–1990) is one of the most important. Both Ralph Stanley (Rosenberg, 1985) and Don Reno (liner notes to Rounder 0005) name him as the source of their three-finger playing.

Originally from North Carolina, Jenkins learned his style of playing from neighbors Smith Hammett and Rex Brooks (liner notes, SFW CD 40037). By the 1930s Jenkins could be heard on WIS in Columbia, South Carolina, playing banjo and doing comedy with Byron Parker's Mountaineers. After Parker's death in 1949, Jenkins continued playing with long-time bandmate Homer "Pappy" Sherill (1915–2001) as the Hired Hands until Jenkins's death.







10 LIVE AND LET LIVE RED ALLEN AND THE KENTUCKIANS

Red Allen, vocals; Greg Allen, vocals and banjo; Ron Mesing, dobro; Harley Allen, Jr., guitar; Dorsey Harvey, Jr., mandolin; Buddy Griffin, fiddle From *Live and Let Live* (1979) Folkways 31065.

One of the most soulful vocalists in the history of bluegrass music was Red Allen, born in Hazard, Kentucky, in 1930. In 1949 he moved to Dayton, Ohio, and began playing bluegrass professionally. His sound was influenced not so much by Bill Monroe as by Bill's brother, Charlie. He formed the group Red Allen and the Kentuckians in 1952, led by his strong rhythm guitar playing and vocals.

Through the years, his group served as a training ground for many young musicians who would later make a name for themselves such as David Grisman, Bill Keith, Scotty Stoneman, Wayne Yates, and Richard Greene.

In 1959, Red moved to Washington, D.C., and re-formed the Kentuckians with the important addition of mandolin innovator Frank Wakefield. Allen even spent a short time in 1967 filling in for Lester Flatt in Flatt and Scruggs when Flatt was ill. In 1968, he teamed with another young innovator, banjo player J. D. Crowe, to form the Kentucky Mountain Boys. He returned to Dayton in 1969 and joined his four teenaged boys to form Red Allen and the Allen Brothers. In the 1980s he recorded for Folkways and performed closer to his Ohio home, until his death in 1993 of lung cancer.

11 THE WORLD IS WAITING FOR THE SUNRISE ROGER SPRUNG (WITH DOC WATSON)

Roger Sprung, banjo; Doc Watson, guitar; Joe Locker, guitar;
Willie Locker, mandolin; Ollie Phillips, bass; Bob Thomas, drums
From Progressive Bluegrass and Other Instrumentals: Vol. 1 (1963) Folkways 2370.



"Progressive" banjo player Roger Sprung (b. 1930) is a lifelong New Yorker. Sprung first recorded for Folkways during the folk revival of the early 1960s and was a frequent participant in the weekly jam sessions at Washington Square Park in Greenwich Village. Having started to play Scruggs-style banjo in 1948, he influenced many of the budding folk banjo players who came there.

Sprung's style was marketed as "progressive bluegrass," as he incorporated elements of jazz and popular music into his sound. Five "progressive bluegrass" albums were recorded for Folkways between 1963 and 1974. Sprung is still active at festivals and teaches banjo in New York.

12 HELLO CITY LIMITS HUGH MOORE AND THE BLUEGRASS CUTUPS

Hugh Moore, vocals and banjo; Roby Huffman, vocals and guitar; Danny Bowers, fiddle or mandolin; Parks Icenhour, guitar; Dale Lee, bass; David Johnson, steel guitar From Hello City Limits (1986) Folkways 31108.

North Carolinian Hugh Moore has made a name for himself in recent years as a studio banjo player and record producer associated with the Original Music Showcase, a performance venue in Durham, North Carolina, and its record label, OMS Records. In recent years he has produced albums by Kenny Baker, Benny Martin, and Vassar Clements for OMS.

Moore recorded one album for Folkways in 1985 at Star Recording Studio in Miller's Creek, North Carolina, enlisting the local group Roby Huffman and the Bluegrass Cutups as backup. "Hello City Limits" is a well-known song originally recorded by Benny Martin (1928–2001).

13 (LEGEND OF THE) BROWN MOUNTAIN LIGHT THE COUNTRY GENTLEMEN

Charlie Waller, lead vocals and guitar; John Duffey, vocals and mandolin; Eddie Adcock, banjo From Vol. 4: Going Back to the Blue Ridge Mountains (1973) Folkways 31031.

When bluegrass music needed a boost and its first wave was beginning to ebb, the fresh sounds of John Duffey (1934–1996), Charlie Waller (b. 1935), Eddie Adcock (b. 1938), and Tom Gray (b. 1942) attracted a new audience. Waller, born in Texas, lived in Louisiana for a while before his family moved to Washington, D.C., in 1941. He met fiddle legend Scotty Stoneman (1932–1973) as a young teenager and was brought into the world of bluegrass music. Waller played in Earl Taylor's Band and with Buzz Busby and the Bayou Boys in the 1950s before forming The Country Gentlemen. The "folk boom" of the late 1950s and early 1960s was the perfect atmosphere for the emergence of the Gentlemen's blend of country, folk, bluegrass, and comedy. Their repertoire combined traditional bluegrass songs and contemporary compositions of various types of popular music. They were popular on college campuses and with young audiences and expanded the range of what was permissible for bluegrass bands to record.

Gray left the group in 1964, and by the late 1960s Adcock and Duffey were gone as well. In the ensuing years, few musicians stayed with the band for more than two or three years, with the notable exception of Doyle Lawson and Bill Yates. Still, the band remained fresh, entertaining, and relevant as they performed non-stop on the festival circuit. Charlie Waller has led the band for 45 years, from 1957 into the new millennium. His warm, smooth vocal style, perhaps the antithesis of the "high lonesome sound," is just as vital now as it was in the beginning.

"Brown Mountain Light" comes from Scott Wiseman (1909–1981), a member of the country husband-and-wife duo, Lulu Belle and Scotty. It concerns mysterious lights that appear atop Brown Mountain on the border of Burke and Caldwell counties in western North Carolina. Brown Mountain is also the location of Wiseman's View, a vista named for an uncle of Scott Wiseman. Various legends explain the phenomenon. One says Cherokee maidens are searching for the bodies of slain Cherokee warriors. Another, cited in these lyrics, concerns a benevolent slave owner who vanished while hunting. One of his slaves went to search for him and is supposedly still out on the mountain with his lantern. The legend was used in a 1999 episode of the popular television program, "The X Files."





14 LONESOME ROAD BLUES RONI STONEMAN

Roni Stoneman (Veronica Stoneman Cox), banjo; Eugene Cox, guitar From American Banjo: Three-Finger and Scruggs Style (1956) Folkways 2314, reissued as SFW CD 40037 (1990).

Roni Stoneman (b. 1937) is a member of the legendary Stoneman Family. Family patriarch Ernest V. "Pop" Stoneman (1893–1968) was a best-selling recording artist starting in the 1920s. He and his wife Hattie (see SFW CD 40090) had 13 children, most of whom were incorporated into the family band. In the 1950s the Stoneman Family Band started performing bluegrass in the Washington, D.C., area as the Blue Grass Champs, appearing in local clubs, on radio shows, and television.

Roni Stoneman, the "first lady of banjo," is best known as a country music personality and former member of the cast of the popular television show "Hee Haw." Aside from her comedy, she is also a brilliant banjo player, as this selection attests. She is still active in Nashville.

15 THE TRAIN THAT CARRIED MY GIRL FROM TOWN DOC WATSON

Doc Watson, vocals and guitar

From The Watson Family (1963) Folkways 2366, reissued as SFW CD 40012 (1990).

Doc Watson's music spans many styles including blues, folk, country, and bluegrass. Though he's only recorded one bluegrass album (*Riding The Midnight Train*, a Grammy winner in 1984 on Sugar Hill Records), his flat-pick guitar playing and warm vocals have had quite an influence on today's bluegrass musicians.

Born in 1923 in Stoney Fork Township (later known as Deep Gap), North Carolina, Arthel Watson was surrounded by music as a child. Many members of his family were singers and musicians (see *The Watson Family* SFW CD 40012). His father built him a fretless, old-time banjo when he was about ten years old, and his cousin introduced him to the guitar a couple of years later. The recordings of the finger-picking guitar style of country-blues singer Jimmie Rodgers made an impression on the young Doc. Doc was also enchanted by the church music he heard on Sundays. His music is an amalgam of many styles, and is difficult to categorize today.

In the 1940s he performed on radio shows and at regional concerts around North Carolina, playing current country music. Through much of the 1950s he played rockabilly music on electric guitar in Jack Williams's band. When Ralph Rinzler went to record banjo player Clarence Ashley at Ashley's daughter's house in Virginia, he heard Doc play mountain music on a borrowed acoustic guitar and returned to New York beaming over the tremendous guitar player he had discovered in Virginia. He went on to manage Doc Watson and introduce him to concert and nightclub audiences around the country. Rinzler also managed Bill Monroe and paired the two performers for a series of shows. Rinzler produced Doc's first albums for Folkways, starting with Old Time Music at Clarence Ashley's (SFW CD 40020) in 1061.

Though in "semi-retirement" since the late 1980s, Watson continues to tour and play when he sees fit and still does so (as he nears age 80) with grace, good humor, and great dexterity.



16 THE LITTLE GIRL AND THE DREADFUL SNAKE THE NEW LOST CITY RAMBLERS

Mike Seeger, vocals and mandolin; John Cohen, guitar; Tracy Schwarz, vocals and fiddle From *Out Standing in Their Field* (1993) SFW CD 40040.

The New Lost City Ramblers came together in New York in mid-1958 to preserve and perform important old-time American music that its three members had grown to love: Mike Seeger (b. 1934), John Cohen (b. 1932), and banjo player Tom Paley (b. 1928). Paley left the group in 1962 and was replaced by Tracy Schwarz (b. 1938).

Influenced by Harry Smith's Anthology of American Folk Music, the Ramblers actively sought older recordings, exchanging reels of tape through a network of collectors who held dubs of vintage 78-rpm recordings. They searched for older songs to fill out set lists and made a point to include rich discographical information on the source of their songs in their notes, giving full credit and helping educate their fans about their musical forebears. They also revived the country humor of recordings by groups like the Skillet Lickers in their performances. Though not primarily a bluegrass group, the Ramblers were fans of the early bluegrass groups and included bluegrass songs such as this in their recordings.

17 LITTLE BIRDIE THE STANLEY BROTHERS

Carter Stanley, vocals and guitar; Ralph Stanley, vocals and banjo; Vernon Derrick, fiddle; Curley Lambert, mandolin; Mike Seeger, bass Recorded 5 February 1961, University of Chicago.

18 RABBIT IN A LOG THE STANLEY BROTHERS

Carter Stanley, vocals and guitar; Ralph Stanley, vocals and banjo; Vernon Derrick, fiddle; Curley Lambert, mandolin; Mike Seeger, bass From *Friends of Old Time Music* (1964) Folkways 2390.



Bill Monroe may have sowed and spread the seeds of bluegrass, and Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs may have had the greatest commercial success, but the Stanley Brothers' legacy may be the strongest of all. With their sibling harmonies, Ralph's (b. 1927) banjo stylings, Carter's (1925–1966) strong, heartfelt lead vocals, and their self-penned songs of life's struggles and sorrows, the Stanleys' sound is still revered more than 50 years after it began.

They first performed as the Stanley Brothers and the Clinch Mountain Boys in 1947, but their performing career began a few years earlier as teenagers. At first they were more of an old-time string band, influenced by their mother's clawhammer banjo playing. They soon discovered the new sounds Bill Monroe was creating, and as a result, they became more of a bluegrass outfit. Carter even left the brother act for a time in the early 1950s to sing lead with Monroe's Bluegrass Boys. After Carter's death in 1966 at the early age of 41, Ralph continued the Clinch Mountain Boys.

Though others including Keith Whitley, Roy Lee Centers, and Ricky Skaggs stepped into Carter Stanley's lead vocal position, Ralph Stanley's own lead vocal talents were given more of a spotlight. In his later years, he has received some of his greatest fame, chosen to be a member of the Grand Ole Opry (a rarity for a bluegrass act) and been featured in the award-winning soundtrack to the movie O Brother, Where Art Thou?

"Little Birdie" features Ralph's clawhammer banjo playing, while "Rabbit in a Log," though loose and a bit sloppy, represents the fun that was often had on stage. Despite the sad lyrics of many a bluegrass song, humor has always played a big part, especially in stage performances.



19 GREY EAGLE DAVID AND BILLIE RAY JOHNSON

David Johnson, fiddle; Billie Ray Johnson, guitar From *Bluegrass* (1983) Folkways 31056.

Multi-instrumentalist David Johnson (b. 1954) recorded three albums for Folkways in the 1980s, one solo banjo record and two with his father, Billie Ray. He grew up in Wilkes County, North Carolina, in a musical family, his parents and uncles appearing on live radio. As a youth he played banjo and eventually fiddle, mandolin, bass, autoharp, drums, and pedal steel guitar. From age 12, Johnson played in professional bands. In the 1970s Johnson also became involved in studio work.

In recent years Johnson has been performing Southern gospel music in North Carolina and working at a recording studio. For more information go to: www.davesworldofmusic.homestead.com.

20 WAYFARING STRANGER CULLEN GAYLEAN AND THE VIRGINIA MOUNTAIN BOYS

Cullen Galyean, vocals; Bobby Harrison, vocals and guitar; David Lambeth, guitar
From *The Virginia Mountain Boys, Vol.* 4 (1983) Folkways 3829, recorded 1982, Woodlawn, VA.

Eric H. Davidson (b. 1937) approached Moses Asch in 1972 with a proposal for a bluegrass project. The group consisted of musicians he had recorded for several earlier albums of old-time music, and were previously known as the Pipers Gap Bluegrass Band and also as members of the Bluegrass Buddies. Now called the Virginia Mountain Boys, several different memberships recorded four albums for Folkways in the 1980s. From the musically rich area around Galax, Virginia, the core of the group was Glen Neaves, Cullen Galyean, Ivor Melton, and Bobby Harrison.

Galyean lives in Lowgap, North Carolina, and was once a member of Ralph Stanley's band. He currently performs around Galax with Cullen Galyean and the Bluegrassers.

21 BILLY IN THE LOWGROUND THE LONESOME STRANGERS

Buddy Pendleton, fiddle; John Herald, guitar; Bob Yellin, banjo From *The 37th Old Time Fiddlers Convention at Union Grove, North Carolina* (1962) Folkways 2434.

This fiddle tune was recorded at one of the great old fiddler's conventions, Union Grove, North Carolina, in 1961. The Lonesome Strangers are a one-shot band formed during the course of the event. Noted fiddler Buddy Pendleton, of Stuart, Virginia, hooked up with John Herald and Bob Yellin of the New York-based Greenbriar Boys. Pendleton later moved briefly to New York and played and recorded with the Greenbriar Boys.

The Greenbriar Boys were one of the first great urban bluegrass bands, formed during the folk music revival by three music enthusiasts in New York. They recorded for Vanguard Records, and at various times the band also included Ralph Rinzler, Eric Weissberg, or Frank Wakefield.

22 THE REBEL GIRL HAZEL DICKENS WITH THE JOHNSON MOUNTAIN BOYS

Hazel Dickens, vocals and guitar; Dudley Connell, guitar; Tom Adams, banjo; Marshall Wilborn, bass; David McLaughlin, mandolin and fiddle

From Don't Mourn Organize!: Songs of Labor Songwriter Joe Hill (1990) SFW CD 40026.

Hazel Dickens sings mountain music with as much heart as anyone on the scene today, and with good reason. She is steeped in the traditions of which she sings. Born in 1935 in Mercer County, West Virginia, she was one of 11 children raised in a poverty-stricken coal mining community. She experienced economic hardship, the bitter struggles associated with the life of coal miners, and the sexist treatment of women, all before she was out of her teens. At age 19, she moved to Maryland where she and some of her siblings became factory workers, and saw the need for labor unions firsthand.



From the late 1950s, Hazel was playing bass and guitar with the likes of Mike Seeger, Alice Gerrard, David Grisman, Ralph Rinzler, John Herald, Lamar Grier, and Bob Yellin. She formed a popular duo with Alice Gerrard in the 1960s and 70s (see notes to track 4). She has written many songs during the last guarter century, and recorded a number of albums for the Rounder label.

Although her touring has slowed, she still makes stirring concert appearances across the country. Among her many honors are awards from the International Bluegrass Music Association for the 1996 Song of the Year, "Mama's Hand," and its prestigious Certificate of Merit in 1993.

The song "The Rebel Girl" was written by labor songwriter Joe Hill (1879–1915) and was adapted by Dickens for the soundtrack of the film *With Banners and Babies* (Lori Elaine Taylor, notes to SFW CD 40026).

23 TRAIN 45 SMILEY HOBBS

Smiley Hobbs, banjo; Tom Morgan, guitar; Pete Kuykendall, mandolin; Mike Seeger, bass
From American Banjo: Three-Finger and Scruggs Style (1956) Folkways 2314, reissued as SFW CD 40037 (1990).

Julian "Smiley" Hobbs (1928–1987) was born near Four Oaks, North Carolina. Spending most of his career in northern Virginia, Hobbs was a member of Bill Harrell's band, in addition to playing with Don Reno and Red Smiley. The author of the well-known song "Banjo Signal," Hobbs was also known around his adopted hometown of Manassas, Virginia, as a career police officer with an "entertaining style of directing traffic" (Bluegrass Unlimited, August 1987).

The song "Train 45" is another standard and part of the family of songs that gave us "Ruben's Train" and "500 Miles (900 Miles)." Of the many early influential recordings of it one certainly needs to mention those by Grayson and Whitter and Wade Mainer.



24 'NEATH THAT COLD GREY TOMB OF STONE THE LILLY BROTHERS AND DON STOVER

Everett Lilly, lead vocals and mandolin; Bea Lilly, guitar; Don Stover, banjo; Herb Hooven, fiddle or bass From *The Lilly Brothers and Don Stover* (1962) Folkways 2433.

"Brother duos" have always been the backbone of bluegrass and traditional country music. Charles Everett Lilly (b. 1924) and his brother Mitchell Burt Lilly (b. 1921) were among the earliest and best of the brother duos. Influenced in their youth by the Monroe Brothers and the Callahan Brothers, Everett and Bea, the Lilly Brothers parlayed tight harmonies, fine musicianship, and well-written songs into a successful career. They began performing together as youngsters in the mid-1930s, doing regularly scheduled radio shows, playing their songs to a live audience at stations in Tennessee and West Virginia. While working at WWVA in West Virginia, they made their first recording in 1948. In 1951, Everett Lilly did a stint with Lester Flatt, Earl Scruggs, and the Foggy Mountain Boys. In 1952, the brothers reunited in Boston to form a band with Don Stover on banjo and Tex Logan on fiddle.

Don Stover (1928–1996) was a versatile and much-admired banjo player. He was a fine clawhammer player, which suited him well to the old-time and folk styles, but was also quite good at the Earl Scruggs and Don Reno styles of bluegrass banjo.

Despite a few interruptions, the Lilly Brothers and Don Stover stayed together until 1970. Everett left to play with Flatt and Scruggs for a while in 1958 and 1966, but his devotion to his brother and the great music they made together always brought him back. Well into his seventies, Everett lives in West Virginia and is still active in music. Bea lived in Massachusetts and as of this writing the duo still re-unites for an occasional show.

25 GET UP JOHN BILL MONROE AND HIS BLUE GRASS BOYS

Bill Monroe, mandolin; Peter Rowan, guitar From Off the Record, Vol. 1: Live Recordings, 1956-1969 (1993) SFW CD 40063.

Bill Monroe not only founded bluegrass music, but he nurtured it, and served as its figurehead for more than 50 years (see notes for track 3). Estimates of how many musicians worked with his band number between 150 and 175. Some stayed for a few weeks, others for many years. Some gained stardom in their own right, many continued as sidemen in other bands, while some faded into oblivion after leaving the band.

Bill's first appearance on the Grand Ole Opry came on October 21, 1939. He holds the record for the longest run on that revered Nashville stage, making his last appearance there on March 15, 1993, six months before his passing.

This mandolin piece by Bill Monroe was recorded at the first Fincastle Bluegrass Festival on September 5, 1965. This event, near Roanoke, Virginia, was staged by Carlton Haney and Ralph Rinzler and is considered the first bluegrass festival.

Bluegrass Recordings in the Smithsonian Folkways Collection

The Allen Brothers, Are You Feeling It Too? (1980) F-31075. Allen, Harley, Jr., Across the Blue Ridge Mountains (1983) F-31076. __, In Memory of the Man: Dedicated to Lester Flatt (with Red Allen, Harley Allen, Jr., and Curley Seckler) (1980) F-31073. , Suzanne (Harley Allen, Jr., and Mike Lilly) (1985) F-31049. Allen, Red, Bluegrass (Red Allen, Frank Wakefield, and the Kentuckians) (1964) F-2408. , In Memory of the Man: Dedicated to Lester Flatt (Red Allen, Harley Allen, Jr., and Curley Seckler) (1980) F-31073. _, Live and Let Live (1979) F-31065. , Red Allen and Friends (Red Allen with Vassar Clements, Marty Stuart, others) F-31088 (1981). _____, The Red Allen Tradition (1983) F-31097. The Country Gentlemen, Vol. 1: Country Songs, Old and New (1990) SFW CD 40004, reissue of F-2409 from 1960. _____, Vol. 2: Folksongs and Bluegrass (1991) SFW CD 40022, reissue of F-2410 from 1961. _____, Vol. 3: On the Road and More (2001) SFW CD 40133, reissue of F-2411 (1963) with additional tracks.

Mountains (1973) F-31031.
Everhart, Bob Everhart (1978) F-31060.
, Alive at Avoca (1985) F-31081.
, Everhart Takes the Fifth (1983) F-31059.
, International (1982) F-31090.
, Time After Time (1980) F-31082.
, Waitin' for a Train (1980) F-31071.
Galyean, Cullen, and Bobby Harrison, Let Me Falls
Bluegrass from the Virginia/North Carolina Borde
(1984) F-3910.
Half and Half Bluegrass Band, Half and Half, Vol.
(1982) F-31086.
, Half and Half, Vol. 2 (1985) F-31103.
Hazel and Alice, Pioneering Women of Bluegrass
(1996) SFW CD 40065, contains selections from
F-31034 (1973) and F-31055 (1965).
, Who's that Knocking and Other Bluegrass
Country Music (1965) F-31055.
, Won't You Come and Sing for Me? (1973)
F-31034.
Johnson, David, <i>Clawhammer Banjo</i> (1983)
F-21004

Johnson, David and Billie Ray, Bluegrass (1983)

,Old Time North Carolina Mountain Music

F-31056.

(1985) F-31105.

, Vol. 4: Going Back to the Blue Ridge



Bluegrass Anthologies

Watson, Doc, The Doc Watson Family (1990) SFW

, Jean Ritchie and Doc Watson at Folk City

(1990) SFW CD 40005, reissue of F-2426 (1963)

. Off the Record, Vol. 2: Live Duet

Recordings, 1963-1980 (Bill Monroe and Doc

_____. The Original Folkways Recordings, 1960-

1962 (Clarence Ashley and Doc Watson) (1994)

SFW CD 40029/30, reissue of F-2355 (1961) and

CD 40012, reissue of F-2366 (1963) with

additional music.

with additional music.

Watson) (1993) SFW CD 40064.

F-2359 (1963) with additional music.

American Banjo: Three-Finger and Scruggs Style (Snuffy Jenkins, Smiley Hobbs, Roni Stoneman, others) (1990) SFW CD 40037, reissue of F-2314 (1956) with additional music. Bluegrass from the Blue Ridge-A Half Century of Change: Country Band Music of Grayson and Carroll Counties, Virginia (Wade Ward, The Bluegrass Buddies, others) (1967) F-3832. Country Gospel Song (Carter Family, Uncle Dave Macon, Alfred G. Karnes, others) (1971) F- RBF 19. Friends of Old Time Music (Doc Watson, Dock Boggs, the Stanley Brothers, others) F-2390 (1964).

Mountain Music Bluegrass Style (Don Stover, Tex Logan, Chubby Anthony, Earl Taylor, others) (1991) SFW CD 40038, reissue of F-2318 (1960) with additional music.

All of these titles are available through Smithsonian Folkways Mail order. For information call 1-800-410-9815 or go to: www.folkways.si.edu

Suggested Reading

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Smith, Richard D., *Bluegrass: An Informal Guide*. Chicago: A Capella Books, 1995.

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Credits

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Folkways Records was founded by Moses Asch in 1948 to document music, spoken word, instruction, and sounds from around the world. In the ensuing decades, New York City-based Folkways became one of the largest independent record labels in the world, reaching a total of nearly 2,200 albums that were always kept in print.

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