

Duck's Eyeball

Arthritis Brothers String Band

Welcome to the Arthritis Brothers fourth CD "Duck's Eyeball". We play old time music. Stuff that was popular in the early 1900's; music that postdated the minstrel era and preceded bluegrass. Banjo picker John Clabourne was raised in rural Sussex County, Virginia. Fiddler John Beland was raised on a Mitchell County, Iowa farm. Earl Rigg was born in the mountains of Virginia and grew up in Eastern North Carolina on a tobacco farm. Clabourne is retired from both the U.S. Army and the Sierra Vista police force. Beland is a retired electrical engineer and contractor. Earl Rigg spent 30 years as a technical expert for a Wisconsin phone company.

The Arthritis Brothers are located in rural Sierra Vista Arizona where the weather is always sunny and the plants are mostly thirsty. Technically, we may not be Hill Billies, but we do live among the mountains and have pickup trucks and dogs. Check our web site at www.arthritisbrothers.com for our schedule and contact information. Stop by and jam with us.



-----About the tunes-----

NORTH CAROLINA BREAKDOWN Some believe that Tennessee's Fiddlin' Arthur Smith wrote this tune in the back seat of a convertible while in route to a festival; upon arrival he played the tune on stage. Arthur claimed the tune ascribing a 1937 date to it. However, the tune does seem to be an improvisation on "Whistling Rufus", which was documented by Kerry Mills in 1899; Mills' Rufus seems to have grown out of an earlier minstrel composition. The tune has its own life now.

DUCK'S EYEBALL We learned this Carolina tune from Lauchlin Shaw of Harnett County, N.C., whom learned the tune from Virgil Craven, a fiddler from Randolph County, N.C. The melody was called "Rainbow Schottische in sheet music printed in 1852. Sometimes lyrics are sung that refer to "having one's finger up a Duck's Eyeball".

ROSE OF ALABAMA Originated on the minstrel stage. As is common for tunes of that era, authorship is claimed by several; the tune appears in "Howes 1,000 Jigs and Reels" It remains popular and was used in the movie "The Ballad of Josie Wales"

DANCE ON THE CLOUDS Tony Ellis wrote this wonderful waltz to commemorate the passing of John Hartford. Listen to this and visualize John dancing on the clouds. We learned our version from the fiddling of Jerry Correl and Betty Vornbock.

CHATTANOOGA A traditional Tennessee tune. We learned this from the Double Decker String Band who learned it from Blaine Smith. We don't know where Blaine learned it. We play it in GDAE tuning, some prefer GDGD.

MORMON SCHOTTISCHE From the playing of Animas Valley NM fiddler Forrest Delk. It is a variation of the 1879 hit tune "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star, Meet Me Out Behind the Bars". The lyrics attempt to arrange a tryst out behind the bars, a rail fence – the equivalent of 'out behind the barn'. Delk (re) named the tune from settlers he heard playing the tune.

O LUD GALS From the minstrel performer / composer Dan Emmit. Dated to 1843; lyrics include:

*It's up de rope and down de cable
Forty Horses in de stable
First an injun den a squaw
Gwine a way to de Arkansaw. .
Chous
O Lud Gals, gib me chaw tebackur
O Lud Gals fotch a log de whiskey
Makes my head swim when I gets a little tippy*

We play it in AEAE tuning

LOST INDIAN The Garage Mahall library has over 140 recordings titled Lost Indian. They each have some claim to uniqueness and several tunes are represented by this one title. It is difficult to believe that Indians got lost that often and needed to holler in order to be found. In any case, our Lost Indian is the tune that was played by Eck Robertson, Byron Berline, and the Volo Bogtrotters among others. We play it in A E A C# tuning to get the proper hollow sound.

DESERT FLOWER This old time styled tune was composed by the banjo player, John Clabourne. He says the tune was in his banjo, he only had to let it out. We hope it will be a traditional tune.

CLEMENTINE The author for Clementine is not known for certain but the words and music are sometimes attributed to Percy Montross, circa 1880. According to a note in the UK Ballad Newsgroup, Montross based his composition on Down by the River Liv'd a Maiden by H. S. Thompson (1863). The reference to "was a miner, a forty niner" would indicate a 19th century background. A couple of sample verses:

*In a cavern, in a canyon,
Excavating for a mine
Dwelt a miner forty niner,
And his darling Clementine.*

*Oh my darling, oh my darling,
Oh my darling, Clementine!
Thou art lost and gone forever
Dreadful sorry, Clementine*

There are dozens (hundreds?) more verses. Popular culture seems to be making a children's tune out of this historical masterpiece.

OIL CITY QUICKSTEP We learned this tune from a recording of Ellis Hall. Bayard documented the tune with the Oil City title listing as alternate titles "Beggars March" and "Op'ry Star". However the tune is melodically cognate with "Garfield March" as played by the Kentucky Fiddler John Masters who learned it from Jim Booker. Clark Kessinger of West Virginia recorded a sophisticated rendition in 1928 but the tune was clearly in the tradition much earlier. Following Garfield's 1881 assassination, several melodies titled "President Garfield's (Funeral) March" were copyrighted, many in the same year. There are over 20 images of such sheet music on Library of Congress website - <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem>. More than one melody is represented, but several include a flowing part similar to the melody we play and all of these seem to include a trio with plucking, pizzacatto, or spicatto. Hall, Kessinger, and Masters all include such a part. . Much of the sheet music seems to be in the 'flat' keys with minor tonality as befitting a funeral march.

RYE WHISKEY is also know as Drunken Hiccups. The tune is universal in the USA but came from an old and distinguished tune family originating in the British Isles. We play it as a Waltz in A E A C# with one part repeated and the other part not. Some verses:

*Rye whiskey, rye whiskey, rye whiskey I cry
If I don't have rye whiskey I surely will die.*

*I'll eat when I'm hungry, I'll drink when I'm dry;
If the hard times don't kill me I'll live till I die.*

*If the river was whiskey, and I was a duck
I'd swim to the bottom and never come up.*

CHRISTMAS EVE This pre civil war tune is frequently found in Kentucky. We got our version from Isham Monday who played it much lower than standard pitch. It is a fine mantra tune – a 'vacation for your brain'. You can hear the original at the Digital Library of Appalachia site <http://www.acadla.org>

BREAKING UP CHRISTMAS This Galax area tune celebrates a Christmas time tradition. Tom Carter and Blanton Owen (1978) quoted (1978) 82 yr. old Meadows of Dan fiddler Lawrence Bolt on the origin of the title:

Through this country here, they'd go from house to house almost – have a dance at one house, then go off to the next one the following night and all such as that. The week before Christmas and the week after, that's when the big time was. About a two week period, usually winding up about New Year. I wasn't into any of this, but used to laugh about it. They'd play a tune called BREAKIN' UP CHRISTMAS, that was the last dance they'd have on Christmas

Google can find Breaking Up Christmas lyrics if you'd like to sing along.

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----continued from other side-----

SPOTTED PONY The tune is very similar to a tune called Snowshoes. Snowshoes may be Canadian, or perhaps we only associate it with Canada because of the snow in the title. Adding to the confusion are two other similar tunes that happen to use identical titles. In any case this tune has been played extensively in Missouri and is now widespread.

CROOKED STOVEPIPE The tune is sometimes attributed to Nova Scotia fiddler Colin J. Boyd, and it is believed to have originated in Canada and spread to New England from Ottawa. Crooked Stovepipe was recorded on 78 RPM in 1932 by Hugh "Hughie" A. MacDonald. Crooked Stovepipe is also the name of a dance performed to the tune, popularized in New Hampshire by the late callers Ralph Page and Duke Miller. We no longer remember where we learned our version.

BATTLE OF CEDAR CREEK The battle of Cedar Creek was fought on 16 October 1864 at Middletown VA. The confederates had early success in the all day battle but Phil Sherman' troops held on to rout them. This was the last major battle in the Shenandoah Valley. The tune may have been written by Mr. Pressly to commemorate the battle. We learned our version from a recording by Jerry Correl.

WAYNESBORO This is an Americanized version of an Old Irish reel called "Over the Moors to Maggie". Tilton finds that Waynesboro was played by five different fiddlers at the 1919 and 1920 Berea, Kentucky fiddle contests, making it one of the most popular tunes of the contests. Kentucky fiddler Doc Roberts, who recorded it in 1927, popularized the tune. Doc attributed the version he learned from his brother Liebert to African-American fiddler Owen Walker.

GALLATIN SPECIAL We learned this tune from Lynn "Chirps" Smith at Bluff Country Gathering in 2008. Chirps got it from Garry Harrison but we've lost track of the tune origins. There is a Gallatin County in Illinois where Chirps and Garry collected tunes from the old timers. The Bottomlanders – Ed Bradley and Vince Uselton of Old Shawneetown in Gallatin County Ill, recorded the tune in 1977

RED RIVER VALLEY is a folk song and cowboy music standard of contentious origins that has gone by different names—e.g., "Cowboy Love Song", "Bright Sherman Valley", "Bright Laurel Valley", "In the Bright Mohawk Valley", and "Bright Little Valley"—depending on where it has been sung. Here are a few verses

*From this valley they say you are going,
We will miss your bright eyes and sweet smile,
For they say you are taking the sunshine
That has brightened our pathway a while.*

*So come sit by my side if you love me,
Do not hasten to bid me adieu.
Just remember the Red River Valley,
And the one that has loved you so true.*

In the movie *The Grapes of Wrath*, Henry Fonda sings the tune to his mother while waltzing with her.

SAL'S GOT MUD BETWEEN HER TOES. A fine Kentucky tune we learned from the playing of Bruce Greene. Bruce collected it from Pat Kingery of Nobob, KY and recorded it on: Bruce Greene & Hilary Dirlam - "Fiddler's Dozen" (1994).

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YOU ARE NOT THE ONLY TURTLE IN THE TANK We learned this great tune from a home recording of Andy Lewis. Andy is a cousin of the famous Lewis Family of Crow Flat NM (source for the tune "Bull at the Wagon"). Andy recorded a cassette of 46 schottisches; many identified by number instead of by title. We don't know where Andy got this schottische but below is an 1896 reprint from the Jacksonville (Fla.) Times-Union of a humbling poem with the same title. The poem seems to scan to the music.

YOUR'E NOT THE ONLY TURTLE IN THE TANK.

When you think the -world's your oyster, and felicitate yourself

On your standing and your balance In the bank,

Just remember there are others as respectable as you—

You are not the only turtle in the tank.

The colonel of militia Is a very mightyman.

His epaulets will tell you or his rank;

But there's captains, and there's sergeants, and corporals besides —

He's not the only turtle in the tank.

The self-made man's a wonder, and will tell you so himself,

And there's no one but himself to really thank;

But when he dies there's some one who can fill the gap he leaves-

He's not the only turtle In the tank.

So take your honors easy and bow just like the rest,

For, whether you're a prize or are a blank.

The world can do without you, can forget you in a day—

For you're not the only turtle in the tank.

MALINDA CINDY SUE We learned this from a field recording of J P Lewis and Bobby Jones of Crow Flat NM. They are part of the extended Lewis family of "Bull at the Wagon" fame and played this tune at their 1993 annual celebration. It is a very happy tune and they sound very happy on the recording.

STREAK O' LEAN, STREAK O' FAT From John Dilleshaw a.k.a. A A Gray." We have changed the tune a small amount, as have others before us. The tune is very similar to "Hell Broke Loose in Georgia". In fact, it is difficult to tell where the Streak ends and Hell begins.

Additional information on many of these tunes can be found at :

Fiddlers Companion www.ibiblio.org/fiddlers/

Library of Congress www.memory.loc.gov/ammem

Digital Library of Appalachia www.aca-dla.org

and by Mr Google! www.Google.com

