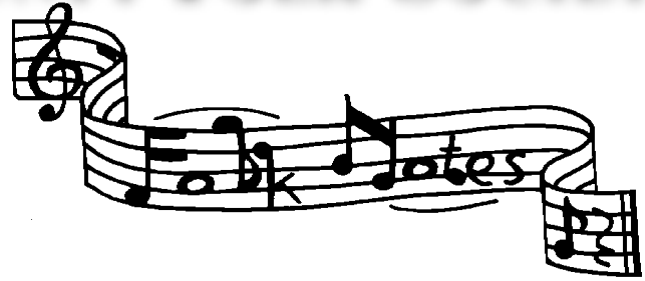


THE SONOMA COUNTY FOLK SOCIETY

January -
February 2016
Volume 21 No.1



<http://www.socofoso.com>

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Blue & Lonesome,

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Look for more information by going on line to
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Talkin' About What's New

By Steve DeLap

There are at least two great publications that have appeared near year's end. The first is of local origin and would make an excellent gift for birthdays, anniversaries, or "just because". It is a double CD called the "Sonoma County Covers Project". The package blurb describes it as "Sonoma County Artists performing songs by (other) Sonoma County Artists in benefit of KRCB-FM." This is a marvelous compilation of 27 songs on two CDs with such diverse performers as Nina Gerber & Chris Webster, Solid Air, Sarah Baker, Dave Hamilton, and Kevin Russell with Cori Wood and Markie Sanders. (Even I'm performing on one of the songs). Songwriters represented on the CDs include Hugh Shacklett, Dan Hicks, Allegra Broughton & Sam Page, Tom Waits, Wayne Haught, and the Late Audrey Auld. For at least a few of the songs, this collection represents the first time they have been recorded or published.

The Sonoma County Covers Project was conceived and created by Last Record Store and Jackalope Records owner Doug Jayne, as a benefit for Local Public Radio Station KRCB-FM. Doug is also a songwriter and program host on KRCB Radio 91. This is the third compilation CD Doug has assembled for the station and probably the most labor-intensive. It's an incredible collection of Sonoma County songs and artists well worth adding to anyone's music collection. The cover even features a photo of Christo's Running Fence in 1976, one of the more interesting bits of Sonoma County History.

The two CD set can be purchased by contacting KRCB (707) 584-2020 during the week or by stopping by the Last Record Store, 1899 Mendocino Avenue, Santa Rosa (707) 525-1963. More information is available at www.sonomacountycoversproject.com.

The other publication is of interest to those of us who like to make our own music. Most of us are familiar with the Songbook "Rise Up Singing", a collection of 1200 or so mainly folk and traditional songs published by Sing Out! in 1988. To some, it is the bible; to others it is the bane of song circles all over the country.

The big news is the publication of a sequel to "Rise Up Singing" called "Rise Again". The format of the new work is very similar to the old. There is a smaller "regular" version and a larger "leader's" version, both spiral bound, which could well be called the Older Eyes version, since the larger print is easier to read at any distance.

Talkin' continued on page 4

"Remembering Bill Keith"

by Bill Amatneek



Pioneering banjo-man William Bradford Keith, known to almost all as Bill Keith, passed away on October 23, 2015, at his home in Woodstock, NY. He was one of three 20th century 5-string banjo-pickers who changed the way the instrument is played. As with the other two, Pete Seeger and Earl Scruggs, the style he created was named after him: "Keith picking."

Scruggs's bluegrass playing sees the right hand's thumb, index and middle fingers executing "rolls," repeating note sequences that float a skeletonized melody on a torrent of embellishing 16th notes. Keith picking, using the same three fingers, is virtually all melody with little embellishment, allowing intricate fiddle tunes to be played on the banjo. Coordinating the fingers of both hands, at bluegrass breakdown speed, requires enough cognitive effort that lesser players sometimes neglect musical expression and pick without rhythmic bounce, something one could never accuse Bill of.

Keith jumped to fame in 1963 when Bill Monroe, the Father of Bluegrass, hired him to play in his group, the Bluegrass Boys. Monroe took to calling him Brad (after Keith's middle name), saying there could only be one Bill in the group. Though Keith's tenure lasted just eight months, his picking with the Bluegrass Boys changed the course of bluegrass banjo.

"Before he came along," Monroe said, "no banjo player could play those old fiddle numbers right. You have to play like Brad or you would be faking your way through a number."

Keith loved the 5-string, and devoted himself to it. The last time I was at his home, he picked up his Rich & Taylor banjo, and showed me what he was working on: pentatonic scales, using just five notes in an octave to solo and comp. Going around the circle of fifths, he played all twelve major pentatonic scales, two octaves up and down, without missing a note, an impressive feat.

But Bill was a humble, soft-spoken guy. While I was marveling at his pentatonic pyrotechnics, he mentioned "melodic picking." After he used the term again, I asked, "What's the difference between Keith picking and melodic picking?"

"None," he said.

"So why do you use the term 'melodic picking'?"

Bill shrugged. "Well," he said quietly, "... modesty."

He also created "Keith tuners," a machined tuning peg that lets the user lock in a high and low note on a tuner, and then change the string's pitch while playing by twisting the peg from one locked-in note to the other. The twanged effect these tuners create can be heard on "Flint Hill Special," "Earl's Breakdown," and other banjo instrumentals. His Beacon Banjo Company has sold more than 30,000 sets.



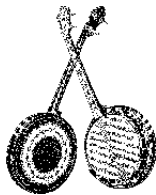
In 1977, Keith hired four of us from the original David Grisman Quintet to back him on a European tour. He had a large continental following with fans in many towns we played, and being taken out to a sumptuous dinner by one of them was a common treat. On a warm July evening we visited his friend's winery, and seated at a table inside a huge oak wine tank, sampled every vintage in the house, a memorable event I have little memory of. Having studied French literature at Amherst, Bill was fluent in the language, a benefit to us at many hotels and restaurants.

He led rehearsals quietly, easily flowing with and around suggestions from other band members. On stage, he played banjo with thumping vitality, expression, and originality. His sharp mind brilliantly rendered the rocking 16th note stream that is Keith picking. Tony Rice, guitarist on that tour, gave Bill the nickname, "Brains," and gave the band, officially called The Bicentennial Bluegrass Band, a tag that stuck: The Keith Unit.

Bill performed on July 6, 2013, with the Jim Kweskin Jug Band at Freight & Salvage. Toward the end of the second set, Jim called a solo piece for Bill, Juan Tizol's instrumental, "Caravan." Pro that he was, Keith nailed it.

It was the last time I heard him play, the last time I heard him make his banjo dance.

Bill's Amatneek's book, Acoustic Stories, tells the Keith Unit tale in the story "Paris Remembers."



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FOLK NOTES

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News From Jam Nation Band



Hello from the Jam Nation String Band. We, Jam Nation Citizens, have become a family who enjoy bringing our live music to assisted living and memory care facilities and happily observing these dear ones relaxing and feeling the vibes. We have also become a favorite group at some upscale senior living facilities.

The Jam Nation group has seen in person what our presence means to these elders, especially the shut-ins. Many times upon our arrival, we notice how restless they are. As the audience settles into the show, they become absorbed and relaxed. The music helps them remember the words to some of their favorite songs and express from a deeper part of themselves.

This is not all just for 'them'...we also continue to learn new songs and love performing together for the fun of it. The Jam Nation String Band accommodates as many requests as we can, sometimes doing a practice plus two gigs per week.

Wishing everyone a happy new year and all the pickin' and singin' you can stand.

Jo Parish,
Sonoma County Folk Society's Jam Nation Band

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Talkin'

As in Rise Up Singing, Rise Again has an index of chapters grouping songs of similar subject matter, and both the chapters and the songs within each chapter are grouped in alphabetical order. The song selection is wide ranging, and includes such categories as "British Invasion and Rock", "Jazz and Swing" and "Surfin' USA", among those more folk-oriented.

The new songbook is published by Hal Leonard Publishing, and is available at <https://www.riseupandsing.org/songbooks/rise-again>. The selection of songs is eclectic and lots of fun, especially in the discoveries of songs you probably forgot you knew.

Keep singing, and thanks for supporting Sonoma County music, from listening to making your own.



Occidental Center for the Arts presents:



JANUARY 16, 8 pm The Songcatchers Tour: Jim Kweskin & Meredith Axelrod with Suzy Thompson. \$25. There will be a Workshop offered at 5 pm. \$20 Workshop only/Advance Registration .

JANUARY 30, 8-10 pm. Scottish Folk: Alan Reid & Rob van Sante Award-winning singer/composer and founding member of Battlefield Band. Reid joins guitarist and former sound engineer for well-crafted old and new music in the Scottish folk tradition. \$20.

January 31, 2016 3-5 pm. Jubilee Klezmer Ensemble! Enjoy a spirited afternoon of family dancing to the joyous and celebratory Klezmer and Israeli music. \$12, \$10, kids 12 and under Free.

FEBRUARY 14, Teresa Tudury's Valentine Concert Musical comedienne and celebrated singer-songwriter brings her many talents and scathing wit to the timeless topic of L-O-V-E

FEBRUARY 26, 7 pm. Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen Fine traditional folk and original tunes including Gillette's best known (Darcy Farrow, Bed of Roses) Pocket Canyon Ramblers open. \$15.

The OCA is located at 3850 Doris Murphy Ct. Occidental, CA. 95465. Bohemian Hwy @ Graton Rd. in Harmony Village. \$20 General. Reservations advised.
occidentalcenterforthearts.org. 707-874-9392.

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www.walkercreekmusiccamp.org 415-663-6030

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Pick'n Pot Luck Recipe

Golden Roasted Cauliflower

- 2 ½ - 3Lb head cauliflower, cut into 1 ½ " florets
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon fresh minced garlic
- ½ teaspoon sea salt
- ½ teaspoon turmeric, dry
- ¼ teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon ground coriander
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 teaspoons fresh squeezed lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon Shoyu (soy sauce)
- 2 tablespoons freshly chopped parsley or cilantro



-Pre-heat oven to 425. Line rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper. (helps with clean up)

-Wash cauliflower, cut and place in large bowl.

-Put all above ingredients (except parsley) in the bowl and toss until evenly coated.

-Spread the cauliflower evenly on baking sheet

-Bake for 25 to 30 minutes or until golden

-Transfer to serving bowl and sprinkle with parsley

Serves 4 to 6

from *The Longevity Kitchen* cookbook w/ personal adaptations
by Steve Hogle



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The Rhythm Rangers

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Friday, January 29th---7:30pm
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Santa Rosa, California

**Ukulele Undercurrents-
by Gary Sugiyama**



Some History- Uke

The ukulele was introduced to Hawaii in the summer of 1879, when the Ravenscrag arrived in Honolulu carrying more than 400 Portuguese immigrants. These people came to the Islands from the island of Madeira to work in the sugarcane fields. The story goes that a man named Joao Fernandes was so happy to finally reach Honolulu—it had been an exhausting, four-month journey of some 15,000 miles—that he grabbed a friend's braguinha, jumped off the boat and began playing folk songs from his homeland right on the wharf. The crowd of Hawaiians who witnessed Fernandes' impromptu playing was impressed, and they marveled at how his fingers jumped like fleas all over the fingerboard. Thus, they called the instrument "ukulele," which translates to "jumping flea."

**A Brief History of Slack Key Guitar
from Keola Beamer**

Hawaiian slack key guitar (ki ho'alu) Ki ho'alu, which literally means "loosen the key," There are different theories about the beginnings of slack key guitar in the Islands. Music is one of the most mobile of cultural forms, and the six-string guitar was probably originally introduced to the Hawaiians by European sailors around the beginning of the 19th century.

Guitars were also brought to Hawai'i by Mexican and Spanish vaqueros (cowboys), hired by King Kamehameha III around 1832 to teach the Hawaiians how to handle an over-population of cattle. Many of them worked on the Big Island of Hawai'i, especially around the Waimea region.

History lap steel

It is widely reported that the lap steel guitar was invented by a man named Joseph Kekuku in 1885 It is said that, at the age of 7, Kekuku was walking along a railroad track and picked up a metal bolt, slid the metal along the strings of his guitar and was intrigued by the sound. He taught himself to play using this method with the back of a knife blade. Various other people have also been credited with the innovation. The instrument became a major fad in the United States during the 1920s and 1930s.

Happy Strummin" - Gary



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•At 10:00 Stay tuned for Folk Alley

•Tuesday Evening, 9:00 - 11:00 Lady Spins the Blues with Mary Carroll.

Wednesday Evening 7:00 -8:00 Reprise of New Music Hour with Doug & Brian.

•Friday 12:00 - 2:00 American Routes

•Saturdays, 10:00 to 12:00, West Coast Live, Lots of live Folk & Singer/Songwriter

•At 12:00 to 1:00 Thistle & Shamrock, Celtic Music

•At 1:00 - 5:00 Our Roots are Showing Steve DeLap & Doug Jayne alternating

Sunday, 11:00 - 1:00 New Orleans By The Bay, Basin Street et. al, Linda Seabright

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- 4th Wed: Bluegrass/OldTime Jam 7-9PM

707-778-6060 (www.aquscafe.com)

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6-10 Irish Music Session

- 4th Sun: 3-5 OldTime Music Jam hosted by Janette Duncan, Chris Carney & Steve DeLap (info: 570-2745)

6-10 Irish Jam Session

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