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SAN DIEGO

ROUBADOUR

Alternative country, Americana, roots,  
folk, gospel, and bluegrass music news



April 2003

OFFICIAL ROOTS FESTIVAL PROGRAM

Vol. 2, No. 7

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good stuff  
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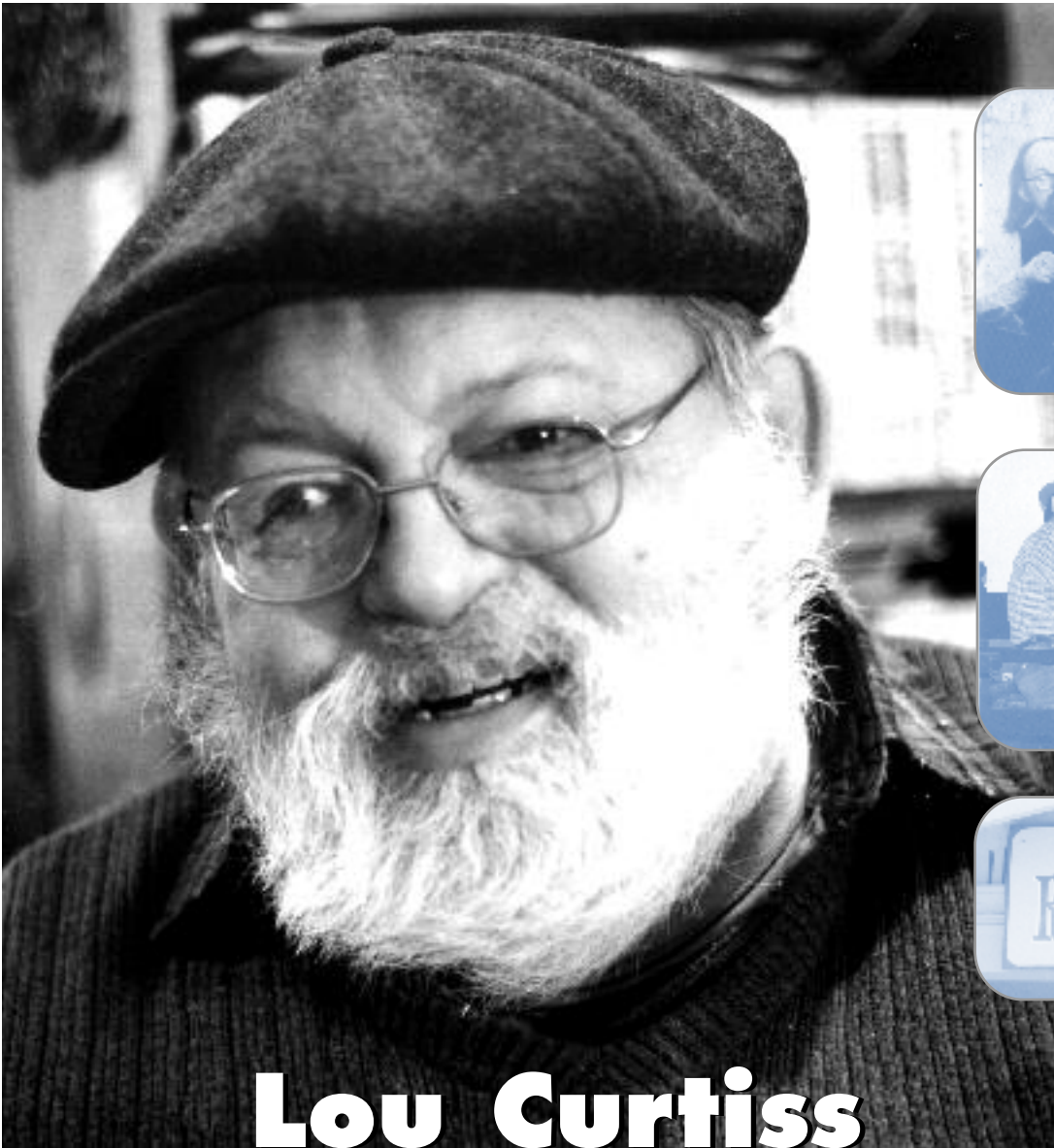
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ADAMS AVENUE  
ROOTS  
FESTIVAL

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Lou Curtiss  
grabs San Diego  
by the **ROOTS**...



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# welcome mat



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To promote, encourage, and provide an alternative voice for the great local music that is generally overlooked by the mass media; namely the genres of folk, country, roots, Americana, gospel, and bluegrass. To entertain, educate, and bring together players, writers, and lovers of these forms; to explore their foundations; and to expand the audience for these types of music.

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**SAN DIEGO TROUBADOUR**, the local source for alternative country, Americana, roots, folk, gospel, and bluegrass music news, is published monthly and is free of charge. Letters to the editor must be signed and may be edited for content. It is not, however, guaranteed that they will appear.

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# Welcome

to the 30th edition of the Adams Avenue Roots Festival. This year's festival will mark the tenth year that it's held on Adams Avenue after a long residence at San Diego State University. Then known as the San Diego Folk Festival, it was founded by San Diego music archivist and promoter Lou Curtiss, who is currently a member on the Board of Directors of the Adams Avenue Business Association, producers of the festival.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Adams Avenue Business Association (AABA), I want to express our appreciation to residents and visitors to Normal Heights for supporting the festival.

I also want to thank the good people at the *San Diego Troubadour* for their heart-felt and hard-working collaboration on this issue of the publication, which is serving as the program for the Roots Festival. In particular I want to thank Kent Johnson, Liz Abbott, and Lyle and Ellen Duplessie for making this effort a success.

Kudos also go to Lou Curtiss, proprietor of Folk Arts Rare Records, who selects all the performers for the festival. Long before the recent revival and interest in traditional music, Lou was steadfastly promoting "roots music" and educating San Diegans about it.

The Adams Avenue Business Association wants to express its gratitude to our San Diego City Council Representative Toni Atkins for her vigorous support of the small business community, and for the AABA and the Roots Festival in particular. She and her staff, which includes Kim Craig, Steve Russell, George Biagi, and Cheli Mohammed, have been central to the success of the AABA's community revitalization efforts.

The Roots Festival is also made possible thanks to the support of our sponsors. These include KPRI radio, Samuel Adams beer, the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture, Jazz 88, Inn Suites hotel, the County of San Diego, and the *San Diego Troubadour*.

A heaping helping of gratitude goes to the Board of Directors of the Adams Avenue Business Association, which heartily endorses and actively supports the Roots Festival and the Street Fair in September.

A central goal of the Adams Avenue Roots Festival is to provide visitors and residents with a standout cultural event that all San Diegans can all be proud of. We sincerely hope you enjoy yourselves and we look forward to your return to walk, shop, and dine on Adams Avenue.

The Adams Avenue Business Association also wants to let you about new businesses in the commercial district: These include:

- Country Kabob, 3375 Adams Ave. (563-6300) Greek and Middle-Eastern food
- Fine Living, 3938 Adams Ave. (528-8138) Flourishes and design for home and garden
- Hummingbird Confections, 3311A Adams Ave. (569-6500) Pastries, desserts, and catering
- Kadan, 4696 30th St. (640-2500) Classy neighborhood pub
- KYK, 3311 B Adams Ave.(255-5314) Martial arts studio
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- Radiant Custom Lighting, 3463 Adams Ave. (542-0607)

Marco Anguiano  
Executive Director  
Adams Avenue Business Association

## MAIL BOX

Dear Troubadour,

First, let me tell you how much I enjoy your newspaper!!! The articles and information you present are *priceless* — a breath of fresh air! Your newspaper is something I look forward to each month. ... I was hoping you might have a couple of past issues I missed. I was out of town last summer and just

recently found several pieces of the Sept.-Oct. issue while I was moving. I'd sure like to read the Chris Hillman articles. Any chance? If so, please send and I'll reimburse you for the postage. Again, thanks for the *great work* and please keep up the *great job*! God Bless.

Sincerely,  
Robert Hale





## front porch

# Turning 30: Roots Still Nourished by Creator

by Bill Richardson

"Is it true that this 30th Roots Festival is going to be the last, and that beginning next year it'll be showcasing hip-hop and rap music?"

It was a question that I felt simply demanded to be asked. Now, as the kind, honest eyes of the festival's founding father suspiciously met my own anxious orbs, I steadied myself for the authoritative, final answer.

What I didn't expect was for Lou Curtiss to answer me with a question of his own. His voice was smooth and gentle, with perhaps a vague hint of surprise. "Where did you hear that?" He was smiling.

"I made it up," I confessed. "Just a stupid joke," I added, stupidly.

"Oh, okay." His grin widened. "For a moment, I wondered if you'd gone crazy."

What he doesn't know won't hurt him.

What he *does* know is substantial. Combine his knowledge of music with an almost evangelical passion, and the result is the closest thing San Diego might have to a sort of cultural saint.

In the glorious spring of 1967, with a budget that today

would scarcely feed a family of four for a week, Lou Curtiss began a program that has been nourishing thousands of souls for decades. What started as the San Diego Folk Festival at SDSU's Peterson Gym has become the joyously anticipated Roots Festival, still blessing our city from its current comfortable nest on Adams Avenue. At 30 years of age, it has assumed a quiet dignity, a lovely polish on its beauty, its allure, its sense of fun. Along with another Curtiss-led festival (September's Adams Avenue Street Fair), it unquestionably offers its thousands of attendees the biggest bang for their buck: it's free.

Each year the festival has been a memorable one, as is evident by Curtiss' computer-like recall of dates and performers and stages. The proud father's reminiscences of his genderless child can probably only be fully appreciated by a handful of "relatives" — nannies and uncles like Scott Kessler and Marco Anguiano and Curt Bouterse who've force-fed it vitamins and love and diapered it if things got messy . . . which was indeed rare, though its behavior has occasionally seemed eccentric.

In 1983 the festival ran from

Tuesday through Sunday — a long musical dream. The following year became a bittersweet nightmare, having been scheduled, oddly enough, on the very weekend the Padres decided to earn a spot in the World Series. Bittersweet? No, nothing really sweet about it upon reflection. That year it was held at the Old Globe theater. Imagine the wonderful acoustics at the outdoor Lowell Davies Festival Stage in Balboa Park — the rich tones of the musicians enhanced by the incessant, agonized cries of the caged monkeys nearby, obviously driven to madness by their inability to join the rest of San Diego down at the stadium.

Over the years cultural challenges have had to be met. Following the 16th festival at SDSU (Lou having had to deal with essentially a different campus committee each year), a preening new kid in town, the rock 'n' roll-friendly Open Air Amphitheater pretty much grabbed the festival by its roots, squeezed, and pulled it away. Another head banger head-butted the fest out to parts unknown from a new venue the following year.

Landing on Adams Avenue a decade ago as the newly christened Roots Festival, an actual baptism seemed to occur as some anxious clouds emptied themselves in a watery attempt to dampen the spirits of the crowd. Seeming to realize the impossibility of the task, the clouds quickly split to find a new venue themselves. They've stayed away ever since.

Along with quirky weather and assorted locations comes the human factor, of course, and here the gathering has always embraced a variety of sublime characters.

There was Skip James, the Mississippi blues singer, who was booked and eagerly awaited at the second festival. After being laid over on a flight in Cincinnati, Jones suddenly



San Diego Folk Festival at SDSU, 1974

decided he didn't like flying that much after all and opted for a bus back home.

Jimmy Murphy, an old-time country singer from Arkansas, surprised Lou with his sudden request for payment in advance, a requirement Curtiss was somehow able to satisfy. On the day of the festival, Murphy was a no-show, having decided to stay home and use the money to buy a tractor. His cheerful letter explaining his absence at least gifted the festival with a very expensive autograph.



Lou and Virginia Curtiss with Joe Gwaltney, early '70s

Then there was the time singing cowboy/one-time movie star Dave McHenry showed up determined to prove that the years hadn't tamed him. So he tamed several audience members and unsuspecting passersby with his undiminished lasso techniques from the stage, standing tall 'n' proud in his

boots, which he'd just gilded with a can of spray paint. He could still sing, too, thankfully.

The older mountain singers and the older African-American singers, among the kindest guests Curtiss has ever dealt with, have occasionally fallen prey to the good intentions of entirely mismatched local musicians. There have been unfortunate clashes of style thanks to these pick-up "enhancements" and more than a few embarrassments, but the pros have always weathered the bumps with grace and are happy to return year after year.

Lou Curtiss seems genuinely happy himself as he watches his 30-year-old baby continue to mature, still making marvelous music.

At the festival this year the occasional "boos" you may think you're hearing will actually just be people calling "Lou! Lou!" as he oversees the weekend merriement, always moving about, checking in at each of the stages every hour (at least), while his own shop right up the street — his actual livelihood — is, by necessity, closed.

That's really the only negative thing about the whole happy experience, Curtiss says, his smile camouflaging any possible pain within a man who continues to suffer for our art.



Lou and Virginia Curtiss with W.B. Reid, ca. 1974

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# ADAMS AVENUE ROOTS FESTIVAL

## HEADLINERS

### Scottsville Squirrel Barkers

by Lyle Duplessie

Over the last 40 years, countless musical trends and trend setters have come, gone, and long been forgotten. Not so the Scottsville Squirrel Barkers, San Diego's first bluegrass band. From its humble origins at the original Blue Guitar location on Midway Drive, it can reasonably be argued this band was the springboard for much of the great Southern California-rooted music that would follow. Though only together for a couple of years, roughly 1961 to '63, this local band has left an endearing and indelible legacy in its wake. This year's Adam's Avenue Roots Festival will feature the band's long-awaited reunion.

Some fortunate souls can still recall seeing the Squirrel Barkers in their heyday. Others, myself included, only learned about the band some years later. The first time I stumbled onto a reference about the Scottsville Squirrel Barkers was about 1970. I was a senior in high school and my musical tastes and identity were taking shape via the Byrds. The first generation of Byrds had come and gone, yet I was still learning from their music and that of the splinter groups, like the Flying Burrito Brothers, CS&N, and Dillard and Clark. I learned that before the Byrds and all that would follow, there were the Scottsville Squirrel Barkers. Could it be that this band was the musical missing link that would evolve into California folk-rock and California country-rock?

Examining the relationship close up, there certainly appears to be a connection. Chris Hillman, the group's mandolin player, would later be a founding member of the Byrds and lead the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame group into country and country-rock. Hillman also co-founded the Flying Burrito Brothers with former Byrd Gram Parsons. From the late

'80s to the early '90s, Hillman's Desert Rose Band revived the California country music tradition. Hillman remains a creative, viable force in music. Larry Murray, on dobro, would campaign his folk-country-rock group Hearts and Flowers, a band that added to the cool Southern California musical climate of the late '60s. Banjo picker Kenny Wertz became a latter day Burrito Brother. With legendary fiddler Byron Berline, Wertz helped to found the red-hot California-based bluegrass band Country Gazette.



The original Scottsville Squirrel Barkers l. to r. Kenny Wertz, Chris Hillman, Larry Murray, Ed Douglas, and Jim Carr

When Wertz left to join the U.S. Air Force, another future R&R Hall of Famer, Bernie Leadon, was invited to sit in on banjo. He would go on to greater glories, joining Larry Murray in Hearts and Flowers, becoming a Dillard and Clark Expedition member, a Burrito Brother, and finally culminating as an Eagle, the most famous of all California-based country-rock bands. Indeed, for many of us, Leadon was the essence of that band.

Then there's our *Troubadour* friend Ed Douglas. It was Ed, the Squirrel Barkers' bass player, who picked the name for the band. It was Ed who found and secured the old Blue Guitar digs on Midway Drive. It was Ed who was the driving force behind formation of the Squirrel Barkers. And if we take this logic to its final conclusion, isn't it reasonable to say that without Ed's key moves at key times, nothing that we know today as the California sound of folk, rock, or country would have ever come to pass . . . ?

If you missed the Squirrel Barkers 40 years ago, you have another chance to see them LIVE! In addition to playing at this year's Roots Festival, you can see them perform, along with the great musical duo of Chris Hillman and Herb Pedersen on Friday, April 25, at the charming Carlsbad Village Theater. Don't miss the band that gave rise to so much of California's musical heritage.

### Mike Seeger

by Lou Curtiss

In 1959 I had more or less gotten away from those old country 78s that my Dad had collected. Oh, I picked a Johnny Cash tune on the guitar and I was into the *Town Hall Party* rockabilly guys like Gene Vincent and Eddie Cochran. I even listened to some of those striped-shirt groups that were becoming popular around that time. My friend Jim decided that he was going to drive to the East Coast for the Newport Folk Festival and he needed someone to talk to who could pick little, so I was his chosen victim. Little did I know that my musical life was about to experience a drastic change, thanks to a first hearing of a band called the New Lost City Ramblers.

I first saw Mike Seeger with John Cohen and Tom Paley (the first incarnation of the New Lost City Ramblers) at the 1959 Newport Folk Festival and took an almost immediate liking to old timey music. I was particularly struck by the autoharp and came away from that festival with a desire to get back out here to San Diego, get into my Dad's old 78s, and learn some of those old timey songs. I got to see Mike again at revisits to Newport, at the Ash Grove in L.A., and finally at San Diego's Sign of the Sun bookstore where the NLCR appeared. Mike also did a solo weekend and some of us got to play with him on stage. I went to those great UCLA Folk Festivals in 1963, '64, and '65, which encouraged me to want to do a festival here in San Diego that concentrated on the Roots aspect of the music. Some other folks had done a festival here in 1965 but it didn't get off the ground. So in 1967 we started the first festival out at San Diego State and it ran for 20 years. We took five years off and in 1994 we started them up again as the Adams Avenue Roots

Festivals. This one is number 10. Mike has been part of so many of them both as a solo act and with groups he's played with. Over the years he has helped us bring many other legendary old timey musicians to town, including Roscoe Holcomb; Cousin Emmy; the Balfa Brothers; Lily Mae Ledford; John Jackson; Tommy Jarrell; Martin, Bogan, and Armstrong; Olabelle Reed; and Elizabeth Cotton.



Mike Seeger's own artistry and knowledge have encouraged so many others to play old timey music whether for fun or for a career or, most likely, like me — a little of both. He has devoted his life to singing and playing old time music, mostly that of the rural South, on an array of instruments, including banjo, fiddle, jaw harp, harmonica, lap dulcimer, mandolin, guitar, and autoharp. He remains one of our great musical and cultural

resources and it's always a treat to have him as part of any festival.



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performing artists



Mary McCaslin

L O U R E M E M B E R S



I first saw Mary when she opened for Lightnin' Hopkins at La Mesa's old Bifrost Bridge coffee house in the late '60s and at the Heritage

Coffee House in Mission Beach not long after that. She did her first festival for me in 1969 at the third annual festival. Mary writes very intimate songs about people and things you think you know about. If you know Mary and some of what her life is about, they leave you in a slight daze with sparkles of insight. None of that matters, however, because the songs and the way she sings them are just so darned good. Mary has listened to a lot of old time roots music from Appalachian to cowboy ballads. A lot of what she's heard remains in her music.

Bob Webb

L O U R E M E M B E R S



I met Bob some time in the early '70s when he did some concerts at my store and then when he played solo at the San Diego Folk Festival and also

with a band of fellow L.A. compatriots called the True and Trembling String Band. For a time Bob toured and played lead guitar with Tom Waits, who got his start at the Heritage during the time Bob was owner.

Bob specializes in songs and sea shanties that 19th-century sailors sang on merchant sailing vessels. He is one of the few musicians anywhere who performs on the rare and difficult MacCann-system (duet) concertina. He also plays claw-hammer banjo and finger-style guitar. Bob is also an internationally recognized presenter of

Appalachian banjo tunes as well as songs of loggers, fishermen, and lumberjacks of the Pacific Northwest. Since moving to New England in 1981, he has fostered the preservation of traditional maritime music. This is Bob's first trip back to San Diego since the late '70s.

Faith Petric

L O U R E M E M B E R S



Faith was born in a log cabin in Idaho near the Clearwater River in 1915. Her father was a Methodist minister, and singing was part of her life at a

very early age. Somehow that led her to singing old cowboy songs, college glee club songs; songs from the Spanish Civil War during the 1930s; and radical, union, and topical songs of all kinds. When she retired from the 9-5 routine in 1970, she took up folk singing full time and she's still at it today, singing traditional, contemporary, topical, labor, radical, and outrageous songs—anything with a tune or special meaning that appeals.

Jon Adams

L O U R E M E M B E R S



Another great Central California musician, I first met Jon at Sweets Mill around 1967. Jon is one of those great song leaders

and finger-style guitarists who always has something new to play. He hasn't played a San Diego Festival since 1987 (when it was still at SDSU). These musicians move around a lot and I sort of lost track of Jon, but when Mark Spoelstra called, he remarked that he sometimes played music with Jon and did I want him too, and I certainly did.

The Incandescent String Trio

(Peter Feldmann, Richard Green, Mike Nadolson)



L O U R E M E M B E R S

I first met Peter at the Ash Grove in L.A. back in the 1960s and heard Richard Green with Bill Monroe. I also saw him with Jim Kveskin's Jug Band and I think with the Greenbriar Boys. Peter played many times at Roots Festivals with various groupings and did backup for Rose Maddox and Charlie Bailey.

This current group specializes in music from the Golden Age of Country Music (1922-1942). You'll hear fine and rare fiddle tunes, old time songs, novelty songs, and ballads culled from vintage 78 recordings of early country master musicians like the Leake County Revelers, Wade Mainer, the Carter Family, and Bill Monroe.

Richard Green, one of the great bluegrass fiddlers, is known for his collaboration with Bill Monroe and the Bluegrass boys. He has also worked with Jerry Garcia, Dave Grisman, and his own bands (Sea Train and the Grass Is Greener). Mike Nadolson, "The Mystery Flatpick Wizard of Riverside County," is a fine lead and rhythm guitarist as well as an excellent singer. He is also founder of Tricopolis Records. Peter Feldmann has been a musical mainstay in the Santa Barbara area for many years and founded the Santa Barbara Old Time Fiddler's Convention and its legendary Bluebird Cafe Music Club in the 1970s. Interestingly enough, Peter's group, the Scragg Family, played at the first concert I ever put on in San Diego before the first official Folk Festival in 1967. It's always a treat to have him back.

Bayou Seco

L O U R E M E M B E R S



Jeanie McLerie and Ken Keppler hail from Silver City, New Mexico, where they play a whole lot of music that

includes cajun, Norteño, northern New Mexico dance tunes, old time chicken scratch from southern Arizona, and even some zydeco and pre-Hollywood cowboy stuff. From the Mississippi River to the deserts of Arizona, Ken and Jeanie have been researching and playing the music of the Southwest for many years. They present an exciting and informative overview of these musics on diatonic accordion, fiddle, guitar, mandolin, banjo, and harmonica.

Jeanie played at the very first San Diego Folk Festival back in 1967 (as part of Sandy and Jeanie) and then again in the mid-1970s with her Delta sister Frannie Leopold. Bayou Seco played the first Adams Ave. Roots Festival (no. 21) back in 1994.

The Delta Sisters

L O U R E M E M B E R S



For the past 30 years, Frannie Leopold and Jeanie McLerie have been singing their special mix of mint-julep vocals and hot-pep-

pered dance music. Frannie is a musician and midwife in Mendocino, and Jeanie is a fiddle teacher for kids in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Frannie plays music up and down the West Coast (most notably in San Diego with Hank Bradley and Cathie Whitesides in the Balkan Cafe Orchestra). Jeanie plays mostly in the Southwest with husband Ken Keppler (in the Bayou Seco band) and with local traditional musicians.

Despite all the miles between them,

Frannie and Jeanie have continued to play and sing together. The last time was at the first Adams Avenue Roots Festival (no. 21) in 1974.

Frannie Leopold

L O U R E M E M B E R S

Frannie played with her Delta Sister Jeanie McLerie at the 11th and 21st festivals here in San Diego. She also played with the Balkan Café Orchestra at Festivals 21 through 28 and with Hank Bradley at Festival no. 20. Any festival Frannie is at with one group, she's likely to be part of two or three others. For instance, while she was here with the Balkan Café Orchestra, she also did sets with Mexican singer Cynthia Llanos. Making her home in Mendocino, Frannie stays active playing a wide range of Latino, cajun, jug band blues, and vintage swing music. Expect her to do a set with W.B. Reid as well as with the Delta Sisters.

Kenny Hall and the Long Haul Band

L O U R E M E M B E R S



I first saw Kenny with the old Sweets Mill Mountain Boys (Ron Hughey, Pete Everwine, and Frank Hicks) at a cabaret concert at the

Berkeley Folk Festival some time in the mid 1960s and again shortly after that at the Sweets Mill Festival (east of Fresno in the Sierras). He brought his unique old timey tater-bug mandolin and fiddle to the third San Diego Folk Festival (along with Fresno compatriots Jim Ringer and Ron Tinkler) and has played at most of them since. Kenny is a true California musical treasure. He must know a couple thousand songs. I've seen him so many times, yet he continues to surprise and amaze me. As a band musician (with the Sweets Mill String Band, his Long Haul Band, or any other combination), his mandolin is always a standout and his great old timey vocals a treat.

Larry Hanks

L O U R E M E M B E R S



Larry Hanks, singer, guitarist, and trumpist (Jew's harp), sings a wide variety of traditional American styles, including old time country

and cowboy songs, ballads and blues, and fiddle tunes played on the Jew's harp, plus children's songs and topical and contemporary songs by such well-known writers as Utah Phillips, Pete Seeger, and Woody Guthrie.

Since 1962 Hanks has performed up and down the West Coast and nationally folk clubs, coffeehouses, and festivals. Hanks sings goofy, ornery hoedown ditties; home-made laments; stark, lonesome ballads; and wry and angry topical songs about life, work, and politics.



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## performing artists

### Tracy Schwarz and Ginny Hawker

LOU REMEMBERS



I first saw Tracy when he replaced Tom Paley in the New Lost City Ramblers. I guess the first time was in about 1964 at San Diego's Sign of the Sun bookstore or maybe at the Ash Grove (the '60s were so busy for me musically, it's hard to put things in order). Tracy added a great fiddle, a great sense of humor, and a fabulous mountain tenor voice to the New Lost City Ramblers and just a touch of bluegrass (and, of course, cajun music) that they didn't have before. He met and started to perform and tour with Ginny Hawker in the late '80s. Ginny hails from southern Virginia where she grew up in a large musical family. At family gatherings she was exposed to early bluegrass, gospel songs, and the unaccompanied hymns of the primitive Baptist Church. I guess I first saw them together at a San Diego Folk Heritage concert some time in the early '90s and was struck with their vocal harmonies on the old time songs. Over the years Tracy has played at the Roots Festival several times, but this is Ginny's first appearance. A special treat for all of us.

### W.B. Reid and Bonnie Zahnow

LOU REMEMBERS



I've known W.B. since he first played a concert for me at the Folk Arts store back in August of 1973. He played his first festival in the spring of 1974 and has performed at quite a few since. The scope of his musical tastes and the kinds of music he plays

encompass ragtime blues, jug band music, vintage swing, Irish music, and a little bit of everything else old timey. Long time San Diego-area resident, W.B. has made his home in the Seattle area for the past 10 years or so, where he makes music with his partner Bonnie. Together they play fine old tunes and songs from Appalachia, Mexico, and points in between on fiddles, guitars, and banjos. Watch for them to join up with Mendocino's Frannie Leopold for some vintage black string band music.

### Dan Wheetman

Singer-songwriter Dan Wheetman returns to San Diego as musical director and cowriter of the upcoming roots musical *Fire on the Mountain*, premiering May 3 at the San Diego Rep. Wheetman, who has performed with John Denver, Itzhak Perlman, and Steve Martin, is an extraordinary multi-instrumentalist who has composed and/or directed numerous musical stage productions. No stranger to San Diego roots music fans, Wheetman has performed at past Roots Festivals with Marley's Ghost. Joining Wheetman at this year's festival will be the *Fire on the Mountain* band.

### Stu and Gloria Jamison

LOU REMEMBERS



Stu has been a part of San Diego's roots music scene off and on since the first festival was held in 1967. I think I first saw him at one of those Sign of the Sun concerts in the early '60s. He was always full of stories about old time banjo man Rufus Crisp whom Stu had recorded for the Library of Congress in the '40s. Stu told of his grandfather who carried his Bible and banjo from the Cumberland Gap in Tennessee to the Gansu Nan

Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture ("Gannan" for short), where he founded a mission for the Tibetans, the Han and Moslem Hue Chinese. Stu was born in the states and only returned after his father was driven out by warlords.

In 1939 Stu, encouraged by Margot and Pete Seeger, took up the banjo. Over the years he has concentrated on styles he learned from such old time banjo masters as Uncle Dave Macon, Murphy Gribble, Cousin Emmy, Rufus Crisp, and Clarence Ashley.

In 1987 and again in 1992 Stu and his wife, Gloria, were sent to China and Tibet by the Durfee Foundation, where they gave dozens of concerts and spent weeks gathering more than 100 hymns still in the oral tradition.

### Mimi Wright

LOU REMEMBERS

One of our very own song catchers here in San Diego is Mimi Wright, who sings old mountain songs mostly unaccompanied, sometimes with autoharp, and always with spirit and a touch of wonder. It there's an unusual variant of an old time song to be found, Mimi will find it. Always a bright moment at the Roots Festivals are her Rocking Chair Concerts.

### The Hangan Brothers

(Clabe Hangan, Rick Smith, Jim Shirey)



LOU REMEMBERS

The Hangan brothers, Clabe Hangan, Rick Smith, and Jim Shirey are three Southern California-based musicians who have been around the scene since the '60s. Clabe Hangan is from Arkansas and grew up with the barrel-house blues of his father, the gospel

influence of his mother, and influences like Leadbelly and Big Bill Broonzy. Clabe has been called "possibly the best unheralded blues singer of this generation." A former teacher and probation officer, Clabe has made a career of teaching the multicultural history of America through music. Harpist Rick Smith is from New York but has been living in California for nearly 30 years. He is equally at home with acoustic and hard-driving electric blues. Originally from Texas, Jim Shirey studied violin and piano from the age of seven, moving on to bass and guitar.

I first saw Clabe back in the '60s either at a Claremont Folk Festival or at the Golden Ring coffee house there. Later in the '70s, he played at the Heritage in Mission Beach and, still later during the '80s, at a folk music class Sam Hinton was teaching at Scripps. About that time he did a solo shot at the Folk Festival. If you haven't heard these guys, you're in for a treat.

### John Bosley

LOU REMEMBERS



John used to play regularly at the concert series we held at the old Folk Arts before moving to Adams Avenue in the early '70s. He wrote songs that sounded like old '30s pop tunes, with kind of a raggy guitar backing. He'd occasionally throw in an old time tune, so it always kept us song collectors wondering. John was from New York and wrote poetry along with his songs. As no one has an easy time making any kind of living from music, John got a job (outside of music), got married, and had kids, but he never threw away that guitar and occasionally we can talk him into revisiting those raggy old songs and some newer ones too. It's always a pleasure to have him at the Roots Festivals.

### The Stairwell Sisters

(Lisa Berman, Sue Sandlin, Martha Hawthorne, Stephanie Prausnitz, Evie Ladin)



The Stairwell Sisters bring together their love of old time country songs and rowdy fiddle tunes from the hotbed of traditional music, the hills of San Francisco. Energetic musicianship and tight vocal arrangements make for a kicking quintet that's wonderful for both listening and dancing. Influenced by such favorites as Hazel Dickens and Alice Gerrard, the Stanley Brothers, and Tommy Jarrell. The Stairwell Sisters, featuring Lisa Berman on dobro, Martha Hawthorne on bass, Evie Ladin on banjo, Stephanie Prausnitz on fiddle, and Sue Sandlin on guitar, bring both familiar and obscure songs to life.

### Curt Bouterse

LOU REMEMBERS



I met Curt in 1963 in an African history class at San Diego State. He was carrying an autoharp case and a shape note hymnal and looked like he might be interested in some of the kinds of music that I was. Shortly thereafter Curt and I, along with some other folks, founded the SDSU Organized Folksingers. Almost right away we talked about doing a festival there on campus. In 1967 we finally got around to it. Curt played at that very first festival and he's played at every one we've had since then. Old time Appalachian folksongs with fretless banjo, hammered dulcimer, autoharp, plucked dulcimer, and Vietnamese mouth harp (upon which he plays Southern mountain dance tunes) are his specialty.



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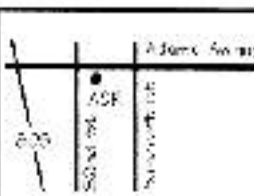
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# performing artists



## Mark Spoelstra

LOU REMEMBERS



I first saw Mark at a *Broadside* magazine hoot-enanny on one of my Newport Folk Festival trips sometime in the early 1960s (maybe it was 1965). He was

an important part of the New York City singer-songwriter scene. A confirmed pacifist and a conscientious objector to military service, his songs often reflected such themes. His debut, *Five And Twenty Questions*, featured 12 original songs and introduced his quiet, unassuming style. Later I met Mark a couple of times at the Sweets Mill Festival in the Sierras east of Fresno. Mark was doing alternate service and living in the Fresno area then. He came and played at the San Diego Folk Festival in the early '70s with a band called the Frontier Constabulary and then more or less dropped out of the music scene or at least the music scene I was aware of. This year my friend Patty Hall told me about his new CD (Mark's first recording in 20 years) and a renewed interest in performing at festivals. So here he is with 12-string guitar, a lot of new tunes and quite a few old ones, some duets with old Sweets Mill buddy Jon Adams, and a new outlook on playing music.

## Bryan Pickering



Canadian born, Bryan was raised on a small farm in Maple Ridge just east of Vancouver, where he had calves for pets. As a child he

often traveled during the summer through the blue Canadian Rockies to his dad's family farm in Alberta. It's no wonder he's a country boy.

He first picked up a guitar at age 11

and has been playing ever since. From the Yukon to Nashville, Bryan has been entertaining audiences for over 30 years. One of the highlights of his career was winning a Canada-wide talent search that brought him to Nashville to play at the Grand Ole Opry and to meet some of the great old stars like Roy Acuff.

When Bryan strolls on stage, folds up his white cane, sticks it in his back pocket, and straps on his guitar, you're in for a real treat.

## The Budapest Brothers

(E.Z. Mark, Lee Birch, Chuck Borsos)

LOU REMEMBERS



E.Z. and Lee have been around the scene at various Folk Festivals since the very early '70s and Chuck's been around for most of the

Roots Festivals. They could just as easily be the Zagreb Boys or the Warsaw Guys. I've heard them do Greek, French, and even an old timey tune or two. E.Z. plays old jazz and vaudeville novelty songs and Lee does Mexican and Cajun tunes. What we have here is three veteran old time music musicians who know a lot of good tunes, play a lot of instruments, and play them well. They are always good for a surprise.

## The Page Family

David Page Sr., model for this year's Roots Festival poster, formed the Siamsa Gael Ceili Band in Ireland with Tom Page in the '30s and brought the music with him to San Diego in the '70s. Before the elder Page passed away in 1987, he passed down the uilleann pipes to John Tuohy who currently performs with the Siamsa Gael Ceili Band. Music in the Page family runs deep. This year Page's legacy will be celebrated with music performed by

members of the Page family in a special festival appearance. Page family members include Maire Page on flute, David Page Jr. on percussion and drums, and Gregory Page on guitar and vocals. In addition, a segment from the mythological play *Aisling*, written by Patricia Page, will be performed.

## The New Lost Melody Boys

(John Wright, Paul Johnson, Dave Allen)

LOU REMEMBERS



I've known all these guys for a lot of years and for most of the past 10 years they've been part of the Roots Festivals. John Wright did old

time banjo workshops for me back in the early '80s. Dave Allen's fiddle and Paul Johnson's mandolin were part of other earlier bands, too. Banging and sawing, from backwoods songs to fiddle breakdowns, the Boys play in the grand tradition of such legendary old time groups as the Skillet Lickers, the Fruit Jar Drinkers, and the Delmore Brothers. As the New Lost Melody Boys, they are perhaps San Diego's premier vintage old timey string band.

## Tanya Rose

LOU REMEMBERS

I've known Tanya and her music since some time in the mid '60s when we actually played in a group together for a short time. Like so many musicians I know, Tanya continued to listen and to learn new songs and occasionally play in public. Her mixture of traditional Mexican folk and old time country songs has always been a treat. She has been at the Roots Festival the past few years as part of the Wayne Brandon-Clark Powell band and also recently did some solo stuff for us.

## Roy Ruiz Clayton

LOU REMEMBERS



Roy is a potter, an artist (he's done the Roots Festival poster drawing the last four or five years), a guitar picker, a songwriter, and a

singer. I first met Roy some 20 years ago when he wandered in Folk Arts Rare Records to inquire about playing some music for us. He's played a whole lot of times for us over the years and is one of those guys who writes songs with words you have to listen to. You won't be sorry.

## Connie Allen and Bill Dempsey

LOU REMEMBERS



Right here in our own area it's still possible to be taken with certain musicians who sound old timey but still refreshing and new. For

the past 21 years, Connie and Bill have found a common voice in traditional music. Connie's banjomer, a hybrid of an Appalachian dulcimer and banjo, adds a melodic accent to Bill's Carter-style flat picking. Connie writes songs with traditional roots that weave stories of the past with a fresh, witty perspective. Bill Dempsey began his career as a trombonist but became interested in folk music during the early '60s. It soon became clear to him that singing and playing guitar was what he wanted to do. Over the years Bill has continued to learn new instruments and new kinds of music while staying close to the folk and traditional music he loves. This is Bill and Connie's first appearance, and their dulcimer and guitar, plus old time banjo, on a wide range of original and traditional songs is a treat.

## New Smokey Mountain Boys

(Wayne Brandon, Clark Powell, Bryan Pickering, Doug McKee, Ed Douglas)

LOU REMEMBERS

I guess I met Clark Powell first, as he was one of the founding members of the San Diego State Organized Folksingers back around 1963. Clark and I even played music together some. Clark plays dobro, guitar, and five-string banjo. He knew Wayne, who is the western world's biggest Roy Acuff fan and sings Acuff songs about as well as anyone except for Roy himself. For a few years in the '60s, we made what we thought was some pretty good music and then ended up going our separate ways. Clark became a lead guitarist in a variety of country music bands, and Wayne became an elementary school principal. It was only when we started doing the Roots Festivals in the mid-'90s that we got back together somehow. For the past three or four years, other old friends from those '60s bands have come on board, but it's Wayne's Roy Acuff-sounding vocals and Clark's Bashful Brother Oswald-sounding dobro steel guitar that give this band its unique flavor. If you like the sound of Roy Acuff's band of the '30s and '40s, these guys are worth a listen.

## Tomcat Courtney

LOU REMEMBERS



I was doing a blues concert series at Folk Arts Rare Records back in the very early '70s when Tomcat walked into the shop and

asked if he could get up and do a song or two. He did, and we've been good friends ever since. Tom hails from Waco, Texas, and broke into the blues biz as part of a T-Bone Walker show

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performing artists

Saturday, April 26


	PARK STAGE	CHURCH SANCTUARY	CHURCH SOCIAL HALL	BEER GARDEN	34TH & ADAMS	HAWLEY & ADAMS	DIMILLE'S PARKING
11-11:45 am	Chris Stuart and BackCountry			Jim Earp	Tom Brosseau	John Bosley	New Lost Melody Boys
noon-12:45 pm	"Fire on the Mountain" cast from San Diego Rep	Los Californios	Mimi Wright	Steve White	Curt Bouterse	Stairwell Sisters	Tanya Rose
1-1:45 pm	Ginny Hawker and Tracy Schwarz	Faith Petric	Bayou Seco	7th Day Buskers	Larry Hanks	Jon Adams	Wayne Brandon, Clark Powell, Bryan Pickering, Doug McKee, Ed Douglas, Tanya Rose
2-2:45 pm	Scottsville Squirrel Barkers	Siamsa Gael Ceili Band	Stu and Gloria Jamison	Robin Henkel	Los Californios	Mark Spoelstra	Tomcat Courtney
3-3:45 pm	W.B. Reid and Bonnie Zahnow	Mary McCaslin	Stairwell Sisters (clog dancing)	San Diego Cajun Playboys	Delta Sisters	Bob Webb	New Lost Melody Boys
4-4:45 pm	Incandescent String Trio	Kenny Hall and the Long Haul Band	American Folk Singers	Chris Stuart and BackCountry	Bryan Pickering	7th Day Buskers	John Bosley
5-5:45 pm	Mike Seeger	Bob Webb	Curt Bouterse	Mary McCaslin	Steve White	Roy Ruiz Clayton	Bayou Seco
6-6:45 pm	Stairwell Sisters	Ginny Hawker and Tracy Schwarz	Connie Allen and Bill Dempsey	Tomcat Courtney	Jon Adams	Hangan Brothers	San Diego Cajun Playboys
7-7:45 pm	Larry Hanks	Mike Seeger	Faith Petric	Siamsa Gael Ceili Band	Mark Spoelstra	Incandescent String Trio	Los Californios
8-8:45 pm	Scottsville Squirrel Barkers	W.B. Reid and Bonnie Zahnow	Page Family	San Diego Cajun Playboys	Chris Stuart and BackCountry	Budapest Brothers	Kenny Hall and the Long Haul Band



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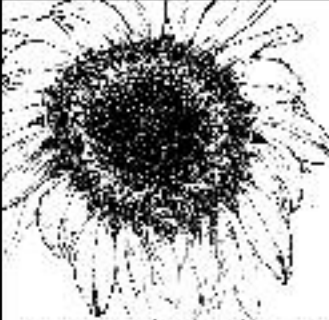
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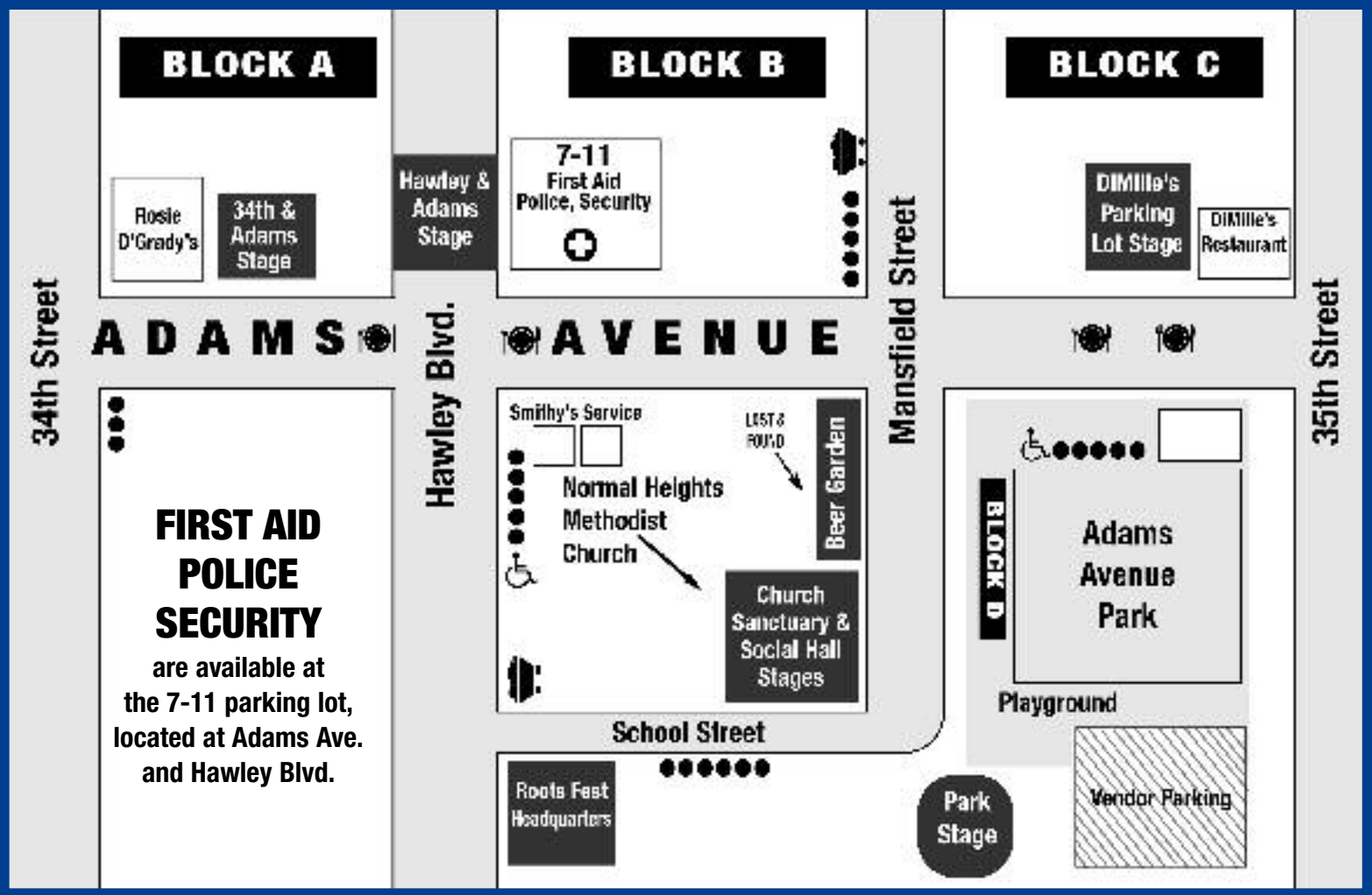
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performing artists

Sunday, April 27

	PARK STAGE	CHURCH SANCTUARY	CHURCH SOCIAL HALL	BEER GARDEN	34TH & ADAMS	HAWLEY & ADAMS	DIMILLE'S PARKING
11-11:45 am	New Lost Melody Boys			Sage Gentle-Wing	Tom Brosseau	Curt Bouterse	Connie Allen and Bill Dempsey
noon-12:45 pm	Mary McCaslin			Robin Henkel	American Folk Singers	Los Alacranes	Tanya Rose
1-1:45 pm	Frannie Leopold with W.B. Reid and Bonnie Zahnow		Mimi Wright	Hangan Brothers	Incandescent String Trio	John Bosley	Bryan Pickering
2-2:45 pm	Bayou Seco		Stu and Gloria Jamison	Budapest Brothers	Faith Petric	Kenny Hall and the Long Haul Band	Roy Ruiz Clayton
3-3:45 pm	Delta Sisters	Wayne Brandon, Clark Powell, Bryan Pickering, Doug McKee, Ed Douglas, Tanya Rose	Steve White	Los Alacranes	7th Day Buskers	Bob Webb	W.B. Reid and Bonnie Zahnow
4-4:45 pm	"Fire on the Mountain" cast from San Diego Rep	Ginny Hawker and Tracy Schwarz	Mimi Wright	Sage Gentle-Wing	Robin Henkel	Jon Adams	Connie Allen and Bill Dempsey
5-5:45 pm	Mike Seeger	Larry Hanks	Page Family	Los Alacranes	Mark Spoelstra	Wayne Brandon, Clark Powell, Bryan Pickering, Doug McKee, Ed Douglas, Tanya Rose	Jim Earp



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## performing artists

back in the '40s (he was a tap dancer). He first played with his old partner (Henry Ford Thompson) at the fifth San Diego Folk Festival in 1971 and at most of them since. Tom has been responsible for giving many young San Diego musicians a chance to play in his bands, and his style of Texas blues, with influences ranging from Lightnin' Hopkins to Muddy Waters and B.B. King to his original mentor T-Bone, continues to bring down the house.

### Tom Brosseau



The first thing you notice about Tom Brosseau is that incredible voice, which harks back to the classic bal-ladeers of the '30s and '40s.

Matched with his wistful guitar playing, it's an unbeatable combination.

Born on the day of America's bicentennial in Grand Forks, North Dakota, Brosseau began writing and singing at a very early age. His Grandmother, who was involved with several bluegrass associations, would take him to church basements and retirement homes and old dance halls to listen. One guy would stand up and yodel and another would play his jew's harp. The audience would clap.

Shortly thereafter, Brosseau began mixing the mediums and singing. He learned how to play a few chords on the guitar, then learned the harmonica. He knew at that age that he'd be doing what he's doing now.

### Los Californios

(Vykki Mende Gray, Janet Martini, Peter DuBois, David Swarens)



For over a decade, San Diego-based Los Californios has been researching and

interpreting the music of Spanish and Mexican California, focusing on the nineteenth century and from the days when the state was part of Spain and then Mexico. This sweet, melodic music was played for dancing and singing at the festive fandangos given by the Spanish and Mexican settlers or the Californios, who ran cattle on the huge ranchos during their heyday in the 1830s and 1840s. Working from primary sources, including Californio testimonials, travelers' accounts, and the early sound recordings of Spanish-speaking Californians made by Charles Fletcher Lummis almost a century ago, as well as secondary sources such as Bancroft's histories, they endeavor to recreate the sound of serenade and fandango from the days before California statehood.

### Jim Earp



Finger-style guitarist Jim Earp is a long time North Park resident. When Jim plays the guitar he makes it look so comfortable and easy because his

talent exceeds beyond all expectations. Jim can be found playing anywhere from Mama's Pies in Julian on Labor Day to playing hymns in his church. Playing his guitar in the style of folk, classical, jazz, Celtic, and New Age, this guy is really good at what he does and it shows. Jim's second CD was a winner in *Acoustic Guitar* magazines' Homegrown CD Awards 2000, and his Celtic and New Age-flavored solo instrumental guitar music has been featured in songbooks and CD compilations with such notable artists as ex-Wings guitarist Laurence Juber, Elton John band guitarist Davy Johnstone, and National Finger-style Champion Muriel Anderson. This is Jim's first appearance at the Roots festival.

### Steve White



Described as a one-man blues band, Steve White can do it all. Highly acclaimed music critic John

D'Agostino perhaps said it best: "Snapping twang, sliding bottleneck grease, and wringing beef-jerky riffs from his Taylor, singing with grit, groove, and grace. Chuffing on a braced harmonica and pounding time on a barbeque boom box with clog-clad feet. I recommend him to anyone who loves good music." Michael Kinsman in a *Union-Tribune* review said, "This local musician brandishes his guitar like a hoe as he digs into fertile Delta music with a classic blues intensity."

An amazing guitarist, he has also played the neck harp since his early days of music. Add to that a stereo-miked percussion instruments, consisting of tambourine and cowbell, contained in a mahogany wooden box, which he may soon be marketing as the "White Stone Box." White plays this box with his feet, wearing his trademark wooden clogs to achieve the best sound. All together, this rhythm-infused blues guitarist sings and blows his harp to create a sound that is uniquely Steve White.

### Robin Henkel



Robin Henkel's music ranges from primitive, Mississippi Delta blues and the urban Chicago sound to Texas-style western

swing and beyond. An amazing blues slide guitarist, Robin has been playing music since the '60s both as a solo act and as a contributing band member. With the Robin Henkel Band he uses a variety of back-up musicians whom he custom picks to fit each gig. He has opened for such top acts as Dizzie Gillespie, Bonnie Raitt, Arlo Guthrie, and Dave Mason. Henkel has also performed with Buddy Miles, John Hammond, Sha Na Na, and Big Jay McNeal.

A seasoned veteran and winner of Best Blues Album at the 2000 San Diego Music Awards, he has participated in numerous blues festivals. He is

also a guitar teacher at the legendary Blue Guitar, where he has been giving lessons to students who are eager to learn from the legend himself.

### Siamsa Gael Ceili Band

The Siamsa Gael Ceili Band (pronounced Sheem-sha Gale Kay-lee) presents the traditional melodies of Ireland played in the "old style."

The band's existence and main source of inspiration can be attributed to a Dublin man named Dave Page. An accomplished Irish piper, he played in the original Siamsa Gael Ceili Band during the early 1930s. He moved to San Diego in the mid-1970s where he met current band members John Tuohy (uilleann pipes), Ian Law (flute), and Judy Lipnick (fiddle), teaching them his music and eventually passing his pipes on to John. Dave Page's influence can be clearly heard in the band's repertoire and style.

### Sage Gentle-Wing




Sage Gentle-Wing is one of those rare multi-faceted artists who brings to the stage a subtle, yet powerful, presence of authenticity. He

will captivate you with his unique use of altered acoustic guitar tunings to create a large, full band sound. The deep resonance of the down-tuned bass often approximates the register of

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The 7th Day Buskers



The 7th Day Buskers are a five-piece acoustic roots band who have been seen by much of San Diego every Sunday morning at the Hillcrest Farmers Market. It was here that the band formed one by one after Shawn P. Rohlf opened up his banjo case and started busking (an old European word for performing on the street) several years ago. Their huge repertoire of original and traditional material covers a wide range of styles, including bluegrass, folk, country, Irish, and blues. Members of the Buskers include Robin Henkel on Dobro, Steve Peavey on mandolin and guitar, Don Hickox on fiddle, Ken Dow on bass, and Rohlf on banjo, guitar, harmonica, and vocals.

With the release of two CDs, *Long Live the Caboose* and *Born to Pick*, the Buskers can be seen performing in many venues from San Diego to Seattle.

Chris Stuart and BackCountry



Chris Stuart plays original music rooted in bluegrass traditions but rather than categorize his music, he refers to it as “just good music.” An admired songwriter, his songs have been recorded by Claire Lynch, Suzanne Thomas, Sally Jones, the Schankman Twins, and Tine Adair. Among his other accomplishments, Chris was awarded first place in both the bluegrass and gospel categories at the renowned Chris Austin Songwriting Contest at Merlefest. Recently Stuart

and his band BackCountry released their first CD, titled *Angels of Mineral Springs*, which has been praised by DJs around the country. Mike Fleischer at WDCB-FM in Glen Ellyn, Illinois calls the CD “...clearly the work of a talented, mature, and highly professional singer-songwriter-musician. The album itself is beautifully produced, well recorded, and well mastered.”

Rick Smith, who is from New York, is a harmonica player with both country and big city roots.

Los Alacranes



Los Alacranes are one San Diego's most beloved group of musicians and

the pride of San Diego's Mexican-American community. The music of these “musicos locos” has been described as sort of a cross between the humorous style of Lalo Guerero and the corridos and old timey norteño songs. “Chunky” Sanchez explains it as Southwest-Chicano-Mexican-Barrio folklore. His song about a chorizo sandwich is not to be believed.

Founded in 1977 by Ramon “Chunky” Sanchez and his brother Ricardo, Los Alacranes along with Don “Güero” Knapp and Miguel Lopez have inspired audiences for more than two decades. Following the success of their critically acclaimed CD, *Rising Souls*, released May 1999, Los Alacranes released *Picando*, originally recorded in 1989. This group always puts on a good show.

San Diego Cajun Playboys

The San Diego Cajun Playboys have been keeping Cajun French music

going strong in Southern California with a full repertoire of traditional Cajun language music.

Along with original members Jon Grant (accordion, fiddle) and Bill Riddell (guitar), the group features South Louisiana-born Joel Breau (accordion, fiddle) from Loreauville (pop. 860), and Greg Rasberry (triangle) from Iota and Crowley, Louisiana.

The American Folk Singers



Gregory Page and Tom Brosseau pay tribute to traditional American music with songs, ranging from Woody Guthrie to various kinds of country music and original tunes.

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# Canadian Songwriters Invade San Diego

Juno Award Winner

Bill Bourne



April 13 • 7:30pm • \$15

Critics have called him a national treasure, an iconoclast, and a master folk musician. Great grandson of Iceland's Poet Laureate Stefan G. Stefansson, **Bill Bourne** grew up in rural Alberta listening to his parents play **old time music**. During the 1980s, he did a three-year stint with Scotland's Tannahill Weavers. Out of that grew his relationship with Alan Macleod that led to the release of the **ground-breaking album** *Dance and Celebrate*, followed by *Moonlight Dancers*.

Bourne's endless drive to write and perform soon saw his return to familiar, and for him, fertile ground of musical autonomy. Always a fiercely independent artist, he continued to carve his own **distinctive musical niche**. His skills as a writer and a seemingly tireless touring performer caught the attention of Ragged Pup records, and the label and the artist seemed to fit. In early 1998 he joined the label's already strong roster of performing songwriters.

Juno Award Winner

Ray Bonneville



May 18 • 7:30pm • \$15

**Ray Bonneville** calls his music "a gumbo of American roots stylings," which involves laying down a surprisingly complex guitar groove, rock-solid footboard percussion, intricate but understated harmonica licks, and weathered vocals that are always cool but never aloof. He often streamlines his touring act, accompanying himself on guitar, rack harmonica, and footboard. This same spare quality applies to the **evocative songwriting** that won Bonneville a 1999 Juno Award, the Canadian equivalent of a Grammy, for his third album, *Gust of Wind* (Stony Plain/Warner).

Bonneville has been in demand as a live performer for three decades, playing not only clubs and concert halls, but also such prestigious festivals as New Orleans Jazz and Heritage, Montreal Jazz, Kerrville, Toronto Harbourfront, Ottawa Folk, Strawberry, Winnipeg, and Edmonton.

**Dark Thirty Productions** is proud to host an evening with Ray Bonneville in May, where you can hear his music and see him play within the comfort of Jimmy Duke's **intimate house concert venue**.

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of note



# Connie Allen and Bill Dempsey The Waves We Left Behind

by Phil Harmonic

Performing at this year's Roots Festival, Connie Allen and Bill Dempsey will sing songs from their new CD, *The Waves We Left Behind*, with a traditional folk sound and song selections that are quite fitting for the festival. Of the 14-song, plus a bonus song, CD, four are originals written by Allen and the remainder are traditional, spanning over 100 years of roots and popular music. The original songs are well-written stories done in that familiar style



heard around camp fires throughout the United States, usually at sing-a-longs where one person plays an old beat-up guitar, pumpin' out the chord changes. Both Allen and Dempsey sing well with ingratiating harmonies, but to me the most effective or *moving* pieces are the dulcimer and guitar instrumentals. Close your eyes and the pure roots sound created by the instrumentals proj-

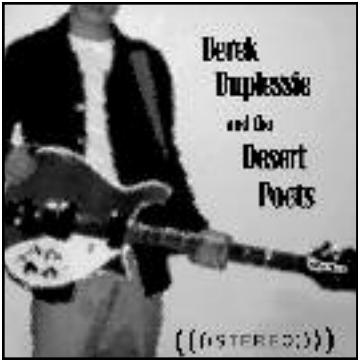
ect images of much slower times with no cell phones, cars, or TVs. Times we'll never see again. The opening song, "Midnight on the Water," written in 1976 by Benny Thomasson and John Croizat, says in words what the instruments imply about those days past, with Dempsey showing off his deep, full, and rich-toned voice. On "Oh, California," the melody of Stephen Foster's "Oh, Susannah" is used. Foster influenced the popular music scene more than traditional music although some of his songs still fall into the traditional category. Connie plays the eight-string dulcimer, banjomer, bass, and kazoo. Bill plays a Guild D40 guitar, banjo, and kazoo, and adds concertina and trombone on "Sailor Jack." From the 1909 "Indiana" to Bill Monroe's 1957 "Cowboy Waltz/Sitting Alone in the Midnight" to the bonus track's live version of Jesse Fuller's "San Francisco Bay Blues," Allen and Dempsey take you back to those days when, compared to today, time stood still. And unlike today, there and only there would their instrumental version of Weiss and Theile's "What a Wonderful World," ring true.



# Derek Duplessie and the Desert Poets Stereo

by Phil Harmonic


Derek Duplessie and the Desert Poets' new CD titled *Stereo* is refreshing and *pure in substance* compared to much of the over-produced material that surfaces today. This veteran songwriter, who hasn't even experienced high school yet, has written five original songs here that are as worthy as the other five by Steve Earle, Tom Petty, Neil Young, John Hiatt, and the Byrds' Gene Clark. Need I say more? The raw sound of Duplessie's harmonica against the well-knit sound of his top-notch band, the Desert Poets contrast to create a sound that is reminiscent of early Dylan. Duplessie, who is an excellent pedal steel player himself, has his teacher, Kevin Ryan on that instrument, showing off his tasteful licks and illustrating how *nuance* transforms a feel into the mood of the song. The rhythm section of Danny Cress on drums and Lyle Duplessie, Derek's Dad, on bass are as solid as they come. Derek's acoustic guitar work is a driving force, and his solid strumming heart beat becomes the life blood that flows through the songs. Background vocals by the elder Duplessie on the originals, and



Peter Bolland on the others, help to produce the full-textured sound. In this self-produced CD, young Duplessie kept the takes that allowed the essence to seep out, rendering an honest and authentic sound. My favorite song, "L.A. Standard Time," has *hit song* written all over it, and has all the ingredients deserving of radio play. A gifted songwriter and multi-instrumentalist, Duplessie also adds a 12-string Ricky electric guitar and a B-3 organ to round out his all-around talent. His time is not far off and when you experience a live performance, you'll see a seasoned, comfortable singer-songwriter with a highly likeable personality, along with a folksy wit and charisma to boot. My mind starts to see Derek as a young song-writing, instead of a story-telling, Will Rogers, whose genuine confidence is so real that you'd think this young professional must have some kind of *hotline* to the truth. *The Desert Poets play at Dizzy's on Sunday, April 13, 7:30pm.*

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# Recordially Yours



Lou Curtiss

## Lou's Anniversary Rant

This is a rant. On the 30th anniversary of my putting this festival together, I deserve a rant. This is the most unique musical event regularly held in this city. I'm not saying that because I put it together. I'm saying it because it's true. Over the years this festival has brought so many performers to San Diego who might (probably would) never have had the opportunity to come out this way. Artists such as Bill Monroe; Cousin Emmy; Frankie Armstrong; the Boys of the Lough; Sam and Kirk McGee; Sam Chatmon; Cliff Carlisle; the Hoosier Hot Shots; Hank Penny; Rose Maddox; Stan Hugill; the Balfa Brothers; Marin, Bogan, and Armstrong; Hank Thompson; Benny Thomasson; Silly Wizard; Robert Pete Williams; Santiago Jimenez; Patsy Montana; D.L. Menard and his Louisiana Aces; Lydia Mendoza; Ray and Ina Petterson; Joe and Rose Lee Maphis; Julia Mainer; and several hundred more.

We got a little money from an NEA grant once in the mid-1970s to pay some artists and to do some research on finding artists. Since then it's been a volunteer effort. Now I'm not griping because I don't get paid. Thirty festivals full of great music is a legacy I'm proud of and fortunate to have experienced. However it is depressing that we've applied for so many grants and we're always turned down. Other festivals with not nearly the track record we have get funding in other cities. Is it because this is San Diego? I've never quite figured it out. The city of San Diego is even talking about cutting off our TOT funding, which is going to make it even harder to continue to bring you the kind of festival we have in the past. Those of you who want to help might drop a line to our Adams Avenue-area council person, Toni Atkins, or to the mayor. Tell these people what this festival means and has meant to you over the years. I know that it means something because so many of you have told me over the years. Roots music, it seems, is always the least likely to be noticed in the grantsmanship business. At least for us it is. We must have written ten reams of grant applications and it's always the same two or three sentences, turning us down if they even bother to reply. It's depressing.

Walter Cronkite said at one of the Kennedy Center award ceremonies that "the arts outlive governments and societies that create them." So I guess this roots music will get by whether our Adams Avenue Roots Festival is large or small. However, it sure would be nice to put together one that has a decent budget, so we could bring everyone we wanted to.

Over the years this festival has brought you Roscoe Holcomb, Jean Ritchie, Sam Hinton, John Jackson, Wilbur Ball, Tommy Jarrell, Lily Mae Ledford, Doye O'Dell, the Strange Creek Singers, Jean Redpath, Harmonica Frank Floyd, Model T. Slim, Johnny Bond, Glenn Ohrlin, Charlie Bailey, Olabelle Reed, U Utah Phillips, the England Brothers, the Como Mississippi Fife and Drum Band, the Golden Eagles (New Orleans Indians), and so many more but . . . we didn't get, although we tried, E.C. and Orna Ball, Ray Whitley, Wilma Lee and Stony Cooper, Don Reno and Red Smiley, the Blue Sky Boys, Buddy Thomas, Seamus Ennis, Furry Lewis, Almeda Riddle, and more than I have space for here. The point is that we could have had many of these people had it not been for lack of funding and, like so many roots artists, most of them are no longer with us.

There are, however, still people out there whom we'd like to bring and should bring to San Diego. Roots music needs to be researched, collected, and heard. A festival like the Adams Avenue Roots Festival is essential to our city. We need your encouragement and support. We need each of you to tell someone else about us and bring them along next time.

All you politicians and granting agencies, remember that as old Pappy MacMichen said, "There's ten pair of overalls sold for each tuxedo suit." That's why I stick to roots music. Recordially, Lou Curtiss



by D. Dwight Worden

This year's Adam's Avenue Roots Festival offers up first-class bluegrass over its two day span, covering the weekend of April 26-27. Be sure to catch the following bluegrass performers, and don't overlook the other great musical performances that include folk, Irish, blues, Appalachian, cowboy tunes, and other great acoustic fare. And it's all free!! Schedules can be found on pages 10-11.

## The Long-Awaited Reunion of the Scottsville Squirrel Barkers

This is going to be a great reunion show! This historically important bluegrass band — also known as the Kentucky Mountain Boys — was formed in 1958 by patrons of a San Diego club, the Blue Guitar. Its proprietor, Ed Douglas, played bass in the founding line-up, alongside Larry Murray (guitar and vocals), Kenny Wertz (guitar and banjo), Gary Carr (guitar), and Chris Hillman (mandolin and vocals). The Barkers were featured on *Bluegrass Favorites*, which was distributed solely in local supermarkets. The quintet broke up soon after its release. Hillman teamed with Rex and Vern Gosdin in the Hillmen\*\* before rejoining Murray in the Green Grass Group. He later became a founding member of the Byrds, while Murray and Leadon were reunited in Hearts and Flowers. Wertz, meanwhile, resurfaced in Country Gazette and most recently in San Diego's award-winning bluegrass band Down the Road. This legendary group will be reunited at the Roots Festival this year and play a pre-festival show on Friday, April 25, at the Carlsbad Village Theater.

See page 2 for details.

## The Seventh Day Buskers

The Buskers are one of San Diego's favorite home-grown acoustic bands, dripping with talent and excitement, performing straight up bluegrass and more. Led by singer-songwriter Shawn Rohlf on guitar, vocals, and banjo, the group features Robin Henkel on dobro and vocals; Steve Peavey on mandolin, guitar, and vocals; Ken Dow on upright bass and vocals; and Don Hickox on lead fiddle and vocals, with Dwight Worden providing twin fiddle accompaniment on some tunes. The Buskers play every Sunday at the Hillcrest Farmers Market where they have developed a loyal following, and they regularly perform at other venues throughout San Diego. The Buskers have released two CDs, both of which were very well received. You won't want to miss their high-energy shows

## Chris Stuart and BackCountry

Great vocals and instrumentation highlight this band, with outstanding songwriting from founder and leader Chris Stuart. Originally from Jacksonville, Florida, Chris now lives in San Diego. In 1993 Chris won first place in both bluegrass and gospel at the Merlefest Chris Austin songwriting contest. His songs have been recorded by a number of top performers, including Claire Lynch ("Paul and Peter Walked," "God Spoke His Name," "Thibodeau"), Suzanne Thomas ("Dear Friends" and "Gentle Hearts"), Sally Jones ("Saro"), the Schankman Twins ("Thibodeau"), and Tina Adair ("These Tears"). The band also features Janet Beazley on banjo

and vocals, Dean Knight on vocals and bass, and Jeff Harvey on mandolin.

## OTHER BLUEGRASS NEWS AND TIDBITS

The Dowden Sisters of Ashville, North Carolina, graced San Diego with two concerts last month, the first sponsored by the San Diego Bluegrass Society and the second by the North County Bluegrass and Folk Club. Their gospel harmonies and charming shows were very well received.

Chris Stuart and BackCountry wowed the full-house monthly Fuddruckers-La Mesa event, sponsored by the SDBS, appearing as the featured band. If you don't have a copy of their new CD *Angels of Mineral Springs*, I highly recommend it.

**Summergrass Festival.** Mark your calendars for August 22-24. The first annual Summergrass San Diego Pickin' in Paradise Bluegrass Festival will be the first "real" bluegrass festival in San Diego, complete with camping, vendors, and tons of great bluegrass music. It will be held at the beautiful Steam Engine Museum and Park in Vista. Stay tuned for more details as the festival date approaches!

Need Info? Want to stay up to date on happenings in the local Bluegrass World? Read the *San Diego Troubadour*! Join the San Diego Bluegrass Society. For only \$15 per year, you receive flyers of all SDBS local jams, concerts, and events, and you get regular copies of *InTune* magazine by mail to keep you informed of all bluegrass events in the Southern California area. Call (858) 679-1225 or surf to <http://members.aol.com/intune-news/subsdbc.html> to join SDBS or for more information.

**\*\*NOTE:** The Hillmen were originally known as the Golden State Boys on *Cal's Corral*, a television show hosted by local car salesman Cal Worthington. It was only on the LP that they were called the Hillmen. (Lou Curtiss)




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ramblin'



# Hosing Down

by José Sinatra

“Do you know who I am?” It is perhaps the most pompous phrase in a celebrity’s vocabulary and one of the most insidiously potent. It is one of the most frequently used against the star-struck sensibilities of the malleable masses who continue to pray at the alter of fame. And one whose very beauty grows from its own audacity.

Now in its 50th decade, “Do you know who I am?” is just beginning to wear out its welcome.

Usually it’s not possible to offer a negative answer to it without a trace of embarrassment — a nervously sensitive, silent admission of cultural illiteracy.

The normal, positive response, however, is accompanied by a form of apology. And a sweet smile, with a fool’s heart swelling in joy at the encounter. Here the celebrity is immediately escorted to the front of the line. And most of the others present are happy to have given way to a real live famous person.

Honey, you won’t believe who I saw at Albertson’s today. Don friggin’ Johnson!

We saw Tommy Lee goin’ in, so we wanted to party with him. Not too long a wait. It was worth it. He’s totally cool!

“Do you know who I am?” It is my contention that the *true* star need *never* ask the question. The modern demigod should command recognition enough to make it unnecessary.

Admittedly, the question has its occasional value. Some years ago, after torching a neighborhood eyesore, I was about to be led away in handcuffs. Use of the six-word question set me free; soon I was signing autographs and the panties of several wives of enforcement officers. The arson case remains open to this day, sadly, though I’ve been able to buy up the adjacent lot and expand my empire. My neighbors know who I am, and they’re not complaining.

It’s just better not to *have* to ask. It’s wonderful when there’s no question as to your identity, when crowds silently part and that table in front is suddenly available for you and there’s not a trace of blood on the napkins. A healthy tip to the doorman here will ensure that your future visits remain similarly smooth and that your personage remain unquestioned.

I’ll not forget an incident in my pre-fame days. I was tearing tickets in the foyer of a movie palace, controlling an anxious line of patrons that stretched around the block. A



The inimitable Mr. Sinatra

well-known cult figure and his entourage shuffled in through the front door and claimed it was okay, wasn’t it, that they just go on in. I said it wasn’t. The figurehead chuckled and looked at his ladies before beading on my nose.

“Do you know who I am?” I would have traded anything, of course, to have been him at this moment in time but betted instead on my innocent hope of a future.

“I know who you *were*,” I told him. “You’ll have to buy a ticket. Join the line outside to your right, please; you’re holding this one up.”

And suddenly I was free, happy that he’d always know who I was, especially without my ever having had to ask him.



# Un-Do

by Paul Abbott

I’ve been playing guitar since I was nine years old, and by the time I was 14 it had become my main activity in life. This fact remained until I was 33. And in all the time between, there was hardly a day that went by when I didn’t pick up the instrument and consider how I could express myself through it. I was, if nothing else, persistent. That changed fairly abruptly about 18 months ago when I decided to jump full-bore into my mastering business and—almost simultaneously—commit myself to a serious yoga practice.

Anyone who has ever started a business knows that it can consume you. Even ones that have a fairly simple design (such as a mastering studio) are fraught with details: business plans, budgets, equipment purchasing (and its subsequent learning/maintaining), marketing, customer service, bills, and deadlines. Serious students of yoga, similarly, will tell you that it is an all-consuming path that can change your life. So, between those two rather seismic events, my focus on guitar got a bit blurry. I still practiced on a regular basis, but at times I felt I was maintaining a routine. Eventually, the combination of everything inched out guitar.

Recently, though, a guitar-related event was offered to me, so I dusted off my instrument and started plucking/hammering/strumming. I soon realized something interesting: not only had my acumen remained,



Paul Abbott

but I felt much more objective and focused. Prior to my hiatus, even though I was an accomplished instrumentalist, my perspective limited my approach to the instrument. And while consistent practice kept raising the bar for me as a player, I was unknowingly re-enforcing a number of less-than-stellar habits that I had convinced myself were part of my “style.” Some of these were minor, such as finger and hand position. Others were more extreme, like associating myself first and foremost as a guitarist.

Over the past 18 months I gained an insight about music I doubt I would have realized if I hadn’t taken a step back from the guitar to pursue other areas of life. When I consider the rush with which I always wanted to accomplish goals on the guitar, it makes me smile. And the more I understand, the more valuable my time away from the instrument has become.


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## Local Yokels



Gus Williker is out of town squirrel hunting this month. Local Yokels will be back in May



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# 'round about

## APRIL MUSIC CALENDAR

### tuesday • 1

**Mike Nadolson & Friends**, North County Bluegrass/Folk Club meeting, Round Table Pizza, Escondido.

**Kelly/Rob Carona**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

**Carolanne Matteson**, Metaphor Cafe, Escondido, 7-9pm.

### wednesday • 2

**Sue Palmer Trio**, Bayou Bar & Grill, 329 Market St., 6-8pm.

### thursday • 3

**Sue Palmer/Candy Kane**, Calypso Restaurant, Leucadia, 7:30-9:30pm.

**Taylor Street Band**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

### friday • 4

**Mark Jackson Band**, Bailey's Barbecue, Julian, 8-12pm.

**Buena Vista Social Club**, CA Center for the Arts, Escondido, 8pm.

**Sue Palmer & her Motel Swing Orchestra**, Croce's Top Hat, 9pm.

### saturday • 5

**Celia Lawley**, Exclusive Collections Gallery, Fashion Valley, 6:30-9pm.

**Steven Cox & Across the Room**, Cafe Crema, Pacific Beach, 7pm.

**Connie Allen/Bill Dempsey**, San Dieguito United Methodist Church, 170 Calle Magdalena, Encinitas, 7:30pm. Call 858/566-4040 for info.

**San Diego Songwriters Guild**, Lestats, 8:30pm.

**Celticana**, Patrick's, 13314 Poway Rd., Poway, 8:30pm.

**Yonder Mountain String Band**, Belly Up Tavern, Solana Beach, 9:15pm.

**Candy Kane/Blues Brokers**, Tio Leo's, Call for info.

**Taylor Street Band**, Hot Monkey Love Cafe. Call for info.

### sunday • 6

**Mark Jackson Band**, Cowabunga's, Imperial Beach Pier, 2-5pm.

### tuesday • 8

**Carolanne Matteson**, Metaphor Cafe, Escondido, 7-9pm.

**Bladerunners**, San Diego Bluegrass Society meeting, Fuddrucker's, La Mesa.

**Sue Palmer/Deejha Marie**, Lyceum Theater pre-show, 6-7pm.

### wednesday • 9

**Sue Palmer Trio**, Bayou Bar & Grill, 329 Market St., 6-8pm.

**Shambles/Rookie Card/Derek Duplessie**, M-Theory, South Park. Call for info.

### thursday • 10

**Sue Palmer/Candy Kane**, Calypso Restaurant, Leucadia, 7:30-9:30pm.

### friday • 11

**Peter, Paul & Mary**, CA Center for the Arts, Escondido, 8pm.

**Peter Bolland**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

**Taylor Street Band**, Cafe Alysa, Carlsbad.

### saturday • 12

**Mark Jackson Band**, Golden Goose Coffee House, 10001 Maine St., Lakeside, 8pm.

**Glenn Miller Orchestra**, East County Performing Arts Center, El Cajon.

**Brother**, Coach House, San Juan Capistrano, 8pm. Call 919/496-8930.

**Lisa Sanders** CD Release, Seaside Church, 1613 Lake Dr., Encinitas, 8pm.

### sunday • 13

**Derek Duplessie & the Desert Poets** CD Release, Dizzy's, 7:30pm.

**Bill Bourne**, Dark Thirty Productions, Lakeside. Call 619/443-9622 for reservations.

### tuesday • 15

**Carolanne Matteson**, Metaphor Cafe, Escondido, 7-9pm.

### wednesday • 16

**Lighthouse**, Golden Goose Coffee House, 100001 Maine St., Lakeside, 7pm.

**Chris Stuart & BackCountry**, Old Poway Park, 9-11am.

### friday • 18

**Chris Stuart & BackCountry**, Border's Books & Music, 668 Sixth Ave., San Diego, 8pm.

**Mark Erelli/Sage Gentle-Wing/Kris Delmhorst**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

**Mark Jackson Band**, Hookey's Irish Pub, 2955 Jamacha Rd., Rancho San Diego, 9pm.

### saturday • 19

**Great Big Sea**, Belly Up Tavern, Solana Beach, 8pm.

**Angela Correa**, Twiggs, 8pm.

**Steven Cox & Across the Room**, Coasters Saloon, Mission Beach, 10pm.

### thursday • 24

**Steven Cox & Across the Room**, Dream Street, Ocean Beach, 9:30pm.

### friday • 25

**Roots Festival Preview**, Lestats, 7-10pm.

**SCOTTSVILLE SQUIRREL BARKERS with CHRIS HILLMAN & HERB PEDERSEN**, Carlsbad Village Theater, 2822 State St., Calrsbad, 7:30pm. Email: sdtroubadour@yahoo.com.

**Chuck Schiele & the Mysterious Ways** CD Release, Hard Rock Cafe, La Jolla, 10pm.

### saturday • 26

**ADAMS AVE. ROOTS FESTIVAL**, Normal Heights, 10am-9pm.

**Jenn Lindsay/Taylor Street Band**, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

### sunday • 27

**ADAMS AVE. ROOTS FESTIVAL**, Normal Heights, 10am-6pm.

**The Hank Show** Cask & Cleaver, 3757 S. Mission Rd. Fallbrook, 6pm.

### monday • 28

**Bayou Brothers**, Patricks II, 9pm.

### wednesday • 30

**Sue PalmerTrio**, Bayou Bar & Grill, 329 Market St., 6-8pm.

## WEEKLY

### every sunday

**7th Day Buskers**, Hillcrest Farmer's Market/DMV parking lot, 10am-1pm.

**Steve White**, Elijah's, La Jolla, 11:30am.

**Celtic Ensemble**, Twiggs, 4pm.

**Extreme Country**, hosted by **Mike Vlack**, 7-10pm, KSON (97.3 FM).

**Jazz Roots**, hosted by **Lou Curtiss**, 8-10pm, KSDS (88.3 FM).

**The Bluegrass Special**, hosted by **Wayne Rice**, 10pm-midnight, KSON (97.3 FM).

### every monday

**Swing Dancing**, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 6-8pm.

**Tango Dancing**, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 8pm.

**Open Mic Night**, Lestats. Call 619/282-0437 for info.

### every tuesday

**Zydeco Tuesdays**, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 6:30pm.

### every wednesday

**Open Mic Night**, Twiggs. Sign-ups at 6:30pm.

**Open Mic Night**, Metaphor Cafe, Escondido, 8pm.

**Hatchet Brothers**, The Ould Sod, 9pm.

**Robin Henkel w/ Big Rig Deluxe**, California Club, 5522 El Cajon Blvd., 9pm,

**Skelpin'**, Dublin Square, 554 Fifth Ave., San Diego, 8:30pm.

### every thursday

**Robin Henkel**, Sassafras Bar & Grill, 3667 India St., 8pm.

**Hot Rod Lincoln**, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., Call for info.

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**mrkentman@cox.net**

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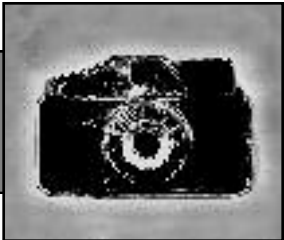
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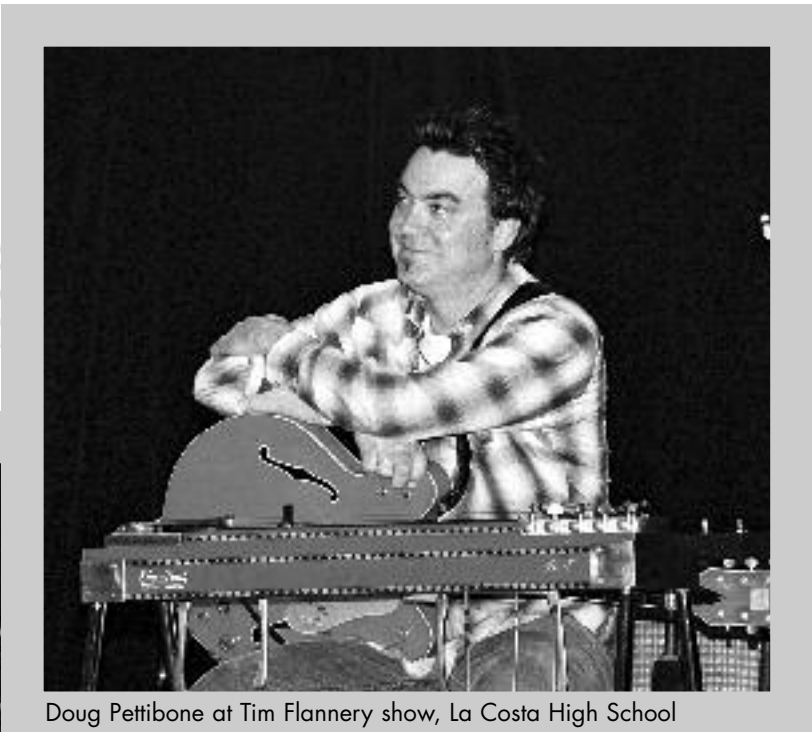
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Doug Pettibone at Tim Flannery show, La Costa High School



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Peter Bolland at Claire de Lune



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Jeanie McClerie
- Bob Webb
- Jon Adams
- Incandescent String Trio  
with Peter Feldmann,  
Richard Green, &  
Mike Nadolson
- Kenny Hall & the  
Long Haul Band
- Larry Hanks

- The Hangan Brothers
- Stu & Gloria Jamison
- Tracy Schwarz &  
Ginny Hawker
- The Delta Sisters  
with Frannie Leopold  
& Jeanie McClerie)
- Frannie Leopold
- W.B. Reid & Bonnie Zahnow
- Mark Spoelstra
- The Stairwell Sisters
- Bryan Pickering
- John Bosley
- Curt Bouterse
- Connie Allen & Bill Dempsey
- Tomcat Courtney
- Jim Earp
- Siamsa Gael Ceili Band

- The Page Family
- The Budapest Brothers
- Roy Ruiz Clayton
- Robin Henkel
- Tom Brosseau
- Los Californios
- John Wright & the New  
Lost Melody Boys
- New Smokey Mountain Boys  
with Wayne Brandon,  
Clark Powell, Bryan  
Pickering, Doug McKee, &  
Ed Douglas
- The 7th Day Buskers
- Tanya Rose
- The American Folk Singers  
with Tom Brosseau &  
Gregory Page
- Chris Stuart & BackCountry

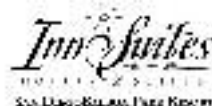
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