

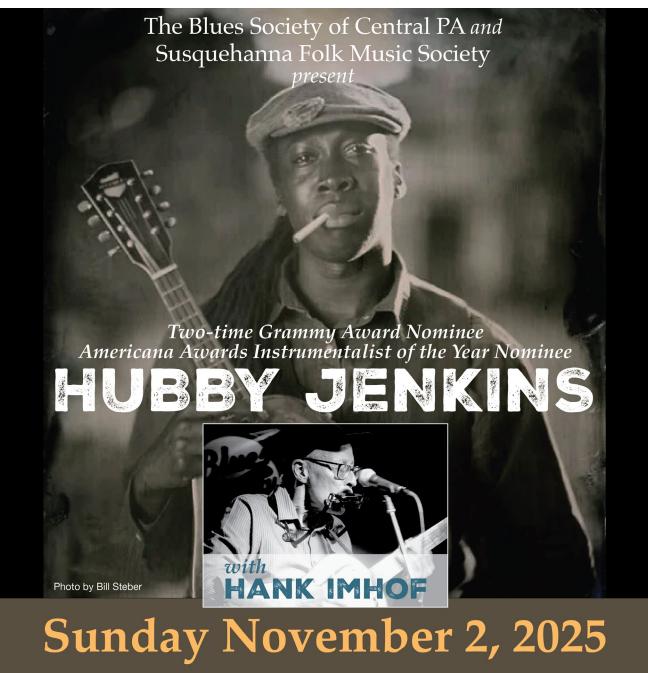
Blues Society of Central Pennsylvania www.bscpblues.com

LUES NEWS



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> **FREE for BSCP 2025 Members** \$20 at the Door



\$20 Advance | **\$25** Door

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Master Class



CHAMPIONS SPORTS BAR

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The Blues

Foundation

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From your President...

While preparing our Fall edition, I noticed that the BSCP Blues Book Club has taken center stage. There is the usual Blues Book Corner which currently features Bonnie Raitt: Just in the Nick of Time (p. 12). For the first time we are also doing two book reviews in response to authors' requests. Hank Imhof reviewed Blues Sensations, a novel, and I reviewed Baby Boomers, an autobiography written by a BSCP member who lives in Lancaster PA that is focused on the musical soundtrack of his life (p. 13).

In celebration of B. B. King, the BSCP Book Club discussed his autobiography (*Blues All Around Me*) at their September 15 meeting (p. 8). Later in the week, BSCP enjoyed birthday treats, free CDs, and lots of B. B. King songs at the Thursday Blues Jam (p. 9).

Working on this newsletter reminded me that the BSCP Blues Book Club started in September 2025 and now it is time to celebrate its 5th Anniversary!

The Book Club started during Covid when Zoom made it possible to get together to share the love of blues. When the pandemic was over, book club members continued with their monthly meetings. In addition to discussing books and related documentaries, YouTube videos, and movies, part of what makes the meetings so much fun is that the group is fortunate to have talented musicians (Hank Imhof, Carl Sherman, Tom Cook) who give lively renditions of songs mentioned in our current reading.

The Book Club has also have been able to have a number of in-person activities, such as a tour of Baltimore; birthday lunch with musician and author, Benny Turner; author Dave Evans lecture in Towson, MD; and a holiday party listening to vintage albums.

The monthly readings and the

contents of the BSCP Blues Book Club library are posted online at BSCPblues.com. Our library now has 54 separate titles, with multiple copies of some books. If you are interested in becoming a member or checking out a book, please email me.

When the book club's twelve members aren't reading, they can be frequently seen at the BSCP Shows. The next two coming up are the Blues Guitar show co-presented with the Susquehanna Folk Music Society featuring Hubby Jenkins with Hank Imhof Opening on November 2 (p. 6) and the annual Holiday Party featuring the Dave Keller Band on December 14 (p. 5).

I just learned that one of our board members died, John Rignani, who served as Chair of the Merchandise Committee since 2016. He managed the products at the BSCP table and online and was always willing to help in any way needed. With his business background, he was able to carry out the demands of the position in a dependable, innovative and detailed manner. He successfully expanded the items offered by BSCP and instituted and handled online sales, including those of memberships. His enthusiasm for the BSCP t-shirt and hat designs was contagious, as was



his love of blues music and the many shows at which he worked. John will be deeply missed.

Loving the Blues... Kathryn Gregoire bluesmunga@gmail.com

Mission Statement

The Blues Society of Central Pennsylvania is a non-profit corporation dedicated to the preservation, promotion, support and enjoyment of the truly original American art form, the blues.

In Memoriam



Johnny Tucker

October 17, 1945 - July 8, 2025

Johnny Tucker used to sit on the porch, listening to his father play the guitar for his mother. Johnny took a different route, though, and became a drummer, influenced by musicians like Lowell Fulson and James Browne. It was 1964 when he met Phillip Walker and started his globe-trotting, decades-long career as his drummer. Over the years Tucker got to play with greats like Johnny Otis, Screamin' Jay Hawkins, and his childhood inspiration, Lowell Fulson. Tucker always followed his heart in his music, and his unique sound will live on.



David "Automatic Slim" Carreon

June 19, 1960 - July 12, 2025

David "Automatic Slim" Carreon was a cornerstone of the Baltimore Blues scene for decades. After starting his band in 1988, Automatic Slim became a common sight at Fells Point venues like Cat's Eye Pub and Bertha's, as well as just about every other blues joint in the city. Automatic Slim joined other Baltimore blues stars for various jams and events as a talented and lovable guitarist. He took pride in making his community a more welcoming space and in helping to bring the blues to Baltimore.



Earl "The Pearl" Banks

March 17, 1936 - August 7, 2025

When Earl "The Pearl" Banks was 10 years old in Germantown, Tennessee, he would tell his mom he was spending the night at a friend's house while he snuck out to hear the blues a few miles away. It was this joint where he started playing piano, and in the mid-50s he picked up his first guitar. Banks taught himself to play, resulting in a unique sound from his habit of tuning a half-step up. He was a Beale Street standout in Memphis, playing with greats like Muddy Waters, Al Green, Etta James and Albert King in just about every spot the city had to offer.



David Earl

July 3, 1967 - September 9, 2025

Owner of Severn Records in Annapolis, Md, Severn received the Blues Foundation's, "Keeping the Blues Alive" Award in 2012. Over the years the Foundation has nominated Severn artists and albums for more than 35 awards. The first artists to sign with the label were Darrell Nulisch, Big Joe Maher, Benji Porecki and Steve Guyger. Later artists such as Mike Morgan, Sugar Ray Norcia, Lou Pride, Tad Robinson, The Fabulous Thunderbirds, The Nighthawks, Big Bill Morganfield and Bryan Lee recorded under Severn Records. Nulisch, Guyger, Norcia, Robinson and the Nighthawks have all performed for the BSCP over the years.

A Tribute to BSCP Board of Director John C. Rignani



This In Memoriam is based on an article written by Hannah Sherman after she interviewed board member John Rignani for the Blues News April-June 2023 issue.

3/03/56 - 9/25/25 Born in the Harrisburg area, John graduated from Cumberland Valley High School in the 70's. His first classic blues influences were Robert Johnson and John Lee Hooker. Memorable early concerts were in Tulsa, Oklahoma, with B. B. King in the 80's and Bonnie Raitt in the 90's. After moving back to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, John found BSCP in 2016 and considered it to be "a

most enjoyable group of people, many of

whom were talented musicians".

A BSCP newsletter that year advertised for help on their Merchandise Committee and he volunteered to be the chair. John loved his work: "What a great time this is to be BSCP Merch Chair as the Society celebrates its 25th year of existence in 2023!"

John was a good fit for the Merchandise chair as he had worked in purchasing for 30 years. He very ably took care of business at the BSCP merchandise table at our shows and several local festivals, often assisted by his life-time friend, Kent Seidel, who also generously volunteered his time and skills. Hannah noted that John's favorite thing about the BSCP, as she reported hearing him say repeatedly, is the people. "They're a fun bunch and I like hanging out with them."

"People don't know a lot about me but the most important thing is that I'm a grandfather twice: two boys, one 13 and one 4. We enjoy going to baseball games, movies and playing catch. It's cool, I like it." - John Rignani



BSCP Christmas Party 2025

By Kathryn Gregoire



Get ready for a band that will have you dancing on the first song. energetic singer/songwriter/ guitarist Dave Keller has been performing music he loves, Deep Blues and Soul, for over thirty years. He grew up in Worcester, Mass, west of Boston with parents who loved music. He

started out briefly on the violin, switched to piano early on, and then settled on the guitar at age 16. In college he was introduced to the blues through a book about Jimi Hendrix's life. He took a deep dive into the blues world under the guidance of his guitar teacher, Jon Geiger, listening to B.B. King, Eric Clapton, Albert King, Magic Sam, Otis Rush, Son House, Blind Willie McTell, Ronnie Earl, and Bukka White. In his 20's, he wouldn't listen to anything if it wasn't blues.

Mentored by Deep Soul/Blues singer Mighty Sam McClain from 1998-2015, Dave Keller has also learned from playing with such blues legends as Mississippi Soul Master Johnny Rawls (2010-2024), Robert Wood (2000), and Fontella Bass (1998). He recorded with Al Green's original Hi Rhythm Section (2013) and sung and co-wrote on Ronnie Earl's Blues Music Award-nominated album, *Living In The Light* (2010). He was a Blues Blast Music Award nominee for Best Male Artist in 2021 and was the winner of the International Blues Challenge (IBC) for Best Self-Produced Album in 2012. Keller is currently working with Johnny Rawls to release a new album in 2026.

Since 1998, the Dave Keller Band has produced 10 albums, the most recent being Dave Keller: It's Time To Shine in 2023, earning three Blues Music Award nominations for Best Soul Blues Album in 2014, 2019, and 2022 and three Blues Blast Music Award nominations for Best Soul Blues Album in 2017, 2019, and 2021. Downbeat included the Dave Keller Band for Best Albums of the year in 2017, 2019, and 2023. Plans are underway for the release of a new album, with an album release tour schedule to

begin October 19.

Keller has extensively toured throughout the United States and Europe from his home base in Montpelier, VT. With an expanded international fan base, he earned a full page profile in Rolling Stone in France and a glowing article in Music Republic Magazine in the UK, among numerous other national and international publications.

Joining Dave Keller on stage at Hummelstown Fire Department on Sunday, December 14 at 2 pm, will be Antar Goodwin (Philadelphia, PA) on bass guitar and Jay Gleason (Burlington, VT) on drums.



Harmonica Highway Introduction to the Harmonica

By Lewis on the Loose



A harmonica is a small, hand-held, free-reed wind instrument that produces sound when air passes through the reed channels singularly or in groups. The instrument has a rectangular shape

and is composed of, from the inside out, a comb, which divides and creates the reed channels for note tones, reed plates, top and bottom and cover plates, all held together with small nails or screws. The shape has been modified over the years to accommodate the needs of players but has remained in the traditional form.

The comb has been traditionally fabricated from wood. In the case of the Hohner Marine Band, it is seasoned and sealed pear wood. Combs can be made of steel and aluminum. Additionally, plastics

and composition materials of all types make up a large part of today's harmonica comb fabrication. The comb starts as a blank rectangle and is then cut into channels, spaces, much like a hair comb.

Many harmonicas have a single row of channels such as the 10 hole diatonic, the standard blues music harp. The chromatic harmonica has a double row of holes up to 16 and includes a mechanical slide to accommodate another set of reed plates for full chromatic scale layout. Other types of the instrument have reed channels in an over-under configuration which provides a tremolo or chording effect from multiple reeds played at one time.

The reed plates "sandwich" the comb top and bottom. These plates have traditionally been made of brass alloy. Today reeds and plates are also made of steel and an assortment of non-ferrous metal alloys. The flat reed plate has a channel slot cut through it to correspond

with the comb channels. This slot is sized in length to have a reed of similar length centered within and having one end riveted to the plate. These channels are sized by length, bass on left being the longest and the far right treble note being the shortest, to provide the correct note tone as tuned.

Each plate of reeds is tuned to produce specific notes on a scale. The top reed plate responds to the player's exhale or blowing. The bottom plate reeds respond to an inhale or breath draw. This whole assembly is covered with a top and bottom cover plate. Traditionally plated steel sheets are cut and contoured to provide amplification in the back and an embouchure for the mouth in the front. Harmonica models, while similar, vary in construction and performance. Players choose the model that works best for their playing style.

Blues Guitar Show & Master Class: Hubby Jenkins

By Kathryn Gregoire | Photos by Horatio Baltz & Eric Imhof



New York City native Hubby Jenkins is a talented multi-instrumentalist (banio, guitar, mandolin, bones, bass guitar, saxophone, fiddle, piano) who endeavors to share his love and knowledge of oldtime American music, such as country blues, early jazz, gospel spirituals, rag time, fiddle and banjo, and pop songs from the 20s. He grew up playing music, starting with the saxophone. In high school Hubby listened to Hendrix, The Doors, Zeppelin, and Bob Dylan, which led him to country blues and folk music. Getting into Dave Van Ronk, Skip James and Bukka White inspired him to get his first guitar and learn about country blues.

Jenkins was astonished to discover that the banjo was originally a Black instrument which opened his mind to a lot of musical and historical ideas. Jenkins considers it to be extremely important to provide a space where people can learn about Black history and music. Jenkins developed his guitar and vocal craft on the sidewalks and subway platforms of New York City. He took his show on the road, playing the streets, coffee shops, bars, and house parties of cities around the U.S.

After years of busking around the country and making a name for himself, Hubby became acquainted with the Carolina Chocolate Drops. He was an integral part of the Grammy award winning Carolina Chocolate Drops (2010 - 2016), as well as a member of Rhiannon Giddens band. The two bands played a major role in the revival of Black string band tradition He continues to study and perform oldtime American music and history through his dynamic solo performances. Jenkins was nominated for Instrumentalist of the Year at the 2015 Americana Awards.[9] He has produced two albums: Hubby Jenkins (2016) and The Fourth Day (2020).

Jenkins describes his tagline, "I'm Hubby Jenkins from Brooklyn, New York, and I play old-time music and talk about Black people. And I like to think I deliver on that promise. I never make setlists, so I don't always know what will happen at a show, but that's generally what to expect. I'm a big fan of medleys and audience participation, so it should be a good time."

Included in the ticket, Hubby will be giving a master class following the show titled Blind Willie Johnson 101 (Intermediate level). Blind Willie Johnson left behind records whose impact and influence are immeasurable. This class will break down his slide techniques and some of his most iconic songs.

More information about Jenkins is available at https://www.hubbyjenkins.com. You can follow him on Instagram and find his music on major streaming platforms, including Bandcamp, Spotify, Apple Music, and Amazon Music.

Opening Act: Hank Imhof



Hummelstown PA native, Hank Imhof, has been playing and singing music locally for decades. He usually performs as a solo acoustic artist, covering an array of different genres. He feels at home with the blues, referring to himself as an interpreter of the blues and the music he loves. His skills allow him to also arrange folk, gospel, Americana, and other classics along with the blues to uniquely fit his voice and musicianship.

Imhof started playing around 1964 with a Play Along with the Ventures record. He first listened to the Beatles, Ventures, Stones and Motown music, then Cream, Led Zeppelin, followed by Ry Cooder, Taj Mahal, Bonnie Raitt, Chris Smither and David Bromberg. Then he flipped the switch into Robert Johnson, Muddy Waters, Howlin

Wolf and Mississippi John Hurt. At the same time Hendrix, Dylan, Buffalo Springfield and Neil Young were big influences. Miles and Monk were always in the background.

Imhof considers himself to be very fortunate to have worked for WITF from 1969 to 1973 filming many incredible musicians including Phil Ochs, John Mayall, Country Joe and the Fish, Dave Van Ronk and many more. He still listens to all of the previously mentioned artists and keeps finding new and old voices to be amazed and inspired by, including Hubby Jenkins. The Playing For Change organization has some of his favorite music happening.

Like many musicians he stepped back during his years of raising a family and working full-time in construction and metal work. Since retiring in 2013, he has played at farmers markets, coffee houses, bars, restaurants, and vineyards. He has been a member of the Susquehanna Folk Music Society since 2000 and did sound for them from 2012 through the pandemic. For a couple of years he played a mix of Old Tyme, Bluegrass and Folk Music with the Rough Edges String Band. He also played up-right bass for a brief while with the Sand Hill Singers, a folk group out of Hummelstown.

Imhof then slightly shifted his focus to include The Blues Society of Central PA where he gets the biggest part of his inspiration from The Blues Society Book Club. He doesn't look to play out on a regular basis anymore but loves sitting and just practicing. He finds music to be very healing after experiencing throat and emergency brain surgeries. Being able to enjoy practicing and learning new music is a source of inspiration to work hard to maintain his current good health.

To play traditional blues and folk music, Imhof incorporates guitar, resonator, banjo, and harmonica in his performances to provide an interesting listening experience for audiences. He mingles finger-style, flat-picking, and slide playing his 1917 Washburn model parlor guitar, a 1930 National Triolian, a 1934 Gibson L 50 round hole archtop, a 2014 National Reso-Rocket resonator and a 2014 Huss and Dalton Crossroads custom. He also has a Bart Reiter open back banjo with a goatskin head.

Like most of you reading this, Hank Imhof just really enjoys music. As he says, "It's that simple."

In Case You Missed It!

East Petersburg Blues Festival

Photos by Ken Rimondi



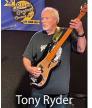




Mississippi Rail Road

Photos by Kathryn Gregoire





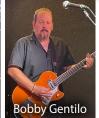




















BSCP Fall Show

Photos by Kathryn Gregoire and Kevin Miskelly























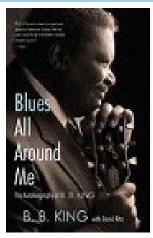






BLUES BOOK CORNER

By Kathryn Gregoire



As part of the 100 year celebration, the BSCP Blues Book Club discussed the autobiography of B. B. King, *Blues All Around Me*, for their September 15 meeting and listened to "Sweet Little Angel" and "Every Day I Got The Blues" performed by member Hank Imhof. Everyone really enjoyed the book. The co-author, David Ritz, spent several months traveling with B. B. King interviewing him daily. He was gifted at ensuring that the book was written in King's voice, so it is very engaging, informative, and readable, capturing the very essence of B. B. King. The Book Club members highly recommend the book.

Blues All Around Me: The Autobiography of B. B. King

B. B. King, who was born in the great Mississippi Delta on September 16, 1925, on the bank of Blue Lake, between Indianola and Greenwood, near the tiny villages of Itta Bena and Berclair.

His daddy, Albert Lee King, named him Riley B. to honor Albert's deceased brother, Riley, and also the plantation owner, Jim O'Reilly, who helped him find a midwife for the birth. The middle name was simply the letter with no known meaning behind it. King acquired the nickname "B. B." standing for "Blues Boy" which he earned while he was working in his younger years as a disc jockey in Memphis, TN.

King was a hard-working man, first while picking cotton and driving tractors and later as a musician on the road an average of 340 days of the year. His tenacity was both his gift and his curse as he financially cared for his wives and his many children and grandchildren, paying for at least 15 college educations, but he wasn't able to spend much inperson time with them. With a passion for learning,

he studied voraciously while on the road and even earned a pilot's license.

With a deceased mother, absent father, a Southern rural background, a limited grade school education and a lack of financial acumen combined with an environment of deep prejudice, B. B. King had a lot of challenges and obstacles in his life which he faced with determination and fortitude. His days were focused on music and his guitar, "Lucille". If he wasn't playing, he was listening to recorded or live music or reading about it. He highly regarded all kinds of music and was frustrated that the blues wasn't given the respect it warranted. He remained true to his rhythm and blues style throughout his career and accumulated an extensive discography.

King received numerous awards, among them 7 Grammies, 3 Lifetime Achievement Awards, 4 honorary Doctorates, 4 Honorariums (including the 1990 Presidential Medal of the Arts), 5 Blues Foundation awards, and 4 Hall of Fame awards. He died May 14, 2015, from a series of small strokes.

Mud Morganfield Releases New Album

By Dr. Wesley Britton



Deep Mud *Mud Morganfield* (Nola Blue Records)

I suspect most members of the Blues Society know full well Mud Morganfield is Muddy Water's legitimate son. Many of you likely have enjoyed his albums from *Son of a Seventh Son* to his classic 2014 collaboration with singer/ harpist, Kim Wilson, *For Pops.* Kim, Mud, and I will all tell you *For Pops* remains the finest Muddy Waters tribute yet recorded.

Now, Mud offers *Deep Mud* from our friends at Nola Blue Records, an energetic wide-ranging

panorama of the many faces of The Blues, all built on a seriously tight Chicago big band. The set kicks off with a party ("Bring Me My Whiskey") which sets the stage for ballads, stompers, shuffles, and ends with the Gospel-flavored, "A Dream Walking," a soulful tribute to Mud's Mother.

The first single from *Deep Mud* is the live horn-driven "She's Getting Her Groove On," only one of many statements on unhappy relationships. As Mud told me in a recent interview, the Blues is all about Women, the male need for them, the male frustration with dealing with them, all the things men will do for love. Mud isn't alone proclaiming the Blues is all about women.

Deep Mud was produced and arranged by harmonica ace Studebaker John, and appropriately recorded at JoyRide Studios in Chicago. Mud wrote 12 of the tracks and two are reworkings of classic Chess-era Muddy Waters numbers. In addition to Morganfield and John, the stand-out musicians include guitarists Rick Kreher and Mike Wheeler, drummer Melvin "Pooky Styx" Carlisle, bassist E. G. McDaniel, and keyboard masters Sumito Ariyo Ariyoshi and Roosevelt Purifoy. Adding texture and harmony are backing vocalists Felicia Collins, Kirsten Lowe, Jacole Avent, and Demetrias M. Hall. Give them all a deep muddy bow...

You can hear a generous sampling of the album on the Sept. 13 interview Wes Britton had with Mud on "Flashback with Wes Britton.":

https://www.artistfirst.com/flashback.htm

If you're into the Blues, all roads in 2025 lead to and through *Deep Mud*. Thank Sallie at Nola Blue for giving us Mud's latest-sure to be more.

Dr. Wesley Britton, Host Artist first flashback with Wes Britton

https://www.artistfirst.com/flashback.htm

Wes Britton's spywisesecretdossier.com espionage files:

 $\underline{https://www.spywisesecretdossier.com/}$

The "Flashback with Wes Britton" Facebook page:

https://m.facebook.com/

groups/1560816671426189/?multi_



BSCP Jam Celebrates B. B. King's 100th Birthday

Thank you to everyone for participating in the celebration of B. B. King's 100th birthday at the Thursday Night Blues Jam at Champions. The desserts were sweet and bountiful, the audience was enthusiastic, and the music was exceptional with lots of interpretations of classic songs associated with B.B. King.





























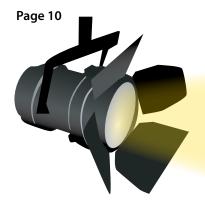






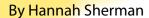






In the Spotlight... Kenny Swartz







Growing up, Kenny was one of three adopted children. Kenny was the only one with an interest in music. When he was 7-8 years old, his grandmother took him to Troup Music Store and he got his first guitar, a Harmony Bobkat. After practicing, he played for his family. His mom and grandmother were encouraging, but his grandfather said, "I think it could have been better." His first public performance was in 3rd grade playing a picnic. He learned to read music while playing his grandfather's ornate silver trumpet in elementary school. Later, he met Dizzy Gillespie at the Chicago airport. Kenny's bus had a tape of "Bird and Diz" stuck in the player so it was the only thing he could listen to. He told Dizzy about playing the trumpet and Dizzy said, "Trumpet - that's a tough one."

After high school, Kenny wanted to study photography and went to Rochester Institute of Technology. He took summer classes and never thought of being a musician. He says, "Music happened by accident." He went to HACC for two years and then wanting to leave the area, he drove his '68 Buick to Santa Barbara in December '82 and enrolled at Books Institute of Photography. He wanted to start playing guitar again but everyone told him, "You're too old!" so he gathered his courage at the ripe old age of 20 and went to a guitar shop, said "Hi" to the first guy he saw and found out it was Joe Walsh. He bought an old beat-up Gibson SG-62. He became friends and roommate with the guy who worked there who then got a gig working a Clapton tour and Kenny hooked up with them in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, going to rehearsals and hanging out in the hotels.

Kenny has been here and there and just about everywhere. He took guitar lessons in Harrisburg, lived in New York City working for photographers, saw Les Paul a couple of times and moved back to Santa Barbara doing odd jobs and seeing bands. Living in his '68 bus, he eventually had a full-time job, learning music and "living by the sun." Through a friend, he was able to use the dark room at college. He made friends from all over the country. He ended up in New Orleans and worked at a health food store. Kenny has lived between New Orleans and Pennsylvania for guite a while now. In the '90's he was asked to play in New Cumberland at a coffee house (The Wire) and opened for a folk singer from Michigan. He also opened for Toad the Wet Sprocket in Santa Barbara. He would visit New Orleans and stay with friends.

Something I've noticed speaking to Kenny – he likes to travel. He must. Something people may not know about him: A few years back he rode 250 miles from Harrisburg to Ocean City, MD on his bicycle. He did it in two days.

Kenny was one of the original Lochiel jammers. He remembers Gary Harrington and Mitch Ivanoff would take care of him and let him do a solo set because he played a different kind of blues.

Kenny recalls that the picture of him sitting down playing his Fender Strat was taken by his friend from high school. He describes it as a blues society story from a night at the 40 & 8. "I was adopted. I had found my biological family a few years earlier and my biological mom and my brother had come that night, the two of them meeting for the first time. My friend from high school and his wife and kids also came that night. I was worried that my set might not go well so I asked Gary to help me out to make sure that I got a good set. I looked for Lee who happened to play the Hammond Organ before my set and asked if he could play my set and he said that he had to leave to get up early in the morning for work. When I told him my situation of having family and everybody there he said he would stay and that I should just make sure I play something easy that everyone could follow. We really tore it up. He helped a lot and made me look really good. I remember that many people danced and the room really lit up. It was a magic moment that was great to share with my family and I owe it all to my friends from the blues society who helped me out."

Kenny's influences have been Mississippi John Hurt and Rev. Gary Davis, Sleepy John Estes, Mance Lipscomb, Ry Cooder, Blind Blake and The Beatles, particularly John Lennon. Seeing John Mooney he says, "I was dumbfounded. This guy was the best I had ever heard." Kenny has played with Anders Osborne and sat in at Jazz Fest. He has also played and recorded with one of my favorites, Roberto Luti. His discography includes the Adelphi release "Smile Away the Blues", also "Kitchen Music" with Roberto Luti, "Bath Tub Blues" and his Ken Swartz and the Palace of Sin releases "When the Roots Hit the Fan" and "While I Was Waiting." There are many YouTube videos so check them out!

Kenny likes that people who are interested in the blues and learning more about the blues come to the jam. He notes, "It's all about listening. Could be a little thing but the little things add up. Maybe you can spark that in somebody."

Marianna Schaffer: Ken brings a unique New Orleans flavor to the BSCP jam. Playing a set with him challenges me musically, and I like that

Gary 'Rocky' Rothrock: Ken's music is heavily influenced by the years he spent in New Orleans and reflects old traditional blues and jazz roots. A highly skilled musician, he is adept at complex chord changes. My favorite Ken Swartz CD is While I Was Waitin which he recorded in NOLA with The Palace of Sin.

Karen Issacson: After missing out for years from Ken's talents since my main interest in high school was horses, I was fortunate to travel to his adopted home in New Orleans a few years back and WHAT A TREAT! At our high school reunion Kenny encouraged me to check out the music scene where he lived and visit his world which was just plain lots of fun. Sure hope to get back there again. Thanks Ken for turning me on to your cool town. Always great to hear you play wherever!





MEET YOUR BOARD MEMBER: Savannah Graybill

by Hannah Sherman

That connection comes from interning with Sallie Bengtson of Nola Blue Records who is another BSCP board member.

Other volunteer experiences include being on the Amelia Givin Library's Teen Advisory Board, working at Rhodes Grove Camp in the 24/7 Leadership Program, helping at the Christmas Burns Red Concert and the Launch Music Conference and Festival. In addition to interning at Nola Blue Records she also interned with the Stillflow Band where her duties at both included researching bands, finding and typing lyrics, researching and applying for festivals and contacting artists and venues among other duties.

Considering her age, Savannah has worked as a package handler and product splitter at distribution centers, a receptionist and chiropractic assistant, a camp cabin leader and support staff, and a grill and ice cream attendant. Savannah just graduated from H.A.C.C. with a degree in Music Business and plans to go to Albright College to further her education. She would eventually like to work as a personal manager, talent manager and/or booking agent. She also works part-time at a coffee shop and likes to volunteer and still works occasionally with Sallie. While currently focusing on work and school, she enjoys going to music conferences, hanging out with her friends, listening to music, reading Japanese and Korean comics, working out, eating out and hiking.

If you have enjoyed square dancing at the Pennsylvania Farm Show in the past, you may have seen Savannah twirling around in the arena. She did it for nine years! After joining a home school group in elementary school, she learned square and swing dancing. She also took lessons at the Green Door in Carlisle and took ballroom dancing at the Carlisle Barracks with Col. Frank Hancock.

Although obligations now keep her away from most blues events, we look forward to hearing more from this young lady and wish her continued success in the future.

Sallie Bengtson: Savannah is a delightful young woman with maturity and a sense of initiative beyond her years. I'm thrilled that she is continuing her music business education at my alma mater, Albright College. I've worked with various interns over the years, and she stands out as someone who is destined for success!

Kathryn Gregoire: Savannah passionate about music and plans to make music business her career. I so appreciate her professionalism, creativity, and willingness to serve on the BSCP board bringing us a youthful perspective. She created a Spotify Playlist for the Blues Society of Central PA where she updates the songs every 2 – 3 months, often based on a theme such as International Blues Challenge Winners, Women in the Blues, and Mississippi Railroad Blues. You can listen to the Spotify Playlist for free at http://bit.ly/BSCP-Spotify.

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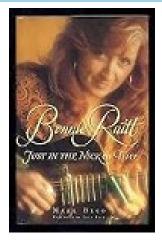
Savannah is our youngest board member and I am looking forward to meeting her in person. Our board meetings are on zoom and I don't have internet so I usually call in on my land line. Yes, I'm a dinosaur. Savannah is the opposite and brings her internet skills to BSCP. She has also already written an article for our newsletter and looks forward to writing more.

Growing up in Gardners, PA, Savannah's dad and brother were the musically inclined members of her family. Her dad is director of music at their church and her brother can play just about anything he picks up. She states that she had piano and ukulele lessons but never learned to play very well. She still plays ukulele in church sometimes. She grew up exposed to her family's choices of music: bluegrass and country. She remembers enjoying the Harrisburg Youth Symphony and the Trans-Siberian Orchestra.

As far as blues go, Savannah has volunteered manning the BSCP table at the Lancaster Roots and Blues, where she was entertained by Nola Blue Artists Benny Turner, Trudy Lynn and Lil' Jimmy Reed.

BLUES BOOK CORNER

By Kathryn Gregoire



Our book club discussions often lead us to our next book selection. The Dick Waterman's autobiography (see Blues News July-September 2025 issue, p. 12) piqued our interest in Bonnie Raitt, with whom he had both a personal and a professional relationship.

Born in 1949 in Burbank, CA, Raitt grew up in a musical family where everyone played from an early age, including her parents and two brothers. Her father was an established actor on musical Broadway and in the movie industry.

Raised as a Quaker, Bonnie acted on principles of pacifism and love throughout her life, protesting against war and injustice and passionately supporting older black musicians who had been often exploited and disregarded.

The book club members got an early preview of Raitt's respect for early blues musicians when we read Woman with Guitar about Memphis Minnie McCoy (1897-1973), one of the most influential blues artists in the United States for three decades. When Raitt found out that Memphis Minnie was buried in an unmarked grave at the New Hope Cemetery in Memphis, TN, she purchased a headstone which was erected in October 1996 in a ceremony attended by 35 family members and taped for broadcast by the BBC. In whatever ways she could, Raitt sought to improve the lives of other blues musicians, many of whom she originally met through Dick Waterman. She idolized the older blues musicians and their music.

Bonnie chose to play the guitar and by the time she was ten she had taught herself to play her grandfather's slide guitar. She found

BONNIE RAITT Just In The Nick of Time by

Mark Bego (2005)

that her middle finger gave her the most dexterity. It is now known as her trademark playing style.

In 1965, Bonnie and her family moved to Philadelphia. She attended a Quaker high school in Poughkeepsie, NY, and concentrated on music. After graduating, Bonnie enrolled in Radcliffe in Cambridge, Massachusetts. While performing in local clubs, she met Dick Waterman. Through him, by the time she was in her second year of college, she started to become immersed in the blues world of Son House, John Lee Hooker, Sippie Wallace, Buddy Guy, Fred McDowell and Junior Wells. She was on stage with Jackson Browne, James Taylor, Taj Mahal and Cat Stevens. Academia fell by the wayside.

The author talks about the up and downs in both Raitt's personal life and career. Many of her relationships started early in her adult life and developed into life-long friendships. Her younger years epitomized the rock n' roll lifestyle. Then she stopped drinking and started attending AA in 1987. She enjoyed the single path until she was forty-one, when she made a marriage commitment with actor Michael O'Keefe in 1991. They met while making a video together about *Homelessness in America*. (Update: Their marriage lasted until 1999.) Raitt is known for being very private about her personal life.

Throughout the book the author gives in-depth analyses of Raitt's original songs and her multiple albums, beginning with Raitt signing with Warner Brothers Records in 1971, who quickly produced her first album *Bonnie Raitt*. She became known as an album artist, with six more released by the time she was thirty-one. At the time the book was published in 1995, Bonnie had released 14 albums produced by either Capital Records or Warner Brothers records. Two albums reached Gold level, one Double Platinum,

one Quadruple Platinum, and one Quintuple Platinum. She collaborated on the songs of other musicians on 35 records and albums.

In 1980 Bonnie received her first of many Grammy nominations for "You're Gonna Get What's Coming" for Best Rock Vocal Performance, Female. The book title Just in the Nick of Time refers to her 10th album produced by Don Was with Capitol Records for which she received 4 Grammys in 1990. It came at a turning point in her life and brought her commercial success, climbing to No. 1 on the Billboard 200 and eventually achieving five-time platinum certification by RIAA. (Update: As of the 67th Annual Grammy Awards, Raitt has been nominated 31 times and has won 14 Grammy awards. She has sung 9 times at the Grammys, the most of any female performer.)

She became involved in different movements including Musicians United for Safe Energy (MUSE), the American Indian Movement (AIM), and Amnesty International, while engaging in multiple fund-raising concerts with other musicians, believing it was an artist's responsibility to focus media attention on social justice and environmental issues. Raitt has worked tirelessly with the Rhythm and Blues Foundation to encourage record companies to change their policies regarding giving performers of past years their long-overdue sales royalties.

"The music is great, but what's important is doing something meaningful with your life." – Bonnie Raitt



BLUES BOOK CORNER REVIEWS

SENSITION

Sensation Blues: A Rock and Roll Novel

(Blues In D Books - Copyright 2024).

Reviewed by Hank Imhof

The author, Bennett Kelly, a New Jersey resident, sent BSCP a copy of Sensation Blues to see if we might be interested in it as a book club selection. Since we have never

read a fictional book for the club, I offered to review it and to give my thoughts on the value of reading it.

Through the Blues Book Club of Blues Society of Central PA I have had the opportunity to read many books, all non-fiction, on the blues, blues musicians, and blues history. The authors of these books are like blues forensic detectives trying to arrive at the truth about each of their subjects and relating their summations to the reader. When assumptions are made, they are noted as such.

Sensation Blues is a novel. Bennett Kelly used accepted historical facts in this work. It's clear he also used his personal passion for the blues and imagination to create a modern day story set in

Clarksdale, Mississippi. For example, the author named his two main characters after Muddy Waters (McKinley Robinson) and Paul Robeson. Kelly quickly sets the stage and lets the action start to play out.

McKinley Robinson, the lead character, is beginning to start the process of deciding his own interests and future as he enters his junior year of high school. His older brother, Paul, is an athlete, scholar, and a popular student. McKinley does not feel he can follow in Paul's footsteps or meet the expectations of others. As McKinley's parents, brother, and uncle attempt to guide McKinley along conflicting paths, things begin to unravel. McKinley discovers through his uncle, blues music. He learns of busking, pawn shops, and late-night juke joints in Clarksdale. Uncle Ira takes Mac to Beale Street and the afterhours music scene in Memphis. There is also a musical adventure in New Orleans surrounding the New Orleans Jazz Festival.

Through this coming of age story this family has numerous conflicts but continues to show great respect and love for one another. There is, of

course, the age old conflict between gospel and secular music and the possible splitting of family ties during this journey. How could the author not have a blues musician turn to preaching? McKinley sometimes gently, sometimes not, tiptoes through dynamics of his family to find himself and to fulfill his life in the blues.

Kelly dedicates this book to blues fans everywhere. If you read this book, and I hope you do, look for all the historical name sharing and places mentioned by the author. It's fun to make all the connections. For me, I found the historical relationship between Ike Zimmerman and his student, Robert Johnson, and the author's relationship between Uncle Ira and Mac to have similarities which were pretty interesting. The practice studio of a graveyard after midnight is something I haven't tried. I hope you are intrigued, as I was, to research Paul Robeson. Kelly ties together a lot of coincidence and history with his New Jersey connections.

I recommend listening to Bennett Kelly's Spotify playlist, Sensation Blues. If you like the blues, you will enjoy the listen and you'll enjoy this read.



BOOMER BLUES: The Music Of Our Youth Is Calling Us Back

(MindStir Media - Copyright 2024)

Reviewed by Kathryn Gregoire

The author, Dave Rineer, a Lancaster PA native resident and a Blues Society of Central PA

member, believes music is the soundtrack of our lives. After retirement, he devoted his life to the blues: listening, reading, and going to festivals and then writing this book, his first ever. He seeks to better understand how he got where he is today with his love of blues music through documenting his lifetime music track. He describes it as "a set of thoughts, impressions, feelings and opinions about what I have experienced."

Rineer first describes his childhood and community and then devotes a chapter to each

year from 1961 through 1989. Vividly describing his musical experiences, Rineer has an astounding memory and voracious appetite for musical facts which he generously shares.

While the focus of the writing is on his experiences in Central PA and Philadelphia, Rineer connects them to the larger setting and to the issues of the day. He tells the stories of recordings, musicians, bands, studios, recording companies, record stores, concert halls, festivals, and local venues.

Baby boomers, especially those who grew up in Central PA, will relate as your memories are jogged by mentions of songs you loved and places you visited while in high school and as an adult. In the second to the last chapter, Rineer talks about how he started to go to Blues Festivals in 1991 and has continued to do so for the past 35 years. He notes by the 90s he recognized that blues music was at the foundation of all of the music he loved.

The author completes the book with the last chapter titled "Happy Trails", which describes an extensive sampling of players of significance that he has become aware of since 1990.

Rineer reflects: "So, in the end, this is just one man's early life in music... It turns out that I was just looking for honest adult emotional music that moves me."

BLUES ROADHOUSE BY JIM WHITE



Buddy Guy

Ain't Done With the Blues
Silvertone/RCA Records

The words "living legend" are not always my favorite, because they are so commonly overused.

Not this time.

Buddy Guy is exactly that — a living legend. He turned 89 on July 30, the day he released his latest album, "Ain't Done With the Blues."

The title is a meaningful statement on two levels: He ain't done with the blues, and the blues still ain't done with us. Both still have a lot to give.

It was just about two years ago that Guy announced a Damn Right Farewell Tour and implied that it was time to hang it up. But that was two years ago, and the farewell tour is not only turning into a celebration of the new album, but also a declaration that the blues still burn brightly in his soul.

"This album is about where I've been, it's about where I'm going, and the people I learned everything from," says Buddy on the album, "...Muddy, Wolf, Walter, Sonny Boy, BB, I could go on and on. Before they passed, they used to say, 'Man, if you outlive me, just keep the blues alive,' and I'm trying to keep that promise."

Guy has included a high-caliber

roster on these 18 tracks. Guests include Christone "Kingfish" Ingram on "Where U At?;" Joe Walsh on "How Blues is That?," Joe Bonamassa on "Dry Stick," Peter Frampton on "It Keeps Me Young," and the Blind Boys of Alabama on the gospel-soaked "Jesus Loves the Sinner," The album was recorded in Nashville and New Orleans, with Guy, producer Tom Hambridge (drums) and Rob McNelly (rhythm guitar) as the core band members. Keyboardists are Kevin McKendree or Chuck Leavell. and bassists are Tal Wilkenfeld or Glenn Worf. Also appearing are Jeff Beck bassist Tal Wilkenfeld, and Chuck Leavell of the Allman Brothers on B3 and Wurlitzer. The uber-talented Hambridge also wrote or co-wrote much of the music with Richard Fleming, Gary Nicholson and Jimmy Tennant.

But what about the music? The originals and covers here stretch over the breadth of Guy's career. His guitar work is vibrantly expressive, and explosive when needed. His vocals are seasoned by his 89 years, but still strong and smooth.

The opening track is a starkly brief take on John Lee Hooker's classic "Boogie Chillun," with Guy chuckling at the end: "That's the first thing I ever learned how to play, man..." The biographical "Been There Done That" by Hambridge and Nicholson, with Guy's blistering guitar, summarizes his life in blues: "I shake my head, and I can't believe the hell that I've been through / My life feels like a movie, but every scene is true." Two other tracks also reflect on Guy's blues life: "How Blues is That," with Walsh on guitar and vocals, and "It Keeps Me Young," with Frampton contributing guitar and vocals.

More highlights include:

On "Where U At," Guy trades licks with "Kingfish" Ingram in a sharp-edged display that hints of blues to come, shaped by what has been. "Blues

On Top" is a more traditional slowburning blues with a feisty piano adding to the mix.

"Dry Stick" adds Guy's name to the writing credits, relating his mother's advice on being prepared for life's surprises, with a powerful vocal offering, aided by Bonamassa guitar licks: "Bound to be some heavy weather up ahead, I just go right back to what Mama said: Save a dry stick for a wet day, you never know what's coming your way." It's a gorgeous effort, tucked midway through the album.

"Jesus Loves the Sinner" is a gospelenriched Hambridge/Fleming song, adding the vocal talents of The Blind Boys of Alabama in a joyous nod to the shared roots of blues and gospel music.

"One From Lightnin" pays a brief but heartfelt tribute to the heritage of Lightnin' Hopkins, displaying one of Guy's seldom-heard guitar skills — his acoustic talents. This is reminiscent of his 1991 album, "Alone & Acoustic," recorded with Junior Wells in France in 1981 — it's a quiet masterpiece that's well worth the effort to track down.

The two closers are intriguing choices, reaching back into the early years of rock "n' roll and R&B.

"Send Me Some Loving" was a slow rocker recorded by Little Richard in 1957. Over a furious piano backing, Guy creates his own rocking vibe. He also pumps new life into the 1955 J.B. Lenoir chestnut, "Talk To Your Daughter."

There's considerably more Buddy Guy music sprinkled in between those tracks, all of it a testament to his massive presence in blues history, and his welcome influence on its future.

This blues' living legend certainly "ain't done with the blues." And that's good news for the rest of us.

See more of Jim Whites album reviews at https://bluesroadhouse.com.

BLUES ROADHOUSE BY JIM WHITE



Rory Block *Heavy on the Blues* M.C. Records

Rory Block — and her magnificent mastery of the country blues idiom — have long placed her in the elite tier of acoustic blues interpreters. But that description doesn't begin to do her, or her massive recorded output, justice.

She's paid faithful tribute to the male and female originators in dozens of excellent albums, won awards too countless to list, and performed relentlessly for years, after leaving home at 14 to track down the old blues masters and inhale their essence.

Not that she's a cover artist. Far from it. Block has absorbed the music, the styles, the vocabulary, and filters it through her own sharply honed sensibilities, often creating new music with its roots deep in her own experience. Her music sounds as though it's been ripped from the primeval mists that shroud the origins of this great American songbook; her vocals ethereal and haunting. All done while retaining the soulful, emotional integrity and raw beauty of the blues.

"Heavy on the Blues" is Block's latest effort, and while it's filled with her traditional soulful stylings, its emphasis is on the work of a handful of electric blues pioneers — Little Milton, Buddy Guy, Koko Taylor and a slice of Jimi Hendrix. This splendid session is filled with nine interpretations, plus one original, and features three great contemporary guitarists who bring extra life to the mix — Ronnie Earl, Jimmy Vivino, and Joanna Connor. The album still includes her powerful trademark acoustic work on several tracks.

I'm going to depart from my usual comments and instead, use Block's words lifted from the liner notes to describe the songs, the singers and the reasons behind their selection. Her words are better than mine. However, the quotes I've used are only a fraction of what she writes, and

those complete insights are easily worth the price of admission to her performance here

"High Heel Sneakers" by Tommy Tucker

"This great little song is one of my all time favs. I think it suits my personality. I sing first about personal experiences — sometimes sorrow, loss and pain. But I can turn suddenly to lighthearted and silly. I love fun, and have a whacky sense of humor. You gotta laugh (just to keep from)..."

"Walking The Back Streets" by Little Milton, featuring Ronnie Earl on guitar

"My inspiration always begins with an overwhelming desire to sing a specific song — this one a killer blues song I first heard performed by Koko Taylor."

"What Kind Of Woman Is This" by Buddy Guy, featuring Jimmy Vivino on guitar

"So deep, so cool, so slammin'! If it hits hard like this, if it rockets through to the core, it would be wrong not to record it."

"Hold To His Hand" - Traditional

"I encountered great gospel music at the same time I heard early blues. It was simply the best singing I'd ever heard, pared with spiritual passion that could change a life."

"The Wind Cries Mary" by Jimi Hendrix, featuring Joanna Connor on guitar

"Jimi Hendrix walked the streets of Greenwich Village when I was growing up — a stunning presence, handsome and incredibly charismatic. Walking past him meant trying not to stare for too long. He always dressed impressively — often brass buttons glinted on his jacket. Hendrix was part of the mystique of the times, the presence of musical greatness at a pivotal time."

"Down The Dirt Road Blues" by Charley Patton

"Country Blues was my first love, an obsession that has lasted a lifetime. It will never leave me. Charley Patton exemplified the deepest possible soul and power. His music rocked my world. I can't listen to Charley Patton without getting overwhelmed with emotion."

"Mississippi Blues" by Willie Brown

" 'Mississippi Blues' is one of the most stunning and beautiful Country Blues songs ever written. While I have recorded it several times before, it is deeply sentimental for me to record it again. It symbolizes the musical energy and inspiration of my formative years."

"Me And My Chauffeur" by Memphis Minnie

"Memphis Minnie is one of the greats, a classic, and one of the most outstanding Country Blues guitar players as well. As usual the Country Blues women were outspoken and clear about just about everything."

"Can't Quit That Stuff" by Rory Block
"The guitar parts were initially inspired
by Bukka White's "Jitterbug Swing," but
then the lyrics veered off totally and the
guitar parts were also altered by my rogue
slide playing. I found myself telling the
story of my backstage conversation with
the great Hubert Sumlin, iconic guitar
player for Howlin' Wolf, Muddy Waters
and others."

"Stay Around A Little Longer" by Buddy Guy

"You know how it goes. You're listening to music online and then one artist pops up front and center, and that's how I came across "Stay Around A Little Longer." BB King and Buddy Guy were sitting together trading lyrics and solos on this deeply moving song. I knew at once I had to record it. They say tomorrow is not promised, and as we all know you don't have to be old to leave this world, which just underscores the beauty of being grateful for every minute. I resonate with this song because I can hardly believe I'm still here, and still making music. What a great gift, to be able to do what I love!"

The powerful statement of "Heavy on the Blues" is a compelling choice for Block, who is primarily an acoustic artist, but fits comfortably into this mixed groove. Her previous album, though, was also a departure — the elegant Bob Dylan tribute, "Positively Fourth Street." Both show alternative sides of Block's talent; both are ambitious and welcome additions to her already impressive body of work.

If you're not already a Rory Block fan (although that's hard to imagine!), consider this album a starting point for your exploration of her life's work of breathing new life into this classic American music. Her depth of feeling and emotional commitment to her music is nothing short of extraordinary.



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