



Blues Society of Central Pennsylvania
www.bscpblues.com

BLUES NEWS

Oct.-Dec. 2020

A RAZZAMA - TAS

Versatile, energetic showman Tas Cru among host of touring notables to grace
Thursday Virtual Jam in October



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

From Your President	2
In Memoriam	3
New Normal	4-5
Keep On Keepin' On	6-7
Blues Biz	8-9
Virtual Jam	10
Word search/scramble	11
Peek at the Past	12-13
CD Reviews	14-15
Triple B, Blues band beats	16-17
Stagolee	18-19

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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.

From your President...

People have such astute insights into human behavior; everyday there are clever comments posted online. "If I had known in March that it would be the last time I went to a restaurant, I would have ordered desert!" Yet another lesson to make room for dessert and all of the other delights in life. I have also learned that while I can't eat desert inside of a restaurant these days, I can order take-out or make it at home myself.

Life is all about adaptability and enjoying the precious moments. BSCP continues to do that every Thursday with the Virtual Jam. The joy of the Jam is not only in the healing of the music, but in the connection with other blues lovers. Something magical happens when everyone gets together to make and listen to music, and being part of the blues community helps mitigate the isolation and loneliness being experienced by all.

Another opportunity for connection is provided by sharing thoughts about what we read; hence, the popularity of book clubs. I am looking forward to being with old and new friends at the upcoming meeting of the BSCP Blues Book Club. If you are interested in joining the Club, please email me. Our first book is "Blues People: Negro Music in White America" written in 1963 by LeRoi Jones aka. Amiri Baraka.

In his updated (1999) Introduction to "Blues People," Amiri Baraka writes he found that as he got into the history of blues music it was impossible to not get into the history of his people. He quotes Sterling Brown, a Howard University professor, "The Music, that is our history." Blues societies are dedicated to the preservation and awareness of blues music and this book helps me to appreciate our mission even more.

The book club will be covering the first 122 pages of "Blues People,"

including chapters about the Negro as non-American, as property, as American slave and post-slave and Negro music. We will discuss how police forces were originally developed to protect rich white men from loss of their slave property. The topics are compelling and relevant in today's world as we struggle with the role of police in our communities.

I write this as Lancaster, my home town, experienced the death today of a young man, Ricardo Munoz, who had bipolar disorder and schizo-typal disorder. He was killed by a police officer who shot him four times in alleged self-defense. This is a tragedy for all involved: the young man, his family and friends, the police officer, and the community. There is no benefit from trying to lay blame. We all must take responsibility to create powerful change and healing.

There has to be a better way.

Baraka concludes his Introduction of "Blues People" by describing the importance of the expression and preservation of music as a way to preserve history and culture and to promote transformation of cities and their people. He states "And this is all part of what an even larger number of us ought to be doing, if we are truly Diggers of The Music, i.e., to keep on Digging!"



Digging the Blues,

Kathryn Gregoire
bluesmunga@gmail.com

In Memoriam



Jesse Williams "Pete" Carr

April 22, 1950 - June 27, 2020

As the lead guitarist for Muscle Shoals Rhythm Section, Pete Carr was featured on hits such as "Paul Simon's Kodachrome," Rod Stewart's "Tonight's the Night" and Bob Seger's "Mainstreet." During his time in the industry he helped produce many award, as well as a few Grammy winners like "Still Crazy After All These Years" by Paul Simon, "Guilty" by Barbara Streisand, and "Against the Wind" by Seger, which he co-produced.



Sharon Paige

February 9, 1952 - July 5, 2020

A stunning vocalist from Philadelphia, Sharon Paige found critical acclaim in her duet with Teddy Pendergrass in the song "Hope That We Can Be Together Soon" on the album "To Be True" by Harold Melvin & the Blue Notes in 1975 - a song especially relevant today. She brought a special flare to the group, and after Pendergrass left she thrived in the spotlight. In the early 1980s she released a few singles under her own name, including "You Don't Even Know My Name," and continued appearing with the Blues Notes throughout the late 2000s.



Peter Green

October 29, 1946 - July 25, 2020

A blues rock singer and guitarist best known as the co-founder of Fleetwood Mac, Peter Green's recognizable style and trademark instrumentals earned him praise from the likes of Eric Clapton and B.B. King. After getting his start filling in for Clapton in John Mayall's Bluesbreakers, he joined the band full time in 1966. By 1967 he and drummer Mick Fleetwood had decided to create their own band. Before leaving Fleetwood Mac in 1970, Green was responsible for hits such as "Albatross," "Black Magic Woman," "Oh Well," and "Man of the World."



Carl Dufrene

September 24, 1966 - August 16, 2020

As a blues bassist, Carl Dufrene collaborated with acts Anders Osborne and the North Mississippi Allstars, appearing on the former's 2016 record "Flower Box" and the latter's 2019 album "Up and Rolling." Notable for his spontaneity and ability to go with the flow, Dufrene was a kind and joyous man who always brought spontaneity and fun to his work.



Bryan Lee

March 16, 1943 - August 21, 2020

Bryan "Braille Blues Daddy" Lee lost his eyesight when he was eight years old, but that never stopped him from making music. After playing rhythm guitar in a cover band in his teens, he immersed himself in the Chicago blues in the 1960s. He released his first album, "Beauty Isn't Always Visual" in 1979, then became a staple of New Orleans blues after moving there in 1982. He played on The Tonight Show with Jay Leno in 2007, and was inducted into the Blues Hall of Fame in 2016.



Sterling "Mr. Satan" Magee

May 20, 1936 - September 6, 2020

Sterling Magee's story has plenty of ups and downs. After serving as a paratrooper in Germany, he found his way to Harlem, where he played guitar alongside James Brown, King Curtis, and Big Maybelle. After the death of his wife in 1970, he travelled around, returning to Harlem and going by his new moniker - Satan. This drew the attention of Adam Gussow in the '80s, and the two went on to play as the duo Satan & Adam, inspiring a Netflix documentary of the same name in 2018.



John Long

Johnny Rawls

Steve Guyger

Tas Cru

Tom Walbank

The New Normal?

Tas Cru returns, this time on Facebook via Zoom as the Thursday Virtual Jam rolls on amid persistent pandemic

Tas Cru keeps coming through for the Blues Society of Central Pennsylvania.

On the distant heels of the BSCP Christmas Party last December, where he wowed the crowd as an eleventh hour replacement headliner, Cru joins a list of notable touring artists to give the Thursday Virtual Jam a boost in October with live virtual performances.

Cru will be playing the Virtual Jam from 8:15–8:45 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 15. He will also give the Blues Talk from 7:00–7:15 p.m. This seasoned bluesman will be coming to you live from his home in upstate New York.

Also performing live at the Virtual Jam in October are Johnny Rawls, Steve Guyger, John Long and Tom Walbank.

Cru's blues music, as unique as his name, reflects the influences of country, rock, and hill blues. A powerful singer, he plays electric, acoustic, resonator and cigar box guitars and occasionally takes out his harmonica just to add even more spice. Tas is an exciting entertainer; he and his band of Tortured Souls kept the room hopping at the Christmas Party.

A prolific and talented songwriter, Tas has created and produced over 60 original songs on his nine albums. "You Keep the Money" (2014), "Simmered & Stewed" (2016), and "Memphis Song" (2018) topped or nearly topped the charts and received multiple nominations and awards. His newest release, "Drive On,"

includes 2019 IBC Gibson Guitar Award winner Gabe Stillman on the slide guitar. (See a review on page 14).

In his former life, Tas responded to "Dr. Richard Bates" having earned a Ph.D. in Literacy Education. He draws upon his teaching and musical skills and passion to guide children in learning about their culture's rich musical heritage. His mission statement reads "To me, there is nothing more important that I do as a blues performer than blues education!"

Tas shares his knowledge of the blues and his "pure joy of playing" with people of all ages through his Blues Education programs and workshops at schools, hospitals, and festivals. The Blues Foundation recognized his contributions by awarding him a Keeping the Blues Alive award in 2014.

In 2009, he released an album of original blues music for kids "Even Bugs Sing the Blues". In 2016 he recorded "Doggon Blues" targeted to dog lovers. Ever creative, he took the characters in "Doggon Blues" and wrote a three book series. The first two books are available on his website tascru.com.

October Lineup

In addition to Tas Cru, following musicians are scheduled for BSCP Virtual Jam shows in October. We are fortunate to have such wonderful people willing to share their music with us.

Oct. 1, 7-7:30 p.m.

Steve Guyger

Guyger, a phenomenal harmonica player and vocalist from the Philadelphia area, considers the biggest influence on his music to be Little Walter. Some of his memorable moments include sharing the stage with Charlie Musselwhite, Little Sammy Davis, Mark Hummel, Carey Bell, Rick Estrin, Rod Piazza, and Kim Wilson

Since his debut album, "Last Train to Dover," released in 1997, Guyger has recorded five albums, receiving a 2009 Blues Music Award nomination for his work on "Radio Blues." In 2010, he released an instructional DVD, "Blues Harmonica." Most recently, he is featured on the Chris "Bad News" Barnes CD "Live" recorded on the 2019 Rhythm & Blues Cruise.

www.steveguyger.com

Oct. 8, 7:45-8:45 p.m.

John Long

Two of John's CDs "Lost & Found" (1999) and "Stand Your Ground" (2017) were nominees for the Blues Foundation Blues Music Awards Acoustic Album of the Year. "Stand Your Ground" was also nominated by Blues Blast Magazine for Best Acoustic Blues. His CDs feature his original music and that of forgotten blues artists whom he respects and honors.

Growing up in St. Louis, John listened to the late night radio shows with Hank Ballard and the Midnighters, Big Joe Turner, Ray Charles, Jimmy Reed and Lightnin' Hopkins. John's roots on stage started with the drums and then the bass guitar as he and brother Claude played at Teen Towns and house parties.

When John moved to Chicago, Homesick James became his mentor. So close were the two of them that they informally "adopted" each other as father and son. The two of them eventually took a younger bluesman named Little Joe McLerran under their wings. While playing in Chicago, John Long opened for Sugar Cane Harris, Harvey Mandel, Hound Dog Taylor, and Homesick James, among others.

Performing at numerous venues and festivals, he has shared the stage with a who's who of blues greats, including Muddy Waters, Willie Dixon, John Hammond, BB King, John Prine, Stevie Ray Vaughn, John Lee Hooker, Robert Cray, Kathy Mattea and Johnny Winters.

He notes that "the blues wasn't and isn't supposed to make you feel deeper pain. It is like a poultice; in effect to draw out the pain. It's supposed to ease your mind."

John will also make himself available for informal conversation during the BSCP Virtual Social Hour following the Jam.

Oct. 22, 7:45-8:45 p.m
Tom Walbank

Tom Walbank, a harmonica and guitar playing Englishman who currently resides in Tucson, AZ., discovered blues in his teens and went on to record more than 20 albums and appears on many others. Major influences include Sonny Terry, James Cotton, Sugar Blue, Son House, Big Joe Williams, Lightnin' Hopkins, John Lee Hooker and Muddy Waters.

Walbank plays and teaches harmonica in styles of pre-war Chicago, Piedmont, West Coast and Country and plays Mississippi Delta style slide guitar. He has shared the stage with the likes of B.B. King, Charlie Musselwhite, Jimmie Vaughan, Lazy Lester, Kim Wilson, Canned Heat and many others.

Walbank's work has been well received, most notably for his YouTube video "Tom Walbank – Harmonica Guru" recorded in 2007, with over 2 million views to date. He

also was recognized by the film industry, scoring the movie "Good Boy" in 2009.

A very talented and productive artist, Walbank has illustrated a self-published pictorial anthology of blues music and produced hundreds of paintings, screen prints, and t-shirts, that reflect his love of blues. His portraits of Delta blues musicians are exceptional.

The Arizona Blues Hall of Fame inducted Walbank in 2009. Among several honors, he has won best blues band in Arizona and has been in the International Blues Challenge in Memphis twice. He has toured both in North America and Europe. www.tomwalbank.com

Oct. 29, 8:15-8:45 p.m.
Johnny Rawls

A soul-blues legend, Johnny Rawls, born in Hattiesburg, Ms., writes, arranges, sings, and produces his own original songs with over 100 recorded. He has produced 15 albums since his first "Here We Go" in 1996. Playing the guitar and saxophone, he has toured Europe, Japan and Australia.

Rawls headlined the most recent BSCP Mississippi Railroad show on July 21, 2019. He also had the dance floor jumpin' at the BSCP Christmas Party in 2016.

Rawls has earned Blues Music Award nominations and/or awards for 17 consecutive years and the Critics Choice Award for Best Album of the Year in Living Blues in 2009, 2010, and 2012. He was named Best Vocalist in 2006 by West Coast Blues Hall of Fame, nominated for 2018 BMA for Best Soul Blues Album for "Waiting for the Train," received the 2019 BMA for Best Soul Blues Album "I'm Still Around," and has been honored with a Blues Trail Marker

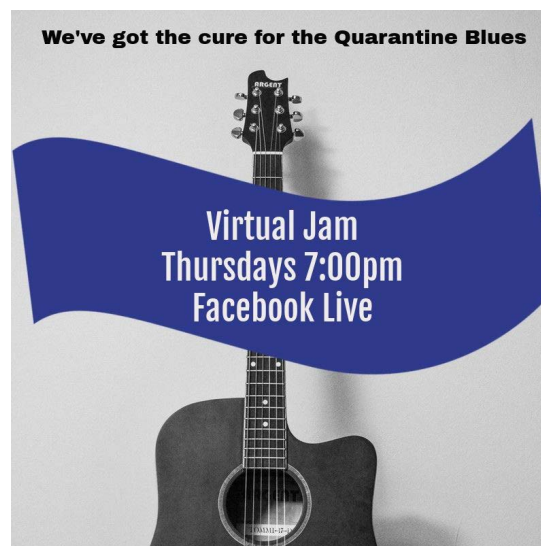
Want to write for Blues News?

Editors of Blues News would like to hear from you if you'd like to be a contributor to the quarterly newsletter.

Editors are seeking compelling, accurate blues CD reviews, festival and show reviews, venue food and atmosphere reviews, playing tips, letters to the editor, short features or anything else you think Blues Society of Central Pennsylvania members would like to read. Photographs will also be considered.

Adhering to deadlines is very important. Contributors will be told well ahead of time what their deadline is. Final approval of all contributions is up to Blues News editors.

Please contact BSCP President Kathryn Gregoire with your idea. bluesmunga@gmail.com



Keepin' on, keepin' on

It virtually takes a village to keep Virtual Jam humming along

By Kathryn Gregoire

The Blues Society of Central Pennsylvania continues to hold weekly virtual jams via Zoom every Thursday from 7-9 p.m., followed by a social hour. Zoom live-streams the "Thursday Virtual Jam" to the Blues Society of Central PA Group page on Facebook, which now has more than 2,000 members. During the past three months, views of the jam range from 419 to 1800. Greg Hogg has prepared several videos to place on www.bscplblues.com.

It takes a village to present these virtual jams to our viewers. Here are the members of that village and a little bit about what they do.

Virtual Jam Crew. The Virtual Jam crew members recruit musicians, schedule the programs, advertise the Jam, serve as Jam and Facebook hosts, set up the technology before the shows, and operate the technology during the shows. The original virtual jam crew consists of John "JD" Drudul, Kathy Gregoire, Dan Mowery, Rebecca Young and Gary "Rothrock" Rothrock. The following people have joined the jam crew, serving in a variety of capacities: Carrie Baker, Linda Null, and Marianna Schaffer. Each person is trained in all facets of the production so there is back-up in case anyone is unable to carry out his or her duties. Additionally Greg Hogg, Joe Kambic, and Hannah Sherman have been active recruiters for the jam.

A special shout-out and thank you goes out to JD, who has been instrumental in setting up the Virtual Jam and in providing the technological support for musicians before and during the show. He and his wife, Renata, are planning an RV trip to the Southwest but has trained the rest to cover his responsibilities. We will miss JD and hope he can tune in on Thursday nights.

New Features

Two features JD instituted in the beginning of July are the Vintage Jam and the Blues Talk.

Vintage Jam: The Thursday night show now starts with a song from a

previous BSCP live Thursday Night Blues Jam recorded by Bill Hines and posted on archive.org. Playing the song gives acknowledgement to the approximate 22-year history of the BSCP Jam and provides blues music for the audience while the live stream is being prepared.

Blues Talk. The first 15 minutes of the Virtual Jam are dedicated to blues education, the purpose being to meet part of the mission of the BSCP to "educate." The focus is on providing basic information about blues music in its different forms and instruments used. JD gave the first talk, answering questions he often receives at the live jam, such as, "How can musicians play together when they haven't played together before?" The next week, Blues Talk featured a video on Clarksdale, MS., as an introduction to the music of Mark "Muleman" Massey. Other presenters and topics include: Roger Hammer, Blues Variations in the "1-4-5 Scramble;" Sallie Bengtson, Nola Blue; Tiffany Pollack, Cocktails for the Blues; JD, Piedmont Blues with Etta Baker video; Kathy Murray & Bill Jones, Texas Blues; Joe Kambic, Cigar Box Guitars; and JD again, Blues Lead Guitar.

Past Virtual Jam Performers

Our profound appreciation goes out to Sallie Bengtson, owner of Nola Blue record label, who has paved the way for us to book numerous enthusiastic musicians. Thank you, Sallie, for your constant support of BSCP.

We've gone from four to five sets, 20 minutes each, to two to three sets a show, 30 to 60 minutes each.

Recordings of the jams are on the BSCP Group page and are archived on bscplblues.com. The previous BSCP Blues News Zoom article (July 2020) lists the lineups from April 23 – June 11.

Past Lineups

June 18 – Sept. 10:

June 18: Bob Wineland, Stephen "AC Steel" Solotist, David "Dr. Mo" Moyar, Carlos Elliot.

June 25: Stephen "AC Steel" Solotist, Johnny Never, Sister Blue, Ken Schaffer, Quentin Jones.

July 2: Rocky Rothrock, Chicago Bob Irving, Daniel Mendez, Tommy Froelich, Andy Tolins & JT Thompson.

July 9: Chris Purcell, Neil Tapp, Ann Kerstetter, Deb Callahan, Songsmith.

July 16: Mark "Muleman" Massey, Vinny Stefanelli, Meg Williams.

July 23: Nate Myers, David "Dr. Mo" Moyar, Clarence Spady.

July 30: Bob Wineland, Tommy "Crooked Eye" Marsh.

August 6: Hank Imhof, Sister Blues, Tiffany Pollack.

August 13: Joe Kambic, Ken Swartz, Jumpin' Johnny Sansone.

August 20: Gary "Rocky" Rothrock, Neil Tapp, The Mighty Klucks.

August 27: David "Dr. Mo" Moyar, Stephen Solotist, Kathy Murray & Bill Jones.

September 3: Joe Kambic, Roman Barten-Sherman.

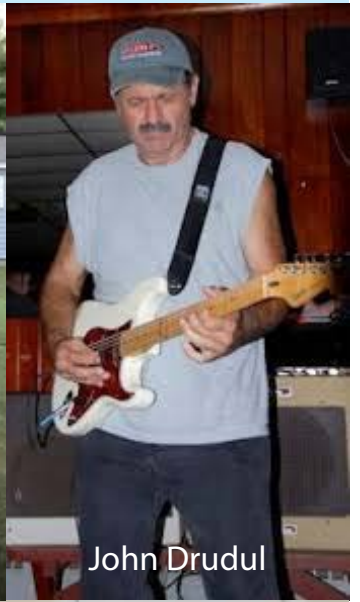
September 10: Gordon Farris, Ken Swartz, Blues on the Loose with Lewy Dean, Jay McElroy, Doug Porter.



Carlos Elliott



Mighty Klucks



John Drudul



Rocky Rothrock



Laura Cheadle



Nate Myers



Roger Hammer

Blues Biz



Sallie Bengtson with
Benny Turner



Kathy Murray and Bill Jones

Nola Blue and founder Sallie Bengtson are stepping up for the BSCP

(First of a series of articles on businesses in the Central Pa. region that support the blues.)

Just as there are so many talented blues musicians in the Central PA region, there are many businesses that support the blues. Often, they are hidden gems, not highly visible to the public. One such treasure is Nola Blue, Inc. a record company owned by Blues Society of Central Pennsylvania member Sallie Bengtson and winner of the prestigious Josie Award for Record Label of the year.

The Josie, a Nashville based organization, honors and recognizes people in the independent music industry. The award was presented to Bengtson on Sept. 5.

Blues News caught up with Sallie recently to learn more about her and Nola Blue.

Blues News: Sallie, could you tell us about your company, Nola Blue?

Sallie Bengtson: Nola Blue is headquartered in Lancaster, Pa., right in Central Pa. blues territory! The corporation was formed in 2012 for the purchase of a franchised business which is no longer in operation, but I like to think of it as laying the foundation for what was unknown at the time as the true mission of the organization; supporting the music I love and the musicians who make it.

By 2014, I embarked on a project to document the life story of Benny Turner, an American bluesman in the award-winning "Survivor: The Benny Turner Story." Benny's story is uniquely his own, but also universally the story of the blues including the great migration from the south to Chicago during the time when electric blues was rapidly emerging and

evolving. Benny also happens to be the younger brother of blues legend Freddie King, and the only living person who spent so much time with Freddie both growing up and professionally. His story needed to be documented and shared. The coolest experience with Benny was going to Gilmore, Texas with him and walking the back roads where he and Freddy walked and going by the porch where his mom played music.

As the book project evolved, it became time to think about marketing it, and also pairing it with Benny's music. Thus began my crash course in the record business as we released "Journey", a collection of ten original songs, on Benny's 75th birthday. Journey earned a nominee for best blues album in the 2014 Offbeat Best of the Beat Awards. I learned so much throughout that process, most importantly the emergence of my true passion and affinity for marketing music. And I haven't looked back ever since.

After Benny's second Nola Blue album, "When She's Gone," some important industry contacts had been made, including Betsie Brown at Blind Raccoon, the album publicist. I continued to learn from adding Betsie to the team, and was inspired to expand my reach and shine the spotlight on other musicians who were too easily overlooked in hopes of boosting their visibility and opportunities.

Our business alliance was the catalyst for many of the things that have happened in the ongoing growth of Nola Blue, including the establishment of a new label imprint, Blue Heart Records, which combines the best of what we both offer into one package. Blue Heart Records

was created for artists who wish to retain ownership of their music while enjoying worldwide distribution, promotion, and marketing services of a label. We launched Blue Heart in January of this year, and are off to a roaring start already, with more projects already in the queue for 2021.

BN: Who are a few of the musicians you have worked with?

SB: I have been so fortunate to work with incredible musicians, beginning with Benny Turner. Through Benny, I've had the opportunity to meet and talk with so many of the greats who are/were his contemporaries, including Otis Clay, Eddie Shaw, Carla Thomas, Bobby Rush, Latimore and Cash McCall. To me, there is no greater thrill or honor than to have had these experiences. Blues legends Benny Turner and Cash McCall's friendship began in Chicago over 60 years ago. The pair reunited in the studio to revisit their roots and the songs they once played nightly in South and West side nightspots for their award-winning album "Going Back Home." The joyous blues summit took place at studios in Memphis, New Orleans, and Chicago. www.bennyturner.com
www.cashmccallmusic.com

The addition of The Southern Gentleman of the Blues, Mr. Frank Bey, was also a career highlight. We released his 2018 album, "Back In Business," which was produced by Tom Hambridge; and his 2020 album, "All My Dues Are Paid," produced by Kid Andersen. Frank was nominated for Blues Music Awards, Blues Blast Music Awards, and Independent Music Awards and received the Global

Music Gold Medal Award for Male Vocalist for these albums. It was a true joy to work with projects of this caliber, and Frank was a gentleman indeed, so strong in his resolve and genuine in his every relationship. www.frankbeymusic.com

BN: How have your musicians met the challenges of COVID-19 and how can we support them?

SB: I have been so impressed and inspired by the resilience of our artists during this time of great uncertainty and unprecedented challenge. They have embraced the use of technology to present livestream events, sharing their musical magic even without the reciprocal energy they're used to getting from playing for a live audience. And, they have continued to write, record and release new music even without the ability to tour behind it.

These are brave and committed professionals, who continue to share their gifts which give us joy and soothe our souls, often drawing from their own place of emptiness and fear. What a gift music is to the creators and the listeners!

The best way to support the musicians is to continue to buy their music and support their streaming events as much as possible. If we can all lift the musicians up and help to carry them through this time, then we will have a foundation to build upon when we can gather again.

BN: Could you tell us about some of the upcoming Nola Blue releases and events?

SB: As you know, we're preparing to release a new single from NEPA bluesman extraordinaire, Clarence Spady, in October. This will be submitted to the Blues Music Awards for Song of the Year consideration and promoted to global radio. A full album release is planned for 2021.

Benny Turner is eagerly anticipating continued work on his next album, when Covid restrictions begin lifting.

Eric Johanson is releasing "Below the Sea Level" on September 18.

www.ericjohanson.com

John Nemeth, a two-time Blues Music Award Winner with 18 BMA nominations and Living Blues magazine Blues Vocalist of the Year winner, will be releasing his 10th album "Stronger Than Strong" with Nola Blue on October 16.

www.johnnemeth.com

There are a few other tentative projects already lining up for 2021, but nothing quite at the point of announcement. I'm also looking forward to bringing more blues events to the Lancaster area, thanks to the wonderful support and enthusiasm of both BSCP and the Stoner Grille. We have been off to a good start, and while things are temporarily dampened, we will hit the ground running again, just as soon as we can.

BN: You have given such wonderful support to the BSCP, especially with your contributions to the Virtual Jam Roster. How does the connection with BSCP fit into your over all mission of Nola Blue?

SB: I feel it is part of my role as a label to support the awareness of blues, which is similar to the mission of BSCP. I am proud of my BSCP membership and have its logo on my business card. I also believe it is the role of Nola Blue to serve to connect Central PA to the greater community of blues to which I have access. I always try to make everything a win-win for everyone. I credit Tom Lowry with connecting me with BSCP.

To learn more about Nola Blue and its artists, go to www.nola-blue.com. Facebook, Instagram and Twitter are @nolabluerecords.



Sallie Bengtson with her Josie Award



Sallie Bengtson with the late Frank Bey

Nola Blue at the Virtual Jam

July through September, the BSCP's Virtual Jam on Thursday nights had some new faces mixed in with local familiar faces. BSCP was able to provide this variety of musicians from across the country thanks to Sallie Bengtson, who put a call out to the artists she works with and introducing them to BSCP President Kathryn Gregoire via email.

In addition, Sallie contacted people she knows through the industry, including Jumpin' Johnny Sansone, Miss Bix, and Johnny Rawls, who will be performing at the Virtual Jam on Oct. 29. Thank you to all of these generous musicians for sharing their talents and time with us.

Here are the artists who have made an appearance on the Thursday night Virtual Jam:

Meg Williams, winner of the 2018 Kentucky Blues Challenge and House Band Director for the 2019 IBC Women

in Blues Showcase, lives in Nashville, Tennessee. Her song "Little Bit of the Devi" reached No. 2 Top 50 Blues Rock songs, and No. 9 Top Blues Song (Roots Music Report). "Take Me As I Am" has reached No. 27 on Top 50 Blues Album Charts, and No. 9 on Top 50 Blues Rock Album Charts (Roots Music Report) and won a Bronze Medal for the 2019 Global Music Awards.

www.megwilliamsmusic.com

Clarence Spady was the 1997 W.C. Handy nominee for Best New Artist, and continues to amaze with his vocal, songwriting and guitar playing. A native of Scranton, he was a mainstay at the Chameleon Blues Festivals and the Lancaster Roots and Blues Festivals.

www.clarencespadyband.com.

Crooked Eye Tommy Marsh, a California-based musician known for his Deep Seeded Blues, debuted in July on the Roots Music Report Blues Album

Nola Blue at the Virtual Jam Continued...

chart at No. 10 with "Hot Coffee and Pain." He and his brother, Paddy Marsh, were finalists in the 2020 International Blues Challenge. His album "Butterflies & Snakes" was nominated in Best Self-Produced Album category, 2016 IBC and reached No. 15 on the National Roots Music Report Contemporary Blues Chart. www.crookedeyetommy.com.

Tiffany Pollack is a New Orleans native who, along with her cousin Eric Johanson, received the 2019 Josie Music Award for Jazz/Blues Duo/Group of the Year. They were also nominated for 2019 Independent Music Award for Best Song/Story and for Best Song/Blues, both for "Blues in My Blood." www.tiffanypollackandco.com.

Jumpin' Johnny Sansone is an American electric blues singer, songwriter, harmonicist, accordionist, guitarist and piano player residing in New Orleans. He was nominated for seven music awards in 2012, including a Blues Music Award for

Song of the Year title, which he won. He has released over 14 albums since his debut album in 1987. www.johnnysansone.com.

Kathy Murray & Bill Jones of Kathy and the Kilowatts from Austin, Texas. Murray was awarded a Silver Medal – Outstanding Achievement for Songwriting/ Lyrics and Blues for their fourth CD "Premonition of Love" in 2018 and was a Finalist for Best Artist for the 2019 Austin Blues Awards. She was the 2017 Heart of Texas Blues Challenge Winner for Solo/Duo.

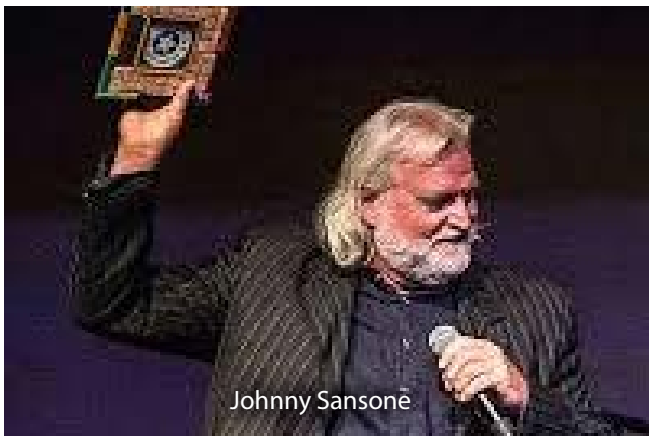
www.kathymurrayandthekilowatts.com.

Moonshine Society originated in 2009 by three students who met at Boston's Berklee College of Music. Their album "Sweet Thing" is the International Blues Challenge Winner for the 2020 Best Self-Produced Blues CD. In Washington, DC, the band received the 2020 Wammie Award for the Best Blues Act, and their album received the Best Blues Album. Three members were inducted into the

Blues Hall of Fame in 2012 for their work with legendary harmonica player Charlie Sayles. They have shared the stage and recorded with many of the greats, such as Johnny Winter, Tower of Power, Tab Benoit, John Mayer, Derek Trucks, and Sister Sparrow.

www.moonshinesociety.com.

Miss Bix, aka Leslie Bixler, from Malibu, Ca., is a singer, songwriter, and guitarist. Miss Bix produced two childrens albums "Rhythm Train" with Dick Van Dyke and Chad Smith (Red Hot Chili Peppers drummer) and "Moon Food" with Dick Van Dyke, which won a Parent's Choice Award. Now she is preparing a new album "We Don't Own the Blues". www.missbix.com



Johnny Sansone



Tommy Marsh



Meg Williams

Virtual Jam Notables

N P E F E L B F F H A G W C N O B W Q A
 O W Y X Y W Q Q V M R J T V P E E B E P
 X R I Z W Q C Y E A A U O W F H D H T Q
 W L M H C R E F F A H C S L N B I C O G
 B M F W R E M M A H Q H V A Z A J Z T M
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 Z S C S L H L P G R I M D K Y Q X G O W
 E K V E Y Q W L M H G S T C M Y M K O Z
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ROCKY
 DRMO
 MOWERY
 TASCRO
 MYERS
 DRUDUL
 HAMMER
 YOUNG
 GREGOIRE
 KAMBIC
 MIGHTYKLUCKS
 WINELAND
 SCHAFFER
 SHERMAN
 NOLA

Word Scramble

Blues Brands

NREDFE

WGILDU

TACSORTAEARS

OGNBIS

DMAMHNO



CD or any of its songs for sale at www.bscplues.com

A PEEK AT THE PAST

Snapshots of BSCP history

The Lochiel Hotel

By Kathryn Gregoire

No long-term members of Blues Society of Central Pennsylvania seem to know when the BSCP got started - sometime in the late 1990s is the consensus. But all agree that the original home of BSCP was in the lounge of the Lochiel Hotel at 901 Shanois Street, Harrisburg.

Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the Victorian-style building has a long and fascinating history, much of it detailed in stories by Sue Gleiter on pennlive.com, Dec. 21, 2016; Courtney Gontz in The Burg magazine, Nov. 20, 2016, and in the John T. Wilson obituary, March 20, 1880 appearing in the Harrisburg Daily Independent.

AschoolhouseforItalianandHungarian immigrants was built on the property in the early 1800s. In 1836, Mathew Wilson built a hotel, known as the Wilson hotel, which was patronized by state politicians. Mr. Wilson and his son, John, ran the hotel until Mr. Wilson's retirement. In 1880, the Colonial Theater was built in the back part, first showing vaudeville and then, starting in 1910, movies. At that time the hotel was renamed the Lochiel Hotel.

The hotel is located in an industrial area referred to as the Lochiel neighborhood. Tragedy struck in the neighborhood on May 11, 1905, when 23 people lost their lives in a railroad accident. The event is referred to as the Lochiel Train Crash.

Dushan Mudrinich bought the hotel in 1927. His son, Dushan Mudrinich, Jr., fondly known as 'Sonny,' inherited the bar and operated it for 40 years. Sonny welcomed blues players for a weekly Thursday jam around 1998 and provided a home for the new BSCP.

Dave Snyder was the society's first president and Kathy Robinson was the first treasurer. Robinson held the first Treasurer's Picnic to raise money for the BSCP. Current board member Dot Grubb helped keep the new society going with the many basket raffles she held at the



Lochiel Hotel.

BSCP gives a "Sonny Award" to persons who have made major contributions to the blues society. In 2018, BSCP presented the Sonny Award to Dale Weis for his development and support of the annual BSCP Mississippi Railroad event, which features blues musicians from Mississippi as the headliner.

In 2004, the hotel closed down due to extensive flood damage and the BSCP Jam moved to the 40 & 8 Club. Sadly, Sonny died in 2006. For a short time, the Lochiel served as an Italian restaurant and then it sat mostly empty.

In 2016, real estate investor Brian Dennis Douglas felt called to resurrect and preserve the legacy of the Historic Lochiel Hotel. Now it is a beautifully restored building with original crown molding, old glass front bar and rustic hardwood flooring called the 901 Lounge and Restaurant.

In the somewhat hidden property, you are surrounded by nature. To quote Douglas in the 2016 Burg article "You can even relax under "Mother," a tree that has stood tall and proud outside the building for about 100 years. It's said that, if you sit quietly under the tree, "you can almost



Flood in 2004 at the Lochiel hotel which forced the BSCP Jam to search for a new venue

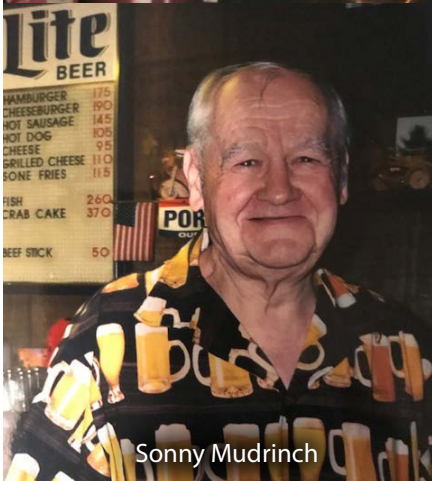
hear the blues music in the air from Lochiel's storied past."

(To see more archive pictures, go to www.bscpb Blues.com. If you have any documentary materials for the early years of the blues society, please send to Buster Grubb at bgolio1020@comcast.net or 420 Orchard Dr., Steelton, PA 17113.)



Gary Harrington, Jason Sutter, Juan Myices and Joe Lamb jam at the Lochiel.

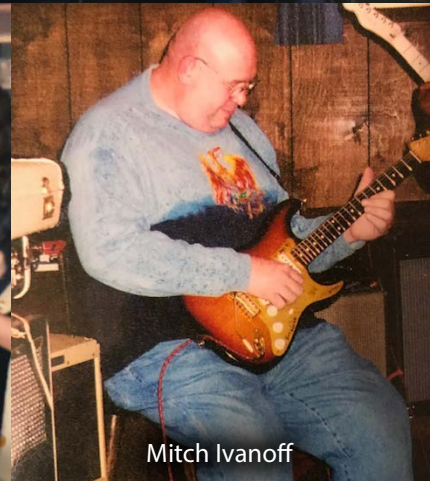
Mark Santana, Ray Santana, Doc Creed.



Sonny Mudrinch



Eric Weaver, Don Johnson and Brett Stuckey



Mitch Ivanoff



Blaine Weisser, end left, with other members of the Slaughterhouse Blues Band at the Lochiel Hotel in 2003: left to right, Tom Dawes, Tony Formica and Jason Suter.

Blaine Weisser

Nov. 12, 1953 – June 30, 2020

On June 30, 2020, Central PA lost a great friend and bassist, Blaine Weisser.

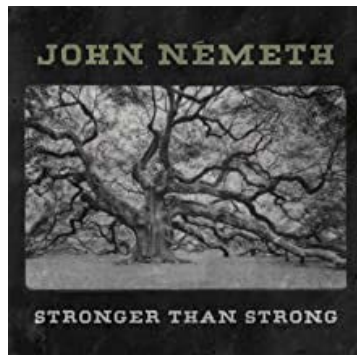
Blaine has played in many notable local bands over the decades, including being a founding member of Slaughterhouse Blues. Most recently he played with the Jake Leg Band.

For those who had the privilege to know Blaine or better yet to have played with him will know that there were very few players out there with that kind of talent, ability, and honesty.

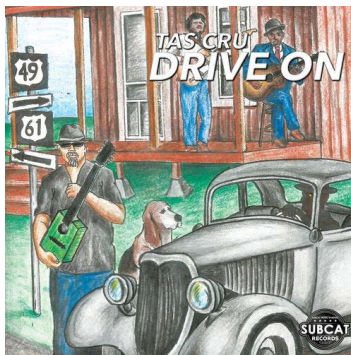
We will all miss our good friend "Grumpy Spice."

hawk Roosts CD Reviews

by Bill "Nighthawk" Halaszynski,



John Nemeth
"Stronger Than Strong"



Tas Cru
"Drive On"



Gregg Martinez
"Mac Daddy Mojeaux"

John Nemeth has crafted some of his best work to date in a nearly two decades-long career on his upcoming release "Stronger Than Strong," due out Oct. 16. There's a stripped down, passionate feel present that harkens back to his earliest independent discs, while also drawing upon his later recordings that have explored the varied facets of Blues and Soul music over the years.

Things kick off deep and dark on the first two songs. "Come and Take It," takes Hill Country drone and revs it up with Nemeth's defiant vocals and guitarist Jon Hay's fuzzy, insinuating fretwork. "Fountain of A Man," opens up with wailing harp before settling into a martial beat underpinning violent imagery.

This aural one-two punch opener leads into the deep groove of "Sometime," then it's onto the rockin' "Throw Me in The Water."

"Chain Breaker" is straight up Chicago Blues allowing Nemeth a chance to blow down the house ala Jr. Wells while Hay handles the Buddy Guy role with aplomb, firing off a roaring old school Chi-town style solo.

The proceedings then turn to take a tad more soulful path. "Bars" and "I Can See Your Love Light Shine" spotlight the rhythm section of drummer Danny Banks and Matt Wilson on bass. The entire ensemble shines throughout. Producer Scott Bomar captures the proceedings with a raw, live feel that accentuates the emotional core of the music.

The end result is a compelling, completely satisfying work that all involved contribute to, but is raised to a higher level by a leader at the height of his powers.

The latest release from Tas Cru is in many ways the polar opposite of Nemeth's. It eschews the in your face live in the studio vibe for studio magic. "Drive On," is a big production filled with all the bells and whistles modern musical technology can summon up. Thankfully, it's also well written and arranged to elicit the truly personal emotional response that good blues is known for.

It's a big sounding record with a heart. Yes, there are many moving parts at work here, but they combine to put a smile on the lips and wiggle to the hips that mark this music as real, not contrived.

I am reminded here of late '70s albums such as Catfish Hodge's "Eye Witness Blues" that took an eclectic approach to blues that was grounded in various styles yet still satisfying in their feel and tone.

Cru AKA Rick Bates is in complete control here. He leads the band and helms the production with confidence born of a blues man's lifetime on the road and eight previous albums under his belt.

Guests Anthony Geraci (keys), Gabe Stillman (slide) and tenor sax player Anthony Terry all add sublime touches throughout.

Standout tracks include "Money Talks," the funky groove of title cut "Drive On," boogie-driven "Kinda Mess" and rollicking "Shookie Shake."

The icing on the cake is provided by Cru's dobro and vocal duet with backup vocalist Mary Ann Casale on the deep, dark closer "Devil In Your Heart."

"Mac Daddy Mojeaux," by Gregg Martinez, is the sum of many musical styles filtered through a Louisiana sensibility that embraces well-written material with first rate arrangements and performances.

Martinez is a strong vocalist who knows how to sell a song with soulful vigor and genuine affection. He co-produced along with Tony Daigle. There's a palpable sense of joy in the ten covers and three originals included here.

Some of the many highlights include a declarative reading of "Same Old Blues," scorching take on "Wildflower" and, perhaps a definitive gospel tinged version of "Don't Pull Your Love," featuring Charlene Howard's vocals. Ballad, "Midnight and Magnolias" stands out for me among the originals that all hold their own alongside so much classic material.

CD Reviews



Tommy Marsh and Paddy Marsh "Hot Coffee and Pain"

Brothers Tommy and Paddy Marsh split guitar and vocal chores for Ventura California based Crooked Eye Tommy. Their latest is called "Hot Coffee and Pain." Son House's "Death Letter Blues" kicks things off with the guitars working in tandem to set a dark, driving tone that permeates the entire disc.

"Sitting in The Driveway," paints a bleak picture of a man grappling with his foibles and uncertain future. This recording presents blues as catharsis in starkest terms.

A couple's recriminations drive "Baby Where You Been?," featuring Teresa James on piano and duet vocals alongside brother Tommy, is one of the strongest tracks here.

Instrumental "The Big House" serves as a mood leveler featuring twin guitar leads, swirling B-3 and wailing saxophone. Sonny Landreth composition "Congo Square" closes out the set on an up tempo, rejuvenating note.



Eric Johanson "Below Sea Level"

Singer/guitarist Eric Johanson is aided and abetted by brothers Luther (producer) and Cody (drums) Dickinson of North Mississippi All Stars fame on "Below Sea Level." The album was recorded at the Dickinson's Zebra Ranch studios. He's also considered to be a protégé of Tab Benoit.

That's a lot to unpack just to talk about a blues rock trio record. There's a bit to talk about with this one though. Talk of these type of trios can conjure up negative images of meandering solos and blatant misogyny in some listener's minds. No such worries warranted here, however, this music is a dark hue yet full-bodied, earnest look at life.

"Buried Above Ground" starts with rolling drums and cascading distorted guitar to frame its metaphor of hurricane as life force.

Johanson's slide work pulls us into "Down to the Bottom" as the narrator entices with the freedom of oblivion.

Ray Jacildo's B-3 organ fills out the sound nicely on slow blues "Changes In the Universe." Things get trio heavy on the next song, "Never Tomorrow," which gets its message across in a concise 2:53.

Song length remains fairly reasonable throughout the record. Emphasis is placed on sonic landscapes and storytelling instead of chops display. This recording rewards listeners open to its style and content with repeated plays.



Magic Slim "Grand Slam"

In the last issue I wrote of my midnight list. Music that has served as balm to my pained being like no simple painkiller could late at night. This time out I'd like to add

Magic Slim's "Grand Slam," primarily recorded in June of 1982, but including three songs from a May '75 session. The version of Grand Slam I own (Rooster Records 2000) sets the template for all things Magic Slim and the Teardrops to follow.

The single string symphonies he composed on the spot add so much more than their simplicity would suggest. His herculean strength on guitar and vocals carries the day.

These teardrops comprised of brother Nick Holt on bass, guitar player Pete Allen and drummer Nate Applewhite, carry their end with supple elastic grace.

It's all good here from song to song, but I'm most drawn to "Early in the Morning," "Just to Be with You," "Slammin'," "Rough Dried Woman" and "Scuffling."

The Joyous cacophony of Slim and the guys houserockin' 'til the cows come home always alleviates whatever distress (physical or otherwise) that may confront me.

TRIPLE B Blues Bands Beat

By Jack Roberts

As you all know, it's been a tough few months for the music business: gigs canceled, venues closed, gatherings limited in size and options. But that hasn't stopped local bands from doing all they can to keep the tunes a-comin'.

Take **Blues on the Loose**, for instance. As anyone who saw familiar members of the band perform on BSCP's Thursday night Virtual Jam can attest, they've downsized. The show featured an all-acoustic set with just three members: Lewis Bechtold on harmonica and vocals, Jay McElroy on acoustic guitar, and Doug Porter on acoustic upright bass. Currently, the band does not have a full-time drummer, and keyboard master Tom Lowry is taking some time off after breaking a finger. They are calling this group **The BOTL Trio** or the **COVID Collateral Three**.

Also rebranding is **Buzzard Luck**. "We are now going under a new name, **Copper Bets**, and have added two members to the group," group leader Kelly McClain told us in a recent email. The new members are husband and wife, Gena and Peter McKibbe. Gena sings and plays electric and acoustic guitar, pedal steel and mandolin. Peter sings and plays harmonica, acoustic and electric guitar. Copper Bets has played a couple of gigs and is working with Bobby Gentilo on the Right Coast Studio on its first album, which the band hopes will be finished by the end of the year. The new album will include songs written by Drew, Peter and Gena. For more info on the band, check out the Copper Bets page on Facebook.

Acoustic Moose, composed of Linda Null, vocals, keys, bass; Chris Kuhns, lead guitar; Tim Gelsweit, bass, keys, and Todd Atkins, drums, have been playing weekly outside gigs, including one on the Pride of the Susquehanna Riverboat. Upcoming gigs include Oct. 10, We Are Weekend, Penn State (online); Oct. 17, J&P Winery's Fall Fest/Truck Rally, Grantville; and Oct. 24, Maggie Malick Wine Caves, Purcellville, VA.

When local guitarist/vocalist Albie von Schaaf isn't busy **Killing the Blues** - and that's all too often these days - he's keeping busy online. "I am uploading all of my recorded original music to my YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/user/blackfuel1," Albie told us in a recent email. "There's a little something for almost anyone on there, with 30 years worth of recorded music." When he's not doing that, he said, he's working on



Pair of Aces, Marianna Schaffer and Bob Wineland

"a jazzy instrumental record with one of my New York homies." Now that we've got to hear!

Then there's **Octavia**, aka Octavia Blues Harp. She is recording prolifically on her own with lots of local musicians. Octavia is working on the cover to her eighth album, "Talkin' 'Bout My Baby," which she describes as "an all blues originals album."

Tracks from albums seven and eight are posted at www.octaviablues.com. Octavia is scheduled to perform live on the rooftop at Tellus 360, Lancaster, on Oct. 30.

Benjamin Vo has literally been on the road with the rest of the **Benjamin Vo Band**. "We played on a moving flatbed truck that drove throughout Lancaster city on August 21," he said in a recent email. "It was organized by Music For Everyone and was just an opportunity to play out again and bring some optimism to the community." While keeping a proper social distance, we must add.

Acoustic Stew, with Marianna Schaffer on vocals, fiddle, and percussion; Bob Wineland on vocals, acoustic and resonator guitar; Rocky Rothrock on vocals and acoustic guitar; Dave Nailor on vocals and cajon; and Dave Harris on bass, has played some wineries, on the sidewalk and on the Pride of the Susquehanna Riverboat this past summer, all outdoors.

Soul House, with Amy Flowers on vocals, flute, and percussion; Johnny Christopher on vocals and bass; Gordy Keeney on vocals and drums; and Rocky Rothrock on vocals, electric and acoustic guitar, played a winery and a few outdoor restaurant gigs.

Rocky says he hopes to spend some time this winter recording, especially his original songs. He also is a jam host on the Thursday night BSCP Virtual Jam.

Pair of Aces, a duo featuring Marianna Schaffer and Bob Wineland, describes the

outdoor gigs they've played this summer as "almost like a religious experience."

"We were so grateful to have the opportunity to play, and the audiences were so grateful to have us perform for them," she said. "It was very intimate and special, unlike any other time in our gigging history."

Pair of Aces has the following dates scheduled: Oct. 2, Downtown Lounge in Lebanon, outside on the sidewalk; Oct. 31, Reid's Cider House, Gettysburg; Nov. 6, Pride of the Susquehanna dinner cruise.

Finally, **Sweet Leda** checked in to say that despite the pandemic, it has gigs coming up, a little far out: Oct. 3, MacDowell's Brew Kitchen, Leesburg, Pa; Oct. 10, Harper's Ferry Brewing, Purcellville, Va., where they'll be saying bye-bye to their longtime drummer, Don Boyette, who's leaving the band after 14 years.

That said, Sweet Leda will play on, thankfully, with Laura Cerulli from Moma's Black Sheep filling in for Don until the band finds a new full-time drummer. Interested? Then catch their show Nov. 29 at Inverness Brewing in Monkton, Md.

If you have a Central Pa.-based blues band, please contact me on Facebook or at ragtime_willi@hotmail.com with the latest blues news. Thanks!



Linda Null of Acoustic Moose

MUSIC OUTDOORS

The following is a listing of known establishments who present music outdoors, but not exclusively blues music. It is likely not a complete list. The list of venues who present musical entertainment indoors and/or outdoors will grow or shrink depending on scale of Covid-19. Please check our website at www.bscplues.com for updated listing and for specific upcoming gigs of local blues musicians. Please email kehe.ja@gmail.com to add a venue to the outdoor list.

Champions Sports Bar & Grill
300 2nd Street, Highspire, Pa.
www.championssportsbar.us
(717) 939-0488

Cassel Vineyards of Hershey
80 Shetland Drive, Hummelstown, Pa.
Fridays & Saturdays 6 – 8:30 pm
www.casselvineyards.com
(717) 533-2008

Marion Court Room
7 E. Marion Court, Lancaster, Pa.
Fridays 5 – 9 pm
www.marioncourtroom.com
(717) 399-1970

Moon Dancer Winery
1282 Klines Run Rd #9120, Wrightsville, Pa.
Fri 7-10 pm
Sat & Sun 2-5 pm
Red, Whites and Blues Festival (July 7-8)
www.moondancerwinery.com
(717) 252-9463

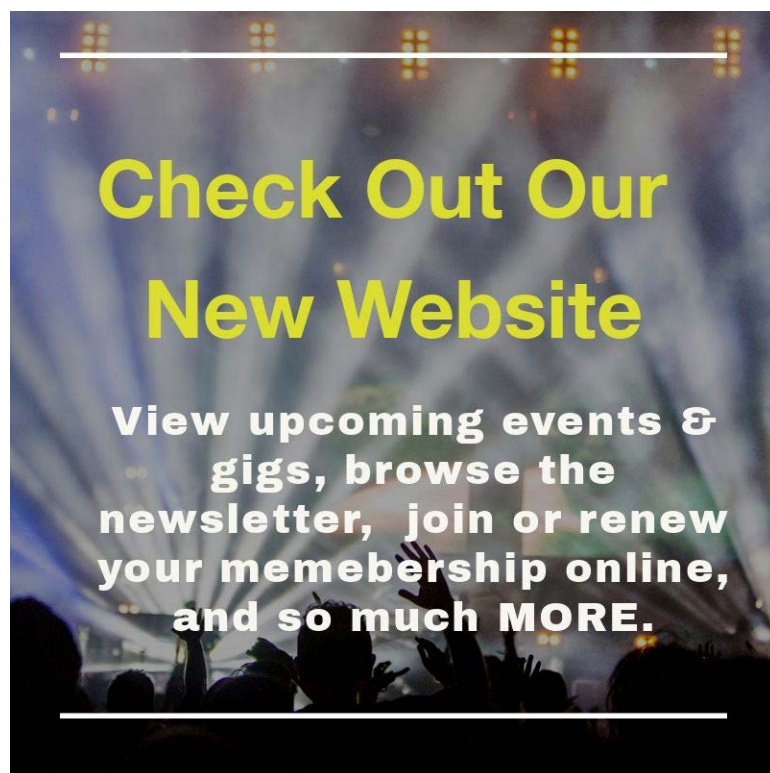
Spyglass Ridge Winery
105 Carroll Rd, Sunbury, Pa.
Saturdays 2-5 pm.. No fee.
Some concerts
www.spyglassridgewinery.com
(570) 286-9911

Sunset Golf Club
2601 Sunset Drive, Middleton, Pa.
Thursday summer music series may open in August
www.sunsetgc.com
(717) 944-5415

SpringGate Vineyard and Winery
5790 Devonshire Road, Harrisburg Pa.
www.springgatevineyard.com
(717) 884-8048

Tellus 360
24 E. King, Lancaster Pa.
Music on rooftop almost nightly
www.tellus360.com
717-393-1660

The Vineyard & Brewery at Hershey
598 Schoolhouse Rd., Middletown, Pa.
Fridays 7 pm
www.vineyardathershey.com
(717) 944-1569



www.bscplues.com

Ballad of Stagolee

Song writers' takes on 1895 murder are all over the place

By David "Dr. Mo" Moyer



STAGOLEE SHOT BILLY
*Could be on a Christmas morning
 Could be on a Christmas night
 Stagolee and Billy D. Lyons
 Got into a terrible fight
 Talkin' 'bout that bad man
 Cruel old Stagolee*



How many times have we either heard or played this song, and wondered about the story behind the lyrics? What is it about this song that would inspire artists as diverse as John Hurt, Nick Cave, Lloyd Price, The Grateful Dead, Dion, Doc Watson, and many more to rewrite and record this story? How much of the story is truth, how much is myth, and which is really more important?

The Stagolee legend originates in 1895, when Lee Shelton, a 30-year-old black man, shot and killed William Lyons on December 25 in St. Louis. However, one could easily make the case that the myth of Stagolee existed long before these two relatively insignificant actors terminated their conflict in a lethal manner. The Ballad of Stagolee can be viewed as just a story about a murder, similar to the Celtic ballad of Barbry Allen (which similarly has gained a life of its own), or as an extension of a mythology that existed since the inception of slavery.

Lee Shelton was a "sporting man" of some notoriety in the Third Ward of St. Louis, otherwise referred to as Chestnut Valley. According to prison records, he was born March 16, 1865 in Texas. In the songs and legends, he is always described as big, black, and bad, but prison records describe him as 5ft. 7in. and his complexion as "mulatto" with a crossed left eye. The St. Louis Dispatch in 1911 described him as "formerly a Negro politician, the proprietor of a lid club known as The Modern Horseshoe Club". A "lid club" was the vernacular name for underground establishments that dealt in narcotics, prostitution, and gambling, keeping a lid on such activities while also serving as a front for a legitimate business. Shelton also served as a carriage driver, often directing visitors to

the city to these establishments.

So how did Lee Shelton become Stagolee?

The St. Louis Star-Sayings refers to Lee Shelton in the December 29, 1895 edition as Stag Lee, while the coroner's report calls him Stack Lee. These two nicknames reference different aspects of a life that would have converged in the being of Lee Shelton. Stack would refer to gambling, setting up or "fixing" a deck of cards in order to cheat, "stacking the deck." Stag is usually associated with male sexuality and potency. Indeed, most of the bordellos of the time featured pictures and heads of stags. Shelton's lifestyle as both a gambler and pimp would be consistent with either nickname.

William Lyons was born somewhere in Missouri in 1864. He reportedly came from an affluent family, however his parents names are not listed on his death certificate. He was described in the newspapers of the day as either "a colored levee hand" or "a watchman." Although not married, he had three children, Florence, Marie, and Buddy. By the time of Billy's death, his father had remarried a woman named Marie Brown. Her son, Billy's stepbrother, had killed Harry Wilson, a friend and "business associate" of Lee Shelton in the Bridgewater Saloon, owned by Henry Bridgewater, Billy Lyon's brother in law. An interesting aspect to the relationship between Lyons and Shelton is that although Billy is usually portrayed as the pitiful, weaker character, he was a large and burly man known in the Chestnut Valley as "Billy the bully." In one early version of the song, the narrator describes a collection being taken for Billy's funeral:

*Some folks gave a nickel
 Some folks gave a dime
 I didn't give a red copper cent
 He ain't no friend of mine.*

It would seem that not many, other than the family of "Billy the bully" were terribly upset by his murder.

One aspect of every telling of the story that remains consistent is the hat, specifically a Stetson. Lee Shelton belonged to a group of exotic and extravagant pimps known in the Chestnut Valley as The Macks. These men held themselves as objects to be observed and envied. Shelton always dressed extravagantly, and always wore Stetson hats. Lee had many hats of many colors for different social situations, including an oxblood red hat he claimed was magical. The story in Chestnut Valley was the hat was made from a man-eating panther that had been skinned alive by the Devil and then traded to Shelton for his soul.

Eyewitness accounts of the murder describe the hat Shelton wore Christmas night 1895 as a high roller milk white Stetson with a hat band embroidered with the picture of his favorite whore.

If we look at the hat as a symbol of masculinity, most versions of the song describe Billy as wearing a derby, and Lee with his wide brimmed Stetson. Freud described hats in dreams as a symbol of "the genital organ, most frequently the male." Clearly the Stetson symbolizes greater masculinity. Further, knocking another's hat or taking it from their head is a symbol of castration.

On the night of December 25, 1895, Billy Lyons and his friend, Henry Crump left the Bridgewater Saloon, and walked to the

Bill Curtis Saloon in Chestnut Valley. Before entering, Lyons asked Crump to lend him a weapon, telling Crump he always got into trouble there. Crump handed him a double edged knife.

While standing at the bar, Lyons noticed Lee Shelton enter and ask "Who's treating?" Someone pointed to Lyons, who by all reports greeted Shelton warmly, and the two drank and laughed for some time until the conversation turned to politics. They argued, and soon began exchanging blows by striking each other's hats. Shelton grabbed Lyons' derby and smashed the crown. Lyons demanded "six bits" for the damaged hat and grabbed Shelton's Stetson. Shelton demanded the return of his hat, and pulled a Smith & Wesson .44 revolver from his coat, and hit Lyons over the head with it. He again demanded the hat, telling Lyons to give it back or he would kill him. Lyons pulled his knife and yelled, "You cockeyed son of a bitch, I'll make you kill me." Shelton backed off, took aim and shot Billy Lyons through the abdomen.

Shelton then walked to Lyons, still holding on to the bar, snatched the hat from his dying hand, and said, "I told you to give me my hat back," put it on his head, walked home and went to bed. Lyons was taken to an infirmary, and then a hospital where he died about 4 a.m. December 26.

Shelton was arrested for murder that morning. On January 5, he was released on a \$4,000 bond (\$100,000 today). His first trial ended July 18 in a hung jury. On October 7, he was sentenced to 25 years in the Missouri State Penitentiary at Jefferson City. He was paroled on Thanksgiving Day 1909, serving 13 years. Two years later, he returned to prison for robbery and assault (pistol whipping his victim), on May 7, 1911. He died in prison of tuberculosis March 11, 1912.

One hundred twenty-five years later, this spectacular murder of a local bully by a street level hustler has become a mythological tale that continues to be retold and reinterpreted. Billy the bully has become a sympathetic figure who pleads for his life for the sake of his non-existent wife and his children. Stagolee, a diminutive lowlife pimp and gambler has become both the quintessential antihero to be admired for never giving in, and a "boogie man" to be feared and respected.

There are many different versions of Stagolee. Although Shelton was sentenced to 25 years in prison, many songs tell the story of Stagolee being sentenced to die. One version has him on the gallows cussing.

*Stagolee on the gallows
He began to cuss
Sheriff told the judge
Kill that man
'fore he come an' kill us*

Obviously, both the sheriff and the judge are white. Another song describes the fear the white deputies feel about being ordered to arrest Stagolee.

*Them deputies took their pistols
Laid them on the shelf
Said "If you want old Stagolee
Go arrest him your own
damn self"*

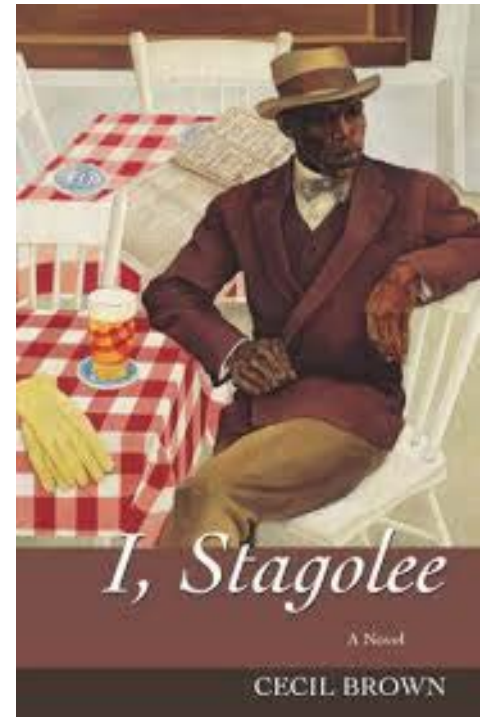
This in a world where the white law had no problem killing any black man and knowing they would face no recrimination. Some songs describe Stagolee descending into Hell and the Devil himself not only fearing Stagolee, but willingly making him the official ruler, and submitting to Stagolee's carnal desires.

Not all these examples have been put to song. Starting in the early 1920s, a series of "toasts" to Stagolee became popular among "social clubs," similar to the lid clubs of Shelton's time, that praised the strength and outright arrogance of Stagolee in the face of oppression. I will not print them here, for they are filled with language that may be considered coarse by some and obscene by others, but they extoll the virtue of never giving in to oppression and celebrate the outlaw who will not bend to being unjustly treated.

Up through the 40s and 50s Stagolee became both a mythical hero and an enforcer to be feared. Young black males were told the stories of Stagolee as an example of how to be a strong man. Children were told to mind their elders or face the wrath of Stagolee. In the 60s, Bobby Seal used Stagolee as a symbol of the enduring black male's struggle against white oppression and racism.

Richard Wright used the Stagolee myth in his story "Big Boy Leaves Home." Langston Hughes, James Baldwin and Ralph Ellison have all acknowledged the influence of the Stagolee myth in their work. One could make the argument that the only difference between the various Stagolee songs and toasts and today's Gangsta Rap is first and third person. Some might make the connection between the Stagolee myths and Shango from Yoruba or Legba from Voodoo, the loas or deities considered "the tricksters".

Trevon Martin, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, Eric Garner, Ahmaud Arbery all remind us that Stagolee, the myth, has become much more important than the story of Lee Shelton and Billy Lyons. As Maxwell Scott reminds us in "The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance," "When the legend becomes fact, print the legend."



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P.O. Box 453
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ELECTRIC JAM EVERY THURSDAY NIGHT AT CHAMPIONS IN HIGHSPIRE PA

COMING BACK SOON

NOW STARTS AT 7 PM

The image is a promotional graphic for an event. It features a close-up of a guitar neck with a wooden fretboard. In the center, the Blues Society of Central PA logo is superimposed. The logo is circular with a blue background and gold border, containing the text "Blues Society of Central PA" in white cursive. A large, bold, red stamp with the words "COMING BACK SOON" is placed diagonally across the logo. At the top of the image, the text "ELECTRIC JAM EVERY THURSDAY NIGHT AT CHAMPIONS IN HIGHSPIRE PA" is written in a white, sans-serif font. At the bottom, the text "NOW STARTS AT 7 PM" is written in a white, sans-serif font.