



## British Bluegrass e-Newsletter No. Eight

March

This is the eighth of a series of semi-regular BBN e-Newsletters. BBN is published by the British Bluegrass Music Association (BBMA).

Those interested in joining the BBMA can do so by contacting the Membership Team, Clare and David Rozzell, 26 Martin Road, Portsmouth, Hampshire, PO3 6JZ [membership@britishbluegrass.co.uk](mailto:membership@britishbluegrass.co.uk).

---

Following the success of the first European Bluegrass Summit in February 2009, a second summit was held on 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> February, 2010, under the auspices of the European Bluegrass Music Association (EBMA), with objectives that included the following:

- \* To provide an opportunity for a wide audience of up to forty participants to meet face to face, bond and get to know each other,
- \* To follow up on issues and decisions taken at last year's summit, and to identify and explore other areas of common concern,
- \* To exchange information about existing local projects to provide tool kits to each other.

As in 2009, Buhl, Baden, in southern Germany, was the location. Bühl city council, which hosts the annual Buhl International Bluegrass Festival, placed first-rate facilities in Bühl Civic Centre at the disposal of the Summit, free of charge. Twenty-nine people from twelve countries - including Rienk Janssen, IBMA board member, and John Wirtz, chair of the IBMA international committee - came at their own expense to take active part in the summit, and were welcomed to Bühl by the mayor, Herr Hans Striebel. In two days of intense discussion, participants identified the following subjects as matters of priority and examined them in working groups:

- \* Associations and membership, including the future structure of the EBMA and its relationship with national associations;
- \* The future form of a European bluegrass magazine and website;
- \* The involvement of young people in bluegrass;
- \* Festivals (including sponsorship and legal issues) and the promotion in the US of bluegrass from Europe and other non-US regions.

A bluegrass concert starring Blackjack (CZ), sponsored by the city of Bühl and provided free of charge to the summit and its participants, was held on 6 February in the Schütte-Keller, a focal point of bluegrass activity in Bühl.

Proceedings ended with a general spirit of friendship and common purpose. The working groups will continue to develop proposals for the EBMA board or for a more general purpose. There was full agreement that the second summit had been successful in carrying constructive co-operation a stage further and plans are being made for a third summit in February 2011.

Comments from attendees included:

'I am really pleased with some of the points discussed at this second meeting and it is obvious that we now have an established event to allow for open discussion of the issues that concern us all in Europe

and in our different countries.'

'I think we've placed another milestone in establishing a Pan-European bluegrass awareness and legacy, and I see our small but strong community making each time little but significant steps forward.'

'I'm really excited about the next two years and I think Buhl is going to become a central part of the European bluegrass calendar.'

'Good meeting and I feel good about the future.'

'I was so moved all three days feeling the European spirit during the discussions and during the jam sessions.'

Many photos taken during the Summit, a report by Friedrich Hog (in German) on the Blackjack concert and coverage in the local press can all be seen [here](#).



**Alison Krauss & Union Station**, featuring [Jerry Douglas](#), will perform at the Telluride Bluegrass Festival, which will take place from 17 through to 20 June in Telluride, Colorado.

It marks Krauss' 12th appearance at the festival and Douglas' 26th.

The festival's line-up also includes the [Sam Bush Band](#), the [Del McCoury Band](#), [Béla Fleck](#), Zakir Hussain & Edgar Meyer, the [Tim O'Brien Band](#), the Jerry Douglas Band, Leftover Salmon, the Yonder Mountain String Band and [Hot Rize](#), as well as Imelda May, Edward Sharpe & the Magnetic Zeros, the Carolina Chocolate Drops, Josh Ritter and Mumford & Sons.

Tickets are available now at [shop.bluegrass.com](http://shop.bluegrass.com) or 800-624-2422.

Make sure you're signed up for the Telluride Bluegrass Festival [email newsletter](#) for all the latest festival updates. <http://www.bluegrass.com/telluride/>



**Kent-Folk** ([www.kentfolk.com](http://www.kentfolk.com)) has a new bluegrass venture at The Boathouse at The Grove Ferry in Upstreet (CT3 4BP).

Having started with a rousing evening by the Biggin Hillbillies, on 16 April they have A Band Like Alice (who have several other gigs this spring – [www.abandlikealice.com](http://www.abandlikealice.com) ) and on 22 May old-time duo Allison Williams and Chance McCoy.

### New and forthcoming CDs .....

Michael Martin Murphey *Buckaroo Blue Grass II* (Rural Rhythm); Big Country Bluegrass *Back In Time* (Mountain Roads Recordings); The Grascals *The Famous Lefty Flynn's* (Rounder); Brand New Strings – No Strings Attached (Rural Rhythm); Audie Blaylock and Redline *Cryin' Heart Blues* (Rural Rhythm); Lorraine Jordan & Carolina Road *Carolina Hurricane* (Rural Rhythm); Various Artists *Look To The Light: Songs of Faith from the pen of Rick Lang* – Russell Moore, Dale Ann Bradley, Jeff Parker, Junior Sisk, and Barry Scott (Rural Rhythm); Darren Beachley & Legends of the Potomac *Takeoff* (Patuxent Records); Larry Stephenson *20th Anniversary* (Whysper Dream Music, originally noted as being on Pinecastle

Records); Valerie Smith & Liberty Pike *Blame It On the Bluegrass* (Bell Buckle Records); Doyle Lawson & Quicksilver *Light On My Feet, Ready To Fly* (Horizon Records); Snyder Family Band *Comin' On Strong* (Mountain Roads Recordings); Jim Lloyd and the Skyliners *Songs From My Attic* (Mountain Roads Recordings); The Toy Hearts *Femme Fatale* ; Various Artists *Dark As A Dungeon* (Rebel); Dierks Bentley *Up On The Ridge* (Capitol Nashville); Various Artists *The Very Things You Treasure, 24 Bluegrass Songs of Faith and Family* (Lonesome Day Records); Reno & Smiley with Carter & Ralph Stanley - *Bluegrass 1963* (Rural Rhythm); Mac Wiseman with Lester Flatt & Chubby Wise - *Bluegrass 1971* (Rural Rhythm).

---

And **DVDs** .....

Volumes 9 and 10 of the wonderful Flatt & Scruggs TV show DVDs will be released on March 23, (Shanachie) <http://www.shanachie.com/> ; Sierra Hull *Secrets Songs & Tunes* (AcuTab Publications) <http://www.acutab.com/> ; Various Artists *Rounder 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary* (Rounder);

---

In the week preceding the SoreFingers week [5th - 9th April], one of its tutors, guitarist **Dan Crary**, will be making a few personal appearances. Dates are as follows .....

Tuesday, 30 March, 8pm  
[Amberley Folk Club](#)  
The Black Horse  
Amberley, West Sussex  
Tickets & Info: 01798 831552 and 07787 570207

Wednesday, 31 March, 8pm  
[Singleton Village Hall](#)  
Singleton, Nr Chichester, West Sussex  
Tickets & Info: 01243 774641

Thursday, 1 April, 9pm  
[Green Note](#)  
106 Parkway, Camden Town, London  
Tel: 0207 7485 9899  
Tickets: [wegottickets.com](http://wegottickets.com)

Friday, 2 April, 8pm  
[The Blue Walnut Cafe](#)  
14 Walnut Road, Chelston, Torquay  
Phone: 01803-605995  
Email: [info@bluewalnutcafe.com](mailto:info@bluewalnutcafe.com)

Crary will present his multi-media show 'Twaang', a theatrical journey through the guitar's colourful and surprisingly controversial 3500-year history.

The early presentation of this show, in San Antonio on October 7, 2009, realised a world television premier and a DVD, *Primal Twang: The Legacy of the Guitar*.  
<http://www.dancrary.com/primal-twang.html>

For more information contact .....

Mark Ringwood, Roots Around the World, The Barn, Fordwater Lane, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 6PT  
Tel: 01243 789786/774641

Fax: 01243 789787  
SKYPE: rootsaroundtheworld  
Mobile: 07802 500050  
[www.rootsaroundtheworld.info](http://www.rootsaroundtheworld.info)  
[markringwood@btinternet.com](mailto:markringwood@btinternet.com)

The Amberley Folk Club is currently held every Tuesday at The Black Horse Inn, High Street, Amberley, West Sussex BN18 9NL  
Contact Jon or Hannah  
[amberleyfolkclub@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:amberleyfolkclub@hotmail.co.uk)  
Tel:01798 875476 and 01798 831552  
<http://www.amberleyfolkclub.com/index.php>

---

**Tony Furtado**, another of the SoreFingers tutors this Easter, will be performing his only UK gig during this visit at the Verge, Cheshire Ring, 72 Manchester Road, Hyde, Cheshire SK14 2BJ, on Saturday, 10 April at 8.30 pm.

---

The **Society for the Preservation of Bluegrass Music in America (SPBGMA)** held its 36th Annual Bluegrass Music Awards show on 7 February during the 27th National Convention at Nashville's Sheraton Music City Hotel.

The winners were announced and presentations made in the following categories to .....

Contemporary female vocalist: Rhonda Vincent  
Traditional female vocalist: Alecia Nugent  
Contemporary male vocalist: Jamie Daley  
Traditional male vocalist: James King  
Entertaining group: Nothin' Fancy  
Gospel group contemporary: Dailey & Vincent  
Gospel group traditional: Paul William & Victory Trio  
Instrumental group: The Bluegrass Brothers  
Vocal group: Dailey & Vincent  
Entertainer: Rhonda Vincent  
Group: The Grascals  
Banjo player: Aaron McDaris  
Mandolin player: Alan Bibey  
Fiddle player: Hunter Berry  
Guitar player: Josh Williams  
Dobro player: Tim Graves  
Bass player: Darrin Vincent  
Album: *Blue Side Of The Blue Ridge*, Junior Sisk & Rambler's Choice  
Song: *Amanda Lynn*, Lou Reid & Carolina  
Songwriter: Tom T. & Dixie Hall  
Radio station: WDVX  
Radio host: Brenda Lawson  
Festival promoter: Bertie Sullivan

The [Bluegrass Plus Club](#) has planned a festival to take place during the weekend 2nd and 3rd April. The Easter Event, as the event has been dubbed, takes place at The Community Amateur Sports Club, Woodplace Lane, Coulsdon, Surrey, CR5 1NE, and will include workshops, picking sessions, concerts and an opportunity for scratch bands to perform. The concert on Saturday night will feature [Monroe's Revenge](#), with Biggin Hillbillies and Deep River, while resident band, The Grass Hoppers, will be playing on Friday.

Good Friday, 2<sup>nd</sup> April

Pickin' Day Workshops and Evening Concert - Acoustic Astronauts with Chris Haigh (Fiddle), Biggin Hillbilly's, Deep River, Les Elvin & Bluegrass From France. Resident Band The Grass Hoppers.

Saturday, 3rd April

Pickin' Day Scratch Bands and Evening Concert - Monroe's Revenge

Both Days £15 (£14 members) or £10 per day (members £9)

email: [sheila@bluegrass-plusclub.co.uk](mailto:sheila@bluegrass-plusclub.co.uk)

---

Keith Pearson's **Coup de Grass**, who raised £1,400 for Haiti children at their recent benefit concert, will be making two further personal appearances during March.

Dates and venues are as follows:

Tuesday 16 March

Dartford Folk Club

8.00pm info:

[www.dartfordfolk.org.uk](http://www.dartfordfolk.org.uk)

Wednesday 24 March

The Red Lion PH

Histon, Cambridge

8:00pm info: 01223 564437

You can hear the band on Spotify and see them on YouTube. [www.keithpearson.co.uk](http://www.keithpearson.co.uk)

---

The International Bluegrass Music Museum's annual **River of Music Party** (ROMP) is a very popular event in the bluegrass calendar. This year's gathering takes place from 24 to 26 June and will bring the pioneers and legends of the genre together with young musicians who are pushing the boundaries of bluegrass.

Arthel Lane "Doc" Watson, who was 87 on 3 March, is scheduled to perform at the RiverPark Center on 24 June with his grandson, Richard Watson and David Holt, an old-time music scholar and performer.

Watson, who was inducted into the International Bluegrass Music Association's Hall of Fame in 2000, performed at ROMP in 2004 and 2006.

The Owensboro, Kentucky-based museum has sent invitations to 300 bluegrass musicians who were performing in the 1950s or before as well as to members of Bill Monroe's band, the Blue Grass Boys. "On June 23-24, we'll be filming the Blue Grass Boys individually and in groups, talking about their careers and telling stories about Monroe," the museum's Executive Director Gabrielle Gray said.

"The interviews are for a documentary about Monroe as told by members of his band", she explained. The

pioneers and Blue Grass Boys will perform in a public jam session at the RiverPark Center, Owensboro, on 24 June and 25 June at Yellow Creek Park in nearby Thruston.

The Dillards, whose plaque will be unveiled in the IBMA Hall of Fame on 24 June, will also perform that day.

ROMP will also stretch the boundaries of bluegrass with bands like the Oklahoma-based Rockin' Acoustic Circus; the Virginia-based Frank Solivan II & Dirty Kitchen; and the Georgia-based Packway Handle Band.

In between the two extremes are some of today's top bluegrass musicians, including the reigning IBMA entertainers of the year Dailey & Vincent; Claire Lynch; Josh Williams; Michael Cleveland; Danny Paisley & Southern Grass; The Isaacs; and Valerie Smith & Liberty Pike.

Three international bands are also in the line-up; Japan's New Appleseed Band; Hungary's Acousticure and Sweden's G2. "Acousticure is the first Hungarian band we've had", Gray said. "They won the European World of Bluegrass band competition last year".

ROMP is designed to appeal to progressive fans as well as to traditional ones. "Friday has more traditional music", Gray commented. "Saturday, we'll make a big pitch to the young people."

"Another headliner may be added to the mix", she speculated, "but that depends on the economy and how many sponsorships we're able to get."

Other acts include Pete and Jan Wernick; the Pete Wernick Jam Campers; Mac Martin & The Dixie Travelers; Dismembered Tennesseans; Jimmy Martin Jr. & The Sunny Mountain Boys; and Summertown Road.

Four day passes cost \$75 until 16 June and one-day tickets are \$20 until that day.

For information about the line-up of artists and to purchase tickets go to the museum's website. <http://www.bluegrass-museum.org/general/romp.php>

---

Tickets are now on sale for the **Deering Banjo 1000** celebration, a day-long banjo extravaganza hosted by the Eagle Music Shop at The North Light Gallery, Armitage Bridge, Huddersfield on 20 March.

This special event includes a Banjo Clinic with Greg and Janet Deering, Jens Kruger's Banjo Master Class and The Kruger Brothers' in concert with support from Howard 'Shep' Shepherd.

It should be noted that the £5.00 daytime entrance ticket does not include entry into the Jens Kruger Master Class. (The Master class is in a separate private room) and that the evening 'Kruger Brothers' concert is also a separate ticket only event.

Details are available on the Eagle Music Shop website.

<http://www.eaglemusicshop.com/details3.asp/ProductID/5536/kruger-brothers-deering-banjoes.htm>

---

**Images of America: Kentucky's Bluegrass Music** is a photographic tribute to some of the pioneers and biggest names in Kentucky bluegrass music.

The 100 page book that includes about 200 photographs, some dating back as early as 1918 and many of which have never before been seen in print before, was compiled by James C. Claypool, professor

emeritus at Northern Kentucky University and published by Arcadia Publishing.

The book includes pictures of such Kentucky notables as Bill Monroe, JD Crowe and Ricky Skaggs, but it is the photographs of lesser-known artists and personalities such as Richard Burnett, the composer of "The Farewell Song", also known as "I Am A Man of Constant Sorrow" and which was used as the theme song to the movie "O Brother, Where Art Thou?", that provide a significant extra dimension to the collection.

[http://www.arcadiapublishing.com/mm5/merchant.mvc?Screen=PROD&Product\\_Code=9780738585611](http://www.arcadiapublishing.com/mm5/merchant.mvc?Screen=PROD&Product_Code=9780738585611)

---

The Gospel Music Association recently announced the final nominees for the 41st GMA **Dove Awards**.

[http://www.gospelmusic.org/newsmedia/pressRoom\\_detail.aspx?iid=42168&tid=33](http://www.gospelmusic.org/newsmedia/pressRoom_detail.aspx?iid=42168&tid=33)

Bluegrass and related genre's are represented in several categories. However, the nominees for the two bluegrass-specific categories are ....

Bluegrass Recorded Song of the Year  
(Song; album; artist; writer; label)

"I Heard My Savior Calling Me"; Destination Life; Rhonda Vincent; Rounder Records  
"On The Other Side"; Brothers From Different Mothers; Dailey & Vincent; Rounder  
"This World Is Not My Home"; Ricky Skaggs Solo: Songs My Dad Loved; Ricky Skaggs; Albert Brumley; Skaggs Family Records  
"When We Fly"; Breaking Like Dawn; Little Roy Lewis & Lizzy Long; Joel Lindsey, Wayne Haun, Ty Herndon  
"Working On A Building"; Mountain Soul II; Patty Loveless; Saguaro Road

Bluegrass Album of the Year  
(Album; artist; producer; label)

Blue Ridge Mountain. Memories; The Marksmen Quartet; Rural Rhythm Records  
Breaking Like Dawn; Little Roy Lewis & Lizzy Long; Kevin Ward, Lizzy Long; Vin Records  
I Have Been Blessed; The Far City Boys; Kevin Street, Aaron Ramsey, Dave Moody; Lamont Records  
I Just Want To Thank You Lord; Larry Sparks; Rural Rhythm Records  
Lord Bless This House; Nothin Fancy; Darrin Vincent; Pinecastle  
The Isaacs....Naturally; The Isaacs; Bill Gaither, Ben Isaacs; Gaither Music Group

The 41st Annual GMA Dove Awards show, hosted by the Gospel Music Association (GMA), will be held on 21 April at Nashville's famed Grand Ole Opry House.

It will be televised on Gospel Music Channel (GMC) television network ([www.gospelmusicchannel.com](http://www.gospelmusicchannel.com)), on 24 April from 8 p.m. - 10 p.m. EST.

---

The five-piece adventurous bluegrass / Old Time group, **Crooked Still**, will be touring later this month, with dates as follows:

Sunday 21 March: Chorley, Lancashire, St Bede's  
Monday 22 March: Bristol, St Bonaventure's Club  
Tuesday 23 March: London, The Borderline

Wednesday 24 March: Leeds, The Brudenell Social Club  
Thursday 25 March: Sheffield, City Memorial Hall

---

West Virginia's exciting, young old-time quartet **The Fox Hunt** are in the UK and Ireland for festival appearances in June and July.

The band, from the Brookfield-Knights artist roster, will arrive in Ireland for Cork Music Festival on 26 June and play Earagail Arts Festival and Galway Music Festival. In between, they will appear at The Old Library in Kilbarchan, Renfrewshire (29 June), The Tolbooth, Stirling on 30 June, Edinburgh (venue tbc) on 1 July and Moniaive, Dumfries and Galloway, on 2 July.

The band returns to Scotland later in the month for appearances at the Hebridean Celtic Festival in Stornoway, on 14 and 15 July, followed by The Aros Centre (Isle of Skye) on 16 June and Brookfield Village Hall on 17 June.

They have won legions of fans across the USA by putting a modern spin on Appalachian old-time and bluegrass music, their self-penned material winning lots of radio exposure and their interpretations of crusty old gems keeping the purists happy too.

Their debut album, *Nowhere Bound*, won them a following far beyond the precincts of Harper's Ferry and Martinsburg where they grew up, the follow-up made sure the momentum kept building and a brand new release is all set to win them even more exposure.

They are in Ireland following a transatlantic writing collaboration with The Henry Girls, three very talented singing sisters from Co. Donegal. [www.thefoxhunt.net](http://www.thefoxhunt.net)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gaixsrf1dpU>

---

The **Dixie Bee-Liners** will be appearing at [Fairport's Cropredy Convention Festival](#) near Banbury, Oxfordshire, on Friday, 13 August.

The band, which has great appeal for younger audiences particularly, is looking to fill other dates in UK and Europe between 10 - 18 August and in the period 1 - 11 September.

Anybody who is interested in booking the Dixie Bee-Liners should contact Jim Roe, Roe Entertainment, 3412 Roy Avenue, Maryville, Tennessee 37804. Tel: 865-982-8885, Fax: 865-982-0885.  
[roeent@bellsouth.net](mailto:roeent@bellsouth.net)

The Abingdon, Virginia-based sextet consists of the dulcet-throated Brandi Hart (rhythm guitar, Nashville guitar, fiddle, and mountain dulcimer); bluegrass veteran and gifted songwriter Buddy Woodward (mandolin, guitar, banjo and bass); Bristol (Tenn./Va.) fiddler, sweet-voiced thrush and Becky Buller protégé Rachel Renee Johnson; Robin Davis (lead guitar and mandolin); Jeremy Darrow (double-bass), returning to his bluegrass roots after formal jazz studies; and banjo picker extraordinaire Casey Henry, who joined The Bee-Liners in August 2009.

The Dixie Bee-Liners recently released their second full-length work, *Susanville*, a concept album that peers into the cars and trucks in America's cities and towns.

<http://dixiebeeliners.com/index.html>

---

---

The 2010 **Didmarton Bluegrass Festival** is scheduled for 2nd to 5th September, at the usual location, Kemble Airfield, and will feature The Peter Rowan Bluegrass Band (Jody Stecher, Keith Little and Paul Knight), the Claire Lynch Band and Jack Lawrence, all from the US.



The UK line up is no less prestigious, with local heroes Bill Smarme and the Business, The Scoville Units, Salmagundi, The Thunderbridge Bluegrass Boys, the Slowdown Boys and a lot more besides.

On Thursday night, 2<sup>nd</sup> September, a special concert will be held on the main stage with folk super-heroes Show of Hands. <http://www.showofhands.co.uk/>

All the usual activities, dance, instrumental seminars, tuition tent will be on the programme and an order has been placed for sunshine!

Tickets are on sale and a booking form is available on the website where you can also keep up with the latest news. [www.didmarton-bluegrass.co.uk](http://www.didmarton-bluegrass.co.uk)

The event is sponsored by Tom Nechville, of Nechville Musical Products (USA), and Phil Davidson, of Davidson Instruments (UK), who have kindly donated instruments as prizes for the raffle. <http://www.nechville.com/> <http://www.davidsoninstruments.com/>

---

---

The highly anticipated authorized biography of acoustic guitar legend **Tony Rice**, *Still Inside: The Tony Rice Story*, written by Tim Stafford and Caroline Wright, will be published on 12 April, with a grand premier during [Merlefest](#) 2010 (which is held in Wilkesboro, North Carolina, from 29 and 30 April through to 1 and 2 May).

The authorized biography relates Rice's life on and off stage and analyses his innovative guitar technique.

<http://www.tonyricestory.com/>

---

---

The **Wilders** arrive back in the UK at the start of May for a run of arts centre and theatre gigs in Wales prior to heading for Ireland. The band will round the tour off with dates in Buckinghamshire, Bath (International Music Festival) and Bristol, and will return in July for a second run of dates (all in Scotland).

Thurs May 6: Borough Theatre, Abergavenny [www.boroughtheatreabergavenny.co.uk](http://www.boroughtheatreabergavenny.co.uk)  
Fri May 7: Park & Dare Theatre (Rhondda Rocks Music Festival), Treorchy, Glamorgan [www.cynonvalley.co.uk](http://www.cynonvalley.co.uk)  
Sat May 8: Theatr Harlech [www.theatrharch.com](http://www.theatrharch.com)  
Sun May 9: Taliesin Arts Centre, Swansea [www.taliesinartscentre.co.uk](http://www.taliesinartscentre.co.uk)  
Mon May 10: FREE  
Tues May 11: Aberystwyth Arts Centre [www.aberystwythartscentre.co.uk](http://www.aberystwythartscentre.co.uk)  
Weds May 12: FREE  
Thurs May 13: The Welfare Hall, Ystradgynlais, Swansea [www.thewelfare.co.uk](http://www.thewelfare.co.uk)  
Fri May 14: Theatr Mwldan, Cardigan [www.mwldan.co.uk](http://www.mwldan.co.uk)  
Sat May 15: Wyeside Arts centre, Builth Wells, Powys [www.wyeside.co.uk](http://www.wyeside.co.uk)  
Sun May 16: Galeri, Caernarfon [www.galericaernarfon.com](http://www.galericaernarfon.com)  
Mon May 17: FREE  
Tue May 18: FREE  
Wed May 19: Strule Arts Centre, Omagh [www.struleartscentre.co.uk](http://www.struleartscentre.co.uk)

Thur May 20: Town Hall, Bangor [www.northdown.gov.uk](http://www.northdown.gov.uk)  
Fri May 21: Flowerfield Arts Centre, Portstewart [www.flowerfield.org](http://www.flowerfield.org)  
Sat May 22: Market Place Theatre, Armagh [www.marketplacearmagh.com](http://www.marketplacearmagh.com)  
Sun May 23: Black Box, Belfast [www.movingonmusic.co.uk](http://www.movingonmusic.co.uk)  
Mon May 24: FREE  
Tues May 25: Regional Cultural Centre, Letterkenny [www.eaf.ie](http://www.eaf.ie)  
Wed May 26: Nesbitt Arms Hotel, Ardara, Co Donegal [www.ardarafestivals.com](http://www.ardarafestivals.com)  
Thurs, May 27: Séamus Ennis Cultural Centre, Naul, Fingal, Co Dublin  
Fri May 28: Bath International Music Festival [www.bathmusicfest.org.uk](http://www.bathmusicfest.org.uk)  
Sat May 29: Radcliffe Centre, Buckingham [www.empty-rooms.com](http://www.empty-rooms.com)  
Sun May 30: The Tunnels, Temple Meads, Bristol

There's a sample of their music on YouTube at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=tbm42rO8Yr8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tbm42rO8Yr8)

---

Banjo ace **Bill Emerson** celebrates two major events in March. As well as holding the CD release party for the new Bill Emerson & Sweet Dixie album, *Southern*, on 28 March, the day before Emerson will be honoured with the very first of the Washington Monument Awards presented by the DC Bluegrass Union in recognition of his 50 year career in bluegrass music. The award celebrates Washington, DC-area musicians who have been instrumental in shaping the direction of bluegrass music nationwide.

Emerson has been associated with several important events in bluegrass music history. He was a founder member of The Country Gentlemen, with Cliff Waldron he recorded the very first bluegrass version of *Fox On The Run* and added a substantial legacy of standard tunes to the banjo repertoire.

In his time with Jimmy Martin & The Sunny Mountain Boys he helped to define the Jimmy Martin sound and saw the debut of *Theme Time*, a banjo tune that is played at jams and in parking lots to this day.

From 1973 until 1992, when he retired, he served in the US Navy. Playing banjo in the group, he was responsible for the rise to prominence of bluegrass music played by Country Current, the US Navy band.

Called "a banjo legend" by the Washington Post, twice awarded Banjo player of the Year by the Muleskinner News bluegrass magazine, credited with starting the careers of both Dobro® legends Mike Auldridge and Jerry Douglas, and credited by Ricky Skaggs as being responsible for his post Ralph Stanley musical career, Bill Emerson was also inducted into the Virginia Folk Music Association Hall of Fame in 1984.

In 1988, was inducted into the Virginia Country Music Hall of Fame.

Two years later Emerson was inducted into the SPBGMA Preservation Hall of Greats during ceremonies at the 26th Annual Bluegrass Music Awards Show in Nashville, Tennessee.

In 2006 he was inducted into The Washington Area Music Awards (Wammies) Hall of Fame.

Emerson's banjo albums, *Gold Plated Banjo* and *Home Of The Red Fox* are essential listening for students of bluegrass banjo.

<http://www.bluegrassville.com/BillEmerson/>

---

Having recently completed her contract with Rounder Records, **Rhonda Vincent** will shortly announce her new record label affiliation. She says her departure from Rounder was entirely amicable and that they may work together again in the future. Vincent spent ten years with the label and recorded nine albums for them. Her latest is *Destination Life*, released in June 2009.

---

This year bluegrass legend **Curly Seckler** celebrates 75 years in music. Seckler began his musical career in 1935, on Radio WSTP in Salisbury, North Carolina.

He went on to perform with a number of the top names in bluegrass music, including Charlie Monroe, Jim & Jesse, Mac Wiseman, The Stanley Brothers, and The Sauceman Brothers.

In 1949 he joined Lester Flatt & Earl Scruggs' Foggy Mountain Boys, and remained with them for nearly a dozen years, recording over 130 songs with them. His distinctive, razor-sharp tenor harmonies grace many of their classic hits, setting the standard for countless bluegrass singers who have followed.

Curly joined Lester Flatt's Nashville Grass in 1973, and then took over leadership of the band after Flatt passed away in 1979. Seckler led the Nashville Grass for another fifteen years before retiring from full-time touring in 1994.

In 2004 he was inducted into the International Bluegrass Music Association's Hall of Fame.

Seckler continued to perform and record, and his 2005 release, "Down in Caroline," was a finalist for IBMA Recorded Event of the Year.

His most recent recording, "Bluegrass, Don't You Know," was picked among the Top 10 CDs of 2006 by the Chicago Tribune. <http://www.curlyseckler.net>

---

France's customary **Spring Bluegrass Weekend** will take place near Rennes in Brittany from 21 to 24 May. This is just a get together with no other goal but to jam and enjoy each other's company. More information (in French) is available at [www.france-bluegrass.org](http://www.france-bluegrass.org) (go to forums/concerts-events/rencontre pentecôte). The discussion is in French but most people speak English on the forum.

Also the Grange Rouge, a beautiful old barn near Macon, north of Lyon, in the heart of the French countryside, opens its doors to bluegrass (and French folk) as every year the second weekend in June (11-12). More jamming with an open stage on Saturday evening, bands can sign up to play on the spot.

The France Bluegrass Musique Association holds its AGM there on the Sunday morning.  
[www.myspace.com/grangerouge](http://www.myspace.com/grangerouge)

In the south west of France there is plenty happening with the new and dynamic Bluegrass en Gascogne association. Three up-coming events in their diary are ....

- 3-4 April, a jam weekend at someone's home not far from Toulouse airport
- 14-17 May, non stop Bluegrass in the Lot
- 22 May, Bluegrass and Old Time festival in Les Landes

For more information on Bluegrass en Gascogne, write to Dany at [nicole.souillart@wanadoo.fr](mailto:nicole.souillart@wanadoo.fr)

France Bluegrass Musique Association  
+33 450 03 42 04  
(Mobile) +33 647 714 435  
[chowardwilliams@gmail.com](mailto:chowardwilliams@gmail.com)  
[www.france-bluegrass.org](http://www.france-bluegrass.org)

---

---

Rural Rhythm Records has announced the release this month of albums from two first generation bluegrass legends: *Bluegrass 1963* by **Reno & Smiley** with special guests Carter and Ralph Stanley and *Bluegrass 1971* by **Mac Wiseman** with special guests, Lester Flatt and Chubby Wise.

The first CD, produced by Ronnie Reno, is a legacy of Reno & Smiley's time on their legendary "Top O' the Morning" daily TV show in Roanoke, Virginia, during the early 1960s.

The second star-studded album was recorded in 1971 at the Renfro Valley Barn Dance in Kentucky during this historic collaborative period between Mac Wiseman and Lester Flatt.

These are the first two album projects by a new and exciting joint venture between Rural Rhythm Records and Ronnie Reno.

<http://www.ruralrhythm.com/bluegrass-new.html>

---

---

**Phil Rosenthal**, singer-songwriter and former lead singer with the legendary bluegrass band The Seldom Scene, is touring the UK for the first time in September.

He will be accompanied by another member of his prodigiously talented family, son Daniel.

Rosenthal has recently released a beautiful album, *A Treasury of Bluegrass & Country Songs* (American Melody AM-CD-5125). <http://www.americanmelody.com/index.html>

As well as making appearances at regular venues up and down the country (details of which will be published closer to the time), Rosenthal is available on a few select dates - September 11th, 15th, 16th & 19<sup>th</sup> - for House Concerts. So, if you would like one of the finest bluegrass musicians of the last 40 years playing in your home/venue, please contact Claire Stein, Tel: 01404 813004 - 24 hours; Mobile: 07713 161669, [info@grapevinemusicagency.co.uk](mailto:info@grapevinemusicagency.co.uk)

The tour is being organised by Bob Butler & Claire Stein, Grapevine Music, Honesty, Happy Valley, Venn Ottery, Devon EX11 1SG [www.grapevinemusicagency.co.uk](http://www.grapevinemusicagency.co.uk)

---

---

Country music singer **Dierks Bentley**, a supporter of bluegrass music since long before he became a star in Nashville, will release a bluegrass album in the summer.

Bentley is currently at work on a new collection of bluegrass tunes called *Up on the Ridge*. The album is scheduled for release on the Capitol Nashville label.

Instead of an all-star band of session players, Bentley recorded with such stellar ensembles as The Del McCoury Band and Punch Brothers (with Chris Thile), with guest appearances from Sam Bush and Tim O'Brien as well.

Other special guests include Alison Krauss and Miranda Lambert.

The record has been produced by Jon Randall Stewart, whose acoustic/bluegrass credentials are beyond reproach and engineered by Gary Paczosa, who has worked on masterpieces with Alison Krauss, Blue Highway, Adam Steffey and the 'Dusters among others.

Bentley has appeared on albums by The Grascals and The Infamous Stringdusters and featured The Grascals on one of his recordings.

Also, Bentley cut a track with the Del McCoury Band for his 2003 eponymous debut release for Capitol Records, Nashville and he continued his collaborations with the McCoury family with a remake of *Last Call*, written by Ronnie McCoury and with whom Bentley sings a duet arrangement, for his *Feel That Fire* album.

<http://www.dierks.com/>

---

Bluegrass music has long been a family affair. There's the Lewis family, the Vincent family, aka the Sally Mountain Show, and Cherryholmes, to mention just three family bands. Well now the family, any family, can enjoy bluegrass with a different dimension, playing **Bluegrass Routes**, a bluegrass music trivia board game.

The objective of the game for two to four is to be the first person or team to put together a bluegrass band and make it to the stage of Sally Mountain Bluegrass Park by correctly answering questions from five categories.

At present, the game is only available direct from the creator Bob lery, a former public school teacher in Ohio. <http://bluegrassgame.com/index.html>

---

For further information about the BBMA visit <http://www.britishbluegrass.co.uk/>