



APRIL 2007

# TFTM *news*

The Tucson Friends of Traditional Music

## TODAY'S TRADITIONAL MUSIC

by Jorga Riggensbach

**T**raditional music is a dynamic part of our culture. It isn't in the dusty back corner of an out-of-the-way museum. It's happening all over the world and

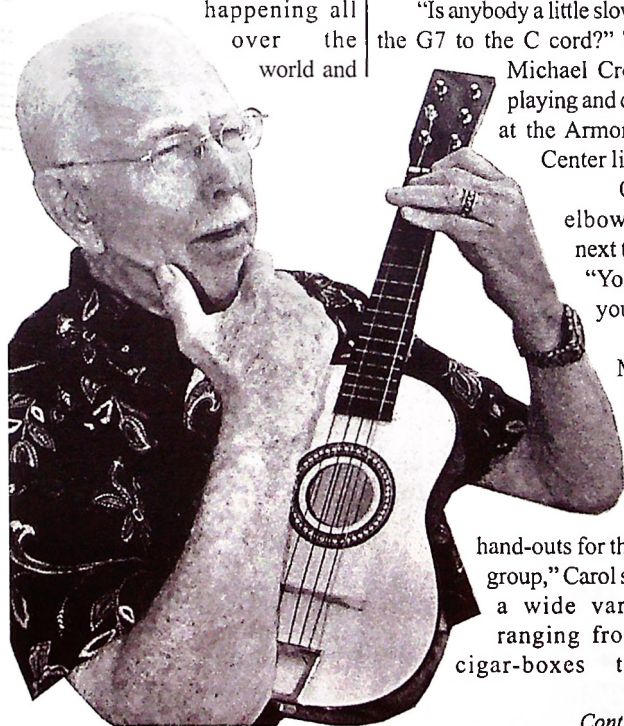
Tucson presents many wonderful examples of the evolution and vivacity of traditional music.

I visited a Ukele Class at Armory Park a couple weeks ago. Not only are participants learning to play the instrument, they are also learning how to build simple, inexpensive ukes.

"Is anybody a little slow jumping from the G7 to the C cord?" The instructor, Michael Crownhart, stops playing and queries his class at the Armory Park Senior Center library.

One man elbowed the fellow next to him and said, "You'd better raise your hand."

Sitting beside Michael, Ukelele Club president, Carol Humphrey organizes hand-outs for the class. "In this group," Carol said, "you'll see a wide variety of ukes ranging from homemade cigar-boxes to Hawaiian



*Continued on page 2*

# TFTM Board Members \*

*President	Dale Tersey	TFTMpresident@tftm.org	520-906-0352
*Treasurer	Steve Richards	TFTMtreasurer@tftm.org	520-882-3068
*Secretary	Cheryl Andersen	TFTMsecretary@tftm.org	
*Website	Becky Nankivell	TFTMwebsite@tftm.org	520-321-4298
*Dance	Lorien Tersey	TFTMcontradance@tftm.org	520-591-2432
*Bookkeeper	June Pitts	dancingjunebug@gmail.com	520-751-2502
Newsletter	Jorga Riegenbach	scribe@ultrasw.com	520-250-8393

*Continued from page 1 - TODAY'S TRADITION*

Kamakas. Most people here play soprano ukes, but there are a few baritones."

Next, the group plays their theme song, "String Along with Me." "We call ourselves 'The Stringalongs,'" Carol explains.

Michael encourages the group by reminding them that, "The number one thing is to have fun. There's no wrong way to play a uke. It's like driving a car with a stick shift. Eventually you do it without even giving it a second thought."

After an hour of playing, Jim Chapman arrives. Jim is teaching them how to make a uke from scratch using recycled material, like cigar boxes.

Jim Chapman, at 89-years-old, says he's shooting for 95.

"Why 95?" I asked.

"I'm taking it in small steps. I don't buy green bananas."

Jim started his uke adventure a year-and-a-half ago after reading a book his wife had given him for Christmas. "It was about a guy who tried to build a ukelele and failed miserably. That made me curious, so I checked around



and discovered that folks in Appalachia had been building ukeles from boxes for many years.

"It sounded like an interesting challenge, so with the

*Continued on page 5*



The Tucson Friends of Traditional Music  
Newsletter is Published  
Ten Times a Year By:

The Tucson Friends of Traditional Music  
PO Box 40654, Tucson, AZ 85717-0654

Tucson Friends of Traditional Music (TFTM) is dedicated to keeping the traditions of community music and dance alive and growing in Tucson. TFTM sponsors and promotes concerts, dances, workshops, and informal music sessions. Through these activities and a newsletter publication, TFTM builds awareness, educates, and fosters diversity in music and dance in the Tucson community.

Tucson Friends of Traditional Music is incorporated in the state of Arizona as a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation.

For more info, visit [www.tftm.org](http://www.tftm.org), or call us at 520-408-6181.



## STEVE LANGFORD PART TWO - ARRANGING

In regard to using software, Steve said, "I used several tools that I would not dare to use if I were worried about working on a tune not in the public domain. I used character-recognition software to scan the ABC Notation from the TFTM newsletter; but I had to correct so many errors that it would have been quicker to put in Notepad by computer keyboard."

"Once I had the ABC code spaced out so that I could read it, I studied it until I felt that I understood most of what it "does." I took a screen shot of its music-score presentation within ABC Navigator 2, copied that into computer memory, and pasted it into a graphical program called Grapher 6 ([www.golden.com](http://www.golden.com)). From there, I sized the music for printing to hard copy, then I then scanned it with PhotoScore v.4.2.1.

"Once a few corrections were made in PhotoScore, I exported the tune (with chord designations) to Sibelius v.4.1.5. (I prefer *Sibelius* to *NoteWorthy Composer*, nowadays, because it is WYSIWYG and is much more powerful. Music can be transferred between such applications via the MIDI "least common denominator," but the

MIDI definition lacks repeat structures – such niceties as *fermatas*, and other things; so I rarely move music from one application to another; still, *Composer* has great value now, because it is used by so many others.) I arranged the music in *Sibelius*.

"When I arrange, I try first to follow whatever chord progressions might be indicated on the original copy from which I work. I put the chords in and see how it sounds. I was taught, as an arranger, to respect the melody completely. That is to say, I try hard not to change a melody when arranging.

"If a chord simply does not fit the melody the way I hear it, I may try slight variations. That's an arranger's prerogative, I've been told.

"Also, when arranging, other chords may suggest themselves by notes that seem to fit in. I try to name those chords, but only if they change on the beat. I have

John welcomes your comments. You can reach him at [s@theriver.com](mailto:s@theriver.com)



learned to keep things simpler by not worrying much about chord spellings for chords that are not right on the beat, as interesting as some of those may be.

"I try to end with a set of chords that makes the best musical sense to my ear; and, with non-melody voices that have their own senses of direction and counterpoint melodies. Some players, especially those who are interested only in nuances of the tunes, may at times be distracted by some of the things I do when creating a fuller score or when jamming. I'm still trying to discover what is acceptable in various genres.

"Why pin a tune down to a written arrangement? Some people see no real need to read music from a written score, even from one so rudimentary as presented in the TFTM newsletter. Some people "get it" entirely by ear. I empathize with that approach. I was one of *them* for most of my life.

"I recently asked a friend to give me feedback on a score I had just completed and she said that, since I had asked, she did not really go for writing it, because that pinned down the music and she felt music should be played differently each time.

"That's is a valid point. It is great to

play in *sesiúns* where most of the people are working at flawlessly playing the tune itself, with many variations being tossed in along the way.

"Even in such venues, the guitar rhythms, for example, are quite often embellished with moving bass lines. One of the cuts shared with me of *Quince Dillon's High-D Tune* has some really wonderful walking-bass lines in it. All that suggests that such music could be



performed in consorts or even in symphonies. After all, many a symphonic theme has been derived from bird songs or folk music (think Copeland's *Appalachian Spring* and its setting of the Shaker song *Simple Gifts*).

"One of my goals is to play traditional music so well with friends in consort that we can fill out a good tune with other musical voices, from sheet music that remains essentially the same. We can come back and do it again the same way at our next gathering.

I hope we can eventually toss the music aside and improvise together, based upon what we have learned to play with the scores. I think that this approach helps me to learn to read music without suppressing my urge to play it my way.

"After all, until Bach came along,

players of early music were expected to improvise. Now, it has gotten to the point that many people seem to resent musical scores, because they fear these rob them of the ability to play music in their own way. That may be somewhat true for those playing in most modern symphony orchestras. It need not be true for people playing music for fun and entertainment.”

Steve generates mp3s with software found at [www.goldwave.com](http://www.goldwave.com).

Photos in the Langford article were taken by Steve's wife, Joann "Joey" K. Nakagawa.



*Continued from page 2 - TODAY'S TRADITION*

encouragement of the nice people at the Folk Shop, I got started.”

Using parts from old guitars and tea or cigar boxes, Jim has completed ten ukes. He reinforces the inside of the boxes with thin wood. He uses the necks, bridges and tailpieces from guitars that he salvages from yard sales, thrift shops and wherever he can find them.

Working in his westside home among a collection of instruments and the Senior Olympic metals he won in bicycling competitions, Jim turns out his distinctive ukes.

For the record, Jim says that most folks mispronounce ukelele. It should be pronounced

“ook-ah-lay-lay. That, according to Jim, is how the Hawaiians say it.

It's wonderful to see musicians like Michael, Carol and Jim supporting traditional music in such a practical and accessible way.



Lessons are from 1-3 on Friday afternoons for seniors, 50+, who are members of the Center. To sign up for membership, you need a photo ID and proof of permanent residence.

Contact Karen Wallace, Recreation Assistant at the Armory Park Senior Center, 791-4865, for more information.

Photos in this issue: Page 1-Jim Chapman. Page 2 - Michael Crownshield and student/musician.

Carol Humphrey and a uke made from a tea box. Pages 3 & 4 - Steve Langford. Page 5 - Michael Crownshield, Jim Chapman's homemade Frog Uke. Page 7 - Woody Simmons. Page 8 - Bruce Thompson. The Clayfoot Strutters.

**ONGOING ACTIVITIES** of  
*Traditional Music and Dance. These  
are not TFTM events.*

♪ **Irish Jam Session at The Auld  
Dubliner, 800 E University Blvd**  
(Southeast corner of Euclid and  
University): Traditional Irish jam session  
every Sunday from 4-8 PM. Info: (520)  
206-0323

♪ **Scottish Country Dancing:**  
Thursdays, 7:30 pm, First United  
Methodist Church, 915 E. 4th St.  
Info: 520-299-5566.

**UPCOMING ENGLISH DANCES:**  
**Thursday, April 19, 2007**

May 12, 2007

June 9, 2007

July 14, 2007

7-9:30 pm. \$5

♪ **Celtic & Old-Time Jam:** Open  
Jam session on the first and third  
Tuesdays. Slow Jam from 7-8 pm. Fast  
Jam from 8-10 pm. Rincon Market, 6th  
St. at Tucson Blvd. Set up in the Deli  
area. Tunes from the TFTM Tune Book  
and some other sources.

♪ **Shape Note  
Singing:** First and  
third Saturdays, 3-  
5 pm, Sonora  
C o h o u s i n g  
Common Room,  
501 E. Roger Rd.  
Info: 682-6201.

## TFTM ADVERTISEMENTS

*TFTM members, place your free ad here.*

*Larger ad, good rates. Inquire at*

*Newsletter@TFTM.org*

Scottish Highland Bagpipes. Private  
instruction or public performance.  
Call William Don Carlos at 520-907-4460  
or email pipes-are-loud@wdoncarlos.com

Real estate professional,  
Liz Healy  
520-444-3914

Stained Glass Lessons  
Private  
30 Years Experience  
Herb Boskin, 520-743-4901

Top-quality Entertainment  
Contact **ROUND THE HOUSE**  
www.roundthehouse.com. Call Claire,  
520-882-3068 or Sharon, 520-298-3014.

*English Dance*  
*Thursday*  
*April 19, 2007*

# AQUAVITA

## NATURAL FOODS MARKET

WWW.AQUAVITASTORE.COM

2801 North Country Club Road

Northwest Corner of Glenn and County Club

(520) 293-7770

8 a.m. - 8 p.m. Monday - Saturday

10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Sunday

# CD REVIEW: DOUBLE GEARED LIGHTNING: THE STORY OF LEGENDARY WEST VIRGINIA FIDDLER, WOODY SIMMONS.

by Jim McConnell

This is a 59-minute recording of the life story of a fiddle player who lived to age 93 and played music nearly all those years. It was produced by the Pocahontas Music Cooperative and was funded in part by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. It is apparent that this CD was created with respect for the music and the tradition that nurtures it.

Woody Simmons was a fiddle player from West Virginia more than he was a West Virginia fiddler. (I'm sure a lot of people would agree with one of my ex-bosses who told me: "I don't care if the fiddler is an SOB or the SOB is a fiddler; I want to hear music.") West Virginia fiddling is characterized by short bowing (use of only about 6 inches of the bow length). Along with this bowing comes a punchy, rhythmic line that you can hear in most Appalachian fiddling.

Most of the time, Simmons plays a more generic style than that.

This recording explains a lot about how he got to be the kind of fiddler he was and a lot about how contact with the "outside" homogenizes tradition.

In the hour this CD takes to narrate

the story of Woody Simmons' musical life, we obviously don't get it all, but the broad strokes are there.

Woody was born in 1911 in rural West Virginia and grew up listening to traditional music. At that time, if you didn't make music you didn't hear music. That's a familiar story of a background that should produce a traditional artist. If the world hadn't collided with Woody and his music, we might be hearing music from him which would sound a lot like it came from the generation before him.

Woody took his music to the world and tested his ability against his peers. He played in contests in West Virginia and surrounding states wherever he could. When you listen to him and his friends talk, you understand how he got validation and money from winning most of those contests. Because he didn't just play for his family and neighbors, he learned tricks and licks from the people he met.



Money was apparently a big part of what motivated his search for contest-playing excellence. He seemed to nearly always have a day job, mostly driving trucks, but the money he made playing for dances (often eight a week) was surely important to his family. That meant that the commercial appeal of his

performance was vital; he had to have something more than his peers and it had to keep changing. The audience would come back to hear a tune or song three

*Continued on page 10*



## TUNE OF THE MONTH BRUCE THOMSON

(LibTNov1@aol.com)

### CLAYFOOT STRUTTERS

**F**or years, the folks with whom I've played have sung the praises of Pete Sutherland, an amazing fiddler and composer from Vermont. And, although I've learned many of his tunes, until recently I didn't have any of his recordings. I bought a copy of the Clayfoot Strutters' CD "Going Elsewhere" (EPACT 106). This band from New England, advertises itself as playing "groove-based music for the contra dance community," and wow, what a surprise!

The members of the band and their principal instruments include: Pete (fiddle), Mark Roberts (flute and banjo), Jeremiah McLane (accordion and piano), Peter Davis (electric guitar and sax), Lee Blackwell (drums and percussion) and Harry Aceto (bass). All members contribute on other instruments as well.

Their music draws from a wide variety of styles including Celtic, Afropop, swing, Latin jazz, Cajun, Zydeco and traditional American fiddle tunes; in other words, it is REALLY different from the New England style of traditional music most of us are used to. These guys are all superb musicians and regularly play and record with A-list players from across the country, including many that I've written about previously.

Their music involves a lot of improvisation, so if you want to learn fiddle tunes, this might not be the CD for you. An extreme example is their

rendition of the familiar southern tune *Big Scioto* – it's almost unrecognizable, but it sure is interesting.

Also, the drums and electric bass are prominent, which would lead to immediate arrest and incarceration if the Old Time Music Police ever caught them. But the beats are strong, the tunes are very creative, the musicianship is first class, and their renditions of the tunes, both new and old, are genuinely good. I, for one, like this CD.

I had trouble deciding which tune from the CD to include here; whether to pick something weird and unusual or something more approachable by most of us. I finally decided on the later and have provided a "C" tune, *Pike's Peak*, that is fun.

They list it as a tune from Texas, but last I checked, Pike's Peak was in Colorado. Pete plays it fairly straight the first time through, but their version becomes quite innovative as it progresses.





# Pike's Peak



Musical score for Pike's Peak, consisting of four staves of music in treble clef. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a common time signature 'C', and a triplet of eighth notes marked with a '3' over a horizontal line. The second staff continues the melody with a common time signature 'C'. The third staff features a key signature change to one flat (F major) and includes a common time signature 'C'. The fourth staff returns to one sharp (G major) and includes a common time signature 'C'. The score includes various musical notations such as eighth notes, quarter notes, and rests, with some notes beamed together.

or four times, but eventually they wanted something new.

Tradition wouldn't cut it for a commercial musician when people got radios, cars and TV. So, at times he sounds like a Texas fiddler using nearly all the bow with *legato* lines and figures. At other times, he sounds like a West Virginia fiddler with staccato-driven phrases. You get the feeling he can do what it takes to make the music he needs to make.

Woody's music is so remarkable because it still has a strong echo of tradition from the West Virginia roots that nurtured him. That, is why I say he is an authentic, traditional artist even though the people he learned from might hate what he did with that tradition.

Oh, did I mention that he was one hell of a fiddle player!

ABC Notation
X:70
T:Pike's Peak
N:From The Clayfoot Strutters "Going Elsewhere", EPACT 106
N:Transcribed by Bruce Thomson
M:C
K:C
z6(3DEF :"C"GAcG AcGA cGAG EG ef G"3gg2ef gagf edcA
"C"GAcG AcGA cGAG EG ef G"2ga gedB "C"[c3E3][cE][c4E4]:
-:"C"3gg2eg agedc4 F"[a3c3][ac][a2c2]eg abag egab
"C"3c'c'4 d'c'2d'c'2ef G"3g^fga g=fed "C"[c3E3][cE][c4E4]:

News flash: April 21st may be the last dance for Ken Cooper before he moves away from Arizona.

## Free Concert

"Sonata in A minor" (Concerto 99) by Alessandro Scarlatti

1:30 P.M., April 22, 2007

Member Performances Meeting of the Tucson Recorder Society  
Downstairs at the Benedictine Monastery, 800 N. Country Club Rd.  
Instruments will be tuned to A=415Hz, not the more usual A=440Hz.

Peter Worden, Baroque Recorder

Brian Cochran, Baroque flute

Mich Michael, Baroque flute

Scott Mason, Harpsichord

Steve Langford, Bass Viol

Info: Call Steve, 520-297-0448  
or Scott, mason\_scott@li.com

	<h1>Tartan Day</h1>	
<h2>Seven Pipers Annual Benefit Show</h2>		
<h3>Saturday, April 7, 2007</h3>		
<h4>Matinee: 2:00 p.m.</h4>		
<h4>Evening show: 7:30 p.m.</h4>		
<h3>Reservations: Call 520-299-0701</h3>		

## JOIN TUCSON FRIENDS OF TRADITIONAL MUSIC!

Membership benefits include: Discounts on many events, including all TFTM events, plus a subscription to this newsletter and free classified listings in the newsletter.

Send this form and your check to TFTM, PO Box 40654, Tucson, AZ 85717-0654

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

- Single \$20       Donor \$30-99       New  
 Family \$24       Sponsor \$100+       Renewal  
 Address Change

Yes, include me in the TFTM contact email listing

I am interested in helping with:       Newsletter       Sound

Dance Camp       Contra Dances       Special Events

## UPCOMING DANCES

**Location:** First United Methodist Church, 915 4th Ave.

**Time:** 7:30-Lesson, 8:00-Dance. **Cost:** \$8 Public, \$7 TFTM, \$6 Student.

Apr. 7 - Round the House with Claire Zucker

Apr. 21 - Hands Four with Ken Cooper

*Apr. 28 - Open band with J.P. Thom-gronachan  
Not At Church, Lohse Family YMCA-Downtown*

May 5 - Round the House with Laila Lewis

May 19 - *No Dance, May Madness up in Prescott*

May 26 - TBA with J.P. Thom-gronachan

Jun. 2 - The Jumping Chollas with Tod Whittemore

Jun. 16 - TBA with Becky Nankivell

Jun. 23 - TBA with Peg Hesley

Jun. 30 - Privy Tippers with Don Copler

NON-PROFIT ORG  
 US Postage  
 PAID  
 TUCSON, AZ  
 Permit #2371



TUCSON FRIENDS OF  
 TRADITIONAL MUSIC  
 P O BOX 40654  
 TUCSON AZ 85717-0654

Return Service Requested

ESTHER FUCHS Exp.: 7/1/2007 12:00:00 AM  
 3529 CAMINO LA LACAVILLE  
 TUCSON AZ 85717

NIXIE 950 9 40 04/04/07  
 POSTAGE DUE  
 RETURN TO SENDER  
 NO SUCH STREET  
 UNABLE TO FORWARD  
 UNLESS HEAVY OR CARD-POSTAGE DUE# .99

**In the April 2007 Issue:**

Today's Traditional Music . . . . .	1
Steve Langford, Part 2, Arranging . . .	3
TFTM Ads, Ongoing Activities . . . . .	6
Review: Double Geared Lightning . . .	7
Thomson, Clayfoot Trotters . . . . .	8
Tune: Pike's Peak. . . . .	9
ABC Notation. . . . .	10
Upcoming Dances, Membership Info...11	

85717@9999

**Newsletter Deadline:** The **MAY** deadline for articles, announcements, ads, upcoming dances, events and reviews is the **MAY 15**. Please email your articles to [scribe@ultrasw.com](mailto:scribe@ultrasw.com).