

CALLIOPE Rootz

Millwood Guitar Week

By Jack Stein

*I am Virginia bound
I am Virginia bound
Pack up my trunk and
my ol' hound dog
Yes I am Virginia bound*
Mary Flower –
“Virginia Bound”
adapted from “Ala-
bama Bound”

I never did get a chance to attend summer camp when I was a kid, so now, a few years later, I'm making up for lost time at the Millwood Guitar Camp. The Millwood Guitar Camp is a chance for a group of fine amateur musicians to hang out for a week playing, learning, and having fun with each other and a couple of top notch professionals, and maybe best of all, it's become the most anticipated and fulfilling time for myself and a dozen like-minded individuals.

Millwood is located in beautiful northern Virginia in the Shenandoah Valley only 50 miles from DC but light years removed from the hustle and bustle of the city. Chip and Carolyn Schutte's residence is the home of Millwood Guitar Week. Typical attendance is 12 to 15 students and 2 or 3 instructors who have included the likes of Ari Eisinger, Ernie Hawkins, Paul Rishell, Annie Raines, Rob Soper, and the last three years Pat Donohue, the guitar virtuoso and regular on Garrison Keiler's "Prairie Home Companion". A regular every year has been Mary Flower, a wonderful guitarist, singer, and songwriter in the traditional blues and folk genre. Great guests have included legendary bluesman John Jackson, Seldom Scene banjoist Ben Eldridge and guitarist/son Chris, Lynn Morris and her husband Marshall.

The intention is to have fun and learn. Daily formal 2-hour classes are held every morning and afternoon. Other less formal one-on-ones with instructors and small groups of students take place all day long. All types of instruments find their way into the mix – guitars, mandos, resonators and laptops, banjos, piano, harmonicas, upright and washtub basses, kazooos, and a multitude of voices.



Getting a chance to perform in front of an audience is a critical step in every musician's education. To accomplish this, the students are divided up into performance groups and work on 2 or 3 tunes to play at a weekend student concert. This provides an opportunity to work on instrumental and vocal arrangements and maybe play another instrument besides guitar. The instructors work with each group to help hone the arrangements and give feedback on

progress. The concert is recorded and later sent out to all participants.

To really see improvement in your musical ability requires dedicated and focused training and practice. It is quite remarkable what one solid week of living and breathing music can accomplish in terms of improving the chops and stretching your musical horizons. I return home with a renewed vigor to take it to another level and return to Millwood the next year with something new to show off. Write to athlone@visuallink.com or call 540.837.3054 for details.

Out and About

by Bill Locke

Calliope is proud to provide lots of opportunities for seeing live music all around Pittsburgh. In fact, some of these events have been going on for so long, people might not know that they were started by Calliope. These are our way of trying to bring the best traditional and acoustic music to every nook and cranny of Pittsburgh and beyond.

SONGWRITERS CIRCLE
1st Tuesdays
7:00-8:30 pm
Bloomfield Bridge
Tavern
George Kantor
kantor@ri.cmu.edu

OPEN STAGE
Every Tuesday
8:30 pm
Bloomfield Bridge
Tavern
James Hovan, Robert
Wagner, Waldo, Doc
j.hovan@verizon.net
Robertawagner@verizon.net

BLUEGRASS JAM
Every Tuesday
8:00 pm
Starlite Lounge
Blawnox
Lew Scheinman
lscheinman@yahoo.com
412-828-9842

FOLK SONG NIGHT
3rd Wednesdays
6:30 pm
Mount Lebanon
Public Library
Jim Colletti
Colletti@adelphia.net
412-531-1391

Have you ever been to a house concert? It's like a regular concert, in that the musicianship is first-rate, but instead of a concert hall, you're in somebody's living room with just a small group of people. A contribution is around \$10 bucks. So if you've never hosted one, or had the chance to go to one, here's pretty much everything you need to know.



WHAT

A house concert is music in somebody's house. People open up their living room to a group of folks. And they open up a restroom - probably not the rest of the house. The hosts have arranged with a musician to play. One usually gets a concert of the same length and quality as in a large concert setting. The limits are on the size of the audience and on the size of the band. Most living rooms can only take about thirty people and a two person band.

Here are some examples of what I have seen during the past few years: The Reed Island Rounders - a top notch oldtime band; Dwight Diller - a master banjo player; John Lily - A West Virginian with a great talent for entertaining and singing Jimmy Rogers songs; Keith and Joan Pitzer - top rate singers and players that have performed at the Kennedy Center in Washington DC; Mustard's Retreat - two gents with a great knack for humor. There are many more - the musicians love the setting, and usually seek a chance to play between big city concert hall gigs.

WHERE

Your best bet is to go check the following web site - <http://launch.groups.yahoo.com/group/PbgHouseConcerts/>

There are also email lists that you can ask about. Go to one concert and ask around. The rest will follow.

The house concerts are very relaxed. Once you have done one you will fit right in. You quickly develop friendships with the other house concertgoers.

HOW DO THEY WORK?

At most house concerts there is a basket for donations. The people usually donate about \$10 per person. In any case, the musician generally winds up with the entire donation. People put on these concerts because they love the music. They are not trying to make a killing at it. The limited seating at these concerts means that you should call ahead - well ahead - to get a seat. There is usually an intermission - cookies and other delights are often most welcome. The best thing to do is ask the host during your phone call. Sometimes people do pot luck dinners before the concert - that gets complicated but very good.

JAY HITT

Through the Window

An Appreciation by Robert A. Wagner



My father-in-law was in the car. This was a few years ago. I don't remember where we were going or why he was in the car, but there was a CD playing, and the old man wanted to know what we were listening to.

"Jay Hitt," we said.

"Who?"

"Jay Hitt. He's a friend of ours."

"You know him? How?"

My father-in-law was damn impressed—and not just with the music. This music was too good to have been created by a friend of ours. This guy must be big, must be a star. How did we manage to meet a star?

When I met Jay at the Calliope Songwriters Circle some seven or eight years ago, my first impression was that he didn't sound like "folk" music. When I think of folk music, I think of Woody Guthrie, Doc Watson, Jean Ritchie, the Harry Smith anthology. I thought listening to folk music is supposed to be like eating apples

from a tree found in a clearing in the woods. Don't mind a few worm holes. Cut off the bad parts, and they're still of good eatin'.

But Jay Hitt's music has no worm holes. He sounds nice, and as a rule, I don't like nice. I want passion! Passion is when you feel so strongly about something you punch a wall or yell till your throat is raw like Bob Dylan, right?

Not so fast. Jay Hitt's music moves me every bit as much as Bob Dylan, John Prine, and Steve Earle but in an altogether different fashion. Jay Hitt is not a hillbilly, labor singer or campus crusader. He's a comfortable, middle-class, middle-aged guy with a family and a home in the suburbs. But Jay writes with uncommon insight and honesty about the world he knows, and what emerges is something akin to a folk singer's version of Charles Schulz's Peanuts. Good, decent, timeless wisdom.

And like the PEANUTS cartoon, Jay Hitt can be enjoyed by the entire family. The audiences for his shows are almost always multi-generational with children playing in the aisles, parents relaxing with a beverage, and grandparents relieved that the culture hasn't gone totally to hell. Great music is timeless.

Jay's shows at venues like Club Café and he's been voted Best Acoustic Performer by readers of The Pittsburgh City Paper.

Jay Hitt discography:

Old Town 1996

Gentle Persuader 1998

The Bright Extraordinary Day 2000

Through The Window 2003

Jay To The World (Christmas music) 2003

All discs available and news of upcoming performances can be found at www.jayhitt.com. You can catch Jay next on November 22 at the Murray Avenue Starbucks in Squirrel Hill.

Sheila Kay Adams
Carnegie Lecture Hall
Jan 22, 2005



“You done stepped in it, Ree-ick.” Sheila Kay Adams is the only person I know who pronounces my name as if it had two syllables and, characteristically, her admonishment is as affectionate as it is direct. “Playin’ the banjo is about relaxin’.”

Hers is a wonderful North Carolina accent informed by a family heritage of seven generations of singers, musicians, storytellers, and eccentric personalities. Sheila, who will be performing at Carnegie Lecture Hall on January 22 as part of the Calliope Concerts, is a phenomenon, both off stage and on.

A great performer, she is a hilarious and poignant storyteller, often recounting tales of her growing up in the tiny community of Sodom, in the western North Carolina mountains, close to where she still lives. In a riveting manner, she sings traditional ballads that came over with her family in the late 1700s. She is a wonderful banjo player and has inspired players from all over the country (including me) who have attended her workshops and classes. I do encourage you to attend her upcoming concert. You will be delighted.

Rick Landesberg

**Here's what's coming up at Calliope's
Carnegie Lecture Hall Concerts**

Doc Watson
November 19, 2004
Almost sold out! Only a few single seats left.

David Bromberg
December 11, 2004
Almost sold out! Only a few single seats left.

Sheila Kay Adams
January 22, 2005

Alvin Youngblood Hart
February 12, 2005

Tickets, flex-packages, and subscriptions for all the 04-05 Calliope Concerts are available through ProArts Tickets. Folks can order online at www.proartstickets.org or call the ticket line, Mon-Sat; 12:00 noon to 5:30 PM, 412-394-3353.

Try your hand at this original reel by L.E. McCullough, a Woodbridge, N.J.-based musician who holds a Ph.D in ethnomusicology from the University of Pittsburgh, and who performs with the group Devilish Merry.

Mrs. Fairley's Frenchman

(Reel)

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is as follows:

Staff 1: D (chord) | - | C4-E4 | :|| F4-A4 | G4-B4 | A4-G4 | F4-E4 | D4-C4 | B3-A3 | G3-F3 | E3-D3 |

Staff 2: A (chord) | G (chord) | D (chord) | F4-A4 | G4-B4 | A4-G4 | F4-E4 | D4-C4 | B3-A3 | G3-F3 | E3-D3 |

Staff 3: 1 | A (chord) | D (chord) | F4-A4 | G4-B4 | A4-G4 | F4-E4 | D4-C4 | B3-A3 | G3-F3 | E3-D3 |

Staff 4: 2 | A (chord) | D (chord) | F4-A4 | G4-B4 | A4-G4 | F4-E4 | D4-C4 | B3-A3 | G3-F3 | E3-D3 |

Staff 5: G (chord) | D (chord) | G (chord) | A (chord) | D (chord) | F4-A4 | G4-B4 | A4-G4 | F4-E4 | D4-C4 | B3-A3 | G3-F3 | E3-D3 |

Staff 6: G (chord) | D (chord) | G (chord) | A (chord) | D (chord) | F4-A4 | G4-B4 | A4-G4 | F4-E4 | D4-C4 | B3-A3 | G3-F3 | E3-D3 |

Staff 7: 1 | A (chord) | D (chord) | F4-A4 | G4-B4 | A4-G4 | F4-E4 | D4-C4 | B3-A3 | G3-F3 | E3-D3 |

Staff 8: 2 | A (chord) | D (chord) | F4-A4 | G4-B4 | A4-G4 | F4-E4 | D4-C4 | B3-A3 | G3-F3 | E3-D3 |

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