

Cuz's Corner

By Dennis Frost

Welcome to the August edition of Cuz's Corner. Here's hoping all of you have had a great summer with friends and family and have squeezed a bit of live music into those busy schedules. By the way, I would be very appreciative if someone out in Folkville could tell me where in the world the summer has flown - wow!

August is typically a slow month for music in Charlotte, but like the winter months, it's a great time for reflection, slowing down, and recharging the batteries.

I guess my high point last month was seeing my friends Carol (Young), Kym (Warner), and Eamon (McLoughlin) of the

Greencards and marveling at the marked improvement in their music in the last year - not that their music wasn't great before. **Chatham County Line's** opening set made for yet another memorable experience in the wonderful McGlohon Theatre. Another high point of the month was getting reacquainted with some music and artists from the past. Those who know me realize I am very much a proponent of sharing music with friends. Not only do you discover new, wonderful artists, but also there is a good possibility of reconnecting with those old favorites in your own collection. My first few Cuz's picks both go back in time quite a few years and were inspired by the process of sharing favorites back and forth with friends. Digging back through my archives, I stumbled on one of my favorite folk albums of all time,



Cuz and Little Bit

Peter Rowan's Dust Bowl Children. (www.peter-rowan.com)

This is a no-frills album with Peter backing himself with only guitar and mandolin. All the tunes on this Woody Guthrie-tinged work address in one way or the other the rural America that was and that is disappearing so rapidly. Topics such as stewardship of the land, respect for indigenous cultures,

tradition, family, and faith in the next generation are all nimbly addressed in this masterpiece. Another rediscovery is a CD of old **Carter Family** songs compiled and wonderfully sung and played by Jim Watson, the late Tommy Thompson, and

Mike Craver of the original **Red Clay Ramblers**. Although I own the original **Meeting in the Air** on vinyl, this masterpiece didn't resurrect itself in my consciousness until a friend loaned the CD to me. If you are a **Carter Family** lover and don't have this one in the old collection, it's available at www.theoriginalredclayramblers.com. My final vintage pick goes back to 1980 and revisits an inventor of modern bluegrass guitar at his peak. **Tony Rice's Church Street Blues** (www.tonyrice.com) is a highly recommended piece of work that is both traditional and exceptionally progressive at the same time. This one is also extremely lean with Tony's brother Wyatt backing on rhythm guitar on about half of the cuts, which includes covers of artists as diverse

as Gordon Lightfoot, Ian & Sylvia, and Norman Blake. Did I forget to mention those hot fiddle tunes? Also worth checking out are the two duet recordings Tony Rice made with favorite Norman Blake, appropriately named **Blake & Rice** and **Blake & Rice 2**.

Now, shall we climb back in the old time capsule and fast forward to 2007? I tend to like my songwriters on the edgy side, so I was tickled to find the new CD by **David Olney** called **One Tough Town** (www.davidolney.com) If you like songs in the tradition of Townes Van Zandt, Dave Olney may be for you. Be sure to check David Olney live the next time he's through Charlotte and discover how one man and one guitar can rock your soul! A bit closer to home, Charlotte area favorites, **Carolina Gator Gumbo** have a new disc called **Leona Had a Party**. (www.carolinagatorgumbo.com) A party this one certainly is! Put this one on, crank up the volume a bit, and you will be transported to Mulate's Dance Hall in Breaux Bridge, Louisiana. Having been in radio a while, I tend to look for good, crisp production and **Leona** gets a big A plus - this one sounds great!

As always, recordings are wonderful, but there is absolutely nothing like the real deal - the live performance. Typically, area venues do not book a heavy schedule of national acts for the month of August as Charlotte pretty much evacuates to the beach and the mountains during the last few weeks of summer vacation. This may be a great month to catch some of those local and regional artists you've wanted to hear. That said, **Robin and Linda Williams** will be at the Evening Muse for an intimate performance on August 17th and are Cuz's gig of the month. (www.Maxx-music.com) Speaking of Robin and Linda, I would urge you to think

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ahead a bit and consider the **Fortune Williams Music Festival** in Staunton Virginia on September 28 -30. (www.fortunewilliamsmusicfestival.org) This festival is unique in the fact it takes place at the Frontier Culture Museum and the performances take place at the various reconstructed farm sites, each a living history of the early immigrant culture and farm life – cool! Performers include **Robin & Linda Williams, Marty Stuart & His Fabulous Superlatives, Adrienne Young, Billy Joe Shaver, Jimmy Fortune**, and the one and only **Cowboy Jack Clement**. Well, that's about it for the laid back August edition of Cuz's Corner. I'm serious about sharing artists and music that you, the reader, are excited about. So please don't hesitate to contact me so I can, in turn, share this with the community at large. I will see you guys down the line in September when things begin to heat up again in the music scene.

The best in music,
Cuz

To share your thoughts about your favorite music with Cuz (especially old-time), contact him either at dcmfrost@mindspring.com or 704-532-8846.

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2007-2008 Gathering Schedule

CFS Gatherings begin at 7:30 PM and are family-friendly, free, and open to the public; donations are appreciated. They feature an hour-long concert, followed by slow and fast jam sessions and a song circle. Except where noted, concerts are in the Bryant Recital Hall of the Sloan-Morgan Building, 1220 Elizabeth Avenue, on the Central Campus of CPCC in Charlotte. Free parking is available in the CPCC Staff & Theater Deck, off Fourth Street, between Independence Boulevard and Kings Drive.

September 14, Original Country Roots Music by Polecat Creek (Kari Sickenberger, Laurelyn Dossett, Natalya Weinstein, and Riley Baugus). 2006 Winner of Neo-Traditional Band Contest at Appalachian String Band Festival. www.polecatcreek.net

October 12, 25th Anniversary Reunion Gathering. Broach Hall, St. John's Baptist Church, 300 Hawthorne Lane, Charlotte, 5:30-10 PM. Jamming, covered dish dinner, socializing, concert with **The Annabelles, Celtic Trader Jammers, The Kee Family and The Mallard Creek String Band.** Bring a dish to share or donate \$5.

November 9, An Evening With Jim Lloyd. Multi-instrumentalist, fiddler's convention champion, and humorist from Rural Retreat, Virginia shares songs, tunes, and stories.

December 2, CFS Holiday Gathering. Charlotte Museum of History Great Hall, 3500 Shamrock Drive, Charlotte, 5:30-9:30 PM. Pot-luck dinner followed by a performance by young singer/songwriter **Natalie Royal** and open jam sessions. Free and open to the public; bring a dish to share or donate \$5.

January 11, Irish, Scottish, and Bluegrass music by champion Celtic fiddler Jamie Laval and mandolin champion Ashley Broder. www.jamielaval.com

February 8, Observe Groundhog Day with storyteller and naturalist Doug Elliott as he illuminates and entertains with Groundhogology: Whistlepigs and World Politics. www.dougelliott.com

March 14, Traditional North Carolina bluegrass by Wood and Steel (Ed Dodson, Joey Lemons, Jacques Smith and Snuffy Smith). www.woodandsteelband.com

April 11, CFS Young Talent Showcase gives younger musicians such as **Carson Hedberg**, Appalachian dulcimer player and 2007 Marilyn Meacham Price Scholarship recipient, a chance to shine! These talented performers assure us that the music is being passed on and it's in very capable hands.

May 9, Old Time Stringband Music by Surry County's Pilot Mountain Bobcats (Nancy Sluys, Jacki Spector, Allin Cottrell, and Bill Sluys). Since 1989, the **Bobcats** have played at MerleFest, LEAF, Augusta and many other regional and national events. www.bobvillemusic.com

June 13, Bluegrass and Gospel by Nashville Bound, the very talented younger generation of The Hatley Family.

Charlotte Folk Society Gatherings are made possible, in part, through a Cultural Project Grant from the Arts & Science Council and the Grassroots Program of the North Carolina Arts Council.

