



# Quarter Notes

### Plank Road's Regular Events:

- **SING-A-ROUND** (Two Way Street Coffee House) 1st & 3rd Saturdays: September 3 & 17, October 1 & 15, November 5 & 19, December 3.
- **Plank Road All Volunteer String Band:** resumes September 10th, October 8, November 12. PRFMS Holiday Party December 10 (tentative).
- Old Time Dance Party October 22..
- **BLUEGRASS JAM** (Paul Vander Woude's house: 708-354-3417) 4th Saturday. September 24, October 22, November 26.
- **LAST THURSDAY:** "It's Our Turn!" (Two Way Street Coffee House) Last Thursdays. September 29. October 27.
- Go to [www.plankroad.org](http://www.plankroad.org) for full details!

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**Help us celebrate over 23 years of Acoustic music in the Western Suburbs!**



## Weavermania Set for September 10th Concert at Westmont Library

PRFMS Co-Founder Mark Dvorak decided to bring some friends over to the Westmont Public Library on Saturday, September 10th—Barbara Barrow, Michael Smith and Chris Walz. The quartet is Weavermania, formed to pay tribute to the first charting folk music group in the United States, The Weavers.

For those in the know, Barrow sings Ronnie Gilbert's parts, Dvorak plays Pete Seeger's banjo and high rolling vocals and Michael Smith (of *The Dutchman* fame) nails the late Lee Hays' rich bass and quirky but dead on sense of humor. Prepare for a night of high energy, wondrous songs and a recreation of music forged in the politically laden and often confusing era of the late 1940s and early 1950s era.

The Weaver's first 'hit' was *Goodnight Irene*, as reworked by Huddie Leadbetter (Leadbelly) who died just weeks before his song zoomed to the top of the charts. The recording was actually credited to the Gordon Jenkins Orchestra because Decca was unsure of the politics and the performers. Oh ye of little faith! *Irene* was followed by *Tzena, Tzena, Tzena, On Top of Old Smokey, Wimoweh, The Great Historical Bum* and dozens more. Weavermania captures the excitement of the original Weavers and is a must see performance for *anyone* who enjoys music—especially us acoustic types.

The Friends of the Westmont Public Library and Plank Road are co-sponsoring the event at the Westmont Public Library, 428 North Cass Avenue, Main Floor, Westmont, IL. Tickets are \$10 each and reservations are suggested to avoid disappointment: 630-969-5625 or email [wms@westmontlibrary.org](mailto:wms@westmontlibrary.org)

### Sunday Afternoon Concert Series at The Ballydoyle

## Garnet Rogers Opens 2005-06 Season

In a darkened bedroom, lit only by the amber glow from an old floor model radio, two young brothers aged 6 and 12 lay in their beds, listening to the country music broadcasts and practiced their harmonies. Two years later, the youngest one was playing the definitive 8-year-old's version of "Desolation Row" on his ukulele. He soon abandoned that instrument to teach himself the flute, violin and guitar.

Within ten years, and barely out of high school, Garnet Rogers was on the road as a full-time working musician with his older brother Stan. Together they formed what has come to be accepted as one of the most influential acts in North American folk music. Join us Sunday, September 18th at the Ballydoyle Pub on Main Street In Downers for a wonderfully intimate concert with one of the very best. Doors open at 4, Music begins around 4:30pm. PRFMS members can reserve seats by e-mail: [info@plankroad.org](mailto:info@plankroad.org) or calling Dave Reynolds at (630) 964-0305





*From The PRFMS President*

# Goin' Down The Old Plank Road

Greetings,

As Plank Road approaches its 25<sup>th</sup> year we are in the process of planning one of our busiest seasons. In September alone we are looking forward to our first concert with the legendary Garnet Rogers, a cosponsored event with Weavermania and Music by the Yard.

We will be releasing additional information on activities for the remainder of the year on our website. I strongly encourage you to take the time to check out the site. We have been adding contributors with more to come. Feel free to share your opinions and knowledge through the website.

Plank Road's longevity and success is due to the generosity and talent of our volunteers. We are off to a fine start for our next twenty-five years.

See you down the old Plank Road,

**-Dave Reynolds**  
President

## If You Haven't Been to a Music By The Yard, You're Missing a LOT of Fun!

**Like These Plank Roadians who went over to Mickey & Bob Holdsworth's House in August:**



### Don't Miss Out!

Head over to Cheryl Joyal's House in September! The Next MBTY is set for Saturday, September 24th between 4:30 and 11:30 pm at 1547 Foxhill Road, Naperville. Reservations appreciated but not necessary: cimjoyal@aol.com, 630-667-3284/630-357-6905

Food: There will be hot dogs and brats, pop and chips. Will have some wine - BYOBeer. Grill fires up around 5:30. You bring salad, desert, chips or what-have-you.

Plan is to be outside on porch and deck, but in case you have allergies know that I have a cat. She will be hiding under the bed so you won't be directly exposed.



What's Playin'?**Guitar: An American Life**

by Tim Brookes

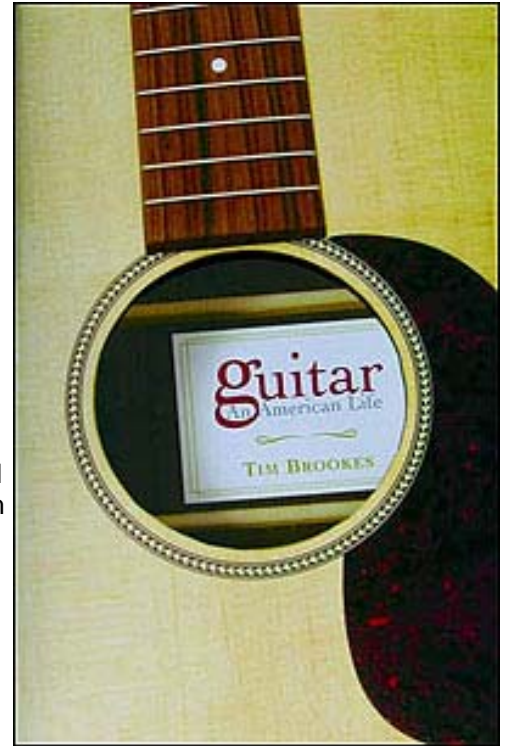
There are hundreds and possibly thousands of books written about the guitar. I recently finished this book by Tim Brookes who is an NPR commentator and essayist. The book is described as "One man's quest for his dream guitar inspires him to explore the instrument's untold history". This may be a concise description but it does not begin to illustrate the entertaining way he is able to mix the subjects of guitar history, guitar making and guitar music.



The story begins with the destruction of his trusty twenty-two year old guitar by some airline baggage handlers and his decision to replace it with a custom built "dream" guitar. The chapters alternate between his visits with Rick Davis, a master-guitar-maker in Vermont and the history of the guitar and it's influence on music through the years.

This is a delightful book to read and one that offers an interesting chronological perspective. The hardcover version of the book also has an amazing 3D effect cover. I was able to borrow this copy from the Downers Grove library but it would also make a great gift especially if you have a birthday in September like I do.

-Dave Reynolds



## Old Time Dance Parties!

Join The Plank Road All Volunteer Band and Caller Marianne Mohrhusen for the first PRFMS Old Time Dance Party for the 2005-2006 Season on Saturday, October 22nd at the Two Way Street Coffee House (1047 Curtiss Street, Downers Grove).

Don't Dance? Marianne will teach you every step of the way! This dance is for EVERYONE!

## Chicago Hosts First Welsh Heritage Family Fest

On Saturday, October 1, 2005, The Cambrian Benevolent Society of Chicago will hold the First Annual Welsh Heritage Family Fest at The Nineteenth Century Club, 178 Forest Ave., Oak Park. Running from 1 to 4 p.m., the Fest aims to teach families about the culture and heritage of Wales, and let them participate in some of the traditions of Wales. There will be live Welsh contemporary music from the band Hwp-la, crafts for children, reading of Welsh stories, presentations of traditional Welsh music, lessons in Welsh folk dancing, and ongoing videos featuring the scenery and music of Wales.

Special Welsh daffodils will be for sale along with information on how to plant and care for them. Tee shirts, books, and other items related to Wales will be available for sale and there will be free information about traveling to Wales and Welsh products. Welsh cakes, tea, and other refreshments will be available. The Women's Welsh Club of Illinois and The Chicago Tafia are also supporting this new venture. There will be an admission fee of \$3.00 per person, or \$5.00 per family or couple. Forest Avenue is between Oak Park Avenue and Harlem Avenue, and The Nineteenth Century Club is located just north of Lake Street. Parking is available on site. For further information, or to volunteer to help, please e-mail Chris Jones at [chjajones@sbcglobal.net](mailto:chjajones@sbcglobal.net).

**PLANK ROAD MEMBERSHIP & ORDER FORM**

Cut out the order form and send to address below. Please make checks payable to the  
**Plank Road Folk Music Society**  
 Post Office Box 386, Downers Grove, IL 60515

**\*Please include \$1.50 shipping/handling for t-shirt**

**Memberships**

**I'm interested in helping with:**

- \$10 for 1 year/Individual
- \$20 for 1 year/Family
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

- Events (ticket sales, concessions, set-up, take down, hosting, etc)
- Workshops, Community Appearances, Sing A Rounds
- Nitty Gritty: Promotion, Publicity, Finance, Archive

PRFMS T-shirt: \$12 each  
 (Yellow/Orange Logo)

PRFMS T-shirt: \$12 each  
 (Blue/Purple Logo)

- M** Yellow/Orange
- L** Yellow/Orange
- XL** Yellow/Orange

- M** Blue/Purple
- L** Blue/Purple
- XL** Blue/Purple

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**Lonesome Jim Reports On:**

**Percy French— Comic Song Writer, Dramatist, Painter & Banjo Player**

(An extremely short, thumb-nail introduction)

Percy French was born at Cloonyquin, County Roscommon, Ireland in 1854 and died 65 years later in Formby, Lancashire. He became ill while performing in Glasgow. In between he became a civil engineer - the self-styled 'Inspector Of Drains' - in County Cavan, had two wives and four daughters (the first wife and daughter died shortly after childbirth) and later a comic song writer, dramatist, painter and banjo player.



His most famous song - The Mountains O' Mourne - is a wistful, humorous and slightly bawdy song about an Irishman who goes away to London and writes home about the strange goings on in this rather strange, far-away place. The tune was made popular in our time by the Kingston Trio, who gave it kind of a parlor-song treatment, and later by Billy Joel, who emphasized the more wistful, longing-for-home aspect.

In 1892 French turned to the stage for a full time career. He wrote, produced and played the major role in a topical revue called 'Dublin Up To Date' consisting of sketches, caricatures, stories and songs. From his base in London, he toured Canada, the U.S., West Indies and Switzerland. Every year he returned to play the holiday resorts and towns of Ireland. In 1896, the engine of the West Clare Railway broke down causing him and his troupe of entertainers to be late for a performance in Moore's Hall, Kilkee. When he finally got to the hall with all of his luggage, most of the audience had left. He sued the railway for loss of income and won, and the incident became the inspiration for the song *Are Ye Right There Michael*, which became one of his most popular tunes:

Are ye right there, Michael, are ye right? Do you think that we'll be there before the night?  
 Ye've been so long in startin' that ye couldn't say for sartin—till ye might now, Michael, so ye might.

You can learn more about Percy French and other early song writers and collectors at The Contemplator—  
[www.contemplator.com/folk.html](http://www.contemplator.com/folk.html), and other links on that page.

**-Lonesome Jim Zethmayr**





## *The Unreconstructed Folksinger*

# Now THAT'S the Way to Make an Album!

**Editor's Note:** Art Thieme has a new CD coming out soon on Folk Legacy Records, so we thought some of Art's "different" and/or just plain unorthodox ideas on making an album might (or might not) be helpful now !!

First: I came from a different era than many of you. Authors trying to get book deals, in the 1950s and '60s showed their stuff to publishers who, maybe, recognized their brilliance and then gave them entire careers writing book after book with the same editor. Maxwell Perkins at Scribners was the prize guy to be working with. He edited for the incandescent Thomas Wolfe, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Marjorie Kinmen Rawlings, and other luminaries of that time and place.

When I started to make records of my found (mostly not written by me) folk songs, it was customary for the company to come to you. Self-produced records weren't happening much yet. Accident seemed to play a large part in the early fledgling musical adventures of my peers and I. Granted, maybe some of the right instincts got me to put myself in the right place at the right moment to be seen and heard. But after it all shook out, it was plain old dumb luck, and knowing the right people, that made two thirds of the difference. I knew what I knew of this music. I picked banjo and guitar and jaw/juice/Jew's harp only as well as I did back then, and no better. (It takes time and doing it to get better. As I am so fond of saying, "If it wasn't for time, we'd have to do everything all at once!")

Yes, I had progressed only as far as I had progressed---and no further. ;-) But I kept on doing it. I was pigheaded to the nth degree. I started playing at the No Exit in 1960 or '61 if my memory is correct. (As I'm fond of saying, "When your memory goes, forget it!") I didn't quit playing at that same No Exit Coffeehouse until 1997---roughly thirty-seven years later! (Well, I guess I knew what I liked.) There were some nice ladies there too. -- - But I digress...

What I was getting at was this: I was playing my gig at the Exit one night---or was it that pizza and beer joint on Foster Street in Evanston called THE SPOT by the elevated CTA station where I had a steady Monday night gig playing for drunken Northwestern U. kids? No matter which. Emily Friedman, editor and guiding light of the infamous (even at this late date) Come For To Sing Magazine in Chicago brought her old friend, ED Denson in to hear me pick. ED (the correct spelling for Mr. Denson's first name---both are capital letters too) was, along with Stephan Grossman, the owners of Kicking Mule Records in California. Somehow, strangely, he liked what he heard that night. I wound up doing a live first album for ED Denson and K.M.--- "Outright Boldfaced Lies-Art Thieme Live At The Old Town School Of Folk Music". (KM-148)

That's about it. About ten years after I made that record, I decided it was a fairly good album even if I sounded as if I was as nervous as I really actually was. A live record---for your first one---is an audacious, ignorant, and fairly stupid thing to do. But, who knew? Not me. ---- Now I can smile when I hear the mistakes I made on the song "Blue Mountain".

Fantasy Records owns all of Kicking Mule. They show no signs at all of wanting to ever make a CD out of that one and my next LP on the label---"Songs Of The Heartland". (But that's life.) As someone else was so fond of saying, "Life is what happens to you while you were making other plans."

Sooooo---I did nothing but play my music. From where I sit, that was no chore at all. It was pure pleasure---I just went with the flow. Other fine people did ALL the real work that went into making my albums happen.----- How lucky can one guy get???

To hear some song samples from this CD, go to my "40 years of folk scene photos" site at: [http://rudegnu.com/art\\_thieme.html](http://rudegnu.com/art_thieme.html) -----and scroll way down---then click to see the notes for the songs and to hear the samples.

You will need to enter the word "mudcat" for both the "user name" and the "password". That'll get you in.

### -Art Thieme

Read the rest of veteran performer [Art Thieme's column](http://www.plankroad.org) on the Plank Road Folk Music Society's website at [www.plankroad.org](http://www.plankroad.org) with his observations in his regular Unreconstructed Folksinger Column.



**Post Office Box 386  
Downers Grove, IL  
60515**

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e-mail: [info@plankroad.org](mailto:info@plankroad.org)

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Scot Witt, (630) 717-8226  
e-mail: [webmaster@plankroad](mailto:webmaster@plankroad)

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## Folk Resources Next Door:

**Plank Road Folk Music Society**, PO Box 386, Downers Grove, IL 60515. (630)889-9121 or (708)442-0823 Web: [www.plankroad.org](http://www.plankroad.org)

**Two Way Street Coffee House** 1047 Curtiss St., Downers Grove, IL 60515. (630)969-9720 Website: [www.twowaystreet.org](http://www.twowaystreet.org)

**Jones Family Music Studio**, Lombard. (630)916-1356. Web: [www.jonesfamilymusic.com](http://www.jonesfamilymusic.com)

**Maple Street Chapel**, Main & Maple, Lombard, 60148. (630)629-2630 or (630)964-4871 Web: [www.tccafe.com/msc](http://www.tccafe.com/msc)

**Acoustic Renaissance Concerts** Unitarian Church of Hinsdale. (708) 802-0236 Web: [www.acousticren.com](http://www.acousticren.com)

**Folk Lore Center & Acorn Coffee Bar**, 29W140 Butterfield Rd, POB 762, Warrenville, IL 60555. (630)393-1247

**Woodstock Folk Music/Festival** (815)338-4245 Website: [www.woodstockfolkmusic.com](http://www.woodstockfolkmusic.com)

**Fox Valley Folklore Society**, 755 N Evanslawn Ave, Aurora, IL 60506 (630)897-3655. Web: [www.FoxValleyFolk.com](http://www.FoxValleyFolk.com)

**Warrenville Folk Music Society**, POB 248, Warrenville IL 60555 (630)717-8495 e-mail: [Warrenvillefolk@aol.com](mailto:Warrenvillefolk@aol.com)  
**Lake County Folk Club**, Box 847, Mundelein, IL 60060, (847)949-5355

**HANDS (Hammers & Noters Dulcimer Society)**, Box 181, Morris, IL 60450(708)331-6875 Web: [www.gwdf.org](http://www.gwdf.org)

**South Suburban Dulcimer & Folk Music Society**, P.O. Box 455, Park Forest, IL 60466. (708)756-3857

*"Folk Festival" with George Brown Tuesdays 7 to 9 PM and "Strictly Bluegrass" with Larry Robinson Wednesdays 7 to 9 PM on WDCB, Public Radio from College of DuPage.* For a program guide, call (630) 942-4200.