

BLUES NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE KENTUCKIANA BLUES SOCIETY

"...to preserve, promote and perpetuate the blues tradition."

Louisville, Kentucky

February 2017

Incorporated 1989



Marjorie Marshall photo (L) courtesy of Marjorie Marshall. Mary Ann Fisher photo (R) by Keith Clements.

On Sunday, February 26, Marjorie Marshall (photo left), will introduce a segment of her play "The Real Mary Ann Fisher Story" at the Lettersong Calligraphy Studio and Gallery. Fisher (photo right), a native of Henderson County, KY, was the first woman to be featured in The Ray Charles Band from 1955 to 1958. She was also the subject of the documentary "Queen of the Blues" created by Marshall and Leslie Graham in 2004.

In addition to being a local singer, songwriter, playwright and producer, Marshall is a board member of the Kentuckiana Blues Society. Her play will be funded in part by a grant from the Kentucky Foundation for Women. Tickets are \$15 in advance or \$20 the day of the show. The Lettersong is located at 1501 Story Ave in the Butchertown neighborhood.

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**February 2017
Volume 30 Number 2**

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The views expressed by the authors and advertisers are their own. Contributions by anyone offering pertinent and thoughtful discussion on blues issues are welcomed.

news@kbsblues.org

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Blues News

The monthly newsletter of the Kentuckiana Blues Society

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Louisville, Kentucky

We appreciate your support and welcome your input. If you have any comments, suggestions, ideas, etc., contact us at this address:

**Kentuckiana Blues Society
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Our single membership is a bargain at only \$20.00 US per year. Double membership (two members at the same address, two membership cards, one newsletter) is only \$25.00 US per year, and we now offer a special band rate of \$30 per year, which includes one newsletter plus a membership card for each band member.

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KBS MONTHLY MEETING

If you are interested in reviewing new blues music, come on out to the KBS monthly board meeting (**held the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00 PM at Check's Café in Germantown**) and take your pick! We receive promo releases from the major blues labels as well as regional and local bands. If you review a CD, it's yours to keep!

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KBS President Mark Sneed

Greetings Blues Fans,

The International Blues contest winners are having their fundraiser this weekend and I can only imagine their excitement as they prepare for their trip to Memphis. They are well deserving and will do great representing the Kentuckiana Blues Society. They'll have wonderful memories to share among band members and our devoted fans. Many members have plans to join those representing us in Memphis and are happy to provide the support. I've never been to Memphis to see all the bands and feel the energy of the contest, but the people I've talked to tell me it's great. Performers from all the blues societies will be there to show their talent and dedication to the music.

Blues music is alive in Louisville, but how can we introduce blues to a new audience? Our mission is to Preserve, Promote and Perpetuate the Blues. Some of our past accomplishments were: placing historic information in our local Ekstrom library about our local blues performers, locating grave sites of past blues artist and helping raise funds to erect appropriate headstones in their honor. We continue to have our blues society tent at blues festivals for the purpose of selling artist's music and spreading the word about this great style of music.

In addition, we'll continue to have The Blues in the Schools program as our focus for the coming year. The plan is to develop the program in order to have youth experience blues music with the hope they will become involved as either a supporter or a musician. The KBS board still meets every month and we are currently putting together our committees to work on their focused agendas. This is the time when each board member decides which committee to join. I see a lot of passion and commitment from the board to improve our society and see it flourish and grow.

The Anniversary celebration, the Blues in the Schools program, members benefits and how to help our membership grow have all been topics of discussion since I've been a member of the board. We have sent out a membership survey and are hopefully planning on doing it again. The feedback we receive helps provide insight and direction that we might not think of on our own. I am asking our supporters and members to please take time and fill out our survey if we do decide to pursue it in the near future.

Mark



HELP WANTED!

Louisville Music News is looking for a contributing writer for their monthly blues column "I've Got a Mind to Ramble". You'd need to submit 3 or 4 columns a year, on any blues related subject of your choice. Please respond to news@kbsblues.org if interested or for more information.

ATTENTION KBS MEMBERS

We are converting our membership rolls to new software to better serve our members. We ask that you please bear with us during this transition, and if you have joined or renewed and it takes more than a couple of weeks to get your card and/or newsletters in the mail, please drop us a line at membership@kbsblues.org or leave a message for Natalie at 502-893-8031.

Back To The Blues



Perry Aberli

If Foree were still around, he would be saying, "It's A New Year, Brother!" And, in that spirit, I will endeavor to continue with my curmudgeon free – or mostly so – writing. To do that, I need to stick to some innocuous topics; I've done sound and text, so I guess this will be the Blues video column.

Blues on video has become remarkably accessible thanks to the plethora of postings on YouTube. Some of these are excellent, others shaky and out of focus with distorted sound, and some just not worth watching. Just search for any Blues artist you wish and you will find either a performance video or an audio cut with a video of a record label or scenes that the poster believed appropriate to the music.

However, there also have been some amazing appearances by Blues artists in movies. I'm not considering documentaries here of which there are a ton. No, I want to take a look at some of those rare moments in the movies when a Blues artist and their music is more than just background wallpaper to create atmosphere.

Most notable of these is the short (15 minutes or so) "St. Louis Blues," with Bessie Smith. This is an unbelievable glimpse at what it must have been like to hear Bessie live. One has the impression that her acting is little more than Bessie being herself, but the scene in which she sings the title tune is absolutely riveting – a legend brought to life! This video is available on YouTube, so check it out.

Also on YouTube is the African-American produced, directed, and all black cast of Spencer Williams', "The Blood of Jesus" (1941). Ostensibly a morality tale, calling the unbelieving sinner back to the Cross, this movie is important from a Blues perspective as it features two songs by the Bluesman known as The Black Ace. The Black Ace was the performing name of Babe Kyro Lemon Turner, a Texas born and based musician who played a National Steel Guitar, often playing lap style. Babe was recorded in 1960 by Chris Strachwitz for his Arhoolie label (LP1003). If you view the movie on YouTube (again!) you can hear the Black Ace in the juke joint scene beginning at about 39:53 and actually get a glimpse of him at 46:20 playing lap style on the back of a flatbed truck of musicians. The truck is driven by the devil and parked under a crossroads sign that says, "To Hell, To Zion," with arrows pointing in opposite directions. The band is parked under the "To Hell" arrow. You really need to watch the whole film, which comes in at just under an hour.

While there are innumerable movies that use Blues music – or even bands – as background – as I noted above, there are at least five Hollywood movies that make notable contributions of cameo performances by Bluesmen: "WW and the Dixie Dancekings" (1975), "The Blues Brothers" (1980), "Crossroads" (1986), "Adventures in Babysitting" (1987), and "O Brother, Where Art Thou" (2000).

"**WW and The Dixie Dancekings**" is a seldom seen movie starring Burt Reynolds, Art Carney, Ned Beatty, Jerry Reed, Don Williams, Mel Tillis, and, oh yes, Furry Lewis. The film is available in its entirety on YouTube and it is a pure delight to watch. The scenes with "Uncle Furry," begin around the one hour mark with Furry playing the strains of, "Shake 'Em on Down." It is Furry as Furry and not to be missed.

In "**The Blues Brothers**" we get the great scene on Maxwell Street with John Lee Hooker, Big Walter Horton, and Pinetop Perkins. While recreated for the movie, this was what Maxwell Street was like in its prime, as can be seen and heard in several cd and dvd documentary recordings.

Most of the music in "**Crossroads**" was not played by Blues artists. However, there is one scene that is an exception: the one in the juke joint. The band on stage that is joined by Joe Seneca (playing the movie's version of Willie Brown) features Frank Frost and Son Thomas, two genuine Bluesmen. It is a scene that rings true in an otherwise totally fictional piece of film. If memory serves me correctly, Frank Frost appeared early on at Garvin Gate.

"**Adventures in Babysitting**" is not, like the previous three, a "music" movie. It is a Chris Columbus version of a coming of age movie in which the film's main character – Elisabeth Shue as the Babysitter finds herself and her charges accidentally on stage in a South Side Chicago Juke Joint with Albert Collins! Okay, so the scene was actually filmed at Fitzgerald's in Berwyn, a suburb of Chicago west of Cicero Ave and adjacent to Oak Park, for all its contrivance, the scene is a lot of fun and Albert is, well, Albert is Albert. I won't list the members of the band so you can watch the scene and try to identify them for yourself; but I guarantee you'll recognize a bunch – if not all of them.

"**O Brother, Where Art Thou**" has become an iconic Coen Brothers film that features a wide ranging wonderful collection of "roots" music. Some of those are performed by the actual artists – for example the Fairfield Four singing "In The Lonesome Valley," and the Peasall Sisters performance of "In The Highways." For Blues purposes though, we have Chris Thomas King playing the misplaced role of Tommy Johnson and singing Skip James' "Hard Time Killin' Floor." It is a chilling rendition that is too often overlooked for the other great Old Timey music and antics in this movie. Chris Thomas King is the son of Swamp Blues master Tabby Thomas who recorded for Excello Records and owned the bar known as Tabby's Blues Box in Baton Rouge. By the way, Chris also played the role of Lowell Fulson in the movie "Ray." (2004)

So, there you have it: lots of video to accompany the cds and books I have already recommended. Guilty pleasures all, but all in some way will get you back to the Blues.

Perry Aberli



New Music Reviews



Fiona Boyes
Professin' the Blues
Reference Recordings

Fiona Boyes' appearance (and win) at the IBC in 2003 was the United States' introduction to this Australian which was the first time the IBC was won by a female and the first time by a non-American. Since then her international career has taken off. She performed at the Louisville Blues, Brews and BBQ, nee Water Tower Festival in 2007. Her finger picking was remarkable, on electric guitar as well as acoustic.

Fast forward 9 years and 6 CD releases later, she recorded this CD which is an experimentation of different guitars (acoustic guitars, resonators and a cigar box guitar) and tunings as she experiments with the sounds of the Mississippi Delta, New Orleans during the classic era of 1920 blues, and some more modern sounds. These songs were recorded live in the studio with no effects, overdubs etc.

Each of the songs is described in the liner notes as to how she was inspired to write or perform them, along with guitar information, and accompanying musicians. Instrument descriptions include for example (on "Old and Stiff") "National Reso-phonic guitar, double bass, drums, and percussion (including the funny thing that goes 'Boing'", or (on "Stubborn Old Mule") "Maton acoustic guitar, double bass and cardboard box percussion". Musicians include Boyes on guitar and all vocals, Jimi Bott on percussion and Denny Croy on bass.

The performance and feel of the music is of a simpler time. Her delivery of these songs is similar to Rory Block's releases of the older artists' music, but with more emphasis on the vocals and simpler, less complex, but appropriate, and well performed guitar work. Of the 16 songs on the CD, all but a couple are originals ("Baby Please Don't Go", and "Face in the Mirror"). What I like about Boyes' music is that after all of her releases, she is still pulled back to early blues rather than (as is more likely to pay the bills) rock.

This CD is not for everybody. If you are looking for rollicking, danceable, good times-tunes, this is not the one. If you are looking for some music that is honest and harks back to older principles of blues music and unencumbered musicianship, this is for you.

Bob Brown



Frank Bang & The Cook County Kings
The Blues Don't Care
Blue Hoss Records

Frank Bang says that "The Blues Don't Care" is the record he's been waiting to make his whole life. He was born and raised in the Windy City and his resume confirms his passion for his craft. Before Buddy Guy took him into his touring band in 1999, Bang worked at Legends, doing everything from merchandising and maintenance to cooking breakfast at the club for the annual Blues Fest weekend brunch.

He toured with Buddy and B.B. King for five summers, traveling the world and gaining experience and inspiration from his idols. His first band was a blues-rock group, Frank Bang and the Secret Stash. They played here at Stevie Ray's a few times several years ago and recorded four CDs from about 2006-2013.

According to Bang, "The Blues Don't Care" is his first true blues album. I'll leave that distinction to someone more discerning than I am...I just know it's a rock solid effort and I give it two thumbs up.

The title track is upbeat and you can see right away what you're in for. The band is classic Chicago and includes drummer Brian 'BJ' Jones (Junior Wells, James Cotton, Otis Rush, Magic Slim & the Teardrops), Andre Howard on bass (Magic Slim, Lonnie Brooks, Lucky Peterson), and Donnie Nichilo on piano (Buddy Guy & Junior Wells, The Mighty Blue Kings). Outstanding harp work by journeyman Russ Green, who learned his chops touring with Lurrie Bell and John Primer, provides the finishing touches for an authentic Chicago sound.

Notable tracks include (#1) "The Blues Don't Care" and (#8) "Repo Man", as well as fresh covers of a couple of oft-recorded classics, (#2) "The Dream" and (#5) "Come in This House".

Hopefully you were fortunate enough to have caught Frank playing guitar with Mark Telesca at Garvin Gate in October. It looks like his upcoming tour schedule centers around Florida as far as they have it posted, but keep your eyes out. This is one you won't want to miss.

Natalie Carter

Kentuckiana Blues Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Jan-29 Bearno's by the Bridge – Open Jam Louie Louie's Pizza – MERRF Dough Raiser Benefit Noon Lyric Theatre (Lexington) – Third Annual Lexington Music Awards 6:00 Rubbies Southside G&B – Open Jam Shamrock B&G (Lexington) – Open Jam Smoky Bean's Coffee Shop – Big Poppa Stampley Noon	30 Tee Dee's Blues & Jazz Club (Lexington) Tee Dee Young Band & Friends	31 Corbett's - Robbie Bartlett 7:00 Henry Clay's House (Lexington) Northside Sheiks Off Broadway Tap House (Madison) Open Jam 8:00 Stevie Ray's - Blues Jam 9:00	Feb-1 Bourbon on Main (Frankfort) - Open Jam 6:00 Intl Blues Challenge (Memphis TN) Linda's Log Cabin (Vernon IN) Open Jam 7:00 Stevie Ray's – Rock Bottom Band Volare – Robbie Bartlett Duo 7:00	2 Intl Blues Challenge (Memphis TN) Mick's Lounge (Jeffersonville IN) Open Mic 8:00 Stevie Ray's – TNT Open Jam 9:00 VFW Post (Madison IN) – Open Jam Volare – Robbie Bartlett Duo 7:00	3 Amy Z's Pub (Lyndon) – Blues an Greys Champions (Richmond) – Five Below Grand Theatre (Frankfort) – Delbert McClinton CD Release Party 7:30 Intl Blues Challenge (Memphis TN) Stevie Ray's – The Blues Drifters / Lawn Dart Accident	4 Backstretch B&G (Lexington) – Romn Crowder and Friends 7:30 Champions (Richmond) – Five Below Band Intl Blues Challenge (Memphis TN) Stevie Ray's – No Problem / Soul River Brown Wick's Pizza (Goose Creek) – Dallas Cole
5 Bearno's by the Bridge – Open Jam Rubbies Southside G&B - Open Jam Shamrock B&G (Lexington) - Open Jam	6 Tee Dee's Blues & Jazz Club (Lexington) Tee Dee Young Band & Friends	7 Corbett's - Robbie Bartlett 7:00 Henry Clay's House (Lexington) Northside Sheiks Off Broadway Tap House (Madison) Open Jam 8:00 Stevie Ray's - Blues Jam 9:00	8 Check's Cafe – KBS Board Meeting 7:00 Kroger (Euclid Ave – Lexington) - Open Jam 4:00 Linda's Log Cabin (Vernon IN) Open Jam 7:00 Stevie Ray's – Jack Whittle Band Volare – Robbie Bartlett Duo 7:00	9 Mick's Lounge (Jeffersonville IN) Open Mic 8:00 Stevie Ray's – TNT Open Jam 9:00 VFW Post (Madison IN) – Open Jam Volare – Robbie Bartlett Duo 7:00	10 Jeff Ruby's – Robbie Bartlett 9:00 Stevie Ray's – Blues and Greys / Toad Strangler Wick's Pizza (Highlands) – Dallas Cole	11 Backstretch B&G (Lexington) – Romn Crowder and Friends 7:30 Jeff Ruby's – Robbie Bartlett 9:00 Knights Club (Frankfort) – Five Below Band R Place Pub – Dallas Cole Band Stevie Ray's – One Shot Johnny / Jimmy Davis Band
12 Bearno's by the Bridge – Open Jam Bellarmine University – Traditional Negro Spiritual Voice Competition Rubbies Southside G&B - Open Jam Shamrock B&G (Lexington) - Open Jam Willie's Locally Known (Lexington) – Lee Carroll's Soul Jazz Quartette 11:00am	13 Tee Dee's Blues & Jazz Club (Lexington) Tee Dee Young Band & Friends	14 Corbett's - Robbie Bartlett 7:00 Henry Clay's House (Lexington) Northside Sheiks Off Broadway Tap House (Madison) Open Jam 8:00 Stevie Ray's - Blues Jam 9:00	15 Linda's Log Cabin (Vernon IN) Open Jam 7:00 Stevie Ray's – Mississippi Adam Riggle Band 8:30 Volare – Robbie Bartlett Duo 7:00	16 Mick's Lounge (Jeffersonville IN) Open Mic 8:00 Stevie Ray's – TNT Open Jam 9:00 VFW Post (Madison IN) – Open Jam Volare – Robbie Bartlett Duo 7:00 Wicked Eyed Woman (E'town) – D Man Duo	17 Beltarra Casino (Florence, IN) – Chuck Brisbin & Cold Tuna Leaves at the River House – Robbie Bartlett 9:00 Stevie Ray's – The Bottle Trees / The KingBees	18 Backstretch B&G (Lexington) – Romn Crowder and Friends 7:30 Beltarra Casino (Florence, IN) – Chuck Brisbin & Cold Tuna MOM's Music (Melwood Ave) – Open Jam Momma's Last Chance Saloon (Nicholasville) – Five Below Band 9:00 Stevie Ray's – 100 Proof / The BeatDaddys
19 Bearno's by the Bridge – Open Jam Rubbies Southside G&B - Open Jam Shamrock B&G (Lexington) - Open Jam Willie's Locally Known (Lexington) – Jazz Brunch with Gail Wynthers 11:00am	20 Tee Dee's Blues & Jazz Club (Lexington) Tee Dee Young Band & Friends	21 Corbett's - Robbie Bartlett 7:00 Henry Clay's House (Lexington) Northside Sheiks Off Broadway Tap House (Madison) Open Jam 8:00 Stevie Ray's - Blues Jam 9:00	22 Kroger (Tates Creek – Lexington) - Open Jam 4:00 Linda's Log Cabin (Vernon IN) Open Jam 7:00 Stevie Ray's – Fatt Matt & the Sluggers 8:30 Volare – Robbie Bartlett Duo 7:00	23 Mick's Lounge (Jeffersonville IN) Open Mic 8:00 Stevie Ray's – TNT Open Jam 9:00 VFW Post (Madison IN) – Open Jam Volare – Robbie Bartlett Duo 7:00	24 Beltarra Casino (Florence, IN) – Ladi T of Cincy Gerstle's Place – Soul Circus 9:00 Jeff Ruby's – Robbie Bartlett 9:00 Louisville Palace – ZZ Top Norton Center for the Arts (Danville) - The Music Maker Blues Revue Stevie Ray's – The Clark Band 9:00	25 Backstretch B&G (Lexington) – Romn Crowder and Friends 7:30 Beltarra Casino (Florence, IN) – Ladi T of Cincy Jeff Ruby's – Robbie Bartlett 9:00 Madison Theater (Covington) – Delbert McClinton CD Release Party 7:00 Stevie Ray's – Rock Bottom / Kung Fu Grip VFW Post (Boonville IN) – Dallas Cole Band
26 Bearno's by the Bridge – Open Jam Letterson Studio – Mary Ann Fisher Story featuring Marjorie Marshall 7:00 Rubbies Southside G&B - Open Jam Shamrock B&G (Lexington) - Open Jam	27 Tee Dee's Blues & Jazz Club (Lexington) Tee Dee Young Band & Friends	28 Corbett's - Robbie Bartlett 7:00 Henry Clay's House (Lexington) Northside Sheiks Off Broadway Tap House (Madison) Open Jam 8:00 Stevie Ray's - Blues Jam 9:00	Mar-1 Bourbon on Main (Frankfort) - Open Jam 6:00 Check's Cafe – KBS Board Meeting 7:00 Open Jam 7:00 Stevie Ray's – TBA Volare – Robbie Bartlett Duo 7:00	2 Mick's Lounge (Jeffersonville IN) Open Mic 8:00 Stevie Ray's – TNT Open Jam 9:00 VFW Post (Madison IN) – Open Jam Volare – Robbie Bartlett Duo 7:00	3 Stevie Ray's – TBA	4 Backstretch B&G (Lexington) – Romn Crowder and Friends 7:30 Chateau Thomas Winery (Nashville IN) – Smokestack Lightning 7:00 Stevie Ray's – TBA

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