

...a festival of traditional roots music
at the Barrier Islands Center

Patchwork of Virginia

Whitetop Mountain Band Appalachian family strings

Paschall Brothers a capella gospel

Shallow Creek bluegrass

Rick Franklin Piedmont blues

Lisa Stevens and Folkgrass



Virginia Foundation
For the Humanities



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE ARTS

Saturday, June 12, noon to 6 p.m.



Patchwork ^{of} Virginia

...a celebration of traditional roots music
at the Barrier Islands Center

Patchwork of Virginia Music Festival

is a project of the Barrier Islands Center



Event sponsors include:



Virginia Foundation
For the Humanities



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Schedule of Performances

On the Main Stage:

Noon - 12:30 p.m.:

Lisa Stevens Powers and Folkgrass

12:30 - 1:15 p.m.:

Rick Franklin

1:30 - 3:15 p.m.:

Whitetop Mountain Band

3:30 - 4:15 p.m.:

Paschall Brothers

4:30 - 5:15 p.m.:

Shallow Creek

5:30 - 6:00 p.m.:

The Big Gospel Finale (all groups)

Lecture Room inside the Barrier Islands Center:

2:00 - 2:30 p.m.:

**Workshop with Rick
Franklin: The East Coast
Blues Tradition**

3:30 - 4:00 p.m.:

**Workshop with Shallow
Creek and Whitetop
Mountain Band: Old Time
to Bluegrass; Evolution of
an American Tradition**



What People Listened to on the Eastern Shore

Historically the Eastern Shore of Virginia and its barrier islands does not seem to have a tradition of indigenous folk music. It would, however, be a mistake to believe that an intense interest in music did not



Sud Bell. Photo courtesy of Annabelle Scott

exist. The gentry aspired to high culture and the barrier islands were not all that isolated from the mainland. Most everyone enjoyed dances and church functions. Quite simply; what was popular elsewhere was popular here. Folk expression takes many forms: work songs, railroad disasters, murders, robberies, unrequited love, those lost at sea, appeals for justice, brave soldiers, feuds, revenge, smugglers, ghosts, and of course, deeply felt religious faith. All these topics easily apply to our people and music could have been composed to commemorate this.

Probably the closest we came to having a troubadour or minstrel was the banjo wizard Sud (Southy) Bell of Wachapreague and Hog Island. This wonderfully outrageous entertainer with his trademark cigar would stroll into towns singing at the top of his voice. Some swear that he could not finish a song without stopping to tell a joke or a story. Walter Chrysler and Governor Tuck of Virginia often exhibited Mr. Bell to their friends. His raucous adventures in New York City are the stuff of legends.

Virginia's Musical Traditions...notes from Gregg Kimball

Virginians are central to America's musical heritage. Few states can boast iconic performers such as the Carter Family, Ralph Stanley, John Cephas, and the Golden Gate Quartet, all of whom helped define quintessentially American styles such as Bluegrass, Country, Blues, and Gospel. Virginia's traditional musical heritage is rich in place as well as styles. From the Appalachia string band to the Piedmont Blues to the Tidewater gospel quartet, local communities preserved unique cultural ways and traditions. Church, home, workplace, and street corner all served as points of musical interchange. The Patchwork of Virginia Festival highlights these traditions by presenting torchbearers of American traditional music. Like those before them, they learned from neighbors, family, and friends and have the music in their bones; and like their mentors, they are passing that legacy on to others. These are living, breathing traditions, full of an energy and power that have made the rest of the world take notice. Enjoy and appreciate the opportunity to see such a remarkable group of performers!



East Coast Blues

Rising from the Mississippi Delta region, blues music was quickly integrated into African American musicians' existing repertoire of rags, country-dance tunes, ballads, religious music, and popular songs. By the early 1920s the fusion of these influences created the so-called East Coast or Piedmont style characterized by a highly syncopated guitar technique.

Virginia songsters found ready audiences at rural house parties, mining and lumber camps, city street corners, factory exits, and town dance halls. In the 1920s record companies captured performances of Virginia artists such as William Moore, barber and farmer from Tappahannock, Luke Jordan, street musician from Lynchburg, and Steve Tarter and Harry Gay, from Scott County in southwest Virginia.

Virginia also produced two of America's greatest modern standard bearers for traditional Blues, John Cephas and John Jackson, who both passed away recently. They recorded and toured extensively, bringing their music to audiences around the United States and the world.

Rick Franklin

Since 1981, Rick Franklin has been playing and singing the Blues. His musical interests are eclectic, reflecting his considerable travels both domestic and abroad. In addition to the Blues, Rick is an aficionado of everything from African High Life, Brazilian Batucada and Samba to Reggae and Zydeco; musical idioms which, like the Blues, reflect the considerable contribution of the African heritage to the musical scene.

Rick's musical style of blues is known as the Piedmont or East Coast style identified with such legendary players like Blind Blake, Blind Boy Fuller and William More along with contemporary players such as Virginia residents John Cephas, John Jackson, and the late Archie Edwards of Franklin County. Rick has taught guitar to youths and adults and is personally committed to the preservation and diffusion of the Blues.

Rick has been an Executive Board member of the DC Blues Society and helped organize and performed in the first annual D.C. Blues Festival. Rick has performed throughout the metropolitan area at events such as the Washington Folk Festival, Northern Virginia Folk Festival, the D.C. Blues Society Blues Festival, and the Columbia Pike Blues Festival, in addition to appearances at The National Portrait Gallery and local elementary schools.



Old Time Music

The music that today is called Old Time in fact springs from a mixture of traditional sources, including Anglo-American balladry, British and American airs and fiddle tunes, African influences on both fiddle and banjo, and religious harmony singing. In the 1920s, the first commercial recordings of Appalachian ballad singers, string bands, fiddlers, and gospel quartets fascinated Americans and became popularly known as "Old Time" or "Old Familiar Tunes."

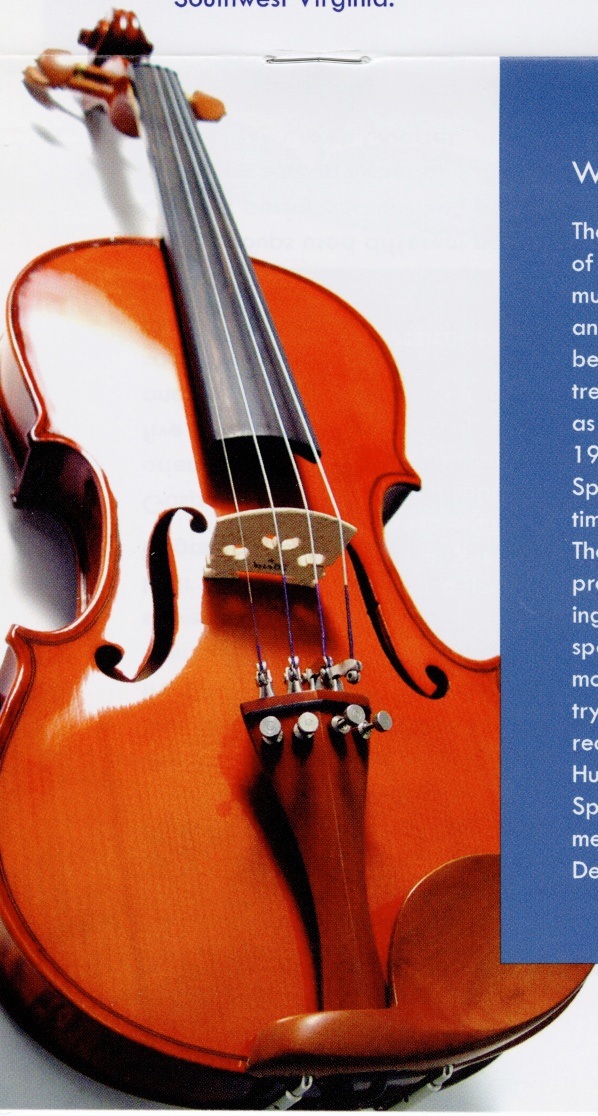
Virginians played a seminal role in the popularization and development of the music, including recording artists such as the Carter Family, Henry Whitter, the Powers Family, and Ernest Stoneman. The instrumentation and distinctive vocals seem to have defined the music as ancient as did the rural backgrounds of many of the songsters.

While artists drew on local traditions and tunes, performers began writing pieces with an "Old Time" sound, from topical songs on famous events such as "The Wreck of the Old Southern 97" to remakes of nineteenth century sentimental ballads. The Old Time tradition has been preserved in local communities and families and in many of the fiddler's conventions that dot the landscape of Southwest Virginia.



Whitetop Mountain Band

The Whitetop Mountain Band is a family-based band from the highest mountains of Virginia, a place steeped in traditional mountain music. The members have done much to preserve the Whitetop region's style of old time fiddling and banjo picking and are legendary musicians and teachers of the style. The band originated with Albert Hash in the 1940s, a well-known and beloved fiddler and luthier. Albert had a tremendous impact on the old time and bluegrass scene and also taught such luthiers as Wayne Henderson, Audrey Ham, and many others to build instruments. In the 1970s, Albert's brother-in-law, fiddler Thornton Spencer, and his wife, banjoist Emily Spencer, joined Albert in the Whitetop Mountain Band and all three started an old time music program at Mt. Rogers School, a small K-12 public school, in Whitetop. The students learned mountain instruments and dancing. Emily Spencer carries on the program and it has received well deserved regional and national attention, including a Grammy nomination. The Whitetop Mountain Band's entertaining performances span the full range of mountain music, from fiddle/banjo instrumentals to four-part mountain gospel songs and old time ballads. The band is as comfortable at a country dance as on stage at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival. The band currently has recordings on Arhoolie Records and one released by the Virginia Foundation of the Humanities. The band's current line-up includes Thornton Spencer on fiddle, Emily Spencer on banjo and vocals, their daughter Martha Spencer on a variety of instruments and as a dancer. Jackson Cunningham plays mandolin, guitar, and sings, and Debbie Bramer plays bass and dances in the band.



Tidewater Tradition: The African American Quartets

The African American vocal quartet—typically four voices singing songs in a lead-tenor-baritone-bass harmony arrangement without instrumental accompaniment—is one of the great musical traditions in Virginia music and had strong roots in the Tidewater region. Early quartets, such as the Hampton Institute Quartette, drew on the spirituals and other sacred songs prevalent in the era of slavery. Local groups usually performed in a church setting, and early quartets usually delivered their songs in a restrained, slow-meter style with great power. Social and commercial influences began to influence some of the groups' style and material in the 1920s and 30s.

Gospel-style music brought to prominence new musical material that centered on upbeat, pop-oriented ensemble arrangements and lyrics of personal salvation, and groups sometimes employed five or six singers. A market for secular performances also existed among the record-buying public, and religious quartets lucky enough to enter the studio were sometimes pressured to record non-sacred songs by companies seeking to get the most sales from their talent. Other groups actively toured with traveling shows and on vaudeville circuits, performing secular material influenced by ragtime and jazz.

Many groups used different names when recording religious and secular material—the Norfolk Jazz Quartet performed upbeat, popular songs but called themselves the Norfolk Jubilee Quartet when recording sacred material. Other prominent Virginia groups included the Golden Gate Quartet and the Golden Crown Quartet.



The Paschall Brothers

In 1981 the Reverend Frank A. Paschall, Sr. formed the Paschall Brothers, an a cappella singing group, with five of his sons: Frank, Jr., Dwight, Tarrence, Wendell, and William. The Reverend Paschall migrated to the Hampton Roads region from North Carolina during World War II, and sang with several quartets, including the Vocalaires, who released a record on Philadelphia's Gotham label. The Paschall Brothers stand firmly in the great tradition of religious a cappella groups that flourished in Tidewater Virginia, developing unique vocal arrangements to spread the message of God. Now under the leadership of Reverend Tarrence Paschall, the group has been featured at many events and festivals including the Blue Ridge Folklife Festival at Ferrum College, the National Folk Festival, and the Kennedy Center. The Paschalls were honored by inclusion in the Virginia Folklife Program's apprenticeship program, where master artists pass on their traditions to younger members of their communities. The Virginia Folklife Program released their recording *Songs for Our Father*.

Bluegrass Music

Most listeners assume that Bluegrass is “as old as the hills,” but it is in fact a relatively modern musical style. With roots in the string bands of the 1930s, Bluegrass incorporated gospel and blues vocal influences, three-finger banjo techniques, and notions of instrumental solos and improvisation from Jazz to create a uniquely American art form. Although the term “bluegrass” as a name for the genre did not appear in print until the 1950s, most agree that the musical style was defined by early music of Bill Monroe and the Blue Grass Boy, including the heavily syncopated, hard driving three-finger banjo picking of Earl Scruggs, the soaring tenors of Lester Flatt and Bill Monroe and the bluesy slide fiddling of Chubby Wise. The exceedingly high-pitched harmony singing and a sharp interplay on

instrumental leads also defined the “high lonesome sound.” Soon there was a flowering of bluegrass bands in the Appalachian region that produced great artists such as Carter and Ralph Stanley of Dickenson County, Virginia. The Stanley’s Primitive Baptist roots deeply influenced their vocal style.



Shallow Creek

The band Shallow Creek, composed of five young men from Pittsylvania County, Virginia, takes the listener back to the classic period of Virginia and Appalachian Bluegrass. Driven by their desire to keep the traditional style of Bluegrass and Bluegrass gospel music alive, these fine musicians perform traditional songs and tunes and also write their own material in the traditional style. In the late 1990s, when the Shallow Creek boys were in their very early teens, they became fairly well-known in Southern Virginia and Northern North Carolina while playing regularly at different festivals and churches in their region. After a hiatus of several years, they decided to start picking again, and recently released their first recording project since 2000, entitled *The Water's Rising*. Banjo player Jeremy Stephens has won numerous first prizes for his banjo playing, including first place at the 2006 Appalachian String Band Festival (Clifftop) and honors at Merlefest.



Workshop Leaders and Hosts: Jon Lohman and Gregg Kimball



Jon Lohman is Program Director of the Virginia Folklife Program and Virginia State Folklorist. As the state folklorist, he works to document, present, and support Virginia's rich cultural folkways through a variety of mediums, including audio and video documentation, exhibit design, public programming, and project development. He has presented at numerous festivals, including the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, the National Folklife Festival, Merlefest, the Blue Ridge Folklife Festival, the American Folk Festival, and others.

Dr. Gregg D. Kimball is the director of Education and Outreach Services for the Library of Virginia. He organized the Virginia Roots Music exhibition and associated programs at the Library

of Virginia, highlighting the state's musical traditions, and assisted with the production of the associated recording, *Virginia Roots: the Richmond 1929 Sessions* (2002). He has developed and hosted concerts and workshops on traditional music for organizations such as the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and the Carpenter Center for the Performing Arts, and serves on the program committee for the Richmond Folk Festival. Kimball plays traditional music in a variety of styles on the guitar, banjo, and fiddle, and has performed at many venues, including the Carpenter Center for the Performing Arts, the Washington D.C. Blues Festival, and recently with the Richmond Symphony Orchestra.

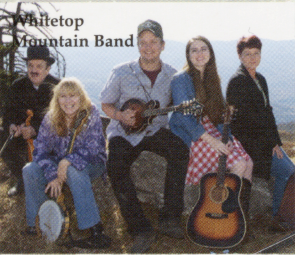


The Barrier Islands Center and Historic Almshouse Farm

The Barrier Islands Center preserves the most complete almshouse complex extant in the United States, using its buildings to showcase the culture, history, community, and ecology of Virginia's Barrier Islands and the people who made them their home. The Barrier Islands Center is committed to the Eastern Shore of Virginia community by providing its residents and visitors with a cultural learning center where educational opportunities are offered to people of all ages and their local history is preserved. What started as a rescue mission to save the photos, artifacts, decoys, and objects of daily living, has evolved into a wide-reaching initiative to re-anchor the community to the legacy of its ancestors.

The islands lining the coast of the Eastern Shore were originally inhabited by the Chesapeake Indians. When the Jamestown colonists arrived in 1614, they camped there to harvest seafood and produce salt from seawater. Over the centuries the islands witnessed pirate raids, revolutionary war battles, and dramatic shipwrecks. A hearty breed of independent men and women grew up around the bays and marshes of the seaside. As they learned to cope with coastal change and geographic isolation, their lifestyles and characters evolved very differently from those who lived in grand homes along the James. Yet all were Virginians, patches in the multicolored quilt of our history.





An afternoon of song and strumming reflecting the rich music traditions of Virginia.

Be treated to interpretations of the music styles by music historian Gregg Kimball and Virginia State Folklorist Jon Lohman.

Enjoy local food, beer, and wines from Chatham Vineyards available for purchase.

**Tickets \$12* in advance,
\$15 at the gate
children under 12 Free**

Patchwork of Virginia Music Festival at
The Barrier Islands Center
7295 Young St.
Machipongo, VA 23405
757-678-5550

www.barrierislandscenter.com

* This is a rain or shine event. All tickets are non-refundable.

Please Observe Event Policies:

No dogs, coolers, picnic baskets or glass containers. Bringing alcohol on premises is prohibited.

Barrier Islands Center
P.O. Box 206
Machipongo, VA 23405-0206

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