



April 2003

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Monthly Jam - April 6 @ Taliano's

Acoustic jam - April 20 @ HR 57

(202) 828-3028

homepage- <http://www.dcblues.org>

## Blues in Passing

### Othar Turner

Othar Turner, a Mississippi farmer who kept alive a musical style that was older than the blues, and his daughter Bernice Turner Pratcher, both died on Thursday February 27. He was 94 and lived in Gravel Springs, Mississippi, near Senatobia. She was 48. Turner led the Rising Star Fife and Drum band, a band that **New York Times** writer Jon Pareles described as "the last survivor of a tradition that had transformed the sound of a Civil War military band into music with clear African roots: a syncopated drumbeat behind sharp, riffing melodies in pentatonic modes." Folklorist George Mitchell recorded Turner in the late sixties for a compilation on Arhoolie. He was also recorded by Professor David Evans who issued some of the recordings on a collection that included fife and drum recordings from the forties made for the Library of Congress. L&R Records also recorded him for the series Living Country Blues USA



Othar Turner at Folklife Festival.  
Photo © Ron Weinstock

in the early 80s. Mr. Turner appeared at various festivals including the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival and participated at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival

## From the President's desk

On being elected the Fifth President of the D.C. Blues Society, I would like to first say "the State of the Blues is Good". My goal as President is not only to maintain what has been created in the Blues community through the Blues Society, but to build on that foundation. It's time for the "Society" to be known as a Blues force in the Blues Community, both locally and world wide. A tall order but an order that must be filled. That's my goal, I welcome your help and with your help we'll never Lose the Blues.

Sam'i Nuriddin.



Couple pictures from the February jam at Talaino's  
Photos © Ingrid Strawser

## Jam News

Outstanding players at the March 2 Jam included, Dave Jackson, Dr S.O. Feelgood on drums and Hosting, Butch Murray, Tommy Jay on drums, Brother Sherrief, killer Guitarist Eddie Becker, Jim Horn on keyboards, excellent job and a host of other Friends.

This issue was put together prior to the March 16 acoustic jam at HR 57 so we hopefully will have the list of those jam participants next month.

The April jams take place April 6 at Taliano's and April 16 for the acoustic jam at HR 57. See you there.

### Big Jack Johnson Resting

#### After Successful Leg Surgery

Mississippi Delta Blues sensation Big Jack Johnson is resting at his home in Clarksdale Mississippi after successful surgery on his leg. The surgery was needed due to a leg infection. Big Jack will take two months off from the road to make sure he is 100%. Big Jack said "I would like to be playing right now but the doctors say I need the rest" Asked how his leg feels Jack added, "It's the best it's felt in over 10 years, I might run a marathon." Look for Big Jack to be on the road starting in May.

Continued on page 2

**THE DC BLUES SOCIETY**  
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 The **DC Blues Calendar** is published usually monthly and includes information on Society events, blues listings and other items of blues interest. Listings should be sent to Steve Levine, 5022 Quebec St., College Park, MD 20740 (cypressgrove@hotmail.com). Recent issues of the DC Blues Calendar are available as PDF files and may be downloaded from the Society's website, www.dtblues.org.  
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**For next issue, must have copy, listings & ads by April 17**

**Continued from page 1**

val when the Folklife Festival celebrated the musical roots of Robert Johnson. Your editor met and interviewed Mr. Turner who regaled him with a description of some of the holiday weekend parties they would throw, roasting a goat over a fire and partying with music food and drink. In 1992, he was awarded a National Heritage Fellowship, the highest award for traditional American musicians, given by the National Endowment for the Arts. He recorded two full-length albums, **Everybody Hollerin' Goat** (Birdman), in 1998, followed a year later by **From Senegal to Senatobia** (Birdman), a collaboration with African musicians, both of which were produced by Luther Dickinson, a student of Mr. Turner and a member of



Bernice Turner Prachter at Folklife Festival. Photo © Ron Weinstock

the North Mississippi All-Stars. In 2001 Mr. Turner appeared at St. Ann's Warehouse in Brooklyn in a program of North Mississippi blues that was filmed by Spike Lee and Wim Wenders for the forthcoming PBS series **The Blues**.

Mr. Turner's daughter Bernice died of stomach cancer. The **Memphis Commercial-Appeal** wrote that she was, "[a] skilled musician in her own right, who labored to keep the fife-and-drum musical tradition alive.

Mrs. Prachter began playing the drums for her family's Rising Star Fife & Drum band when she was 16. She later became the manager of the family band, booking performances, organizing travel arrangements and selling her father's handcrafted bamboo cane fifes. Mrs. Prachter was also a vocalist for the band, leading Rising Star's innovative performances of church hymns, the blues, and chants incorporated in children's nursery rhymes." Tom Freeland posted to the Blues-L news group on the internet about the funerals for Turner and his daughter. "The most moving part for me was the procession from the church to the grave, which was lead by Othar's granddaughter, Sharday, who has become a very accomplished fife player, her mother, and aunt; they played and sang *When I Lay My Burden Down*, and were followed and accompanied by drummers who had played with Othar and Bernice and by family members, all singing." In his granddaughter's hands, the tradition will continue and hopefully prosper. Turner was a wonderful man who impressed all who met him.

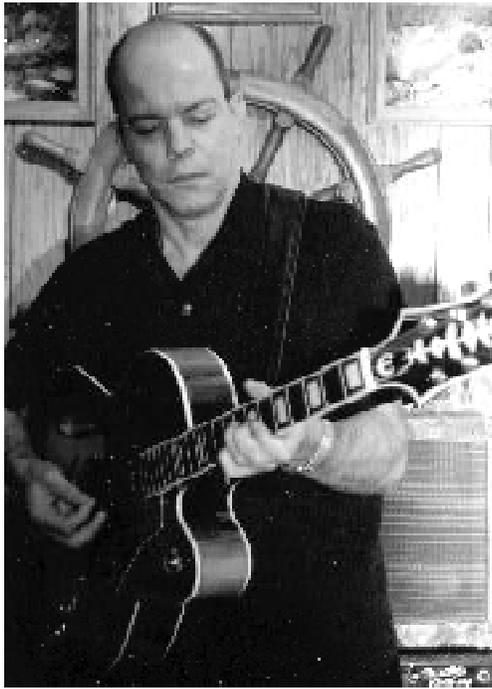
**Hank Ballard**

The legendary Hank Ballard who with the Midnighters had countless rhythm and blues hits including the original version of *The Twist* died on March 2. He had been suffering with throat cancer. Some records indicated he was born in 1927 but his biographies gave his birth date as 1936. Writer-producer Johnny Otis discovered Ballard in the early 1950s. He was lead singer for the Royals, which changed its name to the Midnighters.

Blues Works  
 From the album 'Blues Works' by Cashew Blue Records  
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## April Blues Listings

- 1 Derek Truck's Band @ Ram's Head
- 2 Automatic Slim @ Cat's Eye
- 3 Steve Potter Band @ JV's  
**Asylum Street Spankers @ State Theatre**
- 4 Daryl Davis @ Bayou Blues Cafe  
Sherwood Blues Band @ Diamond Grille  
Johnny and the Headhunters @ Bangkok Blues  
Reggie Wayne Morris @ Zoo Bar  
Heart Of Blue @ Bentz St. Raw Bar  
Melanie Mason @ Savory Cafe
- 5 Hugh Feeley @ Bangkok Blues  
The Nighthawks @ South River Cafe  
Soul Messengers @ Holiday House  
Diane Postell Band @ Poplar Inn  
BluesWorks @ St. Elmo's Coffeehouse  
Melanie Mason Band @ Outta The Way Cafe  
Reggie Wayne Morris @ Willie D's Heaters, Rick Serfas & Soul Providers @ Cat's Eye
- 6 **DCBS Jam @ Taliano's**  
Carl Filipiak @ Bayou Blues Cafe  
Steve Kraemer, Buzzy's Cousins @ Cat's Eye
- 8 Esther Haynes @ Bangkok Blues
- 9 Muleman @ Cat's Eye
- 10 Dixie Power Trio @ Bangkok Blues
- 11 Big Money @ Holiday House  
Takoma Crossing @ Outta the Way Cafe  
Fat Daddy @ Bayou Blues Café  
Mary Lou and the Untouchables @ Golden Sports Bar
- 12 **Shemekia Copeland @ Reston Community Center**  
Chai & the Bangkok Blues Band @ Bangkok Blues  
Phifer Marshall Band @ Okra's  
Roger Girke & the Funky Twisters @ Cat's Eye
- 15 **Kim Wilson's Blues Review @ Ram's Head**  
Robert Lighthouse @ Bangkok Blues  
BluesWorks @ Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center  
Lea Jones @ Cat's Eye
- 17 Rude Dog's Rhythm Review @ Cat's Eye
- 18 Bush Master @ Bangkok Blues  
Sherwood Blues Band @ Summit Station  
Reggie Wayne Morris @ Holiday House  
Tom Larsen @ Bayou Blues Cafe  
Muleman @ Cat's Eye  
Carl Filipiak @ Golden Sports Bar
- 19 Melanie Mason @ Calvert House  
Sherwood Blues Band @ Diamond Grille



Nighthawk Pete Kanaras at Lasick's jam. Photo © Ingrid Strawser

- The Soul Messengers @ Poplar Inn  
Mary Shaver & the Nightcrawlers @ Bangkok Blues
- 20 **DCBS Acoustic Jam @ HR57**
- 22 Crow Valley Band Blues Jam @ Bangkok Blues
- 23 Muleman @ Cat's Eye
- 24 Persuaders @ Cat's Eye  
Takoma Crossing @ Sign of the Whale
- 25 Bad Influence @ Bangkok Blues  
Sherwood Blues Band @ Starlight Station  
Gypsy Joe Alves @ Bayou Blues Café  
Walter Jay & Texas Flood @ Holiday House
- 26 BBS presents **Carey Bell, Big Bill Morganfield @ Rosedale American Legion**  
Robert Lighthouse Band @ Bangkok Blues  
Automatic Slim @ Bare Bones  
Sherwood Blues Band @ Parker's  
BluesWorks @ World Arts Focus,  
Joe's Emporium  
Reggie Wayne Morris @ Full Moon  
Takoma Crossing @ Allegro
- 27 Curtis Blues @ Bangkok Blues  
Steve Kraemer, Lil' Malcolm & the House Rockers @ Cat's Eye
- 29 Crow Valley Band Blues Jam @ Bangkok Blues
- 30 Barn Burners @ Cat's Eye

*DC Blues Calendar April, 2003 p.3*

## Weekly Events

- Sun Detroit Slim @ Full Moon  
Steve Kraemer @ Cat's Eye  
Jim Bennett & Lady Mary w. Unique  
Creation Band @ Lamont's  
Jam @ Lasick's (except 1st Sunday and when Redskins have 4PM start)  
Bobby Thompson @ Dr. Dremo's Taphouse  
Kenny Haddaway (open mic) @ Whitlow's  
Jimmy Cole @ Fat Tuesday's (Fairfax)  
Acoustic Jam @ King of France Tavern  
Automatic Slim Jam @ Wahoo's  
Pro Blues Jam @ Sully's
- Mon Blues Jam @ Taliano's  
Blues jam @ Chick Hall's Surf Club
- Tue Jam @ Full Moon  
Ben Andrews @ Madam's Organ  
Resonators @ Grog & Tankard
- Wed Jam @ Coconuts  
Jam @ 94th Aero Squadron  
Open mike @ Bangkok Blues  
Big Dog Band @ Cat's Eye  
Persuaders @ Main Street Blues  
Steve Smith Band @ Round Table  
Various @ Full Moon
- Thu Jam @ Backstreets Cafe  
Jam w/ Flatfoot Sam @ Zoo Bar  
Jackie Lee @ Wild Azalea  
Everything Bagel @ Cafe Tattoo  
Jam @ Full Moon
- Dean's Blues Jam @ South River Café  
DCBS Jam @ Torrie's  
Fri Blue Flames @ Bertha's,  
Hardway Connection @ Tradewinds  
Jackie Lee @ George Stark's Head Hog
- Sat Various @ Full Moon

## D.C. BLUES SOCIETY MEMBER DISCOUNTS

The Music Loft offers a 10% discount on repairs, lessons, rentals and sales. 2507 N. Franklin Road, Arlington VA (703) 522-5500, Wed-Sat 12 to 6 PM. They also have selected recordings by local acts such as Franklin & Harpe & The Top Dogs

Industrial Sound Studios is offering a 15% discount to DC Blues Society members. You must have a card to get this great deal. If you call soon and set up time to record, your first set of ADAT tapes is free. For more information, contact Industrial Sound Studios, P.O. Box 1162, Riverdale, MD 20738. Phone: 301-209-0565.  
E-mail: industrialstudio@hotmail.com.

Next issue is May 2003.  
Deadline is April 17.

**Listings should be sent to Steve Levine, 5022 Quebec St., College Park, MD 20740. E-mail to: cypressgrove@hotmail.com**

## Places to Hear Blues

Bookings get cancelled so check with the venue as the show gets closer.

94th Aero Squadron, 5240 Paint Branch Pkwy, College Park, MD  
Afterwords Cafe, 1517 Connecticut Av NW, DC (202) 387-1462  
Bangkok Blues, 926 W. Broad St. Falls Church VA (703) 534-0095  
Backstreet Cafe, 12353 Wilkens Av Rockville MD 301-984-0394  
Barefoot Pelican, 2156-E Enterprise St., Sterling, VA (703) 444-2208  
Bay Cafe, 2809 Boston St, Baltimore, MD (410) 522-337  
Big Joe's Place, 8120 Crain Hwy (N.3d), La Plata MD (301) 392-6060  
Birchmere, 3701 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alexandria, VA (703) 549-7500  
Bistro Bistro, Reston Town Center, Reston, VA (703) 834-6300  
Blues Alley, 1041 Wisconsin Ave (Rear), DC (202) 337-4141  
Bop'N'Bowl, Falls Church (VA) Duck Pin Lanes, 4000 S Maple St. (703)-847-5984  
Brickseller, Washington DC (202) 293-1885  
Bushwaller's, Frederick MD (301) 695-6988  
Buomi Temple, 5050 King St. White Marsh MD (410)-583-7337.  
Cafe Vez 1438 U ST, NW. Washington, DC 202-667-0785  
Cat's Eye Pub, 1720 Thames St, Fells Point, Baltimore MD (410) 276-9085  
Chick Hall's Surf Club, 4711 Kenilworth Ave., Hyattsville, MD (301) 927-6310  
Clyde's, Chevy Chase, MD (301) 951-9600  
Coffee House On The Hill, 421 Seward Square, SE, DC  
Coconut's, 1629 Crofton Center, Croft MD (301) 261-3366  
Cowboy Cafe So., 2421 Columbia Pike, Arlington VA (703) 486-3467  
Crossroads Tavern, Richie Highway and Georgia Avenue, Glen Burnie, MD (410) 761-6199  
Dr Dreho's Taphouse, 2001 Clarendon Blvd, Arlington VA  
EastPort Clipper, Annapolis MD (410) 487-7648  
Ebb Tide, 985 Bay Ridge Road, Annapolis, MD (410) 269-1500  
Fantastico, 380 Broadview Avenue, Warrenton, VA (540) 349-2575  
Fat Tuesday's, 10673 Braddock Rd, Fairfax (703) 385-5717  
Flannagan's, Manassas, VA (703) 551-2059  
Full Moon Saloon, 1710 Aliceanna St, Baltimore MD (410) 558-2873  
Game Room, 731 Cady Drive, Fort Washington, MD  
Half Moon BBQ, 8235 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring MD (301) 585-1290  
Harmony Hall, Fort Washington MD  
Harper's Choice Village Center, Columbia, MD  
H.R. 57. 1610 14th Street, NW, DC, 202-667-3700  
Hull Street Blues, 1222 Hull Street, Baltimore, MD (410) 727-7476  
Ice House Cafe, Herndon, VA (703) 471-4256  
Jammin' Java, 231 Maple Ave, Vienna VA (703) 255-1566  
King of France Tavern, State Circle, Annapolis MD (410) 216-6340  
Lamont's, Livingston Rd, Pomonkey MD (301) 283-0225  
Lasick's, 9128 Baltimore Blvd, College Park, MD (301) 441-2040  
Leadbetter's, Baltimore MD  
Lexington Market, Baltimore, MD  
Luna Park, 5866 Washington Blvd. Arlington, VA (703) 237-5862  
Michael's Pub, King's Contrivance Ctr, Columbia. (410) 290-7878  
Madam's Organ, 2461 18th St NW, DC (202) 667-5370  
Market 5 Gallery, Eastern Market, 7th & North Carolina Ave. S.E. Napoleon's, Warrenton, VA (540) 347-4300  
Neptune's, 23900 N Patuxent Beach Rd. California, Md 301-833-0073  
Oasis, 8241 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring, MD (301) 608-3360  
Okra's 9110 Center St, Manassas VA (703) 330-2729  
Potomac Overlook Park, Arlington VA  
Ram's Head, 33 West St., Annapolis, MD (410) 268-5111  
Recher Theatre, 512 York Rd., Towson, MD, (410) 337-7210  
Rosedale American Legion, 1311 Seling Ave., Rosedale, MD  
Round Table, 4859 Wisconsin Ave NW, DC (202) 362-1250  
Scottish Rite Temple, 3800 N Charles St, Baltimore (410) 583-7337  
Shark Club, 14114 Lee Hwy, Centreville VA (703) 266-1888  
Sonoma's, Columbia MD  
Spanish Ballroom, Glen Echo, MD  
Spanky's Shenanigans, Leesburg, VA (703) 777-2454  
Sully's, 14513 Lee Jackson Hwy., Chantilly, VA (703) 818-9292

South River Café, Annapolis MD  
Spotlight, Woodbridge, VA 703-494-9349  
State Theatre, 220 N. Washington St, Falls Church, VA (703) 237-0300  
Stone Cellar, Ellicott City MD (410) 461-4990  
Summitt Station, Summitt at Diamond Aves., Gaithersburg, MD  
Spotlight, Woodbridge VA 703-494-9349  
Starland Cafe, 5125 McArthur Blvd, DC 202-244-9396  
Sunset Grille, 7250 Columbia Pike, Annandale VA (703) 658-0982  
Sweet Caroline's, Winchester VA  
Takoma Park (MD) VFW, 6420 Orchard Ave.  
Taliano's, 7001 Carroll Ave., Takoma Park, MD (301) 270-5515  
Texas Ribs, Waldorf, MD  
333 Coffeehouse, 333 Dubois Rd, Annapolis, MD (410) 647-4275  
Timber Creek Tavern, 10092 Belair Rd, Kingsville, MD (410) 529-7999  
Torries, 7732 Richmond Hwy Alexandria VA 703-360-4911  
Tradewinds, 5859 Allentown Way, Camp Springs, MD (301) 449-1234  
TT Reynolds, Fairfax VA (703) 591-9292  
Twins, 1344 U St NW, Dc (202) 234-0072  
Whitey's, 2761 Washington Blvd, Arlington VA (703) 525-9825  
Whitlows, 2854 Wilson Blvd, Arlington VA (703) 276-9693  
Wild Azalea, 1648 Crystal Sq. Arcade, Arlington, VA, (703) 413-2250  
Wolf Trap, Vienna VA (703) 255-1900  
Wyvill's Tavern, 5753 Southwest Crain Hwy, Upper Marlboro, MD (301) 952-1222  
Zanzibar, 700 Water St SE (202) 554-9100  
Zoo Bar, 3000 Connecticut Ave., NW, DC (202) 232-4225

If you know of clubs that do have blues on a regular basis (at least once a month) that we do not list, please send an update to Steve Levine at [cypressgrove@hotmail.com](mailto:cypressgrove@hotmail.com)

## D.C. BLUES CALENDAR AD RATES:

Business card \$20; 1/8 page \$25;  
1/6 page \$30; 1/4 page \$40; 1/3 page \$55;  
1/2 page \$70; 2/3 page \$100; full page \$125.  
Discount for consecutive placement of ads. Column width is 3.65 inches for a 2-column page, or 2.4 inches for a 3-column page. Height for 1/2 page is 4.85 inches. To place ad, contact: Ron Weinstock, 2862 Dover Lane, #202, Falls Church, VA 22042.  
e-mail - [rbluesw@yahoo.com](mailto:rbluesw@yahoo.com)

*Deadline for May issue is April 17*

**Listings should be sent to Steve Levine, 5022 Quebec St., College Park, MD 20740. E-mail to: [cypressgrove@hotmail.com](mailto:cypressgrove@hotmail.com)**

## Blues Workshops at Guitar Fest

There will be Piedmont & Delta blues workshops at the Mid-Atlantic Guitar Festival. It takes place Sat Apr 05, 2003 from 12:00pm-5:00pm at the James W. Robinson Jr. Secondary School, 5035 Sideburn Road, Fairfax, VA.

For Info: Bill Burke - (703)802-5437. School - (703)426-2100.

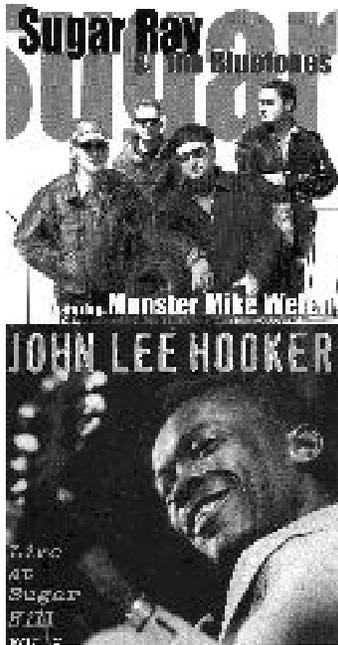
## Sugar Ray & the Blue Tones

About 25 years ago, this writer first caught Sugar Ray & the Bluetones backing J.B. Hutto at New York City club. The band's guitarist at the time was one Ronnie Horvath, better known today as Ronnie Earl. The Bluetones played a solid Chicago based blues with other elements mixed in and provided the late slide legend Hutto with solid support. In intervening years, Sugar Ray Norcia had a spell as lead singer with Roomful of Blues, recorded several albums with the Bluetones or with a larger band. All of his performances were marked by relaxed, yet soulful singing (in the vein of Junior Parker) along his splendid harp playing characterized by a clean, full-bodied tone. The present edition of the Bluetones includes veteran bassist Michael 'Mudcat' Ward and guitarist Monster Mike Welch who has matured into a strong soloist and songwriter. This is evident on their new eponymously titled release on Severn. Pianist Anthony Geraci helps fill out certain tracks. Welch contributed a number of the originals that make up most of this disc including the opening *I Believe*, with Sugar Ray playing very fine harp, and the minor key blues, *Love and Trouble*, with a melody suggestive of *My Love Will Never Die*, and which sports some strong, muscular guitar from Welch. Sugar Ray's *Feeling Blue* provides a different mood as he lifts the melody of the W.C. Handy classic *Mr. Crump Don't Like It*, and everyone plays acoustically here including nice rhythmic playing from Welch and crying harp from Sugar Ray on a very effective low-key performance. *And the Angels Sing* provides a feature for Sugar Ray's harp while Welch's playing is showcased on the Albert King instrumental, *Funk-shun* in which Welch plays proper homage to the late legend. A nice Chicago shuffle groove characterizes *Tell Me What's Going On*, while Welch plays some understated slide on *Burial Season*, and lays out some T-Bone Walker sounding guitar on *I Asked My Baby*. The variety on this album is also displayed by the Louisiana Swamp Pop flavored *When the Sun Sets Red and Low*. The album closes with a low-key jazzy instrumental from Mudcat Ward, *From Now On This Morning (11 September)*, with the band focusing more on mood than on flash making for a very effective close to a solid, delightful album on the ever-growing Severn catalog.

## John Lee Hooker

Fantasy Records has just issued a new disc of a live 1962 John Lee Hooker solo performance, *Live at Sugar Hill, Vol. 2*. I have heard plenty of John Lee Hooker, but not the previous *Live at Sugar Hill*. This album of solo performances is of considerable interest for that fact alone. Also this contains Hooker's renditions of some songs that this writer had not heard him perform such as *The Things That I Used to Do*, *Sinner's Prayer*, *What'd I Say* (transformed into a Hooker boogie number) and Eddie Boyd's *Third Degree*. *Sinner's Prayer* is recast into a distinctive Hooker dirge with his machine gun run of notes accenting his delivery of the lyrics. There are lively versions of *Bottle Up and Go* and *Catfish Blues* along with a strong performance of *Crawlin' King Snake*. *I Love No One But My Baby* is a unusual ballad blues performance with Hooker mainly strumming his guitar for backup. The album notes characterize the Sugar Hill performances as intimate, but also there is a fair amount of what made Hooker's blues so compelling with his

## NOTES HOT & BLUE by Ron Weinstock



JOHN LEE HOOKER  
LIVE AT SUGAR HILL  
Vol. 2



performances having him opening his soul to him. While not an essential Hooker album, these performances will certainly be of great interest to his many fans and are highly entertaining. Fantasy is to be thanked for making them available.

## CeDell Davis

Discovered by folklorists and New York Times music writer Robert Palmer two decades ago in Arkansas, CeDell Davis has been written up in the New York Times, played major festivals and prominent clubs like Tramps in New York and the Barns of Wolf Trap. In addition to songs included in anthologies on L&R (reissued on Evidence) and Rooster Blues, CeDell Davis has recorded several albums including one on Fat Possum. His latest is for the Texas-based Fast Horse label, *When Lightnin' Struck the Pine*. Davis, crippled by polio, learned to play slide guitar using a butter knife in his fretting hand leading to a singular. His vocals have an authenticity that no studied copying of recordings can bring. Whether one agrees with the late Palmer's assessment that Davis was the "greatest Delta-style hard blues vocalist around," one can't question the power of his singing. His regular band of guitarist T. Houston Jones and drummer Joe Cripps (also the disc's producer) is augmented by some alternative rockers of which REM's Peter Buck will be the best known. I did find the backing a bit busy on a couple places, which distracts from the simple power of Davis' music, although this added instrumentation does help on several tracks. A number of these songs are Davis' take on famous blues so that *So Long*, *I Hate to See You Go* is a reworking of Lowell Fulson's *Reconsider Baby*, while *Rub Me Baby*, is a *Rock Me Baby* variation and *Hold Me Baby* has him urging his baby to *Ride in My Automobile*. The slow brooding *Cold Chill* illustrates how moving Davis can be bit of saxophone enlivens *Hold Me Baby* as does some piano from Alex Veley, and where Davis contributes slide guitar runs. There may be sameness to

some of these performances with only the tempo varying, but these performances reward close listening. A nice addition to CeDell Davis' body of down-home blues recordings.

## Denise LaSalle

After years recording for Malaco, Denise LaSalle has a new album on Ecko titled *Still the Queen*. On the opening title track, *I'm, Still the Queen*, she tells the pretenders to the soul-blues throne that she is back, "I'm the Queen, you are not even in the game," and to the young blues mamas trying to take her place, "give it up, you're not even in the race." Her fans will know what to expect as she is not only a strong-confident singer but a terrific songwriter who contributed most of the songs. Whether singing about leaving the party cause she's got a *Dirty, Freaky Man* waiting for her, or telling another woman that she shouldn't have bragged about her good her lover was if she did not want anyone else know cause she's the best man Denise has ever had on *You Should Have Kept It in the Bedroom*, she certainly takes command of the listener's attention. At the same time, she can sing about the heartbreak of some relationships as on *What Kind of Man is This*, where the man she loves is running around with others and yet she loves him and can't leave him despite the pain he causes her. This is one several tracks that make real good use of backing vocals and employs a solid rhythm section which includes guitarist Michael Toles. If the horn sounds are produced by synthesized keyboards, then whoever did it did a real fine job of having his keyboards mimic horn players. *Unlovable Habits* has a terrific lyric as Denise tells her man if she wants to leave her for the woman from better side of the

## Continued from page 5

tracks that she won't get in his way but will she put up with his unlovable promises, the funky smelly feet, will she wait when he doesn't come home at all, the way he puts his clothes on the floor. The album doses with *There's No Separation*, a plea to have Christian prayer mandated in public schools, that I find simple-minded and wrong, but fortunately it is the last track so I can skip it easily. Whether she is **Still the Queen** or not, this is a nicely done disc.

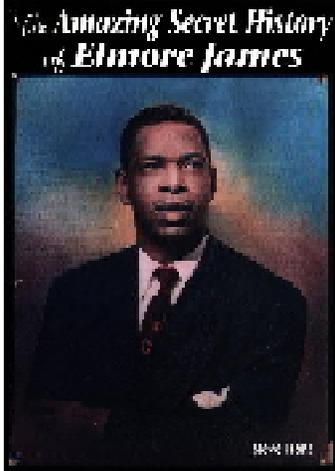
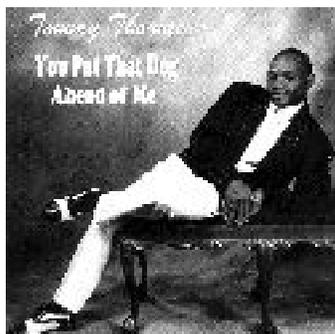
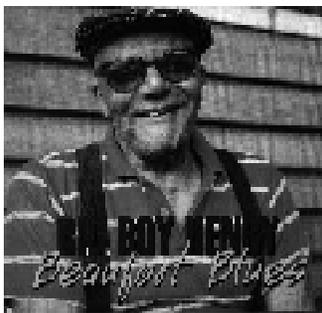
### Big Boy Henry

North Carolina bluesman, Richard 'Big Boy' Henry is among the blues artists that have been assisted with the Music Maker Relief Foundation. Music Maker Recordings has issued a delightful disc by this Patriarch of the Carolina Blues, **Beaufort Blues**, that was produced by Lightnin' Wells and Tim Duffy. Henry's contributions are limited mostly to vocals as Wells, Duffy and Michael Parrish provide backing for most of the tracks. Wells plays wonderful slide (suggesting Bukka White) on a rousing *John Henry* while the simple guitar of Parrish and Duffy enhance Henry's vocal on *Old Bill*, a nice piece of storytelling about the killing of his rooster. *Moan & Cry* has some outstanding fingerstyle playing from Wells as Henry asks his woman to rock him. Duffy's rolling guitar is wonderful behind Henry on *Vellevina*. Big Boy's son, Luther is accompanied by Wells on a warmly sung *Tell Me What to Do* followed by Big Boy's a capella vocal on *Nina Mae*. Pleading with his woman to tell him what's on her mind, Henry accompanies himself on *Turn the Key*, telling his woman to turn the key and let Big Boy ride in her automobile and on *Walking Day & Night* where Parrish adds some low-key piano in support of Henry's enjoyable playing. Sandwiched between those tracks is *Beautiful City*, a gospel blues associated with Rev. Gary Davis. One might wish Henry played a bit more, which is not to fault the wonderful accompaniments he receives through, but the strength of this release is the wonderful heartfelt singing of Big Boy Henry who is a wonderful storyteller who also invests all these performances with heart and honesty. This may be hard to find but you can obtain from some mail-order outlets as well as from the Music Maker Relief Foundation at its website, [www.musicmaker.org](http://www.musicmaker.org).

### Tommy Thomas

Carolina bluesman Roy Roberts had enough of seeing deserving blues artists (including himself) get overlooked by record labels so he started his own label Rock House which has also issued albums by Priscilla Price, Floyd Miles and others. One of these other artists is a Colorado singer by the name of Tommy Thomas has just issued a terrific new album, **You Put That Dog Ahead of Me**. This is a straight-ahead modern blues on which Roberts anchors the backing band on guitar and keyboards. The brassy band really plays strongly behind Thomas, who comes off as a first-rate blues singer whether complaining about his woman on the title track, pleading to his woman to come back on the soul-blues ballad *Cravin' For Your Love*, or telling his woman how he'll make love to her so she will satisfaction as that is *What a Real Man Should Do*. Scott Adair takes a strong tenor sax solo on this soulful up-tempo number. Thomas with Roberts and the studio band have produced a stunning release that shows that the blues don't need to be "mod-

## MORE NOTES HOT & BLUE by Ron Weinstock



ernized into a blues-rock bastardization" and lose their soul to be marketed to those who don't care for the blues. Just listening to Thomas take things down-in-the alley with *Why Didn't You Come Home* reminds one of the power of the blues, sung and played with heart. This is a stunning release that hopefully can be obtained at better stores, but can be obtained by mail order outlets like [www.bluebeatmusic.com](http://www.bluebeatmusic.com) and [www.triangle-music.com](http://www.triangle-music.com), or you might check out [www.rockhouserecords.com](http://www.rockhouserecords.com).

### Elmore James Biography

Among the greatest of all Blues artists, Elmore James' influence is heard in the music of countless musicians today, whether his cousin Homesick James Williamson, Chicago slide guitar boogie master, Lil Ed Williams, New Orleans slide master Deacon John, Fleetwood Mac founder Peter Green or George Thorogood's blues-rock. James' recording of *Dust My Broom* is among the seminal blues recordings and covered or adapted by countless artists. Even forty years after his death, the passion and urgency in his music is evident to anyone who spends anytime listening to his recordings.

Elmore's music was so powerful that Steve Franz did his Masters research on Elmore. Several years ago, Franz published a discography of Elmore's music. Adding additional research, he has completed the first full-length biography of James **The Amazing Secret History of Elmore James** (BlueSource Publishing). James died of a heart attack in 1963 right around the time interest in Chicago blues was growing outside the African-American community. He was only subject to cursory interviews by several Europeans, such as photographer George Adins who saw him performing in various Chicago night clubs. As a result, much of what we know about his life derives from interviews from those who played with him or knew him including his cousin, "Homesick" James Williamson, harmonica player and vocalist Sam Myers, the late drummer Odie Payne, James' Atlanta manager Otis Ealey, and record producer Bobby Robinson. There is also an account of Elmore in performance in a southern juke joint excerpted from civil rights pioneer James Meredith's autobiography. Other information is gathered from various public and quasi-public records including those of the Chicago Musicians Union local.

Included also are brief discussions of some of the myths about Elmore, his influence and biographies of the musicians who played with Elmore and some of the artists who were directly affected by Elmore including Homesick James, J.B. Hutto, Joe Carter and Hound Dog Taylor. There is also an extensive discography of Elmore's recordings including listings of various album reissues. This is copiously illustrated with pictures of Elmore and his musical associates. There are a few minor typos but this is an impressive contribution to the literature on the blues. The book can be obtained for \$40.00 (including shipping in US, Canada or Mexico), from Steve Franz, BlueSource Publications, P.O. Box 20074, St. Louis MO 63144-0074. Anyone who has a serious interest in the blues and one of its greatest legends will want this. He is also selling this on ebay and his seller identification is Hawaiianboogie.

## Continued from page 2

By the early 1960s, Ballard and the Midnighters had charted 22 singles on the rhythm and blues charts, including *Work with Me Annie*, the biggest R&B hit of 1954. The song was part of a well-known trilogy of risqué R&B numbers that included *Annie Had a Baby* and *Annie's Aunt Fannie*. *The Twist* was originally a "B" side of one of his records but became a number 1 record for Chubby Checker. They did not suffer from Checker's cover, enjoying three simultaneous top-40 hits in the mid-sixties, *Finger Poppin' Time*, *Let's Go, Let's Go, Let's Go*, and their original version of *The Twist*.

### Erving Charles

Erving Charles Jr., a professional bassist featured on scores of recordings and concert stages since the 1960s, died Wednesday, February 26, 2003 at his New Orleans home of a heart attack. He was 61. Charles had worked with a who's who of New Orleans musicians, playing rhythm & blues, jazz and rock 'n' roll with Fats Domino, Dave Bartholomew, Snooks Eaglin, Willie "Tee" Turbinton, Irma Thomas, Marva Wright, Clarence "Frogman" Henry, Wanda Rouzan, Bob French and Juanita Brooks, among many others. His versatility and skill insured that he was among the busiest bass players in town. For the past 20 years, Mr. Charles formed part of the backbone of Fats Domino's band.

### Sista Monica Fighting Cancer

Sista Monica Parker, the extraordinary blues singer, songwriter and performer whose first East Coast appearance was at the D.C. Blues Festival several years ago has been diagnosed by the Stanford Medical Center with a rare form of cancer called Synovial Sarcoma. She had a very large tumor removed from under her right arm. After receiving her diagnosis, her last performance for now was a benefit for the make-a-Wish Foundation, but as she stated, "I will be back!"

She asks her fans:

Let me hear from you. Your words of encouragement will help me with the healing work I must do in the days to come. Send cards and donations to my mailing address: Sista Monica Parker, 343 Soquel Ave #308, Santa Cruz, CA 95062 USA (not my home address); Call my voicemail (831) 425-3192; My e-mail is [sistamon@cruzio.com](mailto:sistamon@cruzio.com) for Help ideas. Please Do NOT SEND FLOWERS OR PLANTS because they can make me sick. Continue to SEE ME WELL and in GREAT VOICE!

\*\*\*

I might not be able to respond to each voicemail, snail mail or e-mail, but please know that your words will mean so much to me. I really do appreciate you taking the time to read about my current challenge. Remember me in a good light. I will pray for you and the rest of the world. I love you! Thank you in advance.

Your Sista  
Monica Parker"

### Former Society President

#### Mike Roach on BBC and Has New CD

Michael Roach, a founding director of the D.C. Blues Society and its second President, recently produced a three-part series **Deep Blue**, a radio series on BBC 4 which follows Michael Roach as he looks for the roots of his music. This initial episode was set in Mississippi (although some of it was actually taped at a 2002 conference in France and included interviews with the late Othar Turner, Jerry Ricks, David Evans and Scott Barretta, and is very deftly put together. The second episode covered the migration north and

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## D.C. Blues Society

## Membership

## Application/Order Form

The DC Blues Society is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) all volunteer organization! (0303)

Members receive a copy of the newsletter; The D.C. Blues Calendar, as well as discounts on society events & merchandise, some clubs, and other benefits.

The most important benefit is you help keep our ad rates up, the grant applications more appealing to the grantors and potential sponsors interest and support.

Contributions (not membership dues or merchandise) to the D.C. Blues Society are tax-deductible. \*0403\*

Please Print Clearly:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ If renewal, check here \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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Dues(US) per year: Circle appropriate one.

Individual: \$15.00      Family: \$25.00

Corporate: \$50.00

Canada-\$25.00(US) Other Countries\$40.00 (US)

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Total enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this application with your check or money order to:

**D.C. Blues Society**

**P.O. Box 77315**

**Washington D.C. 20013-7315**

Family memberships (list member names):

\_\_\_\_\_

Please allow up to six weeks for processing Questions? Check out [www.dcblues.org](http://www.dcblues.org)

or call the Society Hotline: (202) 828-3028

Would you be interested in volunteering? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, what would you like to do (if you know)?

## Continued from page 7

included interviews with Bob Koester of Delmark Records, Henry Thomas and pianist Jay MacShann. The episodes were available for listening over the web at the BBC's website for a week after they were initially broadcast and this writer heard the first episode which was exceptional. Mike's commentary was very astute and the statements and musical examples were wonderfully edited.

Since moving to England with his wife Helen for family reasons, Michael has become an important figure on the European blues scene. He has lectured on the blues at Oxford University and the University of Metz in France. Michael is the founder of the European Blues Association and served as director and guitar instructor for the organization's annual Blues Week 2000, 2001 and Blues Week 2002 program (a week of lectures, guitar, harmonica, piano/keyboards and vocals) at Exeter University in Southwest England. He had such blues artists as Phil Wig-



Daryl Davis on keyboards backing Nappy Brown at DC Blues Society's Winter Mini-Fest several years ago at the Bayou.  
Photo © Ron Weinstock

gins, Larry Johnson, the late John Jackson and others help teach. Mike performs throughout England and the Continent at many of Europe's primary blues festivals. He has just issued his fourth album, **Cypress Groove** for his own Stella label which can be purchased from Stella Records website, [www.stellarecords.com](http://www.stellarecords.com).

## Daryl Davis on Juke Blues Cover

The cover story on the most recent **Juke Blues** is devoted to Daryl Davis who tells his story including how he became a musician, his relationship with so many music legends and his

authorship of a book on the clan. Included are pictures of Daryl with Juke Berry, Pinetop Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis, Little Richard, various performance shots and more. **Juke Blues**, published in England, is one of the leading English language blues publications and may be available at Tower Records and at specialty stores.

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