Laura Boosinger





For 13 years I had the great fortune to be a member of the Luke Smathers Band. Luke and his brothers, Harold and George, started their band as boys back in the 1920's. Their musical tastes were eclectic and ranged from fiddle tunes for square dancing to the popular tunes of the day for round dancing. This tune came from their repertoire of "western tunes." Both Luke and Harold have passed away now, and I still miss those Sunday evenings in Luke and Bea's kitchen.

Laura - Banjo and Vocal Mark Howard - Guitar Buddy Spicher - Fiddles Roy Huskey, Jr. - Bass



Luke Smathers

## Italy

Bascom Lamar Lunsford had a great impact on the musical culture of Western North Carolina. Founded in 1927, his Mountain Dance and Folk Festival is the oldest continuing folk festival in the US. Bascom scoured the mountain region for



Bascom Lamar Lunsford - Photo courtesy of Jo Lunsford Herron

traditional musicians and dancers to bring to the folk festival stage for the benefit of the tourists flocking to the mountains during the summer months. This was one of the tunes Bascom collected. I always thought it was odd for mountain folks to be singing about going to Italy, until I learned that Italy is a little community in Jackson County over the mountain from Canada! Laura - Banjo and Vocal Mark Howard - Guitar and Mandolin Aubrey Haynie - Fiddle

### Dixie Darling

Roy Huskey, Jr. - Bass

The Carter Family of Mace's Springs, Virginia, are responsible for preserving more American folk music than any other group. A. P. roamed the hills looking for songs for Sara and Maybelle to sing. Their recordings and radio program forever embedded this classic American poetry into the

fabric of our collective heritage. The legacy continues with Maybelle's daughters - June, Helen and Anita - and through A. P. and Sara's children, Joe and Janette. There are many recorded versions of this song. Mine strays a bit from the



Janette and Joe Carter

original. The addition of two finger banjo gives the song a lilt that you rarely hear. Thanks to Margaret and Jamie for their great harmony vocals.

Laura - Banjo and Vocal Mark Howard - Guitar and Mandolin Aubrey Haynie - Fiddle Roy Huskey, Jr. - Bass Margaret Bailey - Harmony Vocal Jamie Hartford - Harmony Vocal

#### Two Soldiers

I first heard this song on a long road trip with fellow band members. I believe the singer had learned it from that influential recording by Hazel Dickens and Alice Gerrard, "Hazel and Alice". We sang it late into the night refining our duet singing. I've never been sure which war these two soldiers were fighting in. The story is universal, one of comradeship and loyalty, of family and loss. It's about the real tragedy of war, the death of young men.

Laura - Autoharp and Vocal Mark Howard - Guitar and Mandolin Roy Huskey, Jr. - Bass

#### Josie Girl

From Charlie Acuff, Alcoa, TN. I first got to know Charlie at the Tennessee Homecoming, held annually at John Rice Irwin's Museum of Appalachia in Norris, TN. A cousin to Grand Ole Opry star Roy Acuff, Charlie's fiddling included many dance tunes from generations past. Charlie said Roy was the one with all the money. But Charlie was definitely the better fiddler in the family! Charlie learned this tune from his

grandfather Charlie Boyd Acuff. He says a "josie" is a long cape with an additional cape attached to the outside. Laura - Banjo and Vocal Stuart Duncan - Fiddle and Mandolin Mark Howard - Guitar Roy Huskey, Jr. - Bass



Charlie Acuff

Letter From Down The Road Hedy West grew up in North Georgia. Her strong Scotch-Irish roots date back to immigrants who migrated from Ulster in the eighteenth century. Her family was full of old-time musicians and it was from these uncles and grandparents that she learned many of her songs. I was introduced to Hedy's singing and banjo playing by my friend Jeaneane Briles. This song comes from one of Hedy's Vanguard recordings from the 1960's. The melody and sentiment were so engaging that I felt compelled to learn it. However, the lyrics portrayed a time in our culture that many Southerners would like to forget. I added some new ones to make this a more genteel love story.

Laura - Banjo and Vocal Mark Howard - Guitar and Mandolin Aubrey Haynie - Fiddle Roy Huskey, Jr. - Bass

#### Tom Dula

One of Western North Carolina's most infamous characters was Tom Dula forever immortalized as "Tom Dooley" by the Kingston Trio. Tom Dula was a real person with real problems - two women!

Controversy still remains over who really killed Laura Foster, and veovle continue to be fascinated with her death. Tom Dula was hung in Statesville, NC for Laura's murder, never having admitted guilt. I learned this oldtime version from the singing of Doc Watson.



Doc Watson - Photo by Robert Brown

voitson. Laura - Lead Guitar and Vocal Mark Howard - Guitar and Mandolin Blaine Sprouse - Fiddle John Hartford - Banjo and Harmony Vocal Jamie Hartford - Harmony Vocal Roy Huskey, Jr. - Bass Fly Around My Pretty Little Miss Every Saturday night from the Fourth of July through Labor Day, Asheville hosts a mini-festival



on the city-county plaza called "Shindig on the Green." Home folks and tourists alike join together on warm summer evenings replete with a cool mountain breeze for some old-time music and

Quay Smathers dancing. In my

formative years as a banjo player, I would go down to Shindig to hang around the best old-time string band I had ever heard, The Dutch Cove String Band from Haywood County. Quay Smathers and his daughters, Elizabeth, June and Cynthia, and son in-law, Lynn, provided the best toe tapping dance music around. They would always be under

a particular dogwood tree, and I always felt "chosen" when Quay would encourage me to get out my banjo and pick with them. Often we played this tune with twin fiddles, Lynn's raucous



Mary Jane Queen - Photo by Chuck Simmons

lyrics and Quay's rock solid guitar playing. Ballad singer, Mary Jane Queen of Jackson County, shared some of her favorite lyrics.

Laura - Banjo and Vocal Mark Howard - Mandolin Blaine Sprouse - Fiddle Timmy Abell - Guitar Roy Huskey, Jr. - Bass

# Little Margaret

Sharp journeyed to western North Carolina in hopes of finding pure renditions of traditional ballads once found in England. He found a treasure trove of people singing in a style as ancient as the ballads themselves. Even as we approach the millennium.



Sheila Kay Adams - Photo by Catherine Stone

the mineritum, the there are singers in Western North Carolina who still preserve this tradition. This one comes from the singing of my sister in song, Sheila Kay Adams.

Laura - Vocal Mark Howard - Guitars, Mandolin Aubrey Haynie - Fiddle Joey Miskulin - Accordion Roy Huskey, Jr. - Bass

#### Little Moses

Every Saturday night you'll find music and dancing at the Carter Family Fold outside Hiltons, VA. Janette Carter keeps the bands booked, and she and brother Joe often entertain the crowd. Local folks keep the seats filled and the traditions of the Carter Family live on. This is one I remember hearing Janette sing.

Laura - Autoharp and Vocal Mark Howard - Guitar and Mandolin Roy Huskey, Jr. - Bass

## Consolation

This comes from the great collection of early American hymn tunes, William Walker's Christian Harmony. Hearned this style of shapednote singing from Quay Smathers. On many nights in their kitchen in Dutch Cove, and many "Old Folk's Days" at

Laura - Vocal



Quay Smathers

Morning Star Church, Quay and Sue treated me as one of their own. Their gifts went beyond music and I treasure them all. Quay passed away in January of 1997. I know he's in a home not made with hands. His mother is there along with Uncle Bruz, and Lyman Clark, forever singing "Angel Band."

just an Old Bashioned Locket and a Curl. It's just an old fashioned locket That brings that ald fashioned tin type of a girl. If she were only here today. That little curl that tucked og golden hair so ijoung and fair would now be guay. There's an old-jackined lekeness in her face, That makes her picture sum to be a pricilless gearl. Thru many long and empty are shed a million lonesome In this ald fashioned locket

#### Old Fashioned Locket

I can still hear Harold Smathers sing this wistful love song. "If she were only here today. . ."
Laura - Guitar and Vocal
Mark Howard - Guitar and Mandolin
Buddy Spicher - Fiddle
Joey Miskulin - Accordion
Roy Huskey, Jr. - Bass

and a curl.

Co-produced by Laura Boosinger and Mark Howard Recorded at Eleven-O-Three Studio, Nashville, Tennessee Engineered by Mark Howard and

David Ferguson Mastered at Foxwood by Dave Shipley Cover Photography: Lin Barber Art Directress: Luanne Price Howard Laura plays a banjo made especially for Thanks to all the musicians for their creativity and especially to Roy Huskey, Jr. We'll miss him.

For Laura's other recordings and bookings, contact her at: Laura Boosinger 400 Beaverdam Road Asheville, NC 28804 (828) 285-0899



My passion has always been music, especially vocal music made rich with the power of story-telling brought to life in song. For me the music is a tool of communication, a bridge to cultures I may not have otherwise known. I've come to realize that true musical expression comes from a voice deeply connected to body and soul, enhanced by line itistrumentation.

The masters have sough have been more than generous with their leachings. Each has instilled in me respect and leve for the gift they were sharing. I have learned a language beyond words. A language that starts with the heart and grows in the quiet spaces where melody and rhythm join to produce a depth of humanity touched only in what can be called art. Many of their gifts I offer here to you.

Frank Proffitt, of Sugar Grove, North Carolina, puts it another way:

"With these songs did our forebears cheer their weary hearls in the new ground clearings. Life to them was not dull for in their imagination they had a world of their own. This world they built is not for those who see only the dull drab facts of their surroundings, but only for folk of kindred minds seeking to preserve and exalt a people of undaunted spirit who accepted life in a singing spirit, reaching in their hearls for things to brighten the days and years."

I dedicate this recording to my teachers, and to their memories: Luke and Harold Smathers and Quay Smathers all of Canton, North Carolina.

