



## COFFEEHOUSE PERFORMER OCTOBER 28 – “TRELLIS”

interview by Bill Cohen

*TRELLIS is a Columbus, OH based Irish traditional music band consisting of John Garcia (fiddle, bouzouki, vocals), Sarah Perry (fiddle, mandolin, guitar, vocals) and Mary Bertke (banjo, mandolin, vocals). All the members are multi-instrumentalists as well as vocalists whose combined skills weave a complex tapestry of melody, counter melody, and **good old Irish fun.** What follows is an interview with band member, Sarah Perry. Concert details pg. 7.*



**Bill Cohen:** *What kind of music does Trellis perform & what is it about this type of music that makes you so passionate about it?*

**Sarah Perry:** Trellis performs Traditional Irish music, mostly. We also throw in our own twist, adding in a few original pieces, and even a polka based on a classical piece. As a group, we’re passionate about

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## GLORIOUS FOOD: Auction offerings at October Coffeehouse

by D. Boston

If you attend the Trellis Concert on October 28, you’ll be in for a double treat. This is also the night of our Annual Bake Sale,

with 100% of proceeds benefiting the 2018 Central Ohio Folk Festival. If you are familiar with the Columbus Folk Music

Society and its “bakers and food purveyors” you are already aware that we are known for our love of good food as well as

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# HISTORY OF A LONG RUNNING COLUMBUS BASED JAM - *Part Two*

article by Al Belasco

*What follows is the second part of a four part series on the history of a very long running jam in Central Ohio. The article is meant not only to bring back memories for many folks, but also to help remember and pay tribute to some of the members who have passed on.*

*The article is written by Al Belasco and incorporates his recollections of the group over its many years of existence. The jam group presently meets every Thursday evening from 7-10 p.m. at the Whetstone Assisted Living facility on Olentangy River Road. E-mail Al at alanbelasco@att.net for more information.*

Frieda was one of the Friday morning jam's most devoted fans. She was a WWII war bride, and came over from Germany around 1946. She loved the song "You are my Sunshine" and Ray would make sure it was played sometime during the session. I believe that Frieda passed away in 2008.



One of the most devoted fans, Frieda (far right)

During the Friday morning session, we also made sure that

"Charlie and the MTA" was played. Ray would take a knockout lead with the banjo in the third verse.

Another player was Jack (Spoons) Streamer who showed up with a unique instrument. Jack was a

real character and he put together a "drum" made up of an old Xerox box. He had a set of brushes he used that are normally used for the snare drum. He also placed the letters of the scale on the box, and would try to get everybody in tune by showing them the right key.

When we played the MTA song, Jack would take a solo lead with the spoons. He was not adverse to finding a pretty face and getting them involved by showing them how to play the spoons.

We had our "benefactor" who helped push our "fame" even further. Lee Caryer was a true gentleman and he also loved to play the spoons (not that he was very good at it . . . but then, how could you be very bad at it!!!). Lee would find the prettiest women in the shop, have her sit beside him and get her to play spoons along side the group. We asked him why he never got men to play the spoons. His answer . . . "you've got to be kidding!!" Lee

passed away around 2003 from cancer. Before he died, he was in the Woodlands Assisted Living facility where we all went over to play for the residents and to honor him. I remember him sitting in a



Center (with vest): Jack (Spoons) Streamer

wheelchair playing the spoons and having the biggest smile on his face. We found out later that he was a WWII ship commander in the Navy.

Also joining the Friday morning group was Tom Hill. Tom played a Martin guitar and usually would start the song "Piano Man." Unfortunately, he only knew the first 8 measures of the song. He would play them as a lead, and then kind of drop off. He also couldn't complete more than 1/2 of a verse. I always wished him well, and hoped he could learn the entire song. I say that with the utmost joy and respect, which comes with playing with this group of people. Tom had a stroke in 2008. Luckily, he was coming back from a gig with Ray and

when he got back to his house, they summoned the ambulance. He passed away several years later.

Robert ( Bob ) Dunham joined the group in the mornings and brought along his “washtub bass.” This also happened to be his email address. I don’t know which one happened first. He had a terrific voice, and it was great to harmonize with him.

Jackie LaMuth was with our menagerie of musicians from the very beginning. We found out early on that she originally had taken banjo lessons from Ray, which ordinarily is not a bad thing. . . but realize that Ray was getting hard of hearing. Jackie had a real flair for putting together songs. She would combine several good songs and would turn it into a *great* song with lots of fun and smiles from all of us! With these flairs, the song might last 8 or 9 minutes.

Ray Pauken, who was the leader of this motley crew, played banjo. Ray had played gigs in Columbus for many, many years. He and his keyboard partner, John Farley, played at Plank’s Bier Garten on Frebis Avenue for over 20 years on Saturday night. They started around 8 or 9 p.m. and played ‘til around 12:30 a.m. Ray invited me to bring my guitar to these evenings. I was able to play at Planks by sitting in with them after the first set. Ray’s repertoire is vast, and he still plays gigs at assisted care facilities and the

like. You can usually find him at the Grill & Skillet on E. Main Street in Columbus or at Scotty’s Cafe in Bexley at 9 a.m. on any given morning. I told him that there were four constants in the known universe and his being at the café in the morning was one of them. Ray loves playing 30’s



The jammers “Cast of Thousands” at “Don & Gussie’s” Church Bean Dinner

and 40’s songs. He was a former Columbus City School teacher and would bring his banjo into the classroom. Ray is a terrific guy with an undying love of music and he treasures sharing this music with all. I’ve been honored with his friendship from the beginning.

Another individual was Larry Staats who shared with us so many Appalachian instruments and folk music songs. Larry played banjo and also utilized strange instruments including the nose flute and the Jew’s harp (jaw harp/Ozark harp). Call it what you will, but couple those instruments with his laughter and black Greek captain’s hat, and you have a character! It should also be mentioned that Larry is a

champion Storyteller.

Also joining us on Friday mornings was Mike Stanley on 12-string guitar. Mike would dress in Hawaiian shirts and sing Doo-wop songs. Which, if you followed C-Am-F-G chord progressions – that was all you had to know – you could get into the swing of things and have fun with the 60’s songs. Mike was employed at COSI, and when they had a cut-back, he used his love of music, followed Ray’s lead, and started to perform at Assisted Living facilities as well – bringing joy to the residents.

Jumping in with his harmonica on Friday mornings was an incredible individual, Homer Echard. He was always smiling, with a pony-tail and a gentle warmth that could be felt all across the room. Homer passed away in 2007.

Another regular was Dave Weltner. Dave owned an assortment of harmonicas and was always ready to contribute a harmony. Singing was not a strong point for him, but then when you’re playing harmonica, it’s kind of difficult. I can still see the sparkle in his eyes when we were sitting down and making music. Dave passed away in 2015.

We always made sure that people had a chance to play their instruments, which leads us to a basic premise of our group: **MUSIC = FUN.**

*Stay tuned for Part 3 in November issue.*

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Irish music because it connects so much to our ancestral past, it's fun to play, and it tells stories. I myself love all music, but Irish music is special because it allows for so much experimentation. It shares elements with jazz in that one can play variations and ornamentations, rather than strictly adhering to notes on a page.

**Bill:** *You are the youngest member of the band, and some CFMS members remember you as a fiddle-playing elementary school girl. Tell us how you got to be such an experienced musician at such a young age.*

**Sarah:** Oh man, that's a long story. It all started with my sister, really. She's five years older than me, and when I was really little, she was an Irish dancer. I, of course, wanted to be JUST LIKE HER. So, I decided to start Irish Dance. . . . I promptly found that I hated it.

But, I loved the music. I loved the violin, and so I begged my parents to let me start playing. They resisted for a while, but soon caved in and rented a violin for me from the Loft Violin Shop. I started playing when I was around 5 years old, and I actually started with classical Suzuki lessons, not trad.

I actually got into playing trad in second grade. My teacher, Mr. Voldrich, did a unit on *Little House in the Prairie*, and we students had to complete a project based on the books. Because the father in the story played fiddle, I decided to learn a fiddle tune and teach a few of my friends to dance. . . . But I learned to play a jig and I taught them a reel. . . . It was an attempt, at least.

**Bill:** *Tell us about the other members of the band, what instruments they play, and what their musical background is.*

**Sarah:** Well, obviously, I'm the most important member (just kidding), but there are two other musicians in the band. John Garcia is our bouzouki player and he also sings, plays fiddle and flute. He also was the one who recorded and remastered the tracks for my first CD, which I hope to release soon.

John started the fiddle early in life, influenced by 78 RPM recordings of some of the greats, including John McCormack, James Morrison, and Michael Coleman. Circumstances led him away from Irish music and into a long and sordid affair with classical piano and violin. After a lengthy hiatus from music he has returned to his original love, Irish music, and has rediscovered the joy that brought him to music in the first place. When not trying to achieve world domination through jigs and reels, he works in the information technology field.

Mary Bertke is our banjo player. She sings as well as plays the bodhran. Mary fell in love with Irish music at age nine when she heard it on the *Robin of Sherwood* TV series from the BBC - Clannad did the soundtrack. Her freshman year of college, she took up bodhran and realized she had absolutely no sense of rhythm and couldn't count beats to save her life. She learned. After traumatizing her local session with her bodhran playing for a couple years, she moved onto the next loud, percussive instrument she could find, and took up banjo.

She also plays some guitar, bouzouki, and mandolin, although not typically with this band. Her senior year of college, she won the Joanna Jackson Goldman Memorial Prize, a grant awarded to one graduating senior a year, to study Irish traditional music. Mary has played in several Irish bands over the years since then, most notably with the local band Aisling.

**Bill:** *Who are your group's musical heroes?*

**Sarah:** Well for me, personally, definitely the Drowsy Lads and Le Vent du Nord. Mary, of course, loves the playing of We Banjo 3, and is recently awed by Le Vent du Nord and The East Pointers. The people who inspired her to play banjo were Mick Moloney and Seamus Egan, after meeting them and watching them play at the Augusta Heritage Festival's Irish Week. Also, she was inspired by Fiona Ritchie, by dint of the number of bands whom she introduced to Mary via the public radio show, *The Thistle and Shamrock*. John's influences include Kevin Burke, Frankie Gavin, Donal Lunny, Andy Irvine, The Irish Rovers, Planxty, and the Bothy Band.

**Bill:** *Does the name of your band have a special meaning or symbolism?*

**Sarah:** It was the first name upon which all three of us could agree. Sure, it invokes the image of Celtic knotwork, is a symbol of interconnectedness and lives intertwining; it brings to mind a support structure that helps plants to grow tall and flower, but really . . . it was the first random word we could agree on.



# How to Play Your Song at a Jam – The Rules of Effective Song Leading

article by Brae Lewis



Photo courtesy of Wikipedia Commons

It is one thing to go to a jam session and play along, but another thing to actually offer up and successfully play your own song. To ensure you have an enjoyable experience (and get asked back to the jam!), take some time to study these important rules of jam etiquette.

## ***Be aware of the type of jam***

By and large, most jams will involve a mix of folk music, bluegrass, country and some classic rock. There are specialty jams, like traditional Irish sessions or ukulele circles playing jazzy Hawaiian music. If you are attending a specialty jam, make sure you are at least familiar with the style of music so you can survive, as well as offer a song in that genre. In the absence of a specialty jam, assume you will need to have a few simple 3-chord songs to present, so you won't be a jam buster. Remember, 98% of casual jams are not full of advanced musicians who will delight in your game changing rendition of *Lady be Good*, so think simple.

## ***Know your song really well!***

This is kind of a no-brainer, but it is

a harsh reality. You may think you know a song well, but when the heat is on, it falls apart. Make sure whatever song (or songs) you have chosen, you know backwards and forwards! This means you have all the chords memorized, your lead part playable at a decent tempo, and lyrics learned. Remember, you're pretty much going to be teaching the song, so you'll want to sound like you know what you're talking about.

## ***Play along first, don't ask to lead a song right away***

[If it is a new jam to you], it is prudent to play along for a bit before asking to lead a song. While doing this, you can also get an idea who the jam leader or leaders are, so you'll know who to approach when you're ready with your song. Also, having people notice that you exist is helpful, and sometimes this takes a few songs!

## ***Notice the "song flow"***

The choosing of songs is different for every jam, but it often goes in a sort of semi-circle (at least in the more organized sessions). Be sure that you don't cut someone off who was next in line. You can also take advantage of those lulls

when no one seems to be able to think of another song, and call out your tune before the fiddler regains control.

## ***Don't be a Jam Buster!***

It is amazing how often this sin is committed. Someone launches into a fifteen-chord swing number, and then is dismayed when the song careens off the road and into a ditch. The golden rule of contributing songs at a jam is **START SIMPLE!** It's not about who has the most chops or knows the hippest material; it's all about creating an enjoyable group experience. [Again], it is very important to keep in mind the style of music being played. If most of the material being played is folk and bluegrass, please don't expect them to be able to follow Joni Mitchell or Hawaiian swing. It's just common sense and courtesy, as well as self preservation.

## ***Don't be attached to a particular song***

In the event that you offer a song and are met with stony silence, don't take it personal! Just chuckle loudly and say "Ha! I was just kidding there. OK, how about *Jambalaya*, key of G?" Remember, if more than half of the folks are going to have trouble with your song, then it's not worth it. This is not a rehearsal, and no one came to learn a bunch of new chords. It's a jam!

## ***Announce and preview your song***

See How to Play Your Song at a Jam – page 6



Seriously folks, post this on your frig!

# SAVE THE DATE

**The Saturday Music Jam at Worthington Farmer's Market 9:30-11:30am** – S.E. quad of Worthington Square every Saturday morning (until end of Oct). All are welcome; consider bringing a chair.

**Sunday, October 8: 1 - 4 p.m. Darby Days**, held at *Battelle Darby Creek Metro Park*, 1775 Darby Creek Drive, Galloway, OH - Indian Ridge area. Music tent provided for jamming. Come out and share your songs! For more info contact: Hugh Farthing at: hugh8787@yahoo.com

**Tues, Oct 10 (10:00 am) thru Wed, Oct 11 (Noon)** – The *Columbus Foundation* announces a **Big Give opportunity**. Give to your charity of choice: (consider the CFMS which is listed with the Columbus Foundation). **Your giving will be amplified by means of a large bonus pool.** More info at: [www.columbusfoundation.org/giving-events/big-give-2017](http://www.columbusfoundation.org/giving-events/big-give-2017).

**Wednesdays, October 11 & 25, 2-3pm: Jam at Laurels of Worthington** (for Memory Care Unit) – 1030 N. High St., Worthington. Contact Dan Clarke at: dan41n@att.net for info.

**Saturday, October 28, FolkSide Coffeehouse 6pm-Open Jam; 7pm Open Mic; 8-10pm Featured Performer – Trellis.** Held at: *the Columbus Mennonite Church*, 35 Oakland Park Avenue, Cols. Suggested donation at door: \$7; students \$5; CFMS members \$5; under 12 free. Handicap accessible.

# FOLLOWING OUR OWN...

**Saturday, October 21: 7-10 pm – Avalon Nine** at *Java Central*, 20 S State St, Westerville, OH 43081. [www.java-central.com](http://www.java-central.com). No cover.



## Rest in Peace

**Tom Harker (1944-2017), aka "The Ukulele Man," has died at age 72.**

For 72 trips around the sun, Tom Harker, *the Ukulele Man*, made his home here on this Crazy Old World and lived to make it a better place through teaching, music, standing up for what is right, and treating people with respect.

Somewhere along the highway of life he picked up the ukulele and turned his talents to singing

and songwriting with the encouragement of his former students. He eventually became "The Ukulele Man" known for his funny, political, and heartfelt performances. He played many venues in Central Ohio, and took to the road playing in Santa Cruz, Cape Cod, New York City and Wallingford, England among other places.

Throughout it all, he was a prolific writer penning frequent letters to the editor and guest columns on current events pushing us all to think differently about the day's pressing issues.

Tom leaves behind 3 CDs of original music, 2 books of music and poetry, hundreds of YouTube videos, and a warm feeling in the hearts of those he touched throughout his life.



## Welcome to Our New and Returning Members:

- Art and Sharon Mittenburgs
- Hal Pepinsky
- Teresa Schleifer
- Joanie Calem
- Gayla Foote
- Jane VanAuken
- Charlie Flowers & Denise Bronson (Sponsor)
- Judy Swabby
- Donald Feinstein (Good Friend)
- Chris & Sharon Creamer
- Lea Anne Kangas
- Frank Shyjka
- Madalyn & Roger Benjamin
- Tom and Kate Mowbray
- Dorthea Kay Smith (Lifetime)
- Ken Keller
- Lee & Tinya Cherney
- Edward & Erin Tatum
- Phil & Julie Hart
- Howard & Vanja Mosely
- Bob Lipetz
- John and Linda Russo
- George Bennett
- Dan & Pat Epley
- Karen & Denny Stephens
- Linda Blaine
- Betsy Salt
- Steve & Kristi Moore
- Lloyd Davis
- Larry Staats
- Larry & Sally Less (Good Friend)
- Larry Myers
- Dagmar Wolcott
- James Luckhaupt
- Diane & Kathleen Boston
- Shirley Davenport
- Tom and Kate Mowbray (NEW)
- Edward D. Tahm, Jr. (NEW)
- James Farthing
- David Fultz, Jr.
- Greg Denby (Good Friend)
- Stephen Hopkins
- Steven Smith & Rochelle Volen-Smith

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Next Issue in November

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[www.columbusfolkmusicsociety.org](http://www.columbusfolkmusicsociety.org)

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Household \$25

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Yes! Please contact me regarding volunteer opportunities within the organization.

Good Friend \$50

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For credit card transactions: contact [treasurer@columbusfolkmusicsociety.org](mailto:treasurer@columbusfolkmusicsociety.org). Membership amounts are tax-deductible.

Please send completed form and payment to:  
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In an effort to be both fiscally and environmentally responsible, we will send a full-color, interactive newsletter via e-mail unless you request a hard copy be mailed to you.

I prefer a hard copy via regular U.S. mail

I enjoy the annual Central Ohio Folk Festival (early May): Lots 5 4 3 2 1 Not (please circle one)