

BLUES NEWS



CBS at Larchmere PorchFest



Backstreet Blues Gumbo performed on the CBS porch on Saturday, June 17, 2017.

The artists are, Brantt Hamilton, Adrienne Bennett and Denny Mussari. Everyone had a great time and a great day filled with music.



2017 BLUES CRUISE SOLD OUT

5 Years in a row!!!

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Do you have an idea for an article?—email Elaine
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Announcement:

We are happy to announce that we have **sold out** for
our Fifth Annual Blues Cruise!!

800 people will be on board to listen to some great
music and be part of an awesome experience.

Thank you for your support!!

See you on the Good Time III.

We set sail Monday July 10th at 7:30PM. Boarding begins at 7:00 PM.

CBS Blues Cruise Committee
John Adams, Elaine DeStephano
Bill Koteles & Susanne Mayer



Blues You Should Know

by
Bob Frank

Sleepy John Estes

The community of Brownsville, Tennessee lies about 60 miles or so just East of Memphis, just a short ways off of Highway 40, the long interstate that runs the entire width of Tennessee from North Carolina's Great Smoky Mountains to the Mississippi River. Brownsville, whose population was roughly ten thousand at the last census, has recently come to recognize two of its most accomplished offspring. Located in the former Flagg Grove School, once a one-room schoolhouse for "colored" children is the Tina Turner Museum. Immediately next door, and also maintained as a public attraction, is the tiny home, a cottage or really a shack, once lived in by Brownsville's other great artist, the blues singer Sleepy John Estes. Both Estes and Turner, by the way, actually grew up in Ripley aka/ Nutbush, an unincorporated community adjacent to Brownsville once populated almost exclusively by black residents.

At the time of Tina Turner's birth in 1939, Sleep John, born either in 1899 or 1900-no one's really sure, was already in the middle of a recording and performing career that extended from 1929 right up to his death in 1977.

As a child in Ripley/Nutbush, John, like so many bluesmen before and after him, helped out on his family's share-crop cotton farm and tried to pick out tunes on a homemade cigar box guitar. After a particularly productive season his mother awarded John for his hard work on the farm by buying him a real guitar.



For the first decade or so of his musical career, John, along with his "Brownsville Gang" which included harmonica player Hammie Nixon, mandolinist Yank Rachell, jug and piano player Jab Jones, and guitarists Son Bonds and Charlie Pickett, performed and traveled throughout the Western Tennessee area often performing in Memphis.

In 1929 Victor Records talent scout Ralph Peer arranged for John's first recording session, a three-day affair, which produced one of his most well known songs Diving Duck Blues as well as five others. Legend has it that the gang followed the sessions with a week long binge of drinking, gambling and whoring in West Memphis, the wide-open mostly black community located just across the river from Memphis proper.

The following year, 1930 saw John and his gang recording another fourteen songs. John, it seemed, was a highly prolific songwriter.

Three things distinguish the music of Sleepy John Estes. First, was his guitar playing. It wasn't very good. Many have described his playing as "thrashing". But while John certainly wasn't in a class with virtuosos like Blind Blake or Big Bill Broonzy, his playing did have a strong propulsive quality that served his music well. He usually played in standard tuning in the key of G, or in G position with a capo.

(ESTES, from PG 3)

Second, was his “crying” vocal style that made him sound like an old man long before he was one.

The final quality that sets his music apart and was his songwriting; his ability to craft a musical story. While many of John’s songs concern the usual blues subject matter, ie whiskey and women, John was also a chronicler of people and events around him. He wrote about people he knew, people he worked for, people he dealt with and people he admired.

In Liquor Store Blues John sings his admiration for the man he buys hootch from:

Now if you're ever in Forrest City, I'll
tell you what to do
Let Mr. Peter Adams get acquainted
with you
Well, you won't have to go, well, you
won't have to go
You can get what you want, oh, right
here in my liquor store



In Brownsville Blues, John sings the praises of local mechanic Vassar Williams:

Now, he can straighten your wires, you
know Vassar can grind your valves
Now, he can straighten your wires, you
know Vassar can grind your valves
Then, when I turn your motor loose,
and it sure will split the air

Little Laura Blues describes a local teenage girl who likes to tease the men by telling them about her erotic dreams, while the tragic Fire Department Blues tells the sad story of “Hard workin’ woman” Marth Hardin, who’s house burned down.

Estes notes in the song, that she had no insurance.

She's a hard-workin' woman, you know
her salary is very small
She's a hard-workin' woman, you know
her salaru is very small
Then when she pay up her house rent, that
don't leave anything for insurance at all

If I had to name a favorite it is John’s paean to his attorney, Lawyer Clark Blues. Unmentioned in the song, but an interesting question to ponder, is why a blues singer would need to keep a criminal attorney on retainer. What sort of crimes would he have committed? I’ll offer a possible answer to my own question. It’s well known that many bluesmen supplemented their income through bootlegging, either transporting liquor or making the stuff themselves. No proof here, but that’s my guess.

John’s attorney was in fact Hugh L. Clark, a prominent citizen of Brownsville who later served in the Tennessee State Senate and also became a judge. He was clearly a competent lawyer, able to keep at least one of John’s charges from reaching trial. Whether he was actually able to prove that water runs upstream is open to speculation.

(ESTES from PG. 4)

Now, got offices in town, resident out on
Century Road
He got a nice little lake right inside the
grove,
Boys you know I like Mister Clark, yes, he
really is my friend
He say if I just stay out the grave, he see that
I won't go to the pen

Now, Mister Clark is a lawyer, his younger
brother is, too
When the battle get hot, he tell him just
what to do
Boys, you know I like Mister Clark, yes, you
know he is my friend
He say if I just stay out the grave, he see that
I won't go to the pen

Now, he lawyer for the rich, he lawyer for
the poor
He don't try to rob nobody, just bring along
a little dough
Boys, you know I like Mister Clark, yes, he
really is my friend
He say if I just stay out the grave, he see that
I won't go to the pen

Now, once I got in trouble, you know I was
gonna take a ride

He didn't let it reach the courthouse, he
kept it on the outside

Boys, you know I like Mister Clark, yes, he
really is my friend

He say if I just stay out the graveyard, poor
John I see you won't go to the pen

Now, Mister Clark is a good lawyer, he good
as I ever seen

He's the first man that prove that water run
upstream

Boys, you know I like Mist' Clark, yes, he
really is my friend

He say if I just stay out the grave, poor John,
I see you won't go to the pen

John offered good practical advice in his songs as well.
Clean Up At Home is about keeping your home and
yourself clean.

I wash my clothes, I hang 'em by the fire
Get up in the morning they be thoroughly
dry
Clean up at home, clean up at home
Clean up at home, I declare you can't go



He completes the song with some advice on how to
behave at gigs.

I wash my clothes, I hang 'em by the fire
Get up in the morning they be thoroughly
dry
Clean up at home, clean up at home
Clean up at home, I declare you can't go
wrong

I play for the colored, I play for the white
All you got to do, is act...kinda nice, you got
to
Clean up at home, you got to clean up at
home
Clean up at home, declare you can't go
wrong

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YOU ROCK!



(ESTES from PG 5)

Some of John's songs became popular enough to have entered the standard blues repertoire. Divin' Duck Blues, Drop Down Mama, New Minglewood Blues, and The Girl I love Got Long Curly Hair have been covered many times by both John's contemporaries and modern electric bands.

Astute fans of the Allman Brothers know that their version of Trouble No More, which appears on both their debut album and on Live at the Fillmore East, was taken from Muddy Waters' 1955 single for Chess Records. In fact, Muddy himself borrowed both the melody and lyrics from Sleepy John's 1935 recording of Someday Baby Blues. It's the same song.

No one has ever really explained why John Adams Estes had acquired the nickname "Sleepy". One report claims he actually had narcolepsy, a disease that causes people to fall asleep spontaneously. Others say that he would frequently wander off in the middle of whatever he was doing and take a nap. Still others say he just looked "sleepy" all the time.

Sleepy John continued to record throughout the 1930s for a number of record labels including Victor, Bluebird, and Decca. His recording career ended in 1941 with the WWII ban on record manufacturing. He recorded a couple of tracks for Sun

Records in 1952 but by then his style of blues had lost favor and the records didn't sell very well.

In the early 1960s blues fans and researchers were busy "rediscovering" many of the old bluesmen like Bukka White, Skip James, Son House and the Rev. Robert Wilkins. No one was really looking for Sleepy John Estes. Everyone thought he was dead. His 'crying' vocals and old-man voice had led many to believe he was decades older than he actually was. Big Bill Broonzy even claimed in his book Big Bill Blues that he knew of John's death. Only Big Joe Williams insisted that John was alive and claimed that he had visited him in Brownsville.

Delmark Records owner Bob Koester and writer Sam Charters headed to Brownsville in 1962 and found Sleep John without much trouble. John, now in his sixties, had become completely blind and was living with his teen-aged wife in the small house maintained today as a shrine to him.

John was happy to get the opportunity to perform and record again. He got the old gang back together, Hammie Nixon and Yank Rachell, the ones



Upcoming Jams

July 17th	Southeast Gears & Cheers <i>The Juke Hounds</i>
August 14th	Merwin's Wharf <i>Gaetano's Underworld</i> <i>Blues Band</i>
Sept 11th	Union House <i>Burnt River Band</i>

(ESTES from PG 6)

still alive, and together they made several albums for Delmark. Sleepy John even recorded an "electric" album, *Electric Sleep*, with a modern Chicago blues band. He toured Europe with the American Folk Blues Tour and appeared at the Newport Folk Festival and at the 1969 Ann Arbor Blues Festival where I took two of the photos that accompany this article. One tour, with guitarist and fan Ry Cooder, brought him to Cleveland in 1971.

Health issues eventually forced John to cease performing and he returned to Brownsville where he died in 1977. 🎸

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Band Spotlight

by Doug
Schunick

RONNIE CARROLL

Brick House Blues Band

Ronnie Carroll, and the **Brickhouse Blues Band**, our host band for our Society Blues Jam in June, put on a great set of high energy blues. The band featured Ronnie on guitar, his twin brother Bobby on drums, Jack Freeman on bass, and Tommy Nichols, lead vocal and harmonica. Before the band, which was formed in 1988, there were some personnel changes, but the band started playing out regularly in 1991, and "has been rolling ever since!"

From their promo page: "Since then the band has kept a steady track at playing the blues. Always playing the blues with a vengeance, the band's music has been described as "Smokin Blues", "The band is on Fire", and just plain "Hot Blues". While with the Jay Morgan Band National acts, and shared the stage with many great musician such: Sonny Landreth, Tommy Castro, Ronnie Baker Brooks, Kenny Neal, Derek Trucks, Ana Popovic, Coco Montoya, Charlie Musslewhite".... and one of Ronnie's favorites...Jimmie Vaughn! And many More!!! Including, two of my Favs. Roy Buchanan, and Johnny Winter!

Ronnie "AlleyKat" Carroll, and his twin brother Bobby, began to play music at around 13 or 14 years old. Originally from Euclid, they were the first twins born in the Lakeview Hospital! Eventually they moved to Mentor and now live in Lake County. His dad, who played trombone in the Navy, used to play Earl Bostic and boogie woogie piano music around the house. At around 15 Ronnie said he was noodling around on the guitar in the back yard one day and his dad commented that he "had better find something else to do to make a living". This made him mad, and this was when he began to get serious about guitar playing.

He started going to concerts seeing and hearing groups at an early age. He used to go see the James Gang for \$2, and at 15, saw Jimi Hendrix and the Cream! He noted that Canned Heat opened for Cream, and the Soft Machine for Hendrix. Ronnie mentioned he saw the James Gang with Joe Walsh many times at the Mentor Hulabaloo. Early on, Ronnie was in garage bands. From around 1971-1976, he joined and was in The Jay Morgan Band, featuring Jay Morgan on guitar, where they played at the old Agora and downstairs at The Mistake. They did all originals and were quite popular. Ronnie says that Jay was a phenomenal guitarist, and Joe Walsh used to actually come to see him! While with the Jay Morgan Band, they opened for Mahogany Rush, the Ramones, and Boston. He was also playing with a blues band and later was in a Jazz Fusion band, before forming the Brickhouse Blues Band.



(CARROLL from PG 8)



Ronnie mentioned many favorites he has seen or met. Jeff Beck, Stevie Ray Vaughn, Rory Gallagher, Roy Buchanan, come to mind. As most of us were, he was a Beatles fan first, then discovered the Blues through John Mayall, the Yardbirds, the British scene, and eventually "found the real stuff.... the original versions of the songs by the older traditional Blues artists such as Robert Johnson, Willie Dixon, and Pee Wee Crayton".

His main influences were the Beatles, Hendrix, Clapton, Beck, and Vaughn..... He does point out that the loudest band he ever heard was Deep Purple!

For Ronnie, it has always been about having fun. "When the Chemistry is there and everything is working...it's hard to find anything better". He knows how fortunate he has been to be able to open at the Beachland Ballroom blues shows and meet the performers he has shared the stage with, and actually was able to spend time with many of them. "Meeting them was way more important than the money". He told me a great story about drinking beer with Roy Buchanan, where Roy had a camera and was taking photos all night....and then the next morning he tells them there was no film in the camera!

While the band has made two studio CDs and has many live ones too. Today, with all the members very busy with their own individual schedules, it has been hard to find the time to produce anything recently. Tommy (Nichols) does studio work, including commercial spots and jingles. Ronnie has four children, and four grandchildren, in addition to having his own roofing business. That will keep you busy enough!

(CARROLL from PG. 9)

Ronnie actually enjoys the Symphony, and goes to see the Cleveland Orchestra as much as possible. But he points out that keeps pretty busy with his own roofing business. He is married, has four kids, and four grand kids. Ronnie is also an artist He likes to work with watercolors, acrylic paints, as well as doing sketching and drawing. In 2005 he got involved with the Willoughby Fine Arts Academy, where he started getting into ceramics. He creates "face jugs". He say originally these whiskey jugs were made with scary faces in order to frighten the children away from the contents....and that if one was buried under your front porch, it would keep the evil spirits away. He says they have become quite popular, and says they are available in many locations and at their shows.

Ronnie recommends to go on line, find and listen to, some of these fine new young players, especially Ronnie Baker Brooks, Eric Gales, and Gary Clark Jr.

Ronnie hopes the Blues Society can schedule more East Side venues in the future. Hey people!!! Get out, and, as Hendrix would say, "experience" the high energy of Ronnie and the Brickhouse Blues Band....talk to Ronnie...he has great stories....and... ask him about that Fender 75!

Thanks Ronnie! 🎵

Brickhouse Blues Band:

Ronnie Carroll—Guitar

Tommy Nichols—Lead Singer / Harmonica

Bobby Carroll—Drums

Jack Freeman—Bass

Ronnie can be reached at:
ron.carroll@sbcglobal.net
and the band at
brickhousebluesband.net



**By
Jim
Bell**

JIMMY'S JUKE JOINT

CD REVIEW

Front Porch Sessions

Rev. Peyton's Big Damn Band



The doors of Jimmy's Juke Joint are open again and the fun and music is flowing.

This story picks up with my trip to Clarksdale this past April. There were many fine musicians to hear, so many it was hard to choose who to hear and where to turn. Before I go any farther I want to give a shout-out to two ol' timers.... Big George Brock and Leo "Bud" Welch. These two gentlemen are in their 80's and are still out and about playing blues. Both of these musicians play a basic, stripped-down style of blues known as Hill Country; and that brings me to the Reverend Peyton and his Big Damn Band.

Rev. (Josh) Peyton and his band hail from Brown County, Indiana. Born and bred there, the Reverend was influenced in his younger years by the music of his father's record collection (where else?). The sounds of Jimi Hendrix, Neil Young and Bob Dylan are some of the first recollections he has. At age 12 Josh got his first guitar and started down the road to blues and fingerpickin'. At first Josh was not a blues man, after being introduced to the genre while in high school his passion for the music grew, especially the simple, acoustic, finger-pickin' style known as Hill Country blues. His education includes sojourns to Clarksdale to study with the likes of T-Model Ford, Robert "Wolfman" Belfour, and David "Honeyboy" Edwards.

Along the way the Big Damn Band was created. Playing as a trio, the band consists of Rev. Peyton on guitar and lead vocals, wife Breezy Peyton on washboard and backup vocals, and Max Sentney also on back-up vocals as well as playing drums and 5-gallon bucket/suitcase, snapping, clapping, and "other percussion". Josh is especially proud of the fact he doesn't use any "fancy mixers, loop machines, or electronic wizardry", what you hear is pure, pure Heaven. Often during his shows the Reverend will pause to give the crowd a little history in Hill Country blues and how it is played. The bass line is played by Josh as a continual strum using his thumb. On top of that, his other four fingers 'pick' out the melody line. Add to that he has to sing in tune and remember the words!

Rev. Peyton and the band have eight discs to their credit. Their latest release came out in March. Front Porch Sessions is Josh's vision of what songs would sound like if he and a few friends were just sitting on the front porch, playing the afternoon away. There are eleven tracks on the disc, with seven being original songs written by the Reverend. I have two favorites, although I don't think there's a bad song on the disc.

My first pick is the first track, We Deserve A Happy Ending. I can see this song as an ode to his wife and best friend. The lyrics are full of happiness and love. A song that reflects how glad Josh is to have met and married Breezy.

*I can't believe that I found you
I just love being around you
My whole life is about you
I can't make it without you*

*We deserve a happy ending
It's been real since the beginning
Even when we're losing it feels like we are winning
We deserve a happy ending*

(JUKE JOINT from PG 11)

The second song that really touched me has a subject we can all relate to. Your on the verge of losing everything. Money is tight, circumstances are not going your way, if one more thing happens you will be at rock bottom. We've all been there. And the title to this song is aptly named..... One More Thing.

*If they cut my hours
If the furnace goes out
Just one more thing and we lose the house
One more thing
And we lose everything*

*If the gas prices go up
If the back field don't sprout
Just one more thing and we lose the house
One more thing
And we lose everything*

As always, you can check out the band on YouTube and other social media.

Rev. Peyton's Big Damn Band is busy touring all year 'round. They average 250 shows per year. Their upcoming schedule includes two months in Europe, Scandinavia, and the United Kingdom. They return to the USA in September with three shows here in Ohio, check them out. It's worth a road-trip!

- ♪ Sept. 9 David Shaw's Big River Getdown
Hamilton, Ohio
- ♪ Sept. 10 Frankie's Toledo, Ohio
- ♪ Sept. 22 Woodlands Tavern Columbus, Ohio

Their website is: www.bigdamnband.com

Instrumentation: Rev. Peyton plays a 1930 steel-body National guitar, a 1934 wood-body National Trojan Resonator guitar, and a 1994 reproduction of a 1929 Gibson acoustic guitar. He also plays a 3-string cigar box guitar.

Support the Blues! See 'ya on down the road....

Jimmy ♪



July Volunteer of the Month



Our July Volunteer of the Month is
Penny Holycross.

She's one of our newest volunteers and has been helping out at the jams with the 50/50 and is doing a great job!!

Thank you Penny!!
Welcome to the CBS family!!

**THANK
YOU!!**

MEMBERS' BLUES CHOICE AWARDS

WINNERS

**Congrats to the following for
winning the CBS Members
Blues Choice Awards**



Best Blues Group - Blues DeVille



Best Lead
Colin Dussault



Best Vocalist
Becky Boyd



Best Rhythm
Mike Barrick



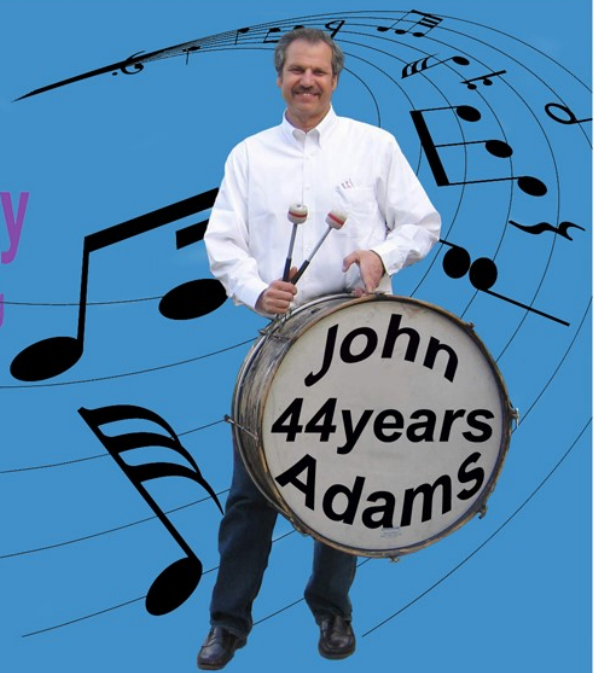
Best up & coming
Adriane Bennett



**Cleveland
Blues Society**

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*At The
Cuyahoga County Fair
August 7th thru 13th 2017*



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