

# BILL BLACK'S MOSTLY GEMS OLD & NEW

"B" Tunes

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## BALLYBAY TAILOR (jig)

© BB

G D G Em G C G D7  
 G D G Em Am D G  
 Em D G Am Em D C D  
 G D G C G D G

Ballybay is a town in Co. Monaghan and the "tailor" - who actually owned the local clothing store - was also the official historian for the area. His name was Peadar Murnane, and he was very helpful to me when I stopped in to visit to find out more about my "roots" (which - as I found out later - weren't in Monaghan but in Derry).

# BALLYCONEELY Jig

© BB 2005

A Bm A D A D A E7

A Bm A F#m D E A

A D A Bm E A E

A Bm F#m D E A

tr V tr V tr

V

<<

# BALTRASNA Reel

© BB

D Em D Bm D Em D A  
 D Em D Bm D A7 D A D  
 Bm G A D Bm G A D  
 Bm G A Bm G Bm A7 D

<<

Baltrasna is the area near Ashbourne, Co. Meath, where Tony Smith - great fiddler and supporter of the music - and his family live. The fact that we (I ?) got horribly lost trying to f

# BANAGHER BRIDGE (jig)

Tune 3 of the "Tribute to Martin Mulhaire" (1936-2020)

© B.Black 10/20

Chord symbols for the first staff: D G D Bm Em A D A7

Chord symbols for the second staff: D G A D Em D A D

Chord symbols for the third staff: Bm A Bm A D G

Chord symbols for the fourth staff: D G D Bm Em D A7 D

Banagher Bridge is a landmark some 8 miles from Martin's home town of Eyrecourt. It crosses the Shannon River between Counties Galway and Offaly. Wikipedia: "The present bridge, constructed between 1841 and 1843 has six masonry arches." Very impressive indeed - it looks like it will be there forever.

## BARKING SEAL (jig)

© BB

G Am7 G D Em D  
 G Am7 G D G  
 Em C G Em C G D  
 Em C G Am D7 D G

There's an aquarium nearby where a couple of noisy seals ("Bumper" and "Luseal") used to live. When they wanted to be fed, you could hear the carry-on half a mile away. They always drew a big crowd around feeding time and they really seemed to love the attention! Sadly both creatures have crossed the Rainbow Bridge to Seal Heaven. There's only one seal there now ("Bubba") and I'm sure he gets plenty of love!



## BASS RIVER (hornpipe)

© BB

D G Bm D Bm A  
 D G Em D A D  
 D G A D G A G A D A  
 D G A D G A D

This tune started life as "The Bubbling Stream", then became "The Kingfisher" - both of which titles, as I found out subsequently, had already been used. I finally gave it the present name in honor of one of our local watercourses (after checking with TuneFinder to make sure this name hadn't been used before either!)

# BATTLING JERRY (jig)

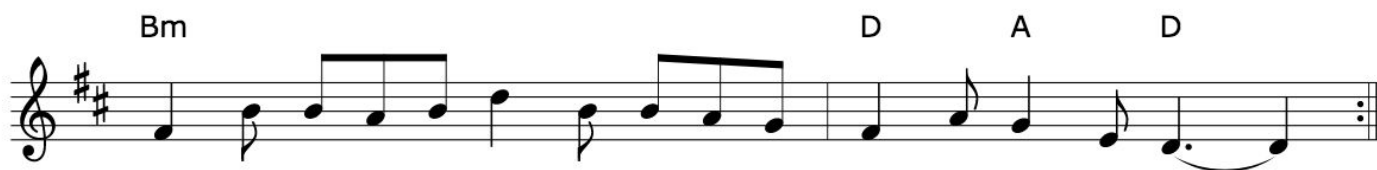
© BB 2007

G D G D C G D  
 G D G Am Em D G G  
 G D G C Am D  
 G D Em G C D7 G

This tune was composed for fiddler Jerry Holland, a battler indeed as he struggled against cancer. He lost the battle in July 2009 but his legacy lives on in many ways. I had the privilege of playing backup for him at a pub concert on the Cape a couple years before he died. I had never met him, never played with him, and due to a traffic situation he arrived just before the show so we never got a chance to practice together. But the show went off without a hitch (I'm still not sure how!)

## BAWNARD SLIDE

© BB 2007



Bawnard is a little town in Kerry near the southern edge of the Sliabh Luachra area. There don't seem to be any other tunes named for it (that I could track down).

# BEACH AVENUE RAMBLE (hornpipe)

© B.Black 6/20

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. It consists of four staves of music. The chords and their positions are as follows:

- Staff 1: G, Em, G, Am, G, Am, C, Am, D
- Staff 2: G, Em, G, G, Am, D7, G
- Staff 3: Em, G, C, Em, Em, Am, G, Em
- Staff 4: Em, G, C, Em, G, Am, D7, G

Triplets are indicated by a '3' below the notes in the second and fourth staves.

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Beach Avenue is a street in the Bronx which is notable for not much in particular, except for the lovely redhead I married who once lived there. And as if that's not exciting enough, box player Luke O'Malley lived on the same street. Although they were totally unknown to one another, the coincidence is . . . well, coincidental. But still - isn't it a small world? (Insert cliché emoji here.)

BEACH HOUSE (reel)

© BB 2014

Am Am D Am G  
 Am Am G Am G Am Em Am  
 Am G Am Em G  
 Am G C Em G Am

Named for a Cape Cod venue where our "Cat's Melodeon" group had some nice sessions a few years back. It has changed hands recently and it's now an Italian restaurant that seems to be doing well. They had a local Irish band there recently too - lasagna and the craic, a fine combination!

## BEAL BOCHT (reel)

## The Poor Mouth

© BB

Em G Bm Em G Em Am G D

Em G Bm Em G Bm D Em

Em G D Em Am Em

Em G D Bm Em D Em

A tribute to the great writer Flann O'Brien, to my thinking one of the funniest men ever to put pen to paper. The name "Poor Mouth" refers to Mr. O'Brien's wonderful parody of the 1930's "Irish native speaker" novels much admired (for the wrong reasons, says Mr. O'Brien) by the urban "literati" of the time.

## BEANS in the POT (polka)

© BB

D Bm D A D G D G Bm A

D Bm D A G D G D A D

Bm A Bm A Em Bm F#m Bm

<< This tune was originally intended to fill what I perceived as the trad repertoire's crying need for a polka in the key of C. I suggested at that time that if your instrument was uncomfortable in that key, you play it in D. As it happened, I never liked it in C anyway, so it now exists only in D. (Note that if the high C in the second part is a problem, substitute A. Or ignore it altogether.)

# BEARS of BAFFIN (hornpipe)

Tune 3 of "The Baffin Island Suite"

© BB 2009

Em D Em Bm Em C

Em Am D Em D Em

Em D Em Am D Em

G D Em D Em Em

Everybody loves polar bears - who wouldn't love a creature so big and furry and white who could kill or at least maim you with one swipe of his or her enormous paw? But hey - the cubs are adorable, right? Just don't mess with them while Mom is around. . .



## BEAUTIES of BROCKTON (jig)

© BB 2007

The musical score for "BEAUTIES of BROCKTON (jig)" is written in G major (one sharp) and 6/8 time. It consists of four staves of music. The chords indicated above the notes are: D, D, D, C, D, D, G, D, A7, D, D, D, C, C, D, A7, D, A, D, D.

Brockton is a blue-collar town southwest of Boston, once a thriving manufacturing locale but now not much of anything. Its two famous native sons are the champion boxer Rocky Marciano and the late great fiddler Jerry Holland. I should point out that a branch of the musical Reynolds clan lives there too, which is definitely a point in Brockton's favor (and it needs all the points it can get).

# BEST OF THE BANNER (reel)

© BB 2008

Em C G Em C Em G Bm

Em C G Bm Em Bm Em

G Am Em Bm Em Am G Bm

G Am Em D G Bm Em D Em

Dedicated to the memory of Mary Keating and Nora Flanagan, both fine ladies from the "Banner County" of Clare, whose families have done so much for the tradition in the New York area.

## BETTY ANN DALY'S (jig)

© BB

G D Em G Am Em  
 C D Bm Em C D G  
 G C D G Em Am Em  
 G C D G D C D G

Named for a good friend, fine lady, and the mother of several excellent musicians. She and her extended family were among the first people to welcome us to Falmouth when we relocated there from New York in the late 1970's.

# BEV & the REAPER (hornpipe)

© BB 2006

D A G A7 D G D A  
 D A G A7 D G D A D  
 Bm A G A D Em7 D A7  
 Bm G D G D Em A D

A few (?) years back a fellow musician had a serious medical issue. Fortunately she came through it in one piece!

## BIG \* DEAL (polka)

© BB

G Em D G C D  
 G Em G Am G  
 G Em D G C D  
 G Em D G Am G  
 G Em D G C D  
 G D Em Am G

Composed in January 2000, after we had miraculously lived through the Y2K hoo-hah (remember that?) The \* stands for whatever your favorite disparaging adjective might be. (I know what MY personal choice would be, but this tune collection is meant for family use).

## BIG THREE-FOUR (waltz)

© BB 10/03

D A D Em  
 Bm G D A  
 Bm Em A Bm  
 G D D A D  
 F#m D A D E7  
 A Bm F#m E  
 F#m D A D E  
 A Bm E A

A three-four tune for a 34th wedding anniversary - cute, huh? (With all my love to my Mrs. - here's hoping for 34 more!) UPDATE: year 55 (or LV as the NFL would put it) as of September 2024. Still as madly in love as a couple of senior citizens can be. - - And remember - you can't spell "love" without "LV"!

## BIG WHITE BOAT (slide)

© B.Black 6/20

D Bm Bm D A  
 D Bm D A7 D  
 Bm A G D G A G A  
 Bm A G A Bm A D

Dedicated to the crew and shore staff of the ferry "Island Queen", which does summer passenger-only runs between Falmouth on Cape Cod and Oak Bluffs on Martha's Vineyard. "IQ" has been my summer employer for the past 12 years. (In case you're interested - and why wouldn't you be? - I serve as a "vehicle placement counsellor", formerly known as a "parking lot attendant".)

# BILL FLYNN'S (jig)

© BB 2011

G C D Em Am D  
 G A D G Am G  
 G D7 G D7 G C D  
 G Am D G C D G

Bill was a local entertainer and friend of the tradition who passed away in November 2011 after a long illness. RIP.



# BILL GLEESON'S (reel)

## The Wooden Wedding

© BB 2009

G D7 G F F Dm7

G C G D7 G F G

G G Em F F

G G C D G D G

Bill Gleeson, to whose memory this tune is dedicated, passed away in September 2009. He was a kind and intelligent man capable of discussing any number of Irish topics. His public claim to fame was his recitation at sessions of a piece called "Clancy's Wooden Wedding". Delivered in Bill's gravelly voice, it never failed to bring down the house!

# BILL McEVOY'S FANCY (hornpipe)

© BB

D A G Em D D A

D G Bm Em D Bm D A D

D A Bm D Em Bm Em A

D A Bm Bm7 G A D

Bill McEvoy (RIP 2020) was well known to anyone involved with traditional music in the US. He received many well-deserved honors and accolades for his efforts on behalf of the music over the years, and I'd like to add this tune to the list!

## BITTERSWEET (reel)

© BB

D Bm D Bm G D C  
 D Bm A D G D A D  
 C D C Am D C D C  
 Am7 D A D C D A7 D

Bittersweet is a vine which puts out bright red and yellow leaves and berries in the Fall. It belongs to the Celastraceae family (as if you didn't already know that!). You see it everywhere - it's certainly pretty but (scary chord please) it has a sinister side - besides being poisonous, it can choke its host tree to death! (Insert 'eeeewww' here.) It's what botanists refer to as an "invasive species", meaning it came from elsewhere and settled here (which describes about 85% of the local human inhabitants of Cape Cod as well, but at least most of us don't go around choking trees) (except in self-defense).

## BLACK ROAD to LOUGHREA (reel)

© BB

Dm Am Dm Am Dm  
 Dm Am Dm Am Dm  
 F Dm F C Am Dm  
 F C Dm F C Am Dm

A salute to the musicians of East Galway and their great D minor tunes. The name refers to the road that crosses the mountains between Ballinakill and Loughrea - as lonely a stretch of road as I've ever driven on. That was years ago - even in these days of ubiquitous smartphones, Onstar, GPS etc., you certainly wouldn't want to get a flat tire (or bump into a sheep) up there!

# BLACKSTONE VALLEY Hornpipe

© BB 2006

The musical score for "Blackstone Valley Hornpipe" is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is composed of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. Chords are indicated above the staff: G, G, Am, G, C, G, D. The second staff continues the melody with chords: G, G, D7, G, C, D, G. The third staff has chords: Em, C, D, Em, G, D, Em. The fourth staff has chords: G, Em, Am7, D, G, C, D, G. There are three triplet markings (indicated by a '3' over a group of notes) in the second, third, and fourth staves. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

<<

For Bob, Russell, and the other folks who have worked so hard over the years to keep the BV Festival alive!

# BOATLOAD of HERRING (reel)

© BB Feb. 2020

D A D G D A G A

D A D G D G D A D

Em A G D D A G A

Em A G D Bm G D A D

For fiddler Tessie Stokinger and her drummer granddad (and Northeast Ceili Band charter member) Pat Reynolds, who occasionally works as a fish-truck driver (or a "marine provision specialist", as we would call him at the Island Queen).

# BOX in the BASEMENT (jig)

Lucky Mike's

© BB 2/21

G G C G Bm C  
 D C G Am G Am D G  
 Em G D Em Am Bm Em  
 C G Em D Em D7 Em

Most musicians that I know have had a beautiful dream - usually after watching too many episodes of "Antiques Roadshow" - in which they come across an instrument of incredible value, or a collection of rare and wonderful instruments (in top condition, of course) (Freud called this "The Banjo Player's Fantasy" but it could apply to any instrument). Well, it actually happened to Mike the box player when one of his older relatives found such a gem in her basement. He still can't believe it happened!

## BOY GENIUS (reel)

© BB

G Am G G F B $\flat$  Dm

G Am G G Am D G

G F G Am G F

G F G F D G

The original inspiration for this tune (and a few more in this collection) was the movie "Amadeus", probably my all-time favorite. In my not-so-humble opinion, every musician should see it (even if you're not crazy about Mozart or classical music in general). UPDATE: playback makes it sound more like Ed Reavy than Mozart. Hey, nothing wrong with that!



# BOYS at BOLAND'S MILL (hornpipe)

© BB

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff has chords G, C, G, C, G, D, G, Am, Em, A, D. The second staff has chords G, C, G, C, G, Am, G. The third staff has chords Em, G, Em7, G, D, G, A, D. The fourth staff has chords G, C, G, C, G, Am, D, G. There are triplets (marked with a '3') in the first, second, and fourth staves. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Boland's Mill, formerly Dublin's flour mill and a city landmark for many years, is situated in the Ringsend area of Dublin between center city and the bay. One of the first battles of the 1916 Easter Uprising was fought there. My wife's grandfather was one of the combatants. The mill shut down in 2001, and like many another of Dublin's older buildings, it has been adapted for "residential/commercial use".

## BRANT POINT Jig

© BB 2006

D D Em A7  
 D Em D G A D  
 Em Bm A Em Bm7 A  
 Em D Em D A D

I wrote this tune shortly after we returned from playing at a wedding on Nantucket, which is where the Brant Point lighthouse is. We didn't get to see much of the island but it certainly looks like a nice place to spend some time (and money, lots of it, especially in the summer).

## BRAVE LADS of TYRONE (reel)

© BB

A G A D A E  
 A G Em A G E A  
 A G A G A G A E A  
 A G A G A Bm A E A

I was working on a project a while back that required me to find one dance tune for each of the 32 counties of Ireland (e.g., "Dublin Porter", "Galway Rambler", "Cork Hornpipe", "Sligo Maid", etc.). I was amazed to discover that there were no dance tunes that included "Tyrene" in the title - at least I couldn't find any. (There is a tune called "Tyrene's Ditches" but it's a march.)

## BRAVE YOUNG BRIAN (jig)

"Brian the Brave"

© BB

G C D G Em D  
 G C D G Am D G  
 G Am G C G Em D  
 G Am G Em G Am D G

This tune was originally named "Brian the Brave" until I found out that name had already been used for a tune in the Roche collection. Oops. . . The Brian of my title is a young man who had to overcome a lot of adversity early in his life, but never gave up and has done quite well for himself - a good example of bravery indeed. (Note that Brian's proud dad Larry Jr. likes the original name, so it's included here!)

## BREEZE ACROSS the LAKE (jig)

© BB

G                      Em                      G                      F                      Dm                      F  
 G                      Em                      D                      G                      D7                      G  
 G                      G                      F                      F  
 G                      G                      F                      G                      D7                      G

Pick your favorite lake - lots of lovely ones up in the Adirondacks, or just around the bend in Ireland - but I didn't have any particular one in mind! (On Cape Cod they're "ponds" unless you can't see to the other side - THEN they're lakes!)

## BROKEN BOW HORNPIPE

© BB 2009

G G Am C D  
 G Am G D7 G D G  
 Em Em D Em D D  
 G D C G C D G

This tune is named for a street in our former home town of Falmouth, unremarkable except for the fact that some very nice people closely related to us live there. Not sure where the name comes from but it might have some historical significance (or not) .

# BRYANT'S BARBECUE (reel)

© BB

Am G Am G Em Am

C Am G Em C Am

Am G

Am G Em Am G Am

<<

If you ever get to Kansas City, make sure you pay a visit to Arthur Bryant's barbecue place downtown on Brooklyn Avenue. No question that it's some of the best barbecue you'll ever try. The place is al smoky and noisy and crowded - in other words, definitely worth the trip! (PS - if you're fussy, you want to bring your own napkins and some handi-wipes. Just don't let anyone see you using them.

# BUCKET o' NAILS (polka)

© BB

D Em Bm A  
 D A G D  
 D C D A  
 D C D A D

Someone on IRTRAD (the now-moribund-but-not-totally-dead traditional Irish music mailing list, may its name be blessed forever) once described yours truly as "funny as a bucket of nails" after I had shared one of my usual inanities. In his part of the world (I believe he's English) that's not necessarily a compliment, but I thought it would make a good tune title anyway. (Look, I'll take titles wherever I can get them!)