

BB'S MOSTLY GEMS OLD & NEW

"M" TUNES

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MAAM CROSS (jig)

© BB

Am Dm E Dm E Am E

Am Dm G7 Am E Dm E Am

A D A Bm A Bm E

A D A Bm D A E A

One of my early composing efforts - another one with a minor-major change between parts. Maam Cross is in the mountains between Galway and Mayo. I personally think it's one of the real beauty spots in a country that's blessed with many of them, but back when I composed this it was a little off the usual tourist routes and wasn't familiar to many people.

MAEVE'S MAZURKA

© BB

Chord progression for the first staff: A, F#m, A, C#m7

Chord progression for the second staff: A, F#m, A, Bm7

Chord progression for the third staff: A, B7, E7, A

Chord progression for the fourth staff: A, F#m, A, F#m

Chord progression for the fifth staff: E, A, E, F#m, B7, E7

Chord progression for the sixth staff: A, F#m, A, D, E, F#m

Chord progression for the seventh staff: A, B7, E7, A

Composed a while back to commemorate the christening of Maeve Elizabeth Flanagan, first child of Mike and Rose (Conway) Flanagan. It's nice to see how thoroughly fiddler Maeve has inherited the musical talent that abounds on both sides of the family!

The MALAMUTE'S FANCY (hornpipe)

© BB

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

A malamute is a breed of "sled" dog that resembles a wolf. They also resemble the better-known huskies but are distinct in their physique and behavior. "Mals" are gentle and strong and more than a little bit independent. We shared our life with one for thirteen years, so we know! Believe it or not (and you probably shouldn't) they are also quite fond of set dancing and have learned over the years to compensate skilfully for the extra paws that most human set dancers don't have.

MARGIE O'DRISCOLL'S (reel)

© BB

G Em D G Em

G Em D G Am D G

Em Bm C D Em Em D G Em

Em Bm C D Em G Em D G

Margie was one of the many hard-working members of Comhaltas USA until she hit a rough patch a few years back. This tune was composed to cheer her up a little as she went through the recovery process.

MARK'S MITTENS (hornpipe)

© BB 2006

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

When you're playing outdoors and the temperature is about 40 degrees and dropping, what better way to avoid frostbite than by playing fiddle with mittens on? Seemed like a good idea to Mark. The weird thing is that it didn't sound bad, but maybe the cold was affecting our hearing . . .

MARY JOSEPHINE'S (hornpipe)

© BB

D G D Bm D Bm7 D A7
 D G D D A D G D
 Bm Em D Bm D Bm F#m A
 Bm Em D Em D A7 A G D

Named for Mary Josephine O'Sullivan, third child and first daughter of Jerry and Frances, born in September of 2000.

MARY O'CONNOR'S (polka)

© BB

D G D D Bm D
 D G Em D A D
 Dm Am7 Dm Am Dm
 F Bb Am7 Dm

Named for the lovely lady at whose Brooklyn apartment many folks once experienced that unbeatable combination - great music and great food. If and when I get to Heaven (not a sure thing), I will not be surprised to find that it bears a strong resemblance to Vince and Mary O'Connor's front room!

MAUREEN GLYNN CONNOLLY'S (jig)

© BB

A Bm A D F#m Bm
 A Bm A D E A A
 A Bm7 F#m A A F#m E
 1 A Bm A D E7 A A
 2 A Bm F#m A F#m E7 A A

Maureen was one of the fine teachers of Irish music who graced the New York area in the 1970's and 1980's. She was a talented performer on several instruments and many of her students - in New York and in Ireland - owe their excellence to Maureen's patience and teaching skills. Maureen was married to the legendary Johnny Cronin until he passed away in 1990 - Mrs. Black and I were at their wedding in Johnny's home town in Kerry, I don't recall the year - but I DO remember playing a couple gigs with Johnny and Maureen in a place called "The Breffni" somewhere in Queens. As they say, God be with the days!

McFADDEN'S GRAND-DAUGHTER (reel)

© BB

E7 F#m A D A F#m Bm F#m

E7 F#m A D A D E A

A D E F#m Bm A F#m Bm

A D E F#m Bm F#m D E A

A tune that I hope will recall "McFadden's Handsome Daughter", that great 3-part reel in the O'Neill collection.

McGILVRAY'S #1 (jig)

Tune 1 of the "Tribute to Kenny" set

© BB 2016

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

Cape Cod lost a great guy when Kenny McGilvray passed away in 2016. I don't have room here to go into all the reasons why so many folks loved him - suffice it to say that he will be sorely missed, not only by his family and many friends, but also by all the musicians and patrons of the Olde Inne, where he served so many years as greeter, maitre d', performer, and dispenser of sincere Irish hospitality. It was truly a blessing to have known Kenny.

McGILVRAY'S #2 (jig)

Tune 2 of the "Tribute to Kenny" set

© BB 2016

Am C Am G Am G C F

Am G Dm Am Em Am G Am

<<

C Em C G Am G C F

C Dm C G7 C Am G Am

McGILVRAY'S #3 (jig)

Tune 3 of the "Tribute to Kenny" set

© BB 2016

Em C Em D G D

Em Em G C D G Em

Em C G D Em D

Em Em G D C Em

<<

McGILVRAY'S SLIP JIG

Tune 4 of the "Tribute to Kenny" set

© BB 2016

This is an attempt to re-work "Carrickfergus", one of Kenny's favorite songs, as a slip jig. Not sure if it works or not but I'm sure he'll forgive me!

McKEON'S RIDE to CLARE (reel)

© BB 2013

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

A few years back piper Gabe McKeon made a bike trip from Dublin to Clare to raise funds for the Pipers' Club. I thought such a worthy endeavor was worth a tune (and a small monetary contribution)!

MEGAN McGANN'S (reel)

© BB

D D C D Am

D D D Am C D

D C D Am D

D C Am D Am D

Megan is the daughter of the late Andy McGann and his wife Pat. Since there are already a few tunes out there with Andy's name on them, I thought I'd name this one after Megan.

The MELODIOUS TOMCAT (jig)

© BB 2009

D C D C
 D G C D A7 D
 D D Am Am
 D C D A D

Musician and archivist Alan Morrisroe tells of a saying in his home county of Mayo that refers to anything noisy or discordant as "cat's melodeon" (only coincidentally the name of our local session group!). Alan - no mean melodeon player himself - obviously doesn't take any offense on behalf of his instrument. This tune was composed to commemorate all those box-playing felines of the County Mayo (note that any substitution of "malodorous" for "melodious" will NOT be viewed kindly by either Mr. Morrisroe or myself.)

MEMORIES of MONK'S (jig)

© BB 2009

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

"Monk's Park" in Manhattan was a session pub in the late 1970's when there still weren't a lot of them around. Locals and visitors provided a lot of great music there back in the day! The pub is long gone and if the building is still there, it's probably an ethnic eatery of some sort. Pad thai chicken, anyone?

The MENACING PIGEON (hornpipe)

© BB

D D G D Bm7 A
 D D G D A D
 D G Bm D G D Em A
 D D Bm Em7 D A D

<<

Naturally there's a story that goes with this title, but for the full details you would have had to ask Chicago box player Jimmy Thornton (RIP). Suffice it to say that it relates to an incident at the hotel that hosted the CCE convention in San Francisco in 1997.

The MERRY STAMPMAKER (reel)

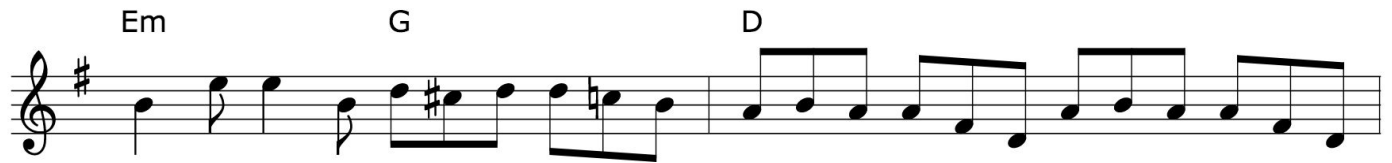
© BB

Gm Dm7 F Gm Bb F Gm
 Gm Dm7 F Dm C Bb F Gm
 F D Gm Bb F Gm
 F D Gm F Bb F Gm
 D Bm Em D G A7
 D Em D G A7 D

I couldn't pass up the opportunity to immortalize (?) John "Squirrel" Casey, everyone's favorite 1 Cork-almost-Kerry rubber-stamp tycoon. The joy and happiness that Mr. Casey has been accuse bringing into the lives of his "friends" is well-nigh indescribable, especially in a publication inter for family use. He currently resides on East 11th Street in Manhattan and has been known to ent visitors (appointments suggested).

MICHAEL ROGERS' (slide)

© BB



Young Michael's family roots are in West Cork and Dublin, and as a child he grew up in Meath. It will be interesting to hear what sort of accent he'll have later in life! (UPDATE: Saw Michael in June 2022 - accent is pretty much Meath!)

MICK O'CONNOR'S (jig)

© BB

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 6/8 time. It consists of four staves of music. Above each staff, the chords for that staff are indicated. The chords are: A, A, D, A, Bm, E; A, A, Bm, D, E, A; A, A, Bm, G, E; A, F#m, A, D, E, A. The music is a jig, characterized by its 6/8 time signature and rhythmic pattern.

Mick is the champion banjo player who is never reluctant to act as my 'native guide' when I'm in London. Mick has a lot of friends in spite of his penchant for bad - some might say terrible - jokes (advice: run away and hide if he pulls that little notebook out of his pocket - he'll understand) .

MICK O'GRADY'S (reel)

© BB

D Bm G D D Bm G

D Bm D Em D Bm D G

D D Bm D Bm D

D F#m Bm G D A7 D

Mick is a fiddler from Co. Mayo who came to New York in the early Eighties and returned to Ireland after a few years. The last time I saw him was at the 1989 Fleadh Ceoil in Sligo. I understand that as of a few years ago he was living and playing in the Dublin area. Maybe I can track him down next time we're back there.

The MIDDLETON LASS (jig)

BB 5/20

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

This tune is for Catskills flute player Mike McHale (RIP), who hailed from Tulska, Co. Roscommon. His grand-niece Hannah, a fine piano player who has recorded some of Mike's tunes, is from Middleton, Co. Cork, hence the name of the tune!

MIGHTY MIKE'S (reel)

© BB

The musical score for 'Mighty Mike's' is written in D major (two sharps) and 4/4 time. It consists of four staves of music. The chords and other markings are as follows:

- Staff 1: Chords D, Bm, D, F#m, G. Includes a tilde (~) over a note.
- Staff 2: Chords D, D, G, D, A7, D. Ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.
- Staff 3: Chords A, Bm, G, D, Em, F#m, G. Includes a tilde (~) over a note.
- Staff 4: Chords A, Bm7, G, Bm, D, A7, D. Includes triplets (3) under the first two measures. Ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

<<

If somebody ever starts awarding prizes for the hardest-working people in Irish music, winner hands-down will be Boston's Mike Reynolds. Mike is the only person I know who can do two gigs - in different states - simultaneously (and set up the sound system somewhere else at the same time!)

MIKE FROM KC (reel)

© BB

Bm D A Bm D F#m7 Bm
 Bm D A D G A7 D
 A D Bm F#m A7 D
 A D Bm G Bm A7 D

"Mike" is Mike Dugger, then-fiddler-now-box-player whom I first met back in the late 80's when his group "Scartaglen" was touring in these parts. Mike, who's based in Kansas City, has been involved in various groups since then. I used to see him when he'd venture east to Boston for "Gaelic Roots", but I haven't seen him recently. I know he's still around - I see his Facebook posts occasionally. I think he has a new band too, so it's great to know he's still involved in the music.

MIKE LYNCH'S (jig)

© BB 2009

Dm F Gm Dm Am Dm
 Dm Am Dm Gm F C Dm
 Dm C Dm F Dm C
 Dm Gm Dm C Dm B \flat C Dm

When the Irish traditional music scene took off in New York in the early 1970's, one of the folks who was always involved in one capacity or another was Mike Lynch. Over the years he had relocated to the San Francisco area, and I lost track of him until I received news of his untimely passing in the Fall of 2009. RIP.

The MILKMAN'S HORSE (reel)

© BB 2010

Em Bm D A Em Bm G

Em G D Bm A Bm

D Em D G Em A

D Em D A Bm

In the course of a conversation with a friend, he mentioned the fact that in his youth he had worked as a milkman's helper in the Bronx. Given his age, chances are that he rode a truck and not a horse-drawn wagon, but I figured I'd keep "Horse" in the title anyway!

MISS BREEN'S HOTEL (hornpipe)

© BB

A A E D E7 C#m

A A E F#m E7 A

E D E7 A E7 A D E

E D E7 A E7 A D E A

<<

This is named for a most interesting Dublin hostelry of days gone by, located in the City Markets on George's Street (within walking distance of Trinity College). The owner was a Quaker lady, good friend of my mother-in-law, and it was for this reason that the "official" name of the place included the word "temperance", implying that you had to go elsewhere for a drink. There was usually ample evidence - most noticeably around the breakfast table - that this requirement did not represent a huge imposition for many of Miss Breen's full-time residents. Sadly, Miss Breen, her hotel, and all its residents are part of Dublin's memories now - God be kind to them.

MOLLY WILLEY'S (jig)

© BB 2009

G D7 Am G C G D

C D G Am G C D7 G

Em D Em D D C

G D Em D G C D G

Molly, a regular at the Olde Inne, definitely qualified as one of Cape Cod's most enthusiastic fans of Irish music. She died in the Fall of 2009.

The MONEYMORE Jig

© BB 2005

A D A G Bm E

A F#m D E A E7 A A

A E Bm A G Em7 Bm E

A Bm F#m E7 A D E7 A

Moneymore is a town in Derry close to where my great-grand-mother Annie was born in 1852. Since there are other towns in Ireland with this name, I was surprised to see that - as far as I could determine - no one had ever used it for a tune!

MONSIGNOR'S POLKA

© BB

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

"Monsignor" is none other than Kerry's own Johnny Cronin (RIP). I'm not certain how he got the nickname - Johnny was certainly a great guy in his own way but you'd never mistake him for a member of the clergy! Everyone who knew him has a few stories about him, most of them true. (Check out the Cronin - Burke tracks on my Tune Vault (www.capeirish.com/tune_vault) site if you want a taste of Johnny's fine playing.)

The MOONRISE Reel

© BB 2006

A Bm7 A Bm F#m E
 A E D A D Bm7 E7 A
 A F#m A D A E7 F#m D
 A F#m A D A E D A E A

<<

The full moon of December - which the Native Americans referred to as "the cold moon" or "the long night moon" - was peering in the window as I began composing this tune. Hard to believe how bright it was that night!

The MOUNTAIN FIDDLER (slide)

© BB 2006

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

I had originally titled this tune "The Rushy Mount", which is the English translation of "Sliabh Luachra". That's the area of southwest Ireland famous for all its great slides and polkas (and players thereof) mentioned so often in these pages. However I subsequently came across at least two other "Rushy Mounts" in other collections, so I renamed mine with the title you see here.

MRS. FEENEY'S BLANKET

© BB 2005

Em C G Em G Bm Em D

G D Em C D G

Em D Em D Em

G D Em Am D G

Sometimes new parents forget stuff, and then they need folks like Mrs. Feeney to help out!

MRS. CONWAY'S CHOCOLATE CAKE (hornpipe)

© BB

G Em Am G Am7 G C Em G

G Em Am G Am7 G Am D G

G D G Am G D G D G

G D G Am Em7 G D7 G

I'd bet that no one ever visited the Conway house in the Bronx without coming away at least five pounds heavier. I've never thought of Irish music as fattening, but it surely was on lovely Wallace Avenue. This tune is my thanks to all the Conways, mom Rose in particular (may she rest in peace), for their kind hospitality to our family and to all musicians over the years.

MUSIC at McGURK'S (reel)

© BB

Em G C Em G Am D

Em G Am G D G Bm7 G

G Em Am G Bm C G D7

G Em Am G D G C D G

John J. McGurk's pub in Saint Louis was once the Midwest mecca of Irish traditional music. I haven't been in Saint Louis in a long time but a search on the Internet shows that McGurk's is still in existence, with plenty of music - but I'm not sure how "pure drop" traditional any of it is.

The MUSICAL CROW (reel)

© BB

The musical score consists of four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The chords are indicated above the notes. The first staff has chords G, Em, Am7, G, Am7, and D7. The second staff has chords G, Em, Am7, G, C, D, and G. The third staff has chords Em, C, Am, G, D, and G. The fourth staff has chords Em, C, Am, G, Em, D, and G. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

<<

Crows were considered highly intelligent, magically gifted creatures by the early Celts, and while I normally would never argue with such an opinion, I occasionally wonder: if crows are so smart, how come none of them can carry a tune? Okay, so maybe they can count up to 29, but have you ever listened to them trying to sing? Yikes!! They make ME sound good!

The MUSKRAT (hornpipe)

© BB 2009

Am Dm Am G C F G Am

Am Dm Am G C F G Am

C Dm Am G Am G

C Dm Am Dm G Am

"The muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*), the only species in genus *Ondatra*, is a medium-sized semi-aquatic rodent native to North America." (Thanks, Wikipedia!) We had a family of these happy beasts living in a pond behind our house - we hope they enjoyed watching us as much as we did them!