

In America

This collection has been simmering for some years: It was originally planned as a follow-up to our 2001 production, *Lafayette's Ghost*, as a look homeward after our exploration of European regimental music. But we were drawn astray for several years by a project of Christmas material, entailing a CD and live concerts. All the while, though, we kept collecting tunes and songs for a recording we tentatively entitled "Green Fields of America." We needed a homecoming.

There is no lack of great material available for an American fife and drum ensemble. The latter half of the 20th century yielded some fantastic tunes written for American fifes and drums—tunes so compelling that they've spread across the Atlantic to enter the repertoires of our fellow musicians in Basel, Switzerland, an example of a vital and growing friendship between devotees of this art. Although the Ancient Corps canon is in itself very satisfying for both player and listener, many truly great fife and drum arrangers and composers are among us today, further expanding on that canon. Here, then, is our celebration of the living art that is fife and drum, spanning the 18th to 21st centuries—from North America, the Isles, and the Continent—proving that the music of these simple instruments is alive and well **In America**.



1. **Two Cotillions**, arranged by Jim Clark. An untitled Grand March composed by Jim Clark provides a graceful introduction to this project, followed by **La Dardanus** and **Cotillion #4**, both from Riley's *Flute Melodies*.

2. **15th Massachusetts Quickstep** is the last tune in the set Three Pieces in Honor composed by John Benoit—this one for the 15th Massachusetts ("Capt. Buxton's") Regiment Fife and Drums and Benny Emerick, both a source of inspiration for John and for MCV. The entire set, arranged by John Ciaglia, is presented on the CD *Road to Folly*, featuring John Ciaglia, John Benoit, Xenia Fünfschilling, Scott Mitchell, and Cap Corduan.

3. **Rakes, Lords & Idiots** begins with two tunes composed by Roy Watrous, **The Eel Pot Tavern** and **The Village Idiot**, and continues with the traditional **Rakes of Kildare** and **Lord Gordon's Hornpipe** after a setting by John MacDonagh. Arranged by John Ciaglia and Jim Clark, MCV offers this set in tribute to the Ancient Mariners Fife and Drum Corps in the year of their 45th anniversary.

4. **Too Cool Beauties**, arranged by John Ciaglia after a setting by Chris Norman in his fabulous CD *Man with a Wooden Flute*, features a Quebecois waltz and reel, **Isle de Madeleine** and **Point au Pic**. Let's dance!

5. **Strange Freddy** proves to be the perfect set for our theme. These three tunes were composed specifically for modern fifes and drums by members of well known American-style corps: **The Nash Street Reel**, composed and arranged by Xenia Fünfschilling of MCV and the 21st Grey Coat Battalion from Basel, Switzerland; **Freddy the Flasher**, by Roy Watrous, a founding member of The Ancient Mariners; and **Strange Jig**, by Scott Crawford of the 3d United States Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) Fife and Drum Corps. The drum score is by Jim Clark, and the latter two tunes are arranged by John Ciaglia.

6. **Pinocchio** is a particularly lovely march composed in 1982 by M. Rossel of Basel, Switzerland, specifically for the Basel Fasnacht, a magical three-day festival featuring thousands of fifiers and drummers in full costume. Arranged by John Ciaglia.

7. **Old Tappit Hen**, arranged by John Ciaglia and Jim Clark, begins with **Bedou's Reel**, named after a fiddler from the Magdeline Islands, and is followed by two tunes from *The Portland Collection of Contra Dance Music in the Pacific Northwest*: **Bus Stop Reel**, composed by Anita Anderson, and **Old Joe**, a Tennessee tune adapted by George Penk from the playing of New Englander Rodney Miller on his album *Airplang*. This set is a real stylistic departure for MCV, especially Old Joe. The incongruity of our formal 18th-



century uniforms and jazz-age harmonies has proven to be hilarious.

8. **Big Top!** Composed and arranged by John Ciaglia, this set illustrates the scenes in a great American circus: **The Barker, Parade of the Animals, The Blue Clown, The Lion Tamer, The Aerialist, The Juggler, The Roustabout, The Vamp's Val-diction**, and **Farewell!** We hope this is as entertaining for the listener as it is for the trio.

9. **Yankee Doodle**, arranged by Jim Clark. No fife and drum recording would be complete without this famous tune.

10. **Pretty Polly**, arranged by John Ciaglia and Jim MacConduibh after a setting by John Benoit in *Fife in the Fast Lane*. Two lovely 18th-century songs, **The Pretty Maid** and **Polly Oliver**, published in the Charles Ashworth manuscript (1812), are excellent examples of three-quarter time retreat beating. This was a duty of the regimental fife and drum corps of the 18th and 19th centuries, played in the early evening to signal the end of the soldiers' working day.

11. **Wettsteinmarsch**, composed by Hermann Suter and arranged by John Ciaglia and Jim Clark. This tune is for all of our friends in Basel.

12. **Michael's Pickle Goes to Boston**, arranged by John Ciaglia and Jim Clark, begins with **Pouring Out the Pickle Jar**, a composition by MCV fifiers Bill Phenix and Jane Law. Next are **Boston Quick Step** from *The Drummers' and Fifers' Guide* by Geo B. Bruce and Daniel D. Emmett (1861), **Michael Wiggins** from Riley's *Flute Melodies*, and **Mississippi Quick Step**, also from Bruce and Emmett.

13. **April on Ice** begins with **In April's Wake**, composed by John Ciaglia, followed by **The High Reel** (traditional) after a setting by Skip Healy. This set was arranged by John Ciaglia and performed by the MCV fifiers at the Yshalle Tattoo in Basel, Switzerland, in June 2005.

14. **Jug a Dut** is a drum solo composed by MCV drummers Michael Godin and Paul Lusardi. Combining traditional rudiments with a more modern interpretation, this showcases the energetic syncopated style of Massachusetts drum corps in the 1960s and 1970s.

15. **When She Cam Ben She Bobed**, a haunting tune discovered by MCV fifer Janis Kenderline in the Caledonian Pocket Companion, arranged by John Ciaglia.

16. **James Hill Medley**, arranged by John J. Benoit and Jim MacConduibh. This striking



set includes four tunes from *The Lads Like Beer* collection of compositions by James Hill, a tavern musician in the Tyneside region of England in the mid 19th century: **The Barber's Pole, The Old Church Hornpipe, The Navvie on the Line**, and **The Locomotive**, with a drum solo **Witch Hazel** by Jim MacConduibh.

17. **Hector the Hero**, composed by the great Scots fiddler and composer J. Scott Skinner (1843-1927) for Major-General Sir Hector MacDonald (1857-1903), one of the most famous Victorian-era British military figures. Arranged by Jim and Sarah MacConduibh, this version features Betsy Ketudat on fiddle and George March on Highland pipes.

18. **William Wallace Crossing the Rhein**, arranged by Jim and Sarah MacConduibh, has become one of MCV's signature sets. *The H.M. Scots Guards Standard Settings of Pipe Music, Vol I/II* (Paterson's Publications Ltd., London) yielded these fine tunes: **Mairi's Wedding, Arniston Castle, Fair Maid of Barra**, and **The Clumsy Lover**.

19. **The Navy Hymn** was originally composed as the hymn Travelers by the Rev. John B. Dykes in 1861. We've been lucky enough to perform this lovely version, arranged by John Ciaglia, many times onboard U.S. Navy ships in Boston Harbor.

20. **America the Beautiful**, composed by Katherine Lee Bates in 1893, here arranged by John Ciaglia.

21. **The Road to the Isles**, a collaboration between John J. Benoit, Scott Mitchell, and John Ciaglia, was written as the finale for the 2005 Yshalle Tattoo in Basel, Switzerland. This epic piece of four traditional Scots tunes—**The Road to the Isles, Ceilidh Umbrella, Drummond Castle**, and **Miss Susan Cooper**—was performed by the massed fifes and drums of the Rhine River Rebels, the 21st Grey Coats Battalion, Wild Bunch Fife and Drum Corps, Grainfield Fife and Drum Corps, and MCV.

22. **Lakes of Pontchartrain**, arranged by John Ciaglia after a setting by Xenia Fünfschilling. We offer this tune in remembrance of those lost in New Orleans during Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

23. **The Sweetness of Mary**, composed by Joan MacDonald Boes in 1987, arranged by Jim MacConduibh, Sarah MacConduibh, and Jane Law. Dedicated to Mary Logsdon, and now a symbol of our friendship with the 1st Michigan Colonial Fife and Drum Corps, The Sweetness of Mary has become firmly established in today's fife and drum lexicon.

