

Only One Pair Of Hands

The purpose of this CD is to record all my banjo compositions before I have to give up playing in public: - my tone at the age of eighty is not what it was, but fortunately my fingers are still reasonably nimble. It was satisfying to play the second parts, although some proved to be quite a challenge, because I had not played them since they were written, - many of them over ten years ago.

All the pieces were played on my 12" Weaver banjo, but the quiet/slow ones were recorded with a Weaver-made cork between the perch pole and the vellum, under the bridge.

Recording conditions were not ideal, the 'studio' being an upstairs room where occasional street noise and sounds from the distant railway and motorway, necessitated quite a few 'retakes'. Hence the close-miking and consequent finger noise. There has been no attempt at digital enhancement such as 'reverb':- these are 'warts and all' tracks, - although about four seconds of silence was added to each , in order to space them out on the CD.

Alan Middleton

April 2008

1. Banjo Boogie (1953) Revised 1992
2. Buckwheat Barn Dance (1999)
3. Cameo (1948) One of four 'Solos for a Quieter Mood', (actually duets), reissued as separate titles 1996
4. Clematis Rag (1998)
5. Clockwork Donkey (1994) Revised 2007, Beware! – The winding-key sounds rather fierce!
6. Coffee Break (1999)
7. Cuckoo (1996) Revised 2007
8. Deux Aquarelles I (2005) Revised 2007
9. Deux Aquarelles II (2005) Revised 2007
10. Eskin Reel (1949) Revised 1992
11. Fragment (1959) Second part written 2007
12. Fun and Games (1944) Revised 2000
13. Gavotte (1998) Revised 2006
14. Leapfrog (1993)
15. Marionette (1994) Written to accompany a busker with a 'dancing doll'
16. Meadowsweet (1948) See notes on 'Cameo'
17. Planxty Doyle (1997) Dedicated to the Editor of 'The Banjo'
18. Reverie (1948) See note on 'Cameo'
19. Ridgeway March (1997) Dedicated to Richard Ineson, Midlands & Northern Secretary, IBC
20. Slumber Song (1948) See notes on 'Cameo'
21. Snapshots (1947) Fully revised 2007
- Something Different: Suite of six pieces in the 18th century French style (1994)**
22. *Prélude*
23. *Bourrée*
24. *Minuets I & II*
25. *Gigue*
26. *Rondeau*
27. Spanish Dance (2005)
28. Summer Serenade (1992)
29. The Echo Tango (1994)
30. The Happy Tramp (1994) The tramp is heard in the distance; he approaches, passes, and finally ambles around a bend in the road still whistling.