



The FINGERSTYLE GUITARIST

Volume 11

****10+YEARS FULL STEAM AHEAD****

Issue 1

A publication of the
Georgia Fingerstyle Guitar Association

GFGA Members in Action



The "Originals" - GFGA founders



Robert Anderson 's Signature guitar



Mr. Wallace and his Guitars



"Georgia State Fingerstyle Champion"
Derrill G. Scott



Door Prizes



As you look up at these pictures what do you see? People of all ages gathered and having a good ole' time. That's what GFGA is all about. Folks, we continue to be fortunate and blessed for being able to have our gatherings. GFGA is coming together full steam. You don't want to miss our next gathering. Pictures like these tell a story of a winning combination.

Please come join us

Oscar

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The President's Report

Happy New Year!

And a good new year we have awaiting. GFGA is running full steam—we had a full house in October. Ten new members joined - the word is out!

We're blessed with so many talented members. Wish we could mention everyone who contributed. Just to mention a few I'd have to say the "Original" or as Ed Cummins puts it, "The 2-bit band" entertained us with the beautiful voice of Maxine, along with James (Chief) and Greg's hot guitar licks. What a combo!!

One of my favorite young guitar-

ist Austin Edmondson continues to grow in his musical experience. As a student of Greg Butler, he often plays offertory numbers in church with the backing of other church musicians. During Christmas, he received a copy of "Chet Atkins Plays Back Home Hymns" as new listening material.

And during the first week of school following Christmas break, he received a first place blue ribbon award from his local 4-H Club for his project detailing the parts and types of guitars. In addition to the paper that he wrote, he put together a poster featuring photographs of guitars that any GFGA member would appreciate.

Keep it up, Austin!

Robert Anderson played his new signature style guitar. Robert entertained us all of with his exceptional Chet style picking. Robert had a nice display with a collection of his CDs.

Wallace guitars were on display along with a host of guitar accessories (guitar picks, strings, etc.) that came in handy for several members.

I'm looking forward to our February 2, 2008 meeting to see what new adventures await us. I'll be looking for you.



Oscar

Vice President's Report—The "Chief"

Happy New Year to everybody. President Oscar and I have been busy working on a schedule and securing the meeting place for 2008 and I am happy to announce that is done. We will be meeting again at St. Paul Methodist Church on Feb.2, May 3 and Oct. 25. Please make a note of this on your calendar.

We had a good meeting in October 2007 and were blessed with some new young players and also the "Georgia State Fingerstyle Champion" Derrill G. Scott from down in Franklin, Georgia. He went to Hiawassee to the annual Georgia State Fiddlers Convention and won the "Fingerstyle" category. Joining the likes of Bro Greg Butler, Julian Smith and Robert Anderson as champion. Per telecom, I interviewed him and

included are his words about winning;

"Awesome, is the way I would describe my feelings when it was announced that I was the winner of the Fingerstyle category". He added, "this was the most exciting time of my life because I won it on an old Gibson Flat top guitar that I used to own and sold to a friend then borrowed it back to play during the competition". He stated, "I was in 4th place during the preliminary part and to win was beyond belief". He added that his young son and his friend were all excited about his win and have become avid students of the guitar ever since. "I am doing everything I can to keep them interested and appreciate GFGA for offering them the stage to display their talents". JC

Derrill G. Scott told me that he, son Aaron and friend Christopher Hodge are wanting to make the next meeting in February to play again. Derrill modestly told me the "G" in his name stands for great! I believed him.

We still need for more members to bring their guitars and perform with us. Also, tell us whom you would like to have come as a guest. 2008 Dues are due.

Respectfully submitted,

James





Happy New Year greetings to you finger pickers!

Hope-fully, we've used our musical opportunities to bless the lives of others during the past several weeks.

It a privilege to have received from the Lord a musical ability or gift, but with every privilege comes responsibility! Last week I read an interesting article with a comment from a guitar teacher at a well known California university. This teacher introduces himself to each student by showing him/her a \$10 bill, telling the student that he will give them the money in exchange for ten minutes of simple solo guitar music. But he hasn't given the money away, yet, because although the players know lots of fancy, hot licks, they don't know how to play songs in their entirety...at least not ten minutes worth! As someone has said, "These things ought not so to be!"

Could I make a suggestion to keep any of us from falling into this same circumstance? Select several of your favorite hymns and Gospel songs in

2008 and learn to play them all the way through, playing them in different styles, playing them in different keys. In the first several weeks of the new year, I'm preaching a series of messages in our church on "Pages From the Old Hymnbook." It is interesting to see that hymns and Gospel songs have been an integral part of Christian worship since the earliest days of the New Testament church. Check Matthew 26:30 and Ephesians 5:18-20 in your Bible.

The messages of the hymns and Gospel songs rehearse and reiterate the truths that we've heard preached and taught from Scripture. And our playing of these songs brings the words of them to people's minds. And this gives us an opportunity, through our picking, to be a blessing to others!

I look forward to seeing you for our February meeting.



Greg Butler

Cheryl's Kitchen



Cheryl and Janice are cooking up something again—no telling?

Things haven't changed much since our last news letter - I still get real hungry after a while with all that good guitar picking going on - it's just a natural

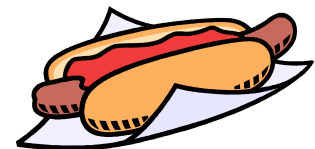
thing! For those of you who came last time know what I'm talking about! We were fed real good!

Please don't miss Cheryl's Kitchen goodies coming up. Some of Cheryl's Kitchen Menu items will include:

Award winning Chicken soup, Potato soup, GFGA Chili - guaranteed to give you that get up and go picking style, GFGA style hot dogs with all the fixings. Then comes the deserts, chocolate cake, soft drinks, cold water, coffee regular or decaf, chips and on and on.....

Come on and chow down on the best home made food just right for guitar lovers. Cheryl - I still don't know how you do it!

Oscar





Meet Fellow GFGA Member

Richard Williams

Richard grew up in Winder, Georgia, about 50 miles S.E. of Atlanta. He and his wife, Cheryl, now live in Gainesville. (The regulars at GFGA meetings know Cheryl is one of the ladies that keeps the fine food coming during our meetings.)

Richard saw a guitar in a furniture store in Winder when he was about 11 years old and strummed it. He fell in love with the sound. His first guitar was a Sears Roebuck Stella bought for him by his Dad who also taught him the 3 chords in C to get him started.

Since there was no one in the area then who played or taught he did what we all have probably done; sit and figure out the keys and the chords and positions on the fingerboard. Later he bought a Mel Bay chord Book which was a big help

He bought his first electric, a Dan-electro Supro with matching amp, while he was in high school I bought and matched amp. After graduating from high school, he got a "paying" job playing trombone and guitar in a combo. That required an upgrade to a 1956 Gibson Gold Top. He admits that playing in the high school band for 4 years helped him in learned to read single line music for trombone, and the valve instruments. That experience is very helpful to him in working up songs from printed music.

In the late 50's he heard Chet Atkins for the first time and fell in love with

his finger style so he threw away his straight pick.. Since there weren't any finger style players around he tried to play that way without much progress. While working in Mobile, Alabama he met a gentleman named Bill Crist who helped take away a lot of the mystery of finger style playing. Later on after another job relocation to North Carolina in 1985 he met another player named Jim Burch, who for about a year, furthered his understanding of finger style. He gives these gentlemen credit for starting him on the track to the enjoyment of finger style playing.

Richard's guitar and amp collection is, in his words, "sparse compared to most players' collections". He has an Alvarez Yairi acoustic, a 1956 Gibson Gold top and the Super Gretsch which he plays at GFGA and is his principal instrument. The Gold Top Gibson later was refinished in cherry red after it was damaged when a bandstand collapsed at a University of Georgia Sigma Nu party about 1958.

Richard sometimes plays at a couple of nursing homes, at church and other small "venues."

Richard became a member of GFGA in 1997. He was working in Alabama at the time and read an ad in the **Acoustic Guitar Magazine** telling about the forming of a finger style guitar organization in the Atlanta area. He called the number given in the ad and talked to Ed Cummings. They both had musical backgrounds in instrumental music, (Ed on the saxophone and Richard on the trombone.) and they also had an interest in the guitar.

When I asked Richard what advice he would give a young person who had wanted to learn to play finger style guitar he did not hesitate his reply.

"I would tell them that finger style is the most natural method of playing a stringed instrument." He backed this up with some comments he had read after doing research on the playing of ancient instruments. He added that he would tell them it would pay them back according to the time and effort one would put into it. For Richard, playing finger style is truly a "labor of love".

He would like to see GFGA grow and feels that instruction for members and young aspiring players is a good way for GFGA to further its growth and commitment to spread the finger style way of playing.



Richard Williams

By: Al Ferguson