



# The FINGERSTYLE GUITARIST

## A publication of the Georgia Fingerstyle Guitar Association

### January Meeting

by Ed Cummins

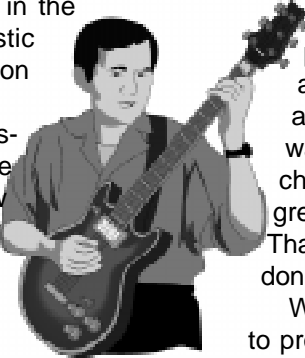
The January meeting of GFGA took place on the 28th in our new location at the Kennesaw, GA Recreation Center. This is a large room with a bi-fold door down the middle. We were able to close the bi-fold door enough to create two spaces. The "main event" took place in the front room while acoustic jam sessions were going on in the back.

Over 100 people registered at the door and we picked up 15 more new members. GFGA now has 101 members. I think this is a wonderful start as we have only been organized for six months.

The meeting was opened in prayer by GFGA's chaplin, the **Rev. Greg Butler**. We are fortunate to have Greg as our chaplin. Where else can you find a minister who is also one great picker? (Actually we do know of another.)

### It Takes a real man to play a pink guitar...

**Johnny Carlton** assumed the duties of Program Director and Master of Ceremonies. He did a great job of lining up the pickers and kept things rolling all day. Johnny also played a set with his bass player and drummer. Johnny played his pink paisley Telecaster. As Johnny says, "It takes a real man to play a pink guitar". Thanks Johnny.



### Can you say "Hot Dogs"?

One of the highlights of this meeting was that we had food available on site. **Shirley Childers, Janice Catron** and **Joanne Henry** manned "Shirley's PX". These lovely ladies did a terrific job of providing drinks, snacks and a light meal service. (Can you say "Hot Dogs"?)

We received many complimentary remarks about having this service available. Folks just don't want to leave and take a chance on missing some great music, even for food. Thanks ladies for a job well done.

While GFGA was formed to provide a forum for Georgia guitarists, we are fortunate to have many members and friends in other states. It was amazing to see how many people made significant trips to be with us at this meeting.

We had folks who came from North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee.

After reviewing the visitor's list we may have to change GFGA's name to the "GA/NC/SC/TN/AR fingerstyle Guitar Association."

Once again, **Bob Saxton (C.S.P.)** Certified Super Picker made the trip from Goodlettsville, TN. Bob always sets the musical bar so high, that most of us can only fall over it.

I won't try to enumerate all of the GFGA members from Georgia who played for us. As we are discovering, there are some very formidable finger pickers here in Georgia. Every-

one enjoyed their playing and we count on their returning to future meetings.

Door prizes were tapes donated by guitarists **Moon Mullins, Bob Saxton**, and **James Childers**. A fruit basket was also donated " and the lucky winners were..." **Debbie Thomas, Kenneth Smith, Margaret Smith, Kelly Sims, Ron Reynolds** and **Son Bui**.

### And the lucky winners were....

Our special guest at this meeting was **Comer "Moon" Mullins**. If you weren't there to be "Mooned" you missed a real treat. Moon delighted the audience with his easy down home style and stage presence. Moon played his acoustic **Taylor** guitar like no one else can. His old time tunes and rock solid thumb are his trade mark.

Moon prefers the old ragtime tunes from the 20's and 30's. We tried to coin a name for his style of playing like "rag-picking" but nothing seemed to fit better than "ragtime". Moon

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commented that he had reached a flat spot in his music but being at GFGA had gotten him really pumped up. He said having seen all of the excitement and interest that GFGA was creating had caused him to feel a new enthusiasm for fingerstyle guitar.

The evening session was kicked off by Moon with his impression of a Leon Redbone song. Later, he was joined by his student and protégé from Calico Rock, AR, **James Clinkingbeard**. For the last tune of this set, Moon and James were joined by **Bob Saxton** for a memorable rendition of "I'll See You in My Dreams".

John Huston's **Piedmont Guitar Quartet** closed the evening with a presentation of classical music which earned them a standing ovation. The members of the quartet are **John Huston, Derek Keller, Micael Lynch** and **Dan Stanislawek**. Bob Saxton commented that he had been listening to guitar music all of his life and had never heard anything like this quartet. They really ended the day on a high note (pun intended).

Thanks again to all who helped set

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### They really ended the day on a high note...

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up, tear down, clean up and work during the day to make this meeting possible. We couldn't have done it without you. Thanks also to all who came to listen. Performing isn't much fun without an audience.

We hope to see you at the next meeting on May 16.

#### Obituary

We regret to report the death of one of our members. **Tom Campbell** did not recover from surgery on March 2. We offer our condolences to Tom's family and to his many friends. While Tom was not a picker, he was a good GFGA friend and he will certainly be missed.

#### THUMBOLGY

by Johnny Carton

**Arnold Shultz** was born in February of 1886 in Ohio County Kentucky. He is one of the very first influences and contributors to thumb and fingerstyle guitar, or what is now known as the Atkins-Travis style picking.

Shultz made several trips to New Orleans during his lifetime and was greatly influenced by jazz and blues he heard there. Shultz apparently brought many new musical ideas back to Kentucky from New Orleans. One of these ideas was passing tones which may have been picked up from the great **Jelly Roll Morton**, and is frequently used in the Atkins-Travis style.

One great player influenced by Shultz was bluegrass legend **Bill Monroe**. Monroe is said to have been influenced by the smooth style of Shultz.

Another great player influenced by Shultz was pioneer fingerstylist **Kennedy Jones**. Although some people have claimed Jones was taught fingerstyle guitar by Shultz, Kennedy himself disputed this in a 1982 interview. It seems Jones may have learned some licks from Shultz, but Kennedy had been playing fingerstyle guitar for ten years before he met Shultz. Kennedy said his first fingerstyle guitar lessons came from his mother, **Alice DeArmond Jones**. The truth is, any time one guitar player watches another guitarist play, he is influenced in some small way or the other, whether he realizes it or not.

Shultz, an African American, played with black, white and racially mixed bands. He also played in a band with family members and seemed comfortable in any situation.

Arnold Shultz was a great fingerstyle guitarist, an accomplished fiddler and sometimes played guitar on his lap like a Dobro using a pocket

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any time one guitar player watches another guitarist play, he is influenced in some small way...

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knife for a bar.

Sadly no recordings of Shultz exist, therefore his place in musical history must be judged by stories handed down by folks who actually heard him play. Arnold Shultz died on April 14, 1931 in Morgan Town, Kentucky, and is buried there in a grave with no monument or epitaph to honor his contribution to fingerstyle guitar.

Alice DeArmond Jones, the mother of Kennedy Jones, was born in or near Muhlenberg County, Kentucky, in 1863. Alice played fingerstyle guitar, banjo, fiddle and mandolin. She is without a doubt the first musical influence on Kennedy Jones. Alice kept several instruments around the house, and young Kennedy started learning to play at the tender age of eight. There were thirteen children in the Jones family, and this makes me wonder when Alice DeArmond Jones ever had time to play a musical instrument. I guess she found time to teach young Kennedy, because he learned very well.

#### MORE THUMBOLGY NEXT ISSUE STAY TUNED...!

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to **Bobby Anderson** for sending me a copy of his wonderful, informative book, "**THAT MUHLENBERG SOUND**"; from which much of my research for the column **THUMBOLGY** is found.

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**Chet Atkins** recorded his first record for RCA on August 11, 1947. It was a vocal entitled "**Ain'tcha Tired Of Making Me Blue**". The recording featured one of Chet's idols on rhythm guitar, the great **George Barnes**.

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## GFGA "Pick"-nic

The first occasional GFGA "Pick"-nic will be held on **July 11** at the Methodist Campground on Hiway 120 East of Marietta, GA starting at **10:00am**.

From I-75, take either the North or South Marietta loop to Hiway 41. From the North loop, go South to the "**Big Chicken**". From South Loop go North to the "**Big Chicken**". Go **East** on Hiway 120 for **2.9 miles**. The campground is right on the road on the right.

There is a covered arbor with electricity for jamming. No drinks, food or smoking is permitted under the arbor.

There are permanent tables for setting up food. These tables are out in the open and have no benches, so bring your lawn chairs. If you have a lawn canopy, this might be useful too.

There are several acres of open ground and a small playground for the children.

There will be a **\$5** per car charge for the picnic as we have to pay for the use of the grounds.

Bring your family and friends and bring your goodies to share with the rest of us. **Bring your guitars** and share your licks too. Help make this a fun, family get-together.

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## Lost & Found

Several guitar accessories were left behind after the January 24th GFGA meeting. If you will contact **Ed Cummins** at **770-345-1467** and identify them, he will be glad to return them to you. The lost articles will also be available at the next GFGA meeting on May 16.

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## Jam Sessions

by Ed Cummins

The guitar is a unique instrument in that it is very portable and can be played either as a solo or rhythm instrument.

This makes it ideal for groups of guitarists to get together and swap licks.



One thing that guitarists love to do is get together with other guitarists and "**jam**". This is how they meet new friends, bond with old friends and steal licks from all friends.

If more than two or three guitarists get together for a jam, the session can become disorganized and not much fun if some controls are not put in place. This article will discuss some possible procedures that could help all participants in a jam session have a fun time.

One recommended process is sometimes called "**circle picking**". The participants sit in a circle. One of the players is chosen to start the session. This player selects a tune he wants to play. He plays it through completely and then nods to the player on his left. If the player on his left wants to play the tune, he does so and then nods to the player on his left and so on around the circle. When the turn to play gets back to the player who started the tune, he ends it. If any player in the circle does not want to play the tune, he just nods to the player on his left.

The player to left of the person who selected the first tune, now picks the second and plays it through and passes it around the circle as before. This method gives each player an equal chance to play every tune and an equal chance to select a tune to play.

Another consideration is to **never cover up the player who has the**

**lead**. If you do not have the lead, either play rhythm under the lead or just listen. Certainly **don't play the lead too**. When your turn to take the lead comes, everyone should do the same for you.

Another possible variation is to let just the person to the left of the player with the lead play rhythm while everyone else listens. This variation may require some modification if the player on the left of the lead player doesn't know the tune being played.

Observe common courtesy and listen to the "**player**". Remember how hard it is to hear every lick played if someone else is playing over you.

Fingerpickers need to be heard. Just listen to Chet's records and **HEAR!**

Jamming should be fun and the discipline not too strict. However, you can see that a little organization and consideration can make a jam session fun for all.

**Keep jammin'.....**

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Observe common courtesy and listen to the "player".....

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## Spring Meeting

**5/16/98** - The Spring GFGA meeting will again be held at the **Kennesaw Recreation Center** in Kennesaw, GA. The meeting times have been changed. We will now start at **1:00pm** and end at **10:00pm**. The facility will be open for set up at **12:00 noon**. There will be no mid-day food service but drinks, coffee, cake and light snacks will be available during the afternoon with a light meal service available at supper time. To date, we do not have a special guest lined up. That could change as we have several negotiations under way. On the other hand, as we have discovered, we have some "special" players within our own membership.

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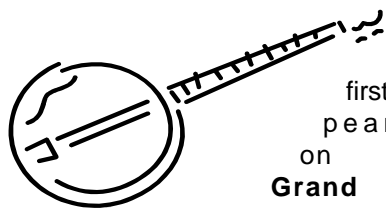
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## Louis Marshall "Grandpa" Jones 1913 - 1998 by Johnny Carlton

Louis Marshall Jones, better known as "**Grandpa Jones**" passed away Thursday, February 19, of this year in Hermitage, Tennessee. Mr. Jones' death resulted from a series of strokes which began in 1991.

Louis Marshall Jones first became "Grandpa" at age 22 when he donned flannel shirts, colorful suspenders, and an old gray felt hat.



He first appeared on the **Grand Ole**

**Opry** in 1946, and is remembered for hits such as "Eight More Miles to Louisville" and "Mountain Dew". He was a member of the gospel quartet known as "The Brown's Ferry Four" along with **Merle Travis**. He became a member of the "Country Music Hall of Fame" in 1978. Also, he will be inducted into the "Thumbpickers Hall of Fame" in April of this year in Drakesboro, Kentucky. He was a veteran of hundreds of radio and TV shows, and appeared at the Hollywood bowl and Carnegie Hall.

Grandpa Jones is survived by his wife Ramona, several children and grandchildren. He will be sadly missed by all.

In 1883, the **Gretsch** Company started manufacturing banjos, drums, and tambourines. Guitars weren't built until about 1900. It wasn't Gretsch's biggest selling product until the 1950's when **Chet Atkins** began to endorse them and the rock and roll explosion started.

## Georgia Music Hall of Fame By Greg Butler

A trip to Macon to see our youngest son, Stephen, participate in the season-ending basketball tournament of the Georgia Association of Christian Schools gave me an opportunity to visit the new Georgia Music Hall of Fame. The date was February 14...the 22nd wedding anniversary for Judy and me, so that several things that are important to me were making this particular weekend very special.

Being a **Chet Atkins** fan for many years, I was happy to see Chet inducted into the GMHF in 1995. And I was anxious to see what kind of a tribute to Chet the museum would put forth.

Approaching Macon on I-75, we noticed several signs giving directions to the GMHF. Upon arrival we saw a beautiful, new facility that indicated the people behind this venture intended to put forth a first class exhibit. The entrance fee was **\$7.50** per person, but coupons for \$1.00 off are easily found in motel lobbies, etc.

The first thing concerning Chet, that we came to, was his "**The Day Fingerpickers Took Over the World**" with **Tommy Emmanuel**. Headphones were hanging on the wall with an invitation to put them on and select the tunes from the CD that you'd like to hear. A little farther on was a Gibson "Tennessean" guitar donated by Gibson and signed by Chet. Not far away was a picture of another GMHF member and friend of Chet's, **Jerry Reed**. One of Jerry's guitars was displayed there. A little farther into the museum was a famous orange, hollow-body, single cut-away Gretsch guitar... not of Chet's, but having belonged to **Joe South**. Many other guitars were on display as well. Later we came to a wall filled with the displays of each member of the GMHF. Judy made my picture as

I stood beside Chet's display. In the gift shop several of Chet's recordings were on sale, along with a neat looking Gibson guitar headstock magnet just right to go on the refrigerator in the kitchen of any serious guitarist.

In addition to the things about Chet and Jerry, we enjoyed the "chapel" with the video telling the story of Gospel music in Georgia.

I especially enjoyed the old footage of guitarist **Alphus LeFevre** with The famous LeFevres of Atlanta. I cut my musical teeth on their music when they appeared on a weekly television program.

The one and a half hours we spent at the GMHF was one of several highlights of our trip to Macon. The 43,000 square foot museum might be of interest to GFGA members looking for a day trip. You can call the GMHF at **(912) 750-8555** for more information.

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### Mose Rager Day

The 5th annual **Mose Rager Day** will be held **April 11, 1998** in **Drakesboro, KY**. The celebration will take place all afternoon in the **Drakesboro School cafeteria** preceding the **National Thumb Pickers Hall of Fame** induction program.

You can enjoy a barbecue pork or chicken meal while listening to thumb picking music and jam sessions. Dessert will be served at **4:00pm**

The meal and music costs **\$6.00**.

For more information call **502-476-9029**.

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### GFGA Apparel

Thanks to member **Gene Smith**, we can now offer wearing apparel with the **GFGA** logo. A listing of available items and an order form are included in this newsletter. Orders will be accumulated and sent to the vendor every two weeks. This will make delivery 4 to 6 weeks.. Thanks Gene

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## NTHF Organized

by Johnny Carlton

"The National Thumbpicking Hall of Fame " has been organized in **Drakesboro, Kentucky**. The first induction ceremony will be held on Saturday **April 11, 1998** which is also the fifth annual **Mose Rager Day** (see article on previous page). The meeting will begin at **7:00 pm** in the Drakesboro school gymnasium. Admission is **\$5.00** for adults, and **\$3.00** for children.

Nine thumbpicking legends will be inducted. Inductees include: **Arnold Shultz, Kennedy Jones, Mose Rager, Merle Travis, Ike Everly, Chet Atkins, Grandpa Jones, Lightning Chance** and **Laverda Rager**, widow of the late Mose Rager.

Officers of the club include: **Eddie Pennington**, president; **Rodney Kirtley**, vice president; **Helen Harris** recording secretary, **Bobby Anderson**, executive secretary/treasurer; **Paul Jarvis** sergeant at arms. **Eddie Pennington, Bennie Lear, Howard Stone, Paul Mosely**, and **Claude Travis** comprise the board of directors, and **Bob Saxton, Mary Rainwaters, Dave Stewart, Steve Rector, Maurice Jones** and **Tommy Owens** are on the nominating committee.

To join this organization, send \$15.00 for individual membership, and \$25.00 for families to; **National Thumbpicking Hall of Fame, P.O. Box 132, Beechmont, KY 42323**.

For more information call **502-476-9029**.

### Atlanta Blues Society

Did you know there is a group in Atlanta which is dedicated to the sole purpose of promoting and preserving blues music? Acoustic guitar night is the last Thursday of the month. **404-892-2949**

## CAAS '98

by Ed Cummins

The **Chet Atkins Appreciation Society** 1998 Convention is set for **July 29 - August 1** at the **Music City Sheraton Hotel in Nashville, TN**.

If you have never been to this affair, you have missed one of the greatest finger picking guitar music overloads known to man. The music starts in the early morning and is still going on in the wee hours of the next day.

There are vendors and displays of guitars, records, and music. There are workshops and seminars as well as the activity in the main ballroom.

The hardest part of being there is trying to figure out what to miss. You just can't do it all.

This year, **GFGA** will join several other clubs in the **Belmont Room** for picking and jam sessions, so bring your guitar. In fact, the CAAS convention is considered to be one of the **GFGA** meetings for the year. It will really be fun this year, to see the other **GFGA** members in Nashville. Just think, less than a year ago, **GFGA** didn't even exist.

### The hardest part ... is trying to figure out what to miss.....

As those of you who waited until after March 1 to make reservations at the Music City Sheraton already know, the block of rooms reserved for CAAS are all gone. However, there are several other hotels and motels close by.

We have not received any information about advance registration and pricing for this year, but it should be available in the forthcoming issue of "**Mr. Guitar**".

This gathering is for CAAS members only, so if you are not a member (heaven forbid), contact **CAAS, 3716 Timberlake Road, Knoxville, TN 37920**. Dues are **\$15** per year.

## Nashville Number Charts #3

by Johnny Carlton

The Major Scale is derived from the Chromatic Scale. The formula for building a Major Scale is as follows:

The Major Scale is constructed of two whole-steps, one half-step, three whole-steps and one half step.

This is further illustrated in **Example 1**.

### Example 1.

ws	ws	hs	ws	ws	ws	hs
C C#	D D#	E F	F# G	G# A	A# B	C
Db	Eb		Gb	Ab	Bb	

The above formula illustrates how to build a C Major Scale. If you started with an F note and applied the same rule, you would construct an F Major Scale. (**Example 2**.) If you start with G you will build a G Major Scale etc. (**Example 3**)

### Example 2.

ws	ws	hs	ws	ws	ws	hs
F F#	G G#	A A#	B C	C# D	D# E	F
Gb	Ab	Bb		Db	Eb	

### Example 3.

ws	ws	hs	ws	ws	ws	hs
G G#	A A#	B C	C# D	D# E	F F#	G
Ab	Bb		Db	Eb	Gb	

You will notice there are no sharps or flats between the notes B and C or E and F. The B# note would simply be a C note, and a Cb note would be a B note. The same rule applies to E and F.

Below is a chord progression that comes from the song "Back UP And Push". The key is D Major, and it is written in 4/4 time with each chord receiving 4 beats. You can listen to this tune on Chet's 1965 album entitled "More Of That Guitar Country".

4 1 5 1    4 1 5 1  
4 1 5 1    4 1 5 1

Until next time -----**Stay Tuned!**

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