

BORDERBOX

Northumberland is one area of England where traditional music has survived despite all the competing influences and attractions of the modern world. The purpose of BorderBox has been to nurture this tradition by enabling and encouraging young musicians to learn the traditional styles, techniques and repertoire of country dance bands from Northumberland and the Borders.

The BorderBox sound is based on the classic traditional music combination of fiddle and accordion, together with the standard country dance band rhythm section of second accordion, piano, bass and drums.

The young fiddlers and accordionists of BorderBox play jigs, reels, marches, hornpipes and waltzes with great vitality and a tremendous lilt. They also show that they can handle slow airs with sensitivity and feeling.

BACKGROUND

In 2000 the arts organisation, Folkworks, began to assemble instruments, teachers and funding for projects to promote the teaching of traditional music in schools in the North of England. The eventual outcome of one of those projects was the formation of BorderBox, a band for young musicians throughout Northumberland who came together once or twice a year to rehearse and perform. In 2004 the band increased its activities with a move to monthly rehearsals, external funding, a parents' committee with a formal constitution and even a "Sunday name" (*The Border Box and Fiddle Youth Band*). In recent years the band has won all the band competitions in the local traditional music festivals at Alnwick, Morpeth and Rothbury.

COMPANION TUNES

To encourage the participation of young players at varying levels of experience and development, the band arrangements have always included the use of second or even third harmony lines. This eventually led to the concept of "companion tunes", i.e. different tunes which can be played either individually or in harmony with each other. Some examples of companion tunes on this CD include "Harbottle Crag" and "Whittingham Tower", "Linhope House" and "The King of The Fairies", "Up The Berwick Road" and "The Spittal March".

DEDICATIONS

- **Belford Lighting:** Heather Westcott and Belford Middle School;
- **The Chantry Scholars:** Veronica Gilbert and the Chantry Middle School, Morpeth;
- **Glendale:** Liz Breckons and Glendale Middle School, Wooler;
- **The Lads of Lindisfarne:** Jo Peace and Lindisfarne Middle School, Alnwick;
- **The Old Duchess's School:** Andrew Scott and the Duchess's Community High School, Alnwick;
- **Seahouses Fret:** Pat Adamson and Seahouses Middle School;
- **The Spittal March and The Twempie Two-Step:** Mark Russell and Tweedmouth Middle School;
- **The Stars at Netherton, Harbottle Crag, Whittingham Tower and The Branton Rant:** Gillian Birnie, the Three Valleys Ceilidh Band and the primary schools at Netherton, Harbottle, Whittingham and Branton;
- **Up The Berwick Road:** Aubrey Sanderson and Berwick Middle School.

THANKS

- **David Oliver and Folkworks/The Sage Gateshead:** for starting it all off;
- **Kathy Anderson, Kirsteen Gray, Heather and Anthony Robb:** for supporting the band (and its musical director) so well;
- **Ally Lee:** of Mill Studios, Alnwick: for recording and fettleing the CD;
- **Andrew Scott:** at the Duchess's Community High School Alnwick for helping us with a recording venue;
- **The Clore Duffield Foundation and Awards for All:** for financial support;
- **Steve Cowton and Vince Hope:** at the Alnwick Playhouse;
- **Chris Brown:** the chairman of the band's parents' committee; and ...
- **All the BorderBox parents.**

Colin Bradford
(Musical Director, BorderBox)

David Oliver
(Folk music educator)



BORDERBOX

UP THE BERWICK ROAD

"When I was a young and inexperienced piano accordionist in the 1970s, Colin Bradford gave me generous helpings of support, advice, encouragement, opportunity and inspiration. It's wonderful that he has been doing the same now with so many fine young players from Northumberland, carrying on the proud and beautiful tradition of playing the region's music on the classic instrumental combination of box and fiddle, and I'm delighted to salute BorderBox's CD, "Up The Berwick Road".

As befits the ever-evolving tradition, this collection includes both established favourites and some brand new melodies, composed specifically to promote the progressive development of playing skill and a real feel for Northumbrian style. By giving young people both a sound instrumental technique and a firm grounding in the traditional repertoire, BorderBox has laid the foundations for a lifetime's love of music making by a whole new generation of players. Warmest congratulations to everyone involved in the creation of this splendid album."

1 THE DURIES' VERDICT

The Duries' Verdict *
The Banjo Breakdown (Trad.)

2 HIGHLAND CATHEDRAL

Highland Cathedral (M Korb & U Roever)

3 BLOW THE WIND SOUTHERLY

Blow The Wind Southerly (Trad.)
The Twempie Two-step *
The Lads of Lindisfarne *

4 RISTY GULLEY

Risty Gulley (Trad.)
The Lads of Alnwick (Trad.)

5 THE THREE VALLEYS SET

The Stars at Netherton *
Harbottle Crag *
Whittingham Tower *

6 HARVEST HOME

Harvest Home (Trad.)
The Trumpet Hornpipe (Trad.)

7 THE DARK ISLAND

The Dark Island (Iain MacLachlan)
Up The Berwick Road *
The Spittal March *

NB: Risty Gulley (the first of the old Northumbrian 3/2 hornpipes in Set 4) is not a misspelling. It is an old name for a carving knife although it is often, perhaps through the influence of folk etymology, converted into "rusty gulley". The interesting rhythm of the tune arises because alternate bars are played as three groups of two crotchets and then as two groups of three crotchets.



8 THE KING OF THE FAIRIES

Linhope House *
The King of The Fairies (Trad.)

9 GLENDALE

Glendale *
Seahouses Fret *
The Chantry Scholars *

10 BUTTERED PEAS

Buttered Peas (Trad.)
The Branton Rant *
Belford Lightning *

11 WHITTINGHAM GREEN LANE

Whittingham Green Lane (Trad.)
The Lads of North Tyne (Trad.)
The Old Duchess's School *
Hexham Races (Trad.)

12 THE ASHOKAN FAREWELL

The Ashokan Farewell (Jay Ungar)
Oliver Smith of Morpeth *

13 THE CLOGGING SET

The Banks of the Tyne (T Murray)
Sally Graham's Clogs *

14 THE GAY GORDONS SET

Scotland the Brave (Trad.)
Teribus (Trad.)
The Cock of the North (Trad.)

* Except where noted otherwise,
all tunes are (Colin Bradford - PRS/MCPS).

L-R:
 Bryony Brunt
 Mark Gray
 Lauren Mark
 Andrew Ness
 Eleanor Brunt












Alice Burn
 Gemma Telfer
 Fiona Mitchell
 Hannah Slater-Patterson
 William Brown

Beth Chamberlain
 Eleanor Rolls
 Sally Graham
 Nathan Armstrong
 Charlie Trotter







Rachel Oliver
 Charlotte Kennedy
 Richard Cooper
 Meg Burn
 Eleanor Walker







Accordions • Nathan Armstrong • William Brown • Bryony Brunt • Meg Burn • Sally Graham • Fiona Mitchell • Rachel Oliver • Eleanor Rolls • Gemma Telfer
Fiddles • Eleanor Brunt • Beth Chamberlain • Sally Graham • Charlotte Kennedy • Lauren Mark • Andrew Ness • Hannah Slater-Patterson • Charlie Trotter • Eleanor Walker
Clogs • Sally Graham • **Drums** • Mark Gray • **Northumbrian Smallpipes** • Alice Burn • **Whistles** • Richard Cooper • Eleanor Walker
Plus a few adults • Kathy Anderson (Piano) • Colin Bradford (Accordion) • Kirsteen Gray (Double Bass) • Anthony Robb (Fiddle and Smallpipes) • Heather Robb (Fiddle)

