



WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA DULCIMER COLLECTIVE

2026 – 3rd Quarter Newsletter

The Western North Carolina Dulcimer Collective is a member-supported group of players of mountain and hammered dulcimers, and those who enjoy listening to dulcimers and/or playing other traditional instruments with them. The group meets once per month to share tunes and information. Dues are \$5.00 per year payable to *WNCDC* – Mail checks to Carl Cochrane, 3239 Heritage Circle, Hendersonville, NC 28739-3553.

DULCIMER CLUB NEWS

MONTHLY TUNES:

July 12th: *'Tis Pretty To Be In Ballinderry*. An old Irish Air, found in Bunting's "Music of Ireland", 1840. I found it listed in the program for a London Gaelic League 1954 St. Patrick's Eve concert, including the words shown.

August 9th: *The Sheep-Shearing*. Number 95 in Cecil Sharp's "One Hundred English Folk Songs" from 1916. The tune is now better-known as "The Sweet Nightingale", but Sharp feels this song predates it, going back to before 1760.

September 13th: *Darling Nelly Gray*. An American anti-slavery ballad written in 1856 by Benjamin Russel Hanby while he was a university student. It is written as from the point of view of an African-American male slave in Kentucky whose sweetheart has been taken away by slave-owners. The song became popular in the years preceding the Civil War and helped promote support for the abolitionist cause. The melody is the basis for the melody of "Faded Love", a 1950 hit for Bob Wills.

SONG REVIEW SCHEDULE

July:	'Round The Bay Of Mexico	(2 nd Quarter, 2006)
	Run Mountain	(4 th Quarter, 1990)
	Sailing in the Boat	(4 th Quarter, 2011)
August:	Sailor On The Sea	(4 th Quarter, 2010)
	Sally Ann	(4 th Quarter, 1990)
	Sally, Let Your Bangs Hang Down	(1 st Quarter, 2007)
September:	Samiotisa	(2 nd Quarter, 2009)
	Santy	(3 rd Quarter, 2007)
	Salty Dog	(4 th Quarter, 2014)

'Tis Pretty To Be In Ballinderry

1. 'Tis pretty to be in Ballinderry,
'Tis pretty to be in Aghalee,
'Tis prettier to be in bonny Rams Island
Sitting under an ivy tree.
Och hone! Och hone!
Och hone! Och hone!

2. Oh! That I was in little Rams Island!
Oh, that I was with Phely my di'mond:
He would whistle and I would sing,
'Till we would make
the whole island ring.
Och hone! Och hone!
Och hone! Och hone!

An old Irish Air, found in Bunting's Music of Ireland, 1840. I found it listed in the program for a London Gaelic League 1954 St. Patrick's Eve concert, including the words shown.



“Our unique programme-magazine “Guth na nGaedheal,” has a wider circulation than any other Gaelic publication in London, and in addition to the St. Patrick’s Musical Festival programme and other interesting articles, it contains the complete words of all of the songs in the order in which they are to be sung...

“Advertisers are reminded that they may reserve space in this unique publication which has a LASTING circulation of 1,500 copies, very few of which are ever destroyed, at the low cost of £5 a full page, £3 a half page, and £1 15s for a quarter page.”

The Sheep-Shearing

1. How delightful to see,
in the evenings of spring,
The sheep going home to the fold,
The master doth sing,
as he views ev'rything,
And his dog goes before him as told.
And his dog goes before him as told.
2. The sixth month of the year,
in the month we call June,
When the weather's too hot to be borne,
The master doth say,
as he goes on his way,
"Tomorrow my sheep shall be shorn,
Tomorrow my sheep shall be shorn."
3. Now as for those sheep,
they're delightful to see,
They're a blessing to a man on his farm,
For their flesh it is good,
it's the best of all food,
And their wool it will clothe us up warm.
And their wool it will clothe us up warm.
4. Now the sheep they're all shorn,
and the wool carried home,
Here's a health to our master and flock,
And if we should stay,
till the last goes away,
I'm afraid 'twill be past twelve o'clock.
I'm afraid 'twill be past twelve o'clock.

Number 95 in Cecil Sharp's "One Hundred English Folk Songs" from 1916. The tune is better-known as "The Sweet Nightingale", but Sharp feels this tune predates it, going back to before 1760.

From Cecil Sharp: "The tune to which this song is set is, of course, that of "The Sweet Nightingale," a song that is known to almost every folksinger in the West Country. Bell, in his Ballads and Songs of the English Peasantry, prints the words, which he first heard from some Cornish miners at Marienberg and afterwards procured from a gentleman at Plymouth.

"I have collected several variants of "The Sweet Nightingale," and the singer of one of them casually remarked that the tune did not really belong to those words but to a sheep-shearing song. He went on to say that many years ago, when he was a boy, a very old man used to come to his cottage and sing this sheep-shearing song; and then he repeated to me the words of the first stanza, which were all that he could recall. Now the singer was a man of ninety years of age, so that the sheep-shearing song must, presumably, have been in existence before 1760."

Darling Nelly Gray

1. There's a low, green valley,
on the old Kentucky shore.
Where I've whiled many
happy hours away,
A-sitting and a-singing by the
little cottage door,
Where lived my darling Nelly Gray.

Chorus

Oh! my poor Nelly Gray,
they have taken you away,
And I'll never see my darling any more;
I'm sitting by the river and I'm
weeping all the day.
For you've gone from the
old Kentucky shore.

2. When the moon had climbed the
mountain and the
stars were shining too.
Then I'd take my darling Nelly Gray,
And we'd float down the river in my
little red canoe,
While my banjo sweetly I would play.

3. One night I went to see her, but
"She's gone!" the neighbors say.
The white man bound her with his chain;
They have taken her to Georgia for to
wear her life away,
As she toils in the cotton and the cane.

4. My canoe is under water,
and my banjo is unstrung;
I'm tired of living any more;
My eyes shall look downward,
and my song shall be unsung
While I stay on the old Kentucky shore.

5. My eyes are getting blinded,
and I cannot see my way.
Hark! there's somebody
knocking at the door.
Oh! I hear the angels calling,
and I see my Nelly Gray.
Farewell to the old Kentucky shore.

Chorus to the last verse

Oh, my darling Nelly Gray,
up in heaven there they say,
That they'll never take you
from me any more.
I'm a-coming-coming-coming,
as the angels clear the way,
Farewell to the old Kentucky shore!

Per Wikipedia: "Darling Nelly Gray" is a 19th century anti-slavery ballad composed by Benjamin Hanby in 1856. It is written as from the point of view of an African-American male slave in Kentucky whose sweetheart has been taken away by slave-owners. The man mourns his beloved, who has been sold South to Georgia. He eventually dies and joins her in heaven. The song became popular in the years preceding the Civil War and helped promote support for the abolitionist cause.

'Tis Pretty To Be In Ballinderry

Mountain Dulcimer: D-A-dd and D-A-AA

Arrangement: Steve Smith
Old Irish Air

	D						A					D						D							
	'Tis	pret-ty to be in					Bal-	in-der-ry, 'Tis				pret-ty to be in													
Notes	D	F#	F#	G	A	-	F#	G	-	A	F#	D	D	F#	F#	G	A	-	F#						
D-A-dd	0	0	0	0	0		0	1		1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
	0	0	0	0	0		0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
	0	2	2	3	4	-	2	3	-	4	2	0	0	2	2	3	4	-	2						
D-A-AA	0	0	0	0	0		0	4		4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
	0	0	0	0	0		0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
	3	5	5	6	7	-	5	6	-	7	5	3	3	5	5	6	7	-	5						

	A				D					D						A					D					
	Ag-	ha-lee,			'Tis	pret-tier to be in				bon-ny Rams Is-					land,											
	G	-	A	F#	-	A	A	F#	D	D	-	D	G	F#	G	A	-	B								
	1		1	0		0	0	0	0	0		0	1	1	1	0		0	0	0	0	0				
	0		0	0		0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0				
	3	-	4	2	-	4	4	2	0	0	-	0	3	2	3	4	-	5								
	4		4	0		0	0	0	0	0		0	4	4	4	0		0	0	0	0	0				
	0		0	0		0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0				
	6	-	7	5	-	7	7	5	3	3	-	3	6	5	6	7	-	8								

	D						Em		D			D												
	Sit-ting un-der an						i-vy		tree.			Och hone!												
	A	F#	D	D	E	D	E	-	E	D	-	-	D	-	-	F#	-	-						
	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		1	0			0			0			0	0	0	0		
	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		1	0			0			0			0	0	0	0		
	4	2	0	0	1	0	1	-	1	0	-	-	7	-	-	2	-	-						
	0	0	0	0	0	0	5		5	0			0			0			0	0	0	0		
	0	0	0	0	0	0	4		4	0			0			0			0	0	0	0		
	7	5	3	3	4	3	4	-	4	3	-	-	10	-	-	5	-	-						

	A			D			D			A			D											
	Och			hone!			Och			hone!			Och			hone!								
	E	-	-	D	-	-	D	-	-	F#	-	-	E	-	-	D	-	-						
	1			0			0			0			1			0			0	0	0	0		
	0			0			0			0			0			0			0	0	0	0		
	1	-	-	0	-	-	7	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	0	-	-						
	4			0			0			0			4			0			0	0	0	0		
	0			0			0			0			0			0			0	0	0	0		
	4	-	-	3	-	-	10	-	-	5	-	-	4	-	-	3	-	-						

Mountain Dulcimer: D-A-dd and D-A-AA

Arrangement: Steve Smith
English

D													
How de-		light-ful to see						In the eve-nings in spring, The					
Notes	A A	D D A D	-	D E	F# F# E F#	-	A F#						
D-A-dd	0 0	0 0 0 0	-	0 0	0 0 0 0	-	0 0	0 0 0 0	-	0 0			
		0 0		0 1	2 2 1 2		4 2						
D-A-AA	0 0	0 0 0 0	-	0 0	0 0 0 0	-	0 0	0 0 0 0	-	0 0			
		0 0		0 0	0 0 0 0		0 0	0 0 0 0		0 0			
		3 3		3 4	5 5 4 5		7 5						

D						A						D						A											
sheep go-ing home to the												fold.						The mas-ter doth sing						As he					
D	F#	A	A	G	F#	E	-	-	-	-	F#	G	A	G	F#	G	-	F#	G										
0	0	0	0	0	0	1					1	1	0	0	0	1		1	1										
0	0	0	0	0	0	0					0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0										
0	2	4	4	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	2	3	4	3	2	3	-	2	3										
0	0	0	0	0	0	4					4	4	0	0	0	4		4	4										
0	0	0	0	0	0	0					0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0										
3	5	7	7	6	5	4	-	-	-	-	5	6	7	6	5	6	-	5	6										

D						A						D						A											
views ev-'ry												thing,						And his						dog goes be-fore him as					
A	D	E	A	-	A	A	D	D	E	F#	G	B																	
0	0	0	1		1	1	0	0	0	1	1	3																	
0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0																	
4	0	1	-		0	0	0	0	1	2	3	5																	
0	0	0	1		1	1	0	0	0	4	4	4																	
0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0																	
7	3	4	0	-	0	0	3	3	4	5	6	8																	

D						D						A						D											
told.												And his						dog goes be-fore him as						told.					
A	-	-	-	-	G	F#	D	F#	A	G	C#	C#	D	-	-	-	-												
0					0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0																
0					0	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	0																
4	-	-	-	-	3	2	0	2	4	3			0	-	-	-	-												
0					0	0	0	0	0	4	4	4	0																
0					0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0																
7	-	-	-	-	6	5	3	5	7	6	2	2	3	-	-	-	-												

⇒ **SEPTEMBER 2026**

Darling Nelly Gray

Mountain Dulcimer: D-A-dd and D-A-AA

Arrangement: Steve Smith
Benjamin Russell Hanby, 1856

	D	G	D	Em	A
Notes	F# G	A - A B A F# E D	G A B C#D - C#B	A - A A B A F# D	E - - - - -
D-A-dd	0 0 0 0 2 3	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 4 - 4 5 4 2 1 0	3 3 5 5 5 5 5 3 3 6 6 6 6 6 3 4 5 6+7 - 6+5	0 0 0 0 0 1 1 0 0 0 0 0 1 1 4 - 4 4 5 4 2 0	1 0 1 - - - - -
D-A-AA	0 0 0 0 5 6	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 7 - 7 8 7 5 4 3	7 7 7 7 7 7 7 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 7 8 9 10 - 9 8	0 0 0 0 0 5 5 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 7 - 7 7 8 7 5 3	4 0 4 - - - - -

	D	G	D	A	D	A	D
Notes	F# G	A A A B A F# E D	G A B C#D - C#B	A - F# A A G E C#	D - - - - -		
D-A-dd	1 1 0 0 2 3	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 4 4 4 5 4 2 1 0	3 3 5 5 5 5 5 3 3 6 6 6 6 6 3 4 5 6+7 - 6+5	0 0 0 1 1 1 1 0 0 0 2 2 2 2 4 - 2 4 4 3 1	0 1 0 0 0 0 0 - 0 - 0 -		
D-A-AA	4 4 0 0 5 6	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 7 7 7 8 7 5 4 3	7 7 7 7 7 7 7 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 7 8 9 10 - 9 8	0 0 0 4 4 1 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 7 - 5 7 7 6 4 2	0 1 0 0 0 0 3 - 3 - 3 -		

	G	D	G	Em	A
Notes	E F#	G - G G G - A G	G F#F#F#F# - F# G	A A A A B A F# D	E - - - - -
D-A-dd	0 0 0 0 1 2	0 0 0 0 0 0 1 1 1 1 1 1 3 - 3 3 3 - 4 3	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 3 2 2 2 2 - 2 3	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 1 1 4 4 4 4 5 4 2 0	1 1 1 0 1 - - - 1 -
D-A-AA	0 0 0 0 4 5	7 7 7 7 7 7 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 - 6 6 6 - 7 6	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 6 5 5 5 5 - 5 6	0 0 0 0 0 5 5 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 7 7 7 7 8 7 5 3	5 4 4 4 4 - - - 4 -

	D	G	D	A	D	A	D
Notes	F# G	A A A B A F# E D	G A B C#D - C#B	A - F# A A G E C#	D - - - - -		
D-A-dd	1 1 0 0 2 3	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 4 4 4 5 4 2 1 0	3 3 5 5 5 5 5 3 3 6 6 6 6 6 3 4 5 6+7 - 6+5	0 0 0 1 1 1 1 0 0 0 2 2 2 2 4 - 2 4 4 3 1	0 1 0 0 0 0 0 - 0 - 0 -		
D-A-AA	4 4 4 4 5 6	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 7 7 7 8 7 5 4 3	7 7 7 7 7 7 7 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 7 8 9 10 - 9 8	0 0 0 4 4 1 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 7 - 5 7 7 6 4 2	0 1 0 0 0 0 3 - 3 - 3 -		



Western North Carolina
Dulcimer Collective
c/o Steve Smith
607 East Blue Ridge Road
East Flat Rock, NC 28726

MEETING DATES

July 12, 2026

August 9, 2026

September 13, 2026

MEETING LOCATION/TIME

Second Sunday of each month from 2:30-5:00 at
The Folk Art Center Upstairs Gallery, Blue Ridge Parkway, Asheville

The Folk Art Center is located on the Blue Ridge Parkway at Milepost 382, about 1/2 mile North of US 70, just East of Asheville. Take I-40 Exit 55 to Highway 70, then left to the Parkway, or take I-240 Exit 7 and go East on Highway 70 to the Parkway. The Club meets in the upstairs gallery, across from the top of the ramp as you enter the Folk Art Center.

Handicapped Access is available: From Highway 70, go West from the Parkway just past the VA Medical Center to Riceville Road. Go to the Folk Art Center Service Entrance. A ramp leads to a second floor entrance next to where we set up.