

FRONT PORCH STRING BAND



LINES & TRACES

FRONT PORCH STRING BAND

LINES & TRACES

REB-CD-1689

- 1 - **HARD TIMES** (2:23)
(Stephen Foster - P. D.)
- 2 - **I FOUND YOU** (2:01)
(Claire Lynch)
- 3 - **NATCHEZ TRACE** (2:47)
(Pierce Pettis)
- 4 - **LOOKS LIKE RAIN** (2:17)
(Karen Staley)
- 5 - **MEDLEY: NEW YORK TO DIXIE**
(4:37)
Welcome To New York
(Bill Emerson)
Breakin' It Down
(Emerson-Lawson)
Sweet Dixie (Emerson-Martin)
- 6 - **KENNESAW LINE** (4:36)
(Don Oja-Dunnaway)

CLAIRE LYNCH - Guitar, Lead & Background Vocals
LARRY LYNCH - Mandolin, Fiddle, Guitar, Bouzouki, &
Background Vocals
ANDY MEGINNISS - Bass, Lead & Background Vocals
HERB TROTMAN - Banjo & Guitar
GUESTS: JIM CONNOR - Harmonica
BOBBY HORTON - Dobro

- 7 - **HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO
RIDE THIS TRAIN** (2:15)
(Don Singleton)
- 8 - **IN YOUR EYES** (2:27)
(Crow Johnson)
- 9 - **SOME MORNING SOON** (3:27)
(Claire & Larry Lynch)
- 10 - **HOME FOLKS** (2:50)
(Carl Jackson)
- 11 - **KEMP'S JIG** (1:17)
(Traditional - P. D.)
- 12 - **WILL YOU BE LONESOME, TOO**
(2:46) (Alton Delmore)
- 13 - **WHERE DEAR FRIENDS WILL
NEVER PART** (2:14) (Keith Little)

Produced By: **LARRY & CLAIRE LYNCH**
Recorded At: **SOUND CELL RECORDING STUDIO
HUNTSVILLE, AL**
Engineer: **DOUG SMITH**
Second Engineer: **HERSHEY REEVES**
Photography By: **DENNIS KEIM - HUNTSVILLE, AL**
Makeup By: **GLORIA HESTER**
Preparation Of Compact Disc Master By: **DAVID
GLASSER - AIRSHOW, INC. - SPRINGFIELD, VA**
Art Direction & Design By: **REBECCA HAY PITTARD**
Production Coordinator: **GARY B. REID**



Back in the late '70's at many of the bluegrass festivals in the southeast, particularly in Florida, Georgia and Alabama, there was one band, a progressive bluegrass band from Alabama, that always had a choice spot on the program, always drew the largest crowd in from the parking lot to hear them, always commanded the attention of the other performers and almost always received an encore, especially for their late night sets. That band was the Front Porch String Band. There was a magic about their music that has held people in thrall to them for years. Underground tapes of their live shows circulated among musicians and fans alike because there wasn't enough recorded music to satisfy. When the band stopped touring in 1981, their faithful followers refused to believe the magic was gone for good. "We'll wait," they said. And they waited. For ten years they waited. And now, the wait is over. The faithful have been rewarded. The magic is back and, as Claire Lynch says, "... better now than it ever was."

The Front Porch String Band was formed in 1975 by a group of students at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. Larry Lynch, who now plays mandolin, fiddle, guitar and bouzouki, is the only original member left. Claire joined a few years later as lead vocalist and for three years FPSB developed their sound as the house band at the Oak Street Banjo Parlor in Birmingham. Until 1981, when the band took a hiatus for Claire and Larry to start their family, they carried their music across the country, living out of their van, playing festivals, clubs and ski resorts and making a lasting impression on everyone who saw them. Though the band members changed from time to time, Claire and Larry remained constant, the cornerstones and lifeblood of the band.

Today's incarnation of the Front Porch String Band still features Claire and Larry Lynch. The band's sound is built around Claire's mellifluous voice, which she seems to use effortlessly. Since the release of her solo album, "Breakin' It," in 1981, she has come to the attention of record-makers in Nashville and has sung backup for several country music artists. She is also a gifted song writer and has had her songs recorded by Kathy Mattea and Patty Loveless. Two of her songs appear on this recording. Larry Lynch, who keeps a lower profile vocally, usually singing baritone or bass, is the man behind the band's sound and direction. His rhythmic, woody mandolin chop propels the band and his swing influenced mandolin leads define the style of the band instrumentally. In the band's early years Larry began to teach himself fiddle and could frequently be seen at late night picking parties practicing his chops. He has developed into a fine, strong fiddle player which adds another dimension to their music. Larry is also primarily responsible for the striking, distinctive arrangements of the songs they perform. His latest accomplishment has been learning to play the bouzouki and he is very interested in Irish and Celtic music.

Andy Meginniss is the third member of the vocal trio, singing harmony or lead and also playing bass. Andy played with the popular Birmingham bluegrass/folk group “Three On A String” for 13 years before joining FPSB in December 1986. Andy does a lot of the M.C. work on their live shows and always leaves the crowd laughing with his comedy numbers.

Banjo player Herb Trotman, who also plays guitar, has been a mainstay in Alabama bluegrass for years. For 15 years he has owned and operated Fretted Instruments, an acoustic music store in Birmingham. Before joining FPSB in 1984, he played and recorded with the Spaulding Brothers. Herb’s melodic style of banjo playing is the perfect complement to Larry’s mandolin playing and he shows his versatility by occasionally finger-picking the guitar.

Through the years, no matter who has been doing the picking, FPSB has remained true to the sound that the public has come to love and expect. Their philosophy is “when you have a formula that works, you don’t stray.” This new collection of tunes, from a variety of sources, all have that vintage FPSB sound.

Stephen Foster’s “*Hard Times*” is perhaps not one of his best known songs but is fast becoming so. It lends itself particularly well to this bluegrassy arrangement. Mr. Foster himself couldn’t help but approve. He would probably find himself tapping his toes and singing along with this catchy version.

“*I Found You*” is an inspirational love song written by Claire—one of the two original tunes on this recording.

Claire says she had to PUSH to get “*Natchez Trace*” on this project. This haunting song about Mississippi from Pierce Pettis makes you feel the sultry, hot emotions of that dark, wild place.

Claire first met Karen Staley, the author of “*Looks Like Rain*,” when she sang on Karen’s debut album with MCA. They have been friends ever since. Ms. Staley is still active in Nashville as a songwriter/performer.

“*New York To Dixie*” is a medley of three Bill Emerson banjo tunes—“Welcome To New York,” “Breakin’ It Down,” and “Sweet Dixie”—arranged for the band by Herb Trotman. It provides an excellent showcase for Herb’s banjo playing as well as Larry’s mandolin and fiddle playing.

“*Kennesaw Line*,” written by Don Dunnaway, is a true song based on the diary of Sam Watkins, a Confederate soldier from Maury County, Tennessee. It tells of an Indian

legend that says if you hear the sound of the whippoorwill on the eve of battle, you know it is your time to die. This battle took place in Marietta, Georgia, at the Kennesaw Line.

"How Much Does It Cost . . ." was written by Memphis songwriter Don Singleton to whom we're grateful for providing the "proverbial train song" every bluegrass project needs. Andy sings lead on this one with Claire and Larry providing the harmony.

"In Your Eyes," which Claire first heard many years ago on a recording by singer-songwriter Michael Johnson, was written by Michael's sister, Crow Johnson. The FPSB is happy to have this opportunity to finally record it.

"Some Morning Soon" was written about 13 years ago by Claire and Larry but was never performed by the band until recording artist Patty Loveless took an interest in it for her 1990 "On Down the Line" release on MCA records. Claire does her own magnificent job here.

Andy Meginniss sings Carl Jackson's **"Homefolks"** for a homespun, rural flavor. Claire and Larry add the harmony.

"Kemp's Jig," a traditional tune with an Irish flavor, played by Herb on guitar and Larry on bouzouki, gives you an idea of Larry's musical direction right now. As this tantalizing arrangement fades out and you strain to hear those last few notes, you realize that the Front Porch String Band has done it again. They have left you longing for more.

Alton Delmore, of the Delmore Brothers from Alabama, wrote **"Will You Be Lonesome Too."** This song is an old favorite of the FPSB and answers their desire to include a traditionally flavored song in this project.

"Where Dear Friends Will Never Part" almost qualifies as a gospel number, with its last line "there is room for all of us in heaven . . .". But its primary focus is lost love: "There'll be time for sadness when you leave me . . .". This love song with gospel overtones was written by Keith Little, a fine bluegrass singer/instrumentalist, who has played with both the Country Gentlemen and Ricky Skaggs.

Murphy Henry

SPECIAL THANKS . . .

. . . to our kids for their patience: Christie & Ben,
Bert & Sara, Kegan & Christy

. . . to Bob Saint - Huntsville, AL

. . . to dear friends for support: Heather & Tricia

. . . to Melissa Hutchins

. . . to Huntsville Depot Museum - Huntsville, AL



Larry Lynch • Claire Lynch • Andy Meginniss • Herb Trotman