

The Magic Bedroom

Rusthall Records: MBRRCD03

Sleeve Notes

(expanded in places for this web site edition)

Last Updated: 2007-03-03

Full credits appear on the back cover and the CD facing page

The 'Introduction to the Series', added here as a postscript, explains the mixed programming nature of these CDs. Total time = 63 mins, 25 secs.

1. **The Magic Bedroom** - 4.55 - Copyright Control (Bringloe)

Chorus:

"... And there's Pooh Bear sitting in the corner, with his arm around Looby-Loo,
All My soldiers are there on the Window-sill, lined up two-by-two,
I've got toy cars, an aeroplane and lots of games, and a train set my Uncle gave to me,
And when I'm all alone in my Bedroom, there's nothing that I can't be"

Some years after his children had 'flown' their bedrooms [Dave Bringloe](#) wondered what pretend-games and other imaginings they devised. In this charming piece he conjures up some magical images. Bognor Regis (Royal Bognor) is a small resort on the Sussex coast made especially famous by the very last words of King George Vth. "Bother Bognor" wasn't *exactly* his rejoinder to the promise of a convalescence there...! [Alice Kinloch](#) expertly articulates the arrangement for trombone & tuba.

2. **Gilderoy** - 4.38 - Public Domain

Roy Harris, in his book English Country Songs 1979 wrote; "...freebooters such as Gilderoy were heartily detested by the common folk because of their ruthlessness and rapacity...in July 1636 he was executed in Edinburgh...there are similarities with the much recorded tale 'Geordie' / Georgie": yet those close to him are extra-ordinarily forgiving, a strict Puritan mores being then in the ascendant some 300 years before the permissive post-1950s, although the last verse tells of the need to take precautions at his funeral! In the first verse his dishevelled appearance includes being carelessly "...garter-ed below his knee". [Paulette](#) learned the song from a 'Topic' L.P.record 'For As Many Who Will', by Shirley & Dolly Collins, their informant indirectly being Henry Burstow of Horsham, Sussex. I tried to replicate Dolly's introduction & 'returns', but otherwise the piano part was improvised whilst recording.

3. **Two Brothers** - 3.17 - Harbourn Music

It's doubtful that political diplomacy could be informed by [Pete Morton's](#) moving resolution of a seemingly intractable conflict, but perhaps this profound insight incorporates foresight too. I understand that the author feels that the well-spring for the situation in part may be the separation of Abraham & Sarah's son Isaac & his half-brother when Ishmael was aged around thirteen. The allegorical mood is caught well by [John & Di Cullen](#).

4. **Long, Long 100 Years** - 2.35 - © Nebel 2006 / Copyright Control

[Steve Nebel's](#) grandmother, as a 3-year-old in 1888, took part in that famous westward migration from the Mid-West to the Pacific coastline of the U.S.A. She grew up "dirt poor" in a log cabin in Washington State amidst other small farms, in primitive conditions. So, in addition to the extra-ordinary and bewildering changes she saw, in common with others of her Time, there must have been a special welcome for 'mod cons' like indoor

plumbing. Mind you, back then, she had the non-materialistic solace of unspoilt countryside and the bless-ed silence of virgin forests.

5. Autumn Leaves - 4.50 - i) Sacem ii) Peter Maurice Music

Entitled 'Dead Leaves' in the original French, this popular piece has only one stanza, but the one verse captures the mood of Autumn, with its dying fall, well enough in both languages, so you suppose that the author knew when to stop. [Tom's](#) piano solo is sufficiently complex harmonically to hide the simple 'Circle of 5ths' of the harmonic sequence, but he takes this much further in his solo which is in extemporised Free Form. [Tony Bye](#) did well to choose the right place to start the reprise... there aren't any hints when exactly the vocalist is invited to come in again - as far as I can hear.

6. The Dreadnought - 3.50 - Public Domain

A.L. Lloyd writes (on the L.P. sleeve to 'A Sailor's Garland', Prestige Int. U.S.A., 1960s) "... the Blackball Line was the most famous of these passenger & packet Lines working the Western Ocean (Atlantic) trade route under sail... flying a crimson swallow-tail flag with a black ball at its centre.... voyage-schedules tight, discipline unmerciful". This is one of the songs sung for fun on board ship or elsewhere ('forebitters' to the seamen), sharing a title with a capstan shanty (worksong): "...There once was a Blackball ship / That 14 knots an hour could slip..." The Rock Light is a lighthouse in the Mersey estuary. The tune is also used on CD 1 of this Series, but here the [Johnson sisters](#) provide the instrumental engine room with some teenage oomph. [Paul Barter's](#) voice is well known locally for his work in Light Opera and for Church choirs. The mid-way dance interlude is an idea taken from the song 'New Scotland' on the Rogues in Rosin cassette 'Awake at Midnight'.

7. Dumb Me Down - 3.53 - Copyright Control (Stepo)

[Paul Stepo](#) produces a range of topics (see Track 20 & CDs 2 & 4) but he is notable to me as one who can identify, pin down and deflate the questionable not to say sickening modern form of 'political correctness', that credo of an ignorant yet 'holier than thou' section of public opinion-formers dominant in the Press, House of Commons, Education and Liberal Theology for the last 40 years. Stepo suggests, by association of ideas, that an 180 degree volte-face might remove our post-1960s mania for mediocrity and insidious liberalism in English goings-on, all this with a swing (...well, with a 'Rock').

8. Dialogue from the film 'A Canterbury Tale' - 1.45 - Non-Musical Work

An excerpt from a Michael/Emeric Pressburger film, who are known to film-buffs for their work in the period c.1936-1945. I was glad to persuade [Steve Nebel](#), & elsewhere his wife, to record for the Label following their appearance at the Beacon Folk and Song-writing club recently (see Tracks 4 & 14). They hail from Seattle, Washington State, and were on their 4th working tour of the U.K.

9. Turn the Lathe Gently - 3.40 - Albino Music

At the outset of the song, it seems that it's going to be a case of 'Woodman, Spare that tree', but, Ashley Hutchings turns a frown-ey start into a charmer. Messers [Sutton](#), [Ball F.](#), and [Bringloe](#) support [Paulette Sheard's](#) alto voice. The tune used, 'Sweet England', is from the Appalachian Mountains in the Eastern U.S.A. Items 8 & 9 were featured on 'Sway With Me', a 'Talking Elephant' CD produced by Judy Dunlop & Mr. (The Guv'nor) Hutchings and which celebrated The Tree in all its diversity of flora & fauna.

10. The Oggy Man's No More – 2.29 – Gwyneth Music Ltd

A 'Tiddy-Oggy' is the Plymouth, South Devon and Cornish word for a Potato-Pastie, usually containing 'skirt (a cut of stewing steak) and 'swede'. The Cornish side of my family make Pasties / Oggies with a variety of fillings to use up leftovers, including Jam, as an economy measure. Oggy (Okey, Wooky) is Old-Cornish for a tin mine, the miners having savoury and sweet pasties as their mid-shift vittles. Cyril Tawney says 'To generations of Devonport Sailors, the 'Oggy Man', a lone vendor of Pasties, from his humble pitch outside a Dockyard (Albert) Gate, was a minor institution... as long as there was a Royal Navy, there would be an Oggy Man, it seemed. In the 1950s, hot-dog stands, also selling Oggies, sprouted up on the bomb sites opposite, and he was forced out of business. In the song, the Sergeant of Dockyard Police explains what has happened to the puzzled and now jilted sailor... [Tony Bye's](#) guitar work, technically difficult to sustain for 2 ½ minutes, emulates the sound of softly-falling rain. Tony Bye is a leading Rock & Blues specialist in the Kent and Sussex area, and I am glad that he has lent his vocal talents to this Series. Cyril was a submariner in the 1950s as was Tony's Grandfather in W.W.1. and after.

11. London Julie – 2.14 – Public Domain

The American and British 'Shanties' of the 19th Century have much in common (also with the shanties of the North Sea Port, Hamburg, the 'English' City of Germany). [Malcolm Ward](#) tells me that Roy Harris found a fragment of this Shanty in a library in the U.S.A., possibly in Philadelphia, to which he added verses of his own from the Shanty tradition.

12. The Rambling Soldier – 2.42 – Public Domain

As with the "wry & saucy 'Trim-Rigged Doxie' with its swinging and mixolydian tune..." (A.L.L.) on CD 2 [Michael Wilkinson](#) communicates this ditty with the relish and rakishness it calls for, though this time the tale is told by 'Tommy Atkins', rather than 'Jack the Lad' and the air is in the plainer Ionian mode. This soldierly version of related songs is the older according to the Folklore scholar, the late A.L. Lloyd.

13. Rogues in Rosin Tribute – 3.51 – Public Domain

[Tom Ball](#) and I have this medley of traditional dance tunes, Tulley met, Papillon & Harley's Reel, from a recording by the eponymous duo, playing violins, viola and piano. Messers Cook and Blakeley brought an imaginative- and to us a new - way of providing keyboard accompaniment to Country Dance tunes. Learning these by ear from their cassette 'Awake At Midnight' we replicate their brilliant performance as well as we are able...!

14. Papa Comin' Home – 3.48 – © Nebel 2006 / Copyright Control

During a previous tour of the U.K., [Kristi & Steve Nebel](#) stayed with Rita Mawson, of Consett, Co. Durham. Her father was a coal miner, and though not a lazy man, would often find an excuse not to go down the mine that day. Many years later her puzzlement came to an end when, meeting a videographer making a documentary about local mining, she discovered that her father's father was killed in an explosion. He would have been aware of the horrifying scenes of corpses and dismemberment, via photographs.

15. Christmas Night Shift at the Post Office – 1.34 – Copyright Control (Ball)

At the "Christmas Pressure" season, sorting offices have many inexperienced, temporary, young staff, and so line-managers / charge-hands, feel they need to extinguish jokiness and laughter, even when staff are carrying out purely physical jobs for hours and hours on end, e.g. postbag tipping. I whiled away such repetitive jobs by formulating ditties, e.g. The Tipper's Shanty, Rock Around The Dock, Little Sally Packet, etc. This performance is dedicated to Charge-hand Claire Mill-er, who liked the pun. The tune is from the anonymous W.W.1. & W.W.2. songs 'I Want To Go Home' & 'Bless 'Em All'.

16. Sea Fever – 1.52 – Stainer & Bell

There are hundreds of worthy poems to do with the sea. This is a deservedly famous example by John Masefield (who went ‘under sail’ himself) to John Ireland’s setting, sung by my late sister Elaine’s son, [Alex Tyler](#), who fitted in a recording session in-between dashing around the world’s dangerous spots as a Refugee Advisor for the United Nations. His local credentials include having been head choirboy at our Rusthall Parish Church.

17. Sonatine / Bourrée – 1.41 – Public Domain

A late-in-the-album intermezzo, brief Baroque pieces by jolly George Handel. A Bourrée was a vigorous C. 18th dance in 2/4 time, and the [Johnson sisters](#) & self do it ‘full steam ahead’.

18. Where Did I Go Wrong? – 2.05 – Copyright Control (Kirk)

[Di Cullen](#) has a flare for such tongue-in-the-cheek ditties, this wag-ish, hen-pecking chanty being by an American, Annette Kirk.

19. The Business Man and the Civil Servant - 3.51 - Copyright Control (Ball)

The precursor of my updated lyric is ‘The Husband and the Serving Man’ where the former extols the virtues of animal husbandry and the outdoor life on the Ducal Estate, whilst the Butler / Valet warms to the perks of Service inside the ‘Big House’. It was published in Lucy Broadwood’s English County Songs in the mid-1800s and was recorded by the A Capella trio ‘The Young Tradition’ in the 1960s. From the outset, 1982, I prepared alternate couplets for the references to Margaret Thatcher but 24 years later I can’t see that mettlesome lady being forgotten for a while: yet the Civil Servant’s boast, that “...Politicians prance & prate but it’s / We who guide the Ship of State...” seems less jokey, taking on a sinister even totalitarian aspect, as in the exponential increase and severity of Governmental legislation cancelling our historic constitutional liberties in favour of State-ism. (In the years 1997-2006, around 1300 Regulations and, by the Home Office alone, 50 Acts of Parliament.) “...Only fly the Flag and beat the drum / It follows that Trade will come...” recalls a business tour of northern New South Wales in the 1960s. As I drove away from Dubbo on my way to Burke-in-the-Bush, I espied the British High Commissioner standing on what looked suspiciously like a soap-box in an outdoor paddock on the outskirts of the township. His task was to extol the virtues of the U.K. / Australian connection to a group of locals who had the air of having been volunteered for this duty. I’ve had an especial regard for the work of Ambassadors from that moment! Freddy Laker was the first to challenge the cartel-like privileges of National Airlines with cheap flights, was a success for a while, but they ‘got him’ in the end. Thanks to [Paul Barter](#) for taking on this song-dialogue at short notice.

20. I’m a Cat - 2.59 - Copyright Control (Stepto)

Sometimes when [Paul Stepto](#) performs this in public the audience is required to miaow and purr.

Rusthall Records Mixed Programming Series

| | | |
|----------|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| MBRRCD01 | Bombers and Other Modern Story Songs | June 2005 |
| MBRRCD02 | Just On The Threshold | May 2006 |
| MBRRCD03 | The Magic Bedroom | November 2006 |
| MBRRCD04 | The Holy & The Horrible | June 2007 |
| MBRRCD05 | Nothing Obvious | Winter 2007 / 08 |
| MBRRCD06 | One Mile From Home | Spring 2008 |
| MBRRCD07 | English Popular Song | t.b.a. |

Sample clips, notes, ordering, etc:

Whole tracks (4 only but a changing content):

E-mail:

www.mikeball.org.uk

www.myspace.com/bullatagate

michaelball38@btinternet.com

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Also...

BAGRRCD01 Pulse Therapy (RR Modern Jazz Trio/Quartet /Quintet Series) May 2006
Trio Web Site: www.tomball.co.uk
E-mail: tomball@doctors.org.uk
jazzwonderboy@hotmail.com

This CD is dedicated to Gray and Helen Cooper, Sound Engineer and Photo-Artist respectively, of Holland Road Studio, Maidstone, Kent.

INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES

The decision to see our first RR CD, Bombers, as the first of a series, rather than a 'once-and-for-all', grew from the striking thought that for years we had been making music at venues within one mile from our house- with an extraordinarily large number of talented amateurs for such a tiny area, the village suburb of Rusthall being a 'neighbourhood extraordinaire' to that degree. The folk music and songwriting club at the Beacon Bar and Restaurant, the Parish Church Services and Concerts, the local pubs, the vehicle repair garage if work is slack, at homes including our own, in all, providing a diversity of artistic enterprise and self-entertainment amounting to a rich musical, literary, choral and (through the availability of Cranmer's Prayer Book occasionally) liturgical culture close at hand. It was time to mark this happy situation, hence the seven Titles listed at the end of the sleeve notes. In addition to the 36-strong choir on CD 2, over 30 of the named performers are in the 'one mile from home' category having made music within this Parish, the village suburb of Rusthall, in my presence.

Tom Ball has begun his own series of Modern Jazz recordings, also under the Rusthall Records label, but our joint productions feature both the range of personnel mentioned above and a wide range of genres / styles of broadly popular melody and song, and 'nothing obvious'.

This is the 'Mixed Programming' approach explained and perhaps justified in the note to MBRRCD01 'Bombers'.

Summarising:

- i) amateurs especially, although having their specialisations of genre / repertoire, do not feel confined by them (this being particularly true for audiences in the continent of Europe and North America) but by studying and respecting the different techniques and interpretive demands can achieve acceptable results. So at the 'Folk' club, where although classic folk-song, acoustic music and new writing are the basis, floor-singers are welcome to what music-making they will, which in the last year has meant Community sing-song, commercial 'Pop', Church Anthem, C&W, Blues, Art song, much comic song, recitations, with the electric keyboard taking its place among the more usual acoustic instruments. So too the Anglican tradition of anthems and hymns, chanted psalms and canticles, versicles and responses, is supplemented by church concerts when members of choir and congregation display their diverse tastes within the secular repertoire;
- ii) like the pre-1968 policy of BBC Radio, where you would be surprised by the appearance of programmes outside the norm on your favourite Station, the content of these CDs has something of the surprise factor, I hope.

M.R.B. December 06