



MUSICAL TRADITIONS OF SOUTH DORCHESTER, by Bill Foxwell, 4 November 2009

This South Dorchester Folk Museum program presents Bill Foxwell and friends to give you a little history of the local musicians and to play and sing some of the old traditional songs. This is the music that was played years ago by the different musical groups of South Dorchester...and it is still played today. These musicians were watermen, boat builders, farmers, carpenters and etc., 99% of them were self-taught and could not read music. They played by ear. In other words, they played it like they heard it, the same way we do today. Some of the groups were:

- ! **From Hoopers Island:** *The Lonesome Valley Boys*: Julian Creighton, Douglas Tolley, Earl Newcomb, Bertcil Tyler, John Tolley, William Aaron, & Ivy Creighton
- ! **Wingate:** *Wingate Ramblers*: O'Neal Dean, Tom Dean & Charles Parks
- ! **Robbins:** *The Robbins Ramblers*: Joe Robbins, Grover Hastings, Harold Abbott, Betty Abbott, George Andrews & Campbell Robbins was their MC (at times)
- ! **Taylors Island:** Charles Willey
- ! **Madison:** *The Mills Brothers*: Raymond, Alfred & Henry Mills
- ! **Neck District:** *The Log Cabin Boys*: William Marshall, Roy Ruark, Neal Ruark, Curtis Warfield, Ed McGrath & Melvin Condon
- ! **Church Creek:** *The Newcomb Family*: Medford Newcomb, John Newcomb, Mildred Newcomb, & Bill Murphy (There were 9 children and all could sing and play)
- ! **Andrews:** *Rhythm Rangers*: George Andrews, Buddy Mowbray, Charles Blades, Darcy Harding, Alva Lee Henry, & Bruce Dean

Some of the musicians would make their instruments or they would buy one from Sears Roebuck or the Dixie Bargain Store in Cambridge. They sent to music publishers and bought song books, so they could learn the music. They also purchased song books from Dixie Bargain. And on Saturday night, they listened to the Grand Old Opera on the old battery operated radio. This is how they learned a lot of the songs, which were mostly country, blue grass and gospel. They played at the old country stores, barn dances, school programs, in churches and gathered to play music in each other's home. Many of them played on the local radio station in Cambridge on Saturday mornings.

**PLEASE NOTE: For technical reasons the video and sound quality of this DVD (Number 85) are not up to the best standards. An encore presentation by Bill Foxwell and Friends was performed and recorded on 1 June 2011 . The DVD is available as Number 96 and the video and sound quality are excellent.**