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Susan Pepper

Hollerin' Girl

BR102

"Hollerin' Girl" is a celebration of the joy that old-time music brings into our lives. I remember when I was a girl and first experienced a square dance in our neighborhood. I cried when it ended knowing it would be another year until the next dance. What I didn't know then was that I had a caught a wonderful thing, the old-time "bug"! Homespun music—even the sad tunes and lamenting ballads—has a way of making us feel full and alive, even in tough times.

This album was recorded live in my family's living room in the early days of 2013 while the snow was falling and my baby was getting ready to enter the world. Thank you Hubbard for being such a huge, little motivating force.

Profound thanks to Dale Farmer for embracing this project with passion and dedication and to Jonathan Bradshaw for encouraging it in every way. A heartfelt thanks to Warren Waldron, Judy Waldron and Amy Clay. My gratitude to Hazel Rhymer, Zora Walker, Pearl Hicks and Rick Ward.

For my Mom,
who serenaded her Daddy's cows with her accordion
and who has always hollered out for others.

Susan Pepper, a Cincinnati native, is a ballad singer, songwriter and multi-instrumentalist who has spent time in the Blue Ridge Mountains collecting old songs and exploring Appalachian music traditions. Her original songs are often inspired by mountain stories and scenes.

All songs traditional except 1, Written by Tab Ward, used with permission, and 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 15 © Susan Pepper.
All tracks played and sung by Susan Pepper except: Amy Clay (vh)- 8, 15; Judy Waldron (g)- 2, 8, 15, (vh)- 8, 15; Warren Waldron (f)- 8, 11, 14, 15; Susan and Warren (f), Dale Farmer (g), Amy Clay (b), Jonathan Bradshaw (v)- 12.
Recorded and mixed by Dale Farmer.
Produced by Susan Pepper and Dale Farmer.
Design and illustrations by Sara Lynch-Thomason of FullSteamLabs (fullsteamlabs.com).
Photo on back © Joe Young.
Old photos courtesy of Zora Walker.

Batchin' on the Farm (Tab Ward)
Tab Ward of Beech Mountain, NC wrote this song and his grandson, Rick Ward, taught it to me. I play it in their picking style, the "double knock", on a fretless mountain banjo.

John Henry (Trad.)
From the singing of Tab Ward in *The East Tennessee State University Collection of Folklore: Folksongs II*. This is a powerful legend of an African-American steel driver.

Pretty Fair Miss (Trad.)
This version of this beautiful ballad comes from a field recording of Tab Ward in the ETSU archives.

Pretty Polly (Trad.)
Learned from Pearl Hicks of Beech Mountain, NC who had a lovely singing voice.

Fair and Tender Ladies (Trad.)
Learned from Jean Ritchie's *Folk Songs of the Southern Appalachians*. I had the good fortune to see Jean perform twice when my interest in ballads was just budding.

Ballad of Vance Presnell (Susan Pepper)
Inspired from a photo of J. Vance Presnell in the *Watauga County Democrat* in which he appears standing (alive) in his handmade coffin. His epitaph reads: "It's all on me...I was just like you, you will soon be just like me."

Good Old Days in Forest Grove (Susan Pepper)
Inspired by a stream of memories that Willa Jean Ward shared with me about growing up in the mountains in the 1940s and 1950s. This one is for you Jean!

Hollerin' Girl (Susan Pepper)

Mermaid (Susan Pepper)
Because sometimes, we are blessed with second chances in life.

Pretty Crowin' Chicken (Trad.)
From Carrie Fridley's *Neighbor Girl* and Hattie Presnell on *The Traditional Music of Beech Mountain, NC Vol. 1*. Singing about chickens is good medicine, even if this is a ghost story!

O Sing to Me of Heaven (Trad.)
A Primitive Baptist hymn I heard from Pearl Hicks at Presnell's Chapel. I love the last verse, "let music charm me last on earth and greet me first in heaven."

Mars Hill (Susan Pepper)
Mars Hill is situated in Madison County, NC, an area with a lively ballad singing legacy. Jonathan hollers out some lyrics he came up with at the end of the tune.

The Old Man From the North Country (Trad.)
From Nancy Cody of Wolf Laurel, NC via her granddaughter, Hazel Rhymer, who sang it for me.

Shady Grove (Trad.)

Bury Me with My Fiddle (Susan Pepper)
Written in honor of Ora Watson of Isaacs Branch, NC, who danced and fiddled into her nineties. Isn't it nice to imagine a square dance up in heaven?

Tom Dooley (Trad.)
Based on the murder of Laurie Foster in Wilkes County, NC in 1866. This version from Tab and Rick Ward is close to how it might have sounded a long time ago.

Boy Sells Cow (Trad.)
From Zora Jenkins Walker of Bryson City, NC who learned it from her father Virge. Zora sang this fast and flawlessly.

The Riddle Song (Trad.)