

# MUSIC MAKER RAG

The Official Newsletter of the Music Maker Relief Foundation

FALL 2000



Macavine Hayes

© Tim Duffy

Music Maker Relief Foundation, Inc.  
Box 456 Pinnacle, NC 27940

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## Dear Friends,

I first walked into Guitar Gabriel's door in March of 1990. He took one look at me and said "Where you been so long? I know where you want to go. I've been there before and I can take you there." He led and I followed. Soon, Gabe and I were fixtures in the drink-houses of Winston-Salem. A few years passed as we performed at clubs and festivals throughout the Southeast. We were also able to travel to Europe a few times. When we were not performing, Guitar Gabriel and I were looking up the many old performers he knew.

Musicians such as Macavine Hayes, Mr. Q, Wills Mae Buckner, Guitar Gabriel and Captain Luke became my closest friends. They had all worked in show business, some for their whole lives, some just on weekends while holding a full-time day job. Every one of them had a great story and every story was different. Besides their love of music, they shared the constant struggle to make ends meet. Whether living on meager Social Security checks, or in Gabe's words, "singing songs of the times for nickels and dimes"; there was never enough money, even for the basics. I became deeply disturbed by the difficult choices they had to make each month: food or medicine, rent or the car, heat or the telephone. I dedicated myself to finding a way to help these artists and the many others I was beginning to meet.

I began to pick everyone up on check day in my old van and take them to the grocery store, to the post office to get money orders, then downtown to pay the utility bills and back home again. Every two months we would pick up



Tim and Denise Duffy  
Sylva, GA

© Tim Duffy

a number of these old entertainers and go stand in the cheese line to collect their commodities. It was a fascinating period of my life, complete immersion in a world not often seen by a young white guitar player.

I created an office in a small utility building behind the rental house Denise and I had in the back of a used car lot in Winston-Salem. From this tin shack I booked gigs and desperately tried to find recording deals for Gabe and the

others. I communicated with the world by hand-written postcards because I couldn't afford the long distance phone bills.

By 1993, I had figured out that the present day blues scene had very little to offer my friends so I began to reach out to a few family friends for help. I had lost my father to leukemia in 1986, but he was a great lover of music and fast friend to many. I began to make a few calls to those who had offered to help if I ever needed them. The first to respond was my dad's best friend, from Louisville, Kentucky, who sent a tractor-trailer to our small house, loaded with Enso, a nutritional drink which we gave to Gabe and Wills. It was a tremendous gift and kept these artists in good health.

Then, audio pioneer Mark Levinson returned a call. Mark was one of the few clients that my father, an attorney, had kept after he became ill. A few months before my father passed he had won a very significant case for Mark, which essentially retained his right to work in the hi-fi industry. I told Mark that I had been recording these incredible blues artists for years. He invited me to visit him.

So a few weeks later, in December of 1993, I visited his showroom in New York. Mark was stunned by my humble field recordings. As he listened to the music I began to tell him about the living conditions of these artists. He was moved and decided to help.

It was Mark who envisioned the non-profit and gave us the name Music Maker Relief Foundation. We worked without sleep for two weeks remastering and writing the notes for a compilation CD and booklet, "A Living Past." Mark began using the CD to demonstrate his audio system and ask people to contribute to the cause. Our first support came from the audiophile community. In January of 1994, I returned to North Carolina with a non-profit foundation and seed money.

With New York as our platform to the world and Mark Levinson as our advocate and spokesperson, there was soon a steady stream of interest and a small stream of donations coming in. In October of 1995 Mark met Eric Clapton at a bistro and shared the Foundation's story. Intrigued, Eric came to the studio a few weeks later and spent the afternoon listening to field recordings and talking about blues artists and the music. I had the great pleasure of recording a couple of guitar pieces with Eric. This meeting was a springboard for Music Maker to get the word out. We started getting press and meeting celebrities. Tower Records distributed our CDs in their NY stores and featured us in their listening stations. Meanwhile, we continued to find performance opportunities for the artists. Donations continued to grow

*continued on page 17*



Tim Duffy, Guitar Gabriel and Captain Luke - Atlanta, GA

© Krusse

*"Blues will never die because it is a spirit. It is an uplift and the way you feel it, that is the way it is. And it brings a lot of joy to people. Music is made to make happiness, make you smile and forget your troubles. In the Good Book its says to make a joyful noise. It doesn't say what kind of noise, just as long as you make one. So that is about the size of it. That is what we are trying to do."*

**- Guitar Gabriel**

*"Music Maker has been a blessing for me. When I was down and needed medicine and food, they got it for me. I have a bad leg and need to get around so they have kept me up with a good car. When we had that heat wave two summers ago they got me an air conditioner. All that is true, it's a great story."*

**- Captain Luke**



## Music Maker Programs

We offer assistance to recipient musicians through the following programs:

**Life Maintenance** - Grants for necessities such as food, medical needs, housing, etc.

**Instrument Acquisition** - Providing quality instruments and maintenance funds for recipient musicians.

**Tour Support** - Funding and services to musicians wishing to tour and record.

**Emergency Relief** - Substantial grants to recipients in crisis (medical, fire, theft, etc.).



Savory Blues, Beverly "Guitar" Watkins and Cootie Stark  
Northside Tavern, Atlanta, GA  
© Mark Auser

**Visiting Artist Program** - The Music Maker Relief Foundation is most effective when we focus intensive attention, aid and documentation efforts on an individual artist. With this in mind we are launching our new Visiting Artist Program. This program will bring artists to our base in Pinnacle, North Carolina, evaluate their needs and determine with the artist the best means of preserving and sharing their art and improving their lives. Furthermore, the program will help us continue to locate new artists, then provide grants and services for documentation through media (audio, video, still photography, etc.), travel assistance and performance opportunities.

The program was conceived due to the transformation we saw in Cootie Stark from Greenville, South Carolina. When Tim went to visit Cootie in 1996 he was terribly frustrated with his career. He was only performing shows at a local pizza parlor. Cootie was so disappointed from 50 years of playing on street corners and diners that he was ready to give his music up.

A few more visits revealed some unusual songs. Cootie had a wonderful set of previously unheard blues that he learned from older men such as Baby Tate, Uncle Chump, Pink Anderson, Peg Leg Howell, Simmie Doolie and John White. Never recorded, Cootie was the sole keeper of this historical archive of music. The Foundation provided Cootie with an acoustic guitar and urged him to practice this old material.

## Visiting Artist Program



Taj Mahal & Cootie Stark - Pinnacle, NC 1998

© Mark Austin

Cootie then began a series of extended visits to the Foundation headquarters in Pinnacle. He played with several North Carolina recipient artists. We discussed Cootie's goals and aspirations at length, as well as his day-to-day needs. We provided life maintenance grants for food, medical expenses and supplies for the blind.

We made some calls in early 1997 and soon Cootie had a series of gigs in New York. Cootie's performances were impressive. The word of this great blues "rediscovery" soon spread amongst the New York elite. He was booked at private parties in the Hamptons and ended that summer opening for Aretha Franklin at the Newport R&B Festival.

Since then work for Cootie has been steady. He opened for Jonny Lang in Germany and performed in 36 Winston Blues Revival shows at major venues across the country. Warner Brothers distributed his album "Sugar Man" in which blues legend Taj Mahal appears. Most recently, Cootie gave a command performance at the Lincoln Center Out-of-Doors Festival.

Cootie's story has received much press, appearing in newspapers throughout the country and the world's finest blues publications. He has become a beloved musical figure and is celebrated by the local press in his home town. When off the road he often has a stream of visitors and can now afford the basic comforts. He truly enjoys his life of traveling, performing and meeting many great musicians and friends.

Please help us work this transformation for other artists by supporting the Visiting Artist Program.

## James "Guitar Slim" Stephens



James "Guitar Slim" Stephens - Greensboro, NC

© Axel Kötzner

In 1988 I began documenting James "Guitar Slim" Stephens of Greensboro, North Carolina for the Southern Folk-life Collection at UNC Chapel Hill. I befriended Slim and he introduced me to the country blues subculture of the Carolinas. I was soon attending blues house parties and acting as Slim's driver and guitarist. He introduced me to the fine subtleties of his guitar style and opened the doors of a world rarely seen by an outsider. Nearly a year after our meeting, Slim was overcome with cancer. Near death he urged me to search out an old friend of his named Guitar Gabriel to continue my education. Guitar Slim's welcoming spirit and generosity began me on my path to working with blues musicians.

"Guitar Slim" was born in South Carolina in 1915. He began to play the pump organ at the age of five and two years later he switched to piano. In his early teens he joined the John Henry Davis Medicine Show. Slim always told anyone who stopped by to listen to him play what his music was all about.

"Blues will be popular as long as the world stands. It'll take away any other musician you may come up with. Them of blues is just a natural born killer, and they always have been, 'cause they come from slavery on up, you understand!"

- Tim Duffy



## Etta Baker

Etta Baker of Morganton, NC was born in 1913 and has been playing guitar since the age of 4. She is the premier female Piedmont blues guitar instrumentalist. Her only contemporary was the late Elizabeth Cotton of Carrboro, North Carolina.

Etta has been a recipient of our Instrument Acquisition and Life Maintenance programs.

"Music Maker came right on time for me. It has truly been a blessing to have known the Music Maker family and all the help they have given me."

Etta maintains a beautiful yard and garden. She is constantly working on new arrangements as she plays the guitar everyday.



Etta Baker - Reidsville, NC

© Axel Kottner



Mr. Q. (Cueselle Settle)  
Winston-Salem, NC  
© Mark Austin

went to all-night jam sessions where he witnessed the legends of the day such as Oscar Peterson, Art Tatum and Teddy Wilson perform. Mr. Q. returned to Winston-Salem, North Carolina in 1963 and has since become a fixture in many piano bars.

Mr. Q. has been a recipient artist since 1995. We have been able to purchase an electronic piano for him, provide him with an escort so he was able to attend the Blues to Bop Festival in Switzerland and when his house was condemned, we moved him into a new apartment. Mr. Q. took tremendous pleasure in his garden and upon moving to the hi-rise he brought his roto-tiller to Pinnacle and urged us to start a garden. This is something we have done each year since, providing vegetables for Mr. Q. and other local artists.

Mr. Q. is an old hep-cat. He graduated from North Carolina A&T in the 30's. He started his career when he left school to travel with Blanche Calloway's Orchestra as a singer. They performed as far away as Mexico. Traveling back through Texas, he took off on his own and hustled a job as singer in a local saloon. His parents were upset when he returned six months later. Mr. Q. appeased them by giving his mother \$500 he earned in tips as a saloon singer, all in change.

He soon migrated to Harlem and got a job playing harmonica with the Savoy Sultans, the house band at the Savoy Ballroom. He sang at tables in local saloons and eventually created his own eccentric piano style that was based on his love of the masters Art Tatum and Earl Hines. He



Mr. Q. entertaining New York Mayor Little Jimmy Walker (bottom right) with guitarist Bob Hope. Photo circa 1935, courtesy of Mr. Q.



## Cora Fluker



Cora Fluker - Marion MS

© Tim Duffy

Cora Fluker was born in Livingston, Alabama around 1920. When Denise and I visited her in 1997 it was a deeply moving experience. She told us of a childhood growing up sharecropping with her family. The conditions were so horrible that she tried to run away at the age of nine only to be caught by the white landowner. He beat her nearly to death.

She showed us the scars on her back and seemed haunted by the awful memory. She then broke out with a testimony about her life and what led her to her praying ground underneath a pecan tree.


It was there she had a vision of Jesus and has since devoted her life to preaching. When she sang and preached, her voice had the power of a saxophone.

The last time I saw Cora she was in ill health and was unable to sing. She spoke of how all music came from the air and if I lived right we would meet again in heaven.

We have been able to provide Cora with much needed Life Maintenance Grants.

# MUSIC MAKER

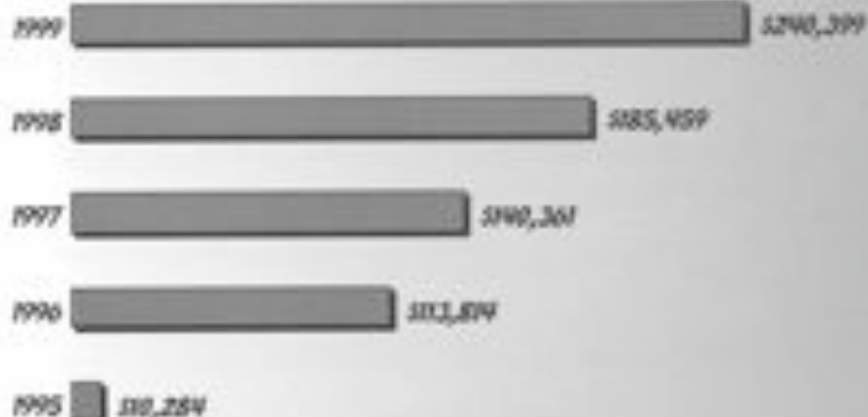
is dedicated to:



Helping the true pioneers and forgotten heroes of southern musical traditions gain recognition and meet their day to day needs.

Managing the organization in an intelligent and efficient manner.

## Donation Growth



## In 1999 Music Maker achieved: Fiscal year ending 3/31/2000

**Revenues \$246,323**

### Expenses

**Program  
Services  
and Grants  
to artists**

**\$163,401**

**76%**

•Grant disbursements to artists have increased 678% since 1995

•There has been a 350% increase in the number of artists served since 1995

**Development**

**\$10,793**

**5%**

**Management  
and General**

**\$40,663**

**19%**

**Total Expenses**

**\$214,857**

**Change in  
net assets**

**\$31,466**

**Net assets  
at year end**

**\$367,926**

Information abstracted from financial statements audited by Goldstein, Golub, Kessler LLP. Complete financial statements available upon request.



## Supporters



Cootie Stark, Tim Duffy, Arlie Dean, Taj Mahal, Mudcat, Neal Pattman, Beverly "Guitar" Watkins, Jon Schwenke - Great American Music Hall, San Francisco, CA

© Mark Austin

The Winston Blues Revival was a unique episode in blues history. Cootie Stark, Neal Pattman, Beverly "Guitar" Watkins, Mudcat and other Music Maker artists appeared with Taj Mahal at 36 major venues in cities including Chicago, Boston, Atlanta, Los Angeles, San Francisco, New Orleans and New York. All door proceeds benefited the Music Maker Relief Foundation.



Eric Clapton & Tim Duffy  
New York, 1995

© Tim Duffy

"We owe it to the extent of the people who created this music that is the lifeblood of what we love as well as our livelihood. I can't force people to listen to Gator Gabriel instead of Stevie Ray Vaughn, but if they're going to listen to me, I can take the money I make and give it to that organization."

- Bonnie Raitt, August 2000



Pete Townshend & Taj Mahal  
Woodstock 1998  
© Tim Duffy

*"Taj Mahal is one of the quietly unsung giants of modern music. As a performer he is spellbinding, magnificent and inspiring. As a man he is committed, compassionate and rooted. His work with Music Maker - itself a labour of love and honour for the blues, and all its loudly unsung old-timers - is a measure of both his understanding of history, and his humility."*

**- Pete Townshend**  
September 2000

*"Working with Music Maker has been one of the highest achievements of my career. Discovering other artists in a long-thought dead tradition and having the opportunity to help and support them has been a rewarding experience. My name is usually not associated with requests for support, but in this case I outright endorse the Music Maker Relief Foundation"*

**- Taj Mahal**  
September 2000



Richie Havens & Taj Mahal  
Woodstock 1998  
© Tim Duffy

*"As the long-term attorney for the musician John Hammond who launched the careers of Aretha Franklin, Bob Dylan and Bruce Springsteen, I have observed that Tim Duffy is following in the footsteps of this great and hallowed producer. He has done this by treating artists with respect and professionalism."*

**- Bill Krasilovsky, author of This Business of Music**  
September 2000







## Lucille Lindsay

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Lucille Lindsay - Winston-Salem, NC

© Tim Duffy

I asked Guitar Gabriel one day if he had any brothers or sisters. He mentioned that he had a sister but had not seen her in eight years. He gave me her married name and I found her, blind from diabetes, in an awful nursing home. When I reunited this pair the next day they immediately broke into song. I scrambled to put up my recording equipment as they sang. Gabriel had written, "Do You Know What It Means To Have A Friend" the day their mother passed away. Their emotions were so intense they both began crying and their tears soaked the front of their shirts.

Their reunion performance can be heard on "A Living Post".

-Tim Duffy

Next, Mark invited Larry Rosen and David Grusin of N2K Records to his studio to listen to the music. In early 1996, they offered me a job as a producer for a series of releases featuring Music Maker artists. They also offered a very substantial royalty to the Foundation. I took the job and started to put records together. Denise and I traveled extensively across the South with a mobile recording studio, meeting more talented, under-appreciated artists.

By this time Guitar Gabriel had passed on and we had moved to an old farmhouse in rural Pinnacle, North Carolina. I had a large library of field recordings and a small salary as a producer. I was still dedicated to keeping the Foundation alive. One December afternoon, I went to the mailbox to find an envelope addressed to the Foundation. I drove up the driveway thinking it was another CD order. Sitting on top of the hill, I opened the letter and was amazed to find an anonymous donation for a great deal of money. I jumped out of the car and screamed for joy. Then I turned around to watch my car roll down the hill: I had left it in neutral.

This began a period of extreme growth for the Foundation. Knowing the immense need among our recipients, Denise and I immediately began to increase grants, expand programs and include new artists. Within a year, the foundation's coffers were once again dwindling. Without a word, another large check appeared. It was unbelievable. We became friends with this generous donor and he became the backbone and unsung hero of our organization. All of the artists and my family have the deepest respect and admiration for his guidance and generosity.

N2K Records was just being formed when I was signed. As their marketing plans began to solidify, it became clear that the work we were doing would never be released. Miraculously in the spring of 1997, Cello Recordings purchased my contract from N2K.

Looking for new support for the foundation I traveled with B.B. King while he recorded "Deuces Wild". B was happy to help. He introduced me to many stars: the Rolling Stones, Dan Aykroyd, Jeff Beck, Bonnie Raitt and most significantly, to Taj Mahal.

Taj was immediately smitten with Music Maker and got busy fast. He came down to Pinnacle and recorded with Cootie Stark, John Dee Holeman, Algia Mae Hinton, and Neal Pattman. These albums and others, nine in total, were released by Cello Recording and distributed through Warner Brothers in 1999. He remains in close contact with us to this day, despite his non-stop touring and recording schedule. We are most fortunate to have this legend champion our cause. The Music Maker family loves him dearly for all he has done for the Foundation.

Taj was also instrumental in helping us obtain the historic Winston Blues Revival tour, which took Music Maker to 36 cities in 1998 and 1999. It was a great joy to be able to meet so many music lovers across America. I can't express how empowering the experience of first class stages and national press was for Cootie Stark, Neal Pattman, Beverly Watkins and the other Music Maker artists.

We began the year 2000 without the help of a major sponsor or record company. It is a period where we must prove that we can stand on our own. By good fortune, a donor invited me to meet with him. As a blues fan of many years, he believes in our mission and is impressed with our achievements. Yet, as a businessman he saw the need for a more solid structure for our organization. He introduced us to nonprofit business consultant Fred Tamalonis. With the help of supporter Marc Comer, we hired Fred to evaluate our organization and devise a development plan.

Implementing this plan, we have established the Music Maker Annual Fund and our new Visiting Artist Program. Rachel Shabott, Denise and I are very happy to announce that Lewis Goldstein and Erica Darling decided to move to Pinnacle for this fall to help us get these ambitious projects going.

We are proud to have the great support of Georgia philanthropist Bill Lucado. Bill has taken our mission to heart and pledged a challenge gift of \$100,000 to get the Annual Fund up and running.

It is our hope that one day there will be a Music Maker Center. A place where artists could take residence, share each other's company and music, record, and hold seminars. We envision a roadside attraction where people come and explore documentary exhibits, have a meal and see a live performance. We wish for everyone to experience the art of these great unsung heroes of southern music.

So, we continue to work and we dream that one day all of this might come true. We know it is you, our donors, who have gotten us this far and will take us where we want to go. For this, we thank you.

Yours Truly,



Tim and Denise Duffy





Bill Lucado & Moses - Gray, GA

©Tim Duffy

Have you taken the **Lucado Challenge**?

Bill Lucado of Gray, Georgia knows the men and women Music Maker serves are responsible for carrying on musical traditions that have given birth to our unique American musical legacy. He wants the rest of the world to hear more music and see us out there helping more artists.

He's a businessman who puts his money where his heart is and he dares you to jump in and do your part to keep Music Maker growing.

To make sure you're paying attention, Bill has pledged a challenge gift of \$100,000 to get the first Music Maker Annual Fund rolling.

If you are a new or renewing donor to Music Maker, Bill will match your gift dollar for dollar. If you are a renewing donor and increase your gift, he will match your increase \$2 for \$1.

Take the Lucado Challenge!

Music Maker Relief Foundation, a 501(c)3 non-profit foundation, receives all of funding from individuals, corporations and foundations. Your tax-deductible contribution directly supports traditional musicians in their efforts to keep playing, performing and recording their uniquely individual music forms.

**Annual Gifts** are the most significant source of foundation revenue. Other sources of funding include **Gifts of Appreciated Property, Restricted or Unrestricted Bequests, Gifts of Personal Property, Life Insurance, Charitable Trusts and Employee Matching Gift Programs.**

For more information about the above gift opportunities, please contact Denise Duffy, Secretary/Treasurer at 336-325-2505 or email at [mmrf1@aol.com](mailto:mmrf1@aol.com)

All donors receive a one-year subscription to the Music Maker Rag.

# Donations



\_\_\_ Music Maker CD's \$17.00 + \$2.00 shipping = \$19.00 each

(quantity of each title)

- \_\_\_ Algia Mae Hinton: Honey Babe
- \_\_\_ Cootie Stark: Sugar Man
- \_\_\_ Etta Baker: Railroad Bill
- \_\_\_ Guitar Gabriel: Deep in the South
- \_\_\_ Guitar Gabriel: Volume 1
- \_\_\_ John Dee Holmes: Bull Durham Blues
- \_\_\_ Neal Pattman: Prison Blues

Various Artists

- \_\_\_ A Living Past
- \_\_\_ Come So Far

\_\_\_ Music Maker Poster - 16" x 20" reproduction of photograph of David Johnson's hands by Axel Küstner (quality suitable for framing) \$20 + \$4 shipping = \$24.00

\_\_\_ Post Card Book — A collection of 30 6 1/2" x 4 1/4" photographs by Axel Küstner \$20.00 + \$3.00 shipping = \$23.00

\_\_\_ Cash Donation (fully tax deductible).

\_\_\_ Total Donation (International donors add \$5 USD for shipping on premium items)

All new and renewals donations will be matched by The Lucado Challenge!

Note: Due to IRS regulations the entire amount of a donation is reduced by the retail value of premiums to donors.

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**MUSIC & MAKER**

*Railroad Foundation*  
 Box 434 • Pinnacle, NC 27943  
 (336) 325-2505 FAX (336) 325-3243

## **Music Maker Relief Foundation, Inc.**

is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping the true pioneers and forgotten heroes of Southern musical traditions gain recognition and meet their day to day needs. Today, many such musicians are living in extreme poverty and need food, shelter, medical care, and other assistance. Music Maker's aid and service programs improve the quality of recipients lives. Our work affirms to these artists' that we value the gifts of music and inspiration they have delivered to the world. Our mission is to give back to the roots of American music.

Our criterion for recipients is they be rooted in a Southern musical tradition, be 55 years or older and have an annual income less than \$18,000.

Music Maker Relief Foundation, Inc. is a tax exempt, public charity under IRS code 501 (c) 3.

Visit our Website at [www.musicmaker.org](http://www.musicmaker.org)

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