


- 
- 1 forest
 - 2 robin
 - 3 ain't bin nowhere
 - 4 audrey's
 - 5 a year with you
 - 6 embleton
 - 7 shadows of giants
 - 8 hickory
 - 9 return from helsinki
 - 10 qoruh to the coquet
 - 11 3 sisters
 - 12 without walls
 - 13 faa from home
 - 14 tunes for Ian & Betty
 - 15 you'll find me

Ian Stephenson

Return from Helsinki
and other tunes.

ian stephenson

return from helsinki

ASH002



All compositions Ian Stephenson copyright 2024

SUPERDUPER SUPPORTERS

Thanks to all the wonderful contributions to my crowdfund campaign which has made this album and the accompanying book possible. Your generosity was humbling and astonishing, I couldn't believe the response, it was more than my wildest dreams! A particularly special thanks both to the Super Supporters listed below, to those who contributed anonymously, and those who are making regular monthly donations to keep me going and fuel future projects too.

Melanie & Edric Ellis

Lucy Nelson

Carolyn Soakell

Jeanette Appleton

Karl Taylor

David Ainsworth

Gill Martin

Alistair & Liz Anderson

Craig Mooney

Dark Sky Voices

Paul Walker

Poppy Holden

Elke Meiborg

Bella Hardy

Tom Besford

Andy Steven

Ted Kelly

Nick Leeming

Colin Bradford

Robert Hefford

Beverley Dore

James Semple

Catherine Werner

Marilyn Framrose

Stephen Purvis

Theo Gibb

Mike Todd

Ben & Sel

Penni Blythe

Jan Hardy

AJ Carr

RETURN FROM HELSINKI
AND OTHER TUNES
SERIES

IAN STEPHENSON

© Ian Stephenson 2024, no unauthorized copying, all rights reserved



1 Forest

Forest Jig Balkan Forest

Two tunes composed for one of Emma Hardman's wonderful dance projects. These are supposed to represent happy forest sprites having a bit of a party! As such I'd like to dedicate these not only to Emma H, but also to the members of Baltic Crossing and Frigg with memories of the infamous 'tree party' at Brenderup Hojskøle all those years ago in the 2000s, actually.

Featuring...

Ian Stephenson	Guitar, C#/D Melodeon, Pipe Organ, Double Bass
Brian Finnegan	Whistle
Jim Goodwin	Drums
Aidan O'Rourke	Fiddle
Eryn Rae	Fiddle

2 The Robin

The Robin

This tune was commissioned by Ryan Hund as a Christmas gift for his mother, whose favourite tune is 'Return from Helsinki'.

Featuring...

Ian Stephenson	Guitar, C#/D Melodeon, Double Bass
Brian Finnegan	Whistle
Aidan O'Rourke	Fiddle

3 **Ain't Bin Nowhere**

The 44th of May Ain't Bin Nowhere

The 44th of May is a birthday tune for Andy May from 2022, partially written in a hurry in Rog Peppe's car on the way to the brilliant Global Session at the Cumberland Arms in Byker, but subsequently improved over some revisions since then. **Ain't Bin Nowhere** was written during Covid-19 Lockdown, when Andy had taken it upon himself to document his efforts to wake up extremely early to put out his wheely bins before the bin lorry arrived. This tune is a celebration of his successes and failures, and also to mark his birthday. This track combines the talents and groove of dream-team Scandinavian supergroups Baltic Crossing and Dreamers Circus with special guest Jim Goodwin on drums. What a combination! Huge thanks to all the guys for volunteering their time and energy to record themselves in Scandinavia and to Kev Lees for recording Kristian and Nikolaj. It's a dream come true!

Featuring...

Ian Stephenson	C#/D Melodeon, Guitar, Rhodes & Pipe Organ
Kristian Bugge	Fiddle
Nikolaj Busk	Piano Accordion
Ale Carr	Cittern
Jim Goodwin	Drums
Antti Järvelä	Double Bass
Esko Järvelä	5-String Fiddle
Andy May	Northumbrian Pipes
Rune Sørensen	Fiddle
Eric Stephenson	Fiddle
Ivy Stephenson	Fiddle

4 **Audrey's**

Audrey's Waltz

I wrote this for my grandmother Audrey "Nanny Jamson" and recorded it for her in 2018 shortly before she passed away. She was a cool, creative lady, always full of beans and even talked more than me (if you can believe it).

Featuring...

Ian Stephenson	Guitar, Harmonium, Double Bass
----------------	--------------------------------

5 **A Year with You**

A Year with You

This tune was written for musicians Davey Harrison & Maire Clement, to mark their first wedding anniversary, a year since they walked down the aisle to 'Return from Helsinki'. Davey and Maire now live in Wisconsin with their son Alasdair and will soon be joined by baby Niamh!

Featuring...

Ian Stephenson	Guitar, Pipe Organ, Double Bass
Erik Rydval	Nyckelharpa
Emily Stephenson	Fiddle
Chris Stout	Fiddle

6 Embleton

Embleton Jig Thropton Stomp

I wrote these two bouncy jigs for various brilliant dance projects led by Emma Hardman. These are well suited to being played for rapper dancing but also have a kind of American contra flavour too.

Featuring...

Ian Stephenson	Guitar, C#/D Melodeon, Piano, Double Bass, Percussion Programming
Brian Finnegan	Whistle
Eryn Rae	Fiddle

7 Shadows of Giants

Walking through the Shadows of Giants

Richard Stewart bakes delicious banana bread and is very passionate about Giant Redwood Trees. He's writing a book about Sequoias in Northumberland and commissioned me to write a tune to go along with it. This tune may win the award for tune waited longest for - it having been commissioned before lockdown but delivered only very recently, sorry for the wait Richard!

Featuring...

Ian Stephenson	Guitar, Pipe Organ, Rhodes
Jim Goodwin	Drums
Antti Järvelä	Fiddle
Esko Järvelä	5-String Fiddle

8 Hickory

Hickory Smoke Rant

Edric Ellis is a very fine Northumbrian Piper based in the Cambridge area and his partner Melanie commissioned this tune for his Birthday. Edric is known for having beaten me all but one time in the Northumbrian Pipes Open competitions but I'm not bitter about it at all, I barely even mention it! The tune was to be suited to the pipes and a bit ranty, so here it is! Edric and Melanie have a fancy Egg-shaped Hot Smoker BBQ which very much caught the attention and admiration of Andy May Trio on a tour whilst staying over after a fun gig at the Black Fen Folk Club. Hickory being the type of wood favoured in the USA for smoking meat, it also sounded like a tune name already so the tune named itself.

Featuring...

Ian Stephenson	Guitar, C#/D Melodeon, Northumbrian Pipes, Harmonium, Double Bass
Jim Goodwin	Drums
Eryn Rae	Fiddle

9

Return from Helsinki

Return from Helsinki

On moving back to Newcastle from Helsinki after an Erasmus exchange in 2003, I found the adjustment to be tricky, especially as the two places and cultures were so different at that time. Unlike most tunes I've written, I felt profoundly that the tune was writing me to begin with - except that the fully formed B part came out so easily, and the A part took many rewrites over several weeks until I felt it complemented it. Around this time, my parents moved out of my childhood home, which I got to visit one last time after returning to the UK, but it was empty of our possessions by then. The tune however is as much about adjusting to moving, leaving new friends behind and returning to old ones, and is also a tribute to the Finns, who are harder to make friends with than English people - in a good way - you really have to earn it!

Featuring...

Ian Stephenson	Guitar, Pipe Organ
Brian Finnegan	Flute
Andy May	Piano
Aidan O'Rourke	Fiddle
Chris Stout	Viola

10

Çoruh to the Coquet

From the Çoruh to the Coquet

John Matheson (from Morpeth) commissioned me to write a tune for he and his wife Esra (originally from the North East of Turkey), to mark the occasion of their 10th wedding anniversary in 2018. Part of the inspiration comes from John's imaginary bus journey which connects the two rivers of the Çoruh and the Coquet that punctuate the landscape of these two beautiful places.

Featuring...

Ian Stephenson	Guitar, Harmonium, Northumbrian Pipes
Jim Goodwin	Drums
Erik Rydval	Nyckelharpa
Emily Stephenson	Fiddle

11 3 Sisters

Three Sisters

Chris S got in touch from Switzerland via the Magnetic North East website and his wishes were clear: He wanted two tunes to be composed and delivered in time for Christmas. "Three Sisters" was a gift for his three daughters. He asked for a tune to show their "liveliness, ability to live in the moment and general joyfulness" as well as mentioning they are very loving towards each other.

Featuring...

Ian Stephenson	Guitar, C#/D Melodeon, Pipe Organ, Double Bass
Esko Järvelä	Fiddle

12 Without Walls

Without Walls

Another commission for 'Chris S' in Switzerland. The story behind the title relates to him watching the joyful scenes of the Berlin Wall coming down. At the time he remembered feeling good about it, but not really expecting it to have a big impact upon his life. However, many years later he met his wife whom he may never have met had it not been for the fall of the wall.

Featuring....

Ian Stephenson	Guitar, Double Bass
Esko Järvelä	Fiddle

13 FAA from Home

FAA from Home

When we moved to the Coquet valley in 2020, we first of all lived with Emily's aunt Alison in Rothbury, all 5 of us squeezing into a 3 bedroom house and learning to live together whilst we installed electricity and plumbing into our new home in Thropton. The 3 months we planned to stay turned into 6 and included a covid lockdown, during which the amazing auntie became headmistress, master of toast-making and keeper of the big running chart. Between us we ran laps of the tiny garden and ran the equivalent of Rothbury to Newcastle. FAA is her nickname and stands for FANTASTIC AUNTIE ALISON, a self-appointed moniker she has held since Emily was little. This tune was composed and recorded in secret during lockdown, in the freezing cold house/building site in Thropton, which I cycled to and where I worked. Written for the occasion of FAA's birthday.

Featuring....

Ian Stephenson	Guitar, C#/D Melodeon, Harmonium, Percussion Programming, Double Bass
Erik Rydval	Nyckelharpa

14 Tunes for Ian & Betty

Side by Side The Park Hill Jig

I wrote 'Side by Side' and 'Park Hill Jig' during lockdown for the wonderful Betty & Ian Scott of Catcherside, Northumberland. Betty wanted to surprise Ian with some tunes to say thank you for his support during her illness. Ian is himself a prolific and talented tunesmith with great taste in melodies so I was nervous but they seem to have hit the spot. Nowadays Betty's infectious smile is missed at all the local folk gigs, but Ian and family still continue to pop up all over the place, often when you least expect it, and I hear that Park Hill Jig is now a mainstay of their repertoire!

Featuring...

Ian Stephenson	Guitar, C#/D Melodeon, Harmonium, Percussion Programming, Double Bass
Alistair Anderson	English Concertina
Emily Stephenson	Fiddle (The Park Hill Jig)
Kathryn Tickell	Fiddle (The Park Hill Jig)
Chris Stout	Fiddle (Side by Side)

15 You'll Find Me

You'll find me by the Ocean

This recording was made at All Saints Church, Rothbury, and features the beautiful sound of the historic 1866 IIP/11 Hill & Son organ, which was restored by Goetze & Gwynn Ltd in 2016. It's a wonderful instrument to play and I take every opportunity to do so.

On receiving my diagnosis of a malignant brain tumour in 2023, I inevitably began to think about what might happen to my ashes when my time comes. They'll be scattered at the beach at Newton Farm in Scotland so that's where you'll find me, by the Ocean.

Featuring...

Ian Stephenson	Pipe Organ
Chris Stout	Fiddle



CREDITS

Recorded by Ian Stephenson at Simpson Street Studios, Coquetdale Music Trust, Thropton

Add. Recording Erik, Ale & Rune recorded at their home studios, Nikolaj & Kristian recorded by Kevin Lees, Esko & Antti recorded by Antti Järvelä

Produced & Mixed by Ian Stephenson

Assistant Producer Andrew Cadie

CD cover design Ian Stephenson

Mastered by Nick Cooke Mastering

Ian plays an NK Forster guitar, Cairdin Melodeon & Northumbrian Pipes by Reid.
All compositions, arrangements & additional material © Ian Stephenson 2024. All rights reserved.

THANKS

A huge thank you to all the dozens of people who have helped with this project, either by giving their time, expertise or by contributing to the crowdfunder. Without you all it couldn't have happened. Thanks also to those who have commissioned tunes from me over the years, it's thanks to you I've got so many tunes!

Thanks to the brilliant musicians for volunteering their talent and enthusiasm, it was amazing to connect with you all and hear the music taking shape piece by piece. To Nick Cooke for volunteering to master the album, cheers! Thanks to Nigel Forster (NK Forster Guitars) for building me such an inspiring instrument to play and for donating an instrument to the cause more recently. Thanks to All Saints Church, Rothbury for use of the church and the wonderful pipe organ. To all my bandmates past and present, for the great times, inspiration and musical journeys over the years. Thanks to Roddy & co. at the Coquetdale Music Trust for their help and support during my illness, much appreciated!

Thanks to my dear wife Emily and our kids Eric & Ivy, for being brilliant and putting up with me through my treatment, I love you always x

And thank you to my family: Mum, Dad, Andy & Helen for everything over the years, and my extended family and friends particularly for your support recently.