

I.D.I.O.T FOR AUGUST 2012

ASWEGOHOMESTEAD

This month sees us back to normal after my gruelling stint of being on the receiving end of the interview. Though I must admit I enjoyed the banter with Mung.

Anyway, back to the plot. We are proud to present a long standing member who has been less busy with us than he has been with real life, as they say, and this is ASWEGOHOMESTEAD.

Q.1 What is your real name (optional) or the name you would like to be called?

AswegoHomestead

Q.2 What is your age group? 20 - 30. 30 - 40. 40 - 50. 50 - 60. Over 60.

60

Q.3 How did you get started in music?

As a country boy back in North Carolina I grew up around a lot of local bluegrass/country/folk musicians. From back yard jams to local festivals there was always somebody picking nearby. My first love was an old neighbour's 1950's Kay six string where I struggled to learn Wildwood Flowers..

Q.4 Can you list your top 3 music genres?

Folk, Bluegrass, Country

Q.5 Of the three, which do you associate with mostly?

Folk

Q.6 What is your talent? Don't be modest.

I think my greatest musical talent is as a folk kazoo maker. Though I love picking acoustic guitar and song writing I don't really have any great talent there. I pick and write songs for fun and to entertain myself. I find picking guitar on the porch each morning the greatest form of prayer, meditation and reflection.

Q.7 Of the talents you have not listed, which would you like to do most?

That's easy LOL I would love to be able to perform in public without stage fright! I admire performers who can get up on stage and be as comfortable as if they were entertaining friends at a back yard cookout. It takes a lot of effort for me to perform in front of a large group of strangers and in a place alien to me. I would love to be able to walk on a stage and not feel all the anxiety I do now. Not sure if this is a talent, a gift or both.

Q.8 Do you think that artists who show confidence on stage 'live' have what they show or is it maybe a front and most artists suffer what you just described in Q7?

I am sure that there are quite a few successful artists that started out feeling the same way. I think most overcome it but there certainly are a few that deal with it throughout their careers. I can't remember names but I do remember hearing of some famous performers like that, actors, musicians, etc.

Q.9 Tell us a little more about how and why you got into the manufacture of kazoos and other home made folk instruments.

I can sum up the why in one word, "necessity". The wife is a private music teacher and in 2009 when the economy really took a nose dive she had been a church secretary for over ten years. The economy forced the church to phase out her job and she started loosing music students at the end of each class year and only getting half as many new students for the upcoming year. She teaches in the home and drives a couple hundred miles each week so the increased gas prices also added to the loss of usable income. Since there are very few jobs available for anyone much less an old retired sailor I figured I better do something myself.

Now the how is kinda interesting. Maybe it was a Divine Intervention or could have been just plain dumb luck LOL. Two acres of our land is natural woodland surrounded on three sides by a couple hundred acres of woodland. I keep walking paths winding through our property and one afternoon when walking the dog in the very back I noticed that someone had run a bush hog across my western property line. I guess the owner of that land was shooting a survey. This line cut through grapevines and ground cover 6' or more tall. I was walking down the new mowed path and came upon an old red cedar tree that must have been on the ground for a couple decades. It was a large tree, probably over ten years old when it was most likely blown down by a storm. Absolutely beautiful old wood. I hooked up the trailer to the tractor and hauled out two loads and took it back to the workshop. That old tree was the how. I had been messing around with the idea and some plain pine kazoos to sell but hadn't actually done anything to sell them. This treasure trove of beautiful old red cedar gave me some remarkable wood to use. That old cedar tree is literally performing on tour, in pubs and parades around the world. I made a over a hundred kazoos from that wood. Still have a wee bit hid back for special kazoos! :) That old red cedar tree truly opened my eyes to a kazoo unlike any I had ever seen in my life. Yet based on that plain old North Carolina pine kazoo.

Q.10. Is there anywhere, apart from our band room where readers can hear some more of your music and maybe buy a kazoo or two from you?

The most complete collection of my tunes are in my TTM Bandroom. My first and only album, "Across The River" is available on CD at Amazon, Itunes and Emusic. Haven't sold many but it had to be a real distributed album with all the codes to be checked off the "Bucket List" LOL This was my "bucket list album" LOL It's also available free in my TTM bandroom and at Officialfm
<http://new.official.fm/#/projects/TVF7/tracks>

You can find my kazoos in my in my ArtFire Shop, the Website and a few on eBay.

The best place to start is the website where there are links to everything.

<http://aswegohomestead.com/>

You can also just Google search "Doc Kazoo" and you will find me in a few places :)

Q.11. Something I know personally about you is that you have spent some time in the navy. You have not mentioned this. Would you like to talk about your Navy career or have you any anecdotes that might interest us?

Yep I spent a couple decades there, mostly at sea or overseas. As an old destroyer sailor I was taught the motto of all destroyer sailors, "We've done so much with so little for so long we can do damned near anything with nothing and have something left over!" So is the motto of the Great Aswego Kazoo Factory! I do a lot of improvising making kazoos and other folk instruments without expensive fancy tools so I can keep my prices fair. With the sawmill less than a mile down the road, a drill press and carving knife who could ask for more?

**Q.12 From the list of members you know, who interests you most and why?
(doesn't have to be because you think they own the best talent)**

Now that's like asking a honey bee which flower interests him the most in a beautiful garden. TTM has some of the most talented independent musicians that it has ever been my good fortune to meet, know and collaborate with. Not only performing talent but studio wisdom as well. There's AG who I always love to hear picking acoustic, whom for a bear of a man uses those fingers to make the most beautiful sound. Then there's Joom, Smurf and Glenn who are engineering wizards. Through in a few beautiful vocals by Papa G, Dave and Babs and you have many TTM musicians that interest me. It is impossible to single out just one. Kinda like a great pot of vegetable soup, you need all the ingredients for the best taste.

Q.13 Have you ever collaborated with another member or members on a recording.

I have done several collaborations with quite a few TTM Musicians over the past few years and use to be active in the KAE Challenge. Regretfully, but necessarily I have not had much free time to join in as much as I would like to. Since opening the kazoo factory in December 2010 I have been kept pretty busy building a business as well as my reputation as a serious wooden folk kazoo maker/folk artist. For a year or so I have been working on a new CD that I had hoped to have finished late summer. I still pick every day at sunrise on the porch and have been recording acoustic guitar tracks for some new original tunes and some old traditional folk/blues/spiritual songs. I have no idea when I will have it finished LOL. So many kazoos to make and so little time. LOL

Q.14 Which of your colabs did you enjoy most and why?

I think one of my favourite collaborations was with one of my songs, Summer Snow. PapaG, Dave and Babs took my lyrics and music and made a beautiful recording. I am not sure but there may have been a couple more that collaborated on this but my old memory fails on things past a month back LOL. It was a very unique experience for me as I had no part of the actual finished product. It's a wee bit different than sitting on the other side of the microphone.

Q.15 Have you a favourite mix from our bandroom? (Could be one of your own.)

This is another very difficult choice. There are so many TTM musicians that are also masters in the mixing room. Jim50 and Papa Smurf When I read this question the first song that came to my mind was an old tune by Dino, Until The Bottles Gone. I really love this one.

Q.16 What is your ambition both musically and personally?

To live to be 105, still picking and still making my folk instruments. LOL My greatest ambition is to have one of my folk kazoos with a performing musician in every country on planet Earth! Today 17 countries, 1 territory and all 50 states, tomorrow the world!! LOL

Q 17 Do you belong to any other indie websites and will you name them?

Nope

Q.18. Who is your next choice for the IDIOT?

PapaG, he's one hardworking, out there gigging indie musician and I really enjoy his music.

Papa G has already been archived. On these occasions I use my power of writer's privilege and choose myself. I think we should ask Jimbo if he can spare some time .

Butch. My thanks to you for taking time out of your busy schedule to give us a very interesting slice of your character.

