

Beginning Irish Mandolin

by Michael B. Gregory

As promised, here's the second jig played by Mike Rafferty, his daughter Mary, and Mary's husband Donal Clancy in the video we cited in the December 2008 issue:

http://comhaltas.ie/music/detail/comhaltaslive_242_mike_rafferty_on_irish_flute/

Mike doesn't exactly assign a name to it except to say that he learned it from his father, "Barrel" Rafferty. He was so-called by the people in his community because of his ability to fill the barrel of a flute with air. In case you're as fascinated by Mike Rafferty's tunes as I am, you should know that a long-time flute student of Mike's, Lesl Harker, has compiled a book of some 302 tunes that she learned from Mike over the years. Here's a good place to read about the book, buy it directly from the author and even locate an errata page:

<http://www.firescribble.net/rafferty/>

The book is spiral bound and has laminated soft covers. I highly recommend it. The jig we're featuring in this column appears on page 67 but it is not identical to our setting. I transcribed this music from the cited video and it appears to be a bit simpler than the version that Mike taught to Lesl.

To repeat something we stressed in our last column, the tablature recommends that beginners use the DUD DUD (down-up-down down-up-down) picking pattern in jigs. I can testify that several very experienced players have switched to this pattern after having spent many years using another. Within months, their jigs started sounding better, with the emphasis and lilt that is so characteristic.

Many of the readers of this column have requested that we suggest chordal accompaniment for the tunes. I'm happy to oblige but somewhat reluctantly. The reason is - most traditional Irish music has never been harmonized & so there are no "agreed upon" chords. Nowadays, each accompanist plays whatever sounds good to them. That may differ from one person to another so the chords I suggest are not written in stone. If you feel something else sounds better, then by all means go for it. In fact, I urge you to experiment with different chord sequences. There are a few readers that have helped my wife and I create the chords I've included for this music. They prefer to remain anonymous but nevertheless, their efforts are appreciated. On one of the mp3's, my wife is playing these chords on her LaPlant guitar (#76, built in 1987) as I play an A-style mandolin I built in 2008. I hope you enjoy *Barrel Rafferty's Jig* along with *The Liltin' Banshee*.

Barrel Rafferty's Jig

5

5 3 0 5 2 0 5 2 0 5 0 2 0 0 5 2 5 2 0 0 0 2 5

G Em G D

5

3 0 5 2 0 5 2 0 5 0 2 0 0 5 2 0 2 5 5 5 2 5

G Em G D G

9

2 5 5 5 0 3 3 3 0 5 2 5 2 5 0 5 5 5 3 5

G Em G D

13

7 5 3 0 5 3 0 5 2 0 5 2 0 5 0 2 0 0 5 2 0 2 5 5 5

Em D Em G Em D G