



FREIGHT TRAINS, LAST TRAINS AND ROCK ISLAND LINES

The History Of Skiffle

CD1

- LONNIE DONEGAN & HIS SKIFFLE GROUP *Rock Island Line*
 THE CHAS MCDEVITT SKIFFLE GROUP ft. NANCY WHISKEY *Johnny-O*
 THE VIPERS SKIFFLE GROUP *It Takes A Worried Man*
 BERYL BRYDEN'S BACKROOM SKIFFLE *Rock Me*
 THE CHRIS BARBER SKIFFLE GROUP ft. JOHNNY DUNCAN *Doin' My Time*
 THE DELTA SKIFFLE GROUP *Pick A Bale Of Cotton*
 THE KEN COLYER SKIFFLE GROUP *Midnight Special*
 DICKIE BISHOP with LONNIE DONEGAN'S SKIFFLE GROUP *Precious Memories*
 THE 2.19 SKIFFLE GROUP *Railroad Bill*
 THE WORRIED MEN *This Little Light Of Mine*
 LORRAE DESMOND & HER REBELS *You Won't Be Around*
 BOB WALLIS'S WASHBOARD BEATERS *Crawdad Hole*
 LONNIE DONEGAN & HIS SKIFFLE GROUP *Lost John*
 JOHNNY PARKER'S WASHBOARD BAND *Up There*
 THE STATION SKIFFLE GROUP *Steamboat Bill*
 THE DON LANG SKIFFLE GROUP *Whiskey*
 THE BRIAN NEWY SKIFFLE GROUP *Toll The Bell Easy*
 THE EDEN STREET SKIFFLE GROUP *Raise A Ruckus Tonight*
 ALEXIS KORNER'S BREAKDOWN GROUP ft. CYRIL DAVIES *Kid Man*
 THE AVON CITIES SKIFFLE GROUP ft. RAY BUSH *Green Corn*
 JIMMY JACKSON'S ROCK'N'SKIFFLE *California Zephyr*
 CHRIS BARBER SKIFFLE GROUP ft. DICKIE BISHOP *Can't You Line 'Em?*
 THE CHAS MCDEVITT SKIFFLE GROUP *New Orleans*
 THE CITY RAMBLERS SKIFFLE GROUP *Boodle-Am-Shake*
 LES HOBEAUX SKIFFLE GROUP *Mama Don't Allow*
 ALEXIS KORNER'S BREAKDOWN GROUP ft. CYRIL DAVIES *Roundhouse Stomp*
 THE BOB CORT SKIFFLE GROUP *Six-Five Special*
 LONNIE DONEGAN & HIS SKIFFLE GROUP *Wabash Cannonball*
 THE VIPERS SKIFFLE GROUP *Don't You Rock Me Daddy-O*
 JOHNNY DUNCAN & THE BLUE GRASS BOYS *Last Train To San Fernando*

CD2

- THE CHAS MCDEVITT SKIFFLE GROUP ft. NANCY WHISKEY *Freight Train*
 LONNIE DONEGAN & HIS SKIFFLE GROUP *Diggin' My Potatoes*
 JOHNNY DUNCAN & THE BLUE GRASS BOYS *Blue Blue Heartache*
 JOHNNY CHRISTMAS & THE SUNSPOTS *(I'm Gonna) Sing, Sing, Sing*
 LORRAE DESMOND & HER REBELS *Preacher, Preacher*
 BERYL BRYDEN'S BACKROOM SKIFFLE *Casey Jones*
 THE KEN COLYER SKIFFLE GROUP *Sportin' Life*
 THE VIPERS SKIFFLE GROUP *Streamline Train*
 LES HOBEAUX SKIFFLE GROUP *Oh Mary Don't You Weep*
 DICKIE BISHOP & HIS SIDEKICKS *No Other Baby*
 THE DELTA SKIFFLE GROUP *K.C. Moan*
 THE WESTCOTT SKIFFLE GROUP *Good Mornin' Blues*
 THE CHAS MCDEVITT SKIFFLE GROUP *Badman Stackolee*
 JOHNNY PARKER'S WASHBOARD BAND *Canine Stomp*
 ALEXIS KORNER'S BREAKDOWN GROUP ft. CYRIL DAVIES *Skip To My Lou*
 THE CITY RAMBLERS SKIFFLE GROUP *2.19 Blues*
 BOB WALLIS'S WASHBOARD BEATERS *It's Tight Like That*
 THE KEN COLYER SKIFFLE GROUP *Down By The Riverside*
 THE 2.19 SKIFFLE GROUP *Union Maid*
 JOHNNY CHRISTMAS & THE SUNSPOTS *Mr & Mrs Mississippi*
 THE WORRIED MEN *Fraulein*
 THE LEA VALLEY SKIFFLE GROUP *I'm Gonna Walk & Talk With Jesus*
 THE STATION SKIFFLE GROUP *Hugged My Honey*
 THE DON LANG SKIFFLE GROUP *By And By*
 BERYL BRYDEN'S BACKROOM SKIFFLE *This Train*
 JIMMY MILLER & THE BARBECUES *Sizzlin' Hot*
 JOHNNY DUNCAN & THE BLUE GRASS BOYS *Footprints In The Snow*
 THE ORIGINAL BARNSTORMERS SPASM BAND *Stormin' The Barn*
 LONNIE DONEGAN & HIS SKIFFLE GROUP *Puttin' On The Style*
 THE VIPERS SKIFFLE GROUP *Cumberland Gap*

FILE UNDER Skiffle / Rock 'n' Roll / Pop / Dance / 50s / 60s / Party



2CD Set RHGB 23

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When Lonnie Donegan's frantic 'Rock Island Line' burst into the Top 20 in January 1956, "The Establishment" recoiled in collective horror. The UK music industry was appalled to its very core - "Skiffle Is Piffle" squeaked one Melody Maker headline - whilst the nation's parents/guardians/MPs/clergymen/schoolteachers/ scoutmasters/etc clasped their foreheads in dismay, convinced that the world was about to be overrun by knife-wielding Teddy Boys. Conversely, the UK's teenagers embraced Skiffle with almost indecent enthusiasm. So much so that within just weeks, virtually every club, hall and coffee bar in the country was presenting Skiffle groups, and sales of scrubbing boards were soaring! An almost exclusively British phenomenon, Skiffle had its roots in three distinct strands of Americana - Delta Blues, Folk and New Orleans Jazz - and one of the genre's initial appeals was that it required very little financial investment. Bottom-of-the-range acoustic guitars were fairly inexpensive; a stand-up tea chest bass cost nothing and was simple to assemble; every scullery in the UK possessed a spare washboard; and you could buy a kazoo in Woollies for a couple of shillings. It certainly paid off. The UK's traditionally staid, stodgy record companies were unusually prompt to jump on the bandwagon, Radio Luxembourg was quick to exploit its teen appeal and for once, even the BBC got the message. However despite its initial impact, during which it (briefly) gave the newly-emergent Rock'n'Roll 'craze' a run for its money, Skiffle had a shelf-life of less than two years.

It had grown out of the UK Jazz scene, the major pioneers being Ken Colyer, Chris Barber and Lonnie Donegan. Colyer was very much its founding father, having instigated what he initially called either 'Spasm' or 'Break-down' sets with The Crane River Jazz Band back in 1949, and in 1953, he, Barber and Donegan linked up to form Ken Colyer's Jazzmen. But personality clashes led to Colyer quitting after just a few months, whereupon they continued as Chris Barber's Jazz Band. In July 1954 the Barber band famously recorded the 10" LP New Orleans Joys, featuring Lonnie's version of 'Rock Island Line', which generated considerable attention and radio airplay. Eventually, the record company wised up and in November 1955, belatedly issued it as a single, credited to The Lonnie Donegan Skiffle Group. The disc stayed in the Top 20 for five months, peaking at No.6 and selling an estimated half a million copies; it very nearly repeated the trick in the United States, where it reached No.8, pushing worldwide sales over the million and earning Donegan his first gold disc.

1957 was Skiffle's Big Year. First to follow Lonnie into the Hit Parade were The Vipers with 'Don't You Rock Me Daddy-O' and 'Cumberland Gap' - although they lost out to Donegan, who covered both, taking the latter to No.1 (Lonnie would top the charts again in '57, with 'Puttin' On The Style'). They also charted with 'Streamline Train' and came close with a slew of other fine releases.