



# Bluegrass Truth

with Hamish & Lachlan Davidson



A good place to start this column about the finest music in the world might be to talk about the winner of the International Bluegrass Music Association's Album of the Year, **Noam Pikelný**. Also crowned Banjo Player of the Year this year by IBMA, Pikelný's new album, *Noam Pikelný Plays Kenny Baker Plays Bill Monroe* is an adaptation of Baker's sacred 1976 recording of Monroe instrumentals. The album features some of our favourite pickers, including **Bryan Sutton** on guitar, **Stuart Duncan** on fiddle, **Ronnie McCoury** on mandolin and **Mike Bub** (formerly of **Del McCoury Band**) on bass. The playing is truly exquisite and a joy to listen to. Pikelný captures the essence of Baker's fiddle playing in his banjo playing on this record, and far more. This is why an instrumental album, furthermore a 'remake,' won Album of the Year. Another album that was nominated for Album of the Year and would equally have deserved to win was

**Junior Sisk** and **Joe Mullins'** *Hall Of Fame Bluegrass!* They play a bunch of classic material on this album and deliver it with an explosive traditional conviction that made the **Johnson Mountain Boys** so popular. In fact, the album features the Johnson Mountain Boys' lead singer **Dudley Connell** on guitar and bass player **Marshall Wilborn**. Additionally, **Jesse Brock** plays mandolin, **Jason Carter** plays fiddle and **Rob Ickes** is on the dobro. For those of you who aren't familiar, Sisk and Mullins are two of today's top preservers of bluegrass music's traditions and deliver the traditional bluegrass with as much authenticity and energy as anybody ever has. The



pair are top musicians and a very strong vocal duo. The album is a truly enjoyable bluegrass experience. We suspect that in time, they will both end up in the hall of fame themselves. IBMA inducted two new Hall of Famers this year, **The Original Seldom Scene** from Washington DC, and bluegrass historian **Neil Rosenberg**. It was sad that **John Duffey** and **Mike Auldridge** weren't alive to receive this award, but many were thrilled to see the surviving members of the original Seldom Scene (**John Starling**, **Ben Auldridge** and **Tom Gray**) speak of the early days and perform live with the current Seldom Scene line up. The band's name referred to the fact that four of the five members had "day jobs" outside of music, and that they only played one night a week: a regular engagement at a local club, The Red Fox Inn. The intent of the original band to play locally just for the fun of it in the Washington DC region didn't last long, as The Seldom Scene rapidly became a major force in the bluegrass world.

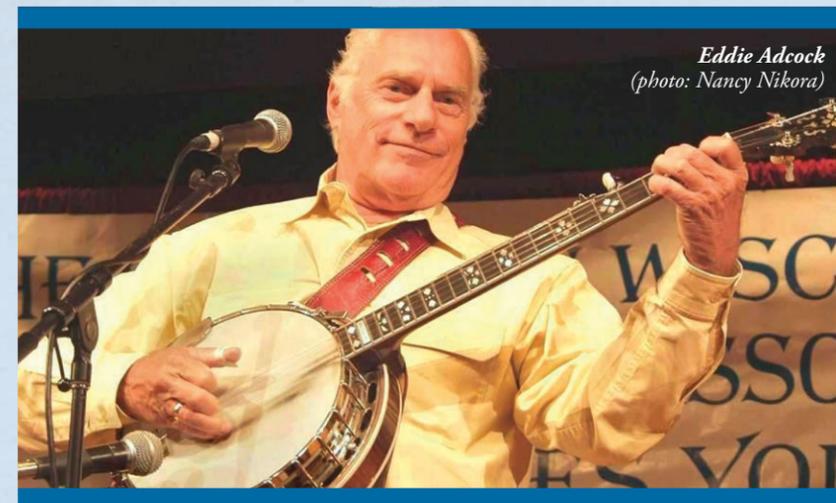
**Neil Rosenberg** specialises in the study of contemporary folk music traditions, investigating the ways in which popular music interacts with local and regional folk music traditions, and examining processes

**Prize** for Excellence in Banjo and Bluegrass. A banjo player and a Grammy Award nominee, Adcock began his career playing alongside pioneering bluegrass musicians like Bill Monroe and later joined the

If you are curious to see something you don't see every day, be sure to google "Modern Medicine Restores Legendary Banjo Player" to see **Eddie Adcock** playing banjo during his brain surgery.

**The Seals** of Perth were the favourite at Melbourne's recent Jamgrass festival. They are going from strength to strength and are really only just beginning to play dates on the Australia's East coast. They have the energy of **Mumford and Sons** and a folk-edge that the punters love to dance to. Best keep a sharp eye on The Seals.

Lastly, it is important that we let our Tamworth going readers know where to get their bluegrass fix at the 2015 Tamworth Country Music Festival. **The Davidson Brothers** and their band are playing one show in the Blazes Showroom with special guest **Fanny Lumsden** on Thursday 22nd January. **Kristy Cox** is hosting her "Bluegrass Comes to Tamworth" show at the Capitol Theatre on Friday 23rd January featuring guests **Jerry Salley** (USA), **Pete Denahy** and **Karen Lynne**. **Mustered Courage** will be tearing the town to shreds also, playing daily, from the 20th to the 25th.



Eddie Adcock (photo: Nancy Nikora)

of cultural revival. His books include: "Bluegrass: A History" (1985), the definitive work on the genre; "Transforming Tradition" (1993), a collection of studies on North American folk music revivals; "Bluegrass Odyssey: A Documentary in Pictures and Words" (2001), co-authored with photographer Carl Fleischhauer; and "The Music of Bill Monroe" (2007), a bio-discography. Australia's own 'bluegrass discographer' **John Boothroyd** has recently released a solo album titled *Still Rollin' On*. **Hugh MacDonald** (formerly of Redgum) recorded the album in Melbourne and John performed all of the vocal and instrumental parts on the album, except for Hugh's vocal harmony on the title track. The original material is really creative and enjoyable to listen to.

**Eddie Adcock** of Lebanon Tennessee (near Nashville) is the winner of this year's **Steve Martin**

Country Gentlemen, the influential bluegrass group of the 1950s and 1960s that included Charlie Waller, John Duffey and Tom Gray. "I can go into country music and play it, and it is absolutely closer to bull manure than anything I've ever heard," he said. "When you get on a bluegrass stage and do what you want to, the audience is tuned in."



The Seals (photo: David Harris)



Noam Pikelný