



## Americana/Soul Experience on February 24 with Shannon Clark & The Sugar

INTERVIEW BY MICHELLE HUGHES

*Editor's Note: The Americana band Shannon Clark & The Sugar is made up of husband and wife, Shannon and Brittany Clark, their teenage daughter Navie, and their cousin Joey Howard. They combine honest country storytelling, blues-rock ferocity, and the sweet blend of familial blood harmonies. Their songwriting paints a sharp, heartfelt portrait of modern American life. **"They always deliver heartfelt, emotive songs that we can related to and find ourselves in."** - Andrew Frolich - Americana UK*

Shannon Clark & The Sugar will perform at **8pm on February 24** at the Columbus Mennonite Church, 35 Oakland Park Avenue as part of the Americana/Folk Concert Series.

**Michelle Hughes:** Shannon Clark & The Sugar - what a name! Can you tell us who "The Sugar" are and how this came to be their moniker?

**Shannon Clark:** Because the group started with just me, my wife, and my daughter we called it sugar because they were always the sweetest part of the band. Now it's sort of used as

[See The Sugar, pg 3](#)

*"Oh healing river. Send down your water.  
Send down your water. Upon this land..."*

*Much love. -Pete Seeger*

## A Different Strummer Newsletter Highlights

SHANNON CLARK & THE SUGAR INTERVIEW  
PG 1

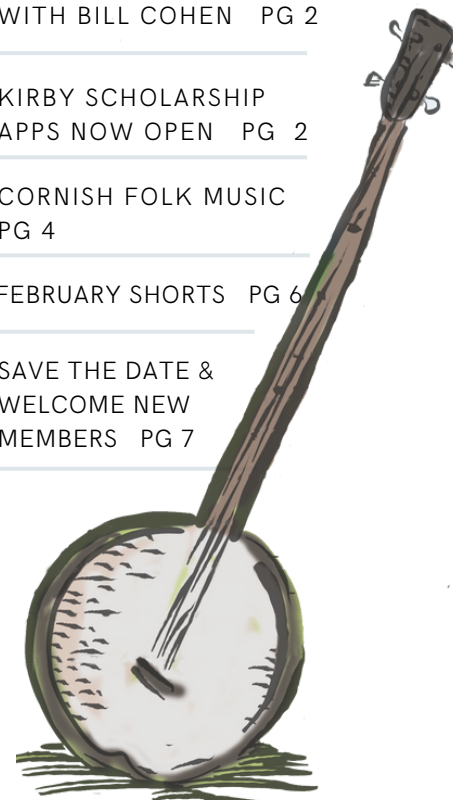
PRE-VALENTINE CONCERT  
WITH BILL COHEN PG 2

KIRBY SCHOLARSHIP  
APPS NOW OPEN PG 2

CORNISH FOLK MUSIC  
PG 4

FEBRUARY SHORTS PG 6

SAVE THE DATE &  
WELCOME NEW  
MEMBERS PG 7



# The Ups & Downs of Love: Our Pre-Valentine Concert Returns With New "Stuff"

BY BILL COHEN



Serious and comical love songs, fun trivia questions, and delicious home-made sweets will highlight the 15th annual Valentines concert by Bill Cohen and friends from 7:00 to 9 pm on Friday, February 2.

With guitar and piano, Bill will sing favorites from the 1940s through the 1990s, made famous by John Denver, the Everly Brothers, John Prine, Sam Cooke, James Taylor, Sting, Patti Page, Johnny Mathis, and even "Weird Al" Yankovic. Bill promises that this year's show will be a refreshed version with several new songs and new surprises.

As usual, though, Ann Fisher will be on hand to add some romantic flute accompaniment on several songs. David Maywhoor will keep the beat on percussion, and Brian Szuch will add extra sparkle on lead guitar. Plus, the all-girl trio, The Harmonettes, will sing smooth backup vocals.

While the songs will reflect the ecstasy, warmth, heartache, and pain that love can bring, there will be a lighter side too, as Bill poses trivia questions about famous and

infamous couples and love songs throughout the decades.

The concert takes place at the Columbus Mennonite Church, 35 Oakland Park Avenue. \$15 per person donations are suggested at the door, with proceeds helping put on this May's Central Ohio Folk Festival. If the Mennonite Church parking lot becomes full, there is available free parking along Oakland Park Avenue and in nearby lots owned by North Broadway Methodist Church.

Did we mention the free and delicious home-made cookies and goodies right after the show? Yep, we'll have them, so stick around till the end, enjoy the treats, and schmooze with the musical cast.

**WHEN: Friday, Feb 2 at 7 pm**

**WHERE: Columbus Mennonite Church,  
35 Oakland Park Avenue, Cols 43214**

For more information, call Bill at (614) 263-3851.

## \$500 Kirby Music Scholarship 2024

Do you know a child who is interested in music or wants to play an instrument? The Kirby Music Scholarship is open to children in Grade 3 to Grade 12.

Link to application:

[www.columbusfolkmusicsociety.org/download/application-kirbyscholar2024sun.pdf](http://www.columbusfolkmusicsociety.org/download/application-kirbyscholar2024sun.pdf)

The Sugar, from pg 1

the backbone of the band; we are all The Sugar now.

**Michelle:** I gotta say, when I listened to your albums, I thought “they definitely listened to some of the same music I did when I was growing up”. Then, I saw on your website that one characteristic used to describe your works is “honest country storytelling” and that just seems so apt. Can you tell us more about what is meant by this and why this is an approach that you use for songwriting?

**Shannon:** I don’t know how to write any other way but honestly. I hate fake. I want the depth, the height, the pulse of what it is to feel real. I do still occasionally write a tune that's stripped back and simple, maybe even surface, but it always comes from a place of honesty.

**Michelle:** Going back to that same bio on your website, the phrase “the sweet blend of blood harmonies” is so deliciously descriptive! Can you explain to us what a “blood harmony” is and what track of yours might be best to listen to for a taste of this?

**Shannon:** Blood harmonies just means family harmony. My daughter Navie and I have been singing together since she was four and have developed a close harmony that's hard to get from non-family. Joey as well – though he is only related through marriage. We have been playing and singing on and off together for 25 years since we were kids. Our new album is a good example of this, it’s riddled with a ton of harmony, but check out “Good

Woman” or “Change Everything” for the heavy dose of harmony.

**Michelle:** It’s my understanding that Shannon Clark & The Sugar is a family affair —mom, dad, daughter, and cousin. Does this shape how you craft your songs in any way? That is to say, does it influence subject matter, compositional choices, etc?

**Shannon:** Yes, it does. We are selective on what we sing for obvious reasons. I wouldn't sing a love song with my daughter, LOL! But we find other ways to perform that complement the writing and subject matter.

**Michelle:** Ok, I’ve got to know - Shannon and Brittany played the Warped Tour back in the 2000s and I just can’t make the leap from that to the style of music y’all make today. For those who may not know, the Warped Tour was an iconic tour for us kids who were into punk, alternative, skateboarding, and the like back in the day. Does anything from that experience or the type of music you were making then find its way into your current musical era?

**Shannon:** Interesting for sure. We played a lot of Pop Rock, [like the bands] The Early November, The All-American Rejects, Dashboard Confessional, etc. All types of that era. At the time it felt right, and it was the best way we knew how to put ourselves into the scene of that time. Surprisingly, lyrically I was still writing at times similar to what I do today. But stylistically, obviously I was not. Yet our catchy chorus writing from the day still finds a home for our newer material.

[See The Sugar, pg 6](#)

# Homes for Cornish Folk Music in Britain and North America

BY NICHOLAS BOOKER

The last day of the 2023 [Cornwall Folk Festival](#) in the southwest of Britain was cloudy and cool. The event had filled the bustling streets and pubs of Wadebridge, Cornwall with jam sessions, concerts, and classes all weekend, so I would have understood if attendees were a little worn out by the final concert. Yet somehow the atmosphere was nothing short of electric.

I danced with the twirling crowd in a last burst of collective cheer and excitement while the Cornish band The Stowes finished the festival off with an energetic version of "[The Craic Was Ninety](#)." The song finished. The applause died down, but few people moved. Singer-songwriter [David Fisher](#) caught on to the energy and struck up a Cornish folk favorite, "[Cornwall My Home](#)." The whole crowd quickly joined in. Less than a month later, I heard that same song sung here in the USA in Mineral Point, Wisconsin at the Midwest [Cornish Festival](#). The audience was no less enthusiastic on this side of the ocean.

I had interviewed Harry Glasson, the songwriter who wrote "Cornwall My Home," a few weeks before the Cornwall Folk Festival at his home on the Cornish coast. The song is partly focused on a place, "Cornwall" in English or "Kernow" in [Cornish](#), an Insular Celtic language related to the Breton language spoken in Brittany, France. Cornwall is a breathtakingly beautiful peninsula at the southwestern edge of Britain, surrounded by the Celtic Sea, the English Channel, and the River

Tamar. It's a county in the United Kingdom with its own special governing body called Cornwall Council. It includes a Duchy of the British monarchy, and it's also a Celtic country included in the United Nations recognized non-governmental organization the [Celtic League](#). As a [press release from the UK government](#) in April of 2014 put it, the Cornish people have the same status as "the UK's other Celtic people, the Scots, the Welsh and the Irish" as part of the European Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

I have been lucky enough to hear Cornish musicians in [pub sessions](#) all over Cornwall, on cobblestone streets for festivals like the [Golowan midsummer festival](#), and in performances all around the peninsula. "Cornish" can mean many things, though. In places like Wisconsin, Michigan, and Ontario, I often meet people who think of themselves as Cornish-American or Cornish-Canadian. I talk about Cornish



Falmouth, Cornwall, Photo Nicholas Booker

songs and Cornish tunes with musicians like [Jim Wearne](#), Marion Howard, and [Heather Dale](#). That's partly because, as Philip Payton describes in his book *The Cornish Overseas*, many Cornish left Cornwall and settled all over the world, mostly between about 1815 and World War I.

Today, Cornish songwriters including Toby Lobb still write songs like "[On the Shore](#)" about Cornish communities leaving home. I interviewed Toby in a pub in Padstow, Cornwall in August of 2023 and asked about the song and his work with the popular Cornish band [Fisherman's Friends](#). Toby told me about the process of writing the song and adapting it for the [second feature-length film about the band](#). He said he was inspired by the idea that when you're a Cornish person leaving home, you're "always going to have Cornwall with you or near you."

Sometimes musicians share a bit of Cornwall with folks living abroad, too. Toby and the Fisherman's Friends visited Toronto, Canada when [Fisherman's Friends: The Musical](#) toured there in 2022 and 2023 and I get the sense that many Cornish-Canadians appreciated the visit. I talked to,



*The village of St Mawes in Cornwall Britain  
Photo Nicholas Booker*



*The Stowes at the Cornwall Folk Festival, 2023*

several members of the [Toronto Cornish Association](#) who went to see the show multiple times. Other Cornish musicians have been to North America too. Remember Harry Glasson, the writer of "Cornwall My Home?" He has been here four times. The Stowes, the band that closed the 2023 Cornwall Folk Festival, played in Maine in 2016 as well. They're a part of musical connections with a long history and a strong tradition.

Cornish connected musicians around the world have long made incredible folk and traditional music, and it's well worth a listen! You can find music by [Fisherman's Friends](#), [The Stowes](#), [Dalla](#), [The Rowan Tree](#), and many others online. You can learn some Cornish music from the [Cornish National Music Archive](#) for free too. You could even head to the Cornish Festival this year in Wisconsin or find me at a pub session in Cornwall this summer! If you do, give me shout. *I'll buy the first round.*

*"when you're a Cornish person leaving home, you're 'always going to have Cornwall with you or near you'. . ."*

The Sugar, from pg 3



Shannon Clark & The Sugar, Press Photo

**Brittany Clark:** I try to not do anything I did back then LOL! I feel like I have grown out of that phase of my life; I enjoyed the memories but just can't relate to that music anymore.

**Michelle:** I happen to think that listening to someone else's favorite songs is a really good way to get to know them and I'd love our readers to get to know you all just a little bit better before the show. Can you share with us one of your favorite songs to perform and then one of your favorite songs by another artist, along with why you've chosen those?

**Shannon:** That's a hard question. My personal favorite song changes depending on where I'm at in my life. It used to always be "[Carry Me](#)," a song I wrote that was very personal to me. It helped me heal after the loss of our daughter. Currently, I like some of the upbeat tunes we play like "[This Old World](#)" or "[Good Woman](#)" because of the harmonies and energy. As far as covers, I love playing Jason Isbell's "[Cover Me Up](#)"; always loved that song for its honesty and vulnerability.

**Brittany:** I love playing "[Red River](#)" because it's got a cool groove, and we usually play "[The Chain](#)" by Fleetwood Mac right after. That's one of my favorite covers of all time.

**Navie:** As I have switched to playing bass this year, I love "[Cool Waters](#)". I get to do some cool parts on the bass and the harmonies are fun to sing. As far as covers, I have always loved "[Into the Mystic](#)". The groove and the harmonies are so fun; I'm drawn to songs that have movement.

**Joey:** I like playing "Good Woman". The guitar parts we have worked out are super fun and interesting to play, along with the rich harmonies. We typically play that with "Come Together" by the Beatles and that has become our 'closer' song when we play full band. It's a cool arrangement.

## FEBRUARY SHORTS

### A Big Shout Out and Congrats . . .

to CFMS' member Michelle Hughes, who put a lot of hard work into preparing for entry into the 2023 US National Mòd this past November. She participated in a beginners' class AND received the highest possible rating (sònraichte = exceptional) and the Joan McWilliams Weiss Award for Best Song from a Beginner for performing the song "Bidh Seumas Leam A-nochd". A link to learn more about the annual Scottish Gaelic Song event is here:

<https://acgamerica.org/events/us-national-mod/>.

### Monthly Songwriter's Showcase

Central Ohio is full of amazing songwriters. Come join us for a monthly songwriter showcase. Each evening you will hear four local artists sharing their latest songs at the Wanderlust Studio. The studio is located at: 1599-1603 South 4th Street, Columbus; <https://www.wanderlustcbus.com/>! It occurs the 2nd Thursday of every month; doors open 6pm, Showcase from 6:30-8:30. \$10 cover. Contact Joanie Calem: [joaniecalem@gmail.com](mailto:joaniecalem@gmail.com) for more details.



## Welcome NEW Members

Mark Belisle    Resurrection Tree Band  
 John Farrell    Bob Roehm  
 Joanna Li        Karen Mortland

...and Welcome Back RENEWING Members!



## Save the Date!

### Pre-Valentine Concert with Bill Cohen & Friends

**Friday, February 2, 7-9pm**

Venue: Columbus Mennonite Church,  
 35 Oakland Park Ave, Cols.  
 Fundraiser for Central Ohio Folk  
 Festival. Refreshments after the  
 show! \$15 suggested donation.

### Americana/Folk Concert Series

**Shannon Clark & The Sugar**  
**Saturday, February 24, 8pm**

Open Mic: 7pm, Open Jam: 6pm  
 Donation: \$15 / \$10 CFMS members  
 Venue: Cols Mennonite Church, 35  
 Oakland Park Ave.

### Zoom Jam Sessions

Offered to nursing homes Thursdays  
 10am -12 noon. Please contact Jane  
 at: [vanaukj@gmail.com](mailto:vanaukj@gmail.com)

### In-Person Jams

**Mondays** 6-8pm at 4th Ave  
 Christian Church, 296 W. 4th Ave.  
**Wednesdays** 6:30-8:30pm at Gillie  
 Center, 4625 Morse Centre Drive  
**Saturdays** 9:30-11:30am at two  
 locations: Whetstone Community  
 Center, 3923 N. High St and  
 All Saints Lutheran Church, 6770 N.  
 High St., Worthington

## NEWSLETTER TEAM

**Editor (interim):** Diane Boston

**Regular Writers:** Pete Insabella, Michelle Hughes

**Layout:** Sherry Hubbard

**Distribution:** Pete Insabella

**CFMS Event Photos:** Linda McDonald

## A note to all Folk Festival Volunteers:

Remember to earmark the dates of May 4 & 5  
 on your calendar for the festival! Randi Cohen  
 will be reaching out later in February for the  
 many volunteers needed for the festival!

## Looking for opportunities to play (music) nicely with others? Join the Worthington Squares!

The Worthington Squares meet several times a  
 week, in person and via Zoom, to jam together.  
 These informal jam sessions are a great  
 opportunity to practice your instrument while  
 getting to know some fellow folk music lovers.  
 We also sometimes play at farm markets, metro  
 parks, nursing homes, children's events, etc. All  
 folk instrument players are welcome, regardless  
 of skill or experience!

For questions or to be added to the jam list,  
 contact Jane VanAuken at: [vanaukj@gmail.com](mailto:vanaukj@gmail.com)

And see the current jam calendar here:  
<https://www.columbusfolkmusicsociety.org/jam-sessions.html>



## The Columbus Folk Music Society

P.O. Box 20735  
Columbus, OH 43220  
VMB: 614-470-3963



[www.campusprinting.net](http://www.campusprinting.net)

[info@campusprinting.net](mailto:info@campusprinting.net)

(614) 261-7991

### BECOME A MEMBER OF THE COLUMBUS FOLK MUSIC SOCIETY

Date \_\_\_\_\_  New  Renew Preferred Newsletter Format:  Digital  Hard Copy **[NOTE: if you choose hard copy, we request an additional \$15 contribution over & above dues to cover postage & handling]**

Name(s) / Band Name (if applic) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

General Age Range – Born:  1930s-40s  1950s-60s  1970s-80s  1990s-2010s

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ (Cell) \_\_\_\_\_ If Band, website \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_ Additional e-mail (if a household or band) \_\_\_\_\_

**We are also a growing, vibrant community of volunteers; the awesome force behind our work! Please  at least 1 box.**

- |  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> May folk festival   | <input type="checkbox"/> General Help      | <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational Skills   | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CFMS concert events | <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic Design    | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Musician   | <input type="checkbox"/> Web Design           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking / Baking    | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership Skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Instructor | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing / Newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Data Management     | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal             | Instruments: _____                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising         | <input type="checkbox"/> Musician          | <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity               | <input type="checkbox"/> None                 |

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS ARE DUE ANNUALLY ON DECEMBER 31.  one of the membership levels listed below.**

- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Band \$25        | <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Silver \$250      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Household \$25  | <input type="checkbox"/> Good Friend \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron \$200  | <input type="checkbox"/> Life Member \$500 |

I have included an additional \$15 (postage & handling) to have a printed version of newsletter mailed to me.

**To join/renew by credit card**, visit CFMS' website: [columbusfolkmusicsociety.org](http://columbusfolkmusicsociety.org) (About Us/Join)

OR click here: <https://tinyurl.com/CFMS-Join>

**To join/renew by cash or check**, please mail completed membership form with payment to: *Columbus Folk Music Society, PO Box 20735, Columbus, OH 43220*. Membership amounts may be tax-deductible.

My place of work matches donations:

