

# Mp3 Trinity River Whalers - Knotty Tales

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The 'Whaler' sound is a "Madcap Celtic Folk/Grass" combination, reflecting their Celtic muse and bluegrass roots. 12 MP3 Songs WORLD: Celtic, FOLK: Celtic Folk Details: Band Bio The Trinity River Whaler sound has strong folk/bluegrass roots with a twist of Celtic, and a splash of salt-sea spray. The Whaler Crew includes songwriter and front-man extraordinaire, Micheal Price, on guitar. A founding member of the Fort Worth-based Blarney Brothers and perennial Master-of-Ceremonies favorite, Micheal has been writing and performing music since 1971. He draws on his years of experience as a standup comic and his comedy improv work for stage presence and his unique humor! Micheal also has a love of loud, outrageous shirts. Some of his craziest come from fans! Randy Christian began playing the harmonica around 1989 with family, which mushroomed into the now-retired Blarney Brothers. Before long, he expanded his repertoire to include the congas, the penny whistle and most recently he's been seen with a washboard and accordion. He also harbored a completely unsuspected flair for singing and vocal arrangement that the Whalers have put to good use. A man of many voices and sound effects, he tends to favor the rowdy, upbeat Celtic songs and belts them out with gusto. Kathleen Jackson began singing with her family as a small child in West Texas, soon learning to play guitar, upright bass and mandolin. Graduation found her playing bluegrass and western swing in Dallas with her brother, Greg, and other family members in the band Buffalo Grass. Later Kathleen began singing with The City Lights Singers, a folk-roots group. Other groups she has been a member of are The Bluebonnet Plague (bluegrass), Full Tilt Boogie (Americana), Sibling Revelry (Texana and political satire) and The Bruce Williams Trio (folk and pop). Marj Troyer's intricate guitar playing, versatile song writing and recent evolution as a power-house mandolin player is an awesome combination, kicking the Whalers' sound up more than just a notch. Whether a ballad or a toe-tapper, her vocals are an absolute treat and she adds the perfect 4th to the Whaler harmony. She started out as a Mennonite preacher's kid in Illinois who somehow talked her dad into letting her buy a guitar when she was 13 and came to the Dallas/Fort Worth area in the '90s. You may have seen her onstage with Doris Daze, Painted Faces, Sun and Moon or more recently with Zen Bubba. Press Reviews Whalers' CD worth savin' By Perry Stewart Special to the

Star-Telegram The Whalers' new CD, *Knotty Tales*, moves the group toward its own distinctive sound rather than one that is a floral offering to the late, lamented Blarney Brothers combo, which disbanded in 2002. The recent departure of David Sparks still leaves Micheal Price and Randy Christian as the remaining Blarneys among the Whalers. And, to be sure, Price's mellow baritone voice and trademark phrasing will always remind listeners of the Blarney sound. But the presence of two strong female Whalers, Marj Troyer and Kathleen Jackson, is a key factor in the group's differentiation from the all-male Blarneys. The Whalers remain rooted in traditional Celtic music, but they spice their sets with references to American folk, pop and other idioms. A rousing example is Jackson's singing of the spiritual-esque *Shut De Do'*. It's a capella, but first-rate instrumental work remains a signature of this group and this album. Christian's is the Irish-est voice on the CD. His *Botany Bay* is solidly traditional. He and Jackson have a high time on *Lannigan's Ball*. The final cut is Lu Mitchell's setting of the Irish Blessing you see on beer mugs, coffee cups and samplers to music. Dallas Folk Music Society Newsletter (Review by Dolly McFarland) "Boy! The Whalers were wailing at the Coffee House night! Lots of energy, excellent music, bongos, conga drums, guitars and even a flute. Also, a lively little gal who makes her bass jump. These folks are truly entertaining as well as musically great. They ooze talent, vitality and harmonically they're 'in the groove'." "This group presents a variety of different kinds of music sprinkled with just enough of the Highlands and the Emerald Isle to make it interesting. All in all, it was a wonderful experience. Thank you Gloria Dei for an evening of great entertainment!" NO FISH STORIES HERE by Curt Marcus SCMA Ceilidh Newsletter If there are any out there who still think of the Trinity River Whalers as whats left of the Blarney Brothers, you need to get out more. You also need to get this new CD. We all loved the Blarneys; they were the most fun one could have with Celtic music in the D/FW area (well, out in public anyway). But bands come and bands go, and TRW is a new band. Never mind that half of TRW would only have qualified as Blarney Sisters in the first place. TRW does still do some old Blarney tunes, and we love to hear them, but they have no intention of fitting back into the old mold, and frankly thats all to love, too. There are no eggs in last years nest. To showcase that fact, the new *KNOTTY TALES* CD features only new selections, from a bunch of really good eggs. For those who havent yet had the pleasure of seeing and hearing TRW, the foursome is Micheal Price, Randy Christian, Marj Troyer and Kathleen Jackson. One good feature of the old Blarneys that TRW does maintain is that each member of the band gets his or her share of lead vocals -- no one in the band is merely backup. This almost gives the feel of hearing

four different bands each and every performance, depending on who leads on a particular song. And nobody can think that Marj and Kathleen were selected just because they spruce up the bands appearance. Marj is justly credited with lead guitar on the CD, and her guitar work is some of the finest Ive heard locally (no discredit intended to the many other good guitarists in local Celtic bands), while Fred, Kathleens standup bass, is nearly a band member in good standing himself. Kathleen, in particular, is involved in a number of other musical groups, including Bluebonnet Plague, a bluegrass group, and brings those other influences into the musical selection. If you need me to introduce Micheal and Randy to you, youre obviously very new in the area. Suffice it to say that Micheal s strong voice and bad jokes (only the first of which makes it onto the CD--youll have to catch them live for the other), and Randys amazing talent at playing just about any musical instrument or other noisemaker that doesnt come with strings attached (which is now extended to include the accordion with this CD) along with his comic interjections and voices (also available only at live performances) keep the music rocking along, and the audience in a high good humour. Marj leads out the cotillion with *If Wishes Were Horses*, a song about the longing to get on and keep moving, which is as good a description for this CD as any could be. While it is true that TRWs musical selections are not always Celtic, Randy gets the majority of Irish songs, starting with *Galway Farmer* about an Irishmans experience at the Cheltenham Races in England, but then the ladies get us away from the horses with a strong duet on the old *Cotton Mill Girls*. Micheal puts on *Kelly Joes Shoes*, while Kathleen sends us back to *Wichita* (Kansas, not Falls, one presumes). Randy regales us with the results of indulging in seemingly-innocent cider, *Johnny Jump-Up* (Randy would get the one drinking song on the CD, wouldnt he?). Marj brings us back to the horses again, longing for her *Little Black Pony* (the group seems to do much of their whaling from horseback, which I suppose is only reasonable when hunting in the Trinity river bottoms). Kathleen then takes us out to the Caribbean to *Shut De Do*, with the others backing her on finger-snaps and syncopation. Randy packs up his shovel and heads for *Botany Bay*, while Micheal turns into a Mountaineer after immigrating (as close to ship songs as this CD ever gets, it seems). Randy and Kathleen tell us about the dancing and shenanigans at *Lannigans Ball* (a song that, in the Dallas area in the good old days, was also featured by Russ Alvey of *Tinkers Dam*, on their long-playing, short-selling album, back when musics initials were LP, not CD). And Marj wraps it all up with a fitting *Irish Blessing*. *KNOTTY TALES* by the Trinity River Whalers was engineered and produced by Gordon McLeod (of *Beyond the Pale*) at Mockingbird Studio, Tyler, and is

available (as of the 25 November release party) at all TRW live performances. Also check out [trinityriverwhalers.com](http://trinityriverwhalers.com).

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