

Mp3 Williams & Bray - Bluegrass Hoedown

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Traditional square and old-time dance tunes played bluegrass style by noted Pacific Northwest bluegrass band, Williams Bray, featuring Vivian Williams on fiddle and Harley Bray on banjo. 18 MP3 Songs

COUNTRY: Bluegrass, FOLK: Traditional Folk Details: Here are foot-stomping hoedowns, a jig, a polka, and two sweet waltzes from the American square and old time country dance heritage, played bluegrass styles and long enough for dancing, by one of the Northwest's best known traditional band. Williams Bray was formed in the mid-1980s by two couples who have been playing bluegrass and old time pioneer dance music for over 40 years. Harley and Shera Bray came to the Puget Sound area from Illinois. In the early 1960s, Harley and his brothers Nate and Francis, along with Red Cravens performed as The Bray Brothers Red Cravens, also known as The Bluegrass Gentlemen, sometimes with John Hartford as their fiddler. They had a weekly live bluegrass radio show out of Clinton, Illinois. This band had a major influence in the development of bluegrass music, and the recordings they made in that era are still available to bluegrass fans today. Shera performed with Harley in the Midwest, became a skilled bluegrass guitarist and singer, and learned to call square dances. Phil Vivian Williams were born and raised in the Puget Sound area and had an extensive upbringing in pioneer music and dance of the region. They started playing bluegrass in 1960 with folks who had moved to the region from North Carolina, and formed the first bluegrass band to perform regularly in the Seattle area. They also became mainstay musicians for the square, contra, and old time dances in the area. Vivian has won many national, international, regional, and local fiddle contests, and is regarded as one of the best traditional dance and bluegrass fiddlers in the West. She and Phil have been in the forefront of documenting the traditional fiddling and pioneer dances of the Pacific Northwest. This CD is for both dancing and listening. The hoedowns are among the classics used for Western style square dancing. Jigs often are used for square dancing in Western Canada and the U.S., and polkas and waltzes are an essential part of a Western country square dance evening. Get on your dancing shoes and set your toes a-tappin! ***** The subtitle of this recordings is 14 Hoedowns, 2 Waltzes, 1 Polka, 1 Jig and that pretty much describes its contents. Harley Bray was the banjoist in the influential bluegrass band The Bray Brothers and Red

Cravens. Based in the Midwest they had a weekly radio program in Clinton, Illinois in the 1960s. Occasionally a young John Hartford would join the band on fiddle. Harley's wife Shera is a talented guitarist and dance caller. Mandolinist and bassist Phil and Fiddler Vivian Williams are well known northwest players. Vivian has won numerous titles for her old-time fiddling and the couples Bray and Williams have performed together for almost 20 years. Bluegrass Hoedown is a delightful collection of classic and lesser-known tunes played at a brisk but manageable rate for dancing or listening. Along with standards such as "Old Joe Clark," "Sugar in the Gourd," "Redwing" and "Arkansas Traveler" we are introduced to other fine dance tunes. "Glise de Sherbrooke" is a French Canadian tune just right for American square dancers. "Tennessee Grey Eagle" was learned from Jim Herd, a fiddler transplanted from Missouri to the Northwest. "Beethoven's Favorite Waltz" was collected from a book of tunes published in New York City in the 1920s and is played here in a lovely rendition by Phil on the mandolin. Probably closest to the hearts of the players is "Sam and Elzie" collected from Harley's older brother Wilson who learned it from their father Montie Monroe Bray. It is a lively tune, certainly a highlight on this fine collection. The test of any collection called Bluegrass Hoedown is whether the listener is encouraged to roll up the carpet and dance. All the while I was listening to this recording my right foot just wouldn't stay still. I'd say Williams and Bray have a real winner here. (Sing Out)

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