

Instrumentation

TIMOTHY SEAMAN—hammered dulcimer, flute, bass and alto flutes, bamboo flutes, whistle, guitars, bowed and plucked psalteries, harmonica, melodica, mountain dulcimer, voice, and percussion.

J. PAULETTE BLAIR MURPHY—keyboards on “Preservation” and “Hazel River,” piano, voice.

PHILLIP SKEENS—guitars on “Limberlost” and “The Rock”

HENRY SMITH—guitar on “Here on This Ridge,” keyboard on “The Rock” and “Hazel River.”

JOSEPH HEALEY—banjo

SUSAN RODENBURG—voice

ROWENA SEAMAN—voice



PRODUCED BY TIMOTHY SEAMAN; ENGINEERED BY TIMOTHY SEAMAN AND HENRY SMITH, WITH ESSENTIAL ASSISTANCE BY STEVEN CLARKE. RECORDED AT THE FERRIS HOUSE, COLONIAL NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK, YORKTOWN, VIRGINIA; NETWORK DYNAMICS, INC. AND THE SKYLIGHT ROOM, WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA; CHRISTIAN MEDIA RESOURCES AND THE HALLS' PIANO ROOM, MECHANICSVILLE, VIRGINIA. COMPOSED BY TIMOTHY SEAMAN, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED. © 1997

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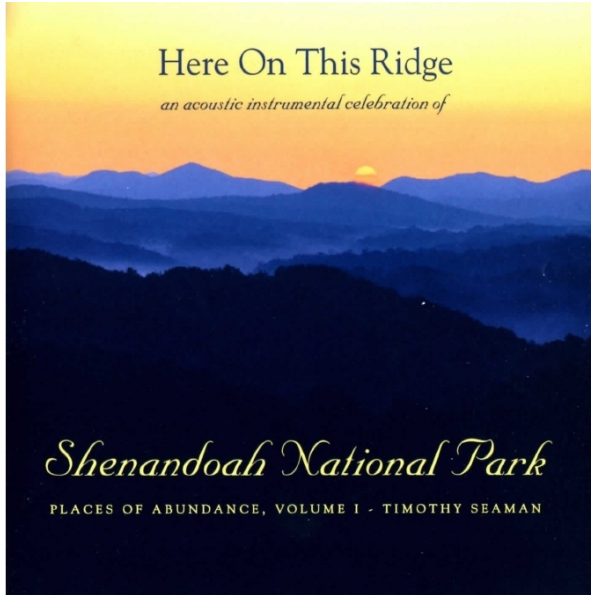
COVER DESIGNED BY KIM FURRY; PHOTO BY BUDDY MAYS, COURTESY OF VIRGINIA TOURISM CORPORATION. PORTRAIT BY LOWELL SEAMAN.

DEDICATED TO MY PARENTS, DOROTHY AND THE LATE WOODY SEAMAN, BIOLOGISTS WHO TAUGHT ME EARLY TO “LIFT UP MY EYES TO THE MOUNTAINS,” WHERE “HELP COMES FROM THE LORD, WHO MADE HEAVEN AND EARTH.”

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Here On This Ridge

an acoustic instrumental celebration of



Shenandoah National Park

PLACES OF ABUNDANCE, VOLUME I - TIMOTHY SEAMAN

1. Preservation—One grand goal of the National Park System is preservation: “to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein, and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.”

Blue Ridge Over the Rise—When we were children our parents often took us to the park. My brother Lowell and I would strain eagerly toward the moment Route 211 crested a hill and revealed a first view of Mount Marshall and Hogback. Added inspiration for this piece is Paul Sullivan’s “Love at First Sight,” on his extraordinary disc, *A Visit to the Rockies*.

2. Shenandoah —“I long to see you”—what earnest wistfulness this folk masterpiece carries in its timeless strains!

3. Hope of the Hike— (Appalachian National Scenic Trail) Benton MacKaye’s early vision persists in myriad backpackers’ lives. A “thru-hike” on the Trail is both linear and cyclic: mile after mile of new joys remind one of many past days’ experiences. The trekker progresses through rocky forested passages; soon a great serene panorama emerges. The walk resumes, and evening’s campsite affirms contented rest.

4. Appalachia: Here on This Ridge— In this mountain-dulcimer air, a fictitious mountaineer reflects on the situation some faced in the early part of this century: depleted resources in the Blue Ridge due to logging, mining, and chestnut blight. An effort to create a “Western” park in the East caused families to be moved off their mountains and hollows to the lowlands.

Spring in the Gap— Mixolydian-mode banjo dances us down the Skyline Drive into a rich cultural memory— an extravagantly long encounter with Americana.

Limberlost— At the head of White Oak Canyon lies this profound grove of ancient hemlocks rescued long ago from the axe. (This medley is dedicated to notable ethnic musicians Alisdair Fraser and Dwight Diller.)

5. Falcons Among Crags— The peregrines have returned and hatched a new generation! The liberties of the great fowl once again frolic in the highland winds.

6. The Rock— An ancient spirituality came into these hills with the Europeans—and with it such hymns in folk tradition as this discovered gem. The writer must have known much of rocks as he convincingly quoted Psalm 61: In seasons of grief, to my God I’ll repair/ When my heart is overwhelmed with sorrow and care./ From the ends of the earth unto thee will I cry:/ “Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.”

7. Hazel River— What a delight was the 1977 day hike of the two couples who would become the Smiths and Seamans—the giant hemlock, the cave falls, and forever the joyful stream!

8. My Thoughts Linger There— Though living in Tidewater, I often dwell upon the bushwhacking climb of Old Rag’s back shoulder, the Elkwallow picnics, the night under stars atop Sawmill Ridge.

9. Whitetails on High Places/Preservation reprise— Black bear, turkey, deer have all returned to own the high forests—to browse and nest in freedom and safety. J. S. Bach penned this evocative pastoral air in 1713 for the birthday of an outdoorsman duke, extolling the peace of even the animals in a wisely ruled land. May we join in the chorus of citizens’ gratitude amid the wisely ruled lands of the Parks!

10. Big Run Thrives— Once again the land rebounds: The largest fire in the park’s history yields rich new growth. And what young trees did I see today rebuilding the swath? Strong oaks! With a restatement of the overture’s fanfare, we go our ways to our separate park adventures. May we, too, be rejuvenated as the flora and fauna along Big Run.

A Word About the Composing: Many of the selections were written with specific ideas in mind. For example, two intervals are part of much of the fabric: the minor third, particularly the fifth and third steps of the diatonic scale; and the major second, particularly the notes ABBA, which, significantly, spell the word “Father” in Biblical Aramaic—a common reference to God; and these intervals are part of a pentatonic scale that is often associated with nature and with Native Americans (easily found on the black keys of the piano). Also, several dulcimer pieces were constructed according to the physical shape of the instrument, rather than written first and then adapted to the instrument. And the tune “Preservation” was built from an alphabet chart using the word “Creator.”

Shenandoah

Here On This Ridge

Shenandoah - Some say it means "Daughter of the Stars": a river and its broad valley, rimmed by the Blue Ridge thousands of feet above. The lofty Skyline Drive winds through this ridge, glides among wondrous panoramas of its park's namesake. Here, for hundreds of years, strong mountaineers lived; now the land is home to new growth of wilderness - an abundance of waterfalls, brooks, forests, and wildlife. Explore this country with us as the hammered dulcimer, flute, guitar and keyboard celebrate such a place.

1. PRESERVATION/BLUE RIDGE OVER THE RISE 6:54

2. SHENANDOAH (*traditional*) 6:32

3. HOPE OF THE HIKE 7:31

4. APPALACHIA: *Here on This Ridge/Spring in the Gap/Limberlost* 7:39

5. FALCONS AMONG CRAGS 1:03

6. THE ROCK (*traditional*) 4:34

7. HAZEL RIVER 7:27

8. MY THOUGHTS LINGER THERE 1:45

9. WHITETAILS ON HIGH PLACES/(*Sheep May Safely Graze—J. S. Bach*) 6:33

10. BIG RUN THRIVES 1:51

TOTAL PLAYING TIME 52:26 ∞

