Stoney Point

by Dix Bruce

"Stoney Point" is a cool fiddle tune arranged for mandolin from my new book/CD set Famous Mandolin Picking Tunes (Mel Bay 98420BCD). This book was originally published as Great Mandolin Pickin' Tunes with about half as many tunes. Mel Bay asked me to expand it and the current publication is the result.

Famous Mandolin Picking Tunes includes over forty, well, "famous" mandolin tunes. It's a varied collection of things I think every mandolinist should know including a little something for every situation and taste: jazz standards, classical pieces, Irish, Jewish, Italian, American and ethnic folk tunes, Gypsy, fiddle tunes, blues, waltzes, polkas, gospel, fiddle tunes, Cajun, Christmas, and swing music.

"Stoney Point" probably comes from the British Isles but it has been adopted by bluegrass players and is often performed at a lightning fast, breakdown speed. My recorded version, which you can download, is played at a moderate tempo. In all of my books I always include a very slow recording of each tune along with an up-to-speed version. Because we included so many tunes in this book, we couldn't fit both speeds on the CD. So, each one is accompanied by a medium temp recording so you can hear what each tune sounds like.

I love the way "Stoney Point" moves from G major to E minor and back again. It makes for an interesting performance. The small numbers between the standard notation and the TAB are fretting hand finger suggestions.

I've got a few other new books that I hope you'll check out on my web site: www.musixnow.com. I've talked about my "Parking Lot Picker's Songbooks" in past columns. Each one, guitar, mandolin, and banjo (co-authored with Bill Evans) is a massive 300 plus page spiral bound songbook with over 200 bluegrass, old time, and gospel standards, songs written and recorded by the greats of traditional American music: Bill Monroe, The Stanley Brothers, Flatt & Scruggs, Doc Watson, Jimmy Martin, and more. The book is packaged with two CDs so you can hear how EVERY song sounds! The printed music includes standard notation, TAB, lyrics, chords, and suggested keys for male and female vocalists.

If you're interested in swing, jazz and Gypsy Swing, my "Gypsy Swing & Hot Club Rhythm" book/CD set is right up your alley. It teaches 12 standards recorded by Django Reinhardt, Stephane Grappelli and the Quintette of the Hot Club of France along with swing/jazz chords and how to play the rhythm comp on the mandolin. Music includes standard notation, chords, TAB, lyrics, and tips on playing in the style. You'll learn by playing along with a Hot Club-style band on full-length recordings of each song. We'll jam all night long Slow versions of each song are also included so you can learn the chords and melodies at your own rate. I think this is the first book of its kind for the mandolin. There's also a separate guitar version of the set available.

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Info on all my books, CDs, and DVDs is available at www.musixnow.com.
Have fun playing the mandolin! It's the world's most fascinating smaller stringed instrument!

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