PLK ascends soapbox:

This is one of the great "anthem" tunes of the Pacific Northwest and Western Canadian oldtime fiddlers - a mark of a "real fiddler". It is notable that in a session of good fiddlers from the Washington Old Time Fiddlers Association (WOTFA), you can get this tune played, whereas mostly all you get from even the better contradance fiddlers is a compromise version that "sorta sounds like" Big John.

The point of the tune is in fact not to compromise, and do what it takes to play it. All the notes - even (or especially) those off-the-beat A notes in the second part, and the "nonstop" notes in the first and second endings that drive each part onward to the next.

When I finally owned a box w/ an "A" row, I spent 4 months of practice getting all the parts of this tune into my recalcitrant brain and fingers, and then getting them at dance speed. The only one I couldn’t get (at speed) was the middle note of the triplet in bar B2. It is my opinion that to learn this tune, one starts out by playing all the notes at whatever slow speed one can (eg 40 counts/min if necessary), then very gradually working the speed up without "giving anything away". (Imo a person who plays Kohler's can learn this tune. G'luck!)

I have my version from Laurel Andrews of Salmonberry, who played it before I had an instrument that could. Thereafter I got it again from Vivian Williams and Stuart Williams of WOFTA and Pleasures of Home; it was they who inspired me to "do what it takes".

Medleys:

Pleasures of Home, Small Pleasures 1994-present: Judy's Reel (D) /Festival du Voyageurs (Am) /Big John McNeill (A)

Grey Owl 2008: Road to Batoche (Em) / Festival du Voyageurs (Am) / Big John McNeill (A)

2007: As above w/ Oyster River (G/Bm) on the front for a 4-tune medley

Salmonberry dates = early-mid 1980's Irishman's Heart to the Ladies (A Jig) / Big John McNeill (A)

Northern Lights 2004: Cliffs of Moher (Am) / Irishman's Heart (A) / Big John McNeill (A) (or two jigs reversed)