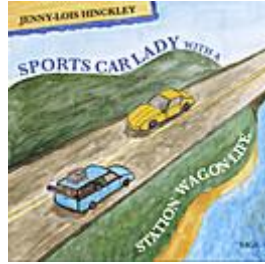


Mp3 Jenny-lois Hinckley - Sportscar Lady With A Stationwagon Life



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Debut solo album, by a long-time singer/songwriter and Classics teacher, offers mellow vocals, rich guitar, tunes that linger and unexpected lyrics - funny, beautiful, touching and (or) thought-provoking - for mostly universal moments in life 15 MP3 Songs FOLK: Modern Folk, FOLK: Gentle Details: So who is this Sportscar Lady? What is a Stationwagon Life? Lois Vivian Hinckley was born in Kalamazoo Michigan during World War II. Growing up west of Boston, I fell in love with Latin in the 9th grade at Dana Hall Later at Wellesley College I majored in Greek as well. My first ever job was (like my siblings) as a page in the Wellesley public library system. It was in the back office of the old castle-like library during 10th grade that I realized that I wanted to be a Latin teacher. After college, it only took 3 years of teaching at Dana Hall to make me realize that I didn't know enough; graduate school taught me I probably never would! After completing a Ph.D. in Greek, a (mistaken) Mrs. and an amicable divorce, I taught Classics for over 30 years on the University level: Princeton University, West Virginia University and University of Southern Maine. I've given numerous papers and published several articles and poems in the classical world, but overall I ignored the "publish or perish" warning in favor of putting most of my energy into my courses and my students. I found myself learning as much from my students as I taught to them; my (as yet) unpublished book on Homer's Iliad and Odyssey, Through a Glass Brightly: Bridges to Homer, collects what I've learned about Homer from my students' observations and questions: that his stories and his poetry offer mirrors of our own experiences. Now that my cd is "out", revising Bridges is my next big project.; it awaits final revision (now that the cd has been born)! I am recently retired from teaching, and, almost as recently, I am very happily married to Edward McCarthy. As you can tell from listening to the title cut, "Sportscar lady" has become a metaphor for my dream of being a focused, organized, elegant,

decisive person, whose house (e.g.) is always calm and orderly and (e.g.) who travels lightly. The particular image, I think, derives from my pleasure in my brother's MG-TD and Triumph TR-3 as I was growing up. "Stationwagon Life" is closer to a description of myself and my life as they are. Judging from audience reactions, there are a lot of us out there! So how come a passionate classicist ended up writing modern folk songs? Actually music goes farther back in my life than Latin or even Tolkien. Mother used to sing in the car on long trips to visit relatives (perhaps some of you remember crossing New York State on Route 20 when it took all day?) and my parents started change-ringing groups at Kalamazoo College in Michigan and Babson Institute in Massachusetts. All three children sang in school and college choruses and in church choirs, and I had lessons in piano, viola and recorder at various times. Radio and records were often playing in our house: popular records ("One of the Roving Kind"; "Get Out of Here with That ____ ____ ____"); classical music and Saturday afternoon opera broadcasts; folk music (Burl Ives, Susan Reed, Richard Dyer-Bennett, Marais and Miranda, Harry Belafonte and Jean Ritchie); and American musicals along with Gilbert Sullivan operettas. The first song I ever "wrote", around age 10, was a takeoff on "Prithee Pretty Maiden" from the G&S operetta Patience. My brother's return in 1955 from an American Friends' Service Committee work project in Mexico was a significant moment; he brought back the small guitar on which I learned my first chords. I've learned to be glad he started me in the key of C so I got used to the F chord while everything was hard anyway! I was terrifically proud when I could sing and play "Fox Went Out on a Chilly Night" and "Cindy" and "Turn Around" all by myself. Entering college in 1959, near the beginning of the folk music revival, I got a tremendous amount of practice by the "Can you play....?" method; blessed with a good ear for tunes, I learned how far 3-5 chords in any key can take you. "Sing it! and I'll see....!" Subsequent instruments have not been accompanied with such requests; accordingly my performances on banjo, mountain dulcimer, auto harp and penny whistle are thus far confined to the privacy of my own home. On my next (deo volente) CD, Turning Signals, I hope to include them all. Writing songs began again with the end of my first marriage and has continued in spurts ever since. I used to dream of making a cassette recording for sale.... Near the end of my teaching, the universe blessed me with a student who was both a skilled guitarist and a computer whiz (he was also a very stimulating class member!). It is his skills and his generosity that has made this CD possible. "So what do you teach? Music, isn't it?"-- Bridging the chasm In my first teaching job, a colleague and I sang a few times as "The Singing Schoolteachers"; we also teamed up to illustrate history through folk songs in

her American and European history classes - an activity I'd like to return to now I'm retired. In graduate school at Chapel Hill NC, I sang with a fellow Classics student several times - once in Maine at the Crossroads Cafe in Hallowell my brother and his wife helped run - as "The Identity Crisis". (The shift in names here neatly illustrates some of the changes which the 'sixties' became known for!) Of course Identity Crisis used to declare proudly (whenever we got the opportunity) that "We've sung from Maine to North Carolina!" My first regular solo gig as a singer/guitar player was at the Alchemist and Barrister in Princeton New Jersey starting in 1973-75 and from then on, in all my teaching venues, I recurrently sang in student cafes and coffeehouses or for benefits. A high point was writing some songs for the Celebration which concluded a conference on "Women in the Bible" in Morgantown. Another high point was a friend's request to compose a "Hero's Journey" song for his Hero's Journey course (from Homer to Tolkien). The idea for Jenny's Song Service may have started there. If people first saw me singing and then found out I was a college teacher, they usually asked "So what do you teach? Music?" and were often surprised to hear "Latin and Greek" - as surprised as I was, sometimes, when I thought about how far apart these two poles of my life seemed. But a chance (as we call it) encounter in a bar in Morgantown WV bridged this chasm in one phrase. A guy I was chatting with asked me some question that led to my identifying the two sides of my life. "Oh!" he exclaimed at once "You're doing the Homer thing!" Homer composed the Iliad and Odyssey and performed them. I was teaching Homer and other classical authors while composing my own and performing others' songs about what can be learned about life -- whether from studying others' experiences (e.g. recorded in classical literature) or from living one's own life with open eyes. I'm indebted to this stranger: his insight settled my psyche and (later) gave birth to chapter 7 of Through a Glass Brightly. I am well content to identify myself as a (very distant) daughter of Homer, a very much younger sister of Archilochus and Sappho and Horace. And what about "Jenny"? Jenny was born ("springing [as Athena did] full grown from the head of Zeus", as you might say) during Lois' time in graduate school. Various circumstances made it both soothing and useful to adopt "Jenny" as a name for her private, non-classical, off-duty, free-spirit, less responsible self. We all have different sides to ourselves, we all play a variety of roles - although we may not give them names! We are each both child and adult, often sibling, spouse and parent; a lot of us do a particular job and are known by it ("I'm a teacher"); most of us, I hope, are friends and colleagues, cousins and aunts, neighbors, volunteers etc. Sometimes it can be helpful - even liberating - to give a name to some particular (perhaps neglected,

perhaps overburdened) role or 'self'. At least I've found it so. Over time I began singing as Jenny Rivers. I had always liked "Jenny" as a name; "Rivers" I borrowed from Jessamyn West's novel Leafy Rivers. (I'd like to have borrowed "Leafy" too, but didn't quite have the nerve!) When Lois started teaching classics at Princeton and Jenny began singing in a local pub, it seemed more tactful to let Jenny do the singing and Lois the teaching. But I soon discovered that they helped each other: Lois' experience in handling a class occasionally gave Jenny ideas about how to work with an audience; Jenny's warmth and outreach spilled over into the classroom to let Lois become an unusually caring teacher offering "beyond the call of duty" attention to her students. Finally Lois began occasionally to "invite a guest speaker" into her lectures: after being introduced (and standing, of course, on the other side of the desk!) Jenny would sing and play English ballads which illustrated the materials Homer was working with, or teach Latin and Greek rounds to Lois' language classes, or end Lois' mythology class with "The Hero's Journey Song" (tune borrowed respectfully from Phil Ochs). At the same time, it became very clear that Jenny NEVER filled out forms or wrote recommendations! Over time, actually, other names have developed as circumstances required different skills or focuses, but you'll have to wait for Turning Signals to find out more. By naming my free spirit off-duty self, I've been able to incorporate her into my always-life to my greater comfort and (I hope) to the benefit of my small corner of the world. But - I've never forgotten one student's anxious question to her section leader, after "Jenny" had visited class: "Does she really think she's two people?" Relax! Of course I don't! And, yes! Of course! I am five or six different people! And so are you! Do you have only one outfit of clothing which you wear at work, at play, to clean house, to go out for an evening and to sleep? Have you ever had a nickname that some people - but not everyone - uses? "Join the club" of many-sided humanity! P.S. Jenny's Song Service doesn't exist yet, but if/when it does - say, early in 2006, you could request a song for your group's celebration or your sister's birthday... you'd fill out a questionnaire about the group or the person in question; you'd opt for a public domain tune or an original one; and.... you'd get a song for the occasion!

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