

SAM BARTLETT'S BIO

Sam Bartlett was born in Burlington, Vermont. The youngest of four kids, he grew up in a family that loved stunts. His mother was a compulsive practical joker and his father a soil chemist with a laboratory in his basement and garage. Experimentation and humor were a way of life for the Bartletts.

Sam began illustrating and collecting stunts 1991. A banjo and mandolin player by trade, Sam found life as a touring musician to be the perfect environment for observing a myriad of tedium-reducing games, tricks, and maneuvers, mostly done by his fellow travelers. He created *the Journal of Stuntology* to showcase his intricate cartoon descriptions of collected stunts. He made 32 issues of the zine over a 15 year period as well as self-publishing two books, *Stuntology*, and *The Big Book of Stuntology*. Workman publishing company in New York City produced a compilation of Sam's work in 2008, *The Best of Stuntology*.

Sam's life as working musician began in 1984 with the Vermont based Green Mountain Volunteers, a group performing traditional New England dance and music. GMV leader, Ben Bergstein, hired Sam to play at a contra dance though he had a repertoire of only 10 tunes. In the following years, playing for dances became Sam's obsession and main source of income, though he also ran a cider press at Chittenden Cider Mill to makes ends meet.

Sam moved to Boston in 1988 and began playing for square and contra dances all around the city and surrounding areas. He was a member of three bands that redefined the voice of traditional dance music, among them: Uncle Gizmo, Wild Asparagus, and the Clayfoot Strutters.

Though he relocated to Bloomington, Indiana in 1993 to be with his wife, Abby Ladin, and to work with the dance company Rhythm In Shoes, Sam continued his long musical relationship with Boston based composer and guitarist Larry Unger. With Unger, Sam's playing has been featured in two Ken Burns documentaries, *Prohibition* and *The Dust Bowl*. Sam's own composed music has been profiled by NPR's All Things Considered, and featured on the Thistle & Shamrock.

When not touring and writing books, Sam has recorded with a virtual who's who of traditional musicians, among them: Garry Harrison, Paul Brown, Rafe Stefanini, Grey Larsen, Pete Sutherland, Malcolm Dalglish, Jeff Goehring, Dirk Powell, David Greely, Sam Amidon, Christine Balfa, Rick Good, Sonny Landreth, Breda Smyth, Jim Higgins, Jamie Gans, Sue Sternberg, Krista Detor, Carrie Newcomer, Eric Merrill, Christopher Layer, Frank Hall, Claudio Buchwald, Stuart Kenney, Mark Hellenberg, and Eden MacAdam-Somer.