

I believe I have the best recordings Jon has ever made as he felt completely relaxed up in my loft studio, unlike commercial studios where one tends to feel under pressure.

What got me to go out and play again? It was bumping into John Mead who helps run Cambridge Acoustic Nights at CB2. He urged me to try playing solo with an acoustic guitar. So, my diary entry for 16th April 2011 says, "Played 2 songs. Very nervous, not having played guitar for ages, forgot 'Saratoga' and had to start again. Despite this I really wanted to try again!" Nerves for a long time were a big issue and I have always been determined to deal with this and the only way I could see my getting over this was to play in public as often as possible. So, as well as CB2 I regularly played at the Cambridge Folk Club.

A major move was to join Bryan Sutton's ArtistWorks on-line School of Bluegrass Flatpicking Guitar and then later, Mike Marshall's ArtistWorks Mandolin School. Having lessons with players of this calibre, and going to music camps in the US and Sore Fingers, here in the UK, has moved me on considerably as a player and this has helped build up my confidence.

I first played at the Plough and Fleece in Horningsea in 2012. I have since played in many settings but The Plough and Fleece remains my favourite. Why do I enjoy it so much? I love the fact that players of whatever level of ability are welcome. There are no big egos, the atmosphere is relaxed and fun and a wide variety of music is played. Even poems and stories are read along with the songs and instrumental tunes. It's a situation where you don't feel the pressure of being on stage, you all sit at a long table taking turns and you can accompany others if you feel you can add something. On occasions it feels as if the TransAtlantic Sessions house band is in town! I find playing with others a most rewarding experience. I earned money from playing music in semi-pro bands until I started going out on my own. Making music purely for pleasure and not being paid is immensely satisfying and being part of a musical community is what it's all about for me now.