



Rædwald Howland-Bolton (and before we start we should get that name out of the way— it's from a King of the East of England who was buried around 625AD surrounded with treasure in a 90ft long boat under a great mound of earth; and, more importantly, it's got a short 'a' at the beginning, like

'hat' not a long one like 'spade'; and anyway he prefers 'Rad')

So... Rad was born in Rochester, NY the eldest son of Ann and Richard and, since they lived in the inner city, when he started school he was in the unusual position of being one of only two white kids in the class, though in spite of being in the minority, he made a great deal of friends. When Rad was eight his father got a job with Cornell U in Ithaca N.Y. and much to Rad's dismay the family moved.

Pretty much from birth Rædwald has been exposed to an incredible variety of music; from classical and early music (really early, like 600 or so years old) to heavy metal and punk. He would listen to his father's Beatles LPs (along with other groups from the 50s, 60s and 70s) for hours on end. Since before they left Rochester Rædwald's father had performed mediaeval music semi-professionally and had even built a couple of lutes; and harps and recorders and other weird instruments were always lying around and quite naturally Rædwald began playing early music with his father so that the lute and recorder were his first instruments. Then came Band in Middle School where, as the tallest kid, he was of course given the tuba. This was also the time that he started teaching himself songs on the guitar he and his other siblings (he has four of them) would put on shows for the family and other neighborhood children.

At sixteen Rad moved back to Rochester and lived with his Grandma Nancy for a time. While living there his uncle's girlfriend taught him chord progressions for Spanish and Mexican style guitar. At eighteen Rad moved to Florida because he needed a new start. He was getting into what he liked to call "a bit of trouble" not unadjacent to substance abuse. In Florida he got to see lots of music shows from the Grateful Dead, and Bob Dylan to Cake and 311, however he did not perform much himself. At twenty-two Rad moved back to Ithaca N.Y. having again got into more substance adjacent trouble. Back in Ithaca Rad met up with an old friend who introduced him to the works of the great old man Bo Carter, and he learned some of the classic Drink and get Drunk Again. This sparked Rad's interest in old blues: he was drawn to the unique sound and personality of the songs. It was not until sometime later that Rad began to dedicate himself to studies of blues guitar. It came about that in March of 2006 he saw Doc Watson play in Ithaca, NY. At the time Rad was living and working in Syracuse and a friend at work told him about the show. To the dismay of his girlfriend, at the concert Rad bought a CD (it was a bit expensive---and worse, it cut into her clothes shopping funds), but on this CD were many great songs including Deep River Blues: originally by the Delmore brothers, Doc had made a version for solo guitar as a blues in E with the boom-chick Travis style of finger picking. This was the first song Rad got into his soul, and Rædwald has been greatly influenced by Doc from then on. Later he was introduced to Bert, a retired bluesman who knew a great many of the old blues and rags from the 1920s and 30s blues craze. He taught Rad songs

from Mississippi John Hurt, Blind Boy Fuller, Reverend Gary Davis, Bo Carter, Blind Blake and Dave Van Ronk. Rad was also introduced to a group of blues and rag players from the next generation most of whom are still alive these included; Roy Bookbinder, Jorma Kaukanen and David Bromberg, among others. Rad met with Bert every week and began playing for hours every day.

After getting a repertoire together, Rad began going to open mikes and quickly got into the local music scene in Syracuse. He started with small gigs and played shows with a local band Kh'mi. He also met Colin Aberdeen who plays with a very popular local band Los Blancos.

Colin shares Rad's enthusiasm for the old blues and they've become good friends. Rad is currently living in Rochester where he has gained quite a bit of popularity. He is still learning and developing his style and repertoire however, whether he's playing a show or busking on the street, people are always drawn to the melodic music he plays.



blues -

RÆDWALD (RAD) HOWLAND-BOLTON



OLD BLUES, RAGS,
FOLK AND JAZZ