



One December many years ago, while on walkabout in Northern Wales, I found myself with nothing but a harmonica to play Christmas carols on. The harmonica worked fine for "Joy To The World" and "The First Noel" but when it came to "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" (which is in a minor key), the harmonica (which is pitched major) wouldn't do it. Consequently, there was no alternative but to play "God Rest Ye

Merry Gentlemen" in a major key.

When Panorama started getting calls a few years ago to play Holiday gigs, I made an arrangement and we finally recorded it on our last session.

The track starts out in the traditional minor key with a solemn, reverential type of English cathedral tone but, after one time down, Patrick with his banjo and Doug on the floor tom cut in and we find ourselves in a New Orleans street party. Then, while Steve on tuba and Doug on drums divide up a half-clave pattern, I deliver the head on clarinet with Matt chasing after me on the accordion. After a two-way thing between Matt and Aurora on alto sax, Charlie (trombone) and I get into it. At the top of the last chorus I added a tambourine part to kick up the party before recapping the head (on clarinet) and pulling back into the slow minor to take it out.

The holidays are a time to party and in New Orleans folks do it their own way. So wave your hands up in the air and celebrate Christmas like ya just don't care!

Ben Schenck
Panorama Jazz Band
New Orleans, LA

Credits:

Recorded November 11th, 2014 @ Gasa Gasa, New Orleans, LA.

Ben Schenck - Clarinet, Tambourine overdubs

Aurora Nealand - Alto Saxophone, Shaker

Charlie Halloran - Trombone

Matt Schreiber - Accordion

Patrick Mackey - Tenor Banjo

Steve Glenn - Tuba

Doug Garrison - Drums

Written and produced by Ben Schenck

Session engineered at Gasa Gasa and track mixed at Listen Up! Studios by Michael Seaman

Graphic design by Daniel Murphy and Ben Schenck with additional graphics by Charlie Zeleny

Cover photo by Greg Miles