

Patsy, Donna and Roni are the three surviving children of 'Pop' and Hattie Stoneman, who founded the legendary musical family. They re-united in July 2008 to record after several years of relative inactivity. *The Stonemans Patsy, Donna & Roni* (Patuxent 183) is the result of their work in the studio. They lead off with the ballad with which the Stoneman family began their career, Sinking of the Titanic. The trio, Patsy (autoharp, jaw harp and vocals); Donna, who has focussed on evangelistic work in recent years (mandolin and vocals); and Roni, the famed member of the television show Hee-Haw (banjo and vocals), include four other songs from the family's early repertoire, The Birds Are Returning, better known as Sweet Fern, Barney McCoy, which 'Pop' recorded it in 1926, the trio number Remember The Poor Tramp Has To Live and Tell My Mother I Will Meet Her, a hymn that 'Pop' cut in 1927. Songs of more recent vintage are This Little Light Of Mine and I Feel Like Traveling On, both led by Donna, Shackles And Chains and I Forgot More Than You'll Ever Know, featuring Roni in a serious mood and in fine voice. With Donna helping on the latter it is an

excellent duet version of the Davis Sisters' country hit. Roni's banjo playing shines on Cousin Emmy's Ruby and Donna's mandolin playing, which is excellent throughout, is outstanding on Scotty's Bow, her tribute to her brother, and on Patsy's autobiographical Prayers And Pinto Beans. Donna's other original contribution, House Of The Lord, really is from the heart. Nate Grower and Merl Johnson (fiddle); Jeremy Stephens (guitar and vocals); Stu Geisbert (bass) and Tom Mindte (vocals) provide tasteful support on an album that has all the Stoneman trademarks.

