

BILL BLACK'S "MOSTLY GEMS" OLD & NEW

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HUSSEY'S PENGUIN (reel)

The musical score for "Hussey's Penguin" is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of four staves of music. The chord symbols above the staves are: Staff 1: Bm, Bm, D, G, A7, D; Staff 2: Bm, Bm, D, A, D, A7, D; Staff 3: D, Bm7, Em, D, Bm7, Em; Staff 4: D, G, Em, D, Em, A, D. The music is a reel, characterized by its rhythmic and melodic structure.

The Shackleton Expedition to the South Pole in 1909 included a young man named Hussey. For reasons best known to himself, Mr. Hussey brought his banjo along, and he is responsible for the discovery that the sound of the banjo playing Irish music would attract penguins, while other types of "Celtic" music repelled them (no kidding!) . Penguinologists and musicologists have been unable to make much sense of this (although Irish trad musicians might have their own theories). But - as they say - the research continues (or not).

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