



THE SLATE MOUNTAIN RAMBLERS

The **Slate Mountain Ramblers** is a family old-time band from Mt. Airy, NC. They formerly lived in Ararat, VA, a small community at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains. For many years, Richard Bowman, his wife, Barbara, and their daughter Marsha, have spent weekends playing music. Richard plays fiddle, Barbara the bass and Marsha plays claw-hammer banjo. The band has a winning tradition by winning and placing at fiddler's conventions they have attended throughout the years. Richard, on fiddle, and Marsha, on claw-hammer banjo, have received many individual awards. The Slate Mountain Ramblers play for shows, dances, family and community gatherings, benefits and compete at fiddler's conventions throughout the year. They have played internationally at the Austrian Alps Performing Arts Festival and in Gainsborough, England for the Friends of American Old Time Music and Dance Festival. They also lead fiddle, banjo, bass and dance workshops.

Richard Bowman is a champion fiddler, winning old-time fiddle competitions at many fiddlers conventions including Galax, Mt. Airy and Fiddler's Grove. He has been playing the fiddle for about 45 years, the last 35 plus as leader of the Slate Mountain Ramblers. Learning from local old-time fiddlers, Richard's long-bow style is easily recognizable. At fiddler's conventions, he can be found with fellow musicians in a jam session. Other weekends finds Richard and the band playing for square dances where everyone enjoys flat footing or two-stepping to a pile of fiddle tunes.

Marsha Bowman Todd is a hard driving clawhammer banjo player. Being Richard and Barbara's daughter, she has been around music since birth. Early on, she could be found listening and dancing to her Dad's fiddle music. Playing in the band for 27 years, Marsha joined the band at age 9 playing mandolin. A few years later, she switched to banjo, which she still plays. In addition to being an award winning clawhammer banjo player, Marsha also plays the two-finger banjo style. Her versatility on banjo is further evident when she puts on picks and plays three-finger bluegrass style. You may also find Marsha playing fiddle, guitar or bass. Marsha adds vocals on select tunes and occasionally gets her Dad to join in. In addition to being an accomplished musician, Marsha is also an award winning dancer.

Barbara Bowman, Richard's wife, began playing bass 27 years ago. Prior to joining the band, Barbara was square dancing and flat footing as Richard played at dances. She competes in bass and flat footing competition at conventions bringing home awards in both. Barbara has been calling square dances for several years and does workshops teaching various routines.

Randy Hiatt is a solid guitar player and singer. He has lived in Mt. Airy, NC his entire life. He began playing guitar when he was 12 years old. He was influenced by many of his family members including his Dad and Mom (Melvin and Artis Hiatt). He has played old time and bluegrass music with several bands over the years, including previously playing with the Slate Mountain Ramblers.

Slate Mountain Ramblers can be contacted by: Phone : 336 719-7875;
cells: Richard: 276 692-7305, Barbara: 276 692-7344 or Marsha: 276 692-7355;
e-mail: Barbara: bcbowman05@hotmail.com or Marsha: smrclogger@hotmail.com;
mail: 149 Fairlane Drive, Mt. Airy, NC 27030 or 5420 West Pine Street, Mt. Airy, NC 27030.