



An admirer of his music once said attending a Michael Shull concert is like being a guest on his back porch—with a lot more space. You feel at home. The personality you observe in performance is no different from the Michael Shull you might run across in the supermarket tomorrow. His songs, stories and testimony—and the extraordinary sounds he draws from a simple mountain instrument are “gentle on



the spirit and heartwarming for the soul.” The lifelong Lexington County resident and his wife Janice regularly are in demand, traversing the Southeast in their well-oiled RV. A four-time national award-winning dulcimetist, Michael has entertained at hundreds of music festivals and concert audiences. While rooted firmly in the midlands, the Shulls never pass up an opportunity to roam the mountains. Michael has become something of a perpetual “artist in residence” of the Smokies.

Everywhere I go, people want to know what part of Appalachia I’m from,” He laughs. “I’m just a Lexington County boy who got to the mountains as fast as he could.”

In concert, Michael is known and admired for his humor, charisma, and faith. He performs on the guitar, mountain dulcimer, autoharp, old time banjo, Native American flute and washboard.



**Minstrel
Of
The South**



With 10 CDs and 10 dulcimer tablature books to his credit, Michael is known nationally, mainly for his folk hymn arrangements. In a real sense, his performances are a ministry. The dulcimer has opened many doors. Listeners are awed by the range and complexity of music he derives from a three-stringed acoustic instrument. Variations of the dulcimer are centuries old. Mountain (also called

“Appalachian” or “lap”) dulcimers like Shull’s became common in rural America during the 1800s. In the early years, they typically were home-made. It is relatively easy for anyone to learn to play basic dulcimer tunes and singing accompaniments. In concert, Shull also sings and plays guitar, autoharp, clawhammer (mountain-style) banjo and for comedic, folksy percussive effects—washboard (à la Snuffy Jenkins). His spirited and spiritual concerts are a mixture of hymns, folk tunes and popular songs of times gone by. His latest CD is Hymns, Hoedowns and Family Favorites. In the works is an album of humorous songs. While at heart an advocate of the Gospel message, Shull also is an advocate of musical enjoyment for everyone. He believes practically anyone can play a dulcimer, but for weird reasons, most erstwhile players seem intimidated. “No matter where I play, someone always comes up to tell me they have a dulcimer—usually in a closet or under the bed. They bought it and/or a dulcimer recording while on a trip to the mountains.



“Most people have a desire to play a musical instrument. Most never try. Some do and give up. “The mountain dulcimer is within the reach of most people. Their level of success could be just sitting out on the porch and playing for their own enjoyment. Of course, that’s what we all play for.”



Written by Daniel Elton Harman



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