

Debby McClatchy

THOUGH she has lived most of her adult life in the Appalachians, Debby McClatchy was born in San Francisco in 1945. Her father's great-grandfather came to America from Ulster during the potato famine, was a '49er' in the Californian gold rush and founded *The Sacramento Bee*, still northern California's leading newspaper. Her mother came from a Tennessee Smoky Mountains family reaching back seven generations to Thomas Jefferson's sister. Mom would sing Carter Family songs as lullabies and music hall songs for fun.

GROWING UP amongst such a sense of history and musical heritage solidly underpins McClatchy's deep knowledge and respect for the origins of the music she makes. Her powerful songwriting and occasional use of contemporary material are directly related to and rooted in her ingrained sense of the traditional forms of the music.

BACK IN THE 1960s McClatchy was a University history student who also found employment playing guitar and banjo in ceilidh and old-time string bands. Going solo, she became a full-time, professional, musician, touring in Europe as well as in America. In 1999 she made her 25th, 'Silver Jubilee' tour of Britain.

DEBBY McCLATCHY is an expert entertainer of enormous presence and sensitivity, always in warmest rapport with her audiences, whether in an intimate club, a concert hall, a huge festival marquee or a school. She plays an enormous variety of acoustic instruments, but her main tool is her old-time mountain banjo. She is recognised as one of the finest frailers of the banjo in the accompanying style and is much valued as a workshop teacher. Her combination of good-time, old-time instrumentals, glorious singing with occasional outbreaks of freestyle Appalachian stepping and mountain fiddling - has made her one of the most popular and appreciated of traditional, performing musicians and teachers. Get her to work for you. Once you've seen and heard her, you'll want to have her back again as often as you can!

From the Press...

Sing Out! (USA) Vol. 43 #2

Debby McClatchy has shown herself to be one of our most indefatigable collectors and flawless interpreters of American traditional music.

There's away McClatchy wraps her resonant alto voice around a song that brings a real warmth and presence to this material. She's a treasure!

The Old Time Herald (USA) Vol. 6 No. 7

Debby McClatchy certainly knows how to sing old-time music. Her relaxed singing style is that of an artist who knows her music well and knows exactly how to present it.

She is one of the best old-time banjo players around; something that people who admire her singing often overlook. She demonstrates a remarkable ability to produce a soft, singing, lyrical accompaniment as well as the harder driving sound often associated with frailing style banjo picking.

Folk Roots (UK) No. 193

Old-timey and vaudeville music as it should be played.

The Washington Post (USA) October 16, 1998

McClatchy revisits seminal folk and country music with a strong voice and a time-warping blend of string band music.

Though she can scarcely conceal her affection for the period, McClatchy knows that some songs don't have to be sold, just deliver them in a simple and honest fashion and they'll sell themselves in no time at all. McClatchy preserves the essence.

A fine banjoist and guitarist, McClatchy has no difficulty turning back the clock and turning on the charm of old-timey music.

Rock V Reel (UK) Issue 32

Any chance to renew the acquaintance of this remarkable lady has to be grasped! She's a fine all-round entertainer with a captivating personality.

This album's stashed full of authentic down-home intimacy and warmth, honesty and simplicity; heartwarming and profoundly nostalgic, yet never empty or falsely sentimental, and invigorating as a breath of fresh, pure Appalachian mountain air. Absolutely addictive too!