



The Crooked Road: Virginia's Heritage Music Trail

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The Crooked Road Music Series at Heartwood to feature Allen Hick's Jam

Abingdon, Virginia - The Crooked Road celebrates the traditional music of the communities of Southwest Virginia. Many of those communities have regular gatherings of musicians for jam sessions or concerts and each gathering is different from the next. These regional gatherings are presented once a month at Heartwood in Abingdon, Virginia, by The Crooked Road as part of their Venue Showcase series. The next Venue Showcase will be at 6:30 pm on Thursday, April 23rd, and will feature the Allen Hick's Jam from Nickelsville, Virginia.

Instrument maker's shops are a popular hangout for local musicians and a natural place for jamming. That is exactly how the Allen Hick's Jam got started when loitering pickers at his woodworking shop began gathering on a regular basis to try out Allen's handmade mandolins and share some tunes.

Allen spent 32 years as a steel worker and farmed tobacco on the side. About 15 years ago he created his first mandolin and has made 22 or 23 so far. His son, Larry, has built approximately 40 guitars over the years. Allen's granddad was a furniture maker near Nickelsville so they are carrying on a family woodworking tradition.

This mostly bluegrass jam has been attended by people from all over the world, including France, Switzerland, Canada, San Francisco, New York and Pennsylvania. A few years ago, Allen put in a completely new gathering room for the Jam with a professional sound system and concessions upstairs. "Visitors seem to enjoy the Jam and it's nice to meet different people who come to it," says Allen. "Mostly, I just treat folks like I want to be treated."

Heartwood: Southwest Virginia's Artisan Gateway is located off I-81 at Exit 14 in Abingdon, VA, and features food, music, and crafts of Southwest Virginia. Admission to the concert is free and donations will be accepted for Crooked Road Traditional Music Education Program (TMEP).

For more information on The Crooked Road Music Series call (276) 492-2409 or email:
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