

Claire Lynch Biography



There were very few role models for a young woman starting out on the bluegrass highway back in the mid '70's when Claire Lynch joined a band called Hickory Wind. A native of Kingston, New York, who has lived in Northern Alabama since the age of 12, Claire was offered a position in the band, decided she was going to be a bluegrass singer, and that was pretty much that. After changing its name to the Front Porch String Band, the group worked regularly throughout the Southeast over the next several years, becoming fan favorites on the strength of its open-minded musical approach and incredible lead singer.

But by 1981, despite a handful of well-received albums (including Claire's first solo effort, *Breakin' It*) and increasing word-of-mouth acclaim, the band had tired of the grind and called it quits. A decade would pass before the band regrouped, but Claire put the time to good use. In addition to raising a family, she launched dual careers as a songwriter (her songs have been recorded by Patty Loveless, the Seldom Scene, Cherryholmes, Kathy Mattea, the Whites and Stephanie Davis) and a session vocalist. Her exquisite harmonies have graced albums by such leading artists as Emmylou Harris, Dolly Parton, Linda Ronstadt, Patty Loveless, Pam Tillis, Kathy Mattea, Jesse Winchester, Sarah Watkins and Ralph Stanley.

A re-energized Front Porch String Band roared back onto the scene with their 1991 album, *Lines and Traces*. The success of that album and the band's resumed touring led to Claire's second solo album, the critically-acclaimed *Friends for a Lifetime* in 1993. Next came the Grammy-nominated *Moonlighter* in 1995, followed by 1997's sublime *Silver and Gold*, which also received a Grammy nomination. During the next several years on the fast-track the Front Porch String Band evolved into one of the sharpest, most exciting post-modern bluegrass bands on the circuit. Their last recording effort was *Rounder's Love Light*, a collection more-than-half comprised of original Claire Lynch songs and which was described as "a masterpiece... an Americana programmer's true delight."

In 2000, husband and mandolinist Larry Lynch, founder and instrumental mainstay of the band from the beginning decided to follow his ever-increasing musical passion for Celtic style picking. For the next few years, Claire enjoyed another hiatus from the road while searching out new players. In the fall of 2004, she formed the Claire Lynch Band and began extensive touring.

In the Winter of 2005, Claire signed her second three-album deal with Rounder Records. The first release, *New Day* (March '06), was a top favorite pick for several publications, scored a #1 song on the National Bluegrass Survey and an IBMA nomination for "Song of the Year". Next came the anthology collection, *Crowd Favorites* (October 2007) which earned another couple of top ten positions on the survey. Ms. Lynch describes her follow-up CD, *Whatcha Gonna Do* (September 2009) as "Americana-inflected bluegrass." It took the #1 spot on the January 2010 BMP national bluegrass CD chart and was included in several "Top Pick" CD lists for 2009. Find out more about Claire by visiting www.clairelynch.com