

Review: Joe Mullins And The Radio Ramblers - Tuned In

Posted By Richard Thompson On 17th August 2008 @ 19:57 In [Bluegrass recording news](#)



Joe Mullins has enjoyed a very active career in bluegrass for over 25 years, beginning while still at high school when playing with his father, the highly esteemed Paul 'Moon' Mullins, in the Traditional Grass, then in the stellar band Longview. Since the turn of the century, he has worked on a couple of award-winning projects and in the process been honoured for his banjo playing. In between he has worked on various Ohio radio stations promoting bluegrass as a DJ. Presently, Mullins owns and operates a network of three south-west Ohio radio stations, playing classic country, bluegrass and Gospel music.

With [The Radio Ramblers](#) - Adam McIntosh, once of The Dry Branch Fire Squad (guitar and vocals), Evan McGregor, who previously has had experience playing with the Wildwood Valley Boys and The James King Band, on fiddle and vocals, Mike Terry (mandolin and vocals) and Tim Kidd (bass and drums) - Mullins is effectively combining both jobs, having a band whose primary purpose is performing at Classic Country Radio promotions. Like Topsy, demand to hear the Radio Ramblers grew and grew and they released this CD.

As mentioned earlier, Mullins grew up on traditional bluegrass and *Tuned In* presents more of the same, beginning with a novel recording of an intro to a bluegrass radio show after the listener has tuned in. It's a simple, brief, but effective way to capture audience attention. What follows is a balanced mix of four secular and four sacred songs and two instrumentals. In the first category is *My Blue Eyed Darlin'*, not to be confused with the popular Monroe song of that title, a song about a lost love, *Each Minute Seems A Million Years*, with a neat bluesy fiddle ending, *Poet With Wings*, from that illustrious song writing team of Pete Goble and Leroy Drumm, and Carter Stanley's *Baby Girl*.

The four Gospel tracks are Jeff Tolbert's song of praise, *I Owe It All To Thee*, the sterling a cappella effort, *Deeper Than The Stain*, *When I've Traveled My Last Mile*, which is very reminiscent of the Boys From Indiana best work, and *Brand New Man*, penned by McIntosh and the only original offering in this set.

The lead vocals are strong and sure and the various blends of harmony singing are well arranged and pleasing to the ear.

Mullins displays award-winning banjo-picking on the standard *Bending The Strings*, while *East Tennessee Blues* displays some fine instrumental teamwork topped off by a great guitar break.

Tuned In is good, solid traditional bluegrass with a touch of class in the right places.

Footnote:

Joe Mullins can be heard spinning discs on the Ohio airwaves each weekday from 2pm to 5pm at AM 1500 WBZI Xenia, AM 1090 WKPI Wilmington and AM 1130 WEDI Eaton and live on line at www.myclassiccountryp.com.

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