



GETTING TO KNOW YOU _____

Dawn Hayes

Hello, my name is Dawn Hayes and I have been a member of Silver Strings for about 7 years. I play the hammered dulcimer and you'll see me at all the monthly meetings and most of the playdates smiling happily and playing my dulcimer. I was born in Battle Creek at the Percy Jones Military Hospital, while my father was in the army, and then our family moved to Big Rapids to help my Dad's parents run their family farm. I remember my 2 sisters and 1 younger brother and me hand milking cows, egg gathering from sometimes mean hens, canning fruits and vegetables, living without electricity and even going to a one-room country schoolhouse.

It was there that I fell in love with country life and also it's music. My Grampa played the banjo, and one of my sisters is now beginning to play the banjo. My other sister has begun to play the mountain dulcimer, and I played the clarinet.

I started the clarinet when I was in 3rd grade and played the B flat, E flat, and alto clarinets all through my school and college years, in bands, marching bands and orchestras. I participated in many district, regional and state "Band" and "Solo and Ensemble" competitions while in school.

While earning a BA degree in Elementary Education at Oakland University, I met my husband, Ron. We got married, I taught 3rd Grade in Sparta, and Ron worked at Consumers Power Company. Soon we were blessed with 2 boys, Jeff and Scott. Jeff and Scott were not that interested in music, and at that time I wasn't either. But now, since they are both married and have sons (Gavin, 1 year, and Asher, 3 years) music has made a surprise entrance back into our family. Asher loves the hammered dulcimer, already holds the sticks correctly, and can hit out some melodies while I point to the strings he is to hit. Gavin likes to bounce to the beats, while his other Grandmother plays her mountain dulcimer. Watch out Silver Strings... you might get 2 more future members! I returned to Central Michigan University, where I earned a Masters Degree in Library Science, and I recently retired from the Northville School System as a Library Media Specialist.

You might wonder how I ended up playing the hammered dulcimer and joining Silver Strings. I have always loved Celtic Music, and since I retired and had some extra time, I decided to try something different. After buying a hammered dulcimer, I located Mary Lou Battley in Northville, started taking lessons, and you guessed it - I loved the instrument! Mary Lou introduced me to Silver Strings, and here I am. I now play in a "Hammer Harmony" dulcimer group as well as Silver Strings. I have several other hobbies I like to do also... knitting, cross stitching, reading historical fiction books, and I belong to a Mystery Book Club. I have quite a collection of hand-crafted nutcrackers from Germany. I have even started to play the tin whistle, but the best thing I do is spend 1 full day each week with my grandsons.

Ron and I have 2 dreams - one is to sell our condo in Novi and build a log home up North on a small quiet inland lake, and to go to Dublin, Ireland, if they ever get a bridge built over the pond to get there (I don't like flying). Life is an adventure, and full of dreams and surprises. Somehow music has helped open some of these doors for us. The next time you are at Silver Strings, look around for me. I'd like to tell you all about my 2 grandsons' adventures into the dulcimer world, and also how the bridge to Ireland is coming along.