



## GETTING TO KNOW YOU . . . Kay Rowe

HELLO, my name is Kay Rowe, I haven't been a member of Silver Strings very long but am so happy I finally found you. I was raised near South Lyon and Northville, went to the one room schoolhouse called Worden School (anyone remember), and graduated from the old Northville High School. I play the hammer dulcimer, penny whistle, piano, organ and did play the clarinet a long time ago.

I came from a busy and musical family. I have 2 brothers - one played the trumpet and later taught high school band. The other played the string bass in a Jazz group in New York City and Miami. I have one sister who played the piano, and is still a private piano teacher in Brighton. My mother sang and played the piano and my dad played the radio. And me... I played the clarinet. I remember my first clarinet my folks bought me when I was 10 years old and in the fifth grade. It was a metal one - remember those? I played the clarinet for over 30 years, all through school, college, and even in the Ann Arbor Symphony for many years.

I attended U of M, where I met and married my husband Rich. We both majored in music education and started careers teaching. I taught music in the middle school and Rich taught band and orchestra in all the Ann Arbor Public Schools. We have 3 children, and they are all musicians. Our son plays the baritone horn, and our two daughters are professional violin and cello players. Since we are now retired, we get to see and hear them perform a lot.

You may wonder how I ended up at Silver Strings, playing the hammered dulcimer and penny whistle. Well, one time while Rich and I were vacationing in Virginia Beach, we heard a man playing a dulcimer on a boat. I was fascinated with it's sound, and mentioned it to a friend who plays with Rich in the Dodworth Saxhorn Band. He knew a lady who had one in her basement gathering dust. The lady loaned it to me, and I started lessons with Mary Lou Battley. But now the best part - remember the Dodworth Saxhorn Band my husband is in ? They happened to be playing at the Northville Victorian Festival, where Silver Strings was playing also, and just like that I found what I was looking for! That day I also found out about the Evert Funfest, and last summer I attended it and bought my first own dulcimer. It's funny how things happen !

I love art, drawing and painting, and 15 years ago I opened my own studio in Plymouth called the Village Artist Studio, where I teach and exhibit art. I also am director of Braille Beats, which offers a summer program to blind children all across the USA, offering classes on art, music, and independent living at the Lions Bear Lake Camp in Lapeer. I also host 2 annual retreats for women artists at Crystal Mountain Resort up north. Besides these activities, I play the organ at the Briarwood Baptist Church in Ann Arbor, and help with their Awana Program. Although music and art keep me busy, I love to sew and have sewn my own Victorian dress to wear for our playdates. Rich and I live on 4 acres we call our small farm, along with 3 llamas, 18 chickens, 4 cats, some woods and pasture lands. Every night Rich and I JAM - me on my dulcimer, and Rich on his guitar- it's our way to relax and appreciate our happy lives together. To me, music is a way to express yourself to others in a positive loving way. Look us up at the meetings- we are always together ready to meet new friends.