



Karen Collins & THE BACKROADS BAND

KAREN COLLINS: Vocals, rhythm guitar, fiddle; IRA GITLIN: Lead guitar, harmony vocals; GEFF KING: Bass, vocals; ROB HOWE: Drums



Karen Collins' Songwriting Awards:

- South Florida Folk Song Contest (2006)
- Susquehanna Folk Song Contest (2006)
- Billboard World Songwriting Contest
- Great American Song Contest
- Mid-Atlantic Song Contest

Karen Collins

Honky Tonk - Roots Country - Singer/Songwriter

Country singer and coal miner's daughter, Karen Collins writes exceptional songs that she delivers in a traditional style – Hazel Dickens meets Loretta Lynn. Who says they don't make 'em like they used to!

Growing up in rural southwest Virginia, she loved the oak covered mountains that surrounded her, but they blocked out most radio signals during the day.

**“...Collins takes a no frills,
authentic approach to her music”**

—Sing Out Magazine, February 2005

At night however, the signals broke through, and on Saturday nights Karen looked forward to hearing the distinctive sounds of the Grand Ole Opry. Listening to the Opry, singing hymns in church

with her sister, and cultivating a deep appreciation for lyrics and harmony, it was only a matter of time before Karen began to perform country music. But to start on her musical journey she needed to get her hands on a guitar...

“When I was 10, Mom found out that there was an old, unplayed guitar at her family home in North Carolina and promised the next time we visited N.C., I could have the guitar. The months crawled by as I waited for the trip to N.C. When we got there, Mom dug out the old guitar and I was ecstatic to finally be getting an instrument. Unfortunately the guitar was laid on a bed where my aunt accidentally sat on it and broke off the neck. I cried for hours.

The next chance for a guitar didn't come until college when I traded a white knit dress for my friend's beat up guitar (she got the best end of the deal). I finally had a guitar, but it was close to unplayable with steel strings that cut into my fingers. Eventually, Mom saved up enough S&H stamps to get me a slightly better “Green Stamp” guitar that made it easier to strum and sing along with records.

Fresh out of college, I took my first paycheck and marched to the local music store to put down a deposit on a guitar that was easier on my fingers and sounded half way decent.”

Karen's early West Virginia influences and passion for country music shine brightly in her songs and her singing. Her current bands include The Blue Moon Cowgirls, featuring the high lonesome sound of three part harmonies and Squeeze Bayou, a popular Washington, D.C. area Cajun dance band. On “Tail Light Blues”, her latest recording, Karen plays with her newest group, the Backroads Band, which is made up of some the area's best country musicians. The CD features eight songs penned by Karen and shows off her recently discovered knack for award winning songwriting.

“I wish Ernest [Tubb] could have heard your songs.”

— Buddy Charleton (pedal steel player with Ernest Tubb in the '60s), October 2006



<http://karencollins.net>