

For Immediate Release
The Schoharie River Center
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The Whitetop Mountain Band, Sandy Shortridge, and Julie Shepherd-Powell are the featured musicians highlighting the **Crooked Road Tour**, a unique musical tour which is making a brief stop in the Capital District on April 7, 2016 for a once-in-a-lifetime evening of music and dance from Virginia's "Crooked Road." The Schoharie River Center (SRC) and the New York Folklore Society (NYFS) have partnered to bring this unique celebration of the "roots of country music" to New York's Capital District.

The Crooked Road: Virginia's Heritage Music Trail concert celebrates the traditional music that has been kept by families and communities of Southwest Virginia since colonial times. Settlers of this mountainous region since the 1700's have brought various ingredients – a cappella gospel music from German tradition that lives in the Old Regular Baptist churches today; spirituals, emotive singing and a musical gourd we now call a banjo from African tradition; and ballads and fiddles brought by the Scots-Irish and English. Mixed together, these ingredients have produced one of the richest musical traditions on earth. This region produced the Carter Family, the first family of Country Music; Jim and Jesse, Grand Ole Opry stars and one of the most innovative bluegrass groups of the golden era of bluegrass; Ralph & Carter Stanley, who took their home place and its mountains and distilled their very essence down into songs we can all sing. But the real heart and soul of The Crooked Road are the everyday folks who keep this music in their homes, country stores, in churches, and in weekly jam sessions. The variety of it is amazing - old time string bands, a cappella gospel, blues, 300 year-old ballads, bluegrass, and more! It is a music tradition that is as vibrant today as it has ever been.

FEATURED ARTISTS:

Whitetop Mountain Band – The Whitetop Mountain Band is one of the busiest groups in the Appalachians, performing concerts and for dances in America and abroad. They have deep roots in mountain music and their members have done much to preserve the Whitetop region’s style of old time fiddling and banjo picking. They are a tour de force of playing, singing, and dance, and they are gifted entertainers as well.

Julie Shepherd-Powell – An award-winning flatfoot dancer and clawhammer style banjo player, Julie has made Appalachian music and dance a lifelong study. Julie has taught old-time banjo and flatfooting all across the Southern Appalachian Mountains, and has called square dances from Knoxville to New York. She also performs with the Railsplitters, a high-energy Appalachian old-time string band.

Sandy Shortridge - Sandy Shortridge is a singer, songwriter, guitarist, and performer who has lived in the mountains of Southwest Virginia all her life. She is one of four daughters from a coal mining family in Buchanan County. A master storyteller through song, Sandy conveys the emotions and pride that many mountain people share for their home and culture. As folklorist Joe Wilson noted, Sandy’s music has a power derived from “three chords and the truth”, an often spine-tingling combination.

The Concert will take place on April 7, 2016 at the Schoharie River Center, 2047 Burtonville Road, Esperance. The Schoharie River Center’s Cultural Center – an historic 1857’s church retrofitted as a performance venue - provides an opportunity for an intimate audience interaction with this national tour. Advanced tickets are \$10.00 for SRC and NYFS members; \$15.00 for non-members. Tickets will be \$20.00 at the door. For information and to purchase tickets, visit the website of the Schoharie River Center, www.schoharierivercenter.org. Support for this tour comes from the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency.

