

*Meet the Commonwealth Bluegrass Band ...*

## **Commonwealth Bluegrass Band**

The Commonwealth Bluegrass Band is a 5-piece Bluegrass band based in central Virginia. The band has been together since 2012, quickly building a fan base in central Virginia and beyond. In February, 2014 the band released its first well received self-titled CD. They followed up by releasing a second CD in 2018 – Love Reunited. It contains fresh arrangements of old songs as well as 6 original songs from within the band.

Band members include Randy Cook from Mechanicsville, VA on Mandolin, Malcolm Pulley from Moseley, VA on Banjo, Wally Hughes from Round Hill, VA on Fiddle and Dobro, Mike Bailiff from Chesterfield, VA on Guitar, and Joe Currence from Powhatan, VA on bass.

The band features hard driving traditional (and more) Bluegrass numbers including many original songs. All band members take turns singing lead providing a diverse but well balanced sound that has been appreciated by audiences throughout the region. Malcolm brings original songs to the band; best known for penning the bluegrass songs In The Gravel Yard by Blue Highway and These Old Pictures by James King.

Additional information including Biographical Information on band members can be obtained from the band page at [www.pulleytunes.com](http://www.pulleytunes.com)

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## **Randy Cook**

*Mandolin, Lead and Harmony Vocals*

Randy Cook plays mandolin and sings lead and harmony vocals with the Commonwealth Bluegrass Band. Randy began his musical career during his high school days when he started playing electric guitar with a local country band. While attending Virginia Tech, Randy became interested in Bluegrass music and started playing guitar with the June Apple Band, which performed at various college events and festivals in southwest Virginia.

Randy returned to the Richmond area after graduation and helped form the well-known country-rock band, **Second Helpin'**. While playing with

**Second Helpin'**, Randy started playing the pedal steel guitar, being influenced by great players such as Sneaky Pete, Buddy Emmons and Tom Brumley. The group enjoyed great regional success for many years and appeared on shows with national acts such as **Ricky Skaggs** and **Johnny Paycheck**.

His love of Bluegrass music kept him interested in playing acoustic guitar and mandolin. In the late 1990's Randy joined with banjo great James Bailey (formerly with The Country Gentlemen), Malcolm Pulley and Doug Ganey to form **James Bailey & Company**. The group recorded two CD's and introduced Randy to Bluegrass music at the national level. When not performing with the Commonwealth Bluegrass Band, he continues to play the steel guitar with **The Honky Tonk Experience**. Randy resides with his wife and two daughters in the Mechanicsville area of Hanover County.



### **Malcolm Pulley**

*Banjo and Harmony vocals*

Banjo player Malcolm Pulley started playing banjo around age 12 under the tutelage of his father, Malcolm Pulley, Sr. After high school, he joined several local bluegrass bands including **Dixie Reign**, and **Virginia Rail**. Malcolm recorded with several local groups and eventually recorded a demo of 10 original songs, including "**In The Gravel Yard**", which was later recorded by Blue Highway and nominated for **IBMA song of the year** in 1996. In the mid 90's, Malcolm met renowned banjo player, James Bailey. Malcolm and James set out to form a band, and with Randy Cook on guitar and Doug Ganey on bass, formed **James Bailey &**

**Company**. The band recorded two well received CD's before disbanding.

Around 2005, Malcolm joined the Jackie Frost Ensemble playing banjo and mandolin. Their first CD, "Calliope" was nominated for **song of the year** and **album of the year** at the **2006 independent Music Awards**. The band recorded one more CD in 2007, "Cold Lonely Blues".

As a songwriter, Malcolm has had songs recorded by Blue Highway, Doyle Lawson and Quicksilver, James King, Tina Adair (with Jerry Douglas and Chris Thile), Paul Adkins, James Bailey & Company, Mill Run, Michelle Nixon and Drive, and Jackie Frost, as well as many other local and Regional bands, including groups from Italy, Australia, and Canada.



## **Joe Currence**

*Bass and Vocals*

Joe has been playing bluegrass in Central Virginia most of his life. He is well known for founding and leading the Willis River band, playing guitar and singing lead. Joe now plays bass and handles some singing duties with the Commonwealth Bluegrass Band. His guitar playing and singing influences include Tony and Wyatt Rice, Josh Williams, and Rickey Wasson. Joe makes his home in Powhatan, VA.

## **Wally Hughes**

*Fiddle, Lead and Harmony Vocals*

Wally is an excellent singer and multi-instrumentalist originally from Delaware, now residing in Northern Virginia. Wally started playing Dobro with his parent's family band when he was 11 and then moved on to the fiddle and other instruments. For a number of years he fronted his own band in Delaware while recording and playing with other groups from the area as well. He recorded and played in a band with Steve Huber in the early 80s and has performed with Valerie Smith and Liberty Pike, Mike Auldridge, Bill Emerson, Mike Munford and many other top DC bluegrass musicians since moving to Northern Virginia.





## **Mike Bailiff**

*Guitar, Lead and Harmony Vocals*

Mike is a new resident of Virginia after making a work related move from North Carolina where he was well known for his singing and guitar playing. He has a beautiful old Martin guitar that he has restored. Mike and his wife now make their home in Chesterfield. He is a converted classic rock listener after being turned on to the Seldom Scene. When he is not playing music, he enjoys classic cars.