

Slim Harrison - Sunnyland Music: Biography

For over 40 years, Slim has performed at Schools and Festivals, Hoedowns & Throwdowns all over North America and around the world.

Considered a "Self-taught" multi-instrumentalist, storyteller & Barn Dance caller, Slim says he, "learned a little bit from everyone I met as I traveled around this great country and around the world!" His greatest joy is sharing the music & dances of America and the world with children & adults.

Slim has had the privilege of performing with Pete Seeger & Tao Rodriegez (at Kennedy Center), Bud & Ola Belle Reed, John Jackson, Patsy Montana, Blind Reverend Pearly Brown, Ella Jenkins, Keter Betts, Jean Ritchie, John "Kinderman" Taylor, Ralph Lee Smith, Guy Davis, Bill Spence and numerous other musicians at festivals, conferences, hoedowns, house concerts & street corners.

Slim is at home on the Main Stage or back porch, leading a march at the White House with Caesar Chavez or a small town "Jugband Parade" with his children's participatory jugband, "The Sunnyland Band". He builds banjos & dulcimers in his workshop at Sugartree Farm & leads workshops with special needs children making stomper-doodles or whammy-diddles.

He has called numerous dances in his barn and 2 Inaugural Barn Dances, as well as a country wedding in Estonia, an "Americana Hoedown" in New Delhi, India and even a barn dance for the 1980 U.S. Olympic team.

He often plays the fiddle or banjo while calling "Afri-lachian" Barn Dances and invites folks to join in with washtub bass, washboards & skiffle-boards, stumpf-fiddles, jugs, etc.

He has been backed up for hoedowns by professional & semi-professional bands including: The Barnstormers, Piney Mountain, Fiddlestyx, Double Decker, South Mountain, Wherligig Celtic, Critton Hollow, The Corn-dodgers, The Sunshine Skiffle Band, New and Used Bluegrass, and many others over the years.

Slim is a "Master Artist" with the Wolf Trap Institute for Early Learning through the Arts and full-time "Artist in Residence" with MD & PA State Arts Councils - in the Artists in Education & Touring Artists Programs.

CONCERTS: Slim's school concerts, titled: "Exploring the Roots of American Folk Music", teach children about the many cultures that brought different flavors to the American Musical Gumbo. Students are given an opportunity to join the "Sunnyland Band" and play along on spoons, jugs, washboards, skiffleboards, limberjacks, washtub bass, PA Dutch "stump-fiddles", African tambourines, Cajun frattrois, Native American whammy-diddles, Chinese "Gao" bead drums, Latin maracas, castañuelas & guiros.

Slim also performs Nationally & Internationally, either solo or with the "Barnstormers" (see links) & the "Rock Candy Cloggers" in concerts, school residencies, festivals, barn dances, conferences and library concert series.

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE PROGRAMS: Workshop Residencies teach how to make & play various instruments as well as teaching regional folk dances for an All School Hoedown where the students become the band while Mr. Slim calls the figures for an Afri'lachian Hoedown/Fiesta. In the evening, a Family Hoedown gets the whole family out on the floor dancing!

FESTIVALS: Performances include "Good Old Time Mountain Music" with the "Barnstormers String Band" and/or the "Sunnyland Band", a jug band where kids get to play in the band as well as dance & sing along. The "Rock Candy Cloggers" often perform with both the Barnstormers & the Sunnyland Band. Slim provides accompaniment with Fiddle, Banjo, Resophonic Guitar, Jaws Harp, Spoons, Jug and his one of a kind "Kazoozafone" which has 3 harmonicas, 4 Kazoos, dual airhorns, duck call and a siren whistle! If time allows, Slim often slips in a tune on the Mountain Dulcimer, Hammer Dulcimer, Autoharp, Mandolin, or Native American Mouthbow/Songbow.

BARN DANCES & HOEDOWNS: Slim is also an accomplished Dance caller and Clogger and leads even the greenest beginners in some simple hoedown dances: Virginia Reel, Zodiac, Alabama Gals, Heel-Toe Polka, Duck for the Oyster, Texas Star and maybe even the Cotton Eyed Joe! Slim can even teach the "Mason Dixon Clogging Style" in 3 easy steps!

THE PEACEWEAVERS: Slim Harrison & Brenda Ambush Harrison present a residency program through the Maryland State Arts Council which includes an introductory concert of "Songs & Stories of Peace from Around the World", several workshops where the children create a "Peaceweavers' Wheel" (see photos) and learn stories, dances & songs to perform for the rest of the school at a final concert.

RESUME:**SLIM HARRISON****SUNNYLAND MUSIC & MULTICULTURAL ARTS****TRADITIONAL AMERICAN FOLK MUSICIAN & DANCE CALLER**

Sugartree Farm: 16530 Eyler Valley Rd, Emmitsburg, MD 21727

Office: 301-271-7928 Cell: 301-639-5178

www.sunnylandmusic.com or Email: sunnyland@erols.com

OBJECTIVE: To preserve America's rich Multi-Ethnic Heritage of Traditional Folk Music, Stories, and Dances by sharing them with children's & adult's audiences locally, nationally, and globally. To foster diversity awareness in order to increase cooperation and promote non-violent conflict resolution.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

1982-Present WOLF TRAP INSTITUTE FOR EARLY LEARNING THROUGH THE ARTS: Master Teaching Artist/Artist in Residence; Headstart/Pre-K & Kindergarten Classes, Workshop Instructor-"ARTSPLAY" Teacher Training Workshops. Teaches WOLF TRAP HEADSTART and HIGHSCOPE curriculum through American and World folk music, stories, & dances. Conducts residency programs & "ARTSPLAY"-Teacher Training Workshops as a part of National Arts Education programs of Wolf Trap Institute for Early Learning Through the Arts. Created "World Beat" & "Multicultural Roots" programs. Aug. '94-Selected as "Master Artist" to lead Teachers' Workshops and Classroom Residencies in schools and at Wolf Trap Institute, Kennedy Center, and nationwide. Jan. '06-Selected as one of 3 Master Artists to begin Wolf Trap Education programs in Elementary Education. Aug '07 commissioned as one of 5 Master Artists to create "SMALL BITES" program nationally. July 2011 featured performer for Wolf Trap Institute's 30th Anniversary Celebration. October 2013, Chosen as a Wolf Trap "STEAM" Master Artist to create and implement Project Based Arts Integrated "STEM" Science, Engineering and Math Residencies.

1982-Present MD & PA STATE ARTS COUNCIL-ARTIST IN EDUCATION/ARTIST IN RESIDENCE: Performing Artist in Schools throughout State of Maryland. Performing Artist in Residence, one-two week residencies. Also: Artist in Residence for VERY SPECIAL ARTS OF MARYLAND. Uses a "down-home, country style" approach in teaching American Folk Music, Stories, and Dances with focus on "Multi-Ethnic Roots". Invites audience participation and direct, "hands-on" experiences. Instruments include: fiddle & fiddlesticks, banjo, autoharp, jaws harp, guitar, slide guitar, songbow, mountain dulcimer, hammer dulcimer, washtub bass, jug, spoons, whammy-diddles, limberjacks, etc.

Program titles include: "Exploring the Roots of American Folk Culture", "Sunnyland Band", "Recycled Instrument Building Residencies" and the "Peaceweavers Wheel" w/Brynda Ambush Harrison.

1979-Present SUNNYLAND MUSIC AND MULTICULTURAL ARTS: Founder and Owner, Self-taught Musician, Educator, Storyteller, Folk Instrument Builder, Performer, and Dance Caller. Builds, sells and performs on Traditional American Folk Instruments including banjos, Mt. dulcimers, zithers, whammy-diddles, limberjacks, etc. Sponsors festivals, barn dances, field trips, and workshops on his historic 18th Century working farm. Performs as a folk musician, barn dance caller, and storyteller at festivals, conferences, schools, community functions, and barn dances throughout Maryland, the U.S., and Overseas.

1978-1979 VERMONT COUNCIL ON THE ARTS: Community Artist-in-Residence. Taught Traditional American Folk Music, Stories, and Dances to children and adults in Public Schools, Community Centers, Rutland County Jail and Vermont Achievement Center (for children with physical, emotional, and mental challenges). At V.A.C., worked in partnership with the Music Therapist for a full school year.

1971-1978 NATURE INTERPRETER, OUTDOOR ED. INSTRUCTOR

Studied Environmental Education at the Chesapeake Bay Foundation & the University of Maryland Baltimore County.

Instructor at the Smithsonian Institution's Chesapeake Bay Center for Environmental Study: Rhode River Outdoor Ed. Project, Edgewater, MD
Nature Interpreter at Manidokan & Highroad Nature Centers, MD & VA
Trail Guide, Musician, Dance Caller, Farm & Wilderness, Plymouth, VT
Taught ages 8-18 & adults about nature, hiking, canoeing, dances, etc.

NOTABLE PERFORMANCES:

- 1971 UNITED FARMWORKERS FESTIVAL, Washington, D.C. (Guitarist & Songleader w/Cesar Chavez & the "Boycott Marching Kazoo Band")
- 1972 KOINONIA FARM CELEBRATION, Americus, GA (Performed with Rev. Pearly Brown) Koinonia was the birthplace of Habitat for Humanity
- 1973 THUNDER BAY FEST, Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada (Children's Concert & Family Dance)
- 1974 BRANDYWINE FESTIVAL, Brandywine, PA -invited to perform on the Main Stage with Ola Belle Reed and Family
- 1976 SMITHSONIAN FOLKLIFE FEST, Wash., D.C.-Slim & Boots invited to perform with John Jackson
- 1977-2003 INTERDEPENDENCE DAY FEST, Farm & Wilderness, VT (F&W String Band Leader & Dance Caller)
- 1977-1979 NEW ENGLAND FOLK FEST, Dartmouth Univ., Hanover, NH w/F&W String Band (Band Leader & Dance Caller)
- 1979-2009 SUGARTREE MAYFEST & SUGARTREE FALL FROLIC/HOEDOWN, Sugartree Farm, Emmitsburg, MD -Dance Caller with "Piney Mountain String Band".
- 1980 DANCE CALLER FOR U.S. SUMMER OLYMPIC TEAM, Wash, D.C. (with "Double Decker String Band")
- 1982 SMITHSONIAN HOLIDAY CELEBRATION, "The Barnstormers" Slim, Tom Jolin, Dave Milefsky & Fred Paul
- 1984 &86 INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S FEST, Wolf Trap, Vienna, VA (Performer/Caller) with "The Sunnyland Band"
- 1985 METROPOLITAN LEARNING CENTER, Portland, OR, (Artist in Residence/Dance Caller)
- 1985-1986 ARTSCAPE FESTIVAL OF PERFORMING ARTS, Baltimore, MD (Featured Performer with the Sunnyland Band)
- 1986, 98, 02 KENNEDY CENTER FOR PERFORMING ARTS, Wash., D.C. (Featured Performer) w/Pete Seeger & w/Rock Howland & Barnstormers
- 1986-1987 DEER CREEK FIDDLER'S CONTEST AND FESTIVAL, Westminster, MD (Fiddle Judge)
- 1987 MANAGUA CULTURAL ARTS CENTER, Nicaragua, C.A. (Cultural Exchange Performing Artist)
- 1988-91 WINTERSONG FEST, Frederick, MD-Co-Founder, Performer/Caller with John McCutcheon & the Barnstormers and with Patsy Montana, Piney Mountain, Barnstormers and Critton Hollow String Band
- 1989 WINTERHAWK FESTIVAL, Hillsdale, NY (Featured Children's Performer with The Sunnyland Band)

1995-2024 CHESTERTOWN COLONIAL FEST- Children's Stage & Main Stage performances with RockCandy Cloggers & Sunnyland Skiffle Band

1996 HALSINGE HAMBO FESTIVAL, Jarvso, Halsingland, Sweden (fiddled w/Cousin Jan Lilja)

1998 SMITHSONIAN HOLIDAY CELEBRATION, Performed with the Sunshine Skiffle Band, Washington, D.C.

1998-2000 MICHIGAN-AEYC CONFERENCE, Grand Rapids, Michigan (Workshop Instructor, Dance Caller & Performer)

1999-2004 INTERNATIONAL WASHBOARD FESTIVAL, Logan, Ohio: Workshop Instructor & Performer (with Sunnyland Washboard Band)

2001-2024 COMMON GROUND'S AMERICAN ROOTS MUSIC & ARTS FEST, Westminster, MD: Teaching Mt Dulcimer & African Gourd Banjo Construction, Autoharp & Jugband, Dance Caller, Festival Performer.

2002 THE ASSOCIATION OF EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATORS "NAALA" CONFERENCE, Rosebud Lakota Reservation- (Performances and Peaceweavers' Wheel Workshop-Slim & Brynda Ambush Harrison)

2003-2021 EARTH FESTIVAL-at Renfrew Institute, Waynesboro, PA: "Sunnyside Slim & the Sunnyland Solar Skiffle Band"

2004 INTERNATIONAL CHILD ART FESTIVAL AND CONFERENCE, on National Mall, Wash., D.C. (Peaceweaver's Wheel with Brynda Harrison)

2006 VILJANDI FOLK FEST, Viljandi, Estonia –sponsored by the U.S. Embassy in Estonia -Performer & Dance Caller with the Barnstormers.

2006 & 2008 AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AND CONCERTS "The Barnstormers" Slim Harrison & Tom Jolin

2006-2009 WESTERN MARYLAND BLUES FEST- Featured Children's performer with "The Sunnyland Band"

2008 GERMANY TOUR -Rudolstadt & Moelln Festivals, Schools & Concerts with "Das Barnstormers" & "RockCandy Cloggers"

2009 ERIE BLUES & JAZZ FESTIVAL-Erie, PA: The Barnstormers & Rock Candy Cloggers and the Sunnyland Band featured performers.

2010 INTERNATIONAL ART & IDEAS CONFERENCE AND FESTIVAL-Yale University, New Haven, CN: Slim Harrison and the Sunnyland Band, featured Children's performers.

2010 SOLAR FEST-Vermont: "Sunnyside Slim & Sunnyland Solar Skiffle Band" -Performer/Workshop Leader

2010- 2024 APPALACHIAN FEST AND CONFERENCE: Frostburg State University-Slim with the Barnstormers & RockCandy Cloggers, Featured performers, dance caller, children's performer and workshop leader.

2011 SPRINGING THE BLUES FESTIVAL-Jacksonville, FL: "Sunnyside Slim & the Sunnyland Skiffle Band"

2012 JOURNEY THROUGH HALLOWED GROUND CONFERENCE: Gettysburg, PA: Keynote Speaker and Solo Historical Performance.

2009 & 2013 INAUGURAL BARN DANCE- (Un-official) The Barnstormers & South Mountain String Band, with Slim Calling.

2014 & 2015 MARYLAND TRADITIONS FESTIVAL- Baltimore, MD: The Barnstormers & RockCandy Cloggers. w/Rock Howland Master Clogger

2015 FOX HAVEN STORYFEST- Featured Storyteller & Barn Dance Caller with the Barnstormers & RockCandy Cloggers.

2016 & 2017 SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION- Family Concerts with the RockCandy Cloggers and the Sunnyland Skiffle Band.

2018 & 2022 SUSQUEHANNA FOLK FEST- York and Harrisburg, PA: Featured performer with the Sunnyland Skiffle Band

2019 AMERICANA HOEDOWN- American Embassy School, New Delhi, India: Sunnyside Slim and the Sunnyland Skiffle Band

2021 NATIONAL FOLK FESTIVAL- National Council for Traditional Arts: The Barnstormers and Critton Hollow with the RockCandy Cloggers

2020-24 WOLF TRAP INSTITUTE -Master Teaching Artist in Residence. Working with teachers and students in VA, MD, DC & regional schools.

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS & PERFORMANCES:

- January 1994 "THE HOWIE AWARD" Howard County Arts Council's "Outstanding Artist of 1994" for Residency programs in Howard County.
- June 1995 The Barnstormers performed "A TASTE OF TENNESSEE" Celebration at the Vice President's Mansion in Washington, D.C., hosted by Al & Tipper Gore for International Ambassadors to the United States
- December 1999 Commissioned by JCAC to create "SEEDS OF PEACE" program and the "PEACEWEAVERS WHEEL" in recognition of the United Nations "Decade for the Culture of Peace & Non-violence"
- December 2002 Invited to perform with Pete Seeger & Tao Rodriegez Seeger at The Kennedy Center's "Tribute to Pete Seeger"
- October 2005 Nominated for Maryland Governor's Art Educators Award for "Arts Educator of the Year"
- July 2006 Barnstormers are featured performers at Viljandi Folk Fest in Estonia, a celebration of the "Singing Revolution" in the Baltic Countries. Sponsor: U.S. Embassy in Estonia
- January 2007 The Barnstormers are selected for inclusion in Penn PAT "Touring Artists Roster" for performances throughout the Mid-Atlantic.
- July 2008 Featured performers at Moelln & Rudolstadt World Folk Festivals, also performed at schools & community concerts in Germany.
(with The Barnstormers & RockCandy Cloggers)
- Jan 2009 Invited to perform at the Inaugural Barn Dance (un-official) with South Mountain String Band
- February 2009 Selected for inclusion in MD/DC "Touring Artists Roster" as a solo artist and with The Barnstormers, The RockCandy Cloggers & The Sunnyland Band
- July 2010 Featured performer at the "Solar Fest" in Vermont with the "Sunnyland Solar Skiffle Band"
- April 2011 Featured Performer at "Springing the Blues Fest" in Jacksonville, Florida-"Sunnyside Slim & the Sunnyland Blues Band"
- August 2011 Featured Performer at Wolf Trap Institute's 30th Anniversary Celebration at Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts
- August 2012 Chosen as Keynote Speaker and Historical Performer to Kick-off the "Journey Through Hallowed Ground" in Gettysburg, PA
- Jan 2013 The Second Inaugural Barn Dance-(un-official) Performer and-Dance Caller with the Barnstormers and South Mountain String Bands
- Oct 2013 Chosen as Wolf Trap STEM Master Artist to create and implement Project Based, Arts Integrated STEM Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Residencies for Teacher Training programs

2013-2014 Selected by the MD Traditions program for a year-long Clogging Apprenticeship to Master Artist, Rock Howland, “RockCandy Cloggers”, culminating in a performance at the Maryland Traditions Festival

Earth Day 2014 Received the "Environmental Artistry Award" from The Renfrew Institute for Environment & Culture

Sept 2015 Recognized by Wolf Trap Institute for Early Learning Through the Arts for over 30 years of service as a MD/DC/VA Teaching Artist and Master Artist Nationally

Dec 2017 Chosen to represent the Maryland State Arts Council at their 50th Anniversary Celebration of the Arts with the RockCandy Cloggers

May 2018 Chosen to conduct “Exploring the Roots of American Music” residency at the American Embassy School in New Delhi, India

March 2019 “The Peaceweavers”: Featured Performers and Artists in Residence for “Peace Day” at Ring Factory E.S. in Harford Co., MD

Sept 2021 National Folk Fest -Selected performer with Barnstormers & Critton Hollow String Band to accompany Maryland Heritage Awardee: Rock Howland & the RockCandy Cloggers.

Dec/Jan 2023-24 Featured Performer with The Sunnyland Band for First Night Talbot’s 30th Anniversary New Year’s Eve Celebration.

2020-24 Selected by Wolf Trap Institute as Master STEM Teaching Artist to lead Teacher Training Partnerships in Virginia Public Schools.