



Bluegrass legend Curly Seckler began his career in music in 1935, performing with his brothers in a band called the Yodeling Rangers. They soon landed a program on WSTP radio in Salisbury, North Carolina. In 1939 Curly hit the big time, when Charlie Monroe recruited him to sing harmony in his new group, the Kentucky Partners, after the breakup of the Monroe Brothers. Curly worked several stints with Charlie Monroe early in his career. He also teamed with various other bluegrass pioneers, including Jim and Jesse McReynolds, Mac Wiseman, The Sauceman Brothers, and The Stanley Brothers.

In 1949 Curly joined Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs's Foggy Mountain Boys, as tenor singer and mandolin player. Except for a couple of brief absences, he remained with Flatt & Scruggs until 1962. During that time he recorded over 130 songs with them, including many of their best known and most popular hits ("Roll in My Sweet Baby's Arms," "Salty Dog Blues," "I'll Go Stepping Too," "Dim Lights, Thick Smoke," "Some Old Day," etc.). Flatt & Scruggs recorded several of Seckler's original songs, including "No Mother Or Dad" and "That Old Book of Mine."

The Lester Flatt/Curly Seckler duets from the 1950s are still considered to be among the best bluegrass performances ever. In addition, Curly's rock-solid "chop" rhythm on mandolin was the foundation of the Foggy Mountain Boys' instrumental sound during his tenure. Millions of fans are now able to experience the magic of this great band through the DVDs of classic Flatt & Scruggs TV shows which have been released by Shanachie Entertainment in conjunction with the Country Music Foundation.

Curly left the music business briefly during the 1960s, but soon returned to performing when bluegrass festivals began to thrive. He joined Lester Flatt's Nashville Grass in 1973 and remained until Lester's death in 1979. Flatt passed the torch to Curly, and he took over leadership of the Nashville Grass for another fifteen years, until his retirement in 1994. That same year Curly recorded *60 Years of Bluegrass With My Friends*, a celebration of his career, with a stellar list of musicians, including Ralph Stanley, Josh Graves, Jim & Jesse McReynolds, Mac Wiseman, Benny Martin, Marty Stuart, Willis Spears, Jimmy Martin, Doyle Lawson, and more. In early 2005, Copper Creek Records reissued this great recording, with several bonus tracks. Also in 2005, County Records reissued Curly's first solo album from 1971, with additional bonus tracks from 1989, and retitled it *That Old Book of Mine*.

Though Curly retired from full-time touring, he continued to make frequent guest appearances at festivals and concerts. He also continued to write songs, and in 2004 he made his first new recordings in ten years. Nearly half of the songs were Seckler originals, many of which had not been performed before. The incredible list of guests who appeared on these recordings includes Dudley Connell, Larry Sparks, Russell Moore, John Carter Cash, Laura Weber Cash, Larry Cordle, Tater Tate, Rob Ickes, Herschel Sizemore, Chris Sharp, Larry Perkins, Leroy Troy, and more. The first volume, *Down in Caroline*, was released on Copper Creek in the fall of 2005. It was a finalist for International Bluegrass Music Association (IBMA) Recorded Event of the Year. In late 2006, Copper Creek released Curly's last CD, *Bluegrass, Don't You Know*. The *Chicago Tribune* touted it as one of the Top 10 bluegrass CDs of the year.

Curly Seckler is regarded as one of the greatest tenor singers ever in bluegrass. In 2004 he was inducted into the IBMA Hall of Fame. Over the next several years he continued to perform at selected venues, including MerleFest, IBMA FanFest and Awards Show, ROMP (River of Music Party), and Hardly Strictly Bluegrass Festival. He was featured twice on the nationally televised *Song of the Mountains* program on PBS. In 2009 Curly was profiled on UNC-TV's *North Carolina People* show (available for viewing on our web site). He was inducted into the North Carolina Music Hall of Fame in 2010. That same year Seckler celebrated his 75th anniversary in music and his 91st birthday at a special program in his honor at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum in Nashville. In 2011 he was inducted into the Bill Monroe Bluegrass Hall of Fame. In 2013, at age 93, Curly made his final recordings, as a guest on Larry Sparks's *Lonesome and Then Some* CD, which was released in August 2014. In December 2015 Seckler celebrated his 96th birthday. The biography *Foggy Mountain Troubadour: The Life and Music of Curly Seckler* will be published in 2016 by the University of Illinois Press.

Curly Seckler is the embodiment of bluegrass history - a legendary entertainer who has seen it all - and living proof that traditional bluegrass still thrives in the new millennium!

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