

The Story of **beatlegras**

by Dave Walser

"The band **beatlegras** was first formed when I asked both George and Milo if they wanted to do a studio project with me, taking Beatle songs and doing bluegrass arrangements with them. Knowing they were both very busy musicians I told them we would be 3 equal partners in whatever happened but meanwhile, I would pay them whatever I could. I also told Milo that George Anderson was going to do it while I was telling George the same thing about Milo. Thankfully they both decided to give it a try and it wasn't long before we realized we had something special.

"I remember my first session with Milo, I showed him a list of possible songs to start with. He stared at it for a while, then his head started moving to a rhythm in his mind and he finally said, "Let's do Back in the U.S.S.R." He grabbed my guitar and started playing this really fast guitar solo line which I thought sounded really cool but I wasn't hearing anything that sounded like Back in the U.S.S.R. I said, "that sounds awesome," thinking I would be playing some simple vamp behind it I asked, "What do you want me to play to go with it?" He said, that's YOUR guitar part I'm gonna double it on mandolin. I've been hangin' on like an inner tube behind a boat ever since. At the end of the session I pulled out my checkbook and started to write when Milo said, "What are you doing?" I said I want to pay you your normal rate. He said, "You're trying to cut me out aren't you". I knew He was in.

"When I first asked George, I said "Hey George I got this idea. I want to do this project that I hope turns into a band. It's gonna be doing Beatle songs on bluegrass instruments" He was smiling and listening until I said "and I want YOU to play Bass." He stopped smiling and just stared at me for a while then very uncomfortably said "But Dave I didn't grow up listening to The Beatles and playing bluegrass is not what I really do." I said "and that's why you'll be perfect for this! It's gonna be all about thinking outside the box and being true to our own influences and ideas." I asked George to listen to some Beatle songs, most of which he had never heard of. I knew he was in when he called back later and enthusiastically said "Dave, these are GREAT songs we've GOT to do this". I said "I know and the good news is there's about 200-300 to pick from!" Anyway- that's how we got started and I hope you hear and see the joy and passion we have in doing this. The Beatles were truly a phenomena that changed everything from a musical and cultural point of view. We truly hope to honor their music in our own way. "