

Ronnie Bowman: Self-Titled Album from a Talented Gentleman

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By Stephen Pitalo

When Ronnie Bowman was playing in the Lonesome River Band, he could be heard on their album *Carrying the Tradition*, the International Bluegrass Music Association's Album of the Year in 1991. But Ronnie's journey began long before when he was just three years old. Little Ronnie probably never imagined that he'd pen songs for multiplatinum country acts like Brooks & Dunn, Kenny Chesney, Lee Ann Womack, and Chris Stapleton, as well as play with both Alan Jackson and Loretta Lynn.

It looks as though Bowman has hit his stride with his latest release, the self-titled *Ronnie Bowman* album, full of humorous and heartbreaking songs about truck driving, mountain climbing, and just living his life.

"For me personally it's definitely been a positive," said Bowman about starting so young in the business. I think the earlier you start, the more comfortable and natural you will feel on stage. Also, it's a lot of hard work but I have a lot of fun doing what I do for a living."

In those early years, his little family band played churches in both North Carolina and Virginia before joining *The Lost & Found* in the late 1980s, where he said he learned valuable lessons from that band's veteran musicians.

“Allen Mills and Dempsey Young were great leaders and teachers,” Bowman said. “It was a great place to learn how to travel in a professional touring band. They taught me what to put in, and most importantly, what to leave out when performing a song. I’m still learning today.”

An added four albums as a member of the Lonesome River Band, Ronnie recorded four solo projects to boot. From IBMA, he has been awarded Male Vocalist of the Year three times, earned the song of the Year award for “Three Rusty Nails” and “Cold Virginia Night”, and won the Gospel Performance of the Year award for “Three Rusty Nails”. Brooks & Dunn and Kenny Chesney both took Bowman’s songs to the number one spot. Another Bowman composition, Chris Stapleton’s “Nobody to Blame,” won the ACM “Song of the Year”.



"I always enjoy hearing someone else sing my songs," Bowman admitted. "It's the greatest compliment a songwriter can get."

Bowman added, “There’s always been and will always be certain songs that take me back to a certain place in time. What they mean to me may not be what they mean to someone else. What I love the most is when someone comes up and shares with me how one of my songs may have helped them and what it means to them in their life.”

Growing up in the cradle of bluegrass – specifically, Mount Airy, NC – contributed to his cultural upbringing, but it was his parents that kept him walking a straight line.

“I was fortunate while growing up to be influenced by people who taught me to be respectful, faithful and kind,” he said.

<https://youtu.be/cWaVmPjzjrg>



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