

Check out our review from Sing Out magazine.

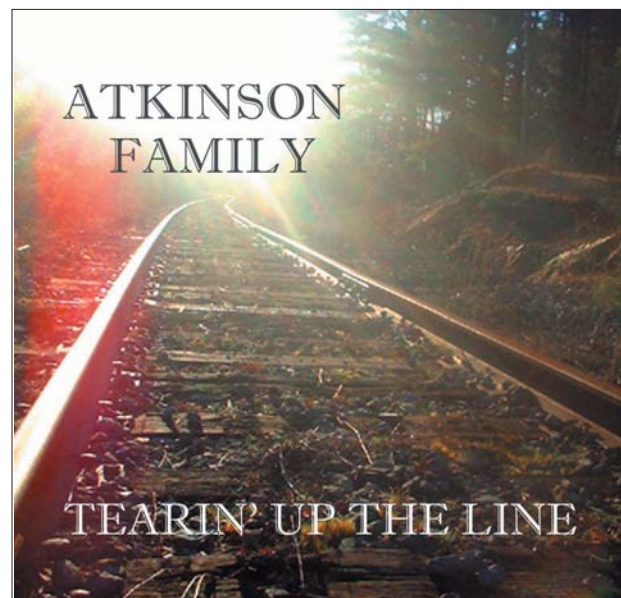
## ATKINSON FAMILY

### *Tearin' Up the Line*

Atkinson Family

“Family” bluegrass bands can be a mixed bag, in that sometimes it seems like a family that plays music together forms a band because they *can*, rather than because they *should*. Sitting through a set by a family band with an inflated sense of its musical and performing talents can be tedious at best. Fortunately, such is not the case with the Atkinsons from upstate New York. Like many family outfits, they’re at their best when harmonizing, but in taking turns at the lead vocals on this debut effort they each show some individual ability as well. Liza Atkinson in particular sings with a clear, direct voice that carries the song forward. Instrumentally, they’re not flashy, but the timing and tone are solid, and the arrangements are nicely conceived. A big added plus is the presence of Becky Buller’s vibrant fiddle and Junior Barber’s Dobro as guests.

Another facet of the family talent on display is the songwriting skills of Liza, Shelene and Dick Atkinson, who together account for eight of the 15 cuts. Shelene, in particular, shows remarkable depth and imagery with “Photograph” and “Hazel,” a song inspired by Hazel Dickens. Other highlights of the disc include “Rest My Weary Feet (written by Buller), “Long Long Road” and “Mama Put Down That Picture,” a song that manages to be sentimental without becoming maudlin. *Tearin' Up the Line* portrays a family of unique individuals who produce a distinctive, yet coherent brand of music. — JL



Taken from “Off the Beaten Track” by John Lupton, on page 113 of the Spring 2005, Volume 49, Number 1 issue of Sing Out.