



Marvin "Marv" Ashby

Marvin "Marv" Ashby (born July 5th, 1961) known to his friends and family as "*Marv*," was born and raised near historic Winchester Virginia in the heart of the Shenandoah Valley. At the age of six, he picked up his first guitar and continues to this day as a South Paw guitarist. His early influence was his late grandfather Howard Ashby Sr., an bluegrass/ole time flat picker who passed the passion of music into Marvin's heart and soul. Marv continues to play to this day with that same passion that was passed down many years ago. Marv is also known as a master craftsman producing some of the finest custom carpentry in and around the northern Shenandoah Valley and the West Virginia Panhandle.

Marv is the front man and founder of Marv Ashby and High Octane. From the West Virginia Panhandle High Octane is known for hard-driving 'no holds barred' bluegrass music courtesy of some the region's finest entertainers delivering high quality fast paced music. Both traditional and contemporary bluegrass genres are showcased during High Octane performances conducted up and down the Mid-Atlantic region. High Octane also features Marv's aggressive flatpicking style and straight-ahead vocal arrangements.



Marvin Ashby

Early life:

Marv grew up in a small rural town on the outskirts of Winchester Virginia listening to the music of times including the Carter Family and Jimmie Rodgers. His greatest influence came not from the acts of times but from his grandfather and later on, his Mother. Treasured visits with Howard Ashby Sr, along with favorite Aunts meant afternoons and evening filled with music and singing that often seemed to go all night long! Marv was eager to play and to emulate the styles he saw, he just needed to figure out how to find a guitar made for lefthanded individuals. Finally in late sixties, he got that first lefthanded guitar and fondly recalls learning to play the opening intro to Folsom Prison Blues. To fuel that love of music, he took summer jobs working in the fields making hay by day and music by night.

Musical career:

Marv was instrumental in creating several bands over the years, performing up and down the East Coast from New York to Florida and as far west as Ohio and Indiana. Marv prefers to perform live for the life-long fans while making new ones every at every show. He never misses an opportunity to lay down tracks in the studio so that those fans can continue to listen at home.

1975:



Mainline - 1975

Like many other teenage bands, Marv and his friends dreamed about creating a band while they studied at school. A first night of jamming together created an experience they'll never forget, and "Mainline" was born. Marv knew that Mainline needed to be mostly country to keep his friends hooked, but newer influences of the time such as Fleetwood Mac, Steppenwolf, and ZZ Top meant that Mainline became more of a rock-n-roll band. As those newer influences took over, it became clear that Mainline needed to change to keep up.

1977:



Desperado - 1977

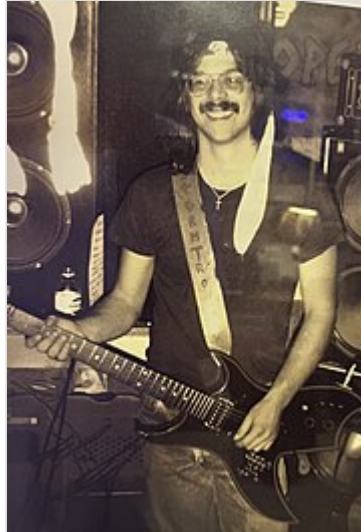
Marv forms "Desperado". Influences came from the likes of the Allman Brothers, Jimi Hendrix, Eric Clapton, and Grand Funk Railroad. Long hours spent practicing and honing the sound led to the very first live performance at the Frederick County Fairgrounds in 1978. Homemade flash-pots meant a very exciting start as the power went off after the timed flash-pots exploded! In true musical fashion, the show went on

and it was a resounding first performance and Marv and his bandmates were hooked! Musical trials and tribulations led to the demise of Desperado in 1979, undeterred, Marv continued to play and practice along with starting a family.

1981:

Along comes "The Smokey Hollow Band", a collaboration between Marv and his new musical friends. The format for this group was country, outlaw country and a little light rock. The Smokey Hollow Band played many a live show in the year that Marv was the lead guitarist.

1983:



Storm Trooper - 1985

1983 ushered in a new collaboration and "Storm Trooper" was born. The format was evolving to southern and classic rock. Storm Trooper enjoyed a good long run that came to a close in 1988. Over those years, musical genres changed and Storm Trooper needed to move away from southern rock sound moving towards the newer main stream sound of the 80's rock-n-roll found on MTV. As the genres continued to evolve into "metal hairband" music, or "devil music" as Marv's Dad liked to call it, Storm Trooper needed

to adapt to keep up. Keeping up meant lots of live shows that became increasingly stressful with moody fans and barfights. In 1988 the members of Storm Trooper decided this wasn't for them and exited stage left. Marv will tell you that to this day he still has many fond memories of those Storm Trooper days.

1990:



Blackhawk - 1992

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1992 - The First

After an almost two-year break, Marv brought a new group to the live scene, and "Blackhawk" was formed in 1990. Blackhawk meant live shows and an 18-foot box truck to cart the band and the gear around to multiple venues. This felt like the big time for Marv and Blackhawk. The sound was new southern rock and they fast became a favorite of bikers, this felt cool and comfortable for the newly formed band. In 1992, enough funds from playing live meant their first time in studio laying down tracks for a record. After an arduous 12-hour session in Falls Church Virginia at Cut Recording Studios, a 5-track cassette was born titled "The First". The cassette did well and was part of the first line-up of merchandize sold at shows and in 2019 was released as a remastered CD. Blackhawk enjoyed a heady year of touring success along with playing besides the likes of Molly Hatchet and the 69 Band.

The Nineties:

The early to mid-nineties saw Marv return to those early influences that he'd grown to love listening to his Grandfather play. Marv picked up playing Bluegrass again in 1995 and acquired his first lefthanded Martin guitar. The strings of that guitar are still played to this day and its one of his favorite instruments. Rock-n-roll had payed a big part in the early career days but Marv was back where he belonged musically. Between building a house in the West Virginia panhandle, designing, building, and installing custom cabinetry, Marv spent many hours playing with the ole timers along with honing his flat-picking skills. Good friends at the Bridge Restaurant in Hancock Maryland invited Marv to play a regular show. For the next three years, he played a full house every Saturday morning from nine until noon even being featured in a recorded session conducted by WMRA 88.5 out of Washington, DC. Marv loved those three years listening to, and playing with the ole timers, enjoying the experience of their music and stories.

A new adventure awaited Marv after he was invited to play with the Green Ridge Mountain Boys. For the next two and a half years, they played live at festivals, ice cream socials, nursing homes, military gatherings, churchyard parties, and many other special occasions.

2006:

In 2006, Marv took that beloved Martin guitar over the Mason Dixon Line and into Pennsylvania leaving behind the Green Ridge Mountain Boys. Regular live performances at The Arena in Bedford, PA led to many more bluegrass player connections and a deeper connection to the ole time music that he loves.

2010:



Marvin Ashby and High Octane -
2024



2019 - The Tour Bus in Rowlesburg, WVA

By now, Marv was well known in the Mid-Atlantic region and frequent requests came in for performances and collaborations. After agreeing to headline a show, Marvin Ashby and High Octane came into being after a September 25th, 2010 show at the Cove Mills Farm Show in Warfordsburg, Pennsylvania. That first show launched a life of touring and recording CD's for the adoring old fans while creating a whole new family of fans. Marv and the band enjoyed an extensive touring schedule that saw them keeping the roads hot in the Carolinas, Virginia, West Virginia and Maryland. Many nights spent driving to the next gig and renting hotels led to a tour bus!

2019:

"Hometown Blues" was a long awaited solo project on Marv's bucket list. The compilation of tracks was a trip back to the 80's and 90's and that rock-n-roll that he loved. After many months of practicing in the studio, Marv was able to bring his musical friends together to lay down the tracks for the album. Later that same year, Marv organized a CD release party at the Backstreet Bar & Grill in Winchester Virginia and in a first for them both, he shared the stage with his youngest son.



2019 - Hometown Blues CD release party at the Backstreet Bar & Grill in Winchester, VA

Writings:

2023:

Marv wanted his fans both old and new to be able to learn more about his passions as a lefty picker and so the idea for a book emerged. So in 2022 with help from Maud Hunter Watson, Marv began to write down his experiences. Over a few months of collaboration and editing reviews, Ms. Watson published "Marvin Ashby - My Musical Journey, the Story of a Lefty's Passion". Available since early 2023, the book was swept up by those adoring fans and is available to new fans.



The Book - 2023

Discography:

Covering both solo albums, earlier works and High Octane.

Year	Album	Artist	Format
1992	The First	Blackhawk	Cassette
2011	Route 9 to Berkeley Springs	Marvin Ashby & High Octane	CD
2012	Morgan County	Marvin Ashby & High Octane	CD
2014	The Recipe	Marvin Ashby & High Octane	CD
2016	West Viginia	Marvin Ashby & High Octane	CD
2017	Blue Plate Special	Marvin Ashby & High Octane	CD
2019	Hometown Blues	Marvin Ashby	CD
2019	The First (remastered)	Blackhawk	CD
2023	Blue Steel	Marvin Ashby & High Octane	CD
2024	Bluegrass Instrumental Classics	Marvin Ashby & High Octane	CD

Awards:

2015:

Marv was awarded the Fisher House Foundation for his continued support of the Marathon Jam played in Severn, Maryland.



2015 - Fisher House award

See other:

Links to external recourses:

Marv's record label and merchandize website: <https://route9records.com/>

Access to the music: <https://www.reverbNation.com/marvashbyhighoctane>



2022 - Typical ending for High Octane at the Apple Butter Festival, Berkeley Springs, Berkeley Springs, WA



2023 - High Octane at the
Appalachian Festival, Frostburg
State University, Frostburg, MD

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