



DOC WATSON 1923 - 2012

Arthel "doc" Watson was not a particularly significant banjo player, and was best known as a guitarist. However, he was a very important influence in my early learning years.

He was blind from early childhood. His first banjo was built by his dad using real "catgut" strings and(I believe) catskin head.

Watson was a revered Old Time musician but had no problem admitting he had trouble with "Droptumbing".

He got round it with his own technique and you can see this on You Tube with a clip of him playing "Tom Dooley". You will hear his unique Frailing style.

The point here is that he inspired me to overcome technique difficulties on the banjo. You can always get the effect you want if you try hard enough. And don't make excuses about physical complications. Doc was blind. He couldn't "see" tab.

He learnt from listening. From experimenting. He rose above it all to become a respected guitarist and musician.

Do likewise.

Keep an open mind.

Try things out.

Be yourself.



EARL SCRUGGS 1924 -2012

Yes..yes ...I know . Earl is not a Clawhammer player. Yes... yes... I know..He perfected the 3 finger style that came to epitomise and dominate Bluegrass Music. And that's the point!!

Overnight Earl changed the banjo scene so deeply that people generally refer to Bluegrass these days as "Scruggs Style".

He wasn't afraid to step out of the musical rut.

He did something different.

He defied the "purists" and delighted the masses.

He devised the new "norm".

I admire him for that. And I also love his music.

Watch him on video. Its entertainment at its best.

Banjo as the lead instrument !!