

Richard Watson



Richard Eddy Watson, son of the late Merle Watson and grandson of the late Doc Watson, joins MerleFest each year to celebrate and carry on the traditions of his influential family.

Richard has mastered his father's blues guitar style. He performed with Doc at MerleFest and other venues from 1991 until Doc's death in 2012. While growing up, Richard occasionally toured with Merle and Doc across the country and in Europe. His front-porch style of picking has led to many great musical performances and a 1992 recording, "Feeling the Blues," which Richard dedicated to his father, and the Grammy nominated "Third Generation Blues" with Doc.

"I'm just happy that MerleFest happened in memory of Dad," Richard said. "He'd be overwhelmed and find it hard to express how much he appreciated it. He would be surprised at how many people turn out for the festival and follow his music. I'm glad for all of my Dad's many friends and loved ones to gather together and enjoy the music." Richard enjoys seeing new artists at MerleFest and picking with the blues players.

Talking about his grandson Richard, Doc once said, "I could retire, but my grandson Richard plays a good blues guitar. One of the most gratifying things that happened to me after Merle left is the fact that Merle's son Richard started playing the guitar."

"He has a job he has to hold down and a family to look after... but he loves the music with a passion. I'm proud of him for two reasons. He's got a wonderful personality, just like his dad had. He loves his family and he loves me and his mam'ma (RosaLee) awful good. The other reason is that he's a fine musician and he's finally got over stage-fright. He has a lot of Merle's attributes."

When asked about his famous grandfather in an interview for the September 1999 issue of *Guitar Player*, Richard said, "I'm intimidated by him. He teaches me something new every time we sit down together." Richard joined Doc and David Holt in the "Hills of Home" tour that was derived from a special Doc and David did as a fundraiser for the UNC Center for Public TV.

The blossoming of Richard Watson into an artist as confident on stage as he is off is evidenced in his appearances at MerleFest. He has become a formidable blues artist with all the modest and appreciative personal charm of his dad.