

CLAYBANK

A Powerful New Bluegrass Band from the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina



Your name is how you are identified, establishes who you are and where you are coming from. **ClayBank** chose their name to relate to all of these. Band rehearsals happen on Claybank Road in the Claybank community in West Jefferson, NC. It's our home, our heritage, and our way of representing the musical tradition in our area. Rising up from the music-rich Blue Ridge Mountains and delivering straight ahead bluegrass dosed with impressive vocals is **ClayBank**.

The group features 17-year old mandolin player **Zack Arnold**, 19-year old guitarist **Jacob Greer**, 25-year old banjo picker **Tyler Thompson** along with the veteran **Gary Trivette** on bass. This quartet of musicians showcases three lead singers accentuated by

church-inspired harmony singing and top-notch musicianship.

The story of the formation of the band **ClayBank** involves church, families who played bluegrass and gospel music in the High Country Mountains of western North Carolina, and a chance meeting at a music festival.

In February of 2015, teenagers Arnold and Greer went to the Appalachian State University Old-Time Fiddler's Convention held in Boone, NC, which is the long-time home of Trivette. At the festival, Trivette found himself in a jam room with the two young pickers and the musicians quickly clicked together. Trivette soon connected the dots and found out that his former band mate, Tyler Thompson, had known Arnold and Greer since they were little kids in church. That led to a weekly jam session in next door Ashe County, NC, that began to rapidly evolve and advance. "The more we jammed, the better it sounded," says Trivette. "When you find something good that clicks musically, you have to stop and take a moment to realize what is going on. I had one of those moments and I went home and told my wife that I met some people that are really talented, and this could be something special."

Within months of forming in early 2015, **ClayBank** began to enter regional band contests at music festivals along with playing at local music events and churches. In February 2016, **ClayBank** entered the prestigious Bluegrass Band Competition at the annual Society for the Preservation of Bluegrass Music of America (SPBGMA) convention in Nashville, TN and came in 3rd place. It was there that they met acclaimed artist manager and booking agent Andrea Roberts which lead to them being signed to the ARA roster for booking/management representation. In March 2016, ClayBank entered the band competition at RenoFest in Hartsville, SC where they came in 1st place. The win at this event coupled with the SPBGMA performance really brought the band into the bluegrass spotlight and gained them a lot of attention and new fans.

Later in 2016, the band released their debut album ***Playing Hard to Forget*** on Rural Rhythm Records. The first single from the project, "Up On ClayBank," climbed to Number 2 on the Bluegrass Today Weekly Airplay Chart and reached the Top Ten on the Billboard Bluegrass Album chart.

ClayBank has recently completed recording their sophomore project to be released with Mountain Fever Records. Produced by Danny Roberts, the award-winning mandolin player for The Grascals, this new album will showcase a fresh slate of original songs, wonderful lead and harmony vocals backed by excellent musicianship. ***No Escape*** is poised to be ClayBank's break out album in the bluegrass world!