

## Steve and Ruth Smith

### *Appalachian Americana with Celtic Roots*

Steve and Ruth Smith, from the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina, play a unique blend of Appalachian Americana music featuring hammered dulcimer, mountain dulcimer, guitar, and old-time banjo. Steve and Ruth play and sing the music reminiscent of the old homeplace where family, love, faith, and sense of place are the foundations of heritage and traditions.

Steve and Ruth have been playing music together for over 40 years. From their home in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina, they have performed their Appalachian Americana music extensively in the U.S. from North Carolina to Hawaii and abroad in Scotland, England, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Thailand, Australia, New Zealand, Tonga, and Canada.

A native North Carolinian, Ruth studied music at the University of Illinois and composes music especially for the hammered dulcimer. Her compositions have been featured on NPR's All Songs Considered, Sirius XM satellite radio, PBS TV "Song of the Mountains" and in Dulcimer Players News magazine. Dirty Linen Folk & World Music Magazine says "Ruth Smith's touch on the hammered dulcimer is absolutely magical, with exquisite phrasing, highlighting the range of the instrument especially on her own pieces." She teaches hammered and Appalachian mountain dulcimer workshops at festivals and folk schools throughout the country and is the author of *From Heart to Hands* and *Touch of Grace*, two popular hammered dulcimer instructional books of her compositions and arrangements. Ruth is also accomplished in traditional Appalachian fiber arts, including weaving and spinning.

Steve, an ASCAP award-winning songwriter, adds fingerstyle guitar, clawhammer and North Carolina up-picking styles banjo, and vocals to the duo. Dulcimer Players News says, "He is a master storyteller and the perfect vocalist to convey the meaning of his lyrics. His songs stand out for their imagery and melodic strength . . . on par with John Denver's songs." Dirty Linen Folk & World Music Magazine says Steve Smith's accompaniment on guitar and clawhammer banjo provides "a traditional . . . rich, true sound" to their Appalachian Americana music. Steve has a Master's degree in Appalachian Studies from Appalachian State University with a major emphasis in Appalachian music and folklife, and is the recipient of the Cratis Williams Fellowship in Appalachian Studies. He teaches workshops nationally at festivals and folk school on guitar, clawhammer banjo, ukulele, recording, songwriting, copyrights & publishing, live sound reinforcement, and performing techniques.

Steve and Ruth perform annually at *MerleFest* and other major festivals nationwide, as well as regular performances on the PBS TV series *Song of the Mountains*. Their music is regularly heard on Sirius/XM Satellite Radio, Pandora, Spotify, Highlander Radio Networks, NPR, and acoustic music format radio stations around the U.S. Also, Steve and Ruth have been featured on NPR's *All Songs Considered* and *Thistle & Shamrock*, and *Dulcimer Players News* magazine.

In 2014, Steve and Ruth were inducted into *America's Old Time Country Music Hall of Fame* for their performing, preserving, & promoting traditional country music. They were named "Americana Instrumental Group of the Year" at the *2013 Appalachian Cultural Music Association Awards*, and were 2009 Roots Music nominees in the *JPF International Music Awards*, the world's largest awards for independent musicians. [www.steveandruth.com](http://www.steveandruth.com)

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