

Steve and Ruth Smith Bio

Appalachian Americana with Celtic Roots
(299 words)

Musical duo *Steve and Ruth Smith*, from the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina, play a distinctive blend of Acoustic Americana music with Celtic and Appalachian roots, featuring hammered and Appalachian mountain dulcimer, old-time banjo, and guitar. Their music combines the richness of centuries old Appalachian and Celtic musical traditions along with their original music about mountain life and rural Appalachian values.

Known for her sensitive, expressive style on the hammered dulcimer, *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." *Dulcimer Players News* says Ruth's playing is "Lush and expressive . . . memorable, heart-felt."

Steve, an ASCAP award-winning songwriter, provides fingerstyle guitar, old-time banjo, and vocals to the duo. *Dulcimer Players News* says, "Steve 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." Ukulele is another of Steve's instruments, having played professionally in Hawaii for 15 years.

Steve and Ruth are former recipients of the "Americana Instrumental Group of the Year" award by the Appalachian Cultural Music Association. *Ohio Magazine* said Steve and Ruth's music has "the soul of mountain music and the gentle grace of mountain air." They are both nationally known workshop instructors, teaching and performing at festivals and folk schools nationwide. Their sixth CD, *A Good Life*, (2016 release) features both vocal and instrumental original music.

Regular performers at MerleFest, Steve and Ruth have been featured on the PBS TV series *Song of the Mountains*, NPR's *All Songs Considered* and *Thistle & Shamrock*, in North Carolina's *Our State Magazine*, and in *Dulcimer Players News Magazine*.

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