



Reprinted from CML Summer 2018 issue.

© 2018 Carolina Mountain Life Magazine, Inc, Linville NC USA
All Rights Reserved.



Bob & Patty Travelin' / Another day, another place, another show.

Sound Traveler: Globe-trotting Minstrels

By Steve York

Patty Tatum starts booking venues for the two-person band, Sound Traveler, months before the typical traveling seasons begin. When not performing, playing five to six instruments, traveling and handling all the group's promotion and publicity, Patty takes care of scheduling their duo well ahead of actual performance dates. "You have to," she says. "Most musical groups and most venues are planning several months out. Besides, some venues close down, some change entertainment managers, some need to shift bands around to better fit their lineup of performers and some are totally new venues—places we've never played before but would like to. And, then again, with some venues, it's a first-come/first serve situation. It's always the case that there are many more entertainers looking to perform than there are venue schedules available...especially in traditionally seasonal tourist locations like here in the High Country. So I have to get in line and get booked early."

Patty and Bob Tatum ARE Sound Traveler. And their name totally fits their lifestyle. Now, if you've lived in these parts for several years, well, you've probably seen, sung along with and danced to Sound Traveler more than once. And, after once, you probably wanted to do it all over again. They're a bandstand full of infectious fun and joy put to music.

Dating back a decade or so, you may also remember the group initially as Bob and Ellie, and sometimes *with* Patty.

Talented vocalist Ellie Hjemmet used to be Bob Tatum's musical partner up until 2010. According to their bio, it was an opportune "open mic night" at Carolina Barbeque in Newland when Bob and Ellie first met Patty. That encounter led to Patty joining to form a part-time trio for a few years. Then, in 2010, as Bob and Patty's relationship blossomed into a serious romance, they decided to *get hitched* and officially formed the duo known as Sound Traveler.

Prior to Sound Traveler, Bob—originally from Savannah, Georgia—was part of several musical groups. He even composed an original Christian musical called "Breath Like A Wind," which was performed for three seasons in this region. Before teaming up with Ellie, he was a founding member of the Cross-ties, which was known for its Peter, Paul and Mary-ish type harmonies. Bob has always been a song writer with several CDs of original music to his credit. He is quite accomplished playing lead guitar, banjo and harmonica while blending his vocals with Patty. Along with performing, Bob also handles the group's sound and recording engineering, as well as their business accounting.

Patty grew up in Orlando, Florida. Her resume includes being trumpet player with two internationally famous Up With People casts both stateside and in Europe. She joined a jazz orchestra in Japan, then decided

to master the guitar and co-founded a contemporary Christian acoustic duo called Beautiful Day back in her home state of Florida. But trumpet and guitar aren't Patty's only instruments. Along with accompanying Bob on vocals, Patty also plays bass guitar, concertina, melodica, ukulele and percussion. Yet, with all that musical accompaniment, this multi-talented duo always manages to retain a genuine warmth and playfulness that captures the hearts of their audience and many fans.

Splitting their time between homes in Cape Canaveral, Florida and Avery County, Bob and Patty literally *live* the group's name. Their tours can include Cuba, Costa Rica, Arizona, Nashville, Washington D.C. and Japan. Their music is always completely live, with no soundtracks or "tricks of the trade" and it's always evolving. This season, Bob and Patty are booked through mid-October here in the High Country and even venture down the mountain for a new venue in neighboring Johnson City, Tennessee. So, if you're anywhere around these parts between now and then, you'll likely see them at least once. Oh yeah...and if you're hiking the Appalachian Trail near their mountain home this summer, you just might find them serving as "Trail Angels" with food and supplies for AT hikers. ■

To keep up with their busy music itinerary, visit www.soundtravelerband.com.