



**Atwater-Donnelly**  
*Traditional American Folk Music & Dance*

**Arts Alliance of Northern New Hampshire  
Artists in Residence February 11-14, 2018  
Information on School Program Offerings**



[www.aannah.org](http://www.aannah.org)

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*"I just wanted to reiterate how wonderful your performance at Providence Performing Arts Center (PPAC) was this morning. You really connected with the students, the ushers, and the PPAC staff members. The musical, dance, historical, and educational aspects of your program were so well interwoven and entertaining!"*

## ABOUT THE RESIDENCY

The Arts Alliance is committed to bringing a variety of art forms to northern New Hampshire students through artist residencies. Our February residency with Atwater-Donnelly offers an opportunity for students of all ages to connect with two musicians who are not only mesmerizing performers but also superb teachers, with years of experience engaging young people in exploring the connections between folk and traditional music, history and heritage.

Award-winning, internationally recognized folk duo Aubrey Atwater and Elwood Donnelly present delightful programs of traditional American folk songs and percussive dance for

school children and adults. Their performance is appealing to all ages, with humor, audience participation, and a relaxed stage presence, Aubrey and Elwood explain song origins to create a deeper understanding of American music and its cultural history.

They have an extensive, diverse list of offerings, including themed performances and workshops on traditional music, women in folk music, an instrumental petting zoo, singing harmony and much, much more.

**We are pleased to offer this opportunity for all ages to experience their work, whether in a presentation, a workshop, or a combination of the two.**

We also ask you to help us invite students, educators and community members to our community programs, which will include teacher and community workshops, family performances – and a music jam for musicians at all levels of experience (including none!).

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Aubrey Atwater and Elwood Donnelly have been performing together for almost 30 years, blending beautiful vocals with an array of instruments -- including guitar, mountain dulcimer, banjo, mandolin, tin whistle, harmonica, bones, spoons, limberjacks -- and other surprises, like Appalachian clog dancing, French Canadian footwork and tap dance.

Married since 1989, they have traveled extensively in New England, the Ozarks, Appalachia, the Midwest, and across the United States, with occasional trips to Ireland, England, and Canada, to perform as well as find their songs and dances one by one. Atwater and Donnelly have shared festival billing with folk legends and have taught classes, studied with traditional musicians and folklorists,



played and called dances, appeared on television, and received standing ovations for their concerts. In addition to twelve recordings, Aubrey and Elwood have received many awards and produced seven books and a film. The duo's music is part of more than twenty compilation CDs as well as numerous recordings of other musicians.

## ATWATER-DONNELLY PROGRAMS

*"Your show was on record the BEST show in the entire known universe. I could not believe the wondrous things you could do. The wheel amazing, the songs breathtaking, the riddles perplexing. Your show has burned an everlasting image in my mind. I will NEVER EVER forget...THANK YOU. -- 7th Grader, Martin Middle School, East Providence, RI*

What is folk music?  
What did people do for entertainment before electricity?  
What is your heritage?  
How was folk music used in daily life and work?  
What are folk songs about?  
How did pioneers develop the mountain dulcimer?  
Where did the banjo come from?  
How do you play the Irish tin whistle?

These are some of the questions Aubrey Atwater and Elwood Donnelly explore in their enthralling programs of traditional folk music. They perform using the Appalachian mountain dulcimer, old-time banjo, Irish tin whistle, guitar, limberjack, harmonica, percussion instruments and other surprises.

Drawing their repertoire from songs collected in New England, Ireland, Appalachia, Prince Edward Island, the Midwest, and other far-away places, Aubrey and Elwood explain folk music with moving stories and humor. Participation is emphasized as Aubrey and Elwood joke and interact throughout the show: they encourage their audiences to sing, dance, clap, use body movements, and even play instruments when possible.

Aubrey and Elwood both have strong backgrounds in education and have spent many years teaching children and adults. Along with their general folk music program, they offer a variety of special programs and enjoy working with people of all ages.

## ASSEMBLIES:

**Note: There is no size limit for these assemblies. Assembly length is typically 45-60 minutes and can be customized with the presenter.**

### **American Heritage Music: all grade levels**

American folk music, like American people, is a fusion of many influences and cultures. In this presentation, which can be customized for any grade levels and for specific interests, Aubrey and Elwood introduce students to traditional folk music and instruments. Participation and questions are a strong part of the program as students explore their own heritages, traveling in time and across borders to different lands to learn about what makes up American folk music.



## WORKSHOPS & SMALLER GROUP SESSIONS:

**Note: no size limit unless listed. Most programs are 45 minutes to one hour**

**Instrument Playing, Jam Sessions, Singing, and Dance:** dance limited to 40, dulcimer (instruments provided) limited to 10. For other workshops, school provides instruments.

Aubrey and Elwood offer workshops for guitar, Appalachian mountain dulcimer, Irish tin whistle, old-time banjo, harmonica, and percussion as well as jam sessions, vocal classes in harmony, ballad, group, and hymn singing, and dance classes for clogging, square and contra dance. Contact us for further details or to discuss your needs.

### **Emigration/Immigration, all ages**

This program focuses on the Irish people and their story of emigration. Immigration songs are sung and explained and the influence of Irish music and culture around the world is illustrated. The story of the Irish people is only one example of the many groups in history forced to flee and emigrate to other countries. Participants are asked to think about if, when, and how their own ancestors came to the United States.

### **French Program, all ages**

Since part of American history includes French and French Canadian settlement and immigration, here's another spin on American heritage and folk music: simple childhood songs in French as well as some French narration. Aubrey, who studied in Paris during college, will teach students French phrases and songs.

### **Preschool Program:** 30 minutes, ages 3-6

Young children can see, hear, and try unusual instruments as well as clap, sing, and dance to captivating folk songs for the very young.

### **Play Party Songs, Games, and Dances:** all ages, up to 40 students

Step back in time and go to a rural play-party! Aubrey and Elwood will present old-fashioned, interactive songs, dances, and musical games that are a part of our American heritage.

### **Images of Women in Traditional Folk Music, all ages:**

Learn about "ordinary" women in history as well as in the present. Aubrey and Elwood combine old songs of love, betrayal, and everyday life as well as songs and poems Aubrey has written about contemporary women's issues. A very moving and unique program as a lead-in to Women's History Month.

### **Instrument "Petting Zoo":** up to 25 students

This is a session for smaller groups where students can see, hear, and touch folk instruments including the very ones that Aubrey and Elwood use in their concerts. This is an intimate and multi-sensory opportunity for students to sit with the artists and talk about the instruments and the lives of performers.



*"I just wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for providing such a wonderful experience for our students and staff at Sowams School. Everybody truly enjoyed learning the dances, games and music that you play so well and which represents American Folk culture in our society."*

**Folk Music and Dance Sampler:** 1 hour, up to 40 (including students & adults) or grade level  
Try your hand, or foot, in this three-part session where we will have a short lesson on the Mountain Dulcimer, an American string instrument that can be played quite instantly; a session on the American step dance form, clogging, where we will learn a few simple dance steps; and a session on group singing. Aubrey will bring loaner dulcimers for you to play, as well as a bag of shoes, in case you don't have your own smooth soled shoes to wear for the dance component.

## **EDUCATOR WORKSHOP:**

### **Incorporating Traditional American Folk Music and Dance into School Curricula**

*"Your magic is still singing in the classrooms of JFK, Aquidneck, and Forest Avenue Elementary Schools. Two children were so inspired they brought in pennywhistles and wooden flutes and played 'Hot Cross Buns' on each to demonstrate the different 'VOICES'!!! Your performances were outstanding, reaching the hearts of us all. The beautiful arrangements, instruments, and voices allowed us to travel back to a simpler time, when music was so important and the core of life. The students LOVED listening to the verses, and were so surprised to find the stories in your songs. And, the clog dancing was beyond words. Amazing!"*

Join former classroom teachers Aubrey and Elwood in a professional development session addressing how to incorporate traditional American folk music and dance into general elementary and middle school curricula. Examples used include dancing the Virginia Reel in P.E.; exploring immigrant history in social studies through song; using a ballad to outline the elements of a story in language arts; looking at counting, rhythm, and fractions through music in math class; rural life and farming in science, and much more. They'll present ideas, lessons, and resources, try out a few dances and songs with the group, and make time for Q & A. You will learn the Virginia Reel, go out to find the cows in a Kentucky play party song, sing songs about riddles, and listen to an Irish ditty about letters written in the 19th century.

A wonderful opportunity to get in touch with your singing, dancing, playful self in a context that is enriching and educational for all and offers many ideas for ongoing classroom work.

## **FAMILY PROGRAM:**

### **Evening family dance:**

If your school is interested in a daytime program (or even if it isn't), it would be great fun to invite parents and family members to come together for a traditional family barn dance with contra, square and circle dancing, traditional party games and simple songs.

It's also a chance for your students to share what they've done during the day with their friends and family!

## **TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS:**

If available, please provide five microphones and boom stands. (If that isn't possible, they can bring their own.) Please provide a clean, clear space. If available, a wooden floor is ideal, but if not, they will make do.

## PRICING:

Prices listed here are for school programs. Please contact us for pricing on after-school programs and community events.

**Assembly:** \$375

**Two assemblies** (same site): \$600

**Assembly plus 1 workshop:** \$525

**Assembly plus 2 workshops:** \$700

**Workshop only:** \$250

**Additional workshops:** \$175

Contact us for pricing on an evening family dance or other ideas or programs.

Note: These prices represent a reduced rate because of block-booking and residency funding support from the New England Foundation for the Arts. We handle travel costs – schools with flexible schedules may be given priority. (We keep costs low by scheduling travel from school to school as efficiently as possible.) Contact us as soon as possible for best availability.

**Pricing quoted is for Arts Alliance member schools and organizations.** Annual school membership is \$65; organizational membership is \$45 or \$70, depending on the size of the organization. Prices for non-members are available upon request.

**Discounts may be offered if we can help find local sponsors. If the funding is a challenge, please don't hesitate to contact us; we will work with you to try to make this programming possible.**

Booking and additional information: Please email us at [programs@aannah.org](mailto:programs@aannah.org) and tell us which programs you are interested in, where you'd like to host them and what days and times are available to you February 12-14. You can also email us with questions or ideas.

The Arts Alliance of Northern New Hampshire works to promote, support and sustain culture, heritage and the arts throughout northern New Hampshire and engages in partnerships and statewide initiatives focused on arts learning, arts in health, cultural and heritage tourism and the Creative Economy. Visit our website, [www.aannah.org](http://www.aannah.org), for additional information and details on program offerings.



The  
ARTS ALLIANCE  
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NORTHERN NEW HAMPSHIRE



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