



GETTING TO KNOW YOUBob Ewald

If you've been to a Silver Strings meeting, chances are you've admired the amazing Bass playing skills of Bob Ewald. Perhaps you've thought Bob must have played as a pro, and you'd have been right! But that's only one of Bob's accomplishments. Born in Detroit, Bob has lived his whole life in the area. He has one younger brother, Ray. Bob started playing a banjo-uke, taught by his father, at age 7, and he and a friend began putting on musicals for the neighborhood kids. At 12, he switched to guitar, and in high school he got involved in folk music, which was getting popular at that time. Bob sang and played as a solo act through high school and college. By college, Bob was involved with folklore clubs, and even appeared on a weekly TV show. During this time, he became acquainted with Noel Stuckey (who went on to become the "Paul" of "Peter, Paul and Mary". Noel decided to quit school, and move to New York, but Bob decided to stay here in Michigan. He completed his studies at MSU and got a degree in Veterinary Medicine.

While employed as a vet in 1958, Bob met a lovely young lady named Dorothy, when she brought her dog in to be spayed. "She was the only client I ever married," quips Bob. "We've been married for 46 years. I really liked that dog!"

Bob established his own clinic, the Ewald Veterinary Hospital, in the Rosedale Park area of Detroit in 1961. He practiced as a vet there, until he sold the hospital and established a house call practice, which he still operates part time.

Shortly after Bob and Dorothy were married, they started traveling around the world. "We'd put on our knapsacks, put an "on vacation" sign on the business, and take off for a month or two" says Bob. They've visited six continents and over 60 countries! "I've always said, 'I'm only going to be in this world once, and when I leave I want to know where I've been!'"

All of that travelling never stopped Bob from pursuing his music. He began playing the bass fiddle in 1971, when he discovered "Bluegrass" and found there was a shortage of bass players. He and some other musicians then formed the "Michigan Consolidated Grass Company" band, and he played with them for about 10 years. "We were the lead-on band for the 'Statler Brothers' and 'Whispering Bill Anderson' when they did shows in Detroit."

Bob first saw Silver Strings perform in the Livonia Mall in about 1990, and thought it might be fun to join. But he didn't pursue joining until 1993, when his friends Joe Bwatti and John Mercier told him they had joined. Bob had known Joe and John since 1960, when they all played at the American Youth Hostels monthly songfests! So, Bob joined Silver Strings, and has been playing his bass fiddle with us ever since.

For the last 14 years, Bob has played Old-Time music with the Golden Griffon Stringtet, with three wonderful people he met at Silver Strings. Their forte is contra dances and civil war re-enactment dances.

Bob sums it up this way: "Music, as you can see, has been an important part of my life. It has given me the opportunity to make many wonderful friends, have many unique experiences, and to be part of "show business".

And Bob's musical talents and fun personality have made Silver Strings a better group as well!