

The Duttons—a brief introduction

The Duttons are a performing family of three generations of amazing talent. They have been recording, performing and touring together professionally for over 30 years. The adult Duttons started out their musical training as classical musicians when they were children, but it didn't take long for them to branch out to play just about any style of music. Along with the classical, they play pop, country, bluegrass and gospel. Their ability to adapt and play just about any style of music is just one of the things that makes them so unique.

To really understand what The Duttons are all about, the best thing to do is to see them live. The Duttons have had several European tours, and have performed in all 50 states as well as the provinces of Canada. Additionally, they have their theater in Branson, Missouri where they perform April through mid-December and their theater in Mesa, Arizona where they perform Mid-December through the end of March.

The Duttons are consummate performers who have mastered how to entertain and entertain well. In their shows they show off their skills on several different instruments and sing beautifully both as soloists and together. They also include dance and comedy with their music to create an experience for all ages.

The Duttons story is not the typical story of a performing family. Dean and Sheila Dutton, an economics professor and an elementary school teacher, started their young children on the classical violin for the sole purpose of teaching them discipline. A family band was the farthest thing from their minds. They just wanted their children to grow up learning how to work hard and work well together.

Once the oldest three Dutton children got interested in bluegrass music along with their classical lessons, they begged their parents to start a family band. That was back in the 1980s and things just kept getting bigger and bigger from there.

Behind the scenes, The Duttons collaborate together to create unique production ideas for their shows which delight audiences. The show is self produced by the family including choreography, musical arrangement, technical support, production, and marketing, the end result of which is the audience streaming from the theater proclaiming, "This is the best show I have ever seen in my life!"

Inspiration for this amazing group has come from various sources. Some performers that are favorites with the family members are The Eagles, Ricky Skaggs, Rascal Flatts, Eric Clapton and James Taylor. Their true source of inspiration, however, lies with Dean and Sheila Dutton, aka Dad and Mom to The Duttons.

Dean and Sheila Dutton were not professional musicians and they certainly weren't planning on raising their children as such. However, when they saw the passion their children had for music and performing, they realized that this was going to be their new lifestyle so they came on board wholeheartedly to supply the backbone of the business. Besides participating in the show on guitar and bass, Dean and Sheila are the acting CEO and CFO for the organization, and are working closely with their sons, Timothy and Jonathan, to take over those positions.

Each member of the family has their own unique duties in this thriving family business. As mentioned, sons Timothy and Jonathan are assuming the responsibilities of CEO and CFO as Mom and Dad attempt to take a lesser role in the day to day business decisions. Daughter Amy is the show's producer and watches over everything from song selection, to costuming, to set design. Abigail, the youngest daughter, manages all the gift shops and merchandise and is the brains behind The Dutton's main gift shop Abby's Tourist Trap in Branson. Many of the spouses of these talented and hardworking siblings are also heavily involved in the business. Timothy's wife Judith is the

Branson Theater's assistant GM and sales manager. Jonathan's wife Bella is the Hotel Manager (The Dutton Inn) and oversees the bookkeeping for the whole enterprise.

The next generation of Duttons is proving just as talented as their parents and grandparents. The Dutton Grandchildren, ranging in age from 24 to 8 have been participating in show business since they were first born, and it shows in their skills in dance, instrumentals and vocals. They are a crucial part of the show and many audience members come back and see the show again and again just to see how the younger set of Duttons has grown and what antics and musical surprises they have developed. The younger set of Duttons is coming along beautifully in their musical talents, so much so that they were recently featured with the adult Duttons on Nickelodeon's "America's Most Musical Family."

Since becoming full time musicians in 1991, The Duttons as a whole have not looked back and have gone on to a successful touring career and music business. Today, they own their own theater in Branson, Missouri where they perform over 300 shows a year, as well as their own hotel and gift shop. Additionally, they operate the Dutton Theater Mesa where they now spend their winters and perform in the sunny Phoenix Valley of Arizona Mid-December through the first of April.

What the future holds is anyone's guess. With five nationally broadcast PBS specials in their resume, there seems to be nowhere to go but up for this amazing group of performers. Since their appearance as top ten finalists on NBC's "America's Got Talent" and the Jerry Lewis Muscular Dystrophy Telethon, projects on the table include a new album of original songs composed and arranged by the members of the family as well as a book about their lives and career. Currently, they are in their fourth season with their own television series "The Duttons Through the Years" airing Friday evenings on RFD-TV which chronicles the musical adventures of this talented family.

Last, and most fascinating with this family is how The Duttons' love for each other and their love for what they do is immediately obvious. "I, for one, have never witnessed anything like this instant rapport between performers and ticket buyers – and I've been attending concerts for almost six decades," says critic Mike Kerverlas of the Sumter, S.C. Item. "In short, The Duttons are showmanship personified."

The Duttons - International Television Appearances:

(in chronological order, most recent listed first)

RFD-TV, USA

The Duttons Through the Years

Nickelodeon, USA

America's Most Musical Family

MDA Telethon Network *(ABC, NBC, and CBS affiliate stations nationwide)*

Jerry Lewis Labor Day Telethon

NBC Television

America's Got Talent

PBS Television, USA

*The Duttons, Making Music**

PBS Television, USA
*The Duttons, Live at the Iowa State Fair**

BYUTV Satellite Television, USA
*The Duttons, Music in Your Heart**

WGN, Chicago, USA
*The Duttons, Music in Your Heart**

PBS Television, USA
*The Duttons**

NBC Television
American River

Quongtong TV, China:
Spring Festival;

TF 1, Paris, France:
The Patrique Sabitier Show;

RAI 3TV, Rome, Italy
The Mino Damato Show;

**Also broadcast on numerous regional stations across the United States and Canada*



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