**Jan Gillies Musical Biography:**

Known for her unusual, and sometimes quirky songs, Jan has been writing and performing her Travis-style, folk music since the mid-sixties, when she first became enthralled with the music of such early influences as Janis Ian, Gordon Lightfoot, Joni Mitchell, Phil Ochs, Leonard Cohen, and so many of the folk icons of the era, as well as much older traditional ballads. Since beginning to write her own material in the 70’s, she has accumulated close to 100 original songs, and recorded 7 CDs including her May 10, 2014 release of “Poultry in Motion” – a compilation of songs about our domestic feathered companions. She has won several songwriting awards, including a recent one from SAW’s MASC contest in the children’s song category.

An avid story-teller, her musical topics are drawn from her extremely unusual life for a girl who grew up in the Midwest; having become a scientist, sailor, research SCUBA diver, biologist, geologist, environmentalist, newspaper editor, science teacher, EMT and Hospice director – among other endeavors. She has been lost at sea without a boat (twice!), fallen asleep underwater (once), worked with American crocodiles, swum with sharks, gone through earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, and travelled around the US and as far away as Australia. Everywhere she went, on land or sea, music has always been a huge part of her life and a loving connection to the world around her!

Neil Gillies has been performing on hammered dulcimer for over a decade, focusing on Old Time and traditional tunes, in addition to accompanying Jan on her more recent compositions. Together, they create a unique blend of the truly traditional and authentic country/folk music, drawing from their lives and experiences living in West Virginia for over 30 years.

For more about Jan’s music, see her on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/JanGilliesMusic/info>