

# Lonesome River Band

## 2015 Bio

Lonesome River Band continues their reputation as one of the most respected names in bluegrass music. Led by five-time International Bluegrass Music Association (IBMA) Banjo Player of the Year and Virginia Country Music Hall of Famer Sammy Shelor, the group holds a powerhouse line up of award-winning players including vocalist and songwriter Brandon Rickman on guitar, Mike Hartgrove on fiddle, Barry Reed on bass and Randy Jones on mandolin and vocals.

The band is celebrating their Billboard Top 10 Bluegrass Album, *Turn On A Dime* released on Mountain Home Music Company. The album certainly showcases Lonesome River Band at the top of their creative game. When masterful players and vocalists combine with top notch material and thoughtful arrangement, the result is a dynamic release. This long awaited project includes numerous chart songs including the hit “*Her Love Won’t Turn On A Dime*” that reached the #1 spot seven times on the Bluegrass Today Top 20.

Lonesome River Band’s enduring career includes 17 albums, three of which were released in 2012 in celebration of the group’s 30th anniversary. The band received the 2012 International Bluegrass Music Association (IBMA) Award for Instrumental Recorded Event of the Year for their song “*Angeline the Baker*” from their *CHRONOLOGY Volume One* album along with Sammy Shelor taking home his fifth win as the 2012 IBMA Banjo Performer of the Year. Lonesome River Band has received other awards from IBMA including Album of the Year, along with numerous awards from SPBGMA including being named Bluegrass Band of Year, Vocal Group of the Year, Song of the Year and Shelor as Banjo Player of the Year.

Sammy Shelor received the 2nd Annual Steve Martin Prize for Excellence in Banjo and Bluegrass. In honor of this award, Lonesome River Band with special guest Steve Martin made an appearance and performed on the Late Show with David Letterman on November 11, 2011.

For over 30 years, Lonesome River Band continues set the standard in the bluegrass music world. Whether performing on the famous stage of the Grand Ole Opry or headlining major concert events & festivals, their loyal fans continue to support one of the most loved and most influential acts of our time.

### **HISTORY OF THE LONESOME RIVER BAND**

Lonesome River Band has been one of the most popular bluegrass groups since the release of their breakout CD, *Carrying The Tradition*, back in 1991. That band line-up included current LRB band leader Sammy Shelor, as well as Dan Tyminski, Ronnie Bowman and Lonesome River Band founder, Tim Austin. They recorded a second project for Rebel Records, *Old Country Town*, before Tyminski accepted a gig with Alison Krauss & Union Station, and Austin decided to leave the road to focus on his recording studio, Doobie Shea.

During his years with LRB, Sammy Shelor has enjoyed performing with such stellar musicians as Kenny Smith, Don Rigsby, Ron Stewart, Rickie Simpkins and Mike Hartgrove (who returned in 2005)

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– each of whom had moved on to pursue other musical endeavors. With each personnel change, Shelor looked for new musicians who could not only fill a spot that had been left vacant, but also bring in an artist with talents of their own.

The year 2001 brought a lot of new changes with the addition of Brandon Rickman and Jeff Parker along with fiddler Mike Hartgrove who had just left IIIrd Tyme Out, along with bassist Irl Hees. The band was rewarded rave reviews for *Window of Time*, the first recording with that band configuration. John Wade soon replaced Hees on bass, and the group recorded *Head On Into Heartache* CD.

In 2005, Hartgrove left to join Doyle Lawson & Quicksilver, and Rickman chose to give up touring to spend more time focusing on songwriting, but more importantly much needed time with his family. With Jeff Parker's contributions on mandolin and tenor vocals, this took LRB into the next generation returning to the band's aggressive, four piece sound that had brought them to prominence years earlier. Shelor brought on a strong picker and a distinctive singer, Barry Berrier on bass who had made a name singing lead and playing guitar with The Lost & Found. Shannon Slaughter then came onboard after initially being hired to fill in during the search for a new guitar man.

In 2007, Hartgrove and Rickman returned to LRB much to the fan's delight. Rural Rhythm Records released the band's 12<sup>th</sup> career album, *No Turning Back* album in 2008. The album made its debut on Billboard's Bluegrass Album Chart and included their hit song, "Them Blues," that garnered seven #1s on various national radio charts.

LRB thrilled the audience with an impressive and well received opening performance of the 2009 IBMA Awards Show at the Ryman Auditorium in Nashville, TN. IBMA members placed the band in numerous categories including receiving Nominations for: Instrumental Performance of the Year for "Struttin to Ferrum"; Gospel Performance of the Year for "Darkness Wept"; and Sammy Shelor again being nominated for Banjo Performer of the Year.

In 2010, Rural Rhythm released *Still Learning* that included two chart singles, "Record Time Machine" and "Jack Up the Jail." The album garnered the band a nomination for IBMA Instrumental Recorded Performance of the Year for "Pretty Little Girl." The same year, the band was part of another Rural Rhythm project, *The All-Star Jam – Live At Graves Mountain* that received significant attention from IBMA members: nomination for Album of the Year; nomination for Instrumental Recorded Performance of the Year (for Sammy Shelor, Brandon Rickman and Mike Hartgrove's work on "Ground Speed"); and a nomination for Recorded Event of the Year for the song, "Graves Mountain Memories" (by the Rural Rhythm All-Stars that included Sammy Shelor and Mike Hartgrove).

In 2011, Randy Jones joined the band on Mandolin and Lead & Harmony creating the current line-up of Sammy Shelor, Brandon Rickman, Mike Hartgrove and Barry Reed.

LRB was also part of other various artists' projects on Rural Rhythm including: *A Bill Monroe 100<sup>th</sup> Year Celebration – Live at Bean Blossom* (2011) album that was produced by Sammy Shelor; the 2012

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IBMA Recorded Event of the Year Award winning album *Life Goes On* (2012) by the Musicians Against Childhood Cancer benefiting St. Jude Children's Hospital in Memphis, TN; and *God Didn't Choose Side: Civil War True Stories About Real People* (2013) that made its debut at #6 on Billboard Bluegrass Album Chart; Various Artists.

In 2012, LRB celebrated their 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with three album releases, Chronology Volumes One – Three.

When this newest version of Lonesome River Band, you can be assured their prominence as one of the most influential acts in bluegrass music is here to stay.