TALL TIMBER! ENCORE!!



Born and based continuously in Seattle, Tall Timber had its beginnings in 1965 and, with various personnel changes, entertained on the West Coast for nearly 30 years.

Original band members Phil and Vivian Williams and Barney Munger first met Sue Thompson in 1967 at the National Oldtime Fiddlers' Contest in Weiser, Idaho. They kept in musical touch through the years, with Sue joining the group in the late '70's to form the incarnation of the band featured on this recording.

After many years of performing as "the Northwest's premier bluegrass band" and showcasing Vivian's championship fiddling, the incorporation of Sue's infectious guitar playing and singing opened up an era of new musical horizons. The band was ready for a change and her arrival proved most propitious.

As if this wasn't quite enough, yet another change happened at this time that had a major impact on the group's direction. Vivian, Barney and Phil had come to feel that continuing as a "bar band" was becoming a less than satisfying musical pursuit. They needed to hear and enjoy each other during performances more and began to want to play for audiences who had come to listen to the music's content and appreciate its subtleties.

So, with the new band makeup, Tall Timber proceeded to creatively broaden its performance repertoire, used bluegrass instrumentation and band dynamics to effectively express their new diversity, and became a concert band.

Featuring grassroots music from many sources, the band's stage offerings typically ranged from yodeling cowboy songs, to original compositions, to Canadian fiddle tunes, to "pop-folk." The formula proved to be highly successful, and is reflected in this album.

In 1980, the band was fortunate to begin working with noted popular music artist, producer, and recording engineer Paul Speer. Paul did sound and lights for Tall Timber concerts occasionally and was of significant help in fine-tuning the band's performance and musical skills.

By 1982, Paul had acquired his own multitrack capability and this provided the impetus for getting the group's music onto vinyl. In order to give the album a wider appeal and to increase rhythmic power, Neil Speer was added on drums. Most of the tracks were laid down at Paul's studio and the record was released in late '82, with Paul as producer.

Thanks again to Paul and Neil and all the wonderful folks who gave their support and encouragement. It was fun.

Tall Timber has gone from being a bar band to being a stage band, and Northwest audiences love it. Williams and his wife Vivian, and their friends Barney Munger and Sue Thompson have probably done more to bring what they call "grassroots American music" to Washington, Oregon, Northern California, and Western Canada than any other local band.

- Bluegrass Unlimited, May, 1982.

Recording: Nova, Playback, and Fisher Studios, Seattle, WA. Mixing: Steve Lawson Productions. Engineering: Paul Speer, Dave Huber. Produced by Paul Speer. Graphic Design: Barney Munger. Cover Photo: Jean Francois Stien. Flower logo: Rochelle Munger

1. **Sparkling Blue Eyes** (Billy Cox) 3:17
2. **Crossin' the Cumberlands** (Bill Monroe) 2:41
3. **Jealous Hearted Me** (A.P. Carter) 2:43 Lead vocal by Phil Williams.
4. **Never Ending Song of Love** (Delaney Bramlett, additional lyrics by Sue Thompson) 2:08 Lead vocal by Barney Munger.
5. **I Want to Be a Cowboy's Sweetheart** (Patsy Montana) 2:49
6. **Medley: Mothers Reel / Mackilmoyle Reel / Big John McNeil** (Traditional) 3:29
7. **Backfire** (Barney Munger) 2:07
8. **Where the Old Red River Flows** (Jimmie Davis) 2:59
9. **Mississippi, You're On My Mind** (Jesse Winchester) 3:46 Lead vocal by Barney Munger.
10. **No Hard Times** (Jimmie Rogers, additional lyrics by Sue Thompson) 2:33
11. **Kansas City Railroad Blues** (Buck Ryan) 2:05



Photo by Laurie Stokes

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VRCD 332

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Finally, a CD release of the groundbreaking 1982 album from this highly regarded Seattle string band -- beautifully recorded by Paul Speer, noted Northwest popular music performer and producer.

Featuring bluegrass instrumentation and drums, Tall Timber treats you to an entertaining and creative leap into their diverse traditional music backgrounds. The result is a generous helping of outstanding performances of grassroots tunes and tempos you will find surprisingly contemporary. Here is an ultimately solid and satisfying listening experience, as fresh now as it was then. Enjoy.

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Tall Timber

Vivian Williams/ fiddle, harmony vocals
Barney Munger/ 5-string banjo, harmony and lead vocals
Phil Williams/ mandolin, bass, lead vocal
Sue Thompson/ guitar, bass, harmony and lead vocals
Neal Speer/ drums

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