

LOW DOWN



**A 'Homestead'
Country Music Club
Publication**

Issue No#1 February 2014

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Quote for the Month

‘Music is the movement of sound to reach the soul for the education of its virtue’
Plato

My Say Segment

To be given the role of corresponding with and providing all members with the **Low Down** of everything that is **Homestead**, is a task I partake with a great sense of responsibility, caution and zeal.

Our communications in today’s fast-moving society have to be relevant to our audience and newsworthy. Competition from other sources such as Wi-Fi internet, Television and every form of social media dictate that unless the message encourages the recipient to *read-on*, there is little chance of having the magazine read. Whether at a Hoedown or a Homestead concert, everyone needs the Low Down of what is happening, what has happened and what is likely to occur in the future. Then comes the where, when and so on. As such, I will utilize the words of Rudyard Kipling; *“I have six honest men, they taught me all I knew. Their names were What and Why and When, and Where and How and Who”*: and I will question all that I do. Hopefully, this will allow me to fulfill my goal and not only dot I’s and cross T’s, but also offer possible solutions, disperse knowledge and avoid mistakes. It also allows me to pursue another of my passions, writing.

It is our aim this year to provide a hard copy ‘*magazine*’ as well as an abridged electronic ‘*newsletter*’ copy on the web.

All of the above being said and 2014 already more than one twelfth over: ...

Welcome to **LowDown.Editor** TT

Club Calendar

Urban Country Festival	2 nd -4 th May
Queensland (Flag) Day	8 th June
Homestead Junior Expo (Festival)	2 nd August
A.G.M.	19 th August

FROM THE PRESIDENT

I hope everyone has had a great start to 2014 and that the year brings lots of happiness and prosperity.

Homestead enters its eighteenth (or is it nineteenth) year of providing great music and musical opportunity to a broad range of people.

This year will not be without its challenges. Having worked through the acquisition of our new equipment, and gaining our independence from the ACMA, our most pressing challenge is now to cater to our increasing membership numbers.

As president I hope to lead the discussion that will help us innovate ways to provide the desired level of participation for all members. At the same time our focus will always be on bringing our high standards of entertainment to our patrons and ensuring the fun continues.

Another challenge for this year is to improve the way we communicate with members and patrons alike. This will be important as we expand our horizons to meet the need of our growing membership and it will allow us to engage and listen to our supporters more regularly.

But let's never forget we are here for the Country Music and the joy it brings.

Geoff McKenzie



For our bass players, our juniors [especially our teenagers] and those who are... or aren't in the know: Check out You-tube and Tal Wilkenfeld... the Aussie teenage sensation now considered "the best female bass player in the world" !!T.T. Ed.

'COUNTRY MUSIC'..... Evolution! and Expansion!

When someone said '*a rolling stone gathers no moss*', they weren't talking about Mick Jagger or any of his contemporaries. However, with a bit of levity, I suggest that they may have been referring to ever-developing nature of Country Music.

As we analyse the ongoing advancement of this music category, it has been accepted that Country Music evolved from Celtic roots and the experiences of those who settled in the New World. It is said to have had humble beginnings in the Appalachian Mountains where it was dubbed 'Hillbilly' or 'Mountain' music. The Celtic roots that established this music genre involved instruments that had been brought with immigrants from various European countries; i.e. concertina, violin, mandolin, harmonica and tin whistle. At around the same time or shortly thereafter, Australia's settlement followed a similar pattern with Celtic folk-refrains adapted to newly written ballads about a new land. This new music, 'Bush Music' had already been established by the time of our Gold Rush era, the early 1800's. The Henry Lawson and Banjo Patterson 'Bush Ballads' of yesteryear provided much fodder for the early Australian Country Music scene. The sounds of convict chains, the stockwhip, axe, blacksmith's hammer, and many, many more, including new birds, animals, rustling eucalypt and melaleuca leaves, the boiled billy and the working plough were also instrumental and contributors in our early Country Music. All played their part to inspire the development of unique, random, reverberating sounds and descriptive lyrics that were incorporated into our distinctive, listening, rhythms and songs.

Just as the didgeridoo, aboriginal clap-sticks and the gum-leaf have been incorporated within Australian Country, so too have Afro-American instruments such as the Congo-'banjar' (similar to a mandolin); [hence 'banjo-mandolin']; the Spanish 'bandora' (stringed lute), as well as Indian wooden and bone flutes, percussion and plucked bows, become part of the American Country scene.

Although some influences were from completely different sources, similar foundations had been set in the U.S.A., Canada and Australia for a form of Country Music that possessed national individuality yet, over the next century, would develop, refine and blend within similar parallels.

'No man is an island' as is no country insular to world events. The introduction of the radio in 1923, the phonograph and international developments all played their part in influencing our Country Music scene. In Australia, the new medium, radio, was embraced with some reluctance owing to a lack of disposable family funds and government regulations where one had to pay an annual registration (similar to a

car registration) to own and operate a radio through the government air-ways (called a radio license). Nevertheless, over, 300,000 were in use just prior to the Great Depression. Bush Music was overshadowed by the 'American' radio influence with Wilf Carter and Hank Snow from 1925 and this trend continued for the next decade. Australia was yet to make its own mark on this new medium.

Arriving from New Zealand as a young teenager, Tex Morton soon made his mark as an up and coming performer, and in February 1936, cut his first recording. This quickly outsold American artists and would do so for some time to come. His pioneering of authentic bush narratives, combined with a distinctive Aussie melodic style, set the scene for future artists to follow. Now dubbed the 'Father of Australian Country Music', Tex and his travelling Wild-west Rodeo Musical Troupe were to be seen performing this new form of Australian Folk/Country Music, far and wide. He became the first musician to travel to America and appeared with Hank Williams in Hollywood.

Other young performers were soon to take up the baton and follow in his footsteps. They included Slim Dusty, the 'King of Australian Country' and Smoky Dawson. The latter, however, was to be remembered more as a showman; a whip-cracking, knife-throwing, singing cowboy. Both were able to provide an invaluable contribution over six decades to the Country Music scene. Slim Dusty's legacy as our most successful and prolific entertainer, nevertheless, has outlived all others as his style was more distinctively Australian. His family, wife, Joy McKean and daughter, Ann Kirkpatrick, also had successful careers, both as singer-songwriters.

World War II dominated and preoccupied the nation during the early 40's; but Country Music was able to establish itself within Australian culture during this era as a much needed diversion from the stresses and horror of conflict.

Our first female, recorded performer was to come from Queensland in 1941. Shirley Thoms, born in Toowoomba, was to excel and entertain troops during WWII as '*Australia's Yodelling Sweetheart*'. '*Where The Golden Wattle Blooms*', one of her recordings highlights her Aussie style and love of country.

The 1950's produced a string of successful artists most notably, Reg. Lindsay and Chad Morgan, the 'Clown Prince of Australian Country'. The introduction of television assisted and bolstered all forms of music, not only country; and as a result more and more notable performers arrived on the scene. But the cult following of the new craze, Rock 'n Roll, was to push all other music genres into enforced hibernation for almost a decade.

Country Music re-emerged, revitalised as 'feel-good, modern country' that did not look back, but continued to develop, expand and re-invent itself. The introduction of LP records and the cassette were instrumental in such growth. By the mid 60's

'Country' had entered TV with Reg. Lindsay's Country Homestead. Jimmy Little became our initial indigenous success with 'Royal Telephone'. The 70's generated the birth of Tamworth as our Country Music Capital as well as the emergence of Eric Bogle, John Williamson and Olivia Newton-John. The 1980's saw Arthur & Jewell Blanch head to Nashville and Johnny Chester became a favourite on the local Country Music scene. In the 1990's, Country moved into mainstream with the likes of Lee Kernaghan, Gina Jeffreys, Troy Cassar-Daley, Adam Brand, Kasey Chambers and Keith Urban all looking for airplay of their new music. Needless to say, there are now so many diverse types of Country Music, from traditional to mainstream; it makes for a smorgasbord of personal choice.

Just as Nashville has become the headquarters of American Country Music, Tamworth is now the undisputed capital of Australian Country. Its annual festival over 10 days provides the opportunity for fans to revel in the best Country Music Australia has to offer. Over 800 artists perform in 120+ venues. There are lots of shows and lots of opportunities for up and coming newcomers. As I recall my many visitations to Tamworth, I often wonder what happened to 'The Squatters', a bush band from Gunnedah that performed on the back of a truck as it slowly motored past my vantage point, the Imperial Hotel, in downtown Tamworth. I also recall a band, 'The Ranch', performing with a little known country guitarist from Caboolture named Keith Urban?

Homestead Country Music in Caboolture has much to be proud of from its 17 years of existence. It has adapted to/with Country Music and the needs and aspirations of its members who are not unlike that 'rolling stone'; enthusiastically developing, growing and moving forward .

T.T. R4A E& OE

Get the *LOW DOWN* on 'Country Music Sub-genres'next edition



Eye on Stage

November and December concerts provided our first outings with the majority of our new equipment including speakers for the Front of House and fold-back together with all the new guitar and keyboard amplifiers. Most people in the audience would have noticed:

- The new fold-back stage speakers are much smaller and this allows a clearer, less cluttered view of the stage area.
- The sound in the hall was much clearer and quieter and with the efficient design, the new speakers give a much easier, understandable, voice reproduction so everyone could hear the words to the songs at a comfortable listening level.
- A higher quality backing of artists was achieved.[This will continue to improve once the new mixing desk is operational and understood.]

Our musicians and vocalists were very accepting of the new sound and played and sang with great feeling and enthusiasm and that came across in their performances. Of note was the superb quality and variety of presentations at our Christmas concert with comedy, stage, country, pop, standards, carols and Christmas songs. End of year produced a stellar effort from choral groups and individual members with everybody performing one song only. Stage hands, John Parkin, Kerry Lawson and Hanjo Smith contributed greatly to the smooth transitions from one act to the next and Peta-Maree is congratulated for her first attempt at managing the mixing desk to good effect.

A number of our patrons and our members were heard to comment that the concert was very easy to listen to and the overall sound level much quieter.

A majority of our audience obviously enjoyed themselves and stayed right to the end on both occasions so as not to miss any of the entertainment.

Altogether, the evenings were very successful and enjoyable nights for all the performers, musicians and our patrons.

We did have a few small glitches with the sound but that was to be expected with the management of such a large changeover of equipment. There was nothing however, that it seems couldn't be tweaked, dare I say it, perfected over the next few months.

I liked it!

Roll on 2014!!

N.S.

Packing up to go ...

One of the most rewarding experiences at Homestead is how members and guests get together to help pack up equipment at the end of each concert. This allows us to run the concert right up to timelines, knowing we can pack up and vacate the premises with the least delay as well as socialise as the pack-up occurs.

However, with new equipment, the pack-up procedures are changing. We request your indulgence while these processes are optimized.

- ✚ We now have road-cases on casters for major units like speakers and amplifiers, so that they can be loaded directly from the stage and rolled into storage with minimum effort ... no more carrying! However, units are heavy when loaded and not easy to manoeuvre and stop. Please avoid standing near the doorways, and remain aware of equipment movement.
- ✚ Plans are in place to store leads and power cables with the equipment they connect: (no longer stored in one big tub). If you are unsure, please just coil them in place and ask where they go.
- ✚ Microphone stands, music stands, amplifier stands etc. will be stored in wells on the top of certain road-cases. The hardware can be folded at any time, but these road-cases will need to be loaded first and tops clipped on before the hardware is added.
- ✚ Small units like microphones, microphone receivers, DI boxes, CD player etc. will have individual boxes where they are stored, together with their cables. Most will be colour-coded ... it's important to make sure they go to the correct location.

Existing tasks like putting furniture away, rolling up the backdrop, sweeping and cleaning will continue as usual.

As the systems are developed and fine-tuned there will be printed documentation to assist in standardising the procedures. Any suggestions for improvement, we'd be glad to hear from you.

JB for the pack-up team!

Modern Music Media/Mediums & Thermoplastics



Very early recordings were made for use on a ‘cylinder’ **Gramophone** using a **Bakelite** (hard plastic) tube, a little smaller than a baked beans’ tin with the ends missing. I can still visualise my Grandfather winding the handle so that it could play the recorded melodies.

The original Edison invention in 1877 did indeed utilise tin-foil for the tube, but intervention by Alexander Graham Bell, (inventor of the telephone), rapidly resulted in improvements to the gramophone.





Soon there-after, (1889), came the **Vinyl Record**, a flat **PVC** disc which would encapsulate the birth of the blues, jazz and ragtime, the proliferation of country music and the explosion of rock ‘n roll onto the arena in the 1950’s. There were 78’s, 45’s and 33’s ## with the early 78 format losing favor after a number of years. (Vinyl is still a favored format in some circles!)



In between then and the MP3 of today, music progressed through many mediums from **Reel to Reel Tape** recorders with **Acrylic** spools; to the **8 Track Stereo Cartridge** of **Polypropylene** invented in 1944 by William Lear the



Then came the  **Cassette** in 1962 developed by Phillips and manufactured from **ABS** and **Polyester** tape. Another 20 years were to pass before, in 1982, the **CD (Compact Disc)** made from high-impact, **Polycarbonate** thermoplastic resin  was to make its mark on the music scene. Today, in 2014, we are advised that despite the growth of digital audio (aka MP3 format), CDs remain the single most popular world-wide medium due to their flexibility re analogue and digital.



With these transitions and evolvments, equipment to support and play these devices has become smaller over the years, to what is now labeled ‘pocket-size’.

What invention and innovation will be the next generation music medium is anyone’s guess! The only thing for sure is that it will happen; be embraced by the millions of music fans and eventually be replaced by another innovation.

Note: 78, 45 & 33 related to the revolutions per minute and the speed setting required for turntable on the record player.

T.T. R4A E& OE

If you’re looking for the **LOW DOWN** on a specific topic, email the editor to investigate.

CMC Monthly Date Claimers

First Friday Pine Rives	Kallangur Community Centre	7:30 pm
First Saturday Brigalow Redlands Mod.	Wagner St., Eagleby Sports Reserve, Thornlands	6:45 pm 6:00 pm
First Sunday Coal City Gold Coast	Booval Bowls Club Southport Bowls Club	1:00 pm 1:00 pm
Second Saturday Blue Denim	Progress Hall, Clontarf	7:00 pm
Second Sunday Maroochy River Pioneer Village Twin Rivers	BliBli Hall North Pine Country Park Wagner St., Eagleby	1:00 pm 1:00 pm 12 noon
Third Friday Homestead Northern Suburbs West Moreton	Stanmore Hall, Caboolture Sandgate RSL Briggs Road, Raceview	7:00 pm 7:30 pm 7:30 pm
Third Saturday Boonah	Boonah Golf Club	7.00 pm (even months)
Third Sunday Guanaba Redcliffe	Heritage Park, Pimpama RedcliffeShowgrounds	12 noon 1:00 pm
Fourth Friday Redcliffe	RedcliffeShowgrounds	7:30 pm
Fourth Saturday Beaudesert Country Flavour Min Min	Jimboomba Hall 54 Rinto Road, Eagleby Masonic Lodge, Whites Rd, Petrie	7:30 pm 12 noon 7:30 pm
Fourth Sunday Blue Denim Roadhouse Pumicerstone	Progress Hall, Clontarf Wagner St., Eagleby Bribie Island Recreation Hall 158 First Ave Bribie Island	1:30 pm 12:30 pm 11.00 am
Last Sunday Cane Country Laidley	Jacaranda Avenue, Kingston Exchange Hotel, Laidley	1:00 pm 1:00 pm

Homestead

Country Music Club

Est. 9/7/96

Check out our website ...

<http://www.homesteadmusic.org>

More **Low Down** on happenings at **Homestead..**

Locate us on Facebook 'Homestead Country Music'

