

LOW DOWN



A 'Homestead'
Country Music Club
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Quotes for Month

'Music is a moral law. It gives soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, and charm and gaiety to life and to everything.'

Plato (428 BC – 348 BC) Greek Philosopher

'Without music, life would be a mistake.' Friedrich Nietzsche (1844 – 1900) German Philosopher

...oooO.ooo...

“My Say” Segment

There is a lot of meaning and enjoyment to be gained from an appreciation of all forms of music, be it classical, jazz, rock or country. That is to say there is nothing wrong with having a leaning towards a specific area and possibly a more specific genre. Such a mind-set is healthy as opposed to an obsession or even more-so, one-eyed, close-minded attitude.

This issue’s editorial focus is to provide the **Low Down** on the positives that can be gained from an open-minded and flexible stance when it comes to music selection, arrangement, presentation and appreciation. This can also be applied to style, individuality and expertise of members when preparing to rehearse a song that you may wish to perform.

When we discuss style and individuality, we become empowered with many options that will ultimately affect the end result. Some of these include:

Do we try to emulate the original recording or a particular artist’s rendition/version?

Do we change the style from e.g. Blues/Bluegrass to e.g. Country Rock or Western Swing?

Is there a club member that can be offered an opportunity to gain experience?

Do we lengthen, shorten or alter the song to suit a particular situation?

Do we put our own interpretation on the song to make it our own?



There is not always a correct answer to these questions and it is up to you and your individual choice that will ultimately provide the result that is going to provide you with the most enjoyment and satisfaction. All positive outcomes! This does not mean that you should not seek assistance from the more experienced in order that everything is technically correct and that alterations are suggested and made where necessary to simplify or provide a more suitable ending etc. Another positive!

At Homestead, the flexibility that is applied to sub-genre selection is one that is not offered to members of many other Country Music Clubs. As such, the opportunities to experience and gain more exposure is not to be missed or taken lightly. Whether it be a ballad, country rock, bluegrass or celtic folk, all have their place within ‘Country’ and all provide opportunities that will give you another notch on your country music capability. Guess what? Another positive!



All in all, it is important that we don’t get stuck in a groove that becomes too deep that it almost becomes impossible to deviate from!

Fortunately, there are many experienced members where advice can be sought; and often, more than one opinion may provide more options. Remember, you need to be comfortable with the decision you ultimately make.

Enjoyment is almost always the number one priority... and that should be a positive too!

T.T. Editor





HI-NOTES - FROM THE PRESIDENT



Hi folks,

Welcome to spring and Homestead's September magazine and concert. The weather has been a bit scatty but nice to see the rain and now the sunshine (I don't enjoy the cold as I am pretty sooky).

On the home front, Homestead held its AGM in August and I was elected as President. I don't take election lightly and will endeavour to carry out my role fairly. I believe in equality as we are all amateurs brought together for our shared interest – music. I see no one as being better than anyone else and we can leave our egos at the door. We have many diverse personalities within our membership and I would like us all to put aside our differences, show a mature level of tolerance and work together to have a really great year.

I thank Trevor Tinworth for his role as Vice President in 2013/14 and supporting me with a job well done. Trevor was nominated but declined this year, as he would like to put his time into revitalising Homestead's magazine – great job so far. A lot of Homestead people have been editors over the years (me included) and each person has certainly put their own personal stamp on it.

I welcome Bob Cole on board as Vice President and as people may or may not know, he is retiring from his Principal duties at the end of the school year, so feels he can put more time into Homestead and his new vice role. I know we will work well together with Frank Moroney (Treasurer) and Peta-Maree (Secretary) to guarantee the 14/15 year goes smoothly and positively. Frank has been a more than worthy keeper of Homestead's finances for many years and although he is always threatening to run off to South America with our cash, he hasn't yet. Peta-Maree is returning for a second year as secretary and it is lovely to see our young ones who have come up through the ranks giving back in other areas, so thanks very much Homestead youth for caring and staying around to support us 'oldies'.

August also saw Homestead hold its 8th Youth Talent EXPO with Karen Grant-Freeman in the coordinator's role. I must once again thank Karen and her committee, for their hard work of organisation and preparation leading up to the day, to ensure that all was in place so the 'EXPO' ran smoothly and successfully. Along with a great team of volunteers, we had a very good day with everyone going away satisfied with a job well done – and a profit in the bank!

The 'EXPO' final results saw Ruby Gilbert take out the junior champion and new Homestead member Cassi Hilbers take out the juvenile champion and overall champion. Congratulations to both girls for their hard work that showed in the final results. I thank all of our juniors who acquitted themselves at a high standard on and off the stage.

Several of Homestead's young people entered into the Gympie Muster Talent Search this year – Ruby Gilbert, Cassi Hilbers, Leigha Moore and Jen Cole. Cassi was the winner of the junior section whilst Leigha Moore was the senior and overall Winner. Congratulations Leigha on your massive win!

I will be away for most of October, but confident with the knowledge that my committee (with Bob at the helm) will do a fine job in steering the Homestead ship until my return.

Cheers and bye until next time –Barbara



“FIREWORKS”



I recall an article in last December's publication entitled "Musicians have Sharper Minds" in which the university's School of Psychology and Neuroscience research suggested that the playing of a musical instrument was beneficial to mental and physical health.

As I was intrigued to know more, I decided to investigate further.

It appears that neuroscientists have discovered that when one physically plays music, 'fireworks' are going on in all areas of the brain; i.e. multiple areas of the brain are functioning and engaged at the same time; and playing a musical instrument is the brain's equivalent of a 'full-body workout'.

Information such as Sound, Melody and Rhythm is processed (individually) and analysed by the neurons of the brain in a split-second and then the information is assimilated back into one uniformed musical experience. This, according to the neuroscientists, sets the brain alight (hence the fireworks label.)

Playing music also involves using both hemispheres of the brain (*scientific/linguistic & creative/intuitive*) and fine-tunes our motor skills. This in turn increases the volume and activity of the "corpus callosum", the bridge between the two hemispheres. All is achieved via simultaneously processing different information in intricate, inter-related and astonishingly fast sequences; especially the Visual, Auditory and Motor channels of the brain. [ed.ted.com] Further, disciplined practice strengthens and invigorates these functions.

The age-old myth that, we, on average, only use 10% of our brain is, to this day, still believed by 50% of teachers and educational professionals. However, research as early as 1890 by William James [Harvard Psychology Lecturer], who famously stated, "Most of us do not meet out mental potential" (Wikipedia) ; began to unlock and stimulate much more investigation into this field of study. The Frontal Lobes and most of the Parietal Lobes, often referred to as the 'silent areas', were deemed to be basically inactive or merely storage areas. However, to believe 90% of the brain is lying idle is rather farfetched.

Today, these areas are credited as being crucial for Adapting, Deciding, Planning and Reasoning. Research has also discovered that the brain, (2% of body mass), consumes daily glucose at the rate of 60% for infants, 50% for children and 20% for adults. [The Neurological Side of Neuropsychology 1995]

(No wonder the young ones learn faster than I do!!)

As other research suggests that playing a musical instrument can lengthen your lifespan, I think I should work harder at achieving my musical goals. Incidentally, It has been found that in contrast to sport and painting etc., the artistic and aesthetic tasks in music are different from any and all other activities and experiences. Further, when playing an instrument, much has been done to maximise our potential mental capacity. 'Tis fireworks alight again!!

T.T. _____

R4A E& OE

Something to Munch Over!

*Character is like a tree and reputation like its shadow.
The shadow is what we think of it, the tree is the real thing.*



THE ORIGINS OF TODAY'S GUITAR



Many believe that the Guitar evolved over the centuries from the stringed instruments of the orchestra, namely the violin, harp, lute, etc: however, nothing could be further from the truth. [It is true that the Bass Guitar was encompassed in such a transition which involved the cross-fertilisation of Double Bass to guitar format, but not so, the Guitar.]

The guitar itself, however, can be traced back over 4000 years ago in Egypt and Mesopotamia; the oldest evidence found on clay plaques in Babylonia dated 1900- 1800BC depicting an instrument with a body, neck and strings, and bearing resemblance to the size and shape of the guitar of today. The 'tanbur', a 3500 year-old instrument, (the oldest, preserved, guitar-like instrument, [on display in a Cairo Museum], was found on the banks of the Nile in an archaeological dig. It is a three (3) stringed instrument with a plectrum suspended from the neck by a chord.

The word 'guitar' is related to 'chartar', ancient Persian in which the translation indicates four (4) strings. Many facades and plaster frescos also depict such instruments. The earliest music written for guitar, (4 string), has been traced to the Spanish 'chitarra' around the 1500's. 'Guitarra banente' was a 5 string Italian instrument that replaced the 4 string. During this period, dual strings and a set tuning of A,D,G,B,E was established. In fact, during the Renaissance, the guitar became a dominant instrument especially in Italy and France with 4 unison-tuned pairs/courses of strings or a single first string and '3-Course' unison pairs. However, the number of frets was yet to be increased from eight (8). Interestingly, there are known examples of Antonio Stradivarius' involvement in the manufacture of '5-Course' guitars around 1680. The Italians added a sixth course in the latter 17th century and this was soon to be adopted throughout Europe with up to a 10 or 12 fret neck.

The next major development, 1800's, saw the string pairing disappear to a six, single-stringed instrument. Thus it can be stated that the 6-string guitar evolved from the 12-string and not the other way around as normally believed.



Antonio Torres Jurado is considered the 'father of classical guitars' (1850's) and his 'Torres' design remains largely unchallenged today. Nevertheless, there are earlier examples of similar designs/shapes by other makers.

The 'Martin' Guitar (Christian Fredrich Martin) had its beginnings in USA around this period of time with 'Gibson' (Orville Gibson), commencing to manufacture later, just prior to the 20th century. The 1900's also saw the introduction of steel strings to produce an instrument with enhanced volume.

The next major change occurred in the 1920's with the invention of the electric guitar. Although its early days were not amazing, it was to become the most sought after instrument in the latter 20th century. Competition from other instruments during the Jazz, Blues, Swing and Big Band era saw the trumpet, piano, clarinet, trombone and saxophone not only take precedence but jockey for dominance prior to the 1960's. [In the meantime, the Electric Guitar was continuing to develop and evolve.]



Today, the guitar remains king and I am always impressed when I see and hear some of the finest musicians in the world pushing the boundaries, trying new things, experimenting and challenging the possibilities. It only remains to say... "keep on strumming or plucking at those strings". It's been the 'in-thing' for centuries!!

T.T.

...oooOooo...

Note: The developments of stringed instruments in the East (Asia) with similarities to the guitar evolved along different lines and times but are related. Many of these remain unchanged unlike western examples. The word 'tar' is used in many examples e.g. 700 year-old, 23 string Sitar, Dutar and Azerbaijani Tar (Afghanistan); the word/syllable 'tar' also being a Sanskrit (Hindu) word for string. The Chinese examples, however, are unrelated and include the 'Ruan', 'Pipa' and 'San/xian' (three/strings).

R4A E& OE

Next Issue's Feature: 'The Role of the Drummer'; .. a *LOW DOWN* articleby Bil Turgeon



Winter winds whistled for another cold winter night in **July** but the music was **hot**.

After some problems and teething troubles over a number of months with the new sound system, we finally had a night without complaints as to sound quality or sound levels either from the audience or from the performers and musicians. When the system was introduced it was envisaged that a six month integration time would be necessary for everyone to be comfortable with the system. Now that six months have expired, the sound desk operators are more positive in their operation of the system and the clarity and good listening levels for the audience and members are the results.

Our resident saxophonist Trevor Tinworth played superb solo parts to the songs of some of our vocalists. His addition to the stage band line-up for specific songs has given Homestead music an altogether new dimension as well as allowing our vocalists more scope in their choice of songs. Our resident lead guitarist Steve Fraser is working in well with the variety of new lead/melody instruments now available on stage. Additionally, he has been able to be off stage for some periods during the night to mingle and chat, something he also really enjoys and in which he had previously been largely unable to participate.

Our **August** concert was another great night and well attended regardless of the rain. What loyal patrons we have in our audience. They'd rather be at Homestead to see a great concert than home in more comfortable conditions. Of course the super food at the canteen, the availability of a warming/cooling beverage and the small entry fee also help the decision.



There were a couple of hiccups with the power to the PA and electrics but the cause (purely mechanical) was located and will be easily remedied for our next concert.

Sympathy for the artists who were the unlucky sufferers of the power outage during their performances.

The young club members are really "strutting their stuff" to the appreciation of our audience. The loud applause for their performances was well deserved.

NS



PICTURE PARAPHENALIA



HOT AUGUST NIGHT II

Woodford reverberated to the sounds of Neil Diamond on two occasions during the month of August. [*Take I*, Woodford Golf Club; *Take II*, Woodford Bowls Club.] Both performances were a complete sell out with homesteaders and locals mingling as the nights marched on.

In the past two years, I have witnessed several tribute shows; four (4) in Brisbane and two (2) on International Cruise Ships and all were extremely professional. Nevertheless, the Woodford experience was equal to, if not better than some of those highly-staged and promoted spectacles.

Steve Fraser's portrayal of Neil Diamond's songs was superb and the superlatives that can be afforded the performances could go on indefinitely. The flawless harmonies and arrangements epitomised three talented musicians that have been playing together for many years.



"Hot August Night", the classic, double vinyl album was recorded in Los Angeles in 1972 as one of 10 sold-out concerts and it then broke records worldwide, remaining at No #1; top of the charts. In Australia, it was Number #1 for 29 weeks. It is no wonder that its songs are persistently sought after and appreciated by audiences everywhere.

Neil Diamond has been a superstar for a number of decades. The 1972 album-cover depicts a very young Neil Diamond. However, on the sequel live album, "Hot August Night II", 1987, the cover bears a little more of a resemblance to the Neil Diamond persona, we saw at Woodford.

"*Soolaimon*" is an African word that can translate to 'Hello' and 'Goodbye', 'Peace be with you'. Steve embraced all three, with his Brother Love's Travelling Salvation Show featuring a Song Sung Blue where Shilo advises Sweet Caroline,.. "Girl, You'll Be A Woman Soon"..... and indeed there was much, much more!

Steve was capably assisted by Shayne Bleakley and Norm Smith, who portrayed and provided a few wonderful examples of Roy Orbison and Buddy Holly, respectively, later in the tribute show.

The town of Woodford has been extremely fortunate to have 2 'World Class' tribute shows which were, in a word, '*outstanding*' and deserving of every accolade given.

There is no doubt that this splendid show will be repeated in the future and if you missed it this time, the comments of some the patrons, such as "*Best tribute show ever !*", "*Great show !*" & "*Wow, what a night !*"; may be all the incentive you need to go next time.



Roving Reporter

Homestead Youth Talent Expo



Congratulations to the competitors, judges, volunteers and committee members for what was a most exciting and successful Homestead Expo.

This year saw the introduction of the Sue Cobcroft Perpetual Award for Duets and the doubling of our cash prize money pool to \$3050.

We wish to acknowledge all our fantastic sponsors, who should be congratulated and most definitely, continually supported for their commitment to young people and their passion to compete and personally grow within the Country Music area.

To the following Sponsors, a most heart-felt THANK YOU:

R&R Hire
Sonic Imprint Pro Studio
Guitar Exchange
Studio 51
Cr Greg Chippendale
Shipley Smash Repairs
Pacific Harbour Golf & Country Club
Moreton Bay Regional Council
Southern Cross Care
The Beerwah & Palmwoods Hotels
The Caboolture College of Music
Caltex Bribie Island

*A Complete Copy of the
'Youth Talent Expo'
Report can be found on
the Homestead Website*

Homestead members who privately sponsored this year include:

The O'Reillys, the Keenans, the Parkins, the Newton-Gilberts, Pam Matthews & Frank Moroney, Neil Rowland, the Boetjes, Peter Bigg, Barbara Hall, the Frasers, the Coles, the Morleys, the Smiths, the Grant-Freemans, Lorraine Austen, Kylie Wild, Geoff McKenzie, Liz Rauchle and our Homestead Junior buskers.

KGF





CRACKER NIGHT

*Remember remember the fifth of November
Gunpowder, treason and plot.*

*I see no reason why gunpowder, treason
Should ever be forgot...*



In reminiscing of a time when the seriousness of consequences did not enter into our thinking and personal safety was not of paramount importance, a well spent youth of yester-year is recalled. . In short I refer to Guy Fawkes Night. (also known as Fireworks night, Bonfire night and Cracker night.)

WARNING – this article has *nothing* to do with country music.

“The Gunpowder Plot of 1605, as it became known, was the brainchild of Robert Catesby, a well-to-do gentleman of Warwickshire, England. Together with Guy Fawkes and three other papist plotters, they formulated a plan to strike at the opening of parliament on 5 November to blow up the houses of parliament and kill King James I. With the king dead, they would put James' daughter, Elizabeth, on the throne, returning Britain to the Catholic fold. The plotters rented a cellar under the House of Lords and packed it with enough explosive to kill the king and the most powerful men in the land as they sat in the room above. A month before Lord Monteagle, the brother-in-law of one of the plotters, received an anonymous letter which warned against attending Parliament for the opening on November 5th. Monteagle passed the letter to the authorities, who decided to wait before taking action. The plotters had no cause to believe their plan was in danger. On 4 November 1605, searches were ordered of the whole of the Houses of Parliament, and Fawkes was arrested. He was found dressed for a swift exit with spurs on his boots.

Fawkes endured two days of torture in the Tower of London before confessing all. It was enough to buy the remaining plotters time to escape. While religious differences between Catholics and Protestants have largely been forgotten, we continue to celebrate the deliverance of James I and the execution of his would-be assassins - most notably Fawkes - every 5 November.”

These are the grizzly facts but of course they meant little to kids who were intent on the explosive adventures of cracker night. It was a night of tom thumbs, double happys, bungers, jumping jacks, sky rockets, mortars, roman candles, Catherine wheels, volcanoes, ink-pots, double voices, sparklers, Bengal matches and throw-downs to name a few. If you were born after 1966 then you probably don't know what all these terms mean because that all ended in 1971 when the sale of fireworks was banned in Queensland thereby effectively ending cracker night.

Of course we all see firework displays at Riverfire and New Year and other special occasions. But we are distanced from the action as spectators. Cracker night was entirely different. We all had the experience of setting off the fireworks ourselves. They were ours to use up as we had paid for them with our own money earned through paper deliveries or milk boy or odd jobs or sometimes saved birthday money gifts from relatives.

Five to ten shillings (fifty cents to one dollar today) would buy enough crackers of the various types to allow a couple of hours of explosive happiness. Mums, (at least in my family), made sure we wore covered foot-ware and our older clothes. (There were sure to be sparks, ash and burning materials flying around!) Dad always confiscated the more high-powered fourpenny and sixpenny bungers so we couldn't blow up anything important like letter boxes, car exhausts, fingers or toes or that sort of thing and of course we couldn't throw any crackers towards the house.

How we waited with impatience for evening and for the first sky-rockets to go up. That was the signal and from then on we were free to light up the bonfire with the “guy” effigy on top and start to touch off the crackers. Dad and the other parents at our family cracker night would set off the “pretty” fireworks and sky rockets to the oohs and aahs while we kids would do our best to blow up the back yard throwing our lit bungers, etc., with abandon. When the kids were finished it was the parents' turn with all the confiscated crackers to engage in bunger warfare while the kids sat and had sandwiches, cake, tarts cordials and other goodies.

It was always an early night but then a shower or bath was essential before bed because everyone smelt of gunpowder and smoke. But we didn't mind because we knew we would be up early the next morning to clean up the yard and hopefully find some crackers that hadn't exploded and set them off. (Occasionally the wick on a cracker would not have burned down enough to set off the explosive. So when you lit them extreme care was needed not to have the thing explode in your hand before you could throw it a safe distance.)

There was always the odd burn to be salvaged and ringing ears from too close explosions but no major injuries were ever experienced by our family and that was without Workplace Health and Safety regulations being implemented. It was merely good sense and watchful parents that kept us safe.

I miss those nights but more than that I would love the chance to allow my grandchildren to experience the fun but, with the perceived dangers to life and limb and the fire risk, it's not going to happen. C'est la vie!

NS

Homestead '3' ... *"Strut their Stuff"*

Our young Homestead members Mikara, Ruby and Janet performed at the Woodford Golf Club on 24th August playing for the club members and visiting Ulysses Motorcyclists from club chapters at Glasshouse and Sunshine Coast.

What a professional show they gave with the girls sharing leads vocals and harmonies. They also did their own backing with guitars and banjo. Their selection of songs was received very well by the visitors and quite a few thanked the girls as they were leaving for such fine entertainment.

The management of the club were most appreciative as well and no doubt will ask the girls for repeat performances on future occasions.

Family and friends from Homestead also made up a table of supporters. Hopefully, on the next occasion it can be publicised further and we can have more Homestead support to see these girls strut their stuff. They are worthy of support and those who go can expect an afternoon of good music listening along with lunch available in pleasant surroundings.

Very well done girls.

Norm Smith

Homestead

Country Music Club

Est. 9/7/96



Monthly Date Claimers (for other Country Music Clubs)

Refer **Homestead** website

<http://www.homesteadmusic.org>

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<http://www.homesteadmusic.org>

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

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