

Rocky Page Tribute

Rocky Page (b: 1928 / d:1997)

Founder - South Australian Country Music Festival & Awards

Rocky's Early Years

Dean "Rocky" Page was born at Kadina on May 10, 1928.

Rocky's parents had a mixed farm and in 1932 his father passed away and the family moved to a dairy farm at Wallaroo. Rocky helped with the milking before and after school.

Rocky volunteered for all the circuses and travelling concert shows in the hope of getting a ticket to the show. In 1939 his mother moved to Crafers in the Adelaide Hills where Rocky completed his education.

Rocky's step father, George Westly, was a talented musician on the button accordion and mouth organ and taught Rocky to play these instruments. Wilf Carter, Tex Morton and the Carter Family were a great influence on Rocky.

At this time Rocky was also introduced to hypnosis and he spent many years studying the mind. Although hypnosis was frowned upon, he presented hypnosis in many theatres around Australia. Rocky's first job was delivering meat and mail around the Adelaide Hills on horseback - rain, hail or shine.

The 1940's
It was in the early 1940's that Rocky met great radio personality, Uncle Bert Wooley, who gave him a guitar he brought back from France and taught Rocky to play. Bert was a fine entertainer. Rocky and Bert performed in many shows around Adelaide.

In the late 1940's Rocky appeared on many radio stations, Mel Cameron's Radio Canteen 5DN, Bob Fricker's Mountain Music 5AD, The Tivoli Shows and Good Friday Appeals.

Rocky made his first custom record in 1947 at 5AD. He also taught music at the Adelaide College of Music.

The 1950's
In 1951 he moved to Berri and continued to teach for the Adelaide College of Music. Every Riverland town and charity organisation benefited by the "Rocky Page School of Music Shows".

In 1956 Rocky and Family toured with Stan and Kitty Gill around Australia in their rodeo and circus. Rocky was billed as the "Singing Cowboy Hypnotist Extraordinaire".

At the close of this tour in Melbourne, Rocky met Les Partel and as partners had many joint ventures in show business and recorded as the Whitman Brothers.

Rocky appeared on television in Melbourne many times on Channels 9 & 7 and on Radio 3DB. The Rocky Page Show was playing to packed houses everywhere, with top artists, Tex Barnes, Ian Castles, Les Partel, Isobel Denmead and Ken Warne.

Rocky then opened a music shop and music school. In 1957 Rocky had a weekly radio programme that played on 5RM (Berri), 3TR (Sale), 3CV (Maryborough) and 7HT (Hobart).

The 1960's
In 1961 Rocky undertook a two month tour in Tasmania with the Slim Dusty Show and Rocky recorded for Hadley Records in Launceston with Slim, Joy and Barry Thornton backing. The next six years Rocky spent working with Frank Foster on most capital city show grounds with great artists such as Lonnie Lee, Slim Dusty, Chad Morgan, Lionel Long, Johnny Chester, Johnny Devlin, Johnny O'Keefe and Normie Rowe.

In early 1967 Rocky performed a lightening tour with the Johnny Young Spectacular. Later that year Rocky joined the Slim Dusty Show for a complete tour of Australia which in Rocky's own words were 'very happy and exciting times'.

In 1968 Rocky again toured with Slim and Joy with regular appearances on Reg Lindsay's Country and Western Hour television show in Adelaide.

The 1970's
In 1971 Rocky organised and started the very successful Berri Rodeo. In 1978 Rocky rode a horse to Darwin putting on numerous shows to raise funds for the Apex Help A Kid Make It Appeal and raised in excess of \$10,000. The rides and shows took some four months to complete. Also in 1978 the first South Australian Country Music Awards were conducted following the Berri Rodeo.

Rocky's Final Years
Over the next 20 years, Rocky continued to organise and promote the South Australian Country Music Awards and was instrumental in establishing the Festival which is now part of a ten days of Country Music in the Riverland. Rocky's health was not always the best and after a long battle with Motor Neuron Disease, Rocky lost the battle in 1997.

Thanks to committee member Josie for this article.

Acknowledgement to <http://www.riverlandcountrymusic.com>

Bereavement Notices

- ♣ Club member Charles Hawke passed away 16th July at 4am.
- ♣ Barry Dalgarno a regular visitor to our club also recently passed away.

Our sincere condolences are offered to the families and friends of both.

'Monte Carlo'



Sue and Friends land on the right spot at Gawler Country Music Club. Well Done and Congratulations.

Just a Thought From Bill Northcott!

Bill Says!



Club members Bill Northcott moved from a cattle and sheep farm in Murrumbidgee in 1965 at the age of 40.

Bill worked at Holden's for 3 months and then worked in an Abattoir for 11 years.

He used to listen to radio when in the country and began collecting Slim Dusty music in '65.

Bill describes himself as 'Happily retired and single'.

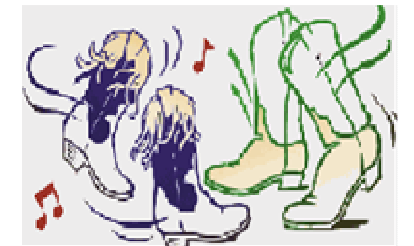
His main companions now are:-

2000 Country Music Tapes
400 Country Music CD's
100 Slim Dusty albums
2000 Country Music 78's

Bill says..... 'I like country music....'



'I Like it Like That!'



'Thanks KFC for your sponsorship'

GAWLER COUNTRY MUSIC CLUB INC.

**Sunday Aug 20th
Courthouse Connection**



Venue: Munno Para Bowling Club

Cnr. Curtis & Main North Roads Munno Para

12 noon - 4pm

**Venue: Munno Para Bowling Club
Cnr. Curtis & Main North Roads Munno Para**

**Admission: Members \$5: Non Members \$7:
Children under 16 free**

Walk Up Artists, Live Band, Dancing & Prizes

Lunch & Bar Facilities:

For Further Information

Contact: Keith Warren (08) 8255 8920

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