

GETTING TO KNOW YOU DAVE RICHARD

THE BARE FACTS

These won't fill the page but, as Sam Goldwyn said: *'We'll jump off that bridge when we come to it'*.

I was stuffing around on piano until age 17 (even at age 4 I could see that picking out Ol' Man River is a piece of cake as long as you start on Db and stay on the black notes) . The folk boom of the sixties provided opportunities for (paid!) public performances in places like Ivanhoe Coffee Lounge and The Copper Kettle in Kew, by which time I had got into guitar playing and teamed with a more musically knowledgeable guitarist , Noel Gough (now a globe-trotting academic who claims to have lost all his guitar skills-use it or lose it!).

We still get together occasionally for a CD/DVD night. We were called The Subway Singers in tribute to Noel's beloved Rooftop Singers (I was more smitten by Peter Paul and Mary who blew me away when I saw them live at Festival Hall in 1965(?). We tried to recruit Lynne Oswald, (now Gough) who could really sing, but she decided that getting married was more important - go figure! We finished up with the daughter of the Principal of the country school I was teaching in at the time (she could sing too—she eventually went on to roles in musicals in London's West End—she also became my first wife). We did a few concerts for charitable institutions like Knox Church Ivanhoe and Doncaster Guides (the big time!). The experience was very like doing a set at a festival (except we had no sound system problems!)—so I've come full circle in a way.

That phase petered out and by 1975 I was playing solo guitar in restaurants, which continued almost without interruption until a few years ago when I became half of Blue Tango and lived happily ever after.

To paraphrase Woody Allen, *'If I had my life to live over I wouldn't change a thing except I wouldn't watch Kevin Costner as Robin Hood.'*

The longest residencies during the restaurant phase were The Mustard Seed in Montmorency, Rossi's in Alphington, Anzac Bistro (Watsonia RSL), Di Riccardo's in Lower Plenty, Monty RSL and Yaringa Boathouse on Westernport Bay. I also had a couple of years in Café Vic (Victorian Arts Centre).

This was a pretty rewarding way (but not financially at least initially—in 1975 I made about \$1000 for the year!) to become a fairly versatile fingerstyle guitarist .Not all positive though. Like the blind diner who asked for the taped music (it wasn't a tape, it was me) to be turned down (is that a compliment or not?- never been sure) or the woman who came over after my heartfelt rendition of The Three Bells and complimented me on a lovely version of Tom Dooley.

At various ages musos hear/see things that blow them away. Here's my (incomplete and random) list: Winifred Atwell 78s; Buddy Holly and the Crickets-That'll Be The Day; Glen Miller- Chattanooga Choo Choo; Now You Has Jazz(Bing and Louis); Gene Kelly- Singin' in the Rain; Fred Astaire Movies; Ezio Pinza -Some Enchanted Evening; Waltz of The Flowers; Peter Paul and Mary -Don't Think Twice etc, etc; The Rooftop Singers -Walk Right In; Jimmy Webb's Solo Album-Ten Easy Pieces; Mason Williams-Classical Gas; John Williams playing Queen Elizabeth Her Galliard etc; John Renbourne's Album -Another Monday; Doc Watson-Deep River Blues; The Mills Brothers-Some of These Days (and anything else pre 1940); Frank Sinatra with Antonio Carlos Jobim; Don Mclean in concert...

My Heros

Paul Stookey, Pete Seeger, Chet Atkins

THE BEST TIME OF MY MUSICAL LIFE

Now, or as Sam Goldwyn said: *'If I dropped dead now I'd be the happiest man alive.'*

