

Singing In The Night Time

Every Song Has A Story

In between tours, my wife Diane and I have been occasional guests on the ABC Radio Overnight Show hosted by Trevor Chappell — a prime cause of insomnia, as fans set their alarms to listen to him. Sitting in a radio studio at 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning — headphones on, squeezebox and ukulele in our laps — we've had enormous fun fielding challenges to our musical memories from all over Australia.



I've always had a parallel career entertaining adults but only four of my thirty albums to date are for adults — the rest are for children. When folks came looking for a CD of the songs we were singing we decided we ought to do something about it.

Here it is with an added bonus — it's a real family album with my wife Diane playing and my sons Ciaron and Tom singing together with me for the first time.

The songs chosen feature jewels from the programme like ***He Played His Ukulele As The Ship Went Down, Goodnight Irene, The Gypsy Rover, Ukulele Lady, By The Light Of The Silvery Moon*** and ***Side By Side***.

The reason for the inclusion of the others needs some explanation:

The Camptown Ladies had to go on — when he was tipsy, Diane's Dad used to cause great amusement by singing it very loudly, with considerable emphasis on the word 'Gwine' and a deliberately out of tune, elongated 'Night'.



I used to go to sleep at night to the sound of my grandmother playing ***The Maiden's Prayer*** and I'm told my granddad regularly played ***Red Wings*** to me on his squeezebox when I was a babe.

I've been going to record the joyous ditty ***We're Busy Doing Nothing*** forever and Diane has been playing ***Between The Devil and The Deep Blue Sea*** non-stop since she 'figured it out' on her uke. Perry Como's classics ***Magic Moments*** and ***Catch A Falling Star*** — or 'Sputnik' as we sang at school! — were part of our growing up. ***When I Grow Too Old To Dream*** was my Mum's request — she was amazed I could remember the words.



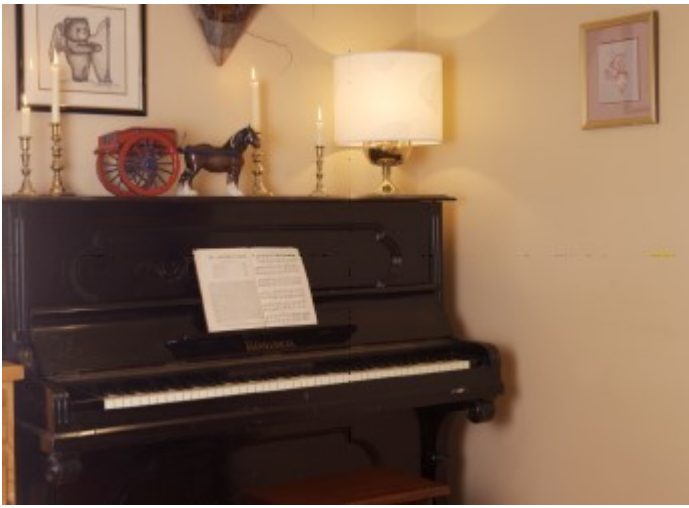
I'll See You In My Dreams is an odd one — it was put forward by my 17 year old son Tom who sings it with me. Yes indeed, there's a whole new generation singing and playing the songs we loved!

Danny Boy has a special place in my heart since I played it to a very frail Mrs Clarke in Ouyen Hospital years ago. She joined in with the most exquisitely silvery high harmony. I had tears streaming down my face by the time we ended the song and I had tears in my eyes in the studio when we recorded it — I'd realised earlier that, for a male performing it, the lyrics could be interpreted as a father farewelling his son about to leave for war and there I was with my two precious sons singing with me!

A lovely story I heard back in the 70's. I wrote ***The Old German Swaggie*** for a children's album about the song ***Waltzing Matilda*** but its been so popular with my adult audiences, it's included.

Heart and Soul was the first song I ever recorded — I was 15 then — so it's appropriate that here, the romping piano part is played by Tom's girlfriend Diana (16) with Tom (17) on ukulele.

No excuses for the ***Tennessee Waltz*** — I just love the song. Hugh's gentle reflective guitar playing was the product of a very long day and my low harmonica was a pure accident that grows on me the more I hear it.



Every Picture Tells A Story

This one is no exception!

The Angelic Teddy was drawn by Joanna who put her skills to good use helping me create the cover art for *Singing In The Night Time*. The horse and cart were a father and son creation. Diane's grandfather – a former blacksmith – made the magnificently detailed model cart and her Dad painted it.

The brass lamp was another Dad and son job — this time my Dad and I. It originally stood three feet tall at the lower of the banister in my last boyhood home (not good for sliding down stairs!). It was in a sad state of disrepair when Mum and Dad bought the house so it was removed and languished on a pile of bits in the garage until, one day whilst cleaning the brasses, I gave it a rub — no genie, but goodness did we make a lovely lamp out of it!

The pastel of flowers is my sister Suzanne's work. She's well on her way to achieving a long term goal of attaining a degree in fine arts — a wonderful achievement made possible by her determination and a more enlightened view of the brilliance dyslexia can mask.

The music is precious to me — it was my grandmother's party piece, *The Overture To The Bohemian Girl*. I don't recall a more thrilling 'rush' than watching her hands fly across the keys bringing that wonderful music to life.