

On The Road
June 2006 edition
Kathleen Hudson

Back from my May trip to San Miguel de Allende. Not much Texas music there this time, but many opportunities to take long walks on cobblestone streets, long siestas, long conversations with students. Yep, I was totally in my element for these two weeks.

Now, back attending the Kerrville Folk Festival (which runs at Quiet Valley Ranch on Highway 16 south of Kerrville until June 12), I am also in my element.....stories and songs. One spectacular moment for me was when Dalis Allen (producer) invited me on stage to accept a check from the festival for the Texas Heritage Music Foundation. She has created a corporate sponsorship opportunity to bring in headline acts. The act donates his or her fee to a favorite non-profit. Arlo Guthrie was part of the program last year. This year Guy Clark designated his fee to the THMF. We did showcase him at the annual tribute to Jimmie Rodgers years ago when we showcased Texas songwriters Townes Van Zandt, Tish Hinojosa, Roxy Gordon and Guy. His donation will help the Wayne Kennemer Scholarship Fund and help me create a team to produce our September event.

Put Sept. 29-30 on your calendar for another Hill Country visit. Friday, over sixty performers and demonstrations will grace the grounds of Schreiner University in Kerrville. The Texas Folklore Society will host a panel on the power of stories Saturday at 1:00 p.m., and we will showcase local performers at an evening coffeehouse, 7p.m., in the Cailloux Student Center. We are still creating our volunteer force, and we are still open to sponsors who want to help make this event a FREE event for the entire state. Interested? kat@maverickbbs.com

Back to Guy, one of my favorite songwriters. When he said, "She ain't goin' nowhere, she's just leaving," I knew he had been reading my mail! My son, Clayton, is a Guy fan, holding "The Randall Knife" as his favorite song, a song about grieving a father's death. I also love his song entitled "She Loves Horses," knowing he must be reading my mind on this one. Turns out a friend was getting home late and asked Guy to help write a song to assuage his wife's possible anger. Guy asked about the wife; "She loves horses," was the reply. So much for the personal angle!

Guy's appearance at the Folk Festival on Sunday night was scheduled between Eric Taylor (a writer of great drama and intensity) and Butch Hancock, an ultimate wordsmith. A great combination. Guy, and his "friend" Verlon Thompson, introduced some new songs off an upcoming album and played some favorites, including "Desperadoes Waiting For A Train" in the encore. Verlon is the perfect complement for Guy, and the duo are more than the sum of the two parts. Yes, they are. Verlon is a writer, guitar master, and singer. And Guy always invites him to sing his songs as well. Wearing the familiar washed denim blue shirt and jeans, sporting a new light straw cowboy hat, Guy commanded the stage with his humble presence. Yes, he can be both commanding and humble at the same time. Oxymoronic. (Yes, I do teach poetry and writing at Schreiner and love words like "oxymoron").

We also heard Guy and Verlon on Monday at the memorial for Allen Damron. That lineup could have easily been a history of the Kerrville Folk Festival, given that Allen

was a co-founder with Rod Kennedy 35 years ago. We heard Bill and Bonnie Hearne, Sheriff Jim Wilson, Albert and Gage, Walter Lee, Tim Henderson and more. I have attended 34 of the 35 years of festival. Now my sister, Carolyn, is in a serious relationship with Rod. Strange family we've created! I moved to Kerrville to work with Rod and the Kerrville Music Foundation (now the Kerrville Folk Music Foundation). An opening at Schreiner called to me, and I put my new Ph.D. to work in education. And I created the Texas Heritage Music Foundation in 1987 out of my passion for the stories and songs. Thanks Rod!

After Guy's set, Butch began with an "a cappella" piece, followed by hard-hitting, strong- talking, diatribe-like folk songs. Since the festival is having a session on protest music on Saturday, June 3, 1:00 p.m., I was thrilled to hear his point of view regarding war, the president, politics, the environment and the state of the world. I'm sure he raised a few hackles in the audience, and he got some cheers along the way. I have great admiration for anyone who is willing to make a stand! Butch Hancock brought that element back into the folk music for this festival. A return to the days of Woody Guthrie and Bob Dylan. Rod said, "More like Bob. Woody was more gentle."

The last night of the festival, Sunday, June 11, David Amram is conducting a festival orchestra that consists of Jimmy LaFave, Trout Fishing in America, Albert and Gage and....of course....Bobby Bridger, author of the festival anthem, " Heal In The Wisdom," a song that I have sung many a closing night. Hope to see you there.

I am having my knee replaced June 12 so my summer travel is restricted. Not sure when I'll be back in the music venues. Meanwhile, websites abound with schedules and news; M.Y.T.H. Magazine and Hill Country Happenings are covering the scene in the Hill Country.

The local music scene is hot. Sol Patch and The Greg Griffin Band are keeping Southway Pub full on the weekends. Terry Penney is back slinging his guitar, often with Sol Patch. Stringdancer (a duo) bring great sets of great songs, often at Pampell's. Louis Real is still hosting a lunch gig at The Downtowner and an open mike on Thursdays at Pampell's. Ahead on their calendar is a night of bluegrass with Green Mountain Grass on June 7, Dana Cooper on June 15, Greg Forest on June 17, Shelley King on June 23 and the Dust Devils in July. And there's more at this classy corner spot in Kerrville. See www.pampells.com for a schedule.

The July 4th Willie Nelson Picnic is back at the Ft. Worth Stockyards. Two stages and a lineup that defines Texas music. Happy trails and down the road. .