

## **On The Road**

**September 2007**

*By Dr. Kathleen Hudson*

**September 8 is the birthday of the Father of Country Music, Jimmie Rodgers, who built his dream house, Blue Yodeler's Paradise in Kerrville, Texas, in 1929. He lived there two years before moving to San Antonio into a duplex. I had the chance to visit his daughter, Anita, in the duplex before she died. Her son, Jimmie Dale Court, took me to the house one Sunday afternoon. He died at the young age of 45. Now his sons, Austin and Cody, have been invited to attend the Texas Heritage Living History Day on September 28 for a noon Tribute to Jimmie.**

2007 also marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Texas Heritage Music Foundation, an organization I started out of a vision that stories and songs make a difference in the world. Our event on September 28 is a FULL day of stories and songs, with a Texas Folklore Society Panel from 4-6 p.m. and an evening with Duke Davis and "Westward Ho," a tribute to the cowboy in story and song. Join us. No charge for the events. Barbecue dinner with Buzzie's for the evening show. Only \$10.

ON September 7-9 Luckenbach is home to Mike Blakely's fifth annual TexAmericana Fandango! Friday night features Los Mystiqueros, Augie Meyers, Debbie Walton, Sweet Soul Vibe. Saturday features Brennen Leigh, Ben Beckendorf, Rusty Weir, Bobby Bridger, Steven Fromholz, and a dance with Mike Blakely Y Los Whiskey Trading Yahoos. Sunday will have an information cowboy church, a slate of Texas authors signing books, and more. Friday and Sunday are FREE. \$25 will get you in for the entire weekend and camping. A great Texas event.

September 5 is the first Texas Music Coffeehouse of the new series. Brennen Leigh ([www.brennenleigh.com](http://www.brennenleigh.com)) is our featured guest. She has written a song about Jimmie, and her voice is the best for this type of song. Mix some bluegrass, Appalachian, blues, country and folk. When you hear Brennen, you will remember her. I know I did. I walked into the "now defunct" Java Pump several years ago. The threads of her voice wove a web around me, and I was caught! I knew then that one day she must be singing for the THMF at this September tribute. You can also catch her many Sundays at Threadgill's in Austin. Jacob Ames and Chandler Kuhn (a hot guitar player attending Schreiner University) will open for Brennen as Two for Texas. The coffeehouse is from 7-9 p.m. on Wednesday night in the Cailloux Student Center.

My latest musical discovery happened at the Back Porch Cantina at Café Riverstone in Kerrville. Walt Wilkins and Los Mystiqueros blew me away! I had heard over and over how much I "would like" this group. I knew Walt could write. Well, this performance was a road trip of its own. The band was hot, each member adding a distinct piece to the picture. And the new CD, "Diamonds in the Sun," has been in my player ever since. I experienced their music like an ocean, with waves of music pouring over me. The music was sensual in every aspect, building to crescendos that exploded then melted away into a smooth river. Yeah, you can tell, I liked it a lot! I do wish the CD had a page of words. I mean, "Diamonds in the Sun," written by Bill Small, the hot bass player, is a treasury of poetic vision. "Trains I Missed" is getting lots of airplay on the stations that I listen to. Revolution Radio, KRVL, in Kerrville, 94.3 is bringing more and more Texas music into the community. The CD ends with "Stand Up Seven," a song that ended the engaging

evening I attended. Maybe I just need to say "Wow." I will be asking this stunning group to perform at a coffeehouse at Schreiner. The CD is a 2007 release on Palo Duro Records. Be sure and check out [www.waltwilkins.com](http://www.waltwilkins.com) The band members include Ramon Rodriquez on drums, Bill Small on bass, John M. Greenberg, hot guitar, Marcus Eldridge, hot guitar, and, of course, Walt.

Not much time in Kerrville this summer. Two weeks in Ft. Worth with aging parents during August. The THMF team has put together a stunning Living History Day on September 28. Join us for activities which include Living History (over 60 performers and demonstrations, including Danza Azteca), a panel with the Texas Folklore Society from 4-6 p.m. and a program on Western music with Duke Davis (for the price of a barbecue dinner!) at 7:00 p.m. La Hacienda, Archways Treatment Center and others are sponsoring a day of music in Louise Hayes Park on Saturday, noon-11:00 p.m., Saturday, September 29, to support musicians in need of treatment for drug and alcohol abuse. The Sims Foundation is also involved. And I saw on the poster that The Resentments are coming! That means more hot guitar music. Stephen Bruton, a name I first knew in my hometown of Ft. Worth, is a founding member. A great program as a follow-up to ours! Ray Wylie Hubbard is the host guest artist.

Also ahead is the Big State Music Festival in Bryan-College Station, Texas World Speedway. Presented by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation, the event is a showcase of great music. The lineup runs from Willie to Lyle Lovett to Robert Earl Keen (all three in my first book of interviews!), to Los Lonely Boys, Kevin Fowler, Miranda Lambert to Tim McGraw. Put October 13-14 on your calendar. More in the column next month.

The highlight of my musical journey in August (along with the Walt Wilkins discovery) was a Saturday night at Billy Bob's in Ft. Worth with Charlie Robison. He always rocks, and the frustration was around the seating. Being close to the front meant sitting, not standing or dancing. We all complained a bit about sitting to Charlie. Hey, I can still chair dance. He pointed out a military man sitting in the audience. We all paid tribute. Someone waved a Texas Music Magazine sporting a photo of Charlie, Jimmy Perkins, Lee Winright and others on a tour in Iraq. Charlie shared his own feelings about that event, saying that, "Hell yes, he was scared at times. But it was the most rewarding gig he had ever done." I remember seeing him play at the YO Ranch Social Club a day after the 9/11 attack. He put a small America flag on the microphone and blasted us with great songs, dance music, and social awareness.

If you can't tell, I'm a major fan of Charlie Robison! He seems to epitomize the Texas music scene, rough edges and all. We often see writers describe appearance when writing about women. For example, many of the stories of the edgy Janis Joplin also included reference to her looks. I am inclined to include a few such reference when writing about Charlie. He seems to be taller now, his eyes shine more, and I love his hair.....grown out from the last time I was a guest at Billy Bob's. Yeah, a look that seems to express who I know he is! It's all about perception and communication. He communicates something from that stage that takes us out to an edge and invites us to look over it. I dig that in a performer! Especially when I need some edgewalking.

My two-week tour of Mexico at the end of July was also very satisfying. Keeping Kerouac in my heart, Joe Ely's new book, Bonfire of Roadmaps, in my hand, the manuscript of a new book by Robert Hardy on Townes Van Zandt on the seat beside me,

I enjoyed being "on the road," traveling in style with Rocinante (my Toyota Matrix) through Eagle Pass to Saltillo to Matahuala and then San Miguel de Allende. A trip to Pozos introduced me to a stunning hotel run by a couple from Austin, Posada de las Minas ([www.posadadelasminas.com](http://www.posadadelasminas.com)). We had privacy, space with a creative wind blowing everywhere. The ruins of Pozos are an inspiration to take photos, which I did, and to write, which I did. I highly recommend you consider this place of retreat, about one hour from San Miguel de Allende, when you are taking some "time out." San Miguel is also hosting a concert featuring Sara Hickman, Pauline Reese and Patricia Vonne (three women included in my new book project). Small world syndrome. Joleen "Aurora" Franklin, a Tivy graduate, world traveler and jewelry artist is helping produce the show in September. Call THMF for details or check the web in San Miguel. The Kerrville/San Miguel de Allende connection is forged with art and music for sure. The THMF is going to showcase Javier, a gypsy guitarist, at a house concert this year. Keep connected with our website for that.

I have started a personal site at [www.kathleenhudson.net](http://www.kathleenhudson.net)

My book and presentations are posted, and I am excited to be sharing my research with some new groups. School starts in August so wish me well! Excited about my new class, American Ethnic Literature. We'll have my book signing on October 3 at the coffeehouse. One day after my birthday!

We are still inviting people to volunteer for both the coffeehouse series and for the Living History Day. You can greet students and teachers, work hospitality, take care of performers and registration, serve water, keep the site clean. Notice that set up and tear down are the projects of Greek service groups at Schreiner University! And we have many, many student volunteers. Consider joining the THMF and supporting our community projects. [www.texasheritagemusic.org](http://www.texasheritagemusic.org)

We have over \$2500 donated to the Wayne Kennemer Scholarship fund in honor of both Bobby Rector and Terry Penney and his wife Sarah. That helps educate young people who need money to go to school! A great cause. And now a word from the office:

**From Sandy Langley, THMF part-time assistant:**

One of the many ways that Texas Heritage Music Foundation reaches out into the community with stories and songs is the Bard Project, an arm of THMF which pays for performers (musicians, storytellers, poets, etc.) to play at schools, as well as camps and programs for at-risk youth. I recently had the privilege of performing for the Bard Project, and it's one of the coolest things I've ever done.

On the evening of Thursday, August 2, the praise band from First United Methodist Church of Kerrville journeyed out to Pathways 3H Wilderness Camp, a camp for at-risk teenage boys, to lead worship in music. The band members playing that night were Todd Lovelady, leader, guitar and vocals; Chase Allsup, electric guitar; Jay Norris, bass; Jeff Kennedy, guitar and vocals; Jonathan Shim, drums; Ambra Freeman, vocals; and yours truly, vocals. We were a bit nervous, because my contact at the camp had originally wanted a country gospel group. Country gospel we ain't! Sometimes we're rock, sometimes we're blues, usually we're loud, and we're rowdy every chance we get! And no matter what we're playing, we are always about the worship of the Lord.

The leaders told us we could be as rowdy as we wanted, so we took them at their word and, with the boys' help, did our best to blow the roof off! We set up an overhead projector so that they could see the words and sing with us. They sang with us, they clapped, they danced, they waved their hands in the air (hey, we're a full-service Christian band—you get an aerobic workout at no extra charge!) and just *enjoyed*. We could really feel the Holy Spirit in the room, just rockin' away with us.

Afterward, we got a chance to talk with several of the boys and our young electric guitar player, Chase, was mobbed like a rock star. He held court for quite a while, talking to them and showing them chords on his guitar. More importantly, he listened to them. Some of the boys had guitars, so we handed out our sheet music with the guitar chords on it. All in all, it was quite a heady evening, and we had an absolute blast!!

I strongly encourage you to get involved with the Bard Project if you are a performer, or give to the Bard Project if you're not. It truly does make a difference.

Its sont parties and down the road.....KH