

On The Road **July 2007**

By Kathleen Hudson

The Monterey Bay Blues Festival, held the 4th weekend in June each year, always has a Texas connection. I attend a conference for writing teachers in Monterey, and this festival is part of the package! This year Shemekia Copeland, daughter of The Texas Twister, Johnny Copeland, rocked the house again. And 2007 is the 20th anniversary of the Monterey Pop Festival. Yes, the music of Janis Joplin is another Texas connection for this California venue. Young Shemekia, already a veteran on this stage, delivered her sassy and strong message to other women of the world. And she is an important chapter in my upcoming book with UT Press, *Women in Texas Music: Stories and Songs*.

The Monterey Bay Blues Festival is well-organized with three stages presenting music, arts and crafts booths from Africa, food booths from many other cultures including that plate of crawfish I ate celebrating the Louisiana connection. I had lunch visiting with Little Jimmy Reed, discovering that he was named after Jimmy Reed, a bluesman I first heard in Ft. Worth, Texas, my first year in college, 1963! Little Jimmy showed me how to eat ALL parts of a crawfish as we talked about his name. "I was called this when folks first heard me, saying I sounded like Jimmy Reed," he explained.

Color abounded at this California event, with tie-dye being one of the choice. Women styled out in big straw hats and colorful sarongs. All in all, this is a most beautiful event. And the weather cooperated this year. After an inspiring Young Rhetorician's Conference where we explored innovate ways of teaching and learning, some of us attended this festival as our grand finale. I came home with new ideas for my life both in and out of the classroom. Yes, the Texas Heritage Music Foundation was also enriched by the experience, as we celebrate our 20th anniversary in 2007.

In June I also enjoyed some heartfelt music and stunning performances at the Kerrville Folk Festival, including a session on songwriting with Patrice Pike. After meeting this award-winning rocker, after hearing her presentation at the songwriting school at the KFF, I know that soon I will be sporting more personal decoration. Not only did I love her music, but her presentation was personal and authentic. Hey, I can still teach with colorful decoration covering my arm, right? Check her out.

Other experiences in June included an evening at River Hills Country Club with Harry the The Hightones celebrating *Daily Intentions*, a book by Ann Blakely Rice. This autograph party was more than a booksigning. Tim Summerlin, president of Schreiner University, gave an introductory talk, speaking of Brownie, Ann's father who attended Schreiner Institute years ago. Ann had donated some of the proceeds of the sale of this book to Schreiner, and she told the story of writing the book.

"I decided to write one entry each day for a year, meditating on my own intentions. What resulted is the book you are holding," she began. I love reading this book of inspirational meditations and reflections knowing how she wrote it. I also love knowing that she and Townes Van Zandt are related. Another Townes story!

Townes showed up in another experience I had. Sam Baker's new cd, "Pretty World," arrived in the THMF mail, and as I listened to the first song, I heard a line repeated with each verse: "He sings waiting around to die." Now that is one of my favorite Townes' songs. Got my attention. I knew Sam had played at Rob Booth's house concert with Walt

Wilkins, and I knew he played the last night of the folk festival. I missed both events. The PR sheet that came with the cd told me many interesting things. things listeners might like to know. Sam experienced a tragedy in Peru years ago when a train he was riding was blown up by terrorists. He spent the next decade recovering. He's well-read, sometimes quoting authors I love like Tolstoy. That caught my attention. And I love the rough-hewn edge to his songs, the comparison to Dylan, the people he worked with (Lloyd Maines, Gurf Morlix, Joel Guzman, Fats Kaplan, Walt Wilkins...to name a few), and the Zen-like quality of the package itself. A white frame with a small gray-toned photo in the middle showing a bare landscape, the corner of a house, and a large pot on a wooden table.

The THMF also received the latest Todd Fritsch cd, "Sawdust," a collection of songs that include both modern and classic ("Little Joe The Wrangler). Fritsch has been compared to George Strait in his presentation, but he does most of his own writing, adding a depth to each performance. I talked with Todd during the 2005 KFAN Windows on Texas event in January. He's the real deal. Check him out at www.toddfritsch.com

I attended the funeral of Bobby Rector, logo designer for the THMF and dear friend of the entire music community in Kerrville. We were honored that the family chose the THMF Wayne Kennemer Scholarship Fund to be the recipient of donations in the name of Bobby. We will be honoring him at the 2007 Living History Day, September 28, on the Schreiner University campus. Bobby and Wayne were dear friends, shared a huge heart for others and for Texas music.

The new 20th anniversary logo for the THMF was designed by Clint Storey, a member of David Smith's graphic design class at Schreiner University. Go to www.texasheritagemusic.org for a look at all the designs submitted. A big thanks to David and his class. 20th anniversary brochures and posters will be around town soon. We have 50 commemorative posters for sale as support for the scholarship fund. And our logo is on the website.

Bert Winston, local aficionado of western swing and music history, donated a collection of Tommy Morrell and the Time Warp Tophands cd's to the THMF office. We also lost Tommy this spring, and his music lives on because of the careful attention of Bert Winston! See www.westernswing.net for details. I am listening to "Relaxin'," Volume XV-How The West Was Swung. Makes me want to dance, for sure. And relax.

I received news of Steadyboy Records, the creating of Texas Hall of Famer, Freddie Steady Krc. This fellow has been around the world with his music, and his latest release, "The Freddie-Steady 5 Tex-Pop," is rock and roll, Freddie style, a British beat with a Texas feel. Steadyboy Records also released a Vince Bell cd, "Vince Bell, Recado." Here's what he said, "You hold my message in your hand. I wrote "Gypsy" in Nashville as a going away present to Townes Van Zandt, and I have included one of his finest songs here, "Mr. Mudd and Mr. Gold." I met Peter Hurd in the watercolor that is the cover art. This work was given to Sarah's father, Jerome Greene, before I was born. With the lyrics of Townes, the painting of Poeter, and ten of my best, you hold the thread between we three." Ah, Townes again.

And I remember "Sorrow and Solitude, these are the precious things," as some guiding Van Zandt lyrics for me. The University of North Texas Press is releasing an indepth book on the life of Townes Van Zandt written by Robert Hardy. I have the joy of being a

reader on the manuscript at this time. It is a page-turner filled with details and documentation.

Wish I were at the Woody Guthrie Festival in Oklahoma July 11-15, but I'm heading back to Mexico for a few weeks of wandering. Good for the Townes Van Zandt spirit that I carry around. THMF is in good hands with a team working on the Living History Day, The Bard Project, The Rockabilly Radio Series, the Coffeehouse Series and a night of cowboy music on September 28 with Duke Davis. Dinner by Buzzie's. Yes, we still need volunteers and sponsors. Yes, all local musicians are invited to participate in this community event where stories and songs become another way of learning. Happy Trails.
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