



Published by South Australian Blues Society

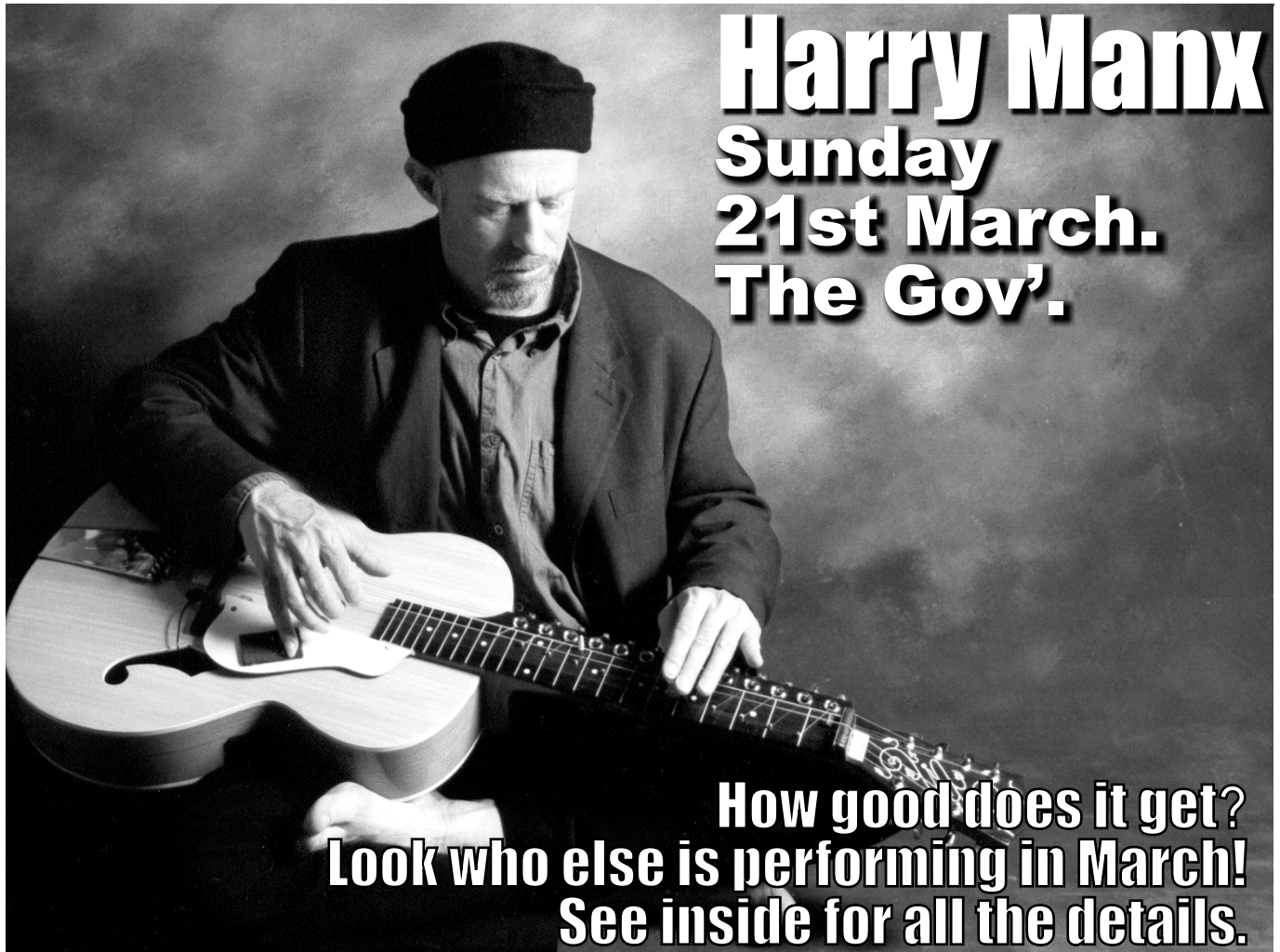
MARCH 2004 ISSUE

BLUES NEWS

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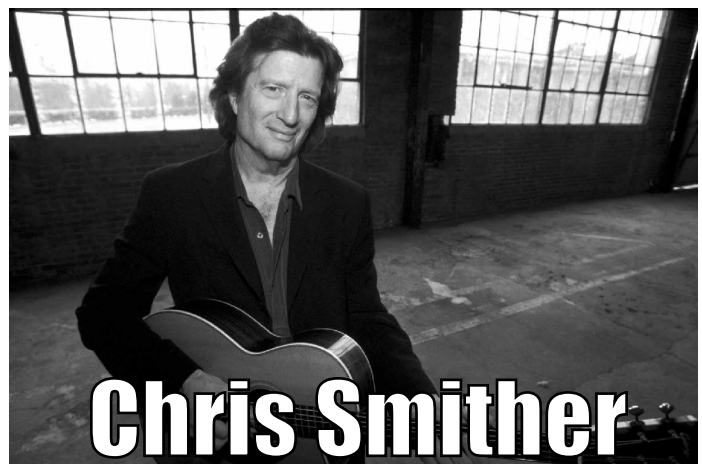


Harry Manx
Sunday
21st March.
The Gov'.

How good does it get?
Look who else is performing in March!
See inside for all the details.



Kristina Olsen



Chris Smither

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BLUES NEWS

MARCH 2004 ISSUE

Published by

The South Australian Blues Society

The Blues News ...informing you about what's happening in blues and roots music on the local, national and international front. "Blues News" is posted to all our members as part of their membership entitlement. Become a member for just \$25 and enjoy the benefits that membership offers.

Membership can be done online at: <http://users.senet.com.au/~bluessa> or fill out the membership form on the back of this issue and mail it to:

MEMBERSHIP
SA Blues Society,
Box 80,
Hindmarsh SA 5007.

Blues News is available at selected outlets throughout Adelaide and the metropolitan area. Many thanks to our contributors and distributors!

APRIL ISSUE CONTRIBUTIONS:

Email to bluessa@senet.com.au
by no later than 20th of Feb.2004
Info is compiled by David Stoeckel.

ADVERTISING RATES:

Full page: \$150 / \$750 6mnths/ \$1000 1yr
½ page: \$90 / \$400 6mnths/ \$700 1yr
¼ page: \$50 / \$250 6mnths/ \$450 1yr
Bus. Card: \$35 / \$180 6mnths/ \$375 1yr
Inserts (A4 and less): \$90
Direct enquiries to David Stoeckel
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Email: bluessa@senet.com.au

Harry Manx @ The Gov'. Sun 21st March. 8pm



Harry Manx, that much traveled troubadour, returns to Adelaide for a gig at The Gov' on Sunday the 21st of March. If you like your blues to be on the acoustic and roots side of things, then Manx's music is for you! He will take you where the Mississippi meets the Ganges. There you will be baptised by his "new world" acoustic blues.

Much has been made of Harry's "Mohan Veenah"; a "new age" addition to roots music. It is where acoustic lap steel slapping, strumming and sliding induces a resonance with 20 sitar-like sympathetic strings. The result? Well it's enthralling! Traditional blues with resonating ragas? It works. Call for his version of the Willie Dixon classic "Spoonful" as an encore ...and you will see what I mean.

Manx's pure and uncluttered playing on harmonica, slide guitar and 6 string banjo will be more to the liking of "blues purists" (can you have "purists" with a genre of music that is such a mixed and diverse bag?) Harry has got to be thanked for resurrecting the banjo in country blues. Fear not 'cause this is not your Bill Monroe type banjo but more your Pappa Charlie Jackson type. Pappa who?

"Candyman", "All I want is a spoonful" and "Salty Dog" Pappa Jackson that's who. Way back in 1924 he was one of the first country bluesmen to cut a record. He played banjo like a six string guitar. Bill Wyman in "Blue's Odyssey" claimed that he created the basis for many blues songs.

Manx's vocalizing style is smooth, unforced and conversational. With those distinctive inflections of his, he sings pensively about the ups and downs of life and the emotional scars they leave behind. This sojourner dwells on things bitter sweet and blue. If you haven't heard Manx before, then get along to The Gov' because this could well be one of the most rewarding "live listening experiences" on offer this year!

CHRIS SMITHER @ The Gov'.

Tues 2nd March. 8pm

Roots music at its best. Smither's consummate finger picking style, his a sensitive gravelly voice and profound poetic lyrics will have you mesmerized.



The bluesmen on the Delta and the Appalachian mountaineers made timeless music with just voice, guitar and a stomping foot ...and that is the tap root of Chris Smither's music. Over the last decade he has released one gem of an album after another. Chris Smither has made outstanding music since he emigrated north from his native New Orleans as a teenager at the tail-end of the 1960's folk revival. His music draws as deeply from the blues as it does from American folk music, modern poets and humanist philosophers.

Chris Smither's audience, which hails from all global regions, perfectly reflects the diversity of his sources. Guitar-heads are drawn to Smither's Lightnin' Hopkins/John Hurt derived fretwork; spiritual seekers nod in recognition at the hard-won knowledge casually tossed off in his lyrics. Many music fans have come to Smither on their own or have learned of his music from the multitude of artists covering his songs.

In his latest album, TRAIN HOME, Smither shows again how it should be done. TRAIN HOME is simultaneously sparse and utterly assured. Poducer David "Goody" Goodrich is a master of ambient sound, never weighing the songs with extraneous instrumentation, always giving them just what they need. You won't hear a rhythm loop, a sample, a false note or a forced emotion. What you will hear is superb music, born of wisdom and tempered in the fire of live performance. Over a six-week period, basic tracks for TRAIN HOME were recorded in the relaxed environment of Smither's home near Boston.

Additional tracks were recorded in a Palmer, Massachusetts studio.

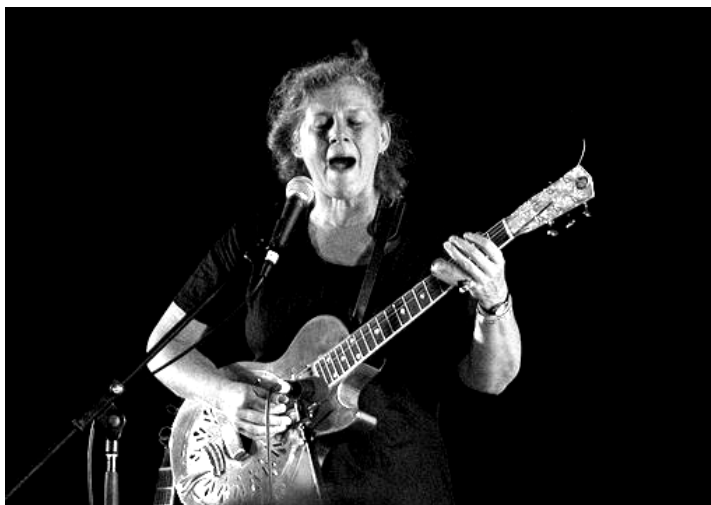
"This one wound up surprising me. It is by far the most 'acoustic, rootsy' feel I've ever had on a produced record. Working at home and adding other musicians' parts later is something I don't think I could have pulled off even a few years ago. To me it sounds surprisingly spontaneous and unrehearsed, like people who know what they're doing and are having a good time doing it." Smither.

Across The Borders Pty Ltd

Kristina Olsen @ The Gov'.

Wed 24th March 8pm

SABS nominated Kristina's 2002 Gig at The Folk Fed as "The Best Blues Gig" for that year! With her strong bluesy voice, she sings about life's ups and downs as well as its ins and outs! Her songs are from the heart ...and the vagina! Lovers, lust, laments and loathing ...all is revealed! This lady doesn't hold back.



"I couldn't say what I was feeling so I had to write songs to keep from exploding, there was no choice in the matter, I had to write."

She was born in San Francisco and raised in Haight-Ashbury during the 1960's. Her music was shaped by the vitality, social activism and cultural diversity of that environment. What's more this lady can play a mean steel-body slide guitar ...and saxophone, concertina and piano!

This lady's vitality will perk you up no end! Catch her if you want a mix of blues and folk delivered with some good ol' "counter culture" feminist punch.



On "the hillbilly hotline" SABS catches up with 3D FM's Lone Tony Joe & gets the low down on "THE COUNTRY IN BLUES"!



ROOTS MUSIC

Putting it all back together.

It may be inexperience, disinterest or lack of space but increasingly music shops are taking weird stabs at placing back catalogue & non-commercial artists on their racks. The cagey ones though now use the "one size fits all" category of Roots. Maybe its no bad thing that Blues, Country, Folk, Gospel ...jazz ...even sometimes World get placed together just alongside nostalgia & easy listening but a long way from the front of the store where its more likely to be Dance, Hip Hop, Soundtracks, Popular & maybe Alternative. Blues and Country music have been a lot closer at times than is widely appreciated. Country gets called white mans blues, but these days it seems that its white guys singing the blues while young black guys lean to rapping & hip hop. **Deford Bailey**, a black harmonica wizard, was the first act heard on the original Grand Ole Opry in 1926 & continued to open broadcasts for years with his signature "Pan American Blues"



It's also reported that for 20 years, until 1958, the Opry featured a white 'Talking Blues Man', Robert Lunn. He was, apparently, the "country's foremost exponent of the style" utilizing a dry & droll recitation style later adapted by Woody Guthrie... and that leads to Dylan. The Nashville based Black Country Music Association reports that between 17-24% of black Americans listen to country music yet are still struggling to prove there's currently a market for black country artists. The banjo is supposed to have come from Africa but it sure aint cool these days to be a black banjo player ...or a white one for that

matter & that's a pity!

'Black Texicans': (Rounder CD 1999) surprises with its 1930s field recordings of 29 black cowboy singers. This little known group are at yet another cross roads further west. Black cowboy blues... currently awaiting market exploitation. Don't hold your breath.

The Coen Bros "Oh Brother..." movie celebrates the marriage of country & blues when the escapees pick up a young black blues dude" at the Crossroad and then have to swing between claiming to be either black or white for the blind producer wanting product to tap into current fashion.

But why didn't more black guys get into country. Now you say, what about Charlie Pride? But who ever hears much of him now. Ray Charles started a life long flirtation with "Modern Sounds in Country & Western Music" in the sixties despite being known for soul & rhythm & blues. There are others still doing it today, like Clarence Gatemouth Brown & Big Al Downing. Both can move effortlessly between blues and country almost within the same tune but neither widely heard in Australia.

Jimmy "Father of Country Music" Rogers picked up his chord changes working amongst black railroad labourers. Jimmy's series of 13 Blue Yodels in the late 1920s became the founding canon of the new genre that wasn't even called country music yet. Blue Yodel No1 :T for Texas, became a million seller before such things were thought possible. Both he, and later Roy "King of Country" Acuff even spent time working Black Face in touring medicine shows.

What made Dock Boggs , a hillbilly favourite in the late 20s was picking his instrument in the style of blues guitar instead of the then widespread claw hammer technique.

Most people, on first hearing Dock's 1927 "Country Blues" would assume he was black & singing blues. And they'd be right, only he was white & singing country ...or was that folk ...or blues?

It is said record companies in the late 20s & 30s thought mainly of demographic target markets rather than styles of music. The result was often haphazard categorisation with white groups using black sounding names being sold to the 'Race' market and some black artists sold as white Hillbilly acts. ➔

The country in blues *continued*

The characteristic country music yodel of 30s & 40s "Country Blues" 1927 may have its origin in middle Europe but as a primordial outlet of emotion yodeling seems a very close relative to Blues wailing, groaning & moaning. Try it next time you are feeling down.

Hank Williams claimed tuition from an elderly black street singer Rufus Payne (Tee-Tot). What was his breakthrough number...Lovesick Blues! When you think about it, Hank Williams lived the same unhealthy lifestyle as Robert Johnson and both died from it an early age.

Bill Monroe "The Father of Blue Grass" also claimed a black mentor. Is the blue in Blue Grass a colour or a mood?

Even young Elvis was forever sneaking out to hear black singers but to gospel sessions in local churches rather than blues shacks.

The actual meeting place for Blues & Country was the honky-tonk bar & the music form it gave birth too. All those Cryin' in your beer songs. Working man laments & regrets about losing girl, job, dog, truck, friend, money etc etc. Honky-tonk Blues, Long Gone Lonesome Blues, (both Hank Williams) If country isn't blues what is it...Opera?

The Dance clubs of today are just updated honky-tonks anyway. In Brixton, England, a group of underground Dance veterans running all night parties prompted Elemental Records label producer to say "what struck me was how they recognise the link between Robert Johnson & Hank Williams and how they fused it. They had a specific social, political & moral standpoint and a very punk attitude" The subsequent group releases under the name of "The Alabama 3" come across as authentic ...but authentic what? Put it in "Roots".

LoneTony Joe.
Adelaide's 3D 93.7 FM
HillBilly Help Desk Yodel Action.
Alternating Saturdays 11 am.

Oz Beat Blues Gigs for March.

Healers.....Fri 5/3.....Squatter's Arms.
Jesse Deane F/man (solo)..Fri 5/3.....Bacchus Bar
Jesse Deane F/man (solo)..Sun 7/3.....Joiner's Arms.
BigTom's Blues Band.....Fri 12/3.....Squatter's Arms.
Steve Gower (Blue Katz).....Sun 14/3.....Joiner's Arms.
Bill O'Grady (Fools).....Fri 19/3.....Blumberg Inn.
Tres Hombres.....Fri 19/3.....Squatter's Arms.
Chris Finnen (solo).....Fri 19/3.....Bacchus Bar
The Hiptones.....Fri 26/3.....Criterion, Gawler.

Peter Serk.

AROUND TOWN WITH ROG.

Feb 9th. BILLY BOB'S BBQ JAM.

Grace Emily Hotel. 232 Weymouth St.

Every Monday night you will find a packed house, full of eager musicians from most genres and a crowd of very enthusiastic music lovers. I joined [on Harp] Bon Darlington [guitar/vocals], Billy Bob [guitar], Jim [drums], ?[base], ?[sax] sorry fellas, for some 12 bar blues. We enjoyed it and so did the crowd.

Feb 13th Friday Bacchus Bar Henley Square.

Great venue, although a little crowded at times. Steve Gower [ex BLUE CATS guitar/vocals/harp] is now doing a one man show. What a busy guy, playing guitar [acoustic, electric, steel], harp, stomp box, singing and all at the same time. Great blues from a very talented musician. Make sure you catch Steve's next gig.

Feb 14th. Saturday afternoon at a friend's pool party at Glenelg.

While standing with Deb talking to friends over a beer, noticed a familiar face in the pool. Steve Gower no less. After a brief chat about all things Blue, we adjourned to the lounge where Steve's gear was set up ready to entertain the partygoers. I just happened to have my harps in the car and was only too pleased to join Steve in an acoustic jam. What a way to spend a Saturday arvo.

Still Feb 14th. evening. Somewhere in Cherry Gardens.

Ever heard of CHERRYSTOCK? Well neither had I until 2 years ago, when I was invited to play harp at a WOODSTOCK type jam at a friend's place at Cherry Gardens. Try to imagine a stage constructed from local timber, with red carpet on the floor, LIGHTS, P.A., SOUND TECH., lots of AMPS and musicians who travel annually from all over Australia and a backdrop of some magnificent gum trees. What a Buzz. Thanks Dean and Happy Birthday. No excuses for boredom in Adelaide people. GET OUT THERE
Regards Roger Smith

Smokestack Lightnin' Blues Radio is currently web-casting for your listening pleasure its newest 3 hour Blues Special (#0457 -recorded 12/28/03). The internet version of Smokestack Lightnin' is now comprised of selected sets digitally recorded during our live broadcasts on WUCF 89.9FM in Orlando. The URL is www.smokestacklightnin.com. We know you enjoy listening to the archived version of Smokestack Lightnin'. Now you can enjoy even more new and original blues programming by tuning into Smokestack Lightnin' live on WUCF each Saturday night at 8PM Eastern Standard Time (USA). The direct WUCF stream utilizes RealPlayer software just like our archived show. The sound quality is excellent.

The WUCF URL can be found on our webpage at <http://www.smokestacklightnin.com> along with an explanation of times you can access the show live. Thank you for listening. The Smokestack Team

Sweet Baby James & Rob Eyers return to the FAD Lounge Bar

As of Friday 30th January Sweet Baby James & Rob Eyers (that's me and the Englishman drummer laddo) will be playing at the FAD Lounge Bar on Waymouth St in Adelaide. Fantastic beers, hip atmosphere & lighting, big cumfy lounges... and the best blues this side of the Southern Expressway! I look forward to catching up with you there. Sweet Baby James with Rob Eyers will be running around the country this year doin' the "Vertigo Blues" thang, with a album due sometime around June.

The Sweet Baby James Trio ... now called Blue Cube.

As some of you may know, we've been looking for a new name for "The Sweet Baby James Trio" for some time. Many people have asked us why we wanted to do this; quite simply it's because that for the last twelve months, we've been performing, recording & collaboratively writing entirely new (and very different) material, with less focus on "baldy" up the front and more focus a "band sound". The new name for the trio (James Meston, Jenna Bonavita & Rob Eyers) is now "Blue Cube", with a website at www.bluecubemusic.tk (mp3 samples of the new CD will be arriving shortly). We're going to be releasing our new (well... I guess now it's our first) album, "Free The Dancing Bear" at The Semaphore Worker's Club on Friday, April 16. Well, till next time, mon cherie ... James.

Blue Cube Gigs

Friday March 5th @ Semaphore Workers Club \$5
Sunday March 7th @ Village Tavern (Golden Grove)
Sunday March 21st @ Stirling Hotel (Mt.Barker Rd)
CD Launch Friday April 16th @ Semaphore Workers Club

Tres ... Cuatro ... Count the Hombres!

Tres Hombres are now the **Cuatro Hombres**.
Catch them this month at the following gigs.
Mar 7th Sunday Bacchus (Henley Beach) 5-9 pm
Mar 14th Sunday Highway Inn 4pm-8pm
Mar 20th Sat Sema4swing Semaphore RSL 9-12am
Mar 28th Sunday Joiners Arms Hotel (Hindmarsh) 5-9 pm
April 4th Sunday Bacchus (Henley Beach) 5-9pm
April 17th Sat Sema4swing Semaphore RSL 9-12am
Apr 25th Sunday Joiners Arms Hotel (Hindmarsh) 5-9 pm

Ross Ward's "Transit Lounge" voted "Best Australian CD"

Singer/Songwriter/Guitarist ross Ward has received the "Best Australian CD" award for 2003, by Blues Oz. The award was the result of internet voting.

"I am excited that Ross has achieved this award from his peers." said Randall K. Ierna, Executive Producer of the CD and owner of Ranluron Music, BMI. "This project was my first international production and the quality of the music, writing, musicianship and recording is superb. The CD is receiving a lot of airplay in Australia and I believe this will be the first of many awards for "Transit Lounge." continued Ierna. Blues Oz is a group of Musos, Punters, Radio Presenters, Distributors, Record Labels and others associated with the music scene in Australia. "I stumbled across BluesOz while surfing the different Blues Societies and joined last year. Through my membership, I met Ross online, and then I met Baiba James, an Australian promoter who put one of my artists, "Molten Mike" on a 7 week tour of Australia. I was fortunate during the tour to see Ross perform many times as a solo artist and also with his group "Wards Xpress". Ross is a phenomonal Muso and a talented Songwriter. I am sure that this award will help Ross reach the international recognition level that he deserves." concluded Ierna. Order "Transit Lounge" @ www.bluesbeat.com.au

New Eric Clapton CD

While listening to ABC Radio (891), Bald Brother Tony McCarthy mentioned that a **new CD by Eric Clapton** was soon to be released called "Me and Mr. Johnson". I immediately thought Robert Johnson, and after a little research on the Internet, there it was, Eric Clapton covering 14 Robert Johnson tunes. The CD is due for International release, I guess, on the 23rd March - another must for all true blue Clapton and Blues fans!

Musicians featured on the CD are: Eric, of course; his loyal friends, Andy Fairweather Low, Nathan East, Steve Gadd and extra buddies, Billy Preston, Doyle Bramhall 11 (the second) and Jerry Portnoy on harmonica. The track listing is as follows:-
"When You Got a Good Friend"; "Little Queen of Spades"; "They're Red Hot"; "Me and the Devil Blues"; "Traveling Riverside Blues"; "Last Fair Deal Gone Down"; "Stop Breakin' Down Blues"; "Milkcow's Calf Blues"; "Kindhearted Woman's Blues"; "Come On in My Kitchen"; "If I Had Possession Over Judgment Day"; "Love in Vain"; (a version done by The Stones from memory?); "32-20 Blues" and "Hellhound on My Trail". Personally, I can't wait for this one!
Regards, Sue Linton.

International Songwriting Competition Announces Blues Winners

I'm writing to notify you of the 2003 International Songwriting Competition winners in the Blues category. ISC is the only major songwriting competition that has a category solely dedicated to blues music. The winners will be of interest to The South Australian Blues Society. ISC wholeheartedly supports this category and understands the importance of recognizing artists within this genre. I hope that you will support our efforts.

The International Songwriting Competition (ISC) is very pleased to announce its winners for the 2003 annual competition. Called "the songwriting competition to take note of" by the New York Times, ISC received over 11,000 entries from 60 countries in its sophomore year. ISC prizes include more than \$100,000 (USD) in cash and merchandise and are shared by 68 winners in 13 categories.

ISC is the only major songwriting competition that has a category just for blues music. Candace Avery, Founder and Director of ISC, states, "ISC recognizes the significance of blues music, from traditional to contemporary, and we wanted to acknowledge songwriters in this genre. We felt strongly that blues music should have a category of its own."

Winning First Place in this category are Ontario, Canada musicians Rick Fines and Alec Fraser for their song "Riley Wants His Life Back".

Taking Second Place honors is South Australian songwriter/musician Peter Gelling for his song "Strong Medicine".

In an article by the Canberra Blues Society, he was described as "a fine player, songwriter and arranger, whose knowledge of rhythm and blues, both from the perspective of a musician and a historian is quite remarkable." His CD *Bluestime* was nominated for an ARIA award in the year 2000, and in 2003 he won the MusicOz Blues Award.

The ISC panel of judges included the following top executives, songwriters, and producers in the music industry:

B.B. King; Rob Thomas (Matchbox 20); Pat Metheny; Phil Vassar; Dan Haseltine (Jars Of Clay); Vanessa Carlton; Bebe Winans; Guru (Gang Starr); Paul Oakenfold; Raine Maida (Our Lady Peace); Nile Rodgers; Monte Lipman (President, Universal Records); Arif Mardin (VP/GM, Manhattan Records); Bruce Lundvall (CEO/President, Capitol Jazz/Classics); Michael Gudinski (Chairman, Mushroom Group Of Companies); Frank Callari (Artist Manager); Tina Davis (Sr. VP A&R, Def Jam/Def Soul); Rose Noone (Sr. VP A&R, Epic Records); Jimmy Bralower (Producer); Kim Stephens (VP A&R/Promotion, Lava Records); Tara Griggs-Magee (Executive VP, Gospel & Urban Music, Sony Music Entertainment); and Robert Beeson (President, Essential Records).

Candace Avery
Founder/Director ISC

CD REVIEW

TRAIN HOME 2003 HighTone Records



While Chris Smither is a great songwriter, the centerpiece of his 11th album, *Train Home*, is a cover - Bob Dylan's *Desolation Row*.

Smither always has been willing to reinterpret another artist when it suits his purpose, and he makes *Desolation Row* and the three other covers on *Train Home* his own. The subtle arrangement of *Desolation Row*, with Bonnie Raitt's mournful slide guitar, ghostly horns and almost martial percussion, turns this jaded epic into a masterpiece.

And that's the thing about Smither - he's subtle. He's not an in-your-face singer, he's not a 300-beats-per-minute guitarist. In a weathered voice he sings of acceptance and transcendence with lyrics that would make a Buddhist monk nod in recognition. On his blue guitar, he plays tunes in a style that would make Mississippi John Hurt proud.

Smither is an American original, a product of the musical melting pot, and one of the absolute best singer-songwriters in the world. "*Train Home*" is well worth taking.

Eric Fidler

JESSIE MAE HEMPHILL RELEASES FIRST NEW ALBUM IN OVER A DECADE

Clarksdale, MS February 24th, 2003. Granddaughter of the late great Sid Hemphill and five-time winner of the WC Handy Award, Jessie Mae Hemphill still carries on the tradition of Northern Mississippi hill country music and remains a mainspring of inspiration for a new generation of blues players. A stroke in 1993 left Jessie Mae partially paralyzed on her left side and unable to play guitar so a string of guitar players from around the country were lined up to do the honors.

Jessie Mae lent her voice and tambourine to a host of friends, including Robert Belfour, Jimbo Mathus, DJ Logic, Kenny Brown, Cedric and Garry Burnside, Papa Mali, Chris Chew, RL Boyce, Tramp Camp, Sharde Tuner & the Rising Star Fife and Drum Corp, Kenny Kimbrough, Steve Gardner, Ruthie Foster, Cyd Cassone, Greg Humphreys, and Eric Deaton.

The album will be exclusively distributed by Redeye USA and features an enhanced CD with an extended DJ Logic remix, photographs, plus an 8-minute video of behind the scenes footage.

All proceeds from the sale of the album will go to the J.M.H. Foundation, conceived as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit vehicle to draw public attention to the hill country blues music indigenous to the Northern Mississippi region.

South Australian Blues Society: Membership

Membership can also be done online at: <http://users.senet.com.au/~bluessa>



Introducing our Patron & Number 1 Ticket Holder: Mr Buddy Guy of Chicago Illinois.

Legendary bluesman Buddy Guy was born George Guy in 1936 in Lettsworth, Louisiana. Buddy continues to record and tour extensively, as well as maintain his renowned Chicago club "Legends". Matt Taylor and Dave Hole hold 2nd and 3rd membership status respectively. Adelaide's very own Chris Finnen is not only next on the list but he is also a life member because of his services to blues music in SA. Greg Baker, Sue Freeman and Sue Turner are our other life members.

Our "home base" is located at The Bookends Bookshop at 136 Unley Rd. Unley. The committee meets there once a month. Our next meeting will be on Monday 5th April at 7.30pm. We always need help! An open invitation is extended to all SABS members to attend.

Oz Beat Blues Gigs

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 Jesse Deane F/man.(solo)..Fri 5/3.....Bacchus Bar
 Jesse Deane F/man (solo)..Sun 7/3.....Joiner's Arms.
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 The Hipstones.....Fri 26/3.....Criterion, Gawler.

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 Postcode _____
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Please tick the appropriate box

<input type="checkbox"/>	New Membership	\$25
<input type="checkbox"/>	Renewal of Membership	\$25
<input type="checkbox"/>	Concession	\$20
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MAIL TO: SA Blues Society, Box 80, Hindmarsh SA 5007

The 12th Annual Brisbane Blues Festival Saturday, March 20 2004 Waterloo Hotel

(Corner of Ann St. & Commercial Rd. in Fortitude Valley)

This annual event, now in its second decade, features the best of the Brisbane blues scene. The event features a two-stage format so the live music is non-stop from 3:00 PM till late and the band times are sequenced so the punters can catch the complete set of every band on the bill.

Doors open at 2:30 PM and the first live act starts at 3:00 PM.

The event will run late.

All day admission is only \$15

and tickets will be available at the door on the day This year featuring:

Panga and the True Blues, Johnny Hucker, Shakey Shaun's Intemperate Few, Fingerprint, The Josh Bambridge Band, Tim Gaze, Mojo Webb and Band, Harpoon and The Hipshooters

For more info contact:

brisbluesfest@optusnet.com.au

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