

## SHOWMAN'S DAUGHTER

**Showman's Daughter (A.Kirkpatrick)** I am the daughter of a travelling showman, but this song I wrote from memories of another showman's daughter who I knew as a kid when my family spent six years (1956-1962) on the showground circuit, taking in the northern QLD run and the capital shows such as Sydney Royal Easter, Brisbane Exhibition, Adelaide and Melbourne Royals. The Showmen are a tightly knit community who look after each other and have a tradition dating back to the gypsies from Europe and England. 'Space' or 'ground' at the various agricultural shows around Australia is handed down through the families. Slim and Joy were wholeheartedly accepted into this community. It was some years later after my family had left the grounds to take the Slim Dusty Show around outback Australia 'night-showing', that I heard the sad news about the showman's daughter I remembered.

Families from all walks of life have lost loved ones because of drugs and so, it seemed, had the Showmen.

**Drive Away (A.Kirkpatrick)** This is the first song I wrote for the album. My daughter Kate and I were driving back from a gig at Twin Towns Services Club after I'd done a support for Charlie Landsborough. It was back in Feb 2004, a few months after Dad had passed away and we'd been playing a lot of his music in the car, particularly *Columbia Lane—The Last Sessions*. I guess when you lose someone so close you feel pretty shattered and you start to think about where you come from and where you're going. Hence the first couple of verses and chorus of this song came into my head — a personal song about yearning for what was — wanting things to be the same, which of course they can't be. So, in a way this song was the beginning of the album, and we started recording later that year.

**Silos of Home (Don Walker)** I love this song written by Don Walker. It's so Australian in the images it paints, bringing to mind the vastness of the outback: "The silos of home, stand guard against a sky, so wide I feel like I'm swimming in God's eye" — what lyrics!

**Never Say Never (James Arneman)** My son James encouraged me to take the first step in recording this album, by cutting short my procrastination, dragging me up to Dad's studio and helping me put down a demo of "Drive Away". He continued to encourage me by writing this great song for my album! All about moving on from a relationship, trying to leave regret behind, but never saying never, this story is set on the road.

### **Women of the West (George Essex Evans/Graham Wardrop)**

George Essex Evans is a great Australian poet in the tradition of Henry Lawson and he wrote these words back in 1902 about the pioneering women of the outback who left the cities to make a life for themselves and their families in the bush. It celebrates their great pioneering spirit in what were often harsh conditions. It was put to music by a friend of mine, Graham Wardrop, who played in my band in the 70's when we were doing the 'country rock' thing and playing some resident gigs in the city. I've had the song since then and finally have got to record it!

**Bluer Skies (Bernie O'Brien)** I've recorded a lot of songs from Melbourne writer Bernie O'Brien; I've always liked his writing. This is such a sweet sentiment with a beautiful melody, enhanced by the "Bob Wills" style fiddle parts from Mike Kerin. I asked Bill Chambers to sing on this one as his voice has that great 'edge' that I thought would work well with the 'sweetness' of the track. I think it's a great blend and, as a bonus, he picked up the dobro and did the break as well!

**The Cunnamulla Fella (Slim Dusty/Stan Coster)** Who'd have thought I'd do a cover of this great Slim Dusty/Stan Coster classic! I actually learnt the song last November when I travelled to Cunnamulla for the unveiling of the 3-times life-size bronze statue of 'The Cunnamulla Fella'. Along with Tracy Coster, I joined them for the celebrations and so enjoyed playing the song (about three times in total!) that I decided to record it when I returned. Mike Kerin did a great arrangement, playing fiddles, mandolin and the lead guitar along with the driving banjo from Mark Collins.

**Peppimenarti Cradle (Joy McKean)** I found this song half-finished in amongst my papers. Mum had started writing it years ago, and I persuaded her to finish it for this album. Our family's association with the people from Peppi in the Northern Territory goes back a long way, to when Slim and Joy would take the show out to Daly River in the 60's, then later on camping trips with Harry Wilson and the mob to go fishing. Also we filmed for the *Slim Dusty Movie* in the 80's up at Peppi. The women at Peppi are famous for their weaving and when they heard I was pregnant with my daughter Kate, they made a special basket for me, which I used as a carry cradle for both my children and has since become a family heirloom. It was very special to have Mum contribute this song.

**Goodbye (A.Kirkpatrick/Jeff Mercer)** I did some guest vocals on the last TCB (Travelling Country Band) album that had an instrumental on it written by Jeff Mercer. It was a gorgeous melody that stayed with me so I wrote some lyrics to put with it. Actually, I'd written the lyrics a few years ago — a generic love song from a mixture of experiences — and they worked with Jeff's melody.

**Neverland (Belinda Butler/Gail Betts)** This song was something a bit different for me. Mike Kerin suggested it — he had to talk me into it, but I love the way it's turned out, and particularly the way my old mates Colin Watson and Michel Rose (electric guitar and pedal steel) played. Young Australian writer Belinda Butler and Gail Betts from Cairns penned the track.

**When it's Lamplighting Time in the Valley (Trad.)** I loved this old song from hearing it as a duet by Slim and Joy on an early album and it's my 'party piece' whenever I'm asked to sing a song anywhere. Fettler (Mike Kerin) and I, along with Rod Coe on the double bass, just played this a couple of times up in the studio and ended up keeping the first take. Again, a great arrangement from Mike who played the fiddles, mandolin and lead acoustic.

**When the Rain Tumbles Down in July (Slim Dusty)** I always associate this song with my Dad more than any other so I wanted to pay tribute to him with a version of his classic bush ballad. No one will ever sing this song like my Dad — from the opening bars of the strong 'pick and strum guitar' and then the soaring crystal clear vocal that just takes you back to the beautiful Nulla Valley. Mike

Kerin played the lead for this recording on the guitar used by Slim for the original “Rain Tumbles” version.

**One of a Kind (A. Kirkpatrick)** I wanted to write a song to celebrate the vibrant ‘larger than life’ performer and person who was my Dad, to capture his restless spirit that kept him always on the move. It was fairly spontaneous and pretty honest.