

BY SIMON WOOLDRIDGE

FOR A DRUMMER HE SURE HAD A LOT OF GUITARS

**The Lazenby Young Blues Guitarist
Award was set-up to honour Phil
Lazenby who passed away in April 2013.**

Cindy Lazenby sets the scene about Phil and his love of music: "I first met Philip in 1979 when he was playing at what was the Lakeview Hotel with Leigh Rolls and Garry Hudson. I will never forget his driving drum beat in My Sharona. They played it every single week!

From then on music became a huge part of my life because it was a huge part of his life. If he wasn't playing in a band, we were running discos. We ran them three or four nights a week - at the Captain Cook Hotel, the ANA Motel which used to be in View Street, Goldies at the Golden Hills Motel and all over the state in various pubs, halls and wedding venues. You name it, we played it.

But he always came back to live music. His enthusiasm for music never waived although in later years he had trouble with his ears and couldn't play in public. So he set up his garage as a studio and had a never-ending stream of muso friends around for jams."

Phil was a highly respected community figure in Bendigo. A distinguished business career, culminating in the role of CEO at Bendigo Community Telco, was preceded by an unstinting passion for music, once supporting AC/DC when they played in Bendigo in the 1970s. Phil's contribution to the local music community was significant over many years and was matched by his support for local young people. "Philip also had unwavering support for the youth of Bendigo, whether it was about music or helping them get a good start in life," says Cindy, "Philip was huge supporter of LeadOn, a youth and community development

organisation which aims to strengthen relationships between young people and the broader community. And Philip gave so much of his time it - he was on the board, he initiated numerous projects and he personally mentored many of the kids."

"Phil was instrumental in helping to get the Bendigo Blues & Roots Music Festival off the ground," said Andrew Watts. "His close friend, Peter Gavin came up with the idea of creating an award in his honour. It was a fitting tribute which celebrated his passion for music, the development of youth and a love for Bendigo."

I asked Andrew about the guitar that some lucky, but talented, young guitarist will be able to call their own later this year. "Phil purchased the Fender Stratocaster guitar from a local music shop to support their business. Given he could hardly play, the guitar remained untouched at Phil's house. After his passing, Phil's family offered the guitar as first prize in the competition. The guitar is in sexy black, unplayed and in a genuine Fender case."

"His family and I are thrilled to be able to provide this guitar - that he owned but never played - as the inaugural prize for this competition," added Cindy Lazenby. "I hope the competition generates lots of fun for everyone involved and gets kids inspired to get into blues music. I also hope this competition will continue to remind us all of the amazing person he was and help to ensure his legacy lives on for future generations."

Peter Gavin added: "I think Phil would be



PHIL LAZENBY

Photo by Laura Makepeace

pleased if he thought that there were some young people out there striving a little more toward excellence just so they can have a shot at playing at the festival and maybe owning this guitar and then using it to further their ambitions."

The Fender Stratocaster is valued at \$2299. Bendigo Community Telco has put up a second prize to the tune of \$500.

I have seen all the Lazenby Young Blues Guitarist heats so far at Big Hill Winery, The Rifle Brigade and the Goldmines Hotel. The young guitarists on display to date have been awe-inspiring, and it will take someone very talented indeed to take out the award in November. But what a great award and what an appropriate tribute to Phil Lazenby - a passionate musician who worked tirelessly for Bendigo and its youth; a drummer who owned a lot of guitars.

**Competition entrants must be under
25. For more information visit
www.bendigobluesandroots.com.au**

COL'S TWO-BOB WORTH

BY COLIN THOMPSON
FESTIVAL FOUNDER/DIRECTOR

As per usual, there's a lot to be excited about on the Bendigo music scene and, for fans of Blues & Roots, Soul, Folk, Funk, Jazz, Reggae and the like, there is plenty to look forward to for the rest of 2014 and beyond.

Keep an eye on our website and connect with our social media for updates and announcements on who's playing where and when as part of our program in November, as well as other supporting events around the calendar.

A quick acknowledgement to some of the sponsors and supporters who've come on board this year to help Bendigo Blues & Roots Music Festival continue to grow: We're grateful to welcome Arnold Dallas McPherson Lawyers as a financial sponsor, as well as Bendigo Regional Tourism who have supported us with a much needed boost through their grant program. In addition to the support and assistance we've received from the start from Bendigo Weekly, we also welcome the Bendigo Advertiser as a sponsor/partner this year. The good folks at the Addy will be assisting us to get our printed program for the November festival out and about in October 2014, so keep an eye out for that. Telstra Business Centre Bendigo has also come on as a major sponsor and we've partnered up to bring a special Family Day to Big Hill Vineyard on Sunday 21 September and look forward to this hopefully becoming a permanent fixture in the calendar annually. We'd also like to thank

our other cash sponsors who continue to go to bat for us, year after year, such as Bendigo Bank, Studio Ink and Mawby Property. City Of Greater Bendigo who, in addition to the financial support from their Major Events office, also provide ongoing in-kind and logistical support through Bendigo Tourism, Bendigo Visitor Centre, Bencon, Local Laws, Waste Management and a number of other COGB departments and staff who recognise the importance of supporting grass-roots events such as ours.

A special thank you to Simon Wooldridge, both for joining our humble crew and for taking the helm as editor in chief of The Bluesletter. There are far too many BB & RMF Committee and Crew to mention them all here, but if you're at one of our events and see our helpful and ever smiling volunteer crew going about their business, please give them a pat on the back and thank them for the great work they do. It's these kind of people who make Bendigo such an enjoyable place to live. In the meantime, don't forget to get out and get amongst the events happening in your town and region. The reward, as always, is the experience provided by a rich and vibrant music and arts culture - created and supported by all of us.

EVER WONDERED? BY SIMON WOOLDRIDGE

The economic impact of the Bendigo Blues & Roots Music Festival

Economic impact statements and passionate musicians are not phrases you often see in the same sentence. However, our friends at the Greater City of Bendigo have forwarded us some interesting data that makes very impressive reading.

Apart from 100s of artists appearing in around 30 venues over four days entertaining thousands of people, just what are the benefits of the Bendigo Blues & Roots Music Festival to the city? Well, in purely economic terms we now know.

The City of Greater Bendigo's Economic Development Unit sent Festival Director Colin Thompson their four page "Economic Activity Analysis" report for the 2013 festival. However, for those of us who zone-out or get the jitters when numbers, ratios, quotas and percentages get thrown together the basics are these:

- Around 5000 people attended the festival, 42% from outside the region.
- 30% of visitors stayed an average of two nights.
- The festival had a direct benefit of \$481,000.
- The additional flow-on effects come to \$436,000, meaning a total overall economic benefit of \$917,000.
- Long-term, with the impact on tourism, this will lead to the creation of an estimated five jobs locally.

It's great to learn that a still relatively young and fledgling festival is having such a positive economic impact in Bendigo as well as its undoubted impact on culture and entertainment.

ARTIST PROFILE John-Luke Shelley

BY SIMON WOOLDRIDGE

"I like everything about Bendigo, from its step back in time feel and look to its great night life and support of live music..."

I have played in Bendigo many, many times." Says Geelong native John-Luke Shelley whose prodigious talent will be on display with his band High Speed Steel at this year's Bendigo Blues & Roots Music Festival, starting 6th November.

26-year 'JL' (as John-Luke is known) cites Roy Buchanan and Stevie Ray Vaughan amongst his earliest influences. "I would put the greatest hits on from both artists and just play and play and play until I thought I had borrowed all the licks..." But it was JL's father Brett, rhythm guitarist with JL's band High Speed Steel, who really inspired Shelley Jr's love of the guitar. "My

dad was the one that got me started. He used to play the Top Gun theme song all the time and one day it really caught my attention, and ever since I have been playing the guitar."

I asked JL the most unusual place he'd played. "Lake Tahoe in 2009, I think. We arrived at the pub and I noticed a white board and in bold letters at the top, it said "Open Mic Night" so I put my name down. I performed I'm Yours by Jason Mraz and the crowd went off - especially because I was an Aussie. It was a fantastic night!"

JL plays a mix of originals and cover versions and has released three albums and has a five



track EP due before the end of the year. Bendigo Blues & Roots Music Festival goers can expect to hear JL play audience favourites Lay Down, Open Mind and JLS Tribute to SRV later this year in what promises to be a polished performance by this talented young blues guitarist.