



FOREDAY RIDERS

.....nothing but the Blues since 1967

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Often cited as Sydney's 'university of the blues', the Foreday Riders celebrate 49 years as a working band in 2016, and despite countless line-up changes, 2 original members from 1967 remain: the King Brothers, Ron (harmonica, vocals) and Jeff (guitar, Dobro) who continue as happy 'backroom boys' in the current outfit. The rhythm section is also highly durable: Rosscoe 'Stinger' Clark (drums) has been a Rider since 1982, and as a master shuffle player, has worked with the Cyril B Bunter band, Ray Beadle, Bridie King, Darren Jack and Alison Penney among others – he's decidedly the go-to guy for blues drumming in Sydney; Stan 'Sleepy' Mobbs has been on bass with the Riders since 1990 and underpins the band with the smooth, swinging yet rock-solid feel essential to electric blues. Like Rosscoe, Stan is also much in demand by other Sydney bands, and has worked with master guitarist Mal Eastick and other notables such as Ray Beadle, Bridie King and Christina Crofts. The Riders are currently privileged to have in the crucial role of front man the highly regarded singer/guitarist Shane Pacey, widely known for his work with the Bondi Cigars, and who also leads his own blues trio. Shane's association with the Riders goes back to the late 1980s, and he has stayed in touch ever since; his intense vocals, attacking guitar style and strong song-writing make him an asset to any band, and his presence has honed the edge on the Riders' sound.

What began in the mid-60's as a loose association of school friends dabbling in electric blues developed over a year or so into a 7-piece band featuring young singer Jill Drury and Swiss piano man Rolli Utzinger. Material ranged from the country blues of Memphis Minnie & Lightning Hopkins through to urban R & B by Willie Dixon and Ray Charles, incorporating jazz-flavoured instrumentals and jump tunes. Since then, after a brief stint as a quartet in the early 70s, the band has settled for a 5-piece line up such as the current one, often augmented at Riders gigs by guests dropping in on guitar, sax, harp, keyboards - whatever you can use for the blues.

Only venturing sporadically into the recording studios, the Riders have released 10 albums, the latest being 'Herding Cats', launched this year 2016 and featuring the current line-up plus four guest performers. Over the past few years the Riders have re-issued on CD the 4 long unavailable albums from 1974–1986 ('Days of Wine and Vinyl' series).

Highlights in the band's history include: support acts with B.B.King; Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee; Freddie King and Hound Dog Taylor, Gatemouth Brown, the 'Delta Blues Legends' show, Chris Cain and others. The Riders have backed Bo Diddley in Sydney, and were joined on stage by Junior Wells during his 1972 tour. In 1975 the Riders were part of the 'History of the Blues' concert tour which included Dutch Tilders, Judy Bailey and Margaret Roadknight. Other names associated with the band are Jeannie Lewis and Broderick Smith, and former Riders have branched out into major local blues acts such as the Bondi Cigars, The Hippos, and the Ray Beadle Band. Apart from appearing at Sunbury in 1975, the Riders played at the now legendary Alice Springs Blues Festival in 1986, along with Chain, Renee Geyer, Kevin Borich, Ian Moss and others. More recent festival appearances include the East Coast Blues Festival at Byron Bay, the Lithgow, Goulburn and Thredbo Blues Festivals, and the Wangaratta, Manly and Hawksbury Jazz Festivals.

In 1996 the Riders were awarded the inaugural Hall of Fame Award at the Lithgow Blues Festival and in following years received the Chain Heritage award at Goulburn (and were later inducted into the Hall of Fame), the 2MBS-FM Stormy Monday Lifetime Achievement award, Sydney Blues Society 'Services to the Blues' Award, and the Wollongong Blues Club Hall of Fame, 2015. The Riders were also included in a series of blues concerts at the Sydney Opera House in 1999, 'Sundays round the House', with Mal Eastick, The Mighty Reapers and Matt Walker.

Throughout the band's history, the King Brothers have been privileged to work with an imposing array of leading Australian blues performers, and hope to continue doing so, always aiming to see audiences have as good a time as the band.