

Laurie Muggleton editorial by Garry Coxhead
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Laurie Muggleton is passionate about his music and filled with determination to have a go despite what adversity might throw up. If you look at Laurie's website: www.lauriemuggleton.com you'll find his biography is divided into two parts, Looking Forward ... from 2014 onwards and Looking Back ... which covers his earlier years growing up, working with bands and building his musical skills 1975 – 1985, his solo career from 1985, the recording of his first album in 1989 and a very active career through until 2002. That year was his watershed and it wasn't until 2014 that Laurie made a return to the music that he loves and recorded his new album Simply Living.

Laurie explains a pretty trying 4 years, "Leading into 2002, my physical health issues became serious enough to cause concern regarding reliability meeting booking commitments. My self-confidence began to waver after being replaced by cheaper acts and back-door agents. On the personal front, losing two brothers to truck accidents, and my marriage and relationship failures found me depressed. To put it bluntly, possessed by 'The Black Dog'. So I retired and went fishing and crabbing on the Gold Coast. 2003 - 2006 saw me taking care of my health issues, both physical and psychological. In 2007 my mother had several serious strokes and being the only sibling able to, I moved back to Pittsworth Queensland to care for her. We spent her final years in Canberra, closer to her sisters. My mother died in 2012 and I found myself 'needing to find' Laurie Muggleton."

When one considers Laurie's career, the hurdles he's had to overcome building it and the hiatus from 2002-2013, Simply Living is a rather apt title for his comeback album. He explains its evolution, "In 2013 I visited the Mildura CM Festival, then Tamworth in 2014, searching for self-confidence, passion and a desire to return to performing. Would I be welcomed back? I returned home with a positive outlook, I decided to do an album of Australian songs written by performer friends I'd met during my earlier career. In 1981 I recorded Simply Living as a single, so to quote from the album liner, looking back on the memory of the love and laughter, the joy and heartache, the trials and tribulations, and the triumphs and failures, one just can't help but come to the conclusion. When all is said and done, and the dust has settled, we really are just Simply Living.

Simply Living is a polished album produced by Stuie French and ranges from bush ballads, through story songs to good old classic remakes. What are the influences? "Heritage, where would we be without our Pioneers? Upbringing, my Mum was a yodeller, my Father a Bush Balladeer. I remember the sounds of old dance halls, I experienced the tent shows of Tex Morton, Slim Dusty and Chad Morgan and then there's personal taste, I enjoy all styles of music, but my career developed from the music of Johnny Cash, Merle Haggard, Willie and Waylon, Elvis and Roy Orbison and of course requests from my audiences added to my repertoire," Laurie says.

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Things don't come much more Aussie than The Rugby League Song, highlighting another of Laurie's interests. "Through school I experienced most sports, but favoured rugby league and it's my preferred spectator sport. I first heard this Danny McMaster composition in 1981 and have performed it regularly so recording it was a must. With Danny's persuasion, Ray Hadley OAM agreed to perform a phantom call featuring the NRL's 'Official Team of the Century' scoring a try. It's a very special feeling having something no one else in the world has!"

As they say, the best laid plans of mice and men sometimes go astray and for Laurie just getting Simply Living to his fans and radio has had its difficulties. He explains, "By May 2014, the album's recorded and pressed with promotional material printed and national and international radio promotion arranged along with singles released. The plan was for the Mildura Festival in September to be my 'comeback' and album launch, but no, come June 30th I'm in Canberra hospital. Five months down the track I'm still there. Frustrated? I can't afford to be. Thankfully there's today's technology. Via Webpage, Facebook, Capital News and a lot of great radio presenters I'm back in the public arena, selling CD's from a hospital bed and determined I'll make the Tamworth Festival in January 2015!"

Laurie Muggleton has had to clear more hurdles than most building and maintaining his career, always in his wheel chair and more recently a hospital bed. His determination to succeed stands as an inspiration to others. For Laurie it's Simply Living, his greatest wish, "to present my style of music from accessible stages and to entertain the audiences who attend." His advice to others, "Believe in your ideals and be true to yourself." Laurie's had time on his hands to work on it, so check out his website: www.lauriemuggleton.com