

Beach Boys with Glen Campbell at Grammys--Wouldn't It be Nice? and Saddlebags All Filled with Beans and Jerky ---Michael's Rock and Roll Posse

http://www.rollingstone.com/country/news/glen-campbell-dead-at-81?utm_source=email (RS Obituary)

http://www.amazon.com/Session-Glen-Campbell-Jimmy-Webb/dp/B008I34Y0I/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1349128852&sr=8-1&keywords=Glen+Campbell+Jimmy+Webb (great DVD/CD)

http://www.rollingstone.com/music/news/glen-campbell-says-farewell-in-final-1-a-concert-20120625?utm_source=dailynewsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter (News of his illness)

http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/music_blog/2012/02/beach-boys-glen-campbell-grammy-awards-reunion.html (more news on his illness, 5 years ago)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6GEhxg3Rwmg> (Jim Morrison, late of Albuquerque, singing the KOB song)

In a sense, I have been preparing for this sad day when Glen Campbell died, so I am including a Posse Posting from 5 years ago, when word of his medical condition began to spread. His last album was ADIOS, and I re-issue this earlier posting, and say *Adios* to the Rhinestone Cowboy, whom I met many years ago. Read this piece and weep,

Michael



Photo of Carl Wilson, left, and Glen Campbell on tour with the Beach Boys in 1964. Credit: Unknown

To my Posse:

Reading this piece this morning about Glen Campbell reminded me that I had never told the Posse my Glen Campbell story. When I was growing up in New Mexico, the favorite child's show on television was the Dick Bills Show, headed up by the local equivalent of Capt. Kangaroo, Uncle Dick Bills, who had a cowboy western/bluegrass band, Dick Bills and the Sandia Mountain Boys. (He also had a country radio show, instilling a dislike for bluegrass that exists to this day.) It was on Channel 4, the NBC affiliate, KOB-TV, aka K Circle B. I do not remember all the details of his show except that kids in the theater would sit around and listen to Dick Bills sing, do bad schtick, have occasional guests, show westerns, and pitch Creamland dairy products. Mothers would show up in the area just outside the studio, line up the kids, and they would take the first 25-30 in line. If someone had a birthday, they were in. The theme song was (I could not make this stuff up):

Ridin' down the trail to Albuquerque,
Saddlebags all filled with beans and jerky.
Headin' for K circle B,
The TV ranch for you and me.
K Circle B in Albuquerque.
Yodel Ae, eee, ae, aeeee, aeee..... [repeat, yodeling]

Uncle Dick was actually Glen Campbell's uncle, and he lived in Albuquerque for a period where he played with Dick's The Sandia Mountain Boys and then his own spinoff group, the Western Wranglers. By the time I was old enough to appear on the show, after we re-settled in NM following my father's mustering out of the military in 1958, Glen had become a very popular backup singer and session guitarist in the LA area, where he became a member of The Champs, and he played lead instrumental on "Tequila" (think Pee Wee Herman, biker bar: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UVKsd8z6scw>). As the LA Times piece notes, he played as a Beach Boy for short time, actually taking Brian Wilson's place when he had his first extended absence from the group. He also played on *Smile*. He also had done other apprentice stuff, recording obscure records, backing and playing with many others (Paul Anka, Bobby Darin, Leon Russell, Elvis, Sinatra, Ricky Nelson, many others) and making his living as a great session guitarist—in part because he could play in a number of genres and was a quick study. Although he got a Capitol Record contract in 1962, it was not until five years later that he “burst” onto the scene with “Gentle on My Mind,” and then “By the Time I get to Phoenix,” etc. He was a member of the “Wrecking Crew,” the rag tag and fluid group that backed literally hundreds of groups in the 1960's, working for various

Phil Spector groups, the legendary TAMI show, and others from Dylan to Eric Clapton.

My meeting him was about 1959 or 1960, when I was 8 or 9, and was in the audience on Uncle Dick Bills, and he was in town to visit his Uncle. He had what my Dad used to call, “duck-ass hair,” or Elvis-hair. (In fact, in my mind, he looks exactly like his 1964 picture, above.) He had a buddy, a scruffy looking piano player, who it turned out was Leon Russell, although I did not know it or who he was (more accurately, who he was to become—a member of the same “Wrecking Crew,” and many other groups). Uncle Dick said to the audience, “My nephew Glen is back here, and he is a great singer—his most famous song is one where he doesn’t sing a word,” or something like that, meaning, “Tequila.” I yelled out, “They do have a word, ‘Tequila,’” and the camera swung to me, and Glen and his buddy—who I could see off-camera—were laughing at me. I was embarrassed by my spontaneous outburst, but even then, I had to have the final word and correct the obvious and glaring rock and roll error.

Flash forward more than 50 years, about 2008 or 2009, and Tina and I are at the El Rey, the old Spanish-language movie theater in downtown Albuquerque. We are watching Leon Russell play. Leon’s pedigree is as varied and versatile as that of Glen Campbell, and he is justifiably in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, elected last year; he keeps up a remarkable tour schedule. See: http://www.leonrussellrecords.com/touring_info.shtml .] He starts with his beautiful song “Song For You,” covered most memorably by Karen Carpenter. Then, he says to the group: “I am glad to be in Albuquerque. I haven’t been here for many years, since I was here with Glen Campbell and his Uncle Dick on that old tv show.” And he started playing and growling in that great voice of his, “Ridin’ down the trail, to Albuquerque...” And all of us who grew up in New Mexico joined in, closing that circle. Perhaps I should say: closing that K Circle B.

Michael A. Olivas
February 11, 2012

PS—I am always glad when you write in to say you liked a piece and have an elaboration or quibble, and especially when you disagree with me or correct an error. As my early example of Uncle Dick Bills and “Tequila” shows: *trust, but verify*.