

# Grandpa.T Smith

It was back in 1976 when Tony took Country music seriously. It all started when he entered a Country music talent contest and won his heat in the solo and duo category, although eventually failing at the last hurdle. Although he missed out on what he thought was his first and only chance he was noticed and with help from Dennis Collier and Phil Lloyd he was on his way. He went on a journey that has taken him to places and met people he would never have imagined which still continues 33 years later.

Working solo for a while by the name of Tony Edwards, he was asked by Mike Storey to do a gig as a duo. Having agreed, he met Jim Nugent and the Tony Edwards Duo was formed. It was not long before Fred Harris (drummer) became free and when Tony advertised for a lead guitarist and Mick Robinson from Leeds joined them, they became Madison County in 1978.

Tony had some good years with the band until they went their separate ways and he took a couple of years out. On his return Madison County was back up and running with Mike Robinson still on lead, John Taylor was on drums and Les Orchard on bass. For the next nine years they performed in theatres and backed the likes of Clinton Ford and touring acts from the States until, in 1994 while on tour with a duo from Nashville, Mark & Marie Mosley, Tony had chest pains. The tour was over for Tony as his doctor ordered an ambulance to take him to hospital. The lads carried on and finished the tour and then sadly Madison County was no more.

Before Mark & Marie went back to the States they invited Tony to stay with them if ever he got to Nashville. That dream came true six months later as he went off to stay for two weeks, along with his friend Marilyn.

'We had a great time' says Tony. 'I didn't know Mark had recording studios and was overjoyed when I was invited to record a couple of tracks to bring home as a souvenir. Mark said take some tracks home and go solo again.'



The doctor gave him the okay and Tony went back to Nashville to record an album.

'Another fantastic journey in Country music started. I went back six months later and recorded another album. This part of my Country music journey has now lasted over 14 years and has been very good to me', says Tony.

In that 14 years Tony has married his life long Country music friend, Marilyn in a chapel in Gatlinburg up in the Smokey Mountains in Tennessee and he now has six albums, two of them recorded in Nashville. When he joined Equity he had to change his name to Grandpa.T Smith for security and

public liability insurance. They already had a Tony Smith on their books. He likes the name and it seems to be a hit with the Country music audiences, they like to call him grandpa, although some still do call him Tony.

Tony says 'thank you all for your support over the years, I hope I will be around for a few more yet. I would miss you all if I had to call it a day. Country music people are simply the best.

'A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all.' Grandpa (Tony) & Marilyn. You can contact him on 01924 254136 or via email [anthony925@btinternet.com](mailto:anthony925@btinternet.com).