

Ivor James

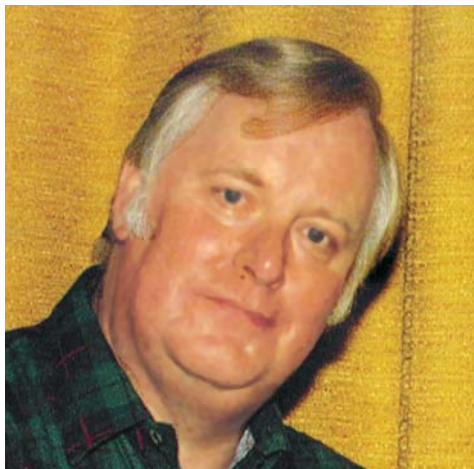
celebrating 50 years in Country music

Born on 22nd July 1943 and with his childhood filled with music, Ivor was caught up in the great rock 'n' roll and skiffle boom in the 1950s. He soon learned the guitar and formed a skiffle group with three school pals which stayed together and developed over the next 10 years carrying Ivor and his Country roots into the swinging sixties.

Ivor's working life caused him to move around the country fairly frequently in the 1970s and 80s which resulted in him leaving a trail of bands behind him as he progressed before deciding to try his luck as a solo artist. He quickly found this suited him and his semi-nomadic lifestyle because he was able to transport his act from one area to another without the complication of starting another band. When changes in the system brought Ivor's work career to an abrupt end in 1993, he struck out as a fully professional performer specialising in his beloved Country music.

Ivor can still vividly remember hearing Country music being played on the jukeboxes in the truckers' cafes as he travelled with his father, a truck driver from Derby. He probably inherited his talents from his mother who was a talented singer and pianist who supplemented the family income by playing and singing in pubs and clubs. She rehearsed daily at home. Ivor also had two great uncles who had a hillbilly band in the 1940s and 50s playing many of the Country songs which had been popularised on this side of the Atlantic by American troops during and after World War II and they often brought their instruments to the house to rehearse with his mother. Ivor's stage act includes many of his self penned songs and several of these are featured on the recordings which he has released to date. Saturday Night Cowboy, which has been adopted as something of an anthem by the Westerners, is the title track of an album which also features two other original songs - Having You Around and The Country Side Of Rock 'n' Roll. The Original Ivor James is a cd carrying 12 of Ivor's original songs which are frequently requested at his gigs and they receive a fair amount of airplay on various local radio stations during Country music programmes. Another album, Rain And Other Friends, features four more of Ivor's original compositions along with Running Water by Pete Naden and cover versions of songs by American artists.

The albums mentioned were all recorded at Pete Haywood's studio in Derbyshire and Pete and other musicians are featured on them and credited on the sleeves. Ivor has also produced some d-i-y recordings



in his small home studio and has recently released his D.I.Y. album which features 12 new songs which he has also recorded and produced himself and as he says on the sleeve notes, he also played all the instruments, sang the lead and harmony vocals, made the tea, greased the van, cleaned the windows and swept the chimney. For the technically minded, he produces the basic backing tracks on an old Roland MV30 sequencer - it's only about 10 years old but technology moves forward very quickly - and he records on a Fostex digital hard drive machine. Ivor feels that in some ways, this is a more 'honest' approach than recording in a professional studio with session musicians providing the backing, although the quality of such recordings is higher.

Ivor is married with two grown up children. Ivor's wife, Diane, with the aid of their daughter Marie, along with Diane's brother, Glenn, have latterly become centrally involved in organising festivals of Country music.

On the performing side, Ivor, celebrating 50 years in 2007, provides a mixture of modern and traditional County music, with a sprinkling of humour for added flavour. His performances make a pleasant change from all the repetitive line dance music that is often heard around the clubs, although, like all music that has a beat behind it, you can line dance as well as listen.