

West Virginia

West Virginia are a band who have been around a long time. I am a big fan as was my father and his father before him. They started at the bottom, found they liked it and decided to stay there. I have followed their career very closely with a bucket and shovel and so Arthur asked me to write this biography but when I asked him for some events and dates he said, 'It's a blur, where were we last week?' But after poking him with a sharp stick I managed to get this much out of him.

In their late teen's brothers Arthur & Keith Thornhill along with Mike Brown, Eric Lloyd and Brian Nichols decided to form a group. They called themselves the Scouse Gits but one day Brian pointed out that he was not from Liverpool. 'I'm from Bingley in West Yorkshire', he said with a scouse accent. So they searched around for another name until they came up with West Virginia after they spotted a ship on the Mersey called, strangely enough, Milwaukee Pride. They couldn't spell Milwaukee and that is how West Virginia were born. (I'm on medication you know!) They immediately started making an impact on the Country music scene, getting plenty of work nationwide. Sadly, Eric died and rather than seek a replacement they carried on as a four piece band. They picked up work touring with such legends as Marty Robbins, Don Everly and Merle Haggard, even going to the Hag's birthday party (I'm so jealous). Television work followed with appearances on Pebble Mill and Scottish tv amongst others.

In the early 90s they went to Nashville to record the album, Blue Rendezvous which soon became Album of the Year with the magazines. More awards followed from clubs throughout the UK. Brian decided that he wanted a change and announced he was leaving the group to join the circus. Hang on (must be these tablets), he left to join a rock band and these days he's with the extremely successful, Phil Haley & The Comments. His replacement was Tony Peck, an inspired choice because he is, like Brian, not only a great drummer but also a very funny man. The Virgins, as their many fans call them, have always had a great sense of fun so the Pekker fitted right in. That was 10 years ago and he is now an integral part of the band. You can guarantee if there is any mischief at a festival that the lads have something to do with it. They have recently appeared in a feature film called The Pool and appeared in front of royalty at the

Alexandra Palace. Which reminds me, I once introduced them by saying, 'these lads appeared before the Queen (pause) was born'. I'm doing my best. (I don't think that pink tablet was mine!)

So after more than 30 years at the top and having just been inducted into the British Country Music Hall of Fame, they are still regarded as one of British Country music's premier bands.

These days Arthur runs the very successful Cloud 9 agency giving work to other acts and organising festivals at home and abroad.



Arthur Thornhill.



Keith Thornhill.



Mike Brown.



Tony Peck.

including Fun In The Sun, an annual trip to Spain where you can unwind and enjoy yourself in the sunshine.

I am pleased to say they are not only my favourite group but they are my mates as well. I hope you now know a bit more about West Virginia than you did. If so, then my work is complete. Keep taking the tablets.

Alan Cameron (a friend of the bride).

