

Pop Archives

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While doing some research for the Concert Report I came across an interesting Internet site called Pop Archives (<http://poparchives.com.au>). This site looks at Australian artists and the songs they had hits with, including minor hits.

The site uses sources of Australian Pop Records from the 50s, 60s and 70s [plus some Aussie originals and some New Zealanders] and you can browse by artist and by song.

I like that if you go into the Links section and click on "08. Songwriters" it takes you to links of various songwriters, which could be interesting to Society Members. So, a very interesting site to explore.

A few songwriting facts interesting facts I found out from the site are:

(1) The Delltones had a major hit with "*Hangin' Five*" in Australia in 1963. It was written by Ben Acton & Fred Kirkham. "This song could be mistaken for a cover of an American surf song, but it's an Aussie original, co-written by Ben Acton, a detective with the police force based at Manly, a Sydney beachside suburb."

"Fred Kirkham was not credited as a writer on the original single of Hangin' Five, and the song has often been attributed solely to Ben Acton. The APRA listing for the song shows both names. This is apparently NSW District Court Judge Fred Kirkham (1937-2007) who, when he rowed in the Australian eight in the 1956 Olympics, was a probationary constable in the New South Wales Police Force."

(2) Noeleen Batley had a major Australian hit in 1960 with "*Barefoot Boy*". "The song was written by Helene Grover, then aged about sixteen (see below). After the success of Barefoot Boy Helene eventually moved away from the music industry. She has worked as a theatrical agent and is now a leading laughter therapist and trainer, based in Sydney: In the late 70s she directed Flashback, a Happy Days-era stage production which included "*Barefoot Boy*".

(3) Even though Blackfeather had a major Australian hit with "*Boppin' The Blues*" they attributed the song to Carl Perkins. However the site notes: "Although the record credited Carl Perkins as songwriter, and is usually described as a reworking or a makeover of the Carl Perkins song, the two records, played back-to-back, reveal nothing in common but their title. Lyrically, melodically and structurally, they are different songs.

Jonathan Sturm, a friend of Blackfeather pianist Paul Wylde, writes at his website: Neither Paul nor the rest of the band could remember the lyric of the old Carl Perkins song, so they wrote their own.

It seems that Blackfeather ended up writing a completely different song altogether, but generously kept the Carl Perkins songwriting credit." Talk about songwriting generosity!

The above are some interesting trivia about songwriting from Pop Archives (<http://poparchives.com.au>). Maybe you'll find some other gems if you go through the site?

ED: I checked and this site is still active in April 2026 so check it out