

# BASIL HENRIQUES AND THE WAIKIKI ISLANDERS

The original Waikiki Islanders were formed in the 1930s by Hawaiian Guitarist **William Cox**. They performed around England and broadcast with the British Broadcasting Corporation.



Stan Keeley, Frank Gaye, Unknown, Terry Jinks, Archie Cox, Bill Cox



The Original Waikiki Islanders 1937. Eric , Penny , Archie and William Cox.

Basil's wife, Patricia, is the daughter of William Cox.

Basil Henriques started playing guitar at eleven years of age and took up Hawaiian guitar at twelve. His first pedal guitar was a six string gibson 4 pedal electraharp.



**Basil Henriques at 16 Years Young**

At fourteen he was playing in his mother's group "The Blue Hawaiians". At sixteen, William Cox died and Basil reformed the "Waikiki Islanders", taking over as bandleader. Later Basil married William Cox's daughter, Patricia, who played rhythm guitar with the group. Hawaiian music has been at the forefront of Basil's and Patricia's lives from the beginning.



The newly formed Waikiki Islanders 1964



Basil's wife, Patricia Henriques (formerly Cox)



Mike DeSouza, Patricia Henriques , Basil Henriques.

From 1966 to 1968 he was resident at the "Castaways" night club in Birmingham with his group , also playing at the BBC Broad Street studios twice a week recording "Slots" for their national network light music prgs.



A Message from . . .  
**THE CASTAWAYS**  
BIRMINGHAM

This picture of the Castaways main room was taken from the stage end, and if you can imagine, the balconies extending to the side of the stage and at the end of the balconies 2 LARGE 40 foot palm trees with the bottoms on the back of the stage extension.

An interesting story from Basil:

"One evening whilst Mat Munroe was singing his finale 'Born Free', Dave Allen (Who was appearing just 'round the corner at the "Talk of the Town") had hatched a cunning plot and slid down from the balcony on one of the palm trees (Accompanied by a suitable glissando from me) landing directly behind Matt just as he was going to hit the last note.

The fun had only begun..

They huddled together for a couple of seconds planning the next move, Dave jumped up on the beautiful white grand piano (Much to the consternation of the club owner John Reeve) and the launched into a sketch they regularly do together at pantomimes. The Nelson-Hardy routine.

Maybe you've seen it but just in case you haven't, I'll describe it.

Dave says "Captain, Captain, I see Forty Fousand Froggie French Frigates off the starboard bow"

Nelson (Mat) replies " Hardy, my good man, Fetch me my Red Velvet Jacket"

Hardy "Why do you want your Red Velvet Jacket ?"

Nelson "So the men won't see the blood if I'm shot"

Hardy runs off and comes back with said jacket.

Hardy "Captain, Captain, I see Forty Fousand Froggie French Frigates off the port bow"

Nelson " Hardy, my good man, fetch me my Brown Corduroy Trousers"

Mat and Dave were very close friends and often appeared on TV on the same show, being complimentary to each other, Dave as a superb comedian and Mat as "Mat"

We played 6 night a week starting at 8:00 pm and finishing at 2:00am. Before each show at the casino/reception and then moving upstairs to the main ballroom to play after the show. Back downstairs to greet the second show audience and then upstairs



Now in semi-retirement, Basil spends his time playing for charity, organizing steel guitar events, producing records and editing the Hawaiian Music periodical, Aloha Dream.

# Steel Guitar Hall of Fame (USA) Nomination

## BASIL HENRIQUES

### TESTIMONIALS FROM FELLOW STEEL GUITARISTS

*The following are unsolicited quotations from fellow steel guitarists on the Steel Guitar Forum*

#### **David L. Donald**

Member

From: Koh Samui Island, Thailand

posted 23 September 2006 09:58 PM

I saw Bas play in Newbury,  
and it was like a masters class  
on the instrument and especially the style.

He has a huge history for sure.

Is there ANYONE from outside the USA in the SGHOF..  
I don't remember one.  
Bas certainly would be a good choice.

#### **Al Terhune**

Member

From: Newcastle, WA

posted 24 September 2006 12:15 AM

I wholeheartedly agree with getting Bas into the hall of fame. He's an icon.

#### **Dave Boothroyd**

Member

From: The Malvern Hills

posted 24 September 2006 02:00 AM

If I had a vote, I'd vote for Basil. Nice guy too. (and a pioneer of bio-diesel!!)  
Cheers

#### **Robert Shafer**

Member

From: United Kingdom

posted 24 September 2006 06:52 PM

As a complete novice and an absolute nobody in the Steel Guitar World I would wish to add my support for the nomination of Basil for induction to the SGHOF.

I have just come from the SGHOF website and it would appear to me, with my limited knowledge of Basil's curriculum vitae, that he excels in ALL of the seven attributes required for nomination.

I would earnestly entreat some of you more knowledgeable steelers to support this nomination and hopefully fill in the SGHOF nomination form with the comprehensive information that they require.

There is certainly enough of Basil's CV on this forum to at least qualify him for nomination.

Having met and heard Basil a couple of times at the Aloha Dreams conventions and having marvelled at his consummate skill and expertise on the instrument I am rather surprised that he has not been nominated before.

His knowledge of the minutiae of this instrument borders on the encyclopaedic and his enthusiasm for the promulgation of its use is hardly equalled.

Further, his generosity of spirit in seeking to help players of all levels is clearly demonstrated by the many comprehensive and in-depth postings made on this forum.

If I knew just half of what Basil has forgotten about the steel guitar I would be more than happy.

I submit these comments in genuine admiration of the man and his work.

Just my humble half a groat's worth.

### **Colin Goss**

Member

From: St.Brelade, Island of Jersey, Channel Islands, UK

posted 25 September 2006 04:46 AM

Add my vote also

### **Joey Ace**

Sysop

From: Southern Ontario, Canada

posted 25 September 2006 06:06 AM

I think an International Player is long overdue.

### **Francis Smyth**

Member

From: Fermanagh, UK posted 05 October 2006 10:36 AM

I played with Basil in Ireland in the the one country band in Ireland for a couple of years. Excellent musician and also a great arranger. I am now stuggling with the steel guitar could do with some lessons.

## **Mike Shefrin**

Member

From: New York USA

posted 05 October 2006

Basil is brilliant.

## **Jody Carver**

Member

From: The Knight Of Fender Tweed

posted 05 October 2006 03:23 PM

Mike, you bet he is.

## **Andy Volk**

Member

From: Boston, MA

posted 05 October 2006 05:20 PM

Bas has certainly earned this honor.

## **Albert Taylor**

New Member

From: Northern Ireland

posted 02 November 2006 09:35 AM

I first met Basil in 1976 in Ireland where he was then residing. He started teaching me Pedal Steel Guitar. Words simply fail me to describe this unique player ,and wonderful personality. I would rate him the most versatile tunesmith on this planet. I would walk 20 miles just to hear him play even one tune. He is also a very kind , and caring person , always ready to help in any capacity. In other words the talent of Basil ,is beyond anyone I have ever heard perform , and I have heard them all. He is long , long overdue to be a member of the Steel guitar Hall of fame . I will be sitting in the front row

## **George Redmon**

Member

From:

posted 02 November 2006 10:43 AM

here here.....and he is such a nice person.

## **Malcolm McMaster**

Member

From: Beith Ayrshire Scotland

posted 02 November 2006 10:52 AM

Baz would get my vote, a great guy,as well as a first class player.

## **Ron Brennan**

Member

From: Edison, New Jersey, USA

posted 03 November 2006 01:38 PM

Everything Malcolm McMaster said!!!

I appreciate his "abundance mentality"....

We know he is the epitome of a dedicated Steel Guitar Professional, Showman, Teacher and a good guy....The shirts are Cool too!!!

## **Al Marcus**

Member

From: Cedar Springs,MI USA

posted 03 November 2006 06:35 PM

Seems to me, that Basil should be seriously considered for the SGHOF

## **Dave Seddon**

Member

From: Leicester, England.

1000%

posted 04 November 2006 02:39 PM

## **Ian Finlay**

Member

From: Kenton, UK

posted 07 November 2006 03:16 AM

I'll add my £0.02...

Basil not only knows a huge amount about the steel guitar, but has the ability to impart this to others. He improved my right hand picking technique dramatically in about 15 minutes, and helped me get my copedant set the way I needed it for the kind of music I

want to play. He also is very knowledgeable about the mechanics of vintage steels, and gives generously of his time and experience.

Thanks Baz!

## Patrick Thirsk

Member

From: Clwydd, United Kingdom

posted 10 November 2006 09:05 AM

Yes I agree with all that's been said. Have had two of Baz's L.P.'s for years and still give them a spin now and then. Have never met or heard him play live, but hope to put that right on 1'st Dec.

I only wish I lived a bit closer to Baz, I could maybe get a few lessons!

## Jeff Au Hoy

Member

From: Honolulu, Hawai'i

posted 13 December 2002 01:10 PM

Having scrounged up every morsel of Billy Hew Len, David Keli'i, Barney Isaacs, and Jules Ah See I have been lucky to come across, I was experiencing a "dry spell" of fresh listening material (albeit that every time one listens to those recordings, there is *always* something new to pick out). Then I received some albums of Basil Henriques...

When we speak of the great Hawaiian players, BH must surely be included in that circle.

I am currently listening to "South Sea Island Magic" on the Volume II - Live at the Castaways CD. It is difficult to type...music of this sort cannot be listened to passively.

In a way, it is a travesty to describe artists in terms of other artists... so I will apologize for doing so here... but I am having difficulty describing just how great this stuff is without establishing a frame of reference. Basil is

...the throbbing chords of Billy Hew Len...

...the crying melodies of David Keli'i (listen to the single-note solo on South Sea Island Magic! WOW!!!)...

...the gorgeous tone and harmonic complexity of Jules Ah See...

And I'm serious about that South Sea Island Magic number...they talk about the stuff that makes old Hawaiians cry...

I should also add that Basil Henriques is a notch above with respect to the fact that he has the awesome versatility that many Hawaiian players never had. When he plays country-western, he *plays country-western*...he doesn't sound like a Hawaiian player trying to play country-western. Likewise, when he plays Hawaiian, he *plays Hawaiian*...he doesn't sound like a country western player trying to play Hawaiian. And his jazzy renditions of songs from the "Great American Songbook" are simply wonderful. Some guys can get great tone out of their steel, but tasteful notes and phrasing are hard to come by. A lot of Hawaiian players let the structure of the tuning dictate what

they played...Basil easily breaks away from this. These Castaways albums hit the spot.

This is just plain GREAT MUSIC.

Well, I suppose a kid should not be engaging in so much critique of a veteran steeler...so I'll end it here and just say that these albums of the Waikiki Islanders have gotten me considerably excited.

Please don't dismiss this music because it involves some pedals and hip rhythms. Here's the website: [www.waikiki-islanders.com](http://www.waikiki-islanders.com)

The one thing I am left wishing for is that Basil had come to Hawai'i years ago...steel guitar in the islands would be *so* much better off!

### **Page Wood**

Member

From: Los Angeles

posted 13 December 2002 02:18 PM

I too am a big fan- but these albums are apparently out of print, and I can't find any info on the site to order cd's, so I've just been listening to the sound clips. I e-mailed for more info months ago, but never got a response- I know he's a forum member, maybe he'll chime in. Basil?...hello..?

### **Andy Volk**

Member

From: Boston, MA

posted 16 December 2002 04:23 PM

Bas is indeed a great steel player everybody. His Castaway CDs truly offer a chance to hear a player who swings, has great feel and intonation and is own man. They also offer an increasingly rare commodity - Frank Kahili, a singer who sings with swing and a feeling of relaxation. Perry Como had this characteristic in a lame way. Bing Crosby Freddie Taylor and Frank had it in the hippest way. It's a lost art.

### **Al Terhune**

Member

From: Newcastle, WA

posted 18 December 2002 08:23 PM

Bas rules. He was gracious enough to send me his "solo" CD a couple of years ago, along with a CD he produced of a female singer. My much-beloved opinion: His guitar playing is the epitome of finesse. I think his technique would be the perfect example of how to use a volume pedal whilst conducting the pedal steel guitar. Jeff the Hawaiian really summed up Bas's playing styles the best. I refer to his original post.

Bas, I know on St. Patrick's Day everybody (I'll bet even Jeff) claims they're part Irish, but you're not only the real thing, but a man of the world. Hats off to you, my friend.

## **Colin Keyworth**

Member

From: Derbyshire, England

posted 19 December 2002 12:46 PM

Basil Henriques is a fantastic man, not only is he an amazing teacher but he is a lovely man. I am lucky enough to be able to have lessons with Basil & his knack of being able to explain how & why is brilliant. I'm still practicing Bas

## **Albert Taylor**

New Member

From: Northern Ireland

posted 02 November 2006 05:24 AM

I first met Basil in 1976 . He taught me pedal steel guitar . The man is a sheer genius with a beautiful personality . He is a tune smith right to his fingertips . One day I went for my lesson he was writing out a music score for the Northern Ireland youth orchestra . That's how versatile the man is . I would walk 20 miles just to hear him playing one tune. His inauguration into the steel guitar hall of fame in my opinion is long overdue and hopefully it will come soon . I will be sitting on the front row .

## **Jim Sliff**

Member

From: Hermosa Beach California, USA

posted 02 November 2006 05:51 AM

Baz is a good friend that I've never met! His talent is unbounded, and I love his dry sense of humor. I got him some repair parts for a Fender a while back, and he paid for them...but I would have done it for free because he's simply a nice guy. He's also gotten me interested a bit in Hawaiian Steel, which has certain family and cultural ties that mean quite a bit to parts of my family - native Hawaiian on my mother's side. I can't play uke anymore at Hawaiian festivals because of injury, but with Baz's inspiration I'm in fledgling mode on Hawaiian steel.

Thanks Baz.

## **Dave Boothroyd**

Member

From: The Malvern Hills

posted 02 November 2006 08:22 AM

I have met him and you can rest assured that he really is as nice as he seems from his postings. He does have a mischievous sense of humour though, so if you suspect he is winding you up, he just might be!

Two things missing from his bio though- he has recorded music tracks using the Beatles as his backing band! (beat that!)

And he's even more talented than you say, with the enthusiasm of a bouncy teenager!  
Cheers Baz

## **Alan F. Brookes**

Member

From: Brummy living in California, USA

posted 02 November 2006 05:46 PM

After hearing a few of his performances on YouTube I bought all of his CDs, and can tell you that he is one of the greatest entertainers out there. In an earlier topic I recommended that he be nominated for the Steel Guitar Hall of Fame and I'm working on getting that done.

Ironically, Basil and I used to live within walking distance of each other in Birmingham, but I only met him through the Forum from 5,000 miles away in California. The Forum really is a marvellous facility.

## **Petr Vitous**

Member

From: Czech Republic

posted 04 November 2006 02:18 AM

Basil nominated for The Hall of Kindness!

By email he gave me a lots of informations bout the Irish music scene I searched for a long time.

Thank you Bas, very helpful.

By the way, the steel work on Philomena Begley recordings is one of the best I ever heard. Proud to call you a friend.

## **Les Anderson**

From:  
Rossland, BC

Posted 6 Jul 2007 2:37 pm

Anyone who has enough talent to play "Swedish Rhapsody" on a steel guitar the way he does gets my vote for a hall of fame member.

