

Unexpected and Unplanned Return

One morning nearly five decades after walking off the Ryman Auditorium stage, I was piddling at the computer [not my cup of tea whatsoever] curiously trying to determine why I have never received a penny of royalties from my recordings or the songs I wrote. Apparently, I was looking perplexed when John happened by and saw what I was doing so he asked 'why' ... after all, we rarely spoke of my singing career. That led to him saying, "you know, you still have fans." I scoffed at the notion saying, "it's been nearly 50 years, no one knows who June Webb is." "Really", said John, "we'll see about that". That conversation was soon forgotten ... that is, until about a week or so later when I saw John pounding away at the computer keys. I looked over his shoulder and lo and behold, John had quietly learned how to create a website and there it was, the ***Hey, it's ... June Webb!*** homepage. I was surprised ... but still not convinced there was anyone out there who remembered me ... frankly, I felt John was wasting his time. Well, nine calendar-years later I guess he was correct; via the site I've had the pleasure of meeting far more of you wonderful folks than I could have ever imagined. And to add to the joy I have met some of you in person when doing shows. Since that 2010 launch we have focused quite a bit on what I have done since the return so I will not belabor the point. What I will do, however, is recap for those who have joined us late.

>> Soon after the site went up there were droves of folks visiting. The overwhelming majority of them said two things: 1. 'Great to have you back, Miss June' or something similar to that and 2. 'You don't have any CDs'. To the first point I say this; you made me so good and so appreciated ... thank you! To the second point; oops, you were right. I asked John, "is there anything we can we do about that?" 'Not really", he said, "you didn't have any albums so we have nothing to convert." Sensing my disappointment that after all these years of fans being loyal I had nothing to offer them, John quickly added, "let me see what I can do." Much to my shock, within a week he had pulled out all of my old 45s, somehow got them on his computer [John technical note: connected an Audio-Technica USB Turntable to my ASUS Laptop Computer], and removed each and every tick and scratch to make the clearest copy possible. He had then created a CD, artwork and all. Sony, who owns the rights to my two former labels [RCA and Hickory], put up a huge roadblock but John somehow got around that too ... ***June Webb then... with a hint of now!*** was born! **[photo of 45s]**

>> That CD release sparked a number of years of unexpected and unplanned country music activities including, but not limited to: an invite to be inducted into *the Old Time Country Music Hall of Fame* from the National Traditional Country Music Association

[NTCMA] ... I was honored to accept >> a number of shows here in Florida and across the Midwest > being honored with a *Lifetime Achievement* award from the NTCMA ... again, very honored >> several radio interviews here and abroad >> my music being played worldwide ... and so on. **[make photo of awards]**

>> Let me stop here for a second to give credit where credit is due. We jumped from being away from country music for years to all of a sudden I'm doing live music and recording again. The key missing ingredient here is the fact I had not sung in years, especially country, which is much more difficult than other genres such as jazz. To that end, I had to practice before I even murmured a note. That proved to be a huge obstacle here in Sarasota where country music basically doesn't exist. Hmmm, where was I going to practice? At home? In a Villa in a small quiet gated community that is not a good option other than me doing a little something with my guitar only. Before I'd even think about performing live or recording I'd want to brush up on my guitar playing and singing. In addition, there were no country music musicians here per se', especially ones familiar with traditional country. Fortunately, through an extensive search and a little luck thrown in John was able to round up a handful of musicians ... though only one knew my type of music [but were all willing to give it a shot]. I must point out that we had no equipment either so each of the guys rounded up what they could. Later that week we all met at a small country church outside Plant City, Florida; about 80 miles from here. After a little milling around, we introduced ourselves to each other: "Hi, I'm **June**" ... "I'm **Lenard** [Lenny], I play Bass" ... "I'm **George**, I play lead guitar" ... "I'm **Gene**, I play harmonica" ... and then a barreling voice said, "I'm **Savell** ... I'm the pastor here and I play steel guitar, or at least I'm learning it". Everyone quickly chipped in setting up the collected equipment. Once we were ready to go I quickly learned these guys by and large did not have any idea about the music they were about to play. We worked for hours and to their credit they really came around; I was proud of them ... and thankful for their help for it seemed by the end of the night I was close to being June Webb again, [June's chuckling]. As an aside, Lenny offered the use of his home recording room to further practice. In honor of these fine and thoughtful gentlemen I want to share a couple of the practice songs on video to demonstrate how well they came together that night. Mind you, this is only practice to strengthen my voice from such a long absence so do not set your listening bar too high [June's giggling here]. Here are the two samples from that first session: ***Blue Eyes Crying In The Rain*** [1:58 sample] and ***Singing The Blues*** [1:04 sample]. Three days later I continued to strength my voice at new friend Lenny's Plant City home ... ***We Could*** is one sample and then ***No***

One Will Ever Know is an sample. I felt *No One Will Ever Know* was close to where I needed to be so after a couple of more sessions I was ready for whatever music event would come up.

>> **Early on we began getting** requests for me to do some new traditional country music. We felt being in Sarasota, Florida, where country music, much less traditional country music, is basically nonexistent [lately some of the newer stuff has surfaced here] we could not fulfill that request. However, the din of that request by loyal fans got louder and louder so we decided to somehow make it happen. Fortunately, a fan and now dear friend in Minnesota had a music recording studio [Jim Reynold's Custom Recording Studio] and offered to take on the project. After a lot of preparation, we made the 4,000-mile roundtrip to record the CD. Jim had put together a great bunch of guys to back June so it was a fun though whirlwind experience.

Once we reviewed the original Minnesota take we decided we needed to go back into the studio to rework some of the stuff, which is quite normal in my business. Since Minnesota is so far from us, John found a local rock-oriented studio [specifically the audio engineer Bud Snyder] that was willing to take on this country project as a favor to me. Why would a stranger, much less a rocker, want to do me a favor? When John initially called him, he had out and out rejected the project until he heard my name. As it turns out he was at one time the sound man for the Allman Brothers Band and while in Nashville recording one of their albums he had heard of June Webb. Back on point, it took well over a year but finally in late 2015 / early 2016 ***Reminiscing with Miss June Webb*** was released. The CD became ***Traditional Country Music CD of the Year in 2016***.

>> On the site, Miss June's Jukebox has been a big hit.

>> The last 'official' activity prior to deciding to semi-retire was receiving the aforementioned CD of the Year award. The ceremony took place in a beautiful Midwest town, Fremont, Nebraska. Following the ceremony, I was honored to do a show for the wonderful, and I mean wonderful, folks there. **[Include a couple of videos]**

>> The last 'official' activity prior to deciding to semi-retire was receiving the aforementioned CD of the Year award. The ceremony took place in a beautiful Midwest town, Fremont, Nebraska. Following the ceremony, I was honored to do a show for the wonderful, and I mean wonderful, folks there. At first it was one of the most frightening music experiences I've ever had. Just minutes before I was to go on for some reason there was no band to back me up. John and Bob Everhart ran around trying to come up with some musicians from the crowd ... shortly thereafter a nice

gentleman came in the tune-up area and offer his services ... we quickly talked about my style and such. When they announced my name I was truly alarmed ... I thought, 'is there going to be any musicians other than the one guitarist on the stage when I arrive.' Fortunate there was. Truth is these guys did not know my music so I wasn't able to perform the show I had created for this special event. Instead, I went with songs I felt they could pick up quickly. In fact, you will note that I oftentimes lean sideways so they can see the notes I'm strumming. Considering the situation, these guys did a nice job. Note: you will note that at times the sound appears a tad odd. That's because when I was being interviewed they put an extra microphone on stage. When the show started they forgot to remove it so it distorted the sound a tad since John was recording directly in line with the two mics. Here are a couple of videos from that final show ... *Afraid* and *I Wonder Where You Are Tonight*; hope you enjoy them as much as I did performing them.