



Hadley Hockensmith Lead Guitarist for Neil Diamond's Tour Band

I first discovered our multi-talented cousin Hadley Hockensmith back in 1996 and related his talent to you in our newsletter (Vol 2 No 3). At that time, I didn't know exactly how we were related to Hadley and asked for your help.

Cousin Faye Johnson of Frankfort, Kentucky, quickly informed me that Hadley Sherrill Hockensmith, born 15 Nov 1949 at Ft. McPherson, GA., is the son of Albert William, s/o Thomas Jefferson, s/o John Henry, s/o Henry Jr., s/o Henry Hockensmith, s/o Jacob, s/o Konrad. I related this lineage in Vol 2 No 4.

In this issue of our Family Newsletter, I'd like to bring you up-to-date regarding Hadley's career and give you a better knowledge of his branch of our family.

The following is found at singer Neil Diamond's "diamondville" website:

In the proud tradition of baseball's utility infielders, Hadley is noted for his ability to fill in at any position, although he is best when sitting at the dinner table. Hadley is truly multi-talented, playing every instrument known to man, as well as seven which have yet to be invented. Asked to name a favorite, he demurs: "If I had my pick, I'd play guitar."

Hadley, just like Coca Cola, was born in Atlanta. He was the son of self-taught musicians and his family soon moved on, not to Hackensack (as you might logically expect) but to Oklahoma City, where he grew up strumming his father's guitar.

He began composing at the age of 13. By 14 he was working in blues clubs, including The Embers, The Blue Onion and after hours at the After Hours in Edmond. That gig was from 2-6:30 am--even then the middle of his day.

[photograph of Hadley Hockensmith]

HADLEY HOCKENSMITH

When he played in Lawton the vice squad was busting underage folks in bars, and 15-year-old Hadley was in an organ trio, which just couldn't do without guitar. So he went up and played two full sets with his ear stuck through the ceiling to hear the rest of the band, until the fuzz had gone home.

Hadley was the winner of the Battle of the Blues Guitars in Oklahoma City, but his big break came when The Righteous Brothers

came to town on the heels of their big hit "You've Lost That Loving Feeling." They needed a guitarist for their Oklahoma City stint and Hadley, then only 15, came highly recommended.

In 1978 he headed for Los Angeles and since has recorded and/or performed live with the likes of Andre Crouch, David Gates and Bread, America, Michael McDonald, Jeff Beck, Gordon Lightfoot, Ray Charles, Johnny Rivers, Glen Campbell and, of course, our vocalist, Neil Diamond.

He married his wife Deby in 1975. He had met her long ago in Oklahoma City, when she was a fan of his Saturday night band and somehow found Hadley irresistible.

He began his Diamondville tenure by subbing for Richard Bennett. Then he subbed for Doug when that rascal was sidelined by illness. Eventually he assumed Richard's position (hunched over, with a guitar in his hand) when Mr. Bennett moved on to other pursuits down Nashville way.

Hadley recalls, perhaps, his fondest memory of working with Neil --"That first show I did on September 16, 1982 at the Philadelphia Spectrum was pretty traumatic. It was much different than just running through the show. But Neil called me in after the show and said that I had done a terrific job. Of course, it made me feel great."

In his spare time, from 1981 through 1988 Hadley was a member and a contributing composer of a jazz fusion, the hard-to-pronounce Koinonia, with whom he recorded three albums. Later, his "new age" solo guitar album, HEARTSONGS, was on the top 10 instrumental airplay list in the United States, Canada and Europe.

Hadley's evil twin is ZMOHT--the Zen Master of Hang Time, who has authored an occasional screed in the PBI. Hadley and Deby now live in Irvine, California.

[photograph of Neil Diamond Road Band]

**Neil Diamond Road Band
(Hadley is right behind Neil Diamond)**

**Hadley Hockensmith
"Overblast"
An interview with Hadley
Hockensmith (guitar)**

By "Dutch Friends of Neil Diamond" which occurred July 2002

[One day Hadley was in Apeldoorn, Netherlands, with the band Koinonia and after one of their performances they all got onto their hotel lift, but it wouldn't go - instead, they heard a very loud bell and a yellow sign began flashing "overblast". All of them were confused, what's happening, what does "overblast" mean? Of course, all of us Dutch people will understand it really said "overbelast", meaning "overload". And there were only 6 people in that lift, so somebody weighed too much!! But we can tell you it wasn't Hadley!]

We agree to meet Hadley in his hotel in London at 12 noon. When we arrive, he's already waiting for us. He leads us through many doors and rooms until we find a large quiet room. It looks like a room in a castle, with much white and gold paint, it has an antique look. It's totally empty but for two couches and a bunch of stacked up chairs. He invites us to go sit on the couch. He then takes one of the chairs and places it in

front of the couch, which makes it look like he's on trial. But we solve that by taking another chair and making sort of a circle.

He says: "Last night was definitely a record as far as the number of kisses that Neil gave, no other night even comes close."

He was talking about the show of the 27th and we can only agree. So many people came up to the stage, so many got kisses.

Hadley was born on November 15, 1949 and likes to make his own guitar picks. He is an around the house "handyman" and he also likes to modify his amps, guitars and effects. But this is about what we know of him. So we ask him to tell us a little bit about himself, where he was born, where he grew up.

"I was born in Atlanta, Georgia, the deep south. However my father was in the Air Force, which at the time meant that he would get re-stationed at different parts in the US. We moved from Atlanta, when I was only 6 months old, to Anchorage Alaska for a couple of years, and then Dayton, Ohio. My parents are from Frankfort, Kentucky, so they're also kind of southern natured, and pretty slow paced. Ended up in Oklahoma City, where almost all of my schooling years were, and that's where I really got my foundational musical background. I started playing Blues guitar when I was fourteen and became very serious about it. And to this day I think it's probably my favorite guitar style.

I don't get to play blues much in this show, but it influences almost everything I play. And it's amazing, living in California, where there are so many musicians, I can hardly find a place to play. One time, I said: 'I need to find a place to play regularly', 'cause Neil was off for a about a year. "I really want to play live, I really want to play for people.' I went around to different clubs and said, 'I'm guitar player with Neil Diamond, and also I've done a lot of studio work in LA. and I'd love to just sit in with your band - I'm quick, I'll catch on with your music and I'll make it sound good.' And I couldn't

even find a band that would let me play. I don't know if there was like a little bit of jealousy with the other guitar player or what."

He continues: "So I ended up in Oklahoma City and I started doing a lot of recording sessions. There are quite a few recording studios in Oklahoma City, and that's where I got my experience. I did that about 4 years and then I met Deby and we got married (1975). I was 25 at the time. Shortly after that we moved to LA because I had a bunch of friends from Oklahoma City that had become producers for records, mainly contemporary Christian rock stuff, and they said: 'well Hadley, if you move out, we can guarantee you a lot of work.' "

So you went

"So we moved, and I immediately started working. I already had my studio experience, so it was great. I guess I did that about 8 years, when I started working with Ron Tutt a lot. He was also playing on a lot of these sessions. One day he told me: 'Hadley, it looks like we're gonna need to replace a guitar player in Neil's group - would you be interested?' "

Ah, so that's how you ended up in Neil's band?

"That's how it happened. Ron and I were working on a lot of sessions together and we hit it off well, we'd go and have lunch together. Ron's a great musician - I love to talk to him about music. So that's how it happened."

Of course, you knew Neil when you joined his band, or at least his music?

"No, I had only heard some songs on the radio. Or let's put it this way, I learned how to play by ear. Never learned to read music. I have what they call a quick ear. I can hear something on the radio and just know how to play it."

That's a real talent

"It's a gift from God. It saves me a lot of time. So the songs that I had heard of Neil's, such as 'Solitary Man' and 'I Am I Said', you know, the biggest hits, I basically knew those by ear. But

all the rest of the stuff, like 'I'm Glad You're Here With Me Tonight', I had no idea. Back then; he was doing a three-hour show. So it was a huge memory chunk when I took on the show, because I didn't have much time and they said, 'Memorize this three hour show'. And that not only means the parts, but which guitar to grab, to get the correct placement of the capo, (that clamp-like thing that I put on my guitar for certain chordal voicings), and of course my foot pedals, to make sure the right sounds are selected. So yeah, that was a huge chunk."

How long did you have to practice before you could start playing in the band?

'Um.... I think I had about a week.' (laughter)
"Yeah, that was one long week."

I bet you didn't get much sleep then.

"No. I would say I spent 10 hours a day in front of a ghetto blaster - you know, a big cassette recorder, and I went over and over and over all the songs."

The first time you joined the tour was in 86 when you replaced Doug Rhone, wasn't it?

"Wrong! - that was not the first tour I did, the first one was '82, and I was basically taking the place of Richard Bennett, who, as you know, eventually left and moved to Nashville. Doug later had a sickness and that one tour I replaced Doug. And that was another nightmare! I had finally learned the three hour show for lead guitar, now I have to learn a whole new three hours worth of guitar parts to replace Doug."

Sounds like a lot of stress

"But that's why I'm making more money than the rest!" This makes us all laugh.

What did you think of Neil's music? You say Blues is your favorite. Neil did write some music that maybe sounds a bit Blues-like.

"Yeah, we don't do a lot of it in the show, but yeah, you're right. He has written some stuff that's kinda bluesy. But the bottom line is, I just like good music. Blues happens to be my favorite for guitar because it's very intense, it's very soulful. But I like all kinds of music when it's done well. And to me Neil's music is unique. That's one thing I really like about Neil: he can sing two words and you know it is Neil Diamond. And his song writing covers really a lot of areas. It's not just one narrow box that he writes in. And, I'll tell you what, the first live concert I did with Neil (that may have been at the Centrum at Philadelphia I'm not sure) I was blown away. Because at rehearsals we don't have the big PA, it's mainly just the small monitors so we can hear ourselves on stage. But when Neil came out and started singing, the sound was huge. The sound of his voice is huge anyway. I was severely impressed. 'Man I can't believe I'm part of this.' So I loved it". He laughs.

[photograph of Hadley Hockensmith]

How do you prepare yourself for a concert these days, do you have special things you do every night?

"Yeah, I'm kind of different in that regard. Most of the band will eat as soon as we get done with the sound check so their food can digest. And then they'll go back to the band room and

either relax, or some guys like Tom and Reinie might be working with their computers. I stay up on stage because that's my only chance to practice whatever I want to practice that day, until they actually make me leave. They'll tell me, 'The doors are gonna open, you've got to get off the stage.' And then I eat rather quickly and then take a walk, if I have time. As you recall, once or twice I've run into you guys walking around, just before the show - sometimes with my little cigar. But I love the solitude, I feel like I need a little time alone before a show - it does something good for my head. And I enjoy the fresh air, because lets face it, the air is not always so fresh in the arenas that we play.

Isn't it hard to be away from home for such a long time during a tour?

"It's hardest of course when my wife Deby can't come out. We don't have any children at this point, so it's just Deby and me. And like I tell the band, can you imagine living with me, and then suddenly having to get by without me! (laughter)

No, Deby and I are very close, so when we're apart it's tough, but it's probably harder on her, because I'm out here in this huge production and they say men they get a lot of their self worth from their job, where as she's just home alone. Although she's very involved in our church, it gets a bit lonely for her. So it's definitely better when she comes out to be with me in the middle of the tour. But for this tour, that just didn't work out.'

How does a day look for a band member when you're on tour?

"A typical day?" **Yes**

"Well, until the bus call, it's largely at our discretion. For instance for Tom, it looks like 'Let's go find a great restaurant.' (laughter) For Linda, it's 'Let's find a Starbucks.' For me, it's usually, 'I want to go out and see the city, but I also want to get some good exercise.' I don't want to become a slob on the road, so I'm usually looking for a place I can jog or play

tennis. Doug and I play tennis a lot as well as Donna Tutt, she's a good tennis player. In fact, we would've been playing at the courts here in Hyde Park, but they were totally booked up..."

And it's very busy here in London, all tourists

"Yeah, and of course it depends on how late we stayed up the night before. That's the disadvantage of staying up late. And that's why I don't stay up as late as I used to, because half the day is gone before you get out of bed."

What's it like to work with Neil, generally speaking?

"I relate to Neil pretty much, because he also likes some quiet time alone. I think he likes it very peaceful before a concert. I consider Neil a generous person. When I first started working with him and played the first show, it was nerve-wracking. I had so much to think about that I couldn't even enjoy the music. 'What's the next song? - do I have to start it? - I've got to be thinking of the next tempo.' Now, I can do that easily. And I think Neil sensed that I was a little uptight that first night, so he called me after the show and said: 'Hadley, you really did a great show.' I just thought, 'you know, most guys wouldn't think to do that because they're so preoccupied with their own performance.' And he's very nice to the band wives. Deby always feels welcome. And of course, the thing I love is, he's such a pro. Most musicians grow up playing in night clubs, and sometimes you get up there, and there's only 4 or 5 people in the club, and maybe your singer isn't very charismatic, and people just ignore you basically. But with Neil, he's such a commanding presence, I know that every show the audience is going to be with us. I mean each show is a little different, but I never even have to worry about the audience connection. Neil is going to win the audience over - all I have to think about is playing my parts well and I love it. And the fact that the audience is always huge is icing on the cake."

He's hardly on the radio, but everybody goes to his shows, it's amazing.

"It's because he gives so much in every show. After all this time, it's never gotten old for me. Getting up in front of all those people is great. Especially when I look over to the sides (you know I've got a good view of the sides, but not so good out front because of Linda and Julia in front of me). Maybe I see a little girl, like 6 or 7, eyes wide open, having a great time - maybe her mother is lifting her up above the crowd. I love that."

Referring to Neil singing his lyrics wrong on stage sometimes, we say to him: And then of course, Neil makes a mistake during the show.....

"Well, he never makes a mistake." (laughter) Haven't you heard of the Diamond principle? Tell us about it.

"What it means is, whatever Neil does is right. It's up to the band to make it sound right. But we joke about it a lot, and call it the Diamond principle. And the band is very good at it. Sometimes things happen during the show, because Neil can't hear us as well as he would like and we can't hear him. And it gets "off" for a moment, so we immediately adapt to bring it back together and to the section of the song where it's supposed to be."

You must be a pretty good band

"Well, either that or we have managed to fool a lot of people!"

**That's good too! (Hadley laughs)
Do you ever make a mistake playing? Not counting the last one, when you ...**

"...oh, when I almost blew up the whole sound system? Now that was a technical mistake that had nothing to do with music.

I don't know if you can see it, we have these big mixers behind us that we pull out to access when needed. You've probably seen Linda turn around and pull hers out to adjust it. And there are all kinds of micro-switches in the back that

you can't see. Well, I could not hear what I was playing, so I reached back to the knob I needed to turn, way in the back. Unfortunately, there are switches all around this knob, so when I turned the knob, I barely touched one of these switches which made my sound level go 40 db louder, which is like 10 times louder than what it should be. I had no idea I had hit the switch. My first entrance was on 'Yes I will' playing a very sensitive harmonic. We now refer to it as the "Harmonic of Death, because it almost blew out the whole sound system." (laughter)

(You can read about this 'event' in the tour report that you can find in the previous newsletter – Ed.)

What do you think of this new stage? For you it must be less nice than the round stage. You don't have that much contact with the audience.

"Unfortunately, that's true. Looking straight ahead, I don't have a very good view of those seated on the floor. I have a decent view of the sides and sometimes the back of the auditorium, but I can't often clearly see people's faces. And I tend to derive energy from seeing faces and expressions."

You're sometimes hard to see for us, we have to wait until Linda moves, or Julia moves.

"I know. I really don't know why the riser Reinie and I are on isn't high enough so that we can see and be seen."

Why do they use this end stage, why not the round stage?

"Because many venues were not designed to accommodate a center stage, especially in the States, and Neil just felt like he could play more venues using the end stage."

Hadley Hockensmith is guitarist in the Neil Diamond band. This is part 2 of the interview we

did with him on July 28, 2002 London England, during Neil Diamond's Three Chord Opera Tour.

When Neil is not touring, what do you do? Do you try to play other things, other bands?

"Yes, I love writing music. I still write a lot of songs, I write them for myself for future CDs. Future CDs... I won't go into that, but yeah, hopefully there will be a lot of original music coming out in the future.'

A new CD?

'Yes. Hopefully more than one. I love songwriting. I actually like it more than guitar playing. And I also play bass - I don't know if you knew that, but I play bass almost as well as I do guitar."

But you don't read musical notes, so you can't write notes either.

"When I say write, compose, create, yes. I actually have a computer music program that helps me out. Have you ever noticed on my electric guitar there's a black box towards the back of it, kind of a funny looking thing. Check it out tonight. That's where I interface the guitar with the computer and synthesizer. And that's how I record my music onto the computer. And the program also draws the notes out on a music staff, even though I have no idea how to read it! I also experiment a lot. My guitar is highly modified. I don't know if you can see all those shiny little chrome switches all over it (20), but all that is stuff that I've added. And I modify a lot of my effects too, because I want them to sound how I need them to sound, not the way they sound from the factory. Probably more than you wanted to know, but that's what I do."

About your CDs, are they for sale, suppose people want to order them?

"The deal with my CD 'Heartsongs' is that originally it came out on an instrumental music label called "Meadowlark". The problem is, the big conglomerate owners of "Meadowlark" and

some other labels, decided that they didn't want to continue the Meadowlark label, so they discontinued it. So all these albums were like dead in a way for people to purchase them. Another company called 'LaserLight', bought the rights to it. So if anyone wants to look for or to order 'Heartsongs', I would say go to a big record store, like in the States we have Tower records. That's a big one, which means they can order a lot of harder to find CDs. (end of paragraph)

Do you have a website of your own?

"No, not at this point. If and when the next CD comes out I will definitely have a web site."

You told us you like to go to Europe, all over Europe. What's so attractive about Europe?

"Well, I really love food, I love great coffee, which I find in most parts of Europe. In America it's getting better, we've got Starbucks now. But it used to be that American coffee, we just called it mud. (Laughter). Drink some mud, you know, because that is kind of what it tastes like. And we used to make the coffee extremely weak. Have all of you been to the States?"

We confirm.

"You probably experienced some of the bad coffee. The first European country I was in (which I believe was Sweden), had very good coffee. I got hooked. I started drinking my coffee about three times stronger. Deby & I make it very strong at home - when we have guests, we heat up some water so they can add the hot water to it, and make it more American-tasting. But that's just one aspect. The other is I enjoy the difference in people, the way they get things done. Because some of us Americans (you know the country is big) don't ever get outside of the country. And you kind of get this mind set that there is one right way to do everything. And you come to Europe or Australia, and you see, oh, gosh, there's ten great ways to do everything. And sometimes the ways are better than what you know, and I

like learning. Plus I love to make fun of the way they talk! (laughter) I love the accents, I truly do."

We'll be laughing in a few minutes now, because we'll be teaching you a few words Dutch.

"Uh-oh. Overblast, overblast!!

We respond: that story is definitely going in the article. "Overblast" will be the title. (For this story, see part 1)

"But don't show a big fat picture of me or something. I don't want them to think that ..."

...I was overblast!!! We finished the sentence for him. (laughter)

You talked about Apeldoorn (City in the Netherlands -Ed.) to us before at previous tours, what's your connection with Apeldoorn?

"I was touring with the Christian Jazz group Koinonia, who were quite popular, actually ARE still popular. That's one future thing that might happen (when I'm not touring with Neil), is doing some more concerts with Koinonia - an Incredible group to hear live."

Are they still playing right now, without you?

"No, but we have stayed in touch. And the promoters in Europe have said they would love for us to come back and do a tour - so we may do it. But when I was touring with Koinonia, we played 2 or 3 cities in Holland, I think we did Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Apeldoorn. The way it worked out, we had a couple of days off in Apeldoorn, and so Deby and I got to walk around - great place to walk around. Beautiful farm land, and of course most people had flowers in the windows and beautiful lace curtains. It was the right time of the year, and we just loved it. There were a couple of great restaurants that we went to. I don't know, it was just kind of magical."

We start talking about canals, which cities have them, and which don't. But this gets confusing and so we won't go into that.

Let's get back to Neil's music. What is your favorite song on stage?

(A lot of thinking going on). "There are a few that come to mind, but I would say, the song that has moved me the most, in concert, every time we play it, is 'Songs of Life', from the Seagull album. In fact, it got to where I could hardly play the song without crying. This is on stage you know, and I don't cry easily, but you know.... I consider myself a fairly spiritual person, and to me that song has some deep spirituality to it, as well as a beautiful melody and form. And Neil sings it superbly. It enhances the depth of his voice, the lowness - you know the deepness. Do you remember the Christmas tour?"

We confirm loudly, because it's one of our favorite tours ever.

"Wasn't that the tour when we did 'And The Grass Won't Pay No Mind'?' **Yes!**

That was great. Neil wrote "And The Grass Won't Pay No Mind"? **Yes, he did.**

"What is that other song? ... I really like the songs 'Angel Above My Head' and 'The Story Of My Life' (we agree). I love the up stuff, you know, Cracklin' Rosie, all that stuff. But really my favorite Neil material is the more melancholy, the more serious ballads. 'Be' and 'Lonely Looking Sky' are also among my favorites."

That's about hearing songs, but what is your favorite song to play? There's a little silence, he thinks. And we help him: "The ones where he has a solo!"

He laughs and says: "There you go!!"

"I'll tell you a song I used to love to play was 'The Last Picasso' - not just because the band had a chance to 'show off', but because the song was so unique and interesting.

Remember when we had the band intro's playing Last Picasso? That was fun."

There must also be a song you don't like.

"Oh gosh, this is dangerous territory. Please understand, none of the songs we've performed live are "unworthy" or sub-par in any way, it's simply my personal taste. I've never totally enjoyed playing Song Sung Blue - likewise 'Headed for the future'. I'm sure I'm going to offend some fans with those selections."

We don't enjoy the movie album very much, although it's a good album, and we are aware that there are also fans who love it, but to us it's just not Neil.

"It's Neil's voice, but not his writing. I thought those songs sounded better live than they did on the album, personally. I enjoyed playing that music simply because I got to use my guitar synthesizer, which meant I could play the oboe. Did you know that Doug and I were both playing symphonic instruments on those songs? I played cello, I played oboe, I played French horn, harp, clarinet and flute. I think that French horn was my favorite. All this through the guitar-controlled sampler. I mean, you actually heard the real instruments because what we use are digital recordings on memory chips of the real instruments, and by me playing the guitar, it triggers those sounds."

We were all fooled! Not about Neil now: do you have favorite singers, or actors, or writers? Somebody you admire?

"Yeah. I really like Burt Bacharach's early writing a lot, which is one reason I like 'Heartlight' so much. I've heard that it's not so popular with the fans but I truly enjoy playing that song. As far as groups, I used to love the Police. I have a lot of respect for Sting as a writer/composer/bassist.

Another group I liked a lot was Level 42, which is an English group also. And have you heard

of a group called. 'The Fixx'?" "No" "F-I-X-X. Another English group, and they were great. As far as the new breed of American singers, the ones who do all the vocal gymnastics, I don't like that, like Mariah Cary and others. It's just too much, and too little substance."

Favorite movies or movie stars?

"I hardly go to movies, I don't like Hollywood in general. Part of that is just that I don't think they make very good quality movies anymore, and the other part is, I'm usually offended by the content - it's usually dark and anything but uplifting. The last good movie I saw... I do like Woody Allen. His movies are usually very funny, but there's also a lot of depth in there, a lot of insight into the human condition. I liked 'Raiders of the Lost Ark, it has a good plot, good production as well as excellent effects (for the time!).

[photograph of Hadley Hockensmith]

Something I shouldn't ask maybe, but I will anyway. Is it possible to tell a little funny story about things that happen in the band, including Neil? Something funny?

"I think I can tell you one story without offending anybody. You may know Neil sometimes smokes cigars. Please stop me if I've told you this before, but this was a few years ago, when the cigar craze in the band was pretty strong. It's about 30 minutes before show time. Neil is already dressed, and comes to the Voo Doo Too café, which is our little coffee hut that we take on the road with us. They also were selling cigars at the time, and I happen to stop by to get some coffee while Neil is there, and he says: "Hey Had, I'd really like to puff on a cigar right now, but I don't have my billfold, you know, there are no pockets in these pants... could you spot me some money to buy a cigar?" I just looked at him and said, 'What have you ever done for me?' (laughter) He seemed to like that, he told the whole band about it before the show."

Please feel free to tell more.

"Let's see, there is more, the question is, can I remember it right now."

We'll let you think.

"Some stories shouldn't be repeated." (laughter) "Let's see. Oh: we were recording at Neil's studio, Arch Angel, working on a new album, and we're getting close to the end of it. We had recorded the tracks, which means the whole band was there. And then after that we proceed to what we call overdubs. Which means we add extra guitar or synthesizer parts to make things sound complete. So we were about to that point, and Sam, Neil and I were in the control room together. Sam says: 'Hadley, we're gonna need to schedule some time for you to do some overdubs, but time is running short, and I don't think we can have you overdub on all the songs that we would like.' And I just looked at Neil and said, 'Well, just

pick the songs that you would like to get maximum airplay, and I'll just work my magic on them.' (which was a joke). 'If you want a hit, okay, I'll play on that one.' (laughter)

We saw you backstage yesterday. (That was the night C&M went backstage)

"Oh yeah" Enthusiastically: 'That was great.'

We were amazed to see all the trucks inside.

"This place (Earls'Court - Ed.) is huge. But it's kind of a strange setup, because our rooms are actually giant trailers, our dressing rooms and stuff. But we love it, because there's lots of wide open space. You know, we got all this room in the middle where we can go and walk around."

It looked great there, it looked like you were having a picnic.

"Yeah! It is great, yeah. But trust me, they're not all like that. Sometimes we're jammed into a very small room, and at all-sports arenas this is usually the same room that all the sweaty guys come into after they've done their sports and stuff (Where's the Incense?)."

Nottingham was very different. Carla once called it 'Nothingham' by mistake, in stead of 'Nottingham'. We thought it was funny and it stayed with us: 'Nothing in Nothingham'.

Hadley laughs. "That's good, Tom (Hensley) would like that. But, we liked Nottingham. Of course we didn't have much of a chance to see it, because we arrived shortly before the sound check. Right after the sound check, some of us went down through the city to go to the world's oldest pub, or rather the oldest pub in England."

"Jerusalem"

"Yeah. And on the way we saw all these restaurants and interesting looking shops, and

we were bummed that we didn't get to spend the night there and check it out - we had to leave for Sheffield immediately after the concert."

We did see some of you walking with this green Robin Hood hat. Did you buy one?

Actually, they were given to us by the promoters at the arena. In fact during the sound check we all had on the Robin Hood hats.

If Neil stops touring, will you be out of a job? What will you do?

"Technically, I've invested a lot of my career into Neil, obviously. But I can always do studio work, which I stopped doing because I prefer playing for live audiences. But I can always go back to doing that. My own solo records - I want to do that anyway, and if Neil ever stops, that will certainly be the kick in the pants I need to crank out some product. There are a number of things I could do... I'm good with electronics and could do custom mods for all the picky musicians in LA. In fact I've done some of that in the past. You make good money doing this, and I could also teach guitar. I've got a number of people who have asked me if I would give them lessons. I keep all their names, just in case," he says laughing.

This leads me up to Vince, because he was working on a solo career in case Neil stops. When he died, how did that feel for you? What was your reaction?

"I was shocked, I was just totally shocked. Because for one thing, I was not aware of his condition until just shortly before he died. I think people thought that he was going to get better, and so they didn't want to make a big deal of it."

Did he have some kind of illness, that just dragged along, and then suddenly became worse, or was it something sudden, that you know of?

"It was something to do with a major lung infection. And they thought he would just get over it naturally. I don't really know all the details of it, but I know by the time he was in the hospital it was too late, a lot of damage had been done to his lungs. Exactly how he died, I'm not sure."

He loved to get out and talk to the fans, have drinks with them. Just like you're doing, and we loved him for that.

"As you know, he could hold a lot more liquor than I ever could." (laughter)

[photograph of Hadley Hockensmith]

We noticed that! (again laughter)

"After my second glass of wine, I go buhrrhhh. The brain's still working, but the mouth disconnects."

But you're fun!

"Ooh. Well, I have fun! I enjoy it. As I've told you before, I enjoy being with people who aren't in the music business. You see, most of my friends at home are immersed in the music business, obviously the band members are musicians, so I like spend time with people who are quite different than those of us with artistic temperament. You do different things than I do. It's good for me, keeps me more balanced and normal. Not to imply that I am totally normal, but you know, more normal."

Is there anything you wish to tell us? Or maybe ask us? The silence that follows is

rather long, so we give him a hint: Tell us how much fun we are, or how silly we are! (laughter)

"Yeah, I would like to ask you, is it really worth it? Going through all the trouble of traveling? Or do you actually enjoy that part of it as well?"

We answered him, but won't print it here. Everybody reading this can answer it in his or her own way!

The interview comes to an end we start to close down by chit-chatting a bit, and we take a few pictures, then we say goodbye. Thank you very much Hadley, we hope you are happy with this interview, as we are. You are a very nice person, and a great guitarist. Any band in the world should be grateful if they could get you to play with them. We're glad you're in the Neil Diamond band.

Next, I want to give you some family information regarding Hadley's branch of our Family Tree. I will begin with Hadley's grandfather, Thomas Jefferson Hockensmith, who was the son of John Henry, s/o Henry Jr., s/o Henry Hockensmith, s/o Jacob Hockersmith, s/o Konrad Hackenschmidt.

First Generation

1. **Thomas "Tom" Jefferson HOCKENSMITH** was born on 29 Apr 1879 in Franklin Co., KY. He died on 17 Mar 1945 in Franklin Co., KY. Thomas married **Fannie Mae HARROD** daughter of A. H. HARROD and Lucie BARBER on 19 Oct 1911 in Franklin Co., KY. Fannie was born on 12 Dec 1896 in Franklin Co., KY. She died on 25 May 1969 in Franklin Co., KY.

They had the following children:

- 2 F i. **Ellen Elizabeth HOCKENSMITH** was born on 14 Aug 1912 in Scott Co., KY. She died on 15 Jan 2002.
- 3 F ii. **Emma Clara HOCKENSMITH** was born on 24 Jan 1914 in Franklin Co., KY. Emma married **James B. "J.B." SEBREE** .

- + 4 M iii. **Jerry Thomas HOCKENSMITH** was born on 6 Jan 1916. He died on 25 Jan 1987.
- 5 M iv. **Woodrow Wilson HOCKENSMITH** was born on 25 May 1918. He died on 6 May 1935.
- + 6 M v. **William Albert HOCKENSMITH** was born on 13 Mar 1920. He died on 23 Oct 2003.
- + 7 M vi. **Freeman Mason HOCKENSMITH** was born on 13 Mar 1922. He died on 21 Apr 1984.
- + 8 F vii. **Ruby May HOCKENSMITH** was born on 10 May 1926. She died on 14 Oct 1995.
- 9 Mviii. **Tom HOCKENSMITH** was born on 31 Aug 1928. He died on 31 Aug 1928.
- 10 Mix. **Franklin HOCKENSMITH** was born on 31 Mar 1931. He died on 31 Mar 1931.

Second Generation

4. **Jerry Thomas HOCKENSMITH** (Thomas "Tom" Jefferson) was born on 6 Jan 1916. He died on 25 Jan 1987. Jerry married **Grace DUNN** on 28 Aug 1937 in Franklin Co., KY. Grace was born on 12 Oct 1914. She died on 21 May 1979.

They had the following children:

- + 11 F i. **Geraldine HOCKENSMITH** was born on 3 May 1938.
- + 12 F ii. **Phyllis J. HOCKENSMITH** was born on 4 Jan 1943.
- + 13 M iii. **William Thomas "Tommy" HOCKENSMITH** was born on 7 Apr 1944.

6. **William Albert HOCKENSMITH** (Thomas "Tom" Jefferson) was born on 13 Mar 1920 in Franklin Co., KY. He died on 23 Oct 2003 in Midwest City, OK. William married **Jessie Overby EDWARDS** on 27 Dec 1942 in Douglas, GA. Jessie was born on 11 Jan 1924.

They had the following children:

- 14 M i. **William Albert "Skipper" HOCKENSMITH Jr.** was born on 18 Jun 1944 in Franklin Co., KY. He died on 15 Apr 1957 in Dayton, OH.

- 15 F ii. **Jo Carol HOCKENSMITH** was born on 2 Nov 1946 in Scottfield, IL. Jo married **Edward ARNOLD** .
- 16 M iii. **Hadley Sherrill HOCKENSMITH** was born on 15 Nov 1949 in Ft. McPherson, GA. Hadley married **Deborah HIXSON** in 1975.
- + 17 M iv. **Robert "Bob" Charles HOCKENSMITH** was born on 3 Apr 1960.
- + 18 F v. **Marilyn Ruth HOCKENSMITH** was born on 21 Nov 1963.

7. **Freeman Mason HOCKENSMITH** (Thomas "Tom" Jefferson) was born on 13 Mar 1922 in Franklin Co., KY. He died on 21 Apr 1984 in Franklin Co., KY. Freeman married **Mary Ann NOEL** on 29 Jul 1945. Mary was born on 20 May 1924.

They had the following children:

- + 19 F i. **Ann Noel HOCKENSMITH** was born on 23 Sep 1946.
- + 20 M ii. **John Freeman Mason "Steamboat" HOCKENSMITH** was born on 23 Sep 1947. He died on 9 Apr 1994.
- + 21 M iii. **Stephen Michael HOCKENSMITH** was born on 15 May 1949.
- 22 M iv. **David Baker HOCKENSMITH** was born on 6 Jun 1950. He died on 12 Nov 1970 in Viet Nam.
- + 23 F v. **Kathryn Lynn HOCKENSMITH** was born on 24 Jul 1951.
- + 24 F vi. **Mary Susan HOCKENSMITH** was born on 30 Apr 1953.
- + 25 F vii. **Deborah Jean HOCKENSMITH** was born on 31 Jan 1955.
- 26 Fviii. **Judith Gail HOCKENSMITH** was born on 3 Oct 1956.
- 27 M ix. **Mark Victor "Doc" HOCKENSMITH** was born on 9 Apr 1958. Mark married **Laura Lee BURCHFIELD** on 30 Oct 1982 in Franklin Co., KY. The marriage ended in divorce. Laura was born on 22 Sep 1964.
- 28 M x. **Kevin Andrew HOCKENSMITH** was born on 23 Jan 1960.
- + 29 F xi. **Nancy Renee HOCKENSMITH** was born on 14 Dec 1962.
- 30 F xii. **Theresa Denise HOCKENSMITH** was born on 1 Aug 1964.

8. **Ruby May HOCKENSMITH** (Thomas "Tom" Jefferson) was born on 10 May 1926. She died on 14 Oct 1995. Ruby married **George C. SHAW III** on 1 Mar 1947 in Franklin Co., KY.

They had the following children:

- 31 M i. **George Mike SHAW** was born on 7 Jul 1952.
- 32 M ii. **Thomas Clay SHAW** was born on 2 Nov 1954.

Third Generation

11. **Geraldine HOCKENSMITH** (Jerry Thomas, Thomas "Tom" Jefferson) was born on 3 May 1938. Geraldine married **Albert Douglas "Doug" SANDERSON** on 3 Sep 1955. Albert was born on 3 May 1937.

They had the following children:

- + 33 F i. **Sharon Daphne SANDERSON** was born on 22 Apr 1956.
- 34 F ii. **Elizabeth Ann SANDERSON** was born on 14 Jun 1958. Elizabeth married **Michael Anthony MILLS** .
- + 35 M iii. **Joseph Douglas SANDERSON** was born on 26 Mar 1962.
- + 36 F iv. **Melissa Gay SANDERSON** was born on 4 Jun 1967.

12. **Phyllis J. HOCKENSMITH** (Jerry Thomas, Thomas "Tom" Jefferson) was born on 4 Jan 1943. Phyllis married **Anthony "Tony" William WOOD** on 18 Jul 1960. Anthony was born on 2 Sep 1943.

They had the following children:

- + 37 F i. **Christie Michele WOOD** was born on 15 Dec 1961.
- + 38 F ii. **Ella Louise WOOD** was born on 18 Sep 1965.
- 39 M iii. **Marc Anthony WOOD** was born on 13 Aug 1970. Marc married **Shelly** on 4 Aug 1995.

13. **William Thomas "Tommy" HOCKENSMITH** (Jerry Thomas, Thomas "Tom" Jefferson) was born on 7 Apr 1944. William married (1) **Carol WILSON** . The marriage ended in divorce.

They had the following children:

- + 40 F i. **Donna Jane HOCKENSMITH** was born on 12 Jan 1962.
- + 41 M ii. **William Thomas HOCKENSMITH Jr.** was born on 21 Jan 1964.
- + 42 F iii. **Tonia Renee HOCKENSMITH** was born on 31 May 1968.

William married (2) **Jackie ARMSTRONG** .

They had the following child:

- 43 F iv. **Toma Sue HOCKENSMITH** was born on 15 Oct 1972.

William married (3) **Mary Belle MANLEY** on 16 Aug 1986 in Franklin Co., KY. Mary was born on 28 Feb 1953.

They had the following child:

- 44 F v. **Tina HOCKENSMITH** was born on 18 Aug 1982.

17. **Robert "Bob" Charles HOCKENSMITH** (William Albert, Thomas "Tom" Jefferson) was born on 3 Apr 1960 in Wright Patterson AFB, , OH. Robert married **Holly FRITTS**.

They had the following child:

- 45 F i. **Caitlan Chloe HOCKENSMITH** was born on 12 Jul 1990.

18. **Marilyn Ruth HOCKENSMITH** (William Albert, Thomas "Tom" Jefferson) was born on 21 Nov 1963 in Tinker AFB, OK. Marilyn married **Donald Herbert BOWEN** .

Donald and Marilyn had the following children:

- 46 M i. **Sean HOCKENSMITH** was born on 27 Aug 1989.
- 47 M ii. **Seth HOCKENSMITH** was born on 28 Apr 1992.

19. **Ann Noel HOCKENSMITH** (Freeman Mason, Thomas "Tom" Jefferson) was born on 23 Sep 1946. Ann married ? **NOVY** .

They had the following children:

- 48 F i. **Cheryl NOVY** .
- 49 F ii. **Angela NOVY** .

20. **John Freeman Mason "Steamboat" HOCKENSMITH** (Freeman Mason, Thomas "Tom" Jefferson) was born on 23 Sep 1947. He died on 9

Apr 1994. John married **Ellen Janolyn CHILDERS** on 21 Apr 1973 in Franklin Co., KY. Ellen was born on 11 Jun 1948.

They had the following children:

- 50 F i. **Gena Stephanie HOCKENSMITH** .
- 51 M ii. **John Freeman Mason HOCKENSMITH II** .

21. **Stephen Michael HOCKENSMITH** (Freeman Mason, Thomas "Tom" Jefferson) was born on 15 May 1949. Stephen married **Jennifer Lynn WHITE** on 19 Oct 1970 in Franklin Co., KY. The marriage ended in divorce. Jennifer was born on 29 Jan 1952.

They had the following children:

- 52 M i. **Stephen Michael HOCKENSMITH Jr.** was born on 29 May 1971. Stephen married **Stacy SMITHER** on 11 Apr 1996 in Pigeon Forge, , TN.
- 53 F ii. **Melanie Elizabeth HOCKENSMITH** was born on 17 Oct 1973.

23. **Kathryn Lynn HOCKENSMITH** (Freeman Mason, Thomas "Tom" Jefferson) was born on 24 Jul 1951. Kathryn married (1) **John Logan HORTENBERRY** on 28 May 1971 in Franklin Co., KY. The marriage ended in divorce. John was born on 30 Sep 1947.

John and Kathryn had the following children:

- 54 M i. **Eric L. HORTENBERRY** was born on 20 May 1975.

Kathryn married (2) **Jimmy MUCCI** .

24. **Mary Susan HOCKENSMITH** (Freeman Mason, Thomas "Tom" Jefferson) was born on 30 Apr 1953.

Mary married (1) **David COLLINS** . The marriage ended in divorce.

Mary married (2) **Robert G. OWENS** on 28 Apr 1975. Robert was born in 1946.

They had the following children:

- 55 M i. **Patrick Neil OWENS** was born on 7 May 1972.
- 56 M ii. **David B. OWENS** was born on 30 Jul 1984.

57 M iii. **Freeman Daniel OWENS** was born on 30 Jul 1984.

25. **Deborah Jean HOCKENSMITH** (Freeman Mason, Thomas "Tom" Jefferson) was born on 31 Jan 1955. Deborah married **John CONWAY** . John was born on 25 Sep 1950.

They had the following children:

58 M i. **John David CONWAY** was born on 2 Nov 1989.

59 F ii. **Kristine Grey CONWAY** was born on 12 Sep 1991.

29. **Nancy Renee HOCKENSMITH** (Freeman Mason, Thomas "Tom" Jefferson) was born on 14 Dec 1962. Nancy married **Tim MICHEL** . The marriage ended in divorce.

They had the following children:

60 M i. **Shane C. MICHEL** was born on 11 Sep 1982.

Fourth Generation

33. **Sharon Daphne SANDERSON** (Geraldine HOCKENSMITH, Jerry Thomas, Thomas "Tom" Jefferson) was born on 22 Apr 1956. Sharon married **William Robert "Bobby" SCRUGGS II** .

William and Sharon had the following children:

61 M i. **William Robert SCRUGGS III** was born on 25 Feb 1976.

62 F ii. **Daphne LaRae SCRUGGS** was born on 13 Apr 1979.

35. **Joseph Douglas SANDERSON** (Geraldine HOCKENSMITH, Jerry Thomas, Thomas "Tom" Jefferson) was born on 26 Mar 1962. Joseph married **Toni Marie SCHILLER** on 3 Mar 1984.

They had the following children:

63 M i. **Jason Douglas SANDERSON** was born on 3 Sep 1985.

64 F ii. **Anne Marie SANDERSON** was born on 21 Apr 1989.

36. **Melissa Gay SANDERSON** (Geraldine HOCKENSMITH, Jerry Thomas, Thomas "Tom" Jefferson) was born on 4 Jun 1967. Melissa

married **Michael Brett MILLS** on 20 Oct 1990. Michael was born on 21 May 1964.

They had the following child:

65 M i. **Michael Reed MILLS** was born on 22 Apr 1994.

37. **Christie Michele WOOD** (Phyllis J. HOCKENSMITH, Jerry Thomas, Thomas "Tom" Jefferson) was born on 15 Dec 1961. Christie married **Paul Alexander EDWARDS** on 19 Nov 1983. Paul was born on 8 Jan 1962.

They had the following children:

66 M i. **Alexander Grant EDWARDS** was born on 17 Jun 1984.

67 F ii. **Michele "Grace" EDWARDS** was born on 7 Apr 1991.

38. **Ella Louise WOOD** (Phyllis J. HOCKENSMITH, Jerry Thomas, Thomas "Tom" Jefferson) was born on 18 Sep 1965. Ella married (1) **William Robert CUNNINGHAM** on 17 May 1985.

They had the following children:

68 F i. **Mesha Donna CUNNINGHAM** was born on 5 Sep 1985.

69 F ii. **Kelly Nichole CUNNINGHAM** was born on 31 Mar 1991.

Ella married (2) **Wilson Todd GRAVITT** on 13 Mar 1992.

Wilson and Ella had the following children:

70 F iii. **Kathryn Michele Lee GRAVITT** was born on 6 Apr 1996.

71 M iv. **Matthew Eric GRAVITT** was born on 6 Sep 1998.

40. **Donna Jane HOCKENSMITH** (William Thomas "Tommy", Jerry Thomas, Thomas "Tom" Jefferson) was born on 12 Jan 1962. Donna married (1) **Keith Allen BROWN** on 18 Apr 1981. Keith was born on 19 Oct 1960.

They had the following children:

72 M i. **Shawn K. BROWN** was born on 26 Jan 1983.

73 F ii. **Brittany J. BROWN** was born on 14 Jun 1984.

Donna married (2) **Daryl HOWARD** .

41. **William Thomas HOCKENSMITH Jr.** (William Thomas "Tommy", Jerry Thomas, Thomas "Tom" Jefferson) was born on 21 Jan 1964. William married **Kim MEANS** on 6 Mar 1986. Kim was born on 3 Aug 1966.

They had the following children:

- 74 M i. **Andrew Stephen HOCKENSMITH** was born on 6 Dec 1988.
- 75 M ii. **Jerry Thomas HOCKENSMITH** was born on 10 Jun 1991.

42. **Tonia Renee HOCKENSMITH** (William Thomas "Tommy", Jerry Thomas, Thomas "Tom" Jefferson) was born on 31 May 1968. Tonia married **Dale HICKMAN** on 9 Aug 1986.

They had the following children:

- 76 M i. **Casey HICKMAN** was born in 1990.
- 77 M ii. **Coty HICKMAN** was born in 1995.

[Request for old family photographs]

FAREWELL

[photograph of Michael Lee Hockersmith]

MICHAEL LEE HOCKERSMITH

from The Benton Courier, Benton, Saline Co., Arkansas, 24 Feb, 2005.

Michael Lee Hockersmith, 59, of Hot Springs died Tuesday, February 22, 2005.

Mike graduated from Henderson State University with a degree in computer science and since the early 70's was employed as an executive software engineer. He lived in Atlanta, GA, Philadelphia, PA, and Jacksonville, FL before returning to Arkansas in 2003. He was an avid golf, pool, and poker enthusiast. Mike was a loving and caring husband, father, brother, grandfather, and friend.

He is survived by his sons, M. Brian Hockersmith and J. B. Hockersmith both of

Atlanta; his daughter, Marci Moore and grandson Austin Moore of Dacula, GA; sister, Joy Allen of Benton, and brother, Tim Hockersmith of Green Cove Springs, FL.

A memorial service will be held at 11:00 a.m. Monday, February 28, 2005 in the chapel of Roller-Ballard Funeral Home with Rev. John Miles officiating. Interment will follow in New Rosemont Memorial Park in Benton. Visitation will be from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m., one hour prior to service time. A reception will be held after the memorial service.

Mike is the son of Alfred Gann Hockersmith Jr., s/o Alfred Gann, s/o Alfred Conrad, s/o Tilford Groves, s/o Conrad Rice, s/o Conrad [Edward] Hockersmith Jr., s/o Konrad Hackenschmidt.

I Am My Own Grandpa...

For a bit of a genealogy mind bender, consider the lyrics to the song I Am My Own Grandpa, written by Dwight B. Latham and Moe Jaffe:

Many many years ago when I was twenty
 three,
 I got married to a widow who was pretty as
 could be.
 This widow had a grown-up daughter
 Who had hair of red.
 My father fell in love with her,
 And soon the two were wed.
 This made my dad my son-in-law
 And changed my very life.
 My daughter was my mother,
 For she was my father's wife.
 To complicate the matters worse,
 Although it brought me joy,
 I soon became the father
 Of a bouncing baby boy.

My little baby then became
 A brother-in-law to dad.
 And so became my uncle,
 Though it made me very sad.

For if he was my uncle,
 Then that also made him brother
 To the widow's grown-up daughter
 Who, of course, was my step-mother.

Father's wife then had a son,
 Who kept them on the run.
 And he became my grandson,
 For he was my daughter's son.

My wife is now my mother's mother
 And it makes me blue.
 Because, although she is my wife,
 She's my grandmother, too.

If my wife is my grandmother,
 Then I am her grandchild.
 And every time I think of it,
 It simply drives me wild.

For now I have become
 The strangest case you ever saw.
 As the husband of my grandmother,
 I am my own grandpa!

This song has been recorded by many artists, including Shel Silverstein, Lonzo & Oscar, Homer & Jethro, Ray Stevens, and Dave Grisman. It reportedly was inspired by an anecdote that Mark Twain related in a book, proving how a person could become his own grandfather

Disclaimer: This newsletter is written, edited and published by Robert T. Hockersmith, 1213 Lions Den Drive, Green Cove Springs, FL 32043-4617. I intend to publish additional volumes quarterly [or at least semi-annually] as interest, time, and resources will permit. The data contained herein is deemed accurate, but is not guaranteed.