



Donnie Lee Strickland, Lulu, Mickey Mouse & JB Aaron



JB Aaron, Lulu Roman and Donnie Lee Strickland performed last Saturday at the Shephard Hill.

PHOTOS BY STEVE WHEAT PHOTOGRAPHY



Just swinging away!

Hee Haw star Lulu Roman makes surprise appearance at Samantha Trade Day

SAMANTHA – This past Saturday during was full of outdoor activities on Shepherd Hill in Samantha, Alabama for the 2nd Annual Samantha Trade Day. Kids and adults alike put down their hand held devices to enjoy some old fashioned fun like shucking and shelling corn in the back of an old wagon in preparation of grinding into commmeal. Vendors from 5 counties brought their homemade items and everyone had a great time eating funnel cake, fried fish, roasted corn, hotdogs, and more all while listening to great country and gospel music.

The highlight of the day was Donnie Lee Strickland, from North Carolina, who has appeared on Shepherd Hill Opry Stage three times introduced his special guest, Lulu Roman. The crowd was mesmerized by her performance. Roman was one of the most sought after female cast members of the long-running hit television series "Hee Haw." She is famous for her side-splitting humor and jovial disposition. She invited questions from the audience between songs and everyone enjoyed a conversation with her as if we were in her living room.

Roman has enjoyed many successes in her life, but she has also seen her fair share of disappointments and hardships. Roman was born in a home for unwed mothers and was soon placed in an orphanage. She was born with a thyroid dysfunction, which subsequently caused her weight problem and prevented her from being adopted. It also contributed to her becoming the center of teasing by the other children at the orphanage. It was during that time she learned to use her sense of humor as a defense, which later evolved in to a highly successful career as an actress and comedienne and later landed her a lead role on "Hee Haw."

Roman's success and wealth from her role on "Hee Haw" proved to be poisonous. Her downward spiral into drug addiction in 1971



Kids and adults alike enjoyed the day.

her to God.

"I was busted twice for the possession of dangerous drugs, and pretty much did everything you shouldn't do," Roman said. "I was an orphan kid and I don't know if I just didn't believe in God, or if there was one... well then...I was really angry with him. I didn't have any concept really of what love is, so I had no fear and thought I had nothing to lose."

Roman said that was the way she lived her life for a long time. She just wanted to get even and eventually ended up in a place where she was doing everything that she thought was humanly possible to make herself feel like she was worthy of being loved.

"That's when I met up with one of the other kids from the orphanage where I once lived and she took me to her church," Roman said. "And I'll tell you this, those people at that church got together and literally loved the hell right out of Lulu Roman."

Roman said accepting Jesus Christ as her Lord and Saviour was a conscious decision that every person has to make on their own in order to secure a life that will give you hope.

"That's not something anyone else can do for you. Man can give you a vision of what you think you want, but that's not always what God wants," Roman said. "I know it's hard sometimes to see or even work through God's plan, but if you will just desire to seek him and walk in faith with him, he will change your life. I know, because he changed mine. He

around to a place where I finally understood there was a reason for me to be alive and to believe in him."

Walking in her newfound faith in God, Roman soon began using another of her talent — her voice — to share with others how God had changed her life.

In 1999, Roman was inducted into the Country Gospel Music Hall of Fame. In 2002, Roman's 16th album, a collection of hits and favorites called "Lulu, Inspired" was nominated for a Dove award, and in 2006, Roman recorded the song "Orphan Girl," which is the title song of an "Americana" type recording project which features gospel, country and rhythm and blues music.

This almost biographical song has become her signature song and is enjoyed in concerts all over the United States.

There are plans to have Roman return to Shepherd Hill for the 4th Annual Legacy of Love Festival which is held on the 3rd Saturday in April. Next year it will be April 15, 2017.

Events on Shepherd Hill are sponsored by The Good Shepherd Foundation, a 501©(3), faith-based organization. You can find out more by visiting their website at goodshepherdfound.org or by calling (205) 233-3794.

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