

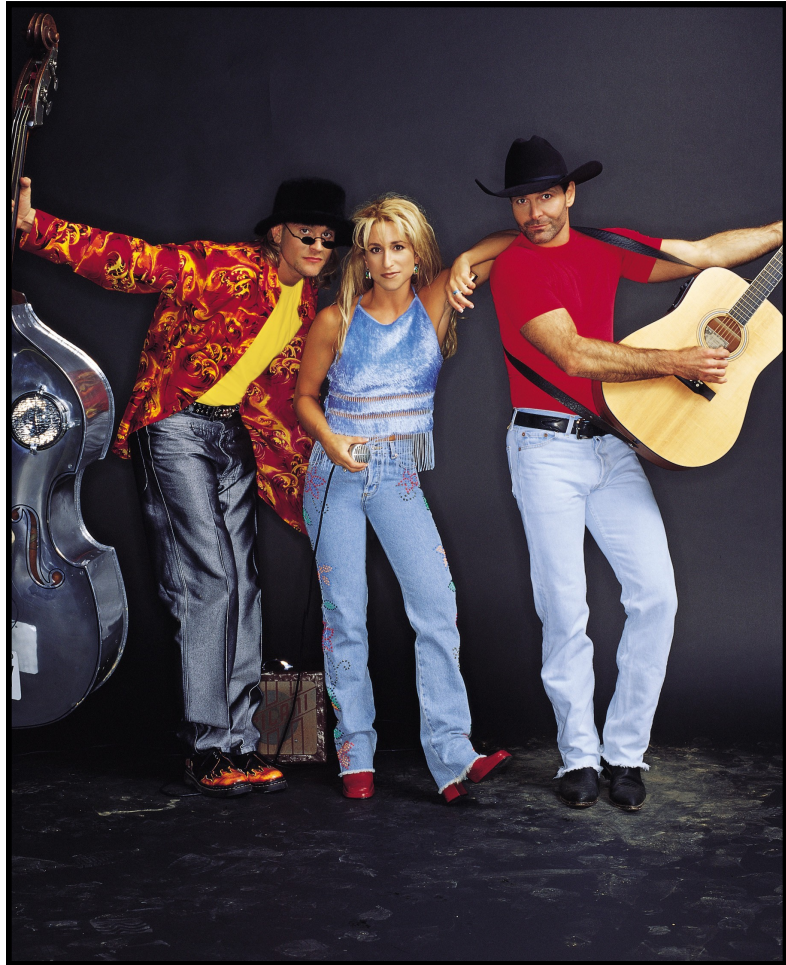
TRICK PONY

by Tamela Meredith Partridge
"The Times" newspaper
Ottawa, IL.
© 2005

Nashville's energetic and raucous trio, Trick Pony, will bring their unbridled brand of country rock to the LaSalle Motor Speedway on Sunday, May 29.

"I think we are just true honky-tonk music," says Trick Pony member, Ira Dean. "Our music comes from a lifetime of playing songs based on truth and reality."

Trick Pony consists of Heidi Newfield (vocals, harmonica, acoustic guitar), Ira Dean (vocals, upright bass) and Keith Burns (vocals, acoustic guitar).



"There's something for everybody in Trick Pony," says Keith Burns. "You've got Ira, who looks like Kid Rock and bounces around on stage like Gene Simmons. And then there's Heidi -- a little, blonde knockout that jumps out in the crowd, plays harmonica and sings her heart out. And I'm the basic cowboy that comes in and sweeps up the mess that the two of them have left behind. I can't explain it, but when the three of us get together, it just works."

Trick Pony derived their name from a popular film.

"We were originally called Rebel," Burns says. "We had to change our name when we were about to get our record deal. I came to the table with One Trick Pony, which was the title of a '80 Paul Simon movie. One trick pony is someone who blows into town, they do the one thing that they do well, then they pack up and move on. The label liked the name, but shortened it to Trick Pony because they said we had more than one trick."

Trick Pony's frisky blend of three-part harmonies is heard on such chart-topping country singles as "Pour Me," "On A Night Like This," and "Just What I Do."

"What is great about having both male and female singers in the trio is that we can cover almost any subject," Ira says. "We sing about the partying and drinking. But we also sing about the serious things like love, loss, happiness, marriage and eternity. We cover all the bases."

Trick Pony are riding high about the upcoming August release of their third album, R.I.D.E. (R.ebellious I.ndividuals D.elivering E.ntertainment). The trio listened to hundreds of demos and co-wrote many of the songs on the album.

"We try to write and record songs that people will want to turn the radio up full blast every time they hear them," Burns says.

A standout song on the new album, "Maryann's Song," is a haunting, gospel-flavored tune penned by Heidi during the final days of her mother Maryanne's life. The song was recorded with no rehearsal, in one take, and includes the beginning sounds of crickets and a nearly inaudible brook that the trio were hearing themselves as they played and sang through the tune.

"We counted to four and went with it," Heidi says. "I was crying throughout it all. When we finished, I begged Chuck Howard, our producer, to let me sing it again. But he wouldn't let me do it because, he said, he could tell the pain I was in as I sang it -- and that's what's missing from today's records. He was right. When we finished, there wasn't a dry eye in the room. We all stood up and had a moment of silence. I'll never forget that moment, as long as I live."

Trick Pony's current Top 30 single, "It's A Heartache," is a Pony-fied version of the classic Bonnie Tyler 70's pop-rock hit. The trio recently wrote a script and shot a music video for the catchy tune at Fort Desoto Park and Redington Shores in Florida.

"The new video shows us in an entirely different light which is exciting for us," Heidi says. "It's gritty, sexy and has a lot of integrity."

Trick Pony's mission is a simple one -- to play their kind of music -- and have fun doing it.

"We're just happy being who and what we are," says Burns. "We enjoy spreading the good time that we have on stage to every one in the audience. People want to come out and be entertained, and the three of us have a great time doing that."

TRICK PONY

by Tamela Meredith Partridge
Our Brown County Magazine
Nashville, IN
© 2002

Nashville trio, Trick Pony, will saddle up on Saturday, October 12, and stampede Nashville North USA with their unbridled brand of country rock.

"I think we are just true honky-tonk music," says Trick Pony member, Ira Dean. "Our music comes from a lifetime of playing songs based on truth and reality."

Trick Pony was initially created by Keith Burns (vocals, acoustic guitar) and his friend, Ira Dean (vocals, upright bass equipped with working headlights and/or windshield wipers).



"I'm the jokester of the trio," Ira says, "But at heart I have always wanted to be known as the musician. So, I permanently borrowed the headlights from the Wildhorse Saloon, traced two circles around a Folger's coffee can on the front of my metal upright bass, took a jigsaw and whacked out two holes. That bass sounded like an old washtub before, but once I installed the headlights it sounds pretty good."

Adding the vocal, harmonica and acoustic guitar talents of Heidi Newfield completed the trio in '96.

"Keith and I hit it off immediately," Heidi says, who had already been friends with Ira for many years. "We had a lot of the same influences. We were both big fans of Waylon Jennings and the outlaw country stuff. When he told me about wanting to have a trio rotating lead vocals with one female and two male voices, I loved the idea. It sounded fresh and and no one had done anything like it yet."

The high-energy trio spent years on the road creating their own sound, honing their songwriting skills and captivating audiences. Lighting up the stage with their charismatic personalities while performing over 200 dates a year eventually earned the seasoned entertainers a steady houseband gig with The Wildhorse Saloons in Nashville, TN and Orlando, FL.

"What is great about having both male and female singers in the trio is that we can cover almost any subject," Ira says. "We sing about the partying and drinking. But we also sing about the serious things like love, loss, happiness, marriage and eternity. We cover all the bases."

Trick Pony derived their name from a popular film.

"We were known in the clubs by another name," Ira says. "After we signed with Warner Brothers Records we wanted to change our name before releasing our debut album. We tried different names left and right. Finally, Keith called me up in the middle of the night and said, 'I'm watching this '80 Paul Simon movie, One Trick Pony. What do you think of the name One Trick Pony? We can ride into town, do our one trick and move on.' The label liked the name, but they said we had more than one trick. So, we went with just Trick Pony."

Trick Pony's frisky blend of three-part harmonies sent their self-titled '01 debut album singles, "Pour Me," "On A Night Like This" and "Just What I Do" galloping up the country charts. Their current single, "On A Mission," is the title track from their second album, scheduled for a early November release.

Trick Pony co-wrote nine out of twelve songs on the new album, which features the accompanying vocals of Willie Nelson in the '78 country hit, "Whiskey River."

"On our debut album we had Johnny Cash and Waylon Jennings come in and sing Johnny's '58 country hit, 'Big River,' Ira says. "We wanted to keep paying tribute to the guys who paved the way, so we invited, no, it is more like we bugged Willie Nelson until he agreed to sing 'Whiskey River' with us on the second album. Which is pretty cool. We did 'Whiskey River' all in one take. No overdubs, those are the scratch vocals on that song."

After playing together for many years and performing countless live shows, Trick Pony never forgets the fans who helped them achieve their musical dreams.

"It's the people out there, the guy that shows up on Saturday night to drink and dance and get rid of his worries for the weekend," Keith says. "That's the guy we're playing for, and when you get a positive reaction, you know you have something special."