



## Dear Orphans – Fast Facts

- Dear Orphans – Nick Payne (guitar, dobro, vocals, songwriter), Lyn Dearling-Taylor (guitar, vocals, songwriter), Mike Kirkley (pedal steel)
- Nick and Lyn met in Dalby, QLD in 1999. Nick had transferred to a new job after moving from Sydney, NSW, and Lyn was about to marry her high school sweetheart.
- Nick had the idea for forming Dear Orphans after moving back to Sydney from Queensland in 2006. He recalls "it was one of those points in your life where every aspect of your life changes. I had an opportunity to organise my life around my priorities, rather than having external factors pushing me around."
- Nick organized a jam weekend in the Southern Highlands, inviting all his musician friends. Lyn came with her guitar and head full of ideas. It turned out to be her "unofficial audition" for Dear Orphans.
- First song written – "History", by Lyn, who wrote it as she was visualising driving to Sydney to start the band.
- 6 months after the Southern Highland Jam session, Lyn moved to Sydney, after having arranged a mini-tour of all the Toowoomba pubs where she and Nick honed their sound. She says "After that, I had to seize the moment! So I lined up 6 job interviews in Sydney, piled up the car and moved on Boxing Day 2006."
- Through a fortuitous lunch meeting with respected singer-songwriter Karl Broadie, Nick was introduced to Cletis Carr, who in turn gave the band their first Sydney gig the week Lyn flew into town for her interview. They lined up a set of gigs at the Merton Estate Hotel in Rozelle.
- Cletis recalls seeing Dear Orphans play for the first time "Lyn walked in the room, she didn't look like a supermodel, but there was something there."
- In 2007 Dear Orphans played "as many gigs as we could, but towards the end of the year, we played one gig to an empty room, and got gypped on the payment. But we cut our teeth, crafted our sound and learned the skill of playing to a room of people that are unappreciative and giving them something to shut up and take note!"
- The pivotal moment in the band's destiny came when they met Natalie D Napoleon who was scheduled to perform an East Coast Tour with Fiona Kernigan. When Fiona had to cancel due to family reasons, Dear Orphans found themselves filling in through a bizarre series of Six Degrees of Separation! One of those gigs was at The Mars Hill Café.

- The owner of Mars Hill Café, Kevin, liked what Dear Orphans did musically and he and the band organised a series of gigs in 2008, playing once per month, which became The Orphanage Sessions.
- The concepts behind The Orphanage Sessions were:
  - Shaping the physical environment, by hosting the sessions at a Café rather than the traditional pub setting, which created atmosphere and an intimacy between performers and audience;
  - Playing regularly to build a consistent audience; and
  - Including a different guest act each month to add variety.
- Nick says "2008 was really good for us, because The Orphanage Sessions built up real fans, and gave us the chance to play with some amazing musicians. I like the collaborative nature of it."
- 2009 – Dear Orphans debut CD launch

## The Music

- Influenced by traditional bluegrass but we're not traditional bluegrass.
- Presence of a pedal steel is a big influence on our sound
- We have a clawhammer banjoist play with us sometimes
- Other influences are traditional country music like Hank Williams, Townes Van Zandt and Johnny Cash.
- Alt country influences like Ryan Adams, Wilco, Lucinda Williams and Gillian Welch, in Lyn's words "the Big Kahuna!"

## Quotes

"Our music takes a little while to get into, but it persists in a way that other music doesn't. It has the ability to stick with you for a long time."

"When it comes to songwriting, songs that one wants to write and that connect with your humanness are the ones we write about. When you put that in a live context, experiencing those emotions, and being in a roomful of people being moved in the same way, that's one of the fundamental experiences of being alive."

"Our music connects with the simplicity of life. It's about getting to the roots of where our country comes from, the simple road, the simple life. Getting away from the city, where everything is "so important", and stripping that back to the bare bones and just playing."

"What I love about bluegrass is that it's music written by poor people about real life. And sometimes some of the reasons they are writing and playing that music is to rise above that and set their sights on something higher."