

Interview With The Terry Eckard Band - Teri Merchant

Contributed by Teri Merchant
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Band Members:

Terry Eckard - Lead / Slide Guitar / Vocals
 Steve "Southside" Donathan - Bass / Vocals
 Doug "DM" Gilbert - Drums

I was fortunate enough to meet and watch this band perform at Bruce Wall's 2008 Jam-A-Que in Tennessee last May. They refer to their style of music as Southern Boogie and that's exactly what you hear in every one of their songs. And I guarantee that you will feel like boogying when you're listening to the unique noise they make when they're on stage together. There are only 3 members in this band that includes an incredibly talented song writer and guitar player and a hard driving back beat. As you will read in the interview, they all have early influences that are a bit different, but the combination of what they each bring with them to their overall sound makes great music. For a band that started playing together just 7 months ago, I think they are well on their way to wherever they want to go. If you're a Southern Rock fan or just a plain ole Rock 'n Roller, I think when you listen to the music these guys make you're gonna like what ya hear. Let's Boogie....Southern Style!

SF: Are you all southern boys by birth or by choice?

Terry: I know I am by birth and I am so glad I am…

Steve: I am, born in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, and I eat grits for breakfast.

DM: Choice, I was born and raised in NH. I moved south when I enlisted in the Marine Corps.

Moved around a lot, SC, TN, TX, FL. I always love the folks down south, felt more like the small town I grew up in.

SF: Who were your early influences in music?

Terry: My mother ...she used to sing to me when I was little..I played the radio when I was little,,Elvis, Slim Harpo, Bobby Vee, loved Bobby, The Stones,,Jimi Hendrix, Zeppelin, etc. a lot of blues,yea.....a lot of blues. I don't even know who they where., but I loved it.

Steve: Southern Rock, Metal, Punk

DM: Beatles, Stones, CCR, Allman Brothers, Skynyrd, Doobie Brothers, Jimi Hendrix, Zeppelin

SF: Do you remember the first record you bought? First concert you went to?

Terry: The first record I ever bought was.....no I don't know, but my mother bought me records like "It's a Grand Old Flag" you know stuff like that... The first concert I ever went to was the North Carolina Symphony..It blew me away..they were great. I've seen a lot of the late 60s early 70s bands.

Steve: 1976 my mom took me to my first concert - Fleetwood Mac and Styx. It was a life changing event. The first record I bought was - Queen.

DM: First record was Beatles, first concert was Rush

SF: Do any of you come from a musical background?

Terry: I don't know about Stevie or Doug....you know my mother loved music and sung all the time..my aunt is married to the "King of Blue Grass"…..Jim Shumate, he played wit Bill Monroe and all them guys....but no ...I don't guess I do.

Steve: No one else in my family plays an instrument.

DM: Not me...

SF: How old were you when picked up your first instrument and what was it?

Terry: So young I can't remember..used to mess with one of my aunt's piano ...I have always had something to beat on. Got my first tape recorder when I was about 8 years old..started band "trumpet" in the 5th grade.

Steve: I was 13 years old and it was a Silvertone Guitar that came out of the Sears catalog.

I started playing bass when I was 14 years old.

DM: 9 yrs old, bass drum in band... the thing was bigger than me..lol.

SF: When did you know that playing music was what you wanted to do with your life?

Terry: The first time somebody paid me to do it...and I knew I really knew I want to play music. when girls started paying attention to me...yes .…I love the stage.

Steve: When I played my first gig in high school. It was a key club dance and I made \$100.00.

DM: Very early on I knew I wanted to play music, seeing the Ed Sullivan show, or listening to "The King Biscuit Flower Hour" I was hooked.

SF: Is the whole band involved when you write music?

Terry: When I write ..’m always thinking ...how the bass will go..what beat the drums will have…um....sometimes they are.

Steve: Terry wrote all the music for the first two CD's. We should all be collaborating on the next CD.

DM: Terry's the man when it comes to that. He's written all the tunes on both CD's.

SF: What has been your favorite venue to play and why?

Terry: My favorite venue..man.....I have played so many.....thats like asking me...which women I ever loved is my favorite…..um....the last one!

Steve: My favorite venue is always one where we get paid, good ! Size of venue doesn't really matter, in fact, I like the smaller clubs better than the large concert halls.

DM: House of Blues - Myrtle Beach SC, Great EAW gear for monitors, and of course the crowd!!! Plus, we did a "big" show there with the Doobie Brothers... a big influence of mine over the years.

SF: You recently played at the House Of Blues in Myrtle Beach, SC with Eddie Money. How did that go?

Terry: Went great...love "Eddie" ..the man rocks,,I like the stage there, the lights,the sound,,good people to work with,it;s first class,,and the audience is loud and happy ,and into the music ..it makes you feel good.

Steve: Eddie Money and his band are all really cool guys. Down to earth guys who will sit and have a drink with you and their stage show is still top notch. The House of Blues is a beautiful place, their tapestries in the dressing room are really nice, I hope I get the chance to play

DM: Very groovie, and of course not without issues... we lost our brakes rolling into Myrtle Beach... Terry and Steve fixed um at an Advance Auto Parts parking lot, and we made load in only 3 minutes late... But it was too cool meeting Eddie Money after seeing him on his first tour opening for Foreigner back in Memphis TN in 77. He and his band are great folks!!! As for our show..We hammered thru, "Friday Night", "Can Ya Hang", "Rebel on the Highway", "20 Dollar Bill" and then we did a tribute of our tune "Mothers" for "The Nations" ...you see, we recently lost a very close friend and performer on both of Terry's CD's ... our buddy Tommy Nations, he was to the lead solo of our last song for the night... "Hot Rod Mama".. then Terry's guitar cord went dead... so Southside and I keep it rollin’, and Stevie took over and gave us some kickin bass solo riff's till Terry got his cord fixed and we finished off the song Big!!! Heck, not to bad for a Friday the 13th!!!

SF: Who would you like to share the stage with if you could make that happen?

Terry: Duane Allman

Steve: From the Southern Rock genre, Charlie Daniels or Three Doors Down would be great. I'm a big fan of Dave Grohl, so playing with the Foo Fighters would be Awesome

DM: Ronnie Van Zant, Elvis, Jimi Hendrix, John Bonham.

SF: The band is very involved with the American Veterans Aid Fund and some other endeavors for vets -- like the Southern Fried Guitar project, which is a great cause! How long have you been working with them and are you all veterans?

Terry: Just Doug.

Steve: I am not a Veteran, but my dad was a Vietnam Vet, he served in both the Army and Marines. My grandfather is a Korean War Vet who was injured in combat. I understand what kind of sacrifices Vets make for our country and how important these organizations are.

DM: We hooked up with AVAF a few months ago, they are a great group of folks to work with, and we try to do all we can to support their efforts. I've seen first hand what these wonderful people can do to make a real difference in a Veterans life. So it's something I feel very strongly about... our Vet's deserve the best we as a country can provide to them. If I can help um out, I feel honored to do so. I am a Marine, SGT, HMS-31, 2nd MAW USMC and very proud of it. I come from a long line of Vets, my granddad, was machine gunner in the Spanish American War.. my dad, was ordinance SGT, VMA-312, 2nd MAW USMC Korean War, two brothers, Army, and Marine, my brother Mitch has 22 yrs in, Desert Storm in 91 and two tours in Iraq.. He's quite the man. And his daughter, my little 105lb niece, is a Marine... I'm very proud of her too... she'll be rollin’ around Iraq next month packin’ a 50cal!!!

SF: You also own a company called Shadowsound Music. How did that come about and what exactly do you do?

DM: Ya, that's my deal... we do a little audio engineering for folks, sometimes DJ some local events, including POW/MIA flag raisings for Rolling Thunder and other events. It's just something I enjoy doing on the side.

SF: You're working on a European tour this fall. How is that coming along and what cities do you have booked so far?

Terry: All I know its in the works.

DM: Well, we started booking shows in Belgium last month, but unfortunately due to my dad being very ill, we decided to put the tour on hold till spring of 09. I wouldn't be comfortable being that far away from home given my dads condition.

We will get there soon though as we've had so much support and interest in the bands music.

SF: TEB is getting some radio airplay these days....that's pretty exciting! What songs and what stations can we find out there that's playing your music?

Terry: Doug is taking care of most of that..I don't really know...tell everybody call their stations and request a song.

DM: I know RED DIRT RADIO, and 43 THE HAWK have been playing TEB for years!!!! Thanks fellas!!! And since our latest CD release we're getting radio play all over... 7th Go Broadcasting has been blasting us all over the place, and we just got hooked up with, Phoenix Radio, and Clear Channel. We are also getting radio play in Europe too, like Countrymusic24 in Germany...all very cool!!! It's hard to keep up sometimes, but we sure appreciate the support!!!

SF: What's the best part about being in The Terry Eckard Band?

Terry: I love to meet people ..seeing old friends and making new ones

Steve: Terry's cooking, he makes really good cooked cabbage and cornbread.

DM: The music!!! It's really that simple, I love our stuff, and enjoy playing it!!! Oh and the fellas..we get along like brothers so that's very groovie too!!! It's always high adventure when we get together!!!

SF: I really enjoyed meeting you all at the Jam-A-Que in Tennessee last month and watching you perform. I thought you were awesome! Will you be back next year?

Terry: Hope so.

Steve: I hope to be..

DM: Thanks!! Well, we sure had a blast...and we'd be honored to be invited back. We met so many great folks and geez ...plenty of wonderful food... heck we may just sneak in next year if we have to, just for the food...

SF: Is there anything you'd like our readers to know about TEB that we haven't covered? I'm sure I missed something...you're very busy guys!

Terry: Thanks….Ask me tomorrow.

Steve: Terry Eckard is one of best southern rock performers of our time. His original music brings a true organic sound to a digital age. The best thing anyone could do would be to see him play live or pick up a copy of his new CD - "Rebel On The Highway."

DM: Well, We're working with some top notch folks to put on a BIG concert to benefit the veteran's. Vetunes Jam 08 is still in the planning stage right now, and will be quite the event, slated for this fall, with a sister event to take place in UK maybe spring of 09. We could raise alot of money for the Vet's so it's very important to us!!! It's a very exciting time for us, meeting alot of fine folks, getting our tunes on the radio, doing shows with folks like the Doobie Brothers, and Eddie Money. And best of all, having folks hear our music!!!

Doug wrote a great article about their experience at the Jam-A-Que for us. You can read it here.

Make sure you check out the band's websites and listen to some of their tunes. And while you're there pick up a CD and donate to a very worthy cause.

www.theterryeckardband.com

www.myspace.com/terryeckardband

www.myspace.com/shadowsoundmusic

www.myspace.com/vetunesjam08

