

Paul Schlesinger Fiddles

Paul Schlesinger fiddles, and has fun doing it. We had an opportunity to dance to Paul and his *Knights of Texas Swing* recently at a VFW Hall near Austin, and he makes great music. Let's learn a little bit more about Paul and his music.

Paul is a fiddle player and vocalist from Taylor TX, where he grew up. His music is a blend of Texas swing and honky tonk, which he says was molded by the playing styles of the post-war musicians who grew out of Central Texas.

Born in 1970, Paul studied piano as a child and later played the euphonium in the Taylor high school band. Paul says he has always enjoyed "older" music, and while his high school contemporaries were listening to the latest heavy metal, Paul listened to the Sons of the Pioneers. He became immersed in the world of western swing and Texas honky-tonk music while earning a photojournalism degree

at UT in Austin.

Paul says his inspiration comes from appreciation of Jimmy Heap and the Melody Masters, a Taylor band that achieved national fame from 1946-77. In 1992 he befriended Perk Williams, a fiddler and vocalist for Jimmy Heap. Perk gave Paul his first fiddle instructions in 1993, teaching him *Faded Love* as first of six tunes.

In these formative years Paul learned a lot from the multi-talented Bill Dessens and the late western swing icon Clyde Brewer, both fiddlers and members of the River Road Boys, a highly respected Texas western swing band. Brewer gave Paul this valuable piece of advice about the art of twin fiddles: "Play the fiddle melody as you would sing the words." Paul says this simple statement became one of the foundations of his playing style, allowing him to play twins with most every professionally trained player.

In 2001 Paul joined the Texas Pioneers, a country swing band featuring both younger and veteran players. One of its early members, swing jazz fiddler Tony Sepolio, became another mentor. The Pioneers became the host band for the annual Jimmy Heap tributes from

2002 to 2009 and also did a couple of tributes to the late Texas music legend Adolph Hofner and late Cajun fiddler Harry Choates.

In 2005, Paul released his first nationally distributed CD, "Our Way," featuring fiddle and guitar instrumentals with Bill Dowdy. His second CD entitled "Paul Schlesinger and his Knights of Texas Swing," is pending and the songs include many of his favorite Jimmy Heap numbers and other classics.

In 2010 Paul began playing regularly with the Milam County Cowboy Church band in Rockdale, and also the Lee County Cowboy Church in Giddings. Most Sundays will find Paul at one church or the other, performing "old school" gospel and spirituals.

Paul will be inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in Gatesville, TX in November.

For more information, check out his website at www.myspace.com/paulschlesinger. Better yet, e-mail Paul at schlesinger-paul@yahoo.com and ask to be included on his e-mail newsletters so you'll know when and where he plays.



Paul Schlesinger

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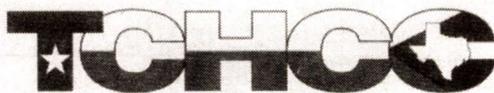
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