ROCK ‘N’ ROLL WALK OF FAME ‘N’ SHAME

AS INNER CITY PROPERTY PRICES SOARED, MANY OF SYDNEY’S MUSICIANS AND ARTISTS MOVED TO THE INNER WEST AND ITS NEW CULTURAL HUB NEWTOWN AND ADJOINING SUBURBS ERSKINEVILLE AND ENMORE.

ON THIS ROCK ‘N’ ROLL WALK OF FAME AND SHAME WE TAKE YOU ALONG CITY RD TO KING ST, ENMORE ROAD AND BEYOND – THE INNER WEST OF SYDNEY.

THIS PODCAST FEATURES THE KING OF KING ST JOHN KENNEDY, HOODOO GURU BRAD SHEPHERD AND MUSICIAN, MANAGER AND IVY LEAGUE LABEL BOSS ANDY KELLY.

“REMEMBER THE FAME ‘CAUSE THE SHAME LASTS FOREVER!”
The physical starting place for rock’n’roll in the Newtown, Erskineville and Enmore region is actually on Broadway, right on the corner of City Road and Parramatta Rd at the long-rocking Lansdowne Hotel – a venue that after decades, still plays host to a stream of indie and upfront rock bands. It’s always great entertainment – most nights every week – and gets us off to a good start as we head up City Road towards Newtown. On our podcast, Hoodoo Guru Brad Shepherd recalls the migration of artists and musicians from inner city Darlinghurst and Surry Hills to the inner west and particularly Newtown in the late eighties.

On the corner of City Road and Cleveland St is the hard-to-miss Seymour Centre – a long standing venue for performing arts including the Sound Lounge with an always creative lineup of jazz, world music, cabaret and comedy.
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KING ST & ENMORE RD

3 REMEMBER THE PAST

Just past Queen St, right at the beginning of King St, we pass two buildings of great musical significance in Sydney. The Vanguard is a New Orleans-inspired venue for jazz, blues and roots artists, top shelf tribute nights – it’s nearly always showcasing the very finest of Australian and international singers and musos.

4 RUNNING, JUMPING, STANDING STILL

Alpha House and Beta House were both large warehouses with colourful histories, both former multi-storey warehouses with a mix of residents, including thriving artistic communities with a penchant for thwarting parties. For our podcast, Peter Simpson Sydney designer and former member of The Dubrovniks, Teeny Weenies and The Spectre’s Revenge recalls a long night at Alpha House, a truly legendary space that – unlike many of its former residents – still stands today.

5 OFF BROADWAY

On the University of Sydney campus itself are two venues: Manning Bar and the smaller Hermann’s Bar – both thriving, crowded rooms with Manning especially featuring top local and overseas artists and Hermann’s showcasing funkier, more hardcore performers.
Inner west music legend John Kennedy is often referred to as a King or even *the* King of King St. His bands JFK and the Cuban Crisis, John Kennedy’s Love Gone Wrong, and his own solo work, helped shape sounds and images of Sydney itself, from more downtown Darlinghurst and Surry Hills to the inner west of Newtown and Erskineville where he moved in the eighties and still lives and performs today.

The Coopers Arms that John Kennedy mentions on our podcast is on the Western side of King St at number 221. Once called the Shakespeare Hotel it’s a great, grass roots acoustic-style music pub, very popular with locals … for decades.

Walking past Newtown Railway Station on the western side, staying on King St, rather than taking the right fork up Enmore Road, music fans and happy drinkers finally arrive at the Sando: full name, the Sandringham. It seems it’s always been there – it’s certainly long been regarded as one of Sydney’s favourite local venues for supporting independent artists. Back in the eighties it was bands such as Alistair Hulett’s Roaring Jack and their fiery, political punk/folk/Celtabilly performances that drew hundreds to the small venue.

The Sando has weathered tough economic and legislative times to still provide residencies for artists such as Louis Tillett and the bluesy legends Dave Tice and Mark Evans. Perhaps the most famous and long running residency was The Whitlams who recorded *God Drinks At The Sando* and *Blow Up The Pokies* – a not-so-wry reflection on the role poker machines played in the death of venues and on the effect it had on a fellow band member.

On our podcast, Andy Kelly, the Newtown-based music entrepreneur and Ivy League Records co-founder recalls first arriving in Sydney and visiting the Sando.
It was Andy Kelly and his muso mates from Canberra, Pete Lusty and Andy Cassell who first successfully set up what was one of Newtown’s most popular performance venues ever – Goldman’s at Newtown RSL. With a management company with a moniker straight out of Wall St – Winterman and Goldstein – these very savvy musos and friends were into management, music publishing, record labels and live rock’n’roll as well. Newtown RSL is a few hundred yards along Enmore Rd, the other major artery that provides the Newtown Enmore metropolis with so much life, colour and traffic. Andy Kelly recalls his first impressions of the venue (on our podcast).

Don’t wander away from the area without a necessary visit to several fine music and entertainment establishments: There’s the Vic on The Park on the corner of Enmore and Addison in Enmore, The Botany View down at South Newtown at 597 King St past the Sando, The Rose of Australia in Erskineville on the corner of Swanson St and Erskineville Rd – where Bernie Hayes still plays and where Jackie Orszaczky used to; The Factory Theatre at 105 Victoria Rd Enmore is one of Sydney’s newest and most exciting live venues. Listen to John Kennedy and Andy Kelly discuss the local scene while exploring the byways, backstreets and tangled traffic gnarls that all contribute to the area’s colourful and confusing identity.

Up the road apiece at number 130 Enmore Rd, unmissable in its centrality and grandeur, is the Enmore Theatre. If every rock’n’roll tragic who claimed to have seen the Rolling Stones legendary gig at the Enmore Theatre had really been in attendance that night in 2003, then this mighty art deco Dame of Sydney’s live performance scene is a helluva lot bigger than the two thousand seats it purports to hold. For our podcast, Brad Shepherd of The Hitmen and Hoodoo Gurus confirms he was there that night, and that his mother used to go to shows there as well way back when …