

Dr. David English and the RSO Legacy.

By Stephanie Lynne Thorburn.

David English has cultivated an evocative niche in the hearts and minds of all those who have had the opportunity to meet him from within the realms of show business, sport and charity. He is blessed with a gregarious and quintessentially English demeanour that meets all the criteria of an endearing British eccentric. I feel though, that this cliché of Dr. English rather overlooks the secure foundation from which his altruistic nature flows- for beneath the exterior of this free agent lies a man who has lived and breathed at the cutting edge of the complementary spheres of music, sport and philanthropy throughout the course of his distinguished career. David has the ability to follow his instincts and ambitions with such a lack of inhibition that he earned an honorary Doctorate on the basis of his initiative and inspirational career. As President of RSO Records, he was able to become acquainted with some of the elites of the music industry and took on a supportive mentoring role with journeyman Eric Clapton during some of his most productive, yet macabre creative years in the '70's. David mediated the sibling rivalries of the Bee Gees and earned the trust of the Gibb brothers, securing a strong friendship and working relationship too with impresario Robert Stigwood, an unsung hero of the media and entertainment industry. There is no doubt that David knows how to recognise talent and he has been blessed with the ability to communicate his own creative drives. He has the motivation to both actualise his ability and to catalyse others towards success, without forgetting his own foundations or the importance of humility.

Certainly David English has always dedicated a significant amount of his time to those less fortunate than himself and is constantly fund- raising and liaising with pivotal charities, from Leukaemia Research to the Make-A-Wish Foundation, for whom he is currently a Patron. Much in the spirit of Make-A -Wish, David is aware of the centrality of the concept of quality of life and he lives in accordance with a belief in the importance of human life each day- for David every day is an adventure comprising numerous unexpected avenues to be explored. His autobiographies are testament to an overactive temperament with a restless spirit and appetite for achievement. Invariably David's affections are never misspent for long- this is a man of spontaneous, yet selective acquaintances. His forays into film led him toward screen legends Robert Redford and Sir Laurence Olivier for brief, yet significant interactions on the set of 'A Bridge Too Far'. David's press office work at Decca gave him a penchant for the bohemian enigma of the Rolling Stones and Bill Wyman is one of the original advocates of the Bunburys- in fact, along with Eric Clapton and Barry Gibb, David is lucky enough to consider Bill Wyman amongst his personal friends. Perhaps though, it is the dignified sport of English cricket that has left the most significant impression on his life path. David's transition from show business has definitely been one of his most memorable and unlikely achievements over the years. In 1987 David succeeded in transposing his colleagues at RSO onto the cricket pitch in form of the early Bunburys team comprising the 'Eric Clapton XI', featuring Eric, manager Roger Forrester, Stones business manager Johnny Cousins, Bill Wyman and many other talented maverick characters. Naturally, the inimitable Sir Ian Botham and Viv Richards were never far away- all these legendary Bunbury ambassadors have been present from the origins of Mr. English's enchanting project.

It is difficult to make an educated guess as to who has been the most influential in David English's life. I think that aside from the centrality of his family, David is able to shrewdly appraise the skills of those he admires and encounters. In his qualities of spirit it is possible to identify key personality traits of others, such as Ian Botham's extrovert nature and dogmatic determination; Eric Clapton's humility complemented by his creative essence and of course Robert Stigwood's mentoring skills. In recent years, Dr. David English has seen the fruits of his labours finally rewarded with numerous accolades offered from the fraternity of the British establishment.

In winter 2010, David had another meeting due with her Majesty the Queen to collect his CBE. Doubtless David viewed the occasion as another growth and learning exercise. Images of Dr. English collecting his CBE from Princess Anne were indeed in the news and doubtless David is now displaying a few more regal airs and graces within his own social repertoire. A more pertinent question may be what others have gained via their experiences of meeting with the charismatic Dr. English? I'm sure that David English might just find himself a willing incumbent of the Palace once again in the coming few Bunbury seasons... on the next occasion there is a fair chance that he will return having been conferred the honour of a Knighthood!

Many congratulations David on your CBE and upon reaching the Bunburys' 25th anniversary in 2011. Your eccentricity, tenacity and enthusiasm for life have left a legacy from your RSO years onward- doubtless you have contributed greatly to our cultural experience, cricket, especially youth cricket and to a multitude of major charities. The 25th celebration of Bunbury Cricket Club at Grosvenor House was indeed a unique and awesome occasion frequented by a host of your dedicated Bunbury friends.

Stephanie Lynne Thorburn, September 2010.

Reminiscences on the Legacy of R.S.O.

“When I think back to my days of starting R.S.O. with Robert (i.e. December 1973), it seems like another lifetime and sometimes hard to believe that all those marvellous adventures happened- but happen they did! This was long before the Bunburys started in 1987... Just think, I was running a record label at the age of 27- *fantastic*. I have not spoken to Robert for some time but I met Sir Tim Rice last week and we immediately went back down memory lane. Tim reminded me that my first record release on R.S.O. was ‘How much is that doggie in the window’, backwards. Yes, “window the in doggie that is much how” set me off on a yellow brick road toward *Saturday Night Fever* and *Grease*.”

Dr. David English. October 2010.