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## Rockin' Profile:

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In place of our regular member's profile, this issue and next issue of Big Beat of the '50s will each feature a set of mini-profiles featuring personalities from within the rockin' scene. Ed.

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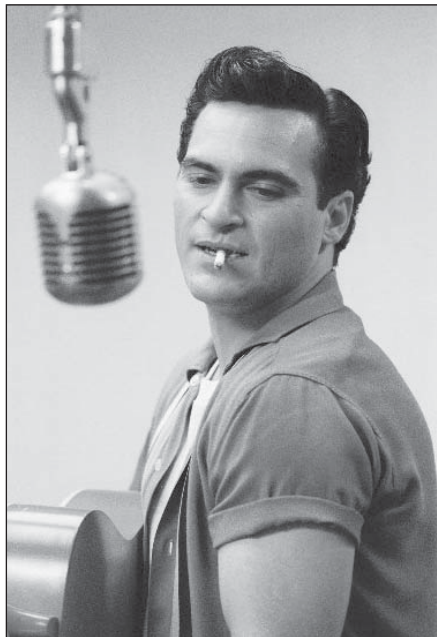
## Rockin' It Right!

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With all the media talk these days telling us about the importance of recycling and sustainability to preserve our fragile planet, it is interesting to note that the rockin' scene is also rollin' with the flow. I was delighted to learn recently that our own annual GreazeFest Kustom Kulture Festival is a carbon neutral event. (See photos from GreazeFest '08 in our centre pages). As well as this, all of the 300 hot rods that are entered in the show are also carbon offset, thanks to event organizer and ARRAS member, Mrs Lori Lee Cash. Let's hope other rockin' events will follow suit.

In recent years there has been an underground movement making its presence felt in the rock'n'roll/rockabilly scene, which is similar to the "straight edge" sub-culture that developed in the hardcore punk scene during the 1980s. It is a movement of "compassionate consumerism", epitomized by walking the vegan line. In North America the movement is taking on a life of its own with a bunch of US pin-up dolls making the commitment and some wonderful vegan cookbooks being written by Canada's tattooed retro sweetheart, Sarah Kramer. Here in Australia it appears to be still in its infancy, however I have managed to find several locals who are "rockin' it right" to briefly illustrate how the times are changing. I'd like to introduce you to Red, Rob, Dan, and Joe who have all chosen to live their lives by the vegan philosophy of "doing least harm".

While veganism consists of so many different aspects, the main component is of course food consumption, the results of which are three-fold: a vegan diet reduces animal suffering, reduces human illness, and conserves the dwindling resources of the planet. For many reasons, the movement



*Popular vegan Joaquin Phoenix played Johnny Cash in the movie Walk The Line*

is now generally accepted as a proponent of social justice, particularly because it is recognized as having positive implications for the human populations of underdeveloped countries.

As a vegan myself, it is always a pleasure to make contact with other like-minded souls from within the rock'n'roll scene, and so I am delighted to introduce readers to our four compatriots below who are breaking down the stereotypes by showing that making ethical lifestyle choices has never stopped anybody from rockin' like crazy.

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## Red Devotchkin: Queensland

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Red Devotchkin is a red hot dame on the Brisbane burlesque scene and spoke to me about her passion for the shows. "I love burlesque from the '50s. It was so raunchy and so innocent at the same time! I've shaken and shimmied at lots of rockin' gigs; like GreazeFest as part of The Bad Moon Company's set, at a Casino Rumlbers gig during Wintersun, and with Six Foot Hick at their 2007 album launch. I was also one of the winners of Kitten Katwalk at Greazefest 2008, which was pretty darn exciting." (See page 29.)

She says her favourite '50s artist is Johnny Cash, however she does have a popular burlesque routine that she



*Red - Queensland's burlesque babe. Photo by Kristof*

performs to Elvis Presley's "Baby Let's Play House", in which she dresses up as a '50s housewife. "I put it together for a "'50s Icons" burlesque night and the crowd loved it!" How does her veganism impact on her shows? "Being a vegan burlesque performer is interesting, because traditionally feather boas and fans are standard burly-q props. I'm more than happy to use fabric instead!"

Red is also a DJ with Brisbane's community station, 4ZzZ 102.1 FM. Under the name "Dangergirl" she presents a radio show called *Aloha From The Crypt* which is listed in the *Rockin' On The Radio* guide on the back page of our magazine.

[www.myspace.com/devotchkin](http://www.myspace.com/devotchkin)

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## Rob Wog: Victoria

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Rob is a tattoo artist at Down To Earth Tattoos in Melbourne. Much of his work in the Kustom Kulture vein includes skulls, flames and human pin-striping, while his most common vintage themes include pin-up gals and Hawaiian scenes. Rob also gets asked to tattoo the word "vegan" on many Melbournians, when they learn that he himself is vegan. "I've been vegan for twelve years now, but I was vegetarian before that for about three years." And his favourite vegan food? "Good old Italian home made pasta!"

Rob is also a musician, playing



**Rob - tattoo artist from Melbourne**

drums in one band and performing vocals in another. When I asked him who is his all-time favourite '50s artist, he answered "Oh God, that's a hard question, but I'd have to say Ray Charles, Little Richard, Elvis and Chuck Berry. This list can go on and on..."

There are so many great photos of Rob's ink work that it was difficult to choose only one to accompany his profile. See page 32. One of his recent jobs included etching the words "Rock and Roll" along somebody's forearm. Check out some more of his tattoo art on his company webpage, and for all enquiries you can call the store during business hours on 03 9379 9540.

[www.myspace.com/downtoearthtattoos](http://www.myspace.com/downtoearthtattoos)

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## **DeadCat Dan: NSW**

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DeadCat Dan is double bass player with Sydney band the Mother Truckers, complete with creepers and a psychobilly-style pompadour. He has been a muso for a long time, telling me "I've been slappin' bass for about two years but I'd played guitar for fifteen years before that." Dan has been involved with the Mother Truckers for about twelve months, but like many musicians, he is also involved in a couple of other side projects that allow him to express himself through variety of rockin' styles. He also likes to get out on the



**Dan - slappin' bass in New South Wales**

rock'n'roll dance floor when he's not on stage.

Dan has been vegan for two years and his lifestyle choice ultimately lead him to leave his profession as a chef. He is currently working as a bicycle mechanic, which he totally enjoys. He says his favourite style of music from the '50s is "definitely rockabilly", and his favourite '50s artist is the great Johnny Cash.

In recent months the Mother Truckers have shared the bill with other great local rockin' acts, including The Fuelers, The Creepers, Nervous Wreckers, Firebird and the Pat Capocci Combo. Be sure to check out Dan's great slappin' style on the songs that are currently featured on the Mother Truckers webpage.

[www.myspace.com/mothertruckersrock](http://www.myspace.com/mothertruckersrock)

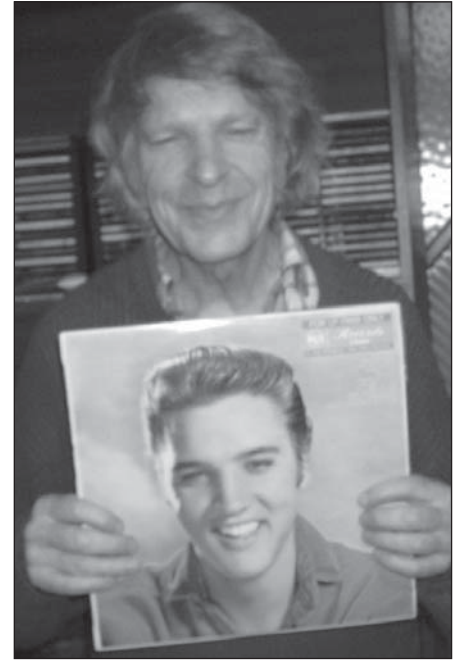
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## **Joe Sampson: Victoria**

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Joe from Bonbeach in Victoria is a university lecturer who has published papers on mathematics. He is also an ARRAS member (2045) and he likes to go out rock'n'roll dancing. Joe has been vegan since 1994, a total of fourteen years. He has recently dedicated a webpage to his ideals and it's a great place to source information and medical facts about vegan nutrition.

One visit to Joe's website will reveal that he adores US vocalist



**Joe - ARRAS member 2045**

Vikki Carr, who first rose to stardom in the 1960s, but he has a huge music collection and there is a special place in his heart for the music of the '50s. He says, "My favourite '50s artist is Buddy Holly, and my all-time favourite rock'n'roll song is "Wear My Ring Around Your Neck" by Elvis Presley." Amongst his other rock'n'roll favourites are Rocky Burnette and Darrel Higham, who have both toured Australia in the past couple of years.

Joe recently attended the World Vegan Day celebrations in Abbotsford, Melbourne, where his brother Kevin performed some live music for an enthusiastic crowd, but Joe has a musical streak of his own, which he expresses by playing piano and writing songs. He joined our Australian Rock'n'Roll Appreciation Society in January this year.

[www.myspace.com/joevegan](http://www.myspace.com/joevegan)

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The vegan diet has been around for centuries, and some cultures, such as the long-lived Hunza people of the Himalayas, have thrived on it for thousands of years, but the broader vegan movement in Western culture has been credited to a carpenter from the UK called Donald Watson. Mr Watson was responsible for coining the term "vegan" and founding The Vegan Society in 1944.

Today, a vegetarian diet is often viewed as a mere stepping stone



along the path to the vegan lifestyle, and you might be surprised to learn that there are some famous 1950s music names who have chosen a vegetarian diet for themselves. Some names include blues legend BB King, Broadway beauty Doris Day, Italian rock'n'roller Adriano Celentano and our own local star Lonnie Lee. (See *Big Beat of the '50s* issue 107 to read an article by Lonnie.) Then there is Jimmy Clanton, the '50s teen idol, always a musician and now a vegan. Jimmy was the featured artist in our *Bayou Beat* column of issue 109.

Mainstream society once branded all vegans as hippies, but the plain truth is that vegans are like snowflakes – there are no two alike. You can find them today as politicians or plumbers, lawyers or luthiers, accountants or actors. There are a large number of contemporary musicians calling themselves vegan, and Australia has a horde of them, often promoting their ideals in their songs. While it was once viewed as a passing fad, it is now expected that in the coming years we will see veganism playing a bigger role in our urban communities as our younger generations grow up better informed about their impact on the planet and (hopefully) wanting to make a difference in the world.

Music, of course, has always played an important role in our cultural evolution, and there's no reason why the rock'n'roll scene should be left behind. Thank you to Red, Rob, Dan and Joe for sharing their profiles with *Big Beat of the '50s*. I'm looking forward to meeting other local rockers whose lifestyle choices are making our rockin' world a whole lot cooler.

*Kiz - Member 1838*

**Footnotes:** *The Straight Edge (Str8 Edge) movement took its name from a song by US punk band Minor Threat in 1980. For more information visit: [www.straightedge.com](http://www.straightedge.com)*

If you know of other vegans who are involved in the '50s rock'n'roll scene we would love to hear about them. Contact the Editor: [bigbeat@dodo.com.au](mailto:bigbeat@dodo.com.au)



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## DVD GIVEAWAY

We have one Elvis movie on DVD to give away called **Love Me Tender (1956)**.

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or by standard mail:  
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This competition is open to all **current ARRAS members** and entries must be received by Sunday 18 January 2009. Good luck!

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