



# WISHIN' ON A STAR

BY DEBORAH MINTER

It's been a long time since she made the wish to be a country music star, but **CONNIE KIS ANDERSEN** can attest to the principle of never giving up on wishes.

**S**he's been an Aussie since her parents emigrated from Denmark when she was two years old. The 'Lucky Country' has been very good to the Andersen family, but it wasn't always easy for a girl named 'Kisa'. "Kisa is a traditional Danish name, but when I got to school here in Australia, the kids gave me a hard time," Connie Kis said. "So I asked my mum what my middle name was. Luckily I was named after **CONNIE FRANCIS**; my parents were fans. I told the kids my name was 'Connie' from then on. My family still call me 'Kisa,' but my Australian friends call me 'Connie.' As an adult, I reclaimed my full name."

"I've been a musician since the year dot. My first instrument was the banjo/mandolin when I was eight years old. I was playing in concerts from the time I was eleven. I was even invited to do a little spot with **SLIM DUSTY**, playing banjo/mandolin. Then I was fifteen when I was involved in a serious car accident; I don't know if that 'changed my life' or anything, but I got more serious after that." Connie Kis put her efforts into her education and succeeded in gaining a degree in Psychology and Economics and a Diploma in Education.

Connie Kis worked as a teacher for many years and still teaches at TAFE colleges in WA. "That helps finance all these grandiose projects," she laughed. "For years I put off recording a CD, because I know how hard it is to promote it; how many hours and miles you have to put in. I was pitching my material as a songwriter, mostly outside Australia because, as you know, most Australian artists write their own material.

"One of my songs caught the attention of **GARY BUCK**, a producer in Nashville. He rang me, wanting to know if I had more material and was I the singer on the demo - and that's how it all started. Of course, I just fell into it; you always secretly would love to be 'discovered' and be able to sing your own music."

"I thought I was too old for all that. I didn't consider myself to be a marketable product, but the offer was there. We ended up working long distance with the musicians recording in Nashville and the vocals recorded in Perth. Gary and I also sang together on the duet *Let's Keep It Simple*. Sadly, he passed away before the project was finished."

Connie Kis completed the five tracks and released the EP *Keeping It Simple* in 2004.

Nashville engineer Tom Pick, who has produced 14 Grammys and 43 chart hits, then took over the role of producer for her full album *Gone Wishin'*. This time, she made the trip over to Nashville to work in the studio there. The album has just been completed, combining new tracks with re-mixes of the five tracks from the EP, including previously released singles *It's Too Late* and *I'll Get Back About That*.

"I worked with the A team in Nashville," Connie Kis said. "It was really encouraging that they were so enthusiastic about my music. I was approached by the manager of **KEITH COCHRAN**, a young rising star in Nashville, about doing a duet with Keith. He just played in front of 35,000 people in America. What can you say? Sure! Tom Pick asked if I would like to record one of his songs. Sure! That's one of the duets with Keith, *It Sure Gets Late Early*." She also recorded the classic *Ring Of Fire* with Keith.

Her new single is the title track *Gone Wishin'*, a pretty track about hopes and prayers for peace. "For years I've just been plugging away and now everything is coming together at last." It's never a waste of time to wish on a star.