

## A PART OF MUSIC HISTORY RELEASED IN 2012

**THE SCHNEIDER SISTERS – RITA & MARY – THE EARLY YEARS**

*The Schneider Sisters - Rita and Mary - The Early Years* is a rare and treasured part of Australian music history. Over 50 years may have passed, but now these timeless tracks have, for the first time, been remastered and available on compact disc (and also digitally via iTunes). This album showcases the careers of two of Australia's most beloved performers and songwriters. Rita and Mary Schneider became household names through their live shows and recordings and *The Early Years* celebrates the very first recordings they did together in the 1950s.

From the first song to the last, this is an album which emulates the good fun the sisters had performing together. Each song transports you to what country and rock n' roll music was like in the 50s in Australia, and in fact, the single taken from the album, *Washboard Rock N' Roll* is the first rock'n' roll song to be written and recorded by an Australian artist in Australia. "We were in Melbourne and were getting ready to record an E.P. the next day

but we only had three songs and we needed four, so we sat down together and wrote '*Washboard Rock N' Roll*' in an hour," Mary says. Mary and her late sister Rita were an amazing double act, not only writing all their own material, but performing around the world. They earned themselves stellar reputations that few artists at that time, or since, have equaled.

Mary Schneider says it was time to release these classics. "For many years I had been asked if I had any recordings of my sister Rita and myself (The Schneider Sisters)," she says. "We were always going to put out some of our early tracks on CD, but never got around to it, so I made up my mind that this year I would do so. Also, it was important to me that I put this together for my beautiful daughter Melinda, who has carried on the Schneider tradition with her very successful career. The Schneider Sisters were 25 years together in a double act, but of course, since then Rita wrote and recorded six of her own comedy releases and I recorded many yodelling albums."

These historical tracks, recorded live in one take, reflect the originality, versatility and upbeat nature of a sister act who were years ahead of their time. There is no doubt that the Schneider Sisters made an indelible impact on the Australian music scene. They helped to pave the way for the future of Australian country music and wrote an impressive part of music history. Most of the songs on this album were penned by Rita and Mary. With this in mind, it's easy to see why these two incredible ladies are still revered as Aussie music royalty today. They have been presented with many prestigious awards including 'Roll Of Renown' and 'Lifetime Achievement Award'.

Behind the scenes, the Schneider Sisters always had a special connection. "When I lost my beautiful sister Rita, I was completely devastated," Mary remembers. "She was my best friend, songwriting partner and motivator. She was a talented, generous, warm person with a strong bent towards comedy. She loved to make people laugh. I miss her madly, so in her memory, I have put these tracks together for you, I'm sure she would be pleased. I dedicate this CD to her, after all those happy years together."

An apt dedication, *The Schneider Sisters - The Early Years* will also become an archive of Australian music history. "It bought back many happy memories for me and a few wistful tears," Mary says. "I hope it will bring a smile and brighten your day."

***The Schneider Sisters – Rita & Mary – The Early Years* is released on January 16, 2012 through WJO Distribution. For more information, please visit [www.maryschneider.com.au](http://www.maryschneider.com.au)**

