

Lee Wilson Bio

The *Dusk* that you hear today (at www.lee-wilson.com) existed for a long time only on an old dusty reel-to-reel tape, stuffed in a cardboard box at the back of a clothes closet.

Lee wrote and recorded the song years ago as a college student in Austin, Texas, where he occasionally performed at local coffee houses and student parties. After college, he moved to Little Rock, and although he continued to play music as a hobby, the tape of original songs was slowly forgotten.

Meanwhile, he found that his passion for delta blues was shared by a few avant-garde Little Rock blues fans. Fast friends, they formed a non-profit organization in the 1980s to promote the blues, a then-dying art form, in Little Rock. Influenced by his new friends, Lee used his spare time to organize talent for shows at local universities and city parks. He shared the billing (and the audience) with the late **Larry Totsy Davis** (who wrote *Texas Flood*, one of Stevie Ray Vaughn's staples), **John Craig** (former guitarist with the Ike and Tina Turner Review), and Arkansas bluesman **Cedell Davis**.

"One of our more interesting adventures was a concert we billed 'Drive-In Blues.' The city wanted us to have some sort of business structure before they let us use their amphitheater for a big concert. So, we looked elsewhere, found an abandoned drive-in theater, and rented it for a few thousand dollars. We bought lumber and nails, and built a stage under the screen. **Son Seals** was our headliner, and we brought up **Johnny Walton** from Texarkana, and **Si Perry** from Pine Bluff. We sold enough tickets to pay for renting the drive-in, but that was about all. The day of the concert, Son Seals (who lived in Chicago) failed to show, and the crowd got mad. They left trash everywhere, and did malicious things like stuffing beer cans down the toilets. There were only about ten of us who had put the entire show together, start to finish. We built the stage, sold tickets, bargained for sponsors, and set up the sound system. And we were the ones sweating in the sun the next day, picking up mega trash and cleaning the restrooms. We learned some hard lessons," Lee recalled.



The group of enthusiasts eventually started hosting the annual Arkansas River Blues Festival. Lee and friends were the opening act for festival headliners such as **John Lee Hooker**, **Johnny Winter**, **Albert Collins**, **Little Milton**, **Lonnie Mack**, and **Honeyboy Edwards**. Later, Lee teamed with the Little Rock Zoo to create a Blues in the Zoo concert, which he opened for headliner **Dr. John**. He also performed several live acoustic blues broadcasts at Arkansas radio station KABF.

By the 1990s, the blues had become popular once again across the nation. Lee stopped organizing concerts, got married, started a family, and moved away from Little Rock. Eventually his guitars were set aside.

In 2003, Lee started performing at open stages around Denver. Playing the guitars that had been neglected for several years gave him a fresh perspective, and he began writing songs and composing music for solo acoustic guitar. He discovered the old reel-to-reel tape that had been neglected for so long, and found that the magic of *Dusk* still shone through. The other tunes on Lee's CD include slide on 6-string and 12-string guitars, accelerated finger-style romps, and lazy melodies with titles about kites and snowflakes. Some of his compositions are blues-based, and others feature elements of Bossa Nova, classical music, folk, and jazz. Put your feet up and enjoy a listen.