

Tom Chelston



Born in 1961, music was at the very center of Tom's New Jersey childhood. His father, Tony was a professional drummer and Tom was exposed to an eclectic blend of music at a very early age. With a house full of instruments and creative ideas, there was always a jam session or a “fake” newscast or a play in development. From a starring role in the basement on Walnut Avenue to “Roadie” status and an occasional tambourine gig with dad's band, **Tom developed great musical desire and marginal guitar skills.**

The mid seventies brought new challenges and a few opportunities. Tom had a run-in with a Ford LTD while walking along a Texas farm road. The next thirteen months were filled with surgeries and self-inflicted guitar lessons. With a stethoscope taped to an old Hagstrom acoustic guitar, Tom improved his guitar chops slightly and began to write his first songs. These tunes were a big hit among family members but the praise was mostly obligatory (and rightfully so). When it was clear that stardom might take a bit longer, Tom set the guitar aside and joined the Navy. Tom served 6 years as a Navy Corpsman (8404) and wound up with the USMC Infantry as a combat medic. He continued to perform his music in each port of call including USO performances in Japan. He joked that even a marginal song followed by “God bless the Marines and America” would always draw loud applause.

Following his service, Tom settled in Southern California where he met the members of his first band, “**The Verge**”, in an operating room and during a rather complex surgical case. The Verge struck radio gold with “**Newport Breezin**” from their first, self-titled release and this led to a few paying gigs. Tom continued to do session work in Los Angeles and he released a solo record that found some air with the novelty song “**I’m In A Mess With The I.R.S.**” in country radio. One major snag.....a New Jersey Cowboy? September 11, 2001 was a turning point for Tom and his music. Suddenly, there was a new purpose brought alive by the tragic loss of life and liberty America experienced on that terrible day. Tom launched his own music company, **TomSongs**, and released “**American Songs**” in November, 2001. His song, “**Since September**”, found more air but this time, the response was worldwide. Tom performed his compassionate “9/11” songs across the country and became involved in family/first responder health advocacy at ground zero. Tom said that he became a witness to the utter disregard for these victims, heroes and survivors by the U.S. Government. As of this writing, the U.S. Government and the State of New York continue to ignore the needs of these humans. The official story of 9/11 and the simply **inadequate 9/11 Commission Report** serve as a reminder that the current U.S. Government is not “for the people or by the people”.

Enter Iraq. Tom's next release, “**Brick**”, would be his greatest commercial success with **CD sales and downloads in more than 60 countries.** Tom scored **2007 Grammy recognition** with two entries. **Brick** received a “**Folk Album Of The Year**” entry and surprisingly, the popular track “**Impeach**” received a “**Song Of The Year**” entry. He has toured America during the past two years and the message delivered by Brick has resonated with a worldwide audience.

In early 2008, Tom moved his circus tent to an undisclosed location in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado where he is at work on his next CD. In a recent radio interview, Tom suggested he might put the political music aside in favor of a few sappy love songs. **Don't count on it!**