

# Johnny Bond JP

1925 - 23 April 2015



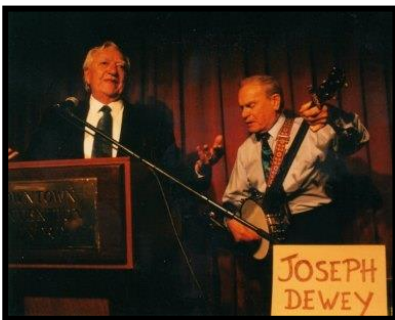
Albert Edward (Johnny) Bond was born in London, one of six siblings. His mother was a professional singer who taught him to play the piano-accordion and banjo. His forte was [comedy](#), dressing up as a cockney pearly king and performing humorous Music Hall songs by English artists such as George Formby and Frank Crumit.

Johnny immigrated to New Zealand in 1958 searching for better weather. His wife Betty worked with one of the founders of *Little Howick Theatre* who found out that Johnny was a carpenter and put him to work making sets. He featured in many more plays as well as around 20 television commercials. A highlight of his television work was a musical which went live for three weeks and he also featured as a clerk of the court in the series *Aerobus: The aftermath*. He appeared on *Sing, Happen Inn* and did a stint with Alma Johnson in the children's series, *The Old Curiosity Shop*.

In 1961 the folk trio *The Convairs* was formed consisting of Johnny (vocals, banjo), Michael Dolan (vocals, guitar) and Phil Seth (vocals, guitar). They spent 18 months practising together before entering and winning the radio talent show *Have A Shot* on 1ZB. As part of their prize they recorded their first single *Lemon Tree* for the *Mascot* label.



In 1963 they competed in the television version of *Have A Shot* and came third. Nevertheless this exposure led to a five-year record contract with *HMV* and their very own six-part television series entitled *Give My Love An Apple*, which was also the title of their debut single on *HMV*. The television series was a great success and led to a second series, which was called *Convairs On Camera* – also the name of their debut album released by *HMV* in September 1963. A steady stream of singles were released which were all promoted on their own national weekly radio show. In 1964 they embarked on a tour of Australia where they appeared on the television show *Bandstand* and headlined at the *Tamworth Festival*. Johnny left the group in 1965. In 2005 *EMI* released a 28 track CD called *Little Boxes – The Very Best of The Convairs*.



Johnny and fellow Londoner Doug Aston ran an *Old Time Variety Show* at Otahuhu's *Turquoise Room* for three years, ending in 1976. He also appeared on Wally Lewis' *Wheel Tappers and Shunters Club* show. In 2008 Bond featured in a *VAC Meet and Greet Sofa Interview* with David Hartnell at the *Gables Pub* in Herne Bay.

In later years after retiring as a property valuer for *State Advances Corporation* he played in a jazz trio in RSAs. He also worked as a Marriage and Death Celebrant.

Over the years the Variety Artists Club honoured him with a number of awards, the 1982 Scroll of Honour, the 1986 Benny, 1996 Life Membership and the 2000 Rielly Comedy Award.

Johnny passed away at the *Bruce McLaren Retirement Village* in April 2015, aged 90. He and Betty had a daughter, Maureen.