

## **Chuck LeMonds: Biography**

Chuck LeMonds has been writing songs and performing for the past 30 years and continues to do so from his home near Graz, Austria. In June 2006, he released his 6th recording Pink Roshi, recorded with his Austrian band in Vienna during the previous year. The release of a live CD is in the works, as well as a solo recording featuring only vocals and acoustic guitar. Chuck LeMonds was born in St. Louis, Missouri and grew up between the noise of urban excess and the rural pastoral settings of Maryland, where he lived as a boy in the servants quarters of an old plantation, and later in the Appalachian Mountains, and then amongst lakes, rivers and dairy farms of Wisconsin.

Chuck's mother Marilyn was a talented singer, piano and clarinet player who's desire to become a professional musician, was put on hold forever, when her first child was born at the age of 16. All of her 11 children benefited greatly from her love of music. All the children learned to sing, and most learned to play an instrument. Musicals, gospel, folk songs, as well as songs that were heard on the radio at that time in the late 60s were sung. Chuck, perhaps the most shy of all the children, was the only one to go on and have music play such a central role in his life.

At the age of 13, Chuck LeMonds family moved to the Appalachian Mountains near Front Royal, Virginia. Here he heard Bluegrass music for the first time. He borrowed a banjo from his brothers friend and started learning from records, until he discovered Earl Scruggs standard work, which became his bible. At 15 he got a guitar from his mother for his birthday. She sent him to the car to get something and there it was lying on the back seat. It was a great joyous moment.

Songs from Dylan, Young, Guthrie, as well as the Stanley Brothers followed. Between the age of 15 and 30, Chuck LeMonds lived mainly in Wisconsin in old farm houses shared with friends. At 18, he started writing his own songs and played in many different folk and bluegrass groups. They played mostly between Minneapolis and Chicago and all small towns in between. They played festivals and small clubs, live radio programs with and without audiences.

At the age of 22, a dear friend of Chucks who had lived many years in Europe, encouraged Chuck and a friend Tim Haub, to go to Europe and play on the streets and have an adventure. Six months later they were standing on the streets of Munich playing to the crowds. Its still a huge mystery how he travelled for 3 ½ months carrying a banjo, a guitar and a very heavy backpack while hitching and riding trains. Upon returning to Wisconsin via New York, and then Washington D.C., and thumbing from Washington, getting a ride with Mike Seeger and spending a few cold nights at the Hope Rescue Mission in West Bend, Indiana, Tim and Chuck lived out the cold Wisconsin winter down on the farm eating the yield from their garden they planted before embarking on their world tour: red beets, carrots and lots of potatoes.

Many trips to Europe followed. In 1991 Chuck LeMonds moved to Austria to live. He lives currently in east Styria, not far from the borders of Hungary and Slovenia, with its rolling hills, a view of the Alps and vineyards. Chucks band, sometimes known as The Impermanence, has been together for 8 years. They travelled to the states in 2000 for two tours, but play mainly in Austria and Germany. For more info: [www.chucklemonds.org](http://www.chucklemonds.org)