I've been thinking about what drives me. What I strive for. What I want to achieve out of life. Being a typical male, I don't really think about much. The future is the future and that's the way I like it. I'm a pretty happy fellow. I love my family and I think I'm lucky to live the life I do. I know not everybody gets to do what they love, and I sure do love the singing.

Part of me feels like I've just been treading water for the last few years, but part of me feels differently. I think on a professional level, that may be true. Our family has gone through a lot in its short life, and getting the kids ready for full-time schooling was a major focus. It's wonderful that they've achieved so much and seem to be happy and settled at school. With Rhona working a little more now too, I get quite a bit of free time during the week by myself. It's this time I should be using to maybe further things along with my music, but I'm just not motivated at the moment.

I really enjoy being alone, and I now that I've got this time, I don't want to lose it. I think it might just be the frame of mind I'm in. I've been telling myself that I was going to finally pull my finger out and get on with recording the album I started over six years ago. Granted I didn't spend a lot of time on it, but all I have to show for my limited efforts is two demos, and five half-finished songs. The main reason I wanted to record an album was just to have something with me at gigs. "Do you have a CD, mate?" "Oh yes, here you go, I hope you enjoy it."

It's something I still want to do, but it's not my main priority. I write songs very sporadically too. The most recent song I wrote was in October last year. I wanted to have something fresh for my Telethon appearance, so I vowed to have it written and ready to go with a window of about a week. I tend to work better with a deadline, I guess, and it was unlike anything I wrote before. Similarly themed as songs like John Lennon's 'Imagine', it was called 'Your Sons and Daughters' and its message was to show the trickle-down effect the words and the actions of adults can have on their children. I was quite happy with how it came out.

Songwriting is a bizarre process, and when I read in Paul Kelly's "How to Make Gravy" that he thinks that doesn't know how to write a song, I knew what he meant. He went on to explain that if he knew how to do it, he would write a new song every day. Amen to that, brother. When I wrote 'Your Sons and Daughters' I was working on something totally different. I had some nice chord changes and a bit of a melody and kept playing with it, but I wasn't happy with what was coming out. After many frustrating tries I abandoned what I had and started afresh. Within about half an hour I had written 'Your Sons and Daughters' and it was complete. No extra lyrics needed, no extra hook required, it was good to go. I've had a few songs I've written come out

that way...bang! They just land and I have no idea where they come from.

'Joanie' is another example of this. A coupla years back, Court and I had started composing an album together about a super hero who discovers his power of being able to slow down time. We met fairly regularly for a few months and came up with about half the concept fleshed out. It was back in the days when Court's nocturnal activity was quite high, so I'd have to kill an hour or so before arriving at his place. One of these days I sat in our old Delica with my guitar and just hoped to come up with an idea or a bit of tune to present to Court. In around forty five minutes, I'd written the whole song, except for a couple of lyrics that Court later helped me tweak. Again, just another moment of inspiration, and a fruitful one at that.

Those two songs are the last two songs that I have written. I think that has been the sum of my creative output for around three or four years. My biggest hang-up when it comes to writing songs is that I don't know what to write about. I get a little worried that I'm going to come up with something terribly unoriginal or subconsciously rip off someone's tune. I don't like writing anything too cliched either and I tend to steer clear of the 'love-you-till-the-end-of-time' sort of ballads. There have been instances where I've sat down with my guitar and not been able to write anything new. One particularly infuriating session was when I decided to head to Kings Park while I waited for Lochie to finish his intervention therapy at Star School. I figured that the view and the time I had to kill would yield something quite special. No such luck. It was like sitting on the toilet and being constipated.

I just don't have that drive to create an original album. I do want to do it, and I'm sure I'll get around to doing it, but I'm quite happy singing covers and the occasional original in pubs. I want it to be raw, like John Lennon's 'Plastic Ono Band' but with a little bit of polish via Beck's 'Sea Change'. Personal songs with minimal production, mostly me and a guitar or a piano. Have a few songs with drums and bass just to break it up a bit. I'd like to have a bit of a theme running through it too, so it didn't just seem like a bunch of songs. I suppose it worked for George Harrison though, stockpiling in the last years of The Beatles.