

Theme Song A Little Boy Called Smiley
Written and Composed
by
Clyde Collins

Wilbur Sampson was a reliable composer in the nineteen fifties, who worked with Lee Robinson and Chips Rafferty on a number of films, including 1954's *King of the Coral Sea* and 1958's *Dust in the Sun*:



FILM-MAKERS Chips Rafferty (left) and Lee Robinson (right) discuss with musician Wilbur Sampson the Georges Auric score for their "Walk Into Paradise." Among their "discoveries" in previous films are Rod Taylor and Victoria Shaw, now in Hollywood.

The more interesting story perhaps concerns the theme song and its origins, as *Smiley Gets A Gun* featured the song (*A Little Boy Called*) *Smiley* by Clyde Collins.

This tune was written in time for the promotion of the first film, which sometimes leads it to be confused with the song *Smiley*, sung by Shirley Abicair for the first film.

The confusion is compounded by alternating titles (*A little boy*) *Smiley*, and (*That Little Boy Called Smiley*), and Johnny Young's later song *Smiley*, which was based on Normie Rowe's experiences in Vietnam, and has nothing to do with either the original film or its sequel, but was also a hit.

Collins was a popular composer always willing to cash in on trends - he also wrote a tribute song to *Robbery Under Arms*.

In the case of *Smiley*, he hit gold, with the song released in time to be used to publicise the first film. It upstaged the track written for the film, and was then recycled by the producers for the sequel.



78 Pacific PB-122 1956

(A Little Boy Called) Smiley (Clyde Collins) (J. Albert & Son) Vocals:
Ray Dickson Red Perksey and His Orchestra And Chorus

45 Pacific PB-122 1956

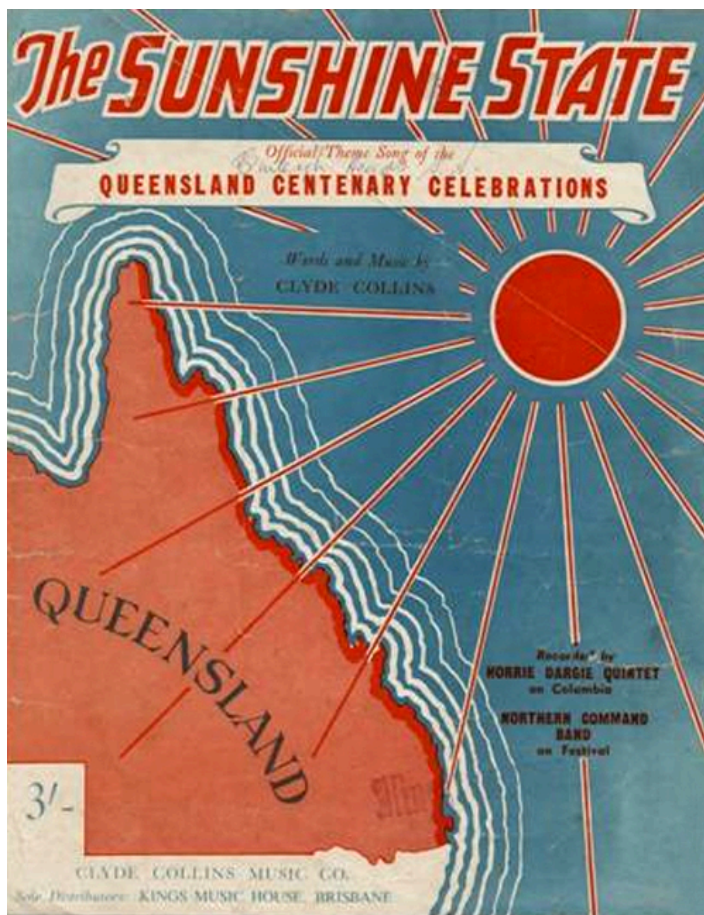
(A Little Boy Called) Smiley (Clyde Collins) (J. Albert & Son) Vocals:
Ray Dickson Red Perksey and His Orchestra And Chorus

The Ray Dickson version reached #9 in Sydney, #2 in Melbourne and #1 in Brisbane, charting in Brisbane and Sydney November-December 1957, and in Melbourne in November 1957.

Clyde Collins (below, left) was a prolific Queensland composer:



He also wrote *The Sunshine State* for the centenary of Queensland in 1959, and it is still performed by bands and choirs on Queensland Day, 6th June:



For NLA holdings of the works of Collins, go [here](#) for details.

The Pop Archives website contains invaluable information and links on the *Smiley* and *Smiley Gets a Gun* themes, [here](#).

The *Smiley* theme was also covered by Joan Wilton on 78 and 45:

78 Diaphon DS406 1956
Smiley Vocals: Joan Wilton

45 Diaphon DS-406 1956
Smiley (2'52") (Collins, Arr: J. Bamford) (Albert) Vocals: Joan Wilton With Paul Lombard and His Orchestra



It was also covered on 78 by Bob Gibson and his orchestra:



78 Columbia DO 3825 1958
(That Little Boy Called) Smiley (Collins) Vocals: Red Moore Bob Gibson & His Orchestra

And it was covered by the Leslie Ross Singers

LP W&G WG-B-1506

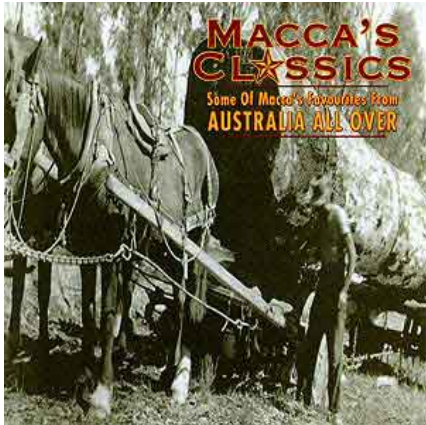
A Little Boy Called Smiley Vocals: Leslie Ross Singers.

The song was released in time to promote the original *Smiley*, as well as appearing in the sequel, as the sheet music release makes clear:

The image shows two pages from a sheet music book. The left page contains musical notation for the song, including a piano introduction and several systems of music with lyrics. The right page is a promotional poster for the film *(A Little Boy Called) SMILEY*. It features a black and white photograph of a young boy wearing a hat. Text on the poster includes the title, the composer's name (Clyde Collins), and the names of the film's producers and distributor (CinemaScope).

This image shows two pages of sheet music for the song *(A Little Boy Called) SMILEY*. The left page is the beginning of the song, starting with a piano introduction and the first system of music. The right page continues the musical notation and lyrics. The sheet music is arranged for piano and voice, with lyrics written below the notes.

The Leslie Ross Singers version turned up in 1992 on the ABC CD called *Macca's Classics*, some of Macca's favourites from *Australia All Over*.



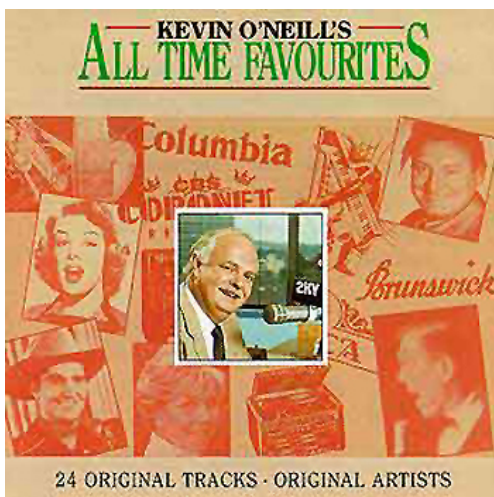
CD ABC 848 230-2 CA 848 230-4 1992

Macca's Classics

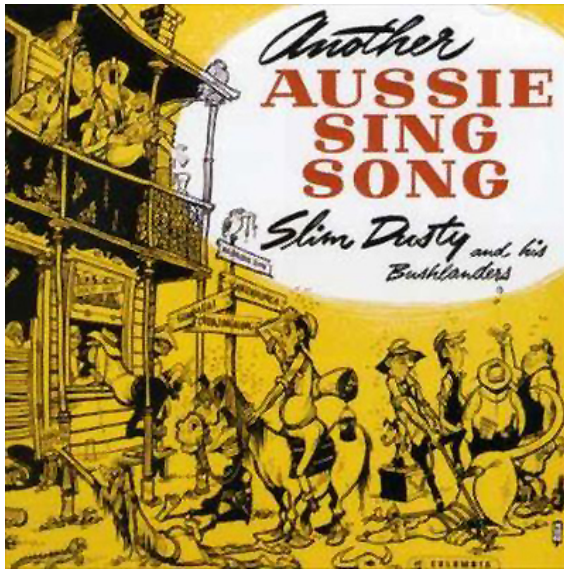
Track 2a: A Little Boy Called Smiley (medley)

(Collins/O'Hagan) (Albert/allan) Vocals: The Leslie Ross Singers.

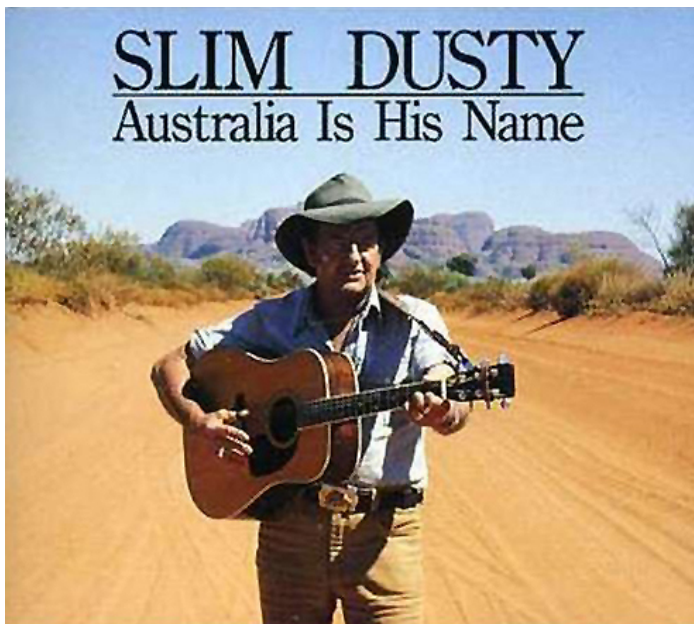
It was also collected by Kevin O'Neill on *Kevin O'Neill's All Time Favourites*:



The theme song has also been collected and covered on a number of LPs by a number of artists, including Clive Wayne and by Slim Dusty, who recorded the song on *Another Aussie Sing Song*, first released in September 1963 and now on CD.



The song was re-released in November 1985 as a medley on CD 2 track 13 on the compilation *Australia Is His Name*:



The film also was one of a number of inspirations for John Watson's (book and lyrics) *Smiley the Musical*, first staged in Redcliffe Queensland in 1992, which has a barebones website [here](#).

