

Beverley Craven

B I O G R A P H Y

Beverley Craven was born in Sri Lanka in July 1963 - an unusually exotic location for a Home Counties girl - but grew up in the English countryside next door to a pig and poultry farm on the Herts/Bucks borders with an older brother and two younger twin sisters.

At the age of seven she began taking piano lessons, encouraged by her mother who was herself an accomplished classical violinist and music teacher. But it was her swimming career that Beverley concentrated on throughout her early teens, competing in the Hertfordshire County Championships, the Nationals and the English Schools Swimming Association representing Division 10 against, amongst others, **Sharon Davies**.

She didn't buy her first pop record until she was 15, but was then immediately entranced by singer/songwriters such as **Elton John, Judie Tzuke, Stevie Wonder** and, in particular, **Kate Bush**.

At 18 she left school - and home - for the bright lights of London, only to find herself spending the next few years squatting, waitressing, selling life insurance, making sandwiches for Sealink ferries and auditioning for a number of quite unsuitable bands. Having failed to find any sympathetic musicians with whom to play, at the age of 22 Beverley decided to strike out on her own as a piano-playing singer songwriter.

Following a brief stint touring with soul legend **Bobby Womack** (who tried to sign Beverley to his record label in LA), she recorded her first set of demos and attracted the attention of **Go West's** manager, John Glover. He quickly set about securing her a major music publishing deal with **Warner Brothers** in 1988, and from there, a highly-prized 'development contract' with the **Epic** record label was but a small step. The seeds of a bright new musical career had been sown...

In November 1988, when Beverley was 25, she was sent to Los Angeles to work with some established songwriters and to 'learn her craft' playing in bars and restaurants. The experience was "*unproductive*" she confesses, preferring even now to write alone. Soon afterwards, again in LA, she made her first attempt to cut her debut album with **Stewart Levine** of **Simply Red** fame. However, Beverley felt the slick professionalism of the recordings failed to

capture the naïveté of her work and was relieved when her A&R man, **Muff Winwood** at Epic, agreed. She went on to record with former Yardbird **Paul Samwell Smith**, whose other production credits included **Cat Stevens**, **Carly Simon** and **All About Eve**.

The album, ***Beverley Craven*** was eventually released in July 1990 and, although initially failed to set the UK alight, found immediate acceptance in several countries throughout Europe.

It wasn't until May 1991, after an appearance on the **Wogan** TV show and **Top of the Pops** that the album finally took off in the UK. Beverley's appearance in a charity concert at **Wembley Arena** in aid of Kurdish refugees, (televised to an estimated audience of 50,000,000) undoubtedly gave ***Promise Me*** its final push to arrive at number 3 a week later, and the album remained in the charts for over a year.

To date Beverley has sold more than 4 million albums worldwide and more than twenty years later, ***Promise Me*** is still played all over the world. Often referred to as a 'standard', her song has been covered by numerous artists in many different languages and performed by contestants on television's **The Voice**.

A string of hits including ***Holding On*** and ***Woman To Woman*** swiftly followed and Beverley secured her position as one of Britain's most successful female singer songwriters.

An 18-date tour of the UK followed, including sell-out shows at the **Hammersmith Odeon** and the **Birmingham Symphony Hall**, the latter of which was filmed by the **BBC** and released by **Sony** as the video ***Memories***.

Beverley has also performed at several royal and celebrity events including concerts for **The Prince's Trust**, **The Royal Variety Show**, **Save The Children** for **Princess Anne** and **Sir Bob Monkhouse's** 70th birthday party, as well **Capital Radio's** **Help A London Child** charity, **Night of The Proms** and a **Unicef** gala hosted by **Audrey Hepburn** and **Roger Moore** to name but a few.

In February 1992, Beverley performed at the **Brit Awards** following her nomination in no less than three categories, and that year she walked away with the prestigious title of **Best British Newcomer**. Beverley was eight months pregnant when she sang at the Brits and she gave birth to her first child, Mollie Megan less than a month later.

She spent much of 1992 revelling in her newfound motherhood yet found time to write and record ***Love Scenes***, the critically acclaimed follow-up to her

double-platinum debut album. It reached number 4 in the UK charts the following year, spawning the hit singles *Love Scenes* and *Mollie's Song*.

That same year Beverley embarked on a twelve-date concert tour in the UK, and the following Christmas played a sell-out show at London's prestigious **Royal Albert Hall**.

Beverley has also performed at numerous corporate events including a private show on the island of Madeira where she sang with **Michael McDonald**, a surprise after-dinner show for **Ford Motors** in Portugal and even a birthday party for a prince!

Shortly after releasing her third album, *Mixed Emotions* in 2000 and somewhat "disillusioned by the music industry" Beverley famously turned her back on the glittering show-biz parties and glamorous globe-trotting to raise her three daughters (Mollie, Brenna, and Connie) with her songwriter/musician husband **Colin Campsie**.

In 2005, whilst in the middle of promoting her *Very Best Of* compilation album, Beverley received the devastating news that she had breast cancer. Following extensive treatment she was finally given the all clear and once again stepped back into the limelight with a new album, *Close To Home* in 2009 and her first UK tour in many years, followed by a live DVD in 2010.

That collection of songs marked Beverley's return to the music scene after a ten year hiatus and showed that she had lost none of her ability to sing from the heart about the things that truly touched her: "*her strength is in her vulnerability - she sings about subjects that people can relate to.*"

Beverley published her own autobiography, *Truth Be Told*, in 2012. The book, which had been a work in progress for several years, revealed in frank and honest detail the story of her Home Counties upbringing, the rise of her music career, her battle with cancer and the aftermath including the breakdown of her marriage and her career revival. "*If everyone has a book in them then this is mine. It's been one of the most therapeutic and cleansing experiences ever!*"

In 2013 Beverley embarked on a new chapter of her life, both personally and professionally. She started writing and recording again, releasing her fourth studio album *Close To Home* in 2014. That same year she lost her younger sister Kathy to breast cancer, a disease that has had a devastating effect on the women in her family.

2015 saw the release of Beverley's most recent album *Change of Heart*, which was met with great reviews and enjoyed a brief spell in the charts.

Beverley continues to tour the UK taking her beautifully crafted music to loyal fans, both old and new.

In 2018 Beverley takes to the stage as a trio in a unique collaboration with two of her all time favourite female artistes, Judie Tzuke and Julia Fordham. The **Woman To Woman Tour**, featuring all 3 singers throughout the show, is scheduled for November this year with eighteen UK dates. *“It’s an absolute dream come true for me to be playing with such legends of the pop industry...If someone had told me years ago (when I was constantly listening to her albums in my bedroom) that I’d be sharing the stage with Judie Tzuke, I would never have believed it... I can’t wait!”*