

## Tom Wheelus Biography

Born in Hugo, Oklahoma in 1947. I am a proud member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Sang in choir and played in band. Started playing guitar in 1961. Graduated from Hugo High School in 1966. Member National Honor Society. Honor student at Southeastern State College in Durant, OK from 1966 to 1969.

Enlisted in U.S. Navy in 1969. Served on the U.S.S. Oklahoma City (clg-5) in the combat zone off the coast of Viet Nam from 1970 to 1973.

Attended Oklahoma University from 1974 to 1977 as a vocal music major. Studied with Carol Brice Carey.

Worked as an Auditor for the Oklahoma Center For Continuing Education from 1973 to 1977.

Began to volunteer with the Music Therapy Department with Central State Hospital under Jake Manzaneres in 1976.

Play Dixieland with Mint Julep from 1979 to 1980.

Began to work and Griffin Memorial Hospital as a Music Therapist in 1980. Left in 1983 to continue education.

Started attending Southwestern Oklahoma State University in 1982 majoring in Music Therapy and classical guitar.

Received a BA in Music Therapy in 1984 after completing my Music Therapy internship at the Enid State School.

Received a BS in music education in 1985 after completing student teaching and performing Senior Recital. Worked at Peach's Music from 1985 to 1986.

Began working a J.D. McCarty center for Handicapped Children in 1986. Taught 5 levels of Special Education within the school system. Taught swimming.

Began playing with the Riverboat Jazz Kings dixieland band in 1988. Continued to play with the group until 1997.

Received a Master of Music in 1989 from Southwestern. Returned to work at Griffin Memorial Hospital in 1990. Became certified in ORFF Schulwerk in 1992. Level III

Attended University of Oklahoma from 1995 to 1999. Completed 45 hour of upper level classes. Studied Kodaly Method under Joy Nelson and Sandy Knudson. Became certified in Kodaly Level III in 1999.

Began playing with Bob Mansfield in 2001 in what later became the group Gypsy Wynd. (Gypsy Wind). Retired from Griffin Memorial in 2009.

I did a presentation at the 1983 National Association of Music Therapy conference in New Orleans on the use the Sparks and Holland Melodic Intonation procedure for expressive aphasia.

In 1984 I did a presentation in Albuquerque on the use of folk instruments in music therapy. Mainly the dulcimer and the Hughes Dulcimer company "nesting of tomato boxes"