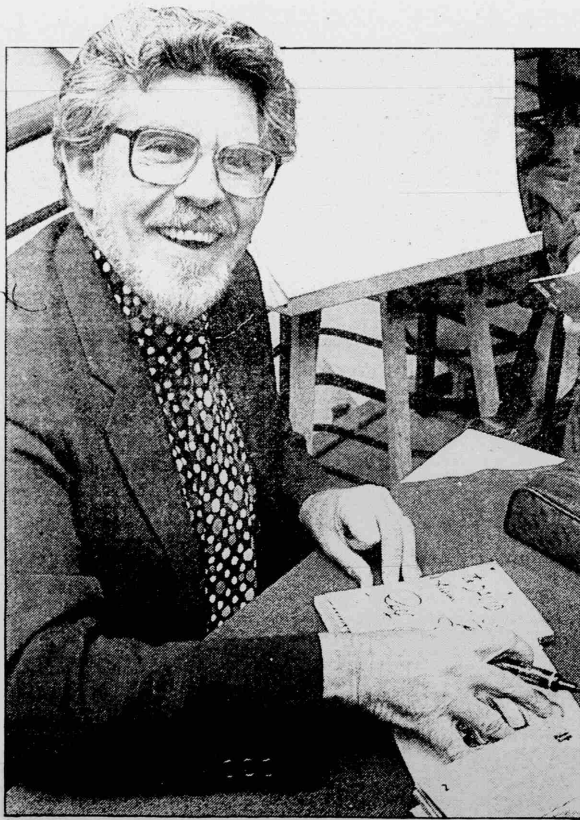


Rolf refuses to grow up!

by Pat Lidiker

'The knack of staying young and lively is to like people'

Rolf Harris



TO EVERYONE'S astonishment, including his own, that grand old man of the didgeridoo Rolf Harris is celebrating his 60th birthday next month.

And, he told me during a book signing session at Dillon's in the city centre, he doesn't see why he should ever grow up.

"I feel no different from when I first arrived in England 38 years ago in 1952," Rolf insists, "even though the white whiskers might say otherwise!"

Rolf and his wife, Alwen, who have one daughter, Bindi, live in showbiz luxury in a house by the Thames and make two visits a year back home to Australia for a few months. His brother and other members of the family still live there so Rolf likes to feel he has a foothold on each side of the world.

When he has any spare time from his busy schedule, he says, his hobbies are carving wood and semi-precious stones but apart from that he is a man who just loves working.

Admitting he has been lucky with his good health so far, he says, "I eat everything in moderation and never seem to put on weight. And I don't drink or smoke because the first gives me a headache and I hate the second."

Already a highly popular children's television entertainer and no mean artist, Rolf took up illustrating and writing books in 1986 and has never really stopped. Judging by the vast queue of fans of all ages in Leicester his second career is obviously as successful as his first.

I THINK the knack of staying young and lively is to like people and enjoy everything you do, he says simply, refusing to give in to the pangs of fibrositis in his left shoulder which signings always start up.

"And anyway, I've seen some people worrying at 30 about how they are going to pay for their own funerals - they are old way before their time. So I have decided to stay a kid for keeps."

"It's much better to keep a childlike wonder in the world around you, don't you think so?"

STAYING a kid for keeps: Rolf Harris, who celebrates his 60th birthday soon, feels it is much better to keep a childlike wonder in the world around him. In Leicester recently for a book-signing session at Dillon's, he said: "I feel no different than when I first arrived in England 38 years ago, in 1952, in spite of the white whiskers."