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Morecambe's No.1 Entertainments Guide

**AWAY DAYS
or nights out,
it's all in
SLEEPING OUT**



Rolf's ready to rock

DIDGERIDOO-PLAYING Aussie legend Rolf Harris is to play at the Dome on November 22. In between recording episodes of *Animal Hospital*, the man who made the world's strangest cover version of Led Zepelin's *Stairway To Heaven* spoke to **INGRID KENT**.

THAT beard, those square glasses, the irrepressible personality and, of course, the Aussie accent, have provided cartoonists and impersonators with endless material for comedy sketches about Rolf.

From the surreal adventures of 'Rolf Harris The Cat' in *Viz* magazine to Phil Cool with his breathy Rolf the artist impersonation, virtually everyone has had a stab at impersonating Rolf.

But if you want to see the real thing head for the Dome next week (November 22). Rolf the artist, Rolf the rock star, Rolf (OBE) and Rolf the all-round good bloke is preparing to present his *Rock and Rolf* show accompanied by his superb four-piece band.

He is taking time out from filming the BBC's

hugely popular *Animal Hospital* to appear in *Morecambe* and he says he is looking forward to the visit: "I've heard all about the wonderful views across the bay - I can't wait."

Rolf spends most of his time working on *Animal Hospital* at Harmsworth Memorial Hospital which is filmed only a few days before it appears on TV and watched by millions of viewers.

The BBC approached him to do the series because they knew he had a great love of animals and he had written a book called *Personality Cats* with his wife.

Animal Hospital was subsequently voted the Most Popular Factual Entertainment Show at the National TV Awards in 1995 and again in 1996.

"At one time I had 13 cats - it was great fun watching them all lining up in the morning for their breakfast," he says.

"I've also got a standard poodle. I really love animals. My books are full of photographs of animals."



This month Rolf is to publish a new book - *True Animal Tales* (Century Books) - about animals from around the world. It is a heartwarming and humorous collection of tales.

But what about his show at the Dome, what songs can we expect to hear, for instance?

Rolf says: "I'll be singing all the classics - *Tie Me Kangaroo Down Sport*, *Jake the Peg*, *Sun Arise*, *Two Little Boys* which was a No 1 hit in Britain in 1969 and *Bohemian Rhapsody*."

In 1993 Rolf achieved cult status and attracted a whole new audience when he released *Stairway To Heaven*. The song was a top ten hit in Britain and he received a rapturous reception at the Glastonbury Festival.

Britain's student population, in particular, latched onto Rolf and hailed him their hero.

"Suddenly it was OK for them to admit to liking Rolf Harris," he explains. "There were all these students singing along to my songs - they knew all the words. My music was suddenly hip. It was really wonderful."

At the *Morecambe* show Rolf will also be doing some cartoon drawing and plenty of stand-up comedy.

But what does he think of his impersonators? "It's a great form of flattery," he says.

Rolf will be appearing in panto at the new Victoria Theatre in Woking this Christmas and an ITV special 'Rolf!' will also be screened at Christmas.

● For tickets and bookings call the Dome on: 831428.