



Men

PAUL GILES

Jacket won't fade away

My fashion favourite may date back to the 1870s – but it's never out of style

I WAS recently asked what my favourite piece of clothing is, and took no time in answering my denim jackets.

For as long as I can remember I have always had one and today, I've accumulated more than half a dozen. My range consists of different shades of colour but has always been loyal to the tried and tested old-school brands of Lee, Wrangler, Levi and Edwin.

They say the first denim jacket dates back to the 1870s – hot on the heels of the first denim jeans.

In 1910, Levi introduced the riveted jacket.

The real defining moment came with the introduction of the trucker jacket, aimed at long-haulage drivers after both Lee and Wrangler had the ranch workers' market sewn up in the late 1950s.

Once again Hollywood had people of influence donning the jackets, with Paul Newman in *Hud*, and Marilyn Monroe in *The Misfits* creating supply issues when both movies screened in 1961.

I tend to wear this icon piece most of the year.

In winter I like to wear it under a sports jacket, pea coat or overcoat. It adds an unexpected, cool edge to a traditional shirt and coat pairing. The darker and

less distressed the wash, the easier it is to mix with dress shoes and tailored pants.

In the warmer weather I wear it matched with jeans of a different shade, chinos or cords.

Just make sure your jacket and jeans are several shades apart, otherwise you're running the risk of the denim suit look.

Dark, crisp jeans for instance, should be paired with a worn, light-coloured jacket.

The shades or the wash needs to be significantly different to give separation.

In summer, I find it's the perfect weight when the temperature cools down. Paired with shorts and a plain T-shirt and deck shoes, runners or thongs, you are ready for action.

Stay with old-school brands and keep it simple. Stay away from smoke and mirror designs, washes, buckles and buttons.

It is said when Bing Crosby was refused entry into an upmarket hotel during the 1950s because he was wearing a denim jacket, Levi Strauss made him a full denim tuxedo. He re-entered the hotel a week later and was granted a VIP life membership.

Long live the power of denim.

Former Calvin Klein model Paul Giles runs image consultancy firm Style Shift, www.styleshift.com.au, helping men transform their image



Levi's Type 3 Denim Trucker standard fit, **\$139.95**, levis.com.au

Transmis denim jac **\$149.9** dcshoes.com