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Keeping the Memory of Marriott Alive



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Rubbing Shoulders With The Roadies

FANS' ENTRIES

Brian Chalmers, Cleveland, Ohio, USA

"Everything But The Kitchen Sink"

My interest and admiration of Humble Pie and Steve Marriott began for me while I was in High School. My first concert that I attended was a Humble Pie show at Cleveland's Public Hall in 1972. I was a junior in High School, 11th grade. My brother Mark, our friends Steve and Kim and I took the rapid transit from the suburbs to downtown Cleveland.

It was the first time that I remember smelling weed and seeing girls wearing midriff (bare belly tank tops) and they were in abundance, yes sir !!

Alexis Korner opened up the show, but he wasn't mentioned in the advertising beforehand, and frankly we didn't know who he was at all at the time. Little did I know that he was on Smokin' which was just about to be released. The Pie did their "Rocking the Fillmore" show, but a very energetic "C'Mon Everybody" was a new one that they played we hadn't heard before.

J Geils Band played before the Pie, so it was a very rockin' show indeed.

Sometime around this time period I read the article in Creem Magazine "Eat Out" about Steve Marriott and Humble Pie. It was the first full length article that I can remember reading about them, or maybe it just never interested me that much. But something clicked with me and Humble Pie after reading that article. Maybe it was the fact that the authors made a point of mentioning that Steve Marriott stood "five feet short without his elevator boots", something that I wasn't aware of at the time and something I could relate to (I'm 5ft 7in myself). I soon made the connection that this was the same singer with the Small Faces. I remembered Itchycoo Park and Tin Soldier vividly from Junior High School. Hearing them on the radio in the morning on the school bus and at school dances etc. This became the band and musicians that I would follow. That would include Peter Frampton who left before I could even see him perform with them. But because of our FM rock stations at the time like WMMS and WNCR I had been introduced to Shine On, 79th & Sunset, Rolling Stone, Strange Days and Stone Cold Fever from the Rock On album. And then of course I Don't Need No Doctor, the unedited version from the live album.

These interests followed me into Art School (the Art Institute of Pittsburgh)

I did see the '73 tour (again at Public Hall) in May, just before the summer and then beginning AIP in September. That show was the same one as the version put out by King Biscuit. Except the Pie also did Oh La De Da as their finale encore at the Cleveland show.

At this point interests have seemingly gone full circle. From Art School projects to photographing Clem's band Rough Diamond in Concert, to interviewing both Steev and Peter on separate occasions While I worked at Scene Magazine.

Then on to WMMS where I worked for 15 years as their Art Director and also drawing the station's mascot the Buzzard. This found me two years ago involved with the movie "Almost Famous", written and directed by Cameron Crowe. Crowe was also the same author of that Creem article on Humble Pie back in '72 (surprise surprise). It also happened to be his very first published assignment for that magazine (while he was just in High School) and began his career as a rock journalist, evolving into the director, screenplay writer that he is today.

As you'll see with the enclosed samples, this is where all these pieces have come together and fit like puzzle pieces. I've tried to organise the material under the "Almost Famous" banner and my other Marriott/Frampton experiences and tid bits in their own order. Whew ! Here we go !

**GIFTS & GEAR
IN THE
MIJIT MALL**



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Hopefully you will find interest in these and have use for them. I would truly like to share these with as many Marriott / Pie fans as possible.

Included also here are some interviews on cassette tape and in print. It's all here, everything but the kitchen sink.

My involvement with "Almost Famous" is detailed within. Included in that story are the experiences I had interviewing Humble Pie in 1980 and how I finally secured a very short interview with Steve Marriott sitting outside of Swingo's Lounge where Steve had just played drums with the local house band the Bruno Brothers. On the tape you can hear the jukebox blaring Michael Jackson everytime somebody opened the lounge door.

The interview was supposed to take place backstage at Public Hall with all four members straight after their set - but Steve had gotten into a fight with the stage manager. I had actually run into him for the first time backstage when we were first there. I was taken by surprise because he was standing right next to me. He had changed from his stage clothes into a cowboy shirt and straw hat. I shook hands with him and said it was great to finally meet him. I had him sign my "On to Victory" poster. He also drew the swastikas on the enemy planes (but only backwards) and said that's how we had wanted them originally, but the record company had them removed. He said he had to take care of business but that he would be back for the interview.

One by one the other band members came back to the room provided for us. First Anthony, then Jerry, followed by Bobby. Photos were taken by Scene photographer Bob Ferrell. The tape was used only to capture and then transcribe the interview. The recording picked up all the other noises backstage, plus the echo of Mahogany Rush playing onstage etc. At one point somebody told us that Steve was actually splitting 'cause he was still pissed off about the fight, the result of the band playing an enocre (due to the crowd's response) and overextending the time they were scheduled for., I stepped out to catch him at the elevator to see if I could convince him to stay.

His mood had changed since the time we had just met. He said "Nah, I gotta split". Thinking this would probably be the last I ever saw of him I tried to say something profound and uttered "well I just want to tell you that you're still great Steve!"

He kind of gave me the once over and said "well you're not so bad yourself"

Yikes - I felt about two feet tall. To be caught red handed gushing compliments and made to look silly by your own hero himself !

And then he was on the elevator and was gone.

So I went back and brushed myself off to finish talking to Bobby and Jerry. Bobby was a really nice guy and invited me and my friends to hang out with the band at Swingo's (also in the "Almost Famous" film). When we got there he also helped me to approach Steve again while he was at the bar. Because frankly, without any quotes from Marriott my editor wouldn't be interested in using the other interviews - and the story would be sunk and wasted.

As I said in the "Almost Famous" stuff I asked Steve if we could talk for awhile on tape and he said "If you buy me a Heineken....the beer in Almost Famous.....

I gladly got one for him and one for me and the short but sweet interview began. We were interrupted by someone I think may have been his road manager, who told Steve he had to go.

But I had gotten my quotable quotes. I was able to take a few photos of Steve with two more of his fans...."Happiness" Stan from the Baloney Heads (local band) and Frank Conge from Shattered Records. (Frank claims that he once sang onstage with Ray Davies and the Kinks. Steve was also teaching them a cockney song)

This was my first experience with this sort of this. Raj Bahadious, an experienced writer and interviewer then transcribed my tape into the finished published piece. But to be able to pull this off was a dream come true indeed. It made me appreciate what full-time writers had to do and go through to chase down their interviews etc

As it turned out, this wouldn't be my last meeting with Steve and the band. The next time was the following year in '81 and at one of my favourite haunts (sadly torn down after a fire in the mid-80's). The Agora. This time I brought some Humble Pie buttons that I had made at home with a kit. Plus, I brought along an art school project that I started in 1975, but never had finished. It was just a rough layout on coloured paper stock - a story book that I based around "Happiness Stan" from the Small Faces. I remember I had to try to write the storyline down by playing a little on the record at a time, and then lifting the needle and replaying it many times over until I got it. I

drew the characters out of my head and gave Stan a dog as a sidekick.

I opened the book with the narrators sitting in an armchair as I imagined he may look. Mad John was only thought out in pencil. The other pages I had used some Martin dyes to indicate the color direction on colored pages.

So I thought it would be cool to show Steve. After everyone got their Pie button I showed Steve the book layout. I said "Steve, do you remember Happiness Stan?" He said "Do I remember it? I f***** wrote it!!"

I explained how I had begun the project, out of my head as far as how the characters looked. He looked at the Narrator page and said "It looks f***** just like him!!"

Years later, after seeing a video of Stanley, I think Steve was being too kind. But he was really thrilled about looking at the book and called Jerry over to check it out. Since he liked it so much I said "Steve, would you like to keep it?" He looked at me thoughtfully and replied "You would give this to me?" I said "man, you wrote it - it's yours". He was totally touched and said "Thankyou, bless you, mate" and gave me a big hug. Another memorable moment for me to say the least.

Unfortunately, I didn't make copies of all the pages before I gave it to him. Later that year, after another Agora show and once again at Swingo's I asked him if he remembered me. He said "you look familiar!". I reminded him about the Happiness Stan book and he said "Oh yeah - my wife had it framed for me". It was also sitting at the bar in Swingo's that I asked Steve if "Teenage Anxiety" (Go for the Throat had just come out around that time) was about John Lennon. "Yeah, man, he was my f***** hero". I mentioned how great I thought the first two Immediate albums were and how I always liked "What You Will". He looked pleased and began to sing the opening lines of the song for me.

I asked if he thought that bands like AC/DC were ripping him off or is he saw it as a compliment. He said something about not being able to control the influence he had on the new bands, but I think he accepted it as a compliment.

We also talked about Stephen Stills singing on Hot & Nasty - but it was difficult to have a long conversatio. Everyone and their mothers were sending beers over to Steve - and they were all sitting in front of him, more than any person could drink (at least in one sitting). Everyone wanted to get a word with him too. We talked about Rock On, and how he'd got Brian Cole to call himself BJ Cole, 'cause he didn't like the name Brian (what were you trying to tell me Steve!).

I'd have to say that I probably caught a glimpse of Melvin with him a few times on these occasions

Another great show was when Steve played the Agora yet again in the summer of '83. I had given Pappy Fagan (one of Steve's biggest fans) a Humble Pie button before the show. Steve saw it and said "where the f*** did you get that? Gimme that!" And he wore it on stage.

I talked to Steve in the lobby of his hotel after that show. He was on his way to his room and I asked him if he would take a photo with the lead guitarist of the localband "SnakeRock" (who also had opened up his show). He seemed nervous and distracted, but said he's come back down. Got the feeling he would just blow it off. But a little later he was.

He said "I told you I'd be back down, so here I am" he was accompanied by a tall blonde who made a bee-line for the ladies room. He made a signal for her to come straight back, and he kept watching to see when she came back, still tense.

I took the photo with him and Spike Wray. I said "Steve, would you like a drink?" And gestured towards the bar. He declined (I think it was after his ulcer problems) but the offer seemed to relax him and he gave me a hug and said "thanks anyway mate"....that was the last time I ever got to speak with him.

In 1985, through his Road Manager Bill Hibbler, I was asked to design Steve's Tour Poster, plus they chose one of my clack and white shots from the '83 Agora show as his 8x10 promo glossy.

Another dream come true !

My brother Mark and I went to see his last Cleveland appearance at Peabody's Downunder in the Flats. We didn't get backstage for this show. But Bill got Steve to sign my poster (For Bwian? A tribute to Monty Python I suppose) and he signed my friend Mark Hilms' Small Faces LPs, even drawing his won face on one of the early Small Faces covers. A couple came back that he wouldn't sign "cause they were f***** compilations" and I guess Steve wasn't getting any money from them. I also was able to give Fallon, his drummer, some of the live

shots I had taken of him playing with Steve at the previous Agora shows. He was thrilled 'cause he didn't have any photos as a matter of record at all. There was a very small crowd there that night, but Steev, Jim and Fallon played like it was a full house. I, for one, drank way too much, before and during the show, which made getting home afterwards interesting, but that's another story for another time.

As far as other stories, there was the one that was told to me by my friend Snake Rock (his band had the same name). He and Pappy were hanging out with Steve after the Pie opened for Ted Nugent at the Richfield Coliseum in 1980. Now both Snake and Pappy were both huge fans of Steve's. But Pappy Fagan was also physically huge, in girth and weight. He was also a bouncer at the Agora, and although he didn't look it, he was fast and annoyingly light on his feet when it came to a fight. He also had a lightning fast punching style. I had witnessed him kicking some ass. (Pappy sadly passed away in his sleep some years ago. Jerry Shirley spoke at his wake held at the new Agora location and told a story of how Pappy rescued and revived him after he passed out at a very hot Fastway show at the old Agora)

Pappy had tattoos everywhere he could on his body. Including his name on the inside of his bottom lip. On this particular occasion, the three of them were sharing a smoke (Steve, Snake and Pappy) when Pappy announced that he had just gotten a new tattoo....on his ass. He asked Steve if he wanted to see it. "No....I don't want to see your fat f***** ass Pappy !!"

Snake said that Pappy looked like a little kid who didn't get the bike they wanted for his birthday. Funny stuff, indeed, but then I guess you had to be there.

Hey, wait a minute - I wasn't even there !

God rest 'em both, Steve and Pappy

Also included within is the Scene interview that I conducted with Peter Frampton in 1982. Although the interview was done over the phone I had met Peter the year before after his Music Hall show (the same Music Hall that Stillwater plays at in the Cleveland scenes in "Almost Famous"). He was touring "Breaking all the Rules" and had just recently cut off his trademark long hair really short. I had brought along a couple of 8x10 color shots that I took of him in Oct 1975 at the Pittsburgh Civic Arena when he opened for Rod Stewart & the Faces (their last tour). His live album "Comes Alive" came out a few months later.

He looked at these photos quite fondly, I think because of the time period of the shots and that they had his original black Les Paul that got lost in a plane crash in most of the shots. He signed each one graciously. I mentioned that I had met and interviewed Humble Pie and even hung out with them. He gave me a somewhat dubious look, so I said "you're still friends with Jerry Shirley, aren't you ?". So he replied "Then obviously you know that Steve and I are not friends". He didn't really explain whatever riff he and Steve were experiencing at the time, but it was good to see that they had patched it up to start recording again together in '91.

After the Agora WMMS Coffee Break concert, where he played for free, Peter signed my Scene interview with him and said he thought it was quite good. Which was a relief 'cause I had to go to battle with my Editor and friend Mark Holan, who also ended up putting his name before mine on the printed piece....whatever !

As he had already taken out what I thought were key elements and quotes etc - the space had already been assigned and the piece edited to fit it, but I argued that if the missing quotes etc weren't put back in then I wanted my name taken off it. Mark said he didn't have the time to do so - but that I could if I wanted ('cause he liked me and wouldn't do it for any other of his writers) So I had the missing stuff reset in type and cut and pasted them in. The enclosed tape and transcript reveals the missing parts.

Peter gave me his address in Westchester County New York, so I was able to send him copies of the photos he signed the year before and shots of him taken backstage at the Agora. One with the two of us he sent back, also autographed.

There were two more meetings that followed in the years to come. One in 1990 the night before he and Jerry Shirley jammed together (the first time since Humble Pie ?) With local musicians the Armstrong Bearcat Band at the Sahara Club, to blues songs including "Red House".

This is when Jerry was a Dj at WNCX FM. Peter was his guest on his show earlier that day. It was great to see them play together and see Peter letting it rip on someone's borrowed guitar. The crowd was obviously into this extra added bonus too.

The again during 1995's Comes Alive II tour I was able to give Peter copies of some of the shots taken at the Sahara Club. He actually had

played in LA with the guitarist Butch Armstrong's brother - a session drummer. Also included was a shot of Steve at the Agora in '83.

My friend Tony and his pregnant wife Shelley went with us. Peter asked when she was expecting and that he and his girlfriend Tina (now his wife) had a baby on the way too.

This show was at Cleveland's Music Hall. His voice box actually went out on the blink that night in mid song. He said that "after all those years the damn thing was bound to go out sometime"

The Cleveland Indians were in the play-offs and Peter and the band showed their suport for the audience and the Tribe. Bob Mayo played "take me out to the ball game", John Regan had "Go Tribe" on the back of his bass guitar and Peter put on an Indian's hat for one song and a Tribe t-shirt for the encore. Go Tribe !

Also included are photo's and a tape of Clem's band "Rough Diamond". The tape was recorded from a radio speaker in mono in 1977 so it's not that great. Clem is wearing a WMMS t-shirt in the concert shots.....the station I would come to work for some nine years late. Two of the photos show David Byron and Clem walking towards the Agora from their bus. In this one, David is waving the "bird" at me. I actually sat to say hello to him and tell him they put on a good opening show, later at the bar. I don't think he knew I was the same guy he popped the bird at.

There are also photos of Jerry Shirley's Humble Pie with Anthony Jones, Wallie Stocker and Charlie Huhn (now with Foghat) playing at Saber's in the Flats, Cleveland 1988. They were actually very convincing and a tight band, playing numbers from the albums that Steve's Pie never played in concert.

Another example of how far reaching Steve and the Pie have been is there's a black guy named Tony at the Kinko's where I copied a lot of the material here. He saw the Steve Marriott poster and said "wow Steve Marriott ! Humble Pie and I Don't Need No Doctor is why I started playing bass guitar !!" He said he was still playing bass today. You never know where you'll run into someone who's been touched and influenced by Steve's music, do you ?

So, there is a lot of stuff here, I'm sure. Thanks for your time and attention !!

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