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#211, October, 2015

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# KEYNOTES

PUBLISHED BY KEYSTONE RECORD COLLECTORS  
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October 2015  
 ISSUE #211  
 Inside...  
 KRC's Biggest RSC  
 Voices Behind the Scenes  
 Research Books are Back  
 Wrecking Crew Review  
 and more!

## RAMBLINGS FROM THE EDITOR

Now is the time to start thinking about the 2016 club leadership. Nominations will be accepted for all four elected positions (President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer) at today's show (October 11<sup>th</sup>) and next month - November 8<sup>th</sup>. Ballots will be mailed with the December KEY-NOTES and membership renewal form. When you renew, by the January 10<sup>th</sup> show, you are entitled to vote.

Get your Christmas shopping done early - at the **Pennsylvania Music Expo!** Give the gift of music. 2016 KRC memberships make great stocking stuffers! See club Secretary **Erna Reinhart** at the show or write her at: P.O. Box 10532, Lancaster, PA 17605.

*Until next time, keep looking for those treasured tunes!*

**B. Derek Shaw**  
 KEY-NOTES Editor  
 and Communications  
 bdshaw73@gmail.com

## VIEW FROM THE TOP

Because of increasing requests for tables from vendors each month, we are asking those who have made reservations and find they can't make it for any reason to PLEASE let us know ahead of time so that we can rent the table space to someone else. If you have paid for the table but don't let us know that you can't make it and just do not show up, your reservation money will be forfeited. If you let us know that you can't make it, preferably several days ahead of the show, we'll make provisions to carry you over to a later date.

Additionally, if you are making a reservation, make sure that you send your reservation money in immediately! This will put you on the 'prepay' list; tables will be assigned in the order in which payment is received. When you are done unloading your vehicle, please move it to the lot so that others can use the areas by the doors to unload.

*More to come!*

**Dave Schmidt**  
 2015 KRC President  
 NRCMusings@aol.com



## THE VOICES BEHIND THE SCENES

By: **B. Derek Shaw**

I'm sure most of you know about the *Funk Brothers* and their contribution to all the legendary Motown recordings. You may also be aware of *The Wrecking Crew* - a West Coast ensemble of musicians who played on many of the biggest 1960's and 1970's artist and groups recordings. (see article, page 2)

I recently learned about the vocal counterpart of *The Wrecking Crew* - the Ron Hicklin Singers, also hailing from the West Coast. These six (sometimes more) vocalists are most famously known for their work backing The Partridge Family. I found out about them through radio jingle production companies, as they were involved with numerous radio station ID packages for a few of the leading Dallas jingle companies. Further investigation led to more background information.

Songs, TV and movie themes and of course radio jingles were the bread and butter of these talented vocalists from the 1960's - 1980's. The core group usually consisted of: Ron Hicklin, lead tenor; Tom Bahler, tenor; John Bahler, tenor; Jackie Ward, alto; Sally Stevens, soprano and Gene Morford, bass.

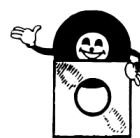
The group sang themes for TV shows, including: "Love, American Style", "Batman", "Flipper", "That Girl, (season 5 opening)", "Happy Days", "Laverne & Shirley", (along with lead vocalist Cyndi Grecco);

"Wonder Woman" and "Angie", (along with lead vocalist Maureen McGovern).

Commercial work included Kawasaki ("Kawasaki, let the good times roll"), Datsun ("Drive a Datsun, then decide") and McDonald's ("You deserve a break today").

Groups they sang with included the Anita Kerr Singers, Percy Faith Orchestra and Chorus, Ray Conniff Singers, Henry Mancini Orchestra and Chorus, Gary Lewis & the Playboys, Gary Puckett & The Union Gap, Cher, Climax, Paul Revere & the Raiders, The Brady Kids and Gene Vincent and His Blue Caps.

Where are they now? John Bahler lives in Branson, MO and conducts the "new" Lawrence Welk orchestra. Bahler's wife, Janet Lennon-Bahler of the Lennon Sisters, still tours in casinos and resorts around the country as part of an extensive nostalgia circuit. Tom Bahler, an associate producer and arranger of "We Are the World", lives in California's Santa Ynez Valley north of L. A. and continues to occasionally produce as well as record. He also penned Bobby Sherman's "Julie, Do You Love Me" and Michael Jackson's "She's Out of My Life". Ron Hicklin is still working as a studio singer and music contractor, living in the Los Angeles area.



KRC in 2015

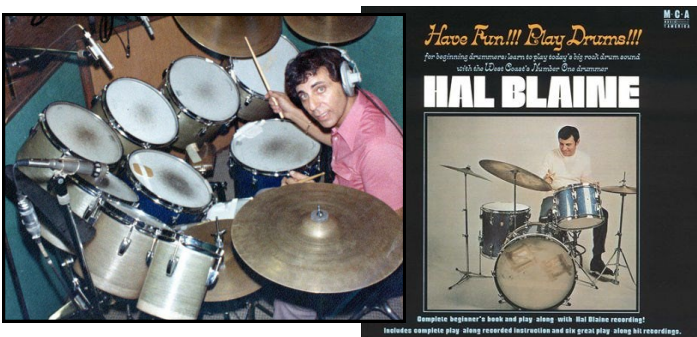
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FLYERS ARE AVAILABLE - TAKE SOME AND SPREAD THE WORD!  
ANNOUNCEMENTS CAN BE MADE FOR WANT LIST ITEMS.  
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A celebration of the musical work of a group of session musicians known as "The Wrecking Crew", a band that provided back-up instrumentals to such legendary recording artists as Frank Sinatra, The Beach Boys, Bing Crosby and many, many more. They were the west coast equivalent of the Funk Brothers. The documentary was completed in 2008 and released in March, 2015 to internet audiences and in September for the consumer market. *The Ron Hicklin Singers were the vocal group equivalent - see page 1 for the story.*



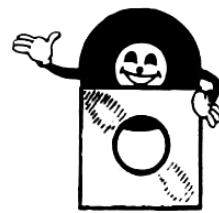
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KEYNOTES

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**(Deadline for KEY NOTES#212 is November 13<sup>th</sup>)**

Names in **bold** type are members of Keystone Record Collectors

THE WRECKING CREW - CREATING A MUSICAL SOUNDTRACK FOR OUR EARS

A film review by Eddie Collins

Many years ago a friend said to me, "Eddie, the 'wrecking crew' musicians are probably on half of the records in your collection. With that said, it was an education getting a chance to see **The Wrecking Crew** documentary. Hats off to producer Denny Tedesco for an incredible inside look at the musicians who created a soundtrack for the sixties, and into the mid seventies, with the imprint they placed on countless hit records and sundry non-hits! This film was well done and articulately presented. Unfortunately, people like guitarist Tommy Tedesco (Denny's dad), sax man Plas Johnson, bassist Carol Kaye, bassist Joe Osborn and my man - drummer Hal Blaine never got their proper due during their days with Phil Spector and hundreds of recording sessions they appeared on.



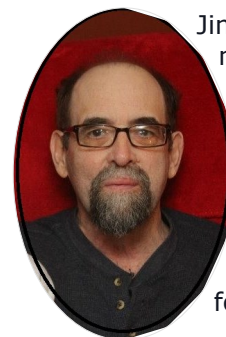
Why? It's quite simple, because artists like The Byrd's, The Monkees, The Association and others couldn't take a chance on having their reputations blown. They strived to maintain an 'image' that they were **the** players on the records, when in actuality it was the incredibly seasoned musicians who were assembled for those recording sessions. In reality those well crafted epics (just under 3:00 minutes long) were extremely well produced, with the 'Wrecking Crew's' talents enhancing those sessions. Even Brian Wilson knew if he had them on his side, his compositions and ideas would be extremely well executed.

Hal Blaine's drumming and overall drum sound is legacy. He was the first studio rock drummer to have a distinctive style. He played for the tune, understood it, drove the band, used subtle but effective fills (some of which became his signature) Hal's sound, was revered by many drummers (myself included) in the early 1960's who asked "how does he get that?" Blaine had a great ear for tuning his Ludwig kit, knowing the pitch each drum should produce, not over or under tuning and for the records he cut - it was dead on. His 'tight' snare drum sound was the greatest. Hal experimented with timbales (the fills on The Association's "Windy") and by late 1968, sheer innovation, devising an array of tom-toms utilizing Plexiglas shells in various sizes small to big. Known as the 'monster kit,' it created a depth of sound, which was prominently heard on the intro of The Vogues "Turn Around, Look At Me."

In 1969, at age 12, I bought Hal's LP, "Have Fun, Play Drums!," in which Blaine talked about his style. As a novice drummer, (of which I was one), I wore out my copy, playing along with Hal Blaine on the record. Hats off to Hal, and those producers, Lou Adler, Snuff Garrett, Bones Howe and Terry Melcher for always placing Hal's drums correctly in the final mix. And, of course to 'The Wrecking Crew,' a definitive sound, and group of musicians that were often imitated, but never could be duplicated.

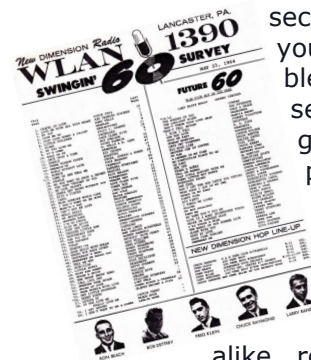
JIM MULL - THE ULTIMATE RSC (Record Survey Collector)

By Phil Schwartz



Jim Mull was a collector. Most of our members who have been associated with the Keystone Record Collectors for a number of years will recognize his face. He was a regular member and common shopper at our expos from the early days in the Columbia Market House. But, unlike most of our members, he was seldom looking for records. Rather, radio surveys.

For our younger members, we must explain that radio surveys, also known as "Top 40 surveys", "Local charts" and "Radio hits lists" were promotional flyers distributed by most rock and roll radio stations in America from the 1950s - '70s. They became passé in the 1980s, and rarely seen in the '90s and forward. The lists were distributed to the local record stores, and record departments within larger retail stores. Typically, they would arrive on Saturdays, to coincide with the "Countdown" show on the given station. These shows generally aired on Saturday afternoons and would feature one of the top rated DJs counting down the hits from #40 - to-#1, the coveted position, which was a guarded



secret - unless you had the survey in your hands in advance. It's remarkable to look over these surveys today, seeing all the new records in any given week which are still widely played on radio. And then there were the local or regional hits, which were unique in a particular radio station market, before the homogenization which made most surveys look pretty much alike, reflecting the national charts published in *Cash Box*, *Billboard*, and *Record World*.

And Jim, who passed away on September 25, 2015 at the age of 62, knew them all. He was an encyclopedia regarding the location, call letters, and format of most stations in this country and Canada.

Jim's collection started in April, 1966, when, at the age of 12, he began picking up the charts from WLAN and WSBA at Woolworth's and Green's department stores in downtown Lancaster. It was during this period that he also became interested in the 50,000 watt stations which would boom out of your AM radio only after the sun went down. The mid-west stations, particularly WCFL, WLS and CKLW, were especially exciting, and Jim started writing letters to these and other stations, requesting a copy of their surveys. "Almost all of them responded", recalled Jim in a recent interview.



Unlike many radio survey collectors, who attempt to obtain charts from every week for their favorite stations, Jim's goal was to obtain one survey from many different stations, generally representative of their best period of music and survey art work.

In the 1990s, Jim's interest went to a higher level. Through an ad in a trade magazine, he became familiar with Frank Merrill, McComb, Illinois who is considered to have one of the largest survey collections in the world. Jim travelled twice to Frank's home to learn more, and to trade surveys. At one time, the collection contained over 2,000 different surveys, which was trimmed to approximately 1,000 (of the best) at the time of his death. Asked what his favorite moments were surrounding his hobby, he replied, "Finding something that I never saw before".



**Phil Schwartz, Dave Schmidt and B. Derek Shaw** were fortunate to spend several hours with Jim recently in early September. They enjoyed Jim's passion for his collection and positive outlook in the face of a terminal illness. His collection will be available to KRC to share with our members through our regular Facebook postings. (see below)



Since late March of this year, the **Keystone Record Collectors** have been posting a music survey from around the country each week on our Facebook page. "Like" us at: Keystone Record Collectors.

The radio station surveys are mostly from the late 1950's through mid 1970's. The early ones contain a more regional flavor with song popularity.

Our thanks to **Phil Schwartz, Eddie Collins and B. Derek Shaw** for providing a scan of the surveys from their collection. Now we can enjoy ones from the late **Jim Mull's** collections as well.