

# The Midtown Men Concert Reviews

On February 20th the Midtown Men came to York PA's Strand Theater and put on an extremely entertaining performance. The group met when they played the Four Seasons in the Broadway show Jersey Boys and during off hours began singing their favorite 1960's songs. From these sessions the current show evolved, and it's a good one.

With a great band featuring a fantastic horn section, smooth choreography, and excellent harmonies, the four talented singers breezed through a variety of hits that included the socially conscious "Get Together" and "For What It's Worth"; the pop/country standard "Wichita Lineman"; the Rascals' "Groovin'"; "Unchained Melody", an obligatory Four Seasons' medley; and a plethora of Motown classics. The musical arrangements were spot on.

The group worked hard - non-stop for over 90 minutes--and were obviously enjoying themselves. Besides liking the performances mentioned above, I was especially impressed by the sterling rendition of "You're All I Need to Get By," which had the singers continually switching leads as well as harmonizing beautifully. My only criticism of the show was that Michael Longoria, who played Frankie Valli on Broadway, resorted to a rather grating, raucous falsetto from time to time, much along the lines of the lead singer in the Newbeats' "Bread and Butter."

Overall, I heartily recommend that if the Midtown Men come back to this area, buy tickets and treat yourself to a very satisfying tribute to the music of the 1960's.

- Steve Yohe

Not since Australia's "Human Nature" act have I been impressed with a modern vocal group who captures the spirit and essence of the 1960's like the Midtown Men.

The four vocalists have impressive acting credits. All hail from different parts of the country with the bass, J. Robert Spencer, hailing from York - a 1987 Central York High School graduate!

The band was extremely talented, with a top notch three piece horn section. The vocalists all were quite good. They had choreographed moves that the Temptations would approve of. (Even band members, when not playing, were doing finger gestures and moves with the singers, tying together this impressive package (the icing on the cake.) Music selection was broad based covering most of the bigger hits of the 1960's and veering into the 1970's on two: "Just My Imagination" and "Vehicle".

Of special note: "Unchained Melody", "Time of the Season", "Ain't No Mountain High Enough", and "Get Together".

(I was hoping the tenor would have sung a Lou Christie song and/or tackled the epic ballad, "Cara Mia".)

Mid-way through the show, the ably talented band did a well-constructed medley of about eight classic 1960's TV show themes. The video monitors helped acclimate concert goers who forgot or those who never knew the show themes they were playing.

The entire package was exceptionally well done.

- B. Derek Shaw



# KEY NOTES

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Inside...

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- Midtown Men show review
- The Unknown Groove
- Our Mistake

and more!

## VIEW FROM THE TOP

Heading into the warmer weather, the KRC continues to enjoy well attended shows and dealers having good results! Lets hope it continues.



The KRC has worked out a deal with Bags Unlimited to offer record supplies, such as sleeves and storage boxes. We offer member and non-member prices. Current items available include 45 and LP sleeves, both medium weight paper and plastic/poly sleeves. We also have a limited number of 45 and LP boxes available each month and also 78 medium weight paper sleeves. If you are looking for a quantity of a certain item, please feel free to place the order with us and we'll have it available at the next show. Our thanks to Dave Street at Bags Unlimited for setting up and suppling us with the items to sell. And remember, get your items early as they sell out pretty quick!

We'd be interested in finding out how many of our members have been involved in the radio business, as a DJ or any other position in that field. Let us know, give us some details and we'll stick your name in print here in Keynotes!

**Dave Schmidt**  
2016 KRC President  
NRCMusings@aol.com

More to come!

## Stak-O-Wax by Ken Clee

Preface and editing by Phil Schwartz

One of the early founders of KRC was not from Central Pennsylvania. **Ken Clee** grew up and lived most of his early life on Bingham Street in Philadelphia, near Roosevelt Boulevard. He attended college in Des Moines, Iowa. We met in 1977, through an ad I was running in Goldmine Magazine. Beginning with his first visit to my student apartment on North Warnock Street, we formed a friendship which took us into many side streets, neighborhoods good and bad, and warehouses in search of records, and fueling the thirst of learning more about the hobby of 45s. Ken's research has been relentless, and his documentation of labels and artists has become world's best. Often copied; often plagiarized; often used without permission, his work remains a cornerstone of connecting the dots, and organizing information within what was largely a very unorganized business. Ken relocated to Lancaster County several years ago, and is present at most of our monthly **Pennsylvania Music Expos**. We are proud to present this article, in his own words, about his fascinating contributions to collectors. And, not only records.

The world's population can be divided into two groups - collectors and those who don't understand why any

## RAMBLINGS FROM THE EDITOR

Spring has sprung. Warmer days means outdoor concerts, Bar B Que's, car cruises and more. It also is a great time to visit the **Pennsylvania Music Expo**.



The shows this year have all been strong. Attendance is up - many new faces in the two showrooms. (It doesn't hurt that the great folks from the Continental Inn have our message on the marquee on BOTH SIDES for a week before EACH show!)

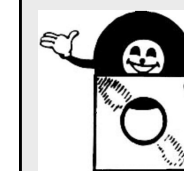
### We don't always get it right.

The "Thank You For the Music" annual look back at those who left us in the previous year had a mistake and a least one omission. Three Dog Night keyboard player Jimmy Witherspoon died March 15, 2015 of cancer in nearby Maryland.



The photo used in the February issue for "fifth Beatle" Andy White (left) was actually of Jimmy Nicol who filled in for Ringo on drums during a 1964 Australian tour. He is still alive and well. Here's the correct photo. Thanks to club members for pointing these things out. We aren't always able to include every member of a particular band, however, we try (as space allows.) This important annual feature takes up as much time and energy as putting out three regular issues - painstaking comes to mind.

Keep collecting those tunes!



*Derek*  
**B. Derek Shaw**  
KEY-NOTES Editor  
and Communications

body would collect anything. An over-simplification? Perhaps, but it sure seems that way sometimes. I clearly fall into the first group as far as I can remember. Age 4 - acorns, elementary school - stamps, college - coins. Since then, cartoon glasses, glass dairy creamers and many other collectibles I'm too embarrassed to identify. However, the one constant since I was 12 - 45 RPM records and picture sleeves.

I always seem to go for collectibles where there is a known quantity to look for (except acorns of course.) And if the quantity was not known, I set about to identify the size and specifics of the universe. It always started out as a personal quest, and when others asked to have a copy of my search results, I'd write a book for that hobby so anybody who cared would know too. I wrote a book about fast food toys, M&M collectibles (wrote the book and started the still active collector's



Continued on page three



## KRC in 2016

EACH SHOW 9 AM TO 3 PM SECOND SUNDAY OF EVERY MONTH  
(EXCEPT MAY 1ST)

## THE CONTINENTAL INN

FLYERS ARE AVAILABLE - TAKE SOME AND SPREAD THE WORD!  
ANNOUNCEMENTS CAN BE MADE FOR WANT LIST ITEMS.  
BUSINESS MEETING FOLLOWS A SHOW WHEN WARRANTED.

## The Unknown Groove

By Pete Casiello

A different time and a different place...the 1950s. I always wonder why people never took better care of their records back then. Did they not realize how collectible some of these would be? And what would happen if the masters were ever destroyed? Does that mean that a piece of musical history would be lost to the annals of time?

Not long ago, I saw a video of the TV show "Pawn Stars". Items are brought into a pawn shop with the potential of being sold. On a recent episode of the show, the holy grail of Doo-Wop made a guest appearance. Yes, I'm talking about an original 78 RPM of "Stormy Weather" by The Five Sharps. There it was in all its glory. Unfortunately it was the copy with the infamous crack in it. The gentleman who brought in the record is the son of the former owner of Bim Bam Boom Records. In the 1970's, Bim Bam Boom reissued rare Doo-Wop records. This particular copy of "Stormy Weather" was the same one that Bim Bam Boom pressed onto 45, and was technically the first official release of the song on 45. A sound engineer at Bim Bam Boom spent upwards of 50 hours removing non-audio sounds from the cracked copy of "Stormy Weather" before pressing the 45. A few years ago I interviewed Bobby Ward, the only surviving member of the original Five Sharps, who was presented with a red vinyl copy of "Stormy Weather" on Bim Bam Boom.

## HOW TO REACH US...

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## KEY NOTES

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(Deadline for KEY NOTES#215 is May 1<sup>st</sup>)

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

It has always been a mystery as to whether (no pun intended) The Five Sharps' classic was ever released on a Jubilee 45. Like the Loch Ness Monster, many have claimed to have seen it but it has never officially surfaced. Val Shively (possibly one of the best known collectors in the world who has a warehouse with over 4 million records that he works out of) probably came the closest to finding the 45. As legend has it, he had a friend who claimed to have seen a few copies of the "Stormy Weather" 45 in a dump truck. He went to take it out of the truck but the driver would not let him. Ironically the next day, a fire destroyed the truck and the records were never found.



The reason there will never be a clear sounding copy of "Stormy Weather" (and many other records on the Jubilee label) is that, in the early 50's, a fire destroyed the warehouse where at least 80 or more masters were stored. Who knows what recordings were lost. I once had a collector ask me if I had ever seen the records that either come before or after "Stormy Weather" in the Jubilee catalog. I do know that a Five Kings single came before the Five Sharps but I have never seen it surface and very little information exists about the record or the group. This seemed to happen a lot back then. Sometimes groups were one-shot deals and then disappeared without a trace.

In music history, there have also been recordings that were only demos and then somehow catch on years later. A few months ago I discovered a recording by a group called Penny and The Quarters. Between 1970 and 1975, they recorded a few demos at the home of Clem Price. The recordings were put in storage only to be discovered years later at an estate sale. Actor Ryan Gosling heard the Penny and The Quarters song "You & Me" (a then unreleased demo) and suggested to the director of the movie he was starring in at the time that it be used for the movie's soundtrack. Lo and behold, the song gained prominence due to being placed in the movie *Blue Valentine*. The song is also available on 7" through The Numero Group.

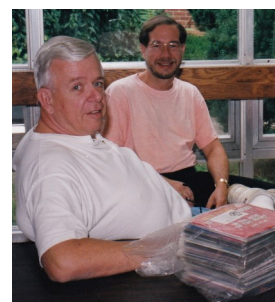
This brings me full circle to my original point. I have been a professional Mobile Disc Jockey since 1994. Over the years I have seen the business evolve from using records and tapes, to CDs, and now mp3s, whose quality will never change no matter how many times they are played. It makes me wonder how many old recordings are out there that have never seen the light of day due to a lack of preservation and exposure. How many great songs are just sitting out there, either in a vault or in an executive's estate, just waiting to be discovered and preserved? We may never know.

club and annual convention), glass dairy creamers book (now in its 4th edition), and finally, "A Discographical Collection of Artists and Labels". Never heard of it? Maybe you know it by the name it evolved into somewhere around 1975 - "The Directory of American 45 RPM Records."

The Directory started out as a 1-volume reference and after 9 updates through the years, it has grown into its current 5-Volume reference with over 7,000 label discographies with its related publications - "20,000 Picture Sleeves" and the "Re-Issue Labels Guide".

The first record I acquired was You, Baby, You by the Cletones. I bought a handful every time I had a few bucks afterwards. A few years later I discovered the nickel bins in discount stores, the 5 in a cellophane bag, collectors swap meets, auction lists, then Goldmine. All of these avenues helped build my "accumulation" of the shiny black devils. Then I met **Phil Schwartz**, who was living in Philly at the time, and attending Optometry School. I don't recall how we found John Lamont's 4-floor warehouse, a place we went to frequently whenever records seemed more important than learning, or in my case, being a Human Resource Director. That was before KRC was born. In addition to digging through the pallets at the warehouse and finding 200-300 records each at a quarter apiece, I also found it was a great place to find information for "The Directory". I never went anywhere without my hand-held voice recorder. It made it easy. At the time, Phil and I were still learning the hobby. I clearly remember finding a couple of pallets of mint copies Annette Funicello's The Monkey's Uncle. Phil and I took 3 copies each. We thought we were pretty clever scarfing up 3 copies for 75 cents! We have similar stories about many other great records we left pallets of, but we got our three copies.

Phil also introduced me to a small band of fellows who got together all the way out in Lancaster and met at a barber shop in Paradise and played great records I never heard of. I liked "Denise" by Randy & the Rainbows, but I never heard of "Why Do Kids Grow Up", "Sharin'", "She's my Angel" and a couple of others by the same group. They called it Doo-wop, a term I'd heard, but probably couldn't define back then. They told me there were thousands of Doo-wop records I'd probably not heard of and that most were from New York. I learned about WCBS, Times Square Records and Norm N. Nite. Every Sunday after hearing about it, I found a place in Philly where I could pick up Norm N. Nite. By the light of the car radio, I wrote down the title and artist of everything he played, and then began searching for them in earnest. I think that was when I went from an accumulator of records to an avid record collector.



Around that time I also met Tom Grosh (left), a lifetime friend. Early on in our relationship, I remember buying a Rolling Stones "Beast of Burden" picture sleeve from him for \$40 or \$50 and thinking at the time that I must have been crazy spending that much for a picture sleeve.

Several months later, he offered me a "Street Fighting Man" sleeve for a few hundred dollars. This time, I thought he was crazy, asking that kind of money for a picture sleeve. Those 2 sleeves are worth about \$20,000 today. I guess he wasn't crazy, but I must have been for turning down the "Street Fighting Man" sleeve.

I visited John Taylor's home - a guy with seven houses full of 45's. It was about the time the first Goldmine price guide came out, without group records in it. If I found a record that was in the guide, John's price was 1/2 the lower of the two values. If it was not listed in the guide, it was \$1. I spent 4 days there!

While on a San Diego business trip, I visited a 5&10. The saleslady directed me to a small table with two doors in the bottom. They stocked only the Top Ten of the time. When I asked about the two doors she told me I could look in there. It was packed tight with picture sleeves. She said I could have them for 10 cents each. I took one from each rubber-banded pile that I didn't have. There were about 20-50 of each sleeve. I distinctly remember taking one from a pack of about 20 of a record I never heard of by a group I never heard of - "Surfin' Down the Swanee River" by the Honeys on Capitol. I put the rest of them back!

In New Orleans I visited Jim Russell's Record Shop. He was a scary guy. I bought some great records from him, but couldn't get out of there fast enough. We all have stories like these. That's the joy of collecting. The stories, the places we've gone, the people we've met. It's been a life-long hobby, and each record I have reminds me of a time, or a person, or a story. Not to mention, the great sounds.

Back to "The Directory". Without exaggeration, I believe I've spent at least 1,000 hours a year on average for the last 40 years researching record labels and picture sleeves. My interest in Doo-wop and picture sleeves helps fuel the continuing research. We also supplied discographies to Goldmine to accompany many of their articles in the 70's and early 80's, as well as several other record collector's magazines of the time.

If 2,000 hours constitutes a full-time work year, I guess I've spent the equivalent of 20 years full-time work on research for "The Directory". Many have helped over the years. A good friend in Canada, Fred Masotti, has helped the last 38 years. The internet, with its blogs, dedicated websites and endless corners to explore have given our work a good boost the last 15 years. We've uncovered so much more information, that this upcoming update will be by far, the largest.

Our website is currently undergoing a rebuild, and when it is finished, we will be offering the 2016 or 2017 (and possibly last) update, additions and corrections and a re-write of Volume 5. Look for it at Stakowax.com (that's the name of our company too).