

Station House--- Changing with the times but still the same



PETER MCCORMICK on drums, and Kevin DeaRues playing the saxophone, are two of the somewhat newer members of Station House. They have played with the band for about two years now.



LARRY THOMPSON has been playing the organ for Station House for about two-and-one-half years. Larry is also one of the background vocalists.

Excitement filled the air. People would arrive at six o'clock in order to get a seat for the nine o'clock performance. When nine o'clock did finally arrive not even standing room was available. Many a time the bar would be completely sold out of beer before the evening was over.

In the somewhat quiet town of Georgetown, at a somewhat quiet hotel known as the Station House, what was the cause of all the havoc?

A band called Station House. Most appropriately named it would seem. Station House has been around town for about five or six years now and serves as a bit of Georgetown's nostalgia.

"The kids at the Station House were a real experience. The place used to almost fall apart. People would be jumping up and down, often three to one seat. It was always a great place for audience participation," recalls Larry Fraser, lead vocalist of the band.

The band has gone through many changes in personnel and also in music played. Despite these changes, Station House still draws huge crowds and maintains the ability to captivate each and every one in the audience.

Playing in the band at present are: Larry Fraser, lead vocalist; Brent Barkhouse, lead guitarist; Bryan Day, bass player; Bruce Gregg, trombone and accordion; Peter McCormick, drummer; John Wilcox, trumpet; Kevin DeaRues, saxophone and Larry Thompson on the organ.

In their many years of existence it was not just the town folk who realized the great amount of talent and potential stored in the group.

In 1970-71, when the group consisted of Dave Booth, Brent Barkhouse, John Wilcox, Tom Thompson, Gig Hillock, Bruce Gregg and Chris Todd, the band placed second in a music competition held at Davenport. The consolation prize was the honor to perform at the St. Lawrence Centre.

In 1971, after two years of service in the Armed Forces, Larry Fraser returned to the band as lead vocalist. It was at this time that the band played with the Stampedeers, King Biscuit Boy and Cookie at a concert held at the Georgetown arena. After this performance, the Stampedeers complimented Station House during a performance on a local television network.

Also following this performance, Rainbow—an underground newspaper in Toronto—wrote an article featuring Station House.

The band has also been approached by two record companies, Warner Brothers and A.M. Records and was

offered to tour Europe, playing at Armed Forces bases. However, for one reason or another, these offers did not exceed preliminary stages.

Remaining are two of the original players of the band formed in 1969. At that time there was Larry Fraser, Bruce Gregg, Nick Morvay, Tom Brotherton, Gig Hillock and Dave Puckering.

Gig Hillock, who constantly thrilled the audiences with his tremendous and remarkable drumming abilities, is now studying at the Berkley School of Jazz in Boston, Mass. The school is one of the most highly acclaimed jazz schools in the world.

Larry Fraser described the changes the band has made.

"We used to be strictly a rock 'n roll band but now we are more to the brass side of rock 'n roll. We are really into audience participation music."

Larry commented on the attitudes of the band. "Before it was more of a business. Now we tend to have more fun than we ever did. I guess we're not so conscious of the money or of the audience. However, we do take our music very seriously."

Speaking for himself and for all the members of the band, Larry attributes much of their success to Neil, owner of Neil's Music Centre on Guelph Street.

"Neil has been so helpful. He provides us with all of our musical needs and handles most of our bookings. We practice in the basement of the store, compliments of Neil. What would we do without him?"

Following that high note of appraisal, Neil gave his views on the band. "In general I think that band plays a great variety of music which suits any crowd. If the crowd wants a good time, the band will give the crowd a good time."

Catering to all types of crowds, Station House play some 'oldies but goodies', rock 'n roll tunes, some light country music, many contemporary pieces and have just recently added polkas.

When mentioning polkas, one must not forget to announce the "Accordian Man" himself, Bruce Gregg, alias 'the travelling polka man'. (Larry notes that this is somewhat of a private joke within the band).

Station House will not be forgotten, nor will they be buried deep in the books of Georgetown's history. A final question: What is the cause of their success?

"The crowd comes because they know they will have a good time. That's the ticket."



CUTTING OUT? No, Bruce Gregg was not cutting out on the other members of the band. The band tries to space their songs accordingly in order to give the players a bit of a break and in order to play longer sets.



LARRY FRASER, lead vocalist for Station House, gets the audience participating at a recent dance at the Riviera Club in Norval. Pictured (from left to right) are

Brent Barkhouse lead guitarist, Pete McCormick, drummer, Larry Fraser singer and Bryan Day, the bass player.