

THE LEGEND OF TONY MARTS

.....INCLUDES HUNDREDS OF ENTERTAINERS!!!!

From Jack Newland playing the piano in the 40's until the final notes of the testimonial to Tony Mart's, and the last Drink 'n Drown in September of '82, there were hundreds of musicians and entertainers.

As part of the history of "The Legacy of Tony Mart" we are compiling many pictures and ads, and we have put together the attached list of more than 130 entertainers who performed in the 38 years of good times at Tony Marts. Here are important and amusing anecdotes about 30 of the greatest and most musically important entertainers and groups that ever played at "The Showplace of the World" as Tony Mart's was called.

We would invite comments and emails at tonymartpresents@gmail.com. We will reminisce about this in the trivia segments at shows.

We are looking forward to having fun with this as well as including comments from friends & family as well as former patrons, in the book.

LEN CARRIE AND HIS KRACKERJACKS

The drummer of Spike Jones Big Band, Len Carrie, lead a hilariously entertaining swing band into the rock 'n roll era at Tony Mart. They did The Mummies Strut, And New Orleans Mardi Gras through all the bars, dancing and throwing Cracker Jacks instead of beads.

PETE CARROLL AND THE CARROLL BROTHERS

A notorious character and Philadelphia/ Jersey shore entertainer who was married to Mary Carol, part of the Connie Francis family.

The best story is about the day that he was so drunk that he rode out into the bay in a Dick's Dock rental boat and had to hauled in when it was time to perform!!

JERRY GABRIEL AND THE ANGELS

A superb group of musicians and entertainers lead by Jerry Gabriel, who actually went on to serve many years as Tina Turners musical director.

FLO DRYER QUINTET

Probably the first female bandleader to ever play on the avenue in Somers Point, She played trombone and lead her troop of early rock 'n roll all female musicians.

THE SKYLINERS

A relatively mellow group of performers, who had several hits and played as an early headliner when Tony Mart's was developing into a major entertainment venue.

JOHNNY MAESTRO AND THE CRESTS

Johnny Maestro played at Tony Mart's with this band BEFORE the Brooklyn Bridge was built!!

THE FALL GUYS

Inspired by the first great lounge act to come off of Bourbon Street and head towards the resorts in Vegas, Louis Prima's band, and the hilarious comedy music star, Ray Steven's, The Fall Guys were one of the greatest house bands in the history of the Jersey shore performing from 1959 to 1964 and continuing in Florida, Pennsylvania, and Las Vegas to name just a few of the places where they were one of the finest and most beloved popular and comedic bands of all time.

BILL HALEY AND THE COMETS

Billy Hailey and his Comets were from the Philadelphia area. This group of seminal rock and rollers became famous for their own song "Rock Around the Clock" and their hits, which were "race music" renditions of New Orleans and southern black entertainers like Big Joe Turner's "Shake, Rattle and Roll".

THE TOMMY DORSEY ORCHESTRA starring WARREN COVINGTON

This is a vestige of the big band era, and one of the more famous of the swing dance orchestras that played at Tony Mart's.

CONWAY TWITTY AND PORK CHOP MARKHAM

Immortal country music stars in the COUNTRY MUSIC HALL OF FAME, "Conway Twitty and The Tweety Birds" were are a hard driven rockabilly rock 'n roll band for many seasons in the early 60's until Conway played his final rock 'n roll shows at The Mart along with Levon Helm and the Hawks in August 1965.

JOEY DEE AND THE STARLIGHTERS

Joey and The STARLIGHTERS came to Somers Point and played at the Jersey shore, learning all about the twist and rock 'n roll before they went to the Peppermint Lounge and recorded their famous hits, including "The Peppermint Twist". Tony Mart swore they learned it all from their experience in Somers Point and Wildwood, where Chubby Checker was playing regularly.

DWAYNE EDDIE AND THE REBELS

Along with his Oklahoma review, Dwayne Eddie became famous for his hit with the cover of Bill Doggert's "Hockey Talk" and several other famous songs. Tony Mart himself said that no group ever drew greater crowds, and sold more drinks than the few weeks of Dwayne Eddie and The Rebels at Tony Mart's.

DEL SHANNON

Backed by The Fall Guys and headlining over Conway Twitty and Bill Haley, Del Shannon played at Tony Mart's when "Run Away" was the number one song in the country!

MITCH RYDER AND THE DETROIT WHEELS

Mitch Ryder played several stormy engagements at Tony Marts. This electrifying phenomenal rock 'n roll entertainer was a very avid and crazy drinker and a loud playing rock star. He had very confrontational engagements with Tony Mart's and was finally throw out with his last engagement, replacing Levon and The Hawks over Labor Day weekend in 1965 and unceremoniously ended by Tony Mart himself, who was infamous for doing such things.

The FEMALE BEATLES

The Female Beatles, with their very tight sequined pants, frilly sweaters and beehive hairdos, this group of all female performers could rock the Beatles' songs and were very entertaining. They were popular and a wild contrast to Conway Twitty, Levon & The Hawks and The Fall Guys, with whom they appeared as co- headline attractions. Tony Mart liked them because he made money with these New York 'in your face' performers, who were anything but bashful on stage, especially the big, tall, attractive blonde in the middle.

THE KIT KATS

A young emerging rock 'n roll cover band on the scene, breaking in at Tony Marts, they eventually played successfully all over the Jersey shore, as well as up and down the East coast. Their leader "Kit" was a very sharp, savvy bandleader who led the group to a long career becoming a strong Las Vegas lounge act with a loyal following for a long time.

LEVON & THE HAWKS

Of all the groups on this long list of entertainers that performed in that 38 year span, there has to be one greatest group and clearly, by almost every measure, that group was Levon & The Hawks. They entranced with the pulsing

dance music and stunned the crowd when Richard Manuel sang soul and R&B like Ray Charles " Georgia on My Mind, and James Brown's " Please, Please, Please". Brought to The Mart by the encouragement of Conway Twitty after they left the famous and very popular " Ronnie Hawkins" with whom they were " Ronnie Hawkins and the Hawks", this is quintessential success story of the greatest group that became " The Band" with Bob Dylan, they went onto become one of the greatest rock 'n roll Americana bands in the " Rock and Roll Hall of Fame". If ever one group defined and distinguished Tony Mart's as a Jersey Shore rock 'n roll institution, it was Levon & The Hawks.

THE MAGIC MUSHROOMS

In 1966 they were the first long haired, psychedelic rockers to wear bell bottom pants, paisley shirts, and big iron surfer crosses. They were the freaks on display and when they played The Kinks, The Stones, and their signature song "Wild Thing" by The Troggs, they drew some of the largest crowds in the history of The Mart. People were literally lined up around the block!

JOEY POWERS AND THE NEW DIMENSION

A very savvy and charismatic front man and singer, who became regionally very popular in Pennsylvania, up and down the east coast, North Jersey, and New York. Joey Powers had a regional hit, " Midnight Mary" as well as making several other songs his signature including " Just Walk Away Renee".

In the summer of '67 he had a great band, and he eventually went on to have an even more popular band, "Powers Flower" who played The Dunes on Somers Point Blvd. as well as some of the most successful mega rock 'n roll bars in The Philly/Jersey area. Joey Powers was the epitome of a great old school front man who could read the crowd, call the songs, and 'keep the room moving' which made him popular as well as valuable. The word is, after leaving the stage he became a booking agent, recording studio owner, record producer and church leader until his passing in 2017.

TOMMY STRAND AND THE UPPER HAND

The hot southern sound of 'blue-eyed soul' made this band one of the top groups in Miami, along with "The Fabulous Lattimore" and the incredible Wayne Cochran & the CC Riders. Tommy Strand played the better part of one season, and it still has not been determined whether his jazz giant bass player, Jaco Pastorius, played part of that time at Tony Marts.

GUNTHER'S BUS

With an entire chapter dedicated to them in " THE LEGEND OF TONY MART", the book from which all this is taken, Gunther's Bus was one of the greatest of all the groups to play at The Mart. Easily top 10, with the Foti Brothers as their heart & soul. Originally started by Carl Foti and their lead guitarist, with a great high voice, Tommy Bittle, The Bus could do everything from Jackie Wilson's "Higher and Higher" and " Evil Ways" when it was a big hit for Santana,

to the long version of “ In A Gotta Da Vida” , an entire side of Abby Road by The Beatles, and the very best covers of Blind Faith & The Spencer Davis Group, as Art Foti was gifted with that Stevie Winwood sound and Carl Foti could sing Kenny Roger’s and the pre disco Bee Gees incomparably.

There is still a suspicion under investigation that Deep Purple actually copied, note for note, the magnificent version of their production of the song “ Hush”, which Gunther’s Bus jammed every night and brought down the house at Tony Mart’s. The recoding of “Hush” by Deep Purple really sounds almost note for note like the Gunther’s Bus rendition and arrangement.

SUPA HEAT

Coming at the time of the Woodstock generation, playing Crosby, Stills and Nash, but still entertaining in an uplifting way by covering the famous gospel pop song “ Oh Happy Day” by The Edwin Hawkins Singers, and a fabulous version of “ Suspicious Minds” by Elvis Presley, performed by the guy we called ‘Ricky Supa Heat’ who really had that kind of hip shaking performance. Summer Heat was one of the many super groups that played the Philly scene so much they became known as ‘Supa Philly’ went on to be very popular for many years up and down the East coast.

GRANT SMITH AND THE POWER

This was the totally hot nine piece horn band with four horns and their very good looking, talented front man, Grant Smith, who could really move onstage. This was ‘blue-eyed soul’, and they were seriously known as one of the best horn bands out there, doing Chicago, Blood Sweat & Tears, and the Stax Records soul band sound. They were the rage of the shore when they played Tony Mart’s for two weeks in 1970. As great as Gunther’s Bus was, they actually left to make room for Grant Smith and The Power on the main stage right in the middle of Tony Marts. One of the most treasured mementos in the scrapbook is their impressive 9 piece band photograph of just what a big band should look like. It is dedicated to Carmen Marotta, the “best little club owner in the world”. Carmen Marotta was about 14 years old and idolized all of these performers.....every night, all summer long!

TONY ORLANDO AND DAWN

Believe it or not Tony Orlando played two weekday nights with his girls, whom they referred to as ‘Dawn’. Tony Mart paid them \$500 each night for him and the girls.

OLIVER

He was a great singer with a strong voice, and a true gentleman and professional performer, Oliver played several multi week engagements performing both of his hits, “Jean”, and the famous song from the Broadway play Hair, “Good Morning Starshine”. The performances from Oliver were very important because he drew large crowds and helped Tony Marts immensely when things were beginning to get soft in the early 70’s, These performances were very special and a little known fact in the history of Tony Marts. Locals

and tourists alike loved it!

MACE with TONY CHERRY

His real name was Cherubini and Tony Jerry was very entertaining and good looking as he brought the first group called Mace to Tony Marts and did the famous and familiar 'sexy front man with a cover band routine' that was so popular at the Jersey Shore and everywhere. He was very well liked and appreciated by Tony Mart himself.

RICKY AND THE ROCKETS

In 1965 there was a group called The Lively Ones featuring the Identicals: Three guys in the band and twins upfront. They were popular and successful that year; but no one thought that their bass player, Jeff Troy, would come back as a star of several seasons in the 70's.

Tony Mart created "Ricky and The Rockets" with Jeff Troy when he returned with another band, that was a professional but non descriptive cover band. With all of the classic routines, including rolling the cigarettes up in the short sleeve shirt and smelling the "Tony Mart panties" onstage, Ricky and The Rockets were tremendous stars of the early 70's that helped keep Tony Marts a very popular party and dance venue.

FULL HOUSE

Bobby Hunter was the lead singer in this band and he often said that in the fall of 1969, he played his first professional gig at Tony Marts.

Eventually joining up with the great great Kenny Jeremiah from The Soul Survivors, this was an immensely beloved, popular, entertaining band that played several years at Tony Marts, and many years all over the Jersey shore and elsewhere. Truly a great horn band who survived the test of time, becoming The Jeremiah Hunter Band, which was ultimately just as great and popular as Full House. One of the wonderful Jersey shore regional stories!

MACE (the second group led by JOE CIMINO AND FRONTED BY "PJ")

There will be much elaboration and discussion of the difficulties that Tony Mart's faced in the mid to late 70's as we explore the tribulations of the Tony Mart family during this less successful period in Tony Mart History. This group, the second MACE, after Tony Cherry left the band, was very central to that period.

Their leader was a drummer named Joe CIMINO and he and Tony Mart had a respectful, warm working relationship.

They were a good cover band that did solid versions of Grateful Dead, Jackson Brown and the Eagles. But most of all they were the group that introduced the Asbury Park sound of Springsteen prevalently into Tony Marts. There was David Bowie and The

Doobie Brothers as well: Suffragette City and Long Train Runnin' four times a night each!

The bass player David Lynne was a great guy and a good friend. The keyboard player John Leafhead was a fine musician and pretty much the musical director. Joe Cimino was a strong driving drummer, and they could move the dance floor and keep things rolling.

One of the greatest attractions for Tony Mart was the fact that they worked very reasonably.

Johnny Caswell and The Crystal Mansion is not on this list because they did not play at Tony Marts! Johnny Caswell played at Tony Marts with THE SECRETS earlier in the 60's.

Around the time that Mace played at the Mart, mid '70's, Tony Mart's was blown away on many occasions by the greatness of Johnny Caswell and The Crystal Mansion, and a band called HEREAFTER, two of the greatest bands to ever play on Bay Avenue but NOT at Tony Marts. As a matter of fact, Tony Mart despised Malcom, who first played at Bayshores with 'JB & The Bonneville's', and then "Ruby Falls", and "The Rock City Band" before becoming musically terrific "Hereafter, one of the finest groups to ever play Somers Point.

These were difficult times for Tony Marts, but this version of MACE was faithful and reliable and steadfastly employed by Tony Mart.

One of the funniest stories about this band Mace was the result of everyone being so high and drunk all the time in those years that Tony Mart Jr. literally had to grab PJ and slap him around and throw him up on stage to get him to do his set one busy, fairly crowded night in the mid 70's at Tony Mart's.

Replacing the slick and polished Terry Cherry in this band was "PJ" a hippie kind of front man who had rock star attitude and demeanor that overwhelmed his modicum of talent. He got the job done; but again, this was certainly not a bright spot in this musical period at The Mart.

THIS IS ROCK AND ROLL!

ONE FOR ALL

For most of the local patrons, especially the "Tri-City Burnouts", this was probably The most revered and remembered band of their era in 1978 and 1979.

A really intriguing and entertaining chapter in the history of Tony Marts, One For All were the reason that Tony Marts rose like a phoenix from the ashes, after almost being sold in a shakey real estate deal in the spring of '78.

With the full percussion ensemble of Tony Galante and the killer three piece horn section, starring the incredible Sammy Dyson on trombone and Ray Sydnor on saxophone, this group did it all from Earth Wind & Fire and Bill Withers to Disco Inferno and an astoundingly, hot mesmerizing version of Ralph McDonald's "Calypso Breakdown" from the Saturday Night Fever album.

In the summer of '78 this was the band that brought the biggest crowds of the last ten years of Tony Marts and made Sunday nights the sexiest, sweatiest most pounding and panting ladies night ever seen at the Mart.

It was an incredible summer of ribaldry and fun! Everyone that was there remembers it with a smile.

SHOTGUN

After the summer of '78, the Mart never really hit its zenith in any summer, except in the summer of '81 when the sexy and exciting Shotgun, led by the sultry Lenora, performed the emerging sounds of punk, rock, and new wave, especially Chrissie Hyde & The Pretenders, Blondie, Joan Jett, and groups like The Talking Heads and Elvis Costello. They performed a signature medley of rockin' tunes by The Kinks with our favorite being "Low Budget" which epitomized the experience at the Mart in the last year of strong business, when Shotgun and a tribute band called Alien brought hundreds of young people up from Cape May where many of the moral well heeled students had drifted with their families. On Tuesday nights ALIEN performed the "Resurrection of Jim Morrison and The Doors" after they brought the frontman into Tony Marts in a white coffin.

Shotgun was the rage of the Mainline...Bryn Mawr and Villanova University. Tony Mart's family is forever grateful to them, for the fabulous performances that carried the Mart into the last great summer, the summer of '81. On Thursday nights, Tony Mart's had "Ms. Mescal" nights when the winner had to "eat the worm".

Throughout this list of the very best entertainers in Tony Marts history, there is a consistent theme of famous world-class, multi award winning, and millions selling recording artists also including performers, like Del Shannon and Oliver.

In the category of the very best to ever play at The Mart and NOT become famous, there are, some really great ones, including GUNTHERS BUS and ONE FOR ALL. Bob Campanell was one such performer.

BOB CAMPANELL AND THE SHAKES

Bob Campanell was one of the greatest performers to play the Jersey Shore and Tony Mart's. As the star performer in THE SHAKES he was powerful with a great voice and vocal ability.

He is deserving of recognition consistent with that of the greatest Jersey Shore/ East Coast rockers like Springsteen, Southside Johnny, Gary US Bonds, and our magnificent friend John Cafferty and Beaver Brown with Michael "Tunes" Antunes.

After Tony Mart's closed, Bobby became so much a part of the Somers Point legacy music scene, including the ALANTICARE CONCERTS ON THE BEACH in Somers Point, that he rightfully was referred to as our "Somers Point Rock 'n Roll Icon".

A world-class singer, a brilliant, charismatic and emotional performer, Bobby was a gifted songwriter and phenomenal rhythm guitarist. His band, THE SHAKES, were extremely popular, especially at Meral's in Margate and all over the Jersey Shore. He was a very important rock and roller in Asbury Park as well. In the entire legacy of the music of Tony Marts, there is no one more deserving of superlatives, recognition and appreciation than the great Bob Campanell. We loved him and everyone loved the Shakes whose drummer Frank was a pleasure with whom we always enjoyed working.

EDDIE AND THE CRUISERS

As we often say, there was no real band named Eddie And The Cruisers. They were a group of actors with one true great rock star, Michael "Tunes" Antunes who made a movie in May that carried the Mart into and through its final season of '82.

Some of the greatest music ever written by John Cafferty and The Beaver Brown Band made the movie and the film made at Tony Marts a truly important part of rock 'n roll history.

These are the greatest; but there are more! Many more bands, with interesting stories that will appear in the book "THE LEGEND OF TONY MARTS" which is being written now in real time.

Follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Tonymart.com. Party with us live! Share your thoughts and stories about these great bands and our times together.

LET THE GOOD TIMES ROLL!!!

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