



PAT FITZPATRICK PHOTO

**STRAWBERRIES JAM:** The Wild Strawberries played *The Dock* on Monday night, marking their first visit in Fredericton since opening at UNB's *Fresh Week* concert last year. Now sporting a much different look, Roberta Carter Harrison was in fine form for the somewhat small crowd that turned out to witness their performance.

## Oh, those wild Wild Strawberries

PETER J. CULLEN

THE BRUNSWICKAN

The Wild Strawberries made their return to the Maritimes this past week with a stopover in Fredericton. Playing to a smaller than average crowd at The Dock, the Strawberries presented the best of their song catalogue, mostly tapping their current album, *Heroine*.

The Strawberries' key players, Ken Harrison and Roberta Carter Harrison, were adorned entirely in their '70s schtick. However, the music isn't a generational throwback; their tunes fit nicely with the current sounds filtering through the airwaves of any radio station format.

The Wild Strawberries lack any veritable stage gimmick, but it's the sheer music and vocal quality you need to embrace. Roberta possesses a great voice, despite not having professional training. And Ken lets his love of the English language shine throughout the song lyrics.

During the show, the band worked a funky dance beat to the latest album's title track, "Heroine." Armed with an age-old vacuum, Roberta did a bit of cleaning just prior to the song, while Ken coaxed the vacuum sound effects from his electronic gizmos.

Roberta talked between songs, discussing their activities in Fredericton, including their viewing of *Kansas City* at the Capital Film Society just before the show. Several times throughout the evening Roberta tried conversing with the audience but only

received minimal response -- until she brought up the subject of mannequins. "Have you ever noticed that all the female mannequins always have erect nipples?" she asked. That led to the question of whether any male mannequins with "erect appendages" existed. The crowd laughed and the group struck the chords for "Mannequin On A Merry-Go-Round," one of the songs that has helped gained them some national recognition over the past couple of years.

The fans danced as Roberta sang, but couldn't fully appreciate a lot of the songs -- mostly due to the band's lack of radio airplay. "Bet You Think I'm Lonely" is arguably their best tune written yet, but the Wild Strawberries have gained most of their recent success from the hit "I Don't Want To Think About It." Saying that for last, most of the crowd then left for the night. The band did jam out "Let's Go" by The Cars for a final encore, then signed autographs for those remaining behind.



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