

## Pocketwatch Paul and The Rhythm Rockets

By RUPERT HOEFENMAYER

Last week the Riverview Arms hosted Pocketwatch Paul and The Rhythm Rockets, one of the highest quality non-repetitive blues/jazz/rock bands to come to Fredericton.

As a unit, the band had the ability to keep the audience interested. They did this by carefully alternating their song selection, showing keenness in playing their musical instruments and having a professional sound one step beyond the traditional blues.

The most impressive aspect of the band was their ability to

produce an original, diverse sound with their own material. The band's talent showed when they were able to keep a steady beat while easily breaking into spontaneous solos. Pat Hall, the band's keyboard player said; "When they applauded our original slow blues number ... I couldn't believe it ... you don't know how good it makes us musicians feel."

Compared to other bands, this group has a lot of depth in their show. They were able to switch lead vocals on almost every song. This gave the band a different angle at reaching out to the audience. They did not use any

fancy light show, make-up all over their faces, or costumes to get the audience's attention. What they had to offer was their music and that's exactly what the crowd at the Arms enjoyed. John Bodine, the sax player, said he couldn't wait until they came back in August, for he thought that the "friendly" crowd could relate to what they were doing.

Just by listening to them play in this city, it was obvious that most people didn't understand what the blues are all about. After listening to them though, anybody could tell that the blues are the root of most contemporary musical styles.

Watching them perform one can tell that their music shows their own feelings. Mike Loveless, the band's trumpet player said, "You have to live the music to play it."

J.W. Williams, the bass player, gave the other dimension needed for their crisp sound. His funky bass solos told us that the band was danceable with the familiar music, yet real diverse.

The band attracted a lot of Fredericton musicians who were inspired by, the way the group played. One local musician said of Pocketwatch Paul, the group's guitar player, "He doesn't bend his strings ... he uses the good old

technique of improvising his sound ... you can tell with his chord changes that he has complete control over his instrument."

When I asked drummer Bill Leathers what he thought of playing in Fredericton, he said, "It's a good place to play the blues -- the people don't mind sitting and listening."

The group recorded "Living Chicago Blues" on the Alligator Label. In the U.S.A. the Alligator Label is distributed only within the Chicago area. In the fall the band hopes to record an album on CBS records which will feature Junior Wells, one of the foremost harmonica players in the world.

## A parable in three parts

There was once a young man who was unhappy at home. He lived in a small city that was renowned for its lack of excitement. This was not the cause of his discontent, but it served well enough for an excuse.

Let us not delve into the chronology of his psychological development, nor question the nature of his philosophies. Suffice it to say that this young man never learned how to communicate; how to share.

And so he lived without ambition without knowable desires; then he came to a time when it was easy to leave the home where love was lost.

He left.

II

He travelled. Without particular reasons. Seeking indefinite things. So the young man found indef-

inite things. His life was permeated by a mist of his own generation; which he could not part.

Yet one day he found a bottle. A flask that was warm to his touch. A fine wine: intoxicating, invigorating, a great treasure. The fluid in the bottle seemed to swirl in harmony with his own soft soul. He decanted it and tasted. The wetness was sweet and fine in his mouth. The warmth flowed through him and he felt clear.

So singular was this experience that he resealed the bottle and did not taste again until many days had passed. When he did, the elixir again sent a shiver of new liveliness through his body. And he marvelled at his great and good fortune.

The days and months moved by, and the wine became a comfort and retreat for the young man. It was his quiet strength and he cherished it as himself and kept it always by his side; taking its liquid when he needed and sheltering its fragility.

What is more, the measure never seemed to be diminished; as if an invisible vine was ever replenishing the quantity of the wine.

It became his constant and reliable friend. He came to call it by a name; a magic name: "SHE".

She was with him always. And neither had existence apart from the other.

He had a need. She had a gift. And this way the way of it.

III

Then one day there was a change.

The young man perceived that the bottle was no longer supplied from the unknown source. The level of the wine fell as he took of it and never rose again.

Now he was threatened. Now he knew the extent of his dependence. And the young man feared much for his security. From his fear he grew anger; and he cursed the bottle even as he drew upon

its blessing sustenance.

He undertook to restrict his drink but was unable and the measure of the wine diminished.

Then his anger, when he knew the guilt of his need, bred frustration and he was bitter. And the wine, when he tasted the last of it,

lent no peace for his torture, gave no sight for his darkness.

Again in his home, love was lost.

END

M.J. Corbett  
Sept. 13, 79

### ODE TO HARRIET (Harriet Irving Library)

Harriet, oh Harriet, how could this be?  
My time has been spent with the likes of thee:  
A building, a structure, a tomb of thought.  
In a prisoner's cubicals without key or lock.

Harriet, oh Harriet, how could you see?  
My heart seeks release from the clutches of thee:  
An island, a nightmare, with: graffiti-crazed thought,  
Speaking of gibberish and truth that is not.

Harriet, oh Harriet, where will you be?  
Not in my mind, my will or degree.  
A lab'rinth, a book-maze, a tragic affair -  
Lending it self to fantasy and thoughts that aren't there.

Harriet, oh Harriet, this is my decree:  
Your halls and stairs will not be safe to be  
When zombies and lovers, collectively there,  
Will end up in unison pulling out each others hair.

Nov. '76  
Peter Wood



Thursday

May 15

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