

Marquee to open next week

BY MARK REYNOLDS

Alternative music aficionados in Halifax have reason to rejoice this month. The long awaited replacement for the Birdland Cabaret, the Marquee Club, will officially open its doors on March 11.

The bar will offer the alternative atmosphere and local music content that had been offered by the Birdland, and the cabaret hours so sorely missed by the old club's clientele.

The Marquee Club will open on Gottingen Street in the space formerly occupied by the Derby bar.

"We've pretty much got the first month booked," said Greg Clark, who was behind the Birdland, and will be the general manager at the new club. The new club will be owned by Victor Syperek and David Henry, who also own the Economy Shoe Shop.

Along with booking local alternative talent, Clark said the Marquee will also feature out-of-town acts, as well as different musical genres.

"We'll maybe bring up celtic acts, reggae, blues...primarily alternative, though," said Clark.

And while the new location is

relatively out of the downtown bar scene, Clark is confident that patrons will have no problems with the location.

"Lots of college people live in

"People say there's been a lull on the local scene...when I was updating my band list, I came up with sixty or seventy alternative acts in Halifax"

the area," he said. "People will find that it's worth the trek."

Clark said the interior of the club is very comfortable, with excellent sight lines for watching the stage. He feels that area of town is also ripe for a boom, as rent is low, and the Spring Garden Road area is saturated with bars.

Though many see the lauded Halifax scene as dying off in recent years, Clark feels confident that his

club still has plenty to offer music fans.

"People say there's been a lull on the local scene...when I was updating my band list, I came up with sixty or seventy alternative acts in Halifax," he said.

Indeed, for the opening on Mar. 11, there are six bands on the bill, including Shine Factory, Soaking Up Jagged and Neuseiland, a new project of Charles Austin from the now defunct Superfriendz. Thursday will feature the Mark Green Blues Band, the Urban Surf Kings, Madhat, and the Snapdragons.

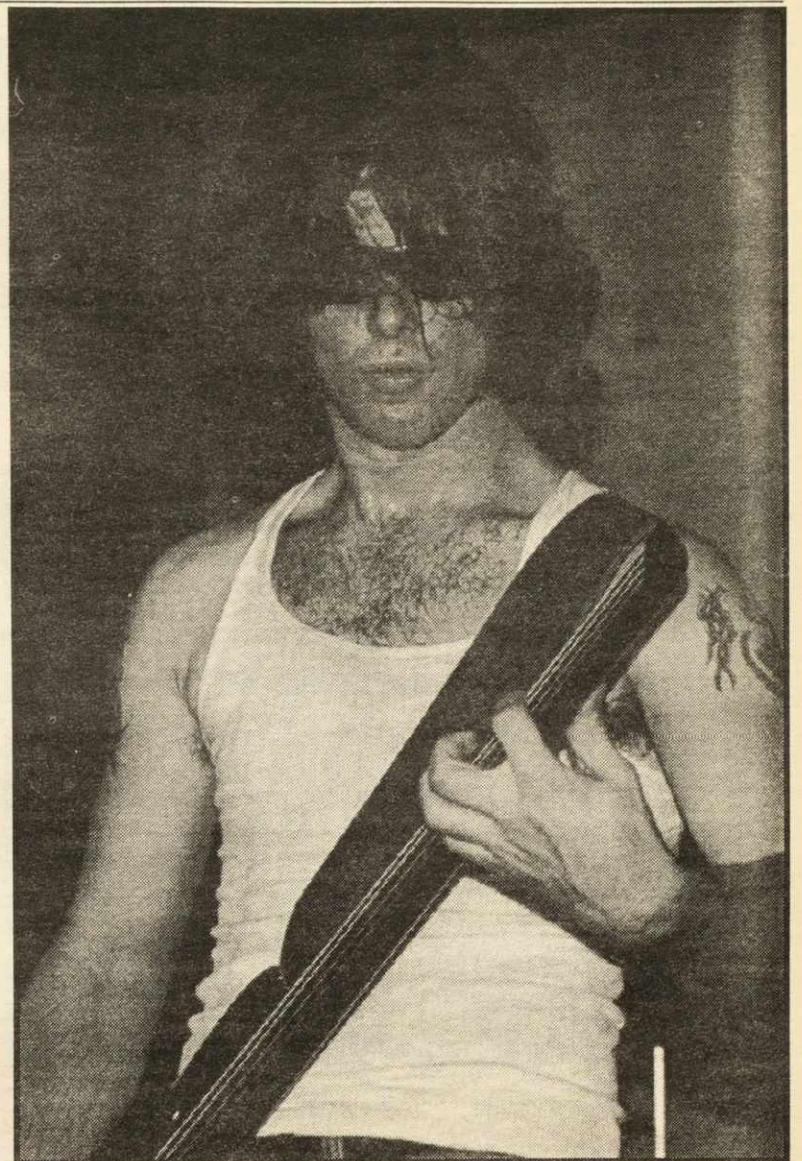
Swing king Johnny Favourite is scheduled to play later this month, as are Cool Blue Halo, Ron Sexsmith and Knifey Moloko.

There will be a benefit for the MAI Alert March 13 that will feature another five bands, including Five Foot Nine.

Clark said that Ben Harper may also appear on the Marquee's stage.

The Marquee will also host a games room later on. It will have video games and pool tables for those not interested in the bands.

All show times will be earlier in the new club to allow more new acts to get stage time. The first band will start at 9pm on both Thursday and Friday nights.



Now that the new Marquee club is open, this cool guy can expect a lot more gigs in Halifax. (Photo by Danielle Boudreau)

REVIEWS OF BANDS YOU KNOW AND TRUST

32 Miles From Memphis

The Royal Crowns
Horseshoe Recordings

Yeehaw, Cletus! Hillbilly rock is back with a vengeance...sort of.

The Royal Crowns add a fake sophistication to their brand of trashy country rock, and in the process make a record that isn't overly easy to listen to:

If you like this CD you'll find yourself in company with the Dukes of Hazzard (Uncle Jesse, Daisy and Roscoe P. Coltrane to boot), but its cheesy twangs and semi-infectious rhythms will be sure to find a niche with somebody as the fad of the week.

You'll get sick of this album, and wonder why you bought it in the first place (that is, if you knew it existed), and return to whatever caught your fancy beforehand. I

don't see square dancing and hoe-downs becoming tradition here at Dalhousie (or at any other location where widescale demographics habituate), and so I don't predict great sales for this album.

In a related topic, a big-name record company has failed to pick up the recording rights to the Royal Crowns...I wonder why?

GREG MCFARLANE

The Daddy of Them All

Space Monkeys
Universal

Composed of eleven tracks delivered in a consistent Liam Gallagher-esque whine, *The Daddy of Them All* attempts to merge rock and pop with the ever-pervasive styles of electronica.

I welcome this album, and for one reason. For years we've watched the world of hip-hop steal rock's greatest

songs and turn them into hits again for a different market (Puff Daddy?). Now, the Space Monkeys turn this trend around. On some songs, they sample tracks by the Wu-Tang Clan and DJ Shadow.

I don't even have to like the music here (I'm actually rather ambivalent), I just like what it represents.

A definite shift in music is evident, where guitars are taking a back seat to every geek with a computer (The Chemical Brothers?). The Space Monkeys are brash enough to rip

these entertainers off, even parodying the scene in the track "Acid House Killed Rock n' Roll," where heavy beats collide with huge, crunching guitars.

I don't believe that this CD was supposed to be a statement of any sort because the Space Monkeys do consider themselves a rock/electronica band; but they stumbled onto something, whether they wanted to or not.

GREG MCFARLANE

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