

Memories: A beginning

by Cheryl Downton

"So what do you do with all the memories?
They hold your life together like poetry,
I never thought it could be so hard
To leave you behind
Oh the days and the years fill my mind."

Penny MacAuley
Memories 1978.

As these lines suggest, memories can be a very integral part of one's existence. How one chooses to remember or forget the things that cast a shadow or warm an icy hand is as individual as the memory. If one is blessed with the ability to transcribe memories into musical verse, a record album might be a logical result.

Penny MacAuley, a Halifax singer and songwriter, has done just that. Her recently released album *Memories* is a vehicle through which she shares her musical talents, heavily laced with thoughts and feelings of past remembrances. Of the ten album cuts, seven are works of Maritime artists, including five of her own compositions and one written by brother Duncan, a physiotherapy student at Dalhousie.

Memories was recorded, mixed and produced at the Audio Atlantic studios in Halifax, and it has surprised some skeptics who have been disparaging of local production facilities and capabilities. MacAuley says she is pleased with the technical aspects of the album and feels the Halifax recording enterprise is more than competent.

The album is selling, and there are hopes that it will go into a second pressing. It has

received fairly substantial support in the form of airplay from several local radio stations, as well as national coverage on CBC. The album can be found in Toronto as well as locally, and MacAuley has recently returned from Toronto where she was a guest on Morningside and appeared on the Bob MacLean Show.

Penny MacAuley has not just suddenly surfaced as a talented singer and songwriter; she has been writing and singing songs for ten years. She had regular television exposure for four years on Sing Along Jubilee, has done numerous radio and television commercials, and has acted with the Seaweed Theatre troupe. (Of the album cuts, *The Sixth Day of September* was written for the company's production of 'Explosion'.) She is currently involved in commercials for Atlantic Loto and Moosehead Breweries.

After several years of employment which range from box office work in Vancouver and Halifax to secretarial positions and a year at Dalhousie, MacAuley has once again picked up a musical career. Over the past months, she has undertaken club engagements, and finds them a good creative outlet. Her lounge undertakings have been so successful that one (The Griffin Room in the Hotel Nova Scotian) wanted to sign a six month contract. Although she says she finds this very flattering, MacAuley feels six months of doing the same thing could be creatively negative. In a compromise move, she has agreed to return to the Griffin Room for two months, beginning the first week of December.

MacAuley feels that for her, certain elements and factors affect her creative ability. She finds that constant communion with the earthly elements allows her more of an artistic flow. Her home overlooking the Northwest Arm keeps her in touch with the sea and sky, the trees and the land. She has found that sojourns away from the pull of nature hold a limited appeal, and that although trips to the big cities are fun and can serve a useful purpose, she prefers the free air of open space.

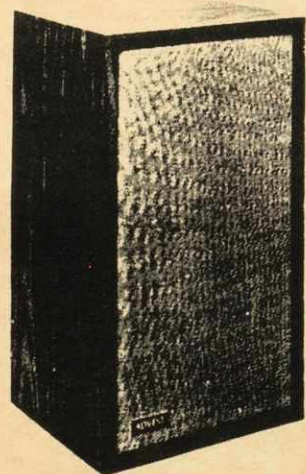
There are no plans for any big changes, but MacAuley is becoming involved in other aspects of a musical career. She played at the Grad House in October, and an appearance at Saint Mary's during that university's Spring festivities is a definite possibility. She is thinking of doing a high school tour next year, and would like to become involved in musical theatre, perhaps at the Charlottetown Festival some future summer.

Penny MacAuley is a special lady with a special talent—her creative strength combined with the firm and certain knowledge of where she wants to go and by what method, will enable her to realize her full potential as an artist.



Penny MacAuley

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