

THE ADELAIDE ROCK 'n' ROLL CLUB

The First 20 Years

The music and dancing from the 1950's and early 60's was without doubt the most exciting era of music the world has ever seen, and never a truer word has been spoken when a wise and knowledgeable person said "Rock and Roll will never die".

In the early 1990's the popularity of original R'n'R music was making its predicted comeback. At the time there were three venues that were dedicated to providing R'n'R music. The Rosewater Hotel, The Links at the Seaton Hotel and Fonzies in the Glenelg RSL Club.

The few bands that I recall specializing in playing R'n'R music were *Eddie Fury and the Idols*, *Johnny and the Moondogs*, *Fahrenheit 451*, *The Esquires with Bobby Hunter*, *Route 66* (the fore runner to *Getback*) and *Juke Box Jive* who were the in house band at Fonzies.

Fonzies was special – it was started by band leader John Holder and his dear wife Fay.

Every Wednesday night the regulars gathered dressed like 50's teenagers and we became pretty good Rock 'n'Rollers sharing our dance moves with one-another. Once a month on Saturday night there was a full on dance often with a dress-up theme such as Halloween or Valentines Day or an end of year College Graduation Ball. We had many wonderful times in what was Adelaide's first Rock'n'Roll Club but unfortunately John and Fay left Adelaide for better employment opportunities in Queensland and Fonzies closed its doors.

Johnny Pligl and Dean Volprecht who were involved in the R'n'R dance scene at that time saw the need for a Rock'n'Roll Club in Adelaide and on the 29th May 1994 they registered the name:

The Adelaide Rock and Roll Club.

Christine Easton assisted the boys with the administration requirements.

The Club logo was designed and black, white or grey T-shirts with a large multi coloured logo on the back and a smaller logo on the front were available to members at \$15.00 each. A group of enthusiastic members who were willing to volunteer formed the first committee.

PRESIDENT

Johnny

VICE PRESIDENT

Dean

SEC/TREASURER

Christine

VICE PRES/AIDE

Ken



MINUTES

Lilly

SECRETARY/AIDE

Loretta

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Jimmy

PUBLIC REL/AIDE

Dave

Our first newsletter was a single sheet of paper printed on both sides. It showed the Club logo and listed the committee members' names as shown above.

The First 20 Years (cont.)

Club rooms were needed and Louie Semola the manager of the Sunnybrae Restaurant Complex came to the rescue. He allowed the Club to use The Barn or Stables which had been renovated and turned into an entertainment hall. It had a stage, a dance floor, a jukebox and bar facilities. The committee decided to have Club Nights on the first and third Tuesday of each month and the first Club Night was held on the 7th March 1995.

Louie loved his R'n'R and had the jukebox choc-a-block full of the appropriate 45rpm records. Dancing to 45's played on a jukebox was ideal at the time.

After several Club Nights, Newsletter No.2 was produced (still a double sided single sheet). The first paragraph read:

"Thank you to all those who have been attending our Club Nights on the first and third Tuesday of each month. The nights have been well supported with a mixture of regular rockers, new faces and a few younger ones. We are constantly working towards attracting more and more new people to the Club. So all you regular rockers out there, please support our Club Nights and help the newcomers with their dancing. Let's make Adelaide the Rock'n'Roll capital of Australia. It can be done if we all are prepared to just give a little bit of ourselves".

The Newsletter also provided a report on the "LE-CLASSIQUE" dance competition. Club member No.9 Susan Heinrich, encouraged several of our members to enter the competition and the report read as follows:

"THE DANCE SPECTACULAR OF THE YEAR "LE-CLASSIQUE" was held on Easter Saturday. It truly was spectacular and a great experience for all those rock'n'rollers who participated. The competition consisted of 151 events. The majority of events were ballroom style dancing with an occasional rock'n'roll heat/final thrown in to provide the spectators with a bit of variety. The ballroom dancers were certainly very elegant and skillful dancers but it was the rock'n'rollers that created the atmosphere and excitement and provided the most enjoyment for the spectators.

Congratulations to all the Club Members who participated and to those that won awards – **well done !"**.

After 12 months of operation the Club boasted 146 members.

To promote the Club to the general public dancing demonstrations were done on a regular basis. We danced where ever people would have us:

Westfield Marion Shopping Centre.

Westfield West Lakes Shopping Centre.

"Life Be In It" Festival.

Optus Festival.

St.Andrews School Fair.

Birdwood R'n'R Rendezvous.

Minda Home.

Rundle Mall.

Mosley Square Glenelg.

Our numbers were growing and people with new ideas to expand and develop the Club volunteered for roles on the Committee. With Dianne Kolbig's input the Newsletter progressed to several pages in the form of a quarto size booklet.

The earlier attempts to produce a Club jacket had not been overly successful and so a great deal of thought and effort was put in to create a "standout" jacket. A proposal was put to the Members in Newsletter No.5 / February 1996 which read as follows:

"The Club Would like to know if the Members require an up market jacket similar to other club jackets.

> Black satin outside. > Red satin lining. > Our Club logo embroidered on the back.

> Your name embroidered on the front > The cost would be \$130.00 each."

The results of this initiative are clearly on display today.

-----to be continued-----