

1973: An Interview Exclusive

by Robin Cook

1973 is a band enamored of the past. The face of the 1970's icon Barry Manilow adorns a clock in the Rhinebeck abode of Jane Brien and Lauren McMahon, who are, respectively, 1973's singer and accordionist. Also on hand was the band's bassist, Laura Stout, and photographer, Fran Soosman.

1973 was formed in late 1987. "I came back from a very luxurious vacation on the shores of Sicily," McMahon recalled, "and I was thinking, 'Gosh, wouldn't it be good to get a band together?' I just wanted to say something about music...but I didn't want to be serious about it, and I thought, 'Wow! A 70's cover band would be good.'"

Thus, McMahon formed 1973 upon her return to America. The original personnel, consisting of McMahon, Brien, Holly Brown (guitar), Melanie Chapman (bass) and Raisa St. Pierre (drums) played its first gig at the Rhinecliff Hotel in September of 1987, opening for the Electric Jellyfish. There they met their soon-to-be guitarist, Markus Olin-Fahle. "It was a terrible scene," Olin-Fahle recalls, "but I really liked them a lot. They asked me to join after I told them how much I liked them, and I eagerly accepted."

Olin-Fahle's first show with the band was on October 30, 1987, at the apartment that Brien and McMahon shared in Tivoli. Friends turned out in hot pants and bellbottoms to celebrate the arrival of a new

force on the Bard music scene. But, why the name 1973?

Brien stated, "We wanted to go for the 70's, the 70's is our ideal...and we all started thinking, '71's too early; '71 we were six, seven, eight...that's too young. '75's in the middle of the decade, and then '77, disco and punk...and '79 was a bummer. So I think '73 seemed to be the only year we could really pick."

"Fun was our main idea, she said. "We had a philosophy that we would not take ourselves seriously."

"We were rebelling against the idea of being cool that bands are always putting on," Stout said.

1973 has undergone numerous alterations in personnel; a band family tree might be better able to chart their convoluted history than this article. Therefore, the reader will be provided with an overview of 1973's current lineup: Brien, Stout, Olin-Fahle, McMahon, guitarist Steve Sollins, and drummer Dave Tarica.

"We've got a lot of people to come to the Rhinecliff Hotel by advertising ourselves as an all-female power trio," Brien said. "That gets a lot of people interested for some reason...I think Rush and Cream would've done much better if they'd had women in them."

The group performs a wide variety of original interpretations of 70's songs, including a medley of "Mandy" and "Angie," entitled "Mangie." "We perform Paul Anka, Helen Reddy, Neil Sedaka, Terry Jacks,

David Essex, Barry Manilow," said Brien. "The kind of songs I wanted to choose were songs that, when you started to hear us play it, you would say, 'Oh no, I hated that song!'"

"We just really love those songs, and they were very dear to us, so it was a combination of 'I hate this song, let's do it, it's really obnoxious,' to 'Actually, this song is quite interesting,'" added Stout.

"We hope to do a version of Don't Fear the Reaper," Olin-Fahle said.

The band has absorbed a number of 70's influences. Olin-Fahle likes Bob Seger, K.C. and the Sunshine Band, the Eagles, and Bad Company. Brien is a fan of the Bay City Rollers, to whom she paid tribute one night by dressing in tartan, and doffing an Eric Longmuir wig. McMahon is a Mick Jagger devotee. "My whole goal is to meet Jagger, and that's the only reason I'm a musician."

So far, it has been a long fight for the group to gain respect for its unique musical outlook. A musician from a rival band claimed that they sounded like "the Shags after having been run over by Jonathon Richman's tour bus."

"I wish people took us more seriously from a musical

outlook," said Olin-Fahle. "I think Buddy Holly would take us seriously."

What advice does 1973 have for aspiring Bard bands hoping for that prize opening slot at the Rhinecliff Hotel?

"Just call Ed (the owner of the Rhinecliff Hotel) and get a gig," says Brien.

"Keep your ears open, don't be phony, and don't use deodorant," says Olin-Fahle.

What is the 1973's attitude toward-AHEM-the competition? "I like a lot of what I hear of new bands," Olin-Fahle says, "It's nice to see we can co-op," he adds, pointing out that Tarica and Sollins are concurrent members of Velcro Dildo as well as 1973.

In the future, the band members predict that they will abandon rehearsals. "We're beyond rehearsals. We're an improv band," said McMahon.

"Even last semester, we didn't need rehearsals," Sollins added.

As for future live performances, Olin-Fahle said that they will consist entirely of "surprise hit-and-run gigs."

And their eventual goal? "We'd like to go to some island off the coast of Alaska, and hopefully record a debut album," Olin-Fahle stated.



HUDSON PRO MUSICA will perform sacred music

and All, Rejoice," a setting of a German melody by Michael Praetorius, and "O Lord of Heaven," a spiritual by Orlando di Lasso.

The second segment features music from 1750 to 1810 by early New England composers. Pieces include "Old Hundred," a setting of Psalm 100 from the Bay Psalm Book, the first music book printed in the colonies. Also to be performed are "When Jesus Wept" and "Creation," by Oliver Holden; "Russia" by Daniel Read; "Blow Ye the Trumpet" by Supply Belcher, and Simeon Jocelin's settings of Psalm 89 and Psalm 146.

Sacred music from the 19th and 20th centuries is the subject of the last segment. Selections include "Lift Thine Eyes," from Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy's oratorio "Elijah," "Ave Maria" by

Sergei Rachmaninoff; "God Be in My Head" by John Rutter, and "Praise Ye the Lord" by Hugo Distler.

The Old Dutch Church is located on Route 9 in North Tarrytown across the street from Philipsburg Manor. From point: south, take the New York State Thruway (I-87) to Exit 9 Tarrytown, and proceed left to Route 9. Follow Route 9 two miles north to the Old Dutch Church.

Tickets for the "Sacred Music Sampler" are \$10 in advance (limited tickets available at the door). For reservations, further information and a free calendar of upcoming events, contact Historic Hudson Valley, 15 White Plains Road, Tarrytown, New York 10591, (914) 631-8200.

Sacred Singers Grace Tarrytown

Sacred music from the 17th century to the present is the subject of a performance by Hudson Pro Musica at the Old Dutch Church in North Tarrytown on Sunday, March 19 (Palm Sunday), at 3 p.m. Based on biblical texts and other sacred sources, the "Sacred Music Sampler" includes works by Bach, Mendelssohn, Rachmaninoff and Billings.

Hudson Pro Musica is a choral ensemble composed of a staff from Historic Hudson Valley. The group specializes in singing and playing music popular in America from the colonial era through mid-19th century. They frequently perform during special events at Historic

Hudson Valley properties: Philipsburg Manor, Van Cortland Manor and Sunnyside.

The hour-long performance, sponsored by Historic Hudson Valley, is divided into three segments. The first segment focuses on European music from the 17th century. Both "Cantate Domino" by the Venetian composer Giovanni Croce and "O Worship the Lord" by Henry Purcell are settings of Psalm 96.

"Jesu Meine Freude," a famous German chorale, is sung in four different settings: the melody by itself, a Johann Cruger harmonization, a J.S. Bach motet and an organ chorale prelude by J.G. Walther. Other selections include "Dear Christians, One