

# Pete Best & Rockin' the Casbah

by Helen Marketti

"Haymans Green is a sound track of my life. The songs were composed and written by the band and myself. Its an 11 track CD and I'm proud of it. I know people will draw their own conclusions." These are thoughts shared by Pete Best about his new CD that was released on September 16th.

Pete Best was one of the original members of The Beatles. He was their drummer before Ringo Starr. During our telephone conversation Pete is at The Casbah Club in Liverpool, England. Original art work that was done by John Lennon and Paul McCartney still adorn the walls of The Casbah. It has stayed pretty much the same as it was since



Early Beatles: (l to r) Paul, John, Pete & George

the early 60s. It is now a tourist attraction for Beatle fans. Guided tours are provided and original artifacts are on display. "Haymans Green is the house where I lived; where the Casbah Club is," says Pete. "That's why the CD is called Haymans Green, its part of my life. My mother (Mona Best) had the idea to open up a coffee club in the basement of our home and book live entertainment. On special occasions we are hoping to bring live music back into the Casbah again."

The Casbah Club has played a treasured spoke in the wheel of Beatles history. It was the club where they first began to establish their sound, generate a solid fan base and hone their rock star skills. "In the early days I was influenced by an endless list of who was an idol of that time such as Elvis, Eddie Cochran, Chuck Berry and so on. In Liverpool I was bitten by the skiffle sound bug which was popular here at the time as well. I actually started playing guitar but wasn't happy doing it. I had always admired

the drumming of Gene Krupa. Once I started on drums I knew that was it for me. So the guitar was put in the corner to collect cobwebs," Pete laughs as he shares the story of how he became a drummer.

Through friendships, circumstances and a steady stream of Liverpool's youth filling in and out of the doors at the Casbah was how Pete found himself being asked by Paul McCartney if he would like to be their drummer. Pete already "had the job" but they went through the formality of auditioning him so as not to appear overly anxious to have him on board. When asked what he felt was the magic ingredient that first brought the Beatles sound together Pete said, "We played for such long hours. Playing clubs at home (Liverpool) then going over to Hamburg (Germany) and doing shows that were 6 - 7 hours long. We had the platform to grow as musicians and to also grow our audiences. Things started to change for us from that point as we started to get a particular sound going, audiences responded more and even our appearance changed."

The reason is still not clear why Pete was replaced by Ringo. There are many opinions and speculations that can be left to the imagination to ponder. Now over forty years later it doesn't really matter. Pete reflects on his participating role for the beginnings of the most popular rock band in the world, "I've grown up with it. I don't reflect upon it every day. I am reminded of it by others. I look upon myself as a person who enjoys my life, my family, traveling, making music and my band. When I do think about it I am very proud to have had a hand in it and to have been a part of it."

"Frans" is an endearing term that combines the words 'friends' and 'fans'



Pete Best Band

together. That is how Pete refers to his audiences. "That is what they are to me...friends and fans." Plenty of "frans" were in attendance for a recent show given by Pete and his band in Bucyrus, Ohio. Songs were performed from the new CD, Haymans Green, as well as early Beatle favorites in which he was the drummer for in those days. One such song is, "Love Me Do."

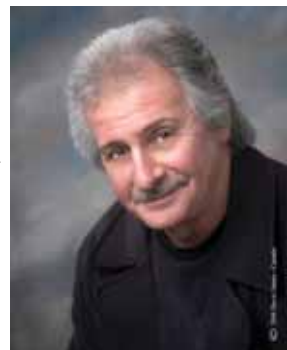
The crowd is a varying span of generations who seem to automatically clap, toe tap and sing along. Pete Best and his band have put on a rockin' show that everyone will remember and talk about with excitement after words. He always



takes time to sign autographs and pose for pictures with "frans" of all ages. Does he ever grow weary from always being associated with and being asked about his time with The Beatles? After a thoughtful pause Pete said, "If people didn't ask me about my time with them then I would wonder what I was doing wrong."

Thinking back to many life lessons learned from his mother Mona, Pete sums up one of her best pieces of advice, "To enjoy life regardless of what happens to you. That is how she lived her life and she taught us to do the same."

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