

LOST SHEEP BAND



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Love Affair

On Saturday, April 28 at The Tangier in Akron, Love Affair will be doing two reunion shows for the first time in nearly 30 years!

By Helen Marketti

Favorite songs such as "Mama Sez" will be performed at the reunion show, just like the ole days! Love Affair was a band that ignited its spark in Cleveland during the mid-70s and saw success, travel, album releases and thousands of fans for ten years before calling it quits to pursue life's next journey. Their last gig was in 1984. The timing is right for a reunion show this year and all of the guys are remembering the excitement, fun, laughter and a brotherhood that has stood the test of time.

Love Affair band members:
 Rich Spina - front man
 Wes Coolbaugh - guitar
 John Zdravecky - guitar
 Wayne Cukras - bass
 Mike Hudak - drums

"We were all kids together," said Rich. "I was the last member to join. Wayne, John and Wes formed the band. It was their first band



and I think their only band. At the time, they were 15 years old. Mike joined when he was either 16 or 17. I joined around my 18th birthday. We were playing the Cleveland Agora on Thursday nights and three of the guys were still in high school."

Love Affair was not the original name of the group when they first started. "I joined the band in 1974," said Rich. "We were called, Stairway then and that was our name until 1976 and then it was time for changes. We were doing more Queen and Led Zeppelin,

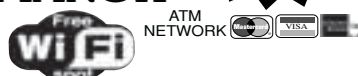
added a big light show and doing more of a stage show plus we were adding more of our own original material. The name change was a signal that we were moving in a different direction. Our management was pushing names on us and I remember Love Affair being the name that we hated the least. (laughs) I don't think any of us really put any of our own efforts into the naming of the band. The name was just given to us. Each of the guys may remember it a bit differently."

"There is some discrepancy there," said



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John. "I remember the name of the band coming from a contest."

"I really don't remember to be honest," said Wayne. "I was too busy enjoying what we were doing."

"There was a bunch of band names out there and we wanted something we could market," said Wes. "Love Affair still isn't my favorite name for a band to be honest but it was the best name out of the other options we had. I think Guns N Roses would have been a cool name for us instead of Love Affair and they came along after us. The Rolling Stones was already taken so we ended up going with Love Affair."

"I just woke up one day and our manager said our name has been changed," said Mike. "That's all I remember. I sure had a lot of fun back then."

One thing that can be agreed upon is that the friendships are still going strong regardless of the different pathways each member has taken since the band folded. Playing in front of the fans again is something all of the guys are looking forward to as well.

"We were together for a total of ten years," said Rich. "It was still the five of us even though the band's name had changed. There was never a breakdown in communication. We all stayed friends over the years even though our lives have gone in different directions but the chemistry between all of us is still there. The rehearsals have been going great. There are so many memories that we have been reliving. Things are going to be exactly the same way as our fans remember."

Rich continues, "We have such camaraderie. We have a special relationship with each other. It's one of those situations where we can each finish sentences for one another. (laughs) After all these years, it still hasn't changed. We all had a dream and we accomplished that dream together."

"It's funny, after rehearsals we have been sitting around and talking about the past for two more hours instead of going home," said John. "I'm enjoying this time that we are spending together and can't wait to do the show. The timing was right to do this. It has all meshed well. We are going to recreate as much as we can. We used to have pyrotechnics in our shows but you can't do that now. We still have an imitation of sorts that will be as equally effective. We will have some video going as well so that will be neat for everyone to see."

"Getting back with these guys has been like getting back together with long lost brothers," said Wayne. "I'm not in the music business any more so this has been a double treat for me. I haven't picked up the bass in 27 years! Rich talked me into doing this again and I'm

going to tell you how he did it...he asked me!" (laughs)

Wayne continues, "I've been out of the music business for such a long time, by choice, so it's very special to me to be a part of this. It feels natural. I can look at these guys and know what is going to happen. For example, I can look at Mike and know what he is going to do on the drums and I will be able to pick up on it. It's special for me to be able to do that after all these years without having played. It really does feel like yesterday. I really love these guys."

"We have a lot of work to cram in but it's going well," said Wayne. "We want the sound as good as we possibly can get it. It's all sounding good. We are going to try to represent Love Affair as it was then. There are some things that I'm not going to share because we have a few surprises in store."

"I can't really explain how well we all seem to click as we always have," said Wes. "It's hard to explain. You just fall back into it even with the same jokes. We have spent a lot of time together so it's like picking up where you left off."

Wes continues, "Getting back with these guys is like we never even stopped. You just remember the stuff and your brain grabs it. Well, my brain isn't quite what it used to be but it still remembers. (laughs) We are going to try to do what we used to do. I don't think it will be exactly the same because it has been close to 30 years ago. I would like to survive it and be able to talk about it after. (laughs) Musically, I think we are up to par. We were always a good live band."

"It's been great playing with these guys again," said Mike. "We just picked up where we left off almost 30 years ago. It's just so much fun to see everyone again. It's going to be a great show. Our fans are going to hear great music. You never know what is going to happen. Anything can happen when you're onstage but I mean that in a good way!"

Rich sums it up, "Everyone that comes to our show is going to see a solid, cohesive unit that loves to entertain an audience. All the songs will be in the same key as they were then. All of us will be in our same spots onstage. We will give the fans what they remember. This is probably the last hurrah for us to do this. We want to do it and we want to do it right."

For ticket information: www.thetangier.com
Show times: 7 pm & 9 pm (Saturday, April 28)

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