

THE CRYERS

On Saturday, November 10, The Cryers will be the opening band for classic artist John Ford Coley at The Winchester in Lakewood.

By Helen Marketti

The Cryers, from Freehold, NJ have been churning out their own rockin' music as well as playing alongside some of the coolest names in classic rock history for several years. They have toured throughout the United States and Canada bringing with them their own sound, talent, and unique brand that makes them a staple with many artists such as Denny Laine (The Moody Blues/Wings), Terry Sylvester (The Hollies), Joey Molland (Badfinger), Mark Lindsay (Paul Revere & The Raiders) and a most recent addition to the list with the band, Ambrosia. This is the short list, however.

The band members are: Joe Orlando (bass/vocals) Belle Liao (keyboard/vocals) Jeff Brown (guitar/vocals) Roger Wolford (drummer)

Joe Orlando took some time to share how The Cryers formed and evolved, "I started the band in 1991. It originally began as an original acoustic band. There had been some lineup changes over time. Jeff joined the band in 2002. He, along with Belle and myself has been the nucleus of the band for the past ten years. As for the name of the band, it's a very simple story. I'm a fan of the actor, Jon Cryer and I thought that would be a cool name for a band."

Many great reviews have been written about the The Cryers. "I would definitely describe our sound as classic rock," said Joe. "It stems from so many influences. My father used to listen to all of the crooners from South America who had the melodic, baritone voices. My mother was a big TV fan so we used to watch all of the variety shows of the late 50s and early 60s. I liked listening to Elvis, The Kingmen, The Kingston Trio and all of the folk groups. The Beatles and the whole British Invasion were a great influence on me as well. I liked early country music, Texas swing and things like that. Belle was raised on classical music and is a classical trained pianist. Roger is a jazz-trained drummer and has been heavily into jazz his entire life. Jeff is kind of a Merle Haggard-Waylon Jennings country-rock-style player. We are a product of all we have been influenced by. Each one of our song writing styles is so different that we write separately. We create our sound by bringing what we each have to offer to each song we write."

Opening for classic rock artists is a reputation that The Cryers have earned for themselves over time. "It is quite a buzz to

work with all of these great people," said Joe. "Many of them I grew up listening to so it's been quite surreal actually, someone pinch me (laughs). For the most part, I create all of the events for The Cryers. I seek these people out and see if there might be an opportunity to open up for them or perform with them. So for a short time, we are either opening for a classic act or we are part of their band and it's a lot of fun. I will approach an artist if I can and introduce myself and it goes from there."

On Saturday, November 10, The Cryers will be opening for John Ford Coley. "You hear us talk about these people and you hear other artists talk about other people and it's always said how talented they all are but it's true," said Joe. "John Ford Coley is a great talent, a wonderful human being and incredibly funny. We go on the road a lot together and he keeps us laughing all the time."

The Winchester is well known to The Cryers. "The Winchester is one of my all time favorite places to play," said Joe. "The people who own it (Jim and Rebecca) are absolutely great. They understand the music and they understand musicians. I like the venue and I like the sound quality."

When not on the road with The Cryers, Joe and keyboardist, Belle Liao are the co-owners of Monmouth Academy of Musical Arts located in Morganville, NJ. "Monmouth has a pretty long history," explains Joe. "It all started in 1988 when Belle moved to New Jersey which was also the same year I met her and we became friends. She was teaching music lessons out of a large music store. Around 1995, the storeowner asked Belle if she would be interested in leasing some space. She asked me if I would be interested in that as well so we became business partners then, too. We were already in the band together. From 1995 until 2005, we were in a large music store giving lessons and then we were evicted because they wanted the business that we had built, basically. After that, we leased our own space. In January of 2006, we opened our doors to Monmouth Academy. It's around 8300 square feet, we have 20 world-class teachers, a performance area and a professional recording studio. We have about 500 students right now."

The Cryers keep busy all year long and have some plans already in place for 2013, one of them being to play Memorial Day Weekend in Louisville, KY to an extensive Beatles



tribute fest, Abbey Road on the River. "We do a kick ass version of Sgt. Pepper," said Joe. "We do the version without special effects. We just rock it out from beginning to end."

For more information on The Cryers and their latest CD, "Rock & Roll Holiday", please visit their Facebook page.

For a full show schedule at The Winchester, please visit: www.thewinchester.net



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