

V NOW WE'RE TALKIN

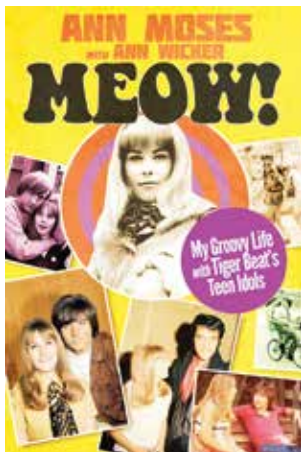
By Helen Marketti

“MEOW! My Groovy Life with Tiger Beat’s Teen Idols” by Ann Moses

Teen magazines have been around for more than fifty years. As each generation changes, matures, and evolves, so do their favorite teen idols. Reading teen magazines was as though we were in touch with a trusted friend who gave us a window (a backstage pass if you will) to get a glimpse of what our “faves” were doing when they weren’t filming a movie or performing onstage. *Tiger Beat* magazine kept our finger on the pulse of those days, when we dreamily put the glossy pin-ups of our idols on our bedroom walls and somehow hoped they would find their way to us. I too joined in the fandom.

Since sixth grade, my favorite idol was Shaun Cassidy. I was convinced at age twelve that he and I were destined to be together. *Tiger Beat* magazines were in my bedroom, stacked in a corner. In fact, there was one issue devoted entirely to Shaun Cassidy and I held onto that magazine for years. It wasn’t until I left for college that my mom thought I no longer needed those old magazines and she threw them away! Even today, I still browse thrift stores and flea markets, hoping that specific *Tiger Beat* issue about Shaun Cassidy will pop up.

Fast forward to browsing a book store one day, when this book cover seemed to call my name. It was as though I had found a familiar friend all over again. “MEOW! My Groovy Life with Tiger Beat’s Teen Idols” (© 2017 by Ann Moses Marino, introduction written by Bobby Sherman). I eagerly grabbed it off the shelf and took it to the cashier. I had the book finished within two days. Even though some of the teen idols were before my time, I still knew who they were and Ann Moses knew them personally! I loved this book! Its memories are what readers will resonate with and take us back to when life seemed less complicated. Stories of The Monkees, The Dave Clark Five, Mark Lindsay of Paul Revere & The Raiders, Bobby Sherman, David Cassidy,



The Bee Gees - the list would take the rest of this page but you get the idea.

Ann Moses was the youngest editor of a national magazine. She was hired at the age of 19 and worked as the editor of *Tiger Beat* from 1966 to 1972. “Everyone was young and accessible back then,” remembers Ann. “My first interview was with Mike Smith, keyboardist for the Dave Clark Five. I couldn’t even imagine trying to communicate with artists now. There are such strong gatekeepers around them that it seems nearly impossible.”

“*16* magazine was the main competition for *Tiger Beat*. They had already been on the market. *Tiger Beat* started in 1965,” said Ann. “We built ourselves to be the largest selling magazine in all of Hollywood. *16* magazine was based in New York City but most of the stars lived in the Hollywood area so we prided ourselves on having better access because we lived in Los Angeles.”

So, what exactly IS a teen idol? “My classification of a teen idol would be that they are an artist that especially appeals to teens and preteens,” explains Ann. “During the *Tiger Beat* years, we had always believed that our audience was all girls. I have since found out, after launching my blog and Facebook page, that there were a lot of boys reading the magazine, too. They were interested in learning about their favorite bands but not so much in the teen idol aspect. When The British Invasion bands came over and took over the United States for a while, they ignited a new generation of artists and fans. I think there are classic things we did in *Tiger Beat* that are just as relevant today. There were so many teen magazines mentioning an artist’s favorite color but *Tiger Beat* was much more than that. Some of our most successful stories were the life stories we printed. We had in depth interviews with Bobby Sherman and David Cassidy. We interviewed the artist, but also interviewed a parent, a former teacher, a former classmate or a childhood friend. Then we would scan baby pictures, etc... which would make the reader more engaged and interested. It gave insight to the artist. It’s as classic today as it was then. It’s learning about someone that we are curious about and it satisfies a lot of questions of what young people have on their minds. We also did what was called “24 Hour Stories” about how an artist spends their day and while that may seem trivial in general, it wasn’t to their fans.”

“In 1969, I created the “Tiger Beat Interview,” which was a serious, sit-down interview. I based it on *Playboy* magazine! I had a boyfriend at the time who had *Playboy* magazine and I would read the interviews and how in depth they were. I remember reading an interview they did with Paul Newman and they had asked him about his wife, Joanne Woodward, and other women and he replied, “Why go out for hamburger when I have steak at home?” remembers Ann. “I liked the seriousness of the interviews and that’s how I formulated the interview for *Tiger Beat*. I post those interviews on my Facebook page and when I read them again fifty years later, it is amazing of what was important to the artist at the time. There were artists who cared about the climate and the Earth fifty years ago and we are still fighting that battle. I am proud of *Tiger Beat* magazine and all that we accomplished.”

She continues, “I was always prepared with questions. My main work was feature stories. When you establish rapport with someone, a good interview happens organically. One-on-One situations are more relaxed and the interview isn’t manufactured. Artists were interested in talking with me because I was genuinely interested and curious about them. Many of them I had interviewed early in their careers.”

An extra special interview occurred when Ann interviewed The Bee Gees. A real-life romance naturally blossomed between she and Maurice Gibb. She spent time with them on the road and at their home in England. She was present at the studio when they recorded “Words” (1967). “They had written the song on my *Tiger Beat* stationery,” remembers Ann. “When I was in London with Maurice, I had written letters to my parents back home in California. My mother had kept all of the letters. When I read them, I saw all over again the beauty and romance of our relationship. He showed me a wonderful time and life experience. He gets an A+. I wouldn’t trade those experiences for anything, even the heartache I went through. It was such a special time I had with him and seeing them write music and work on their songs was incredible.”

She continues, “Maurice abruptly ended our relationship by saying he was married to the singer, LuLu which turned out not to be true



Ann interviewing Mike Smith (seated) of the Dave Clark Five



Ann with Elvis Presley

Ann and Davy Jones (The Monkees)



at the time. It was believed that management didn’t like the fact that he and I were together and they wanted him to be a “celebrity couple” with LuLu and of course I was heartbroken. He and LuLu did end up getting married but eventually got divorced. I never saw or communicated with him again.”

Ann was in the audience for Elvis Presley’s 1968 comeback special. “That night was the ultimate time in his career. He was powerful and commanded the audience. He was Mr. Sex on a stick. It was the best he ever looked. I hadn’t been too interested in Elvis since I was interviewing all of the young bands but that changed when I attended the comeback special.” (laughs)

It took Ann five years to write her book. She was encouraged by her young coworkers in an orthodontic office who had never heard of some of the people she talked about but then Googled her name and the artists she had interviewed and they suggested she write a book about her experiences and memories. “The book is still being well-received. I post memories and *Tiger Beat* articles on Facebook and on my website. I am amazed every day.”

“MEOW!” is available on Amazon.com. Autographed copies are available at www.AnnMoses.com and www.helenrosemarketti.com