

The Good



Intentions

Curragh Camp

1966 - 1970

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With contributions from ex members Tom Mills and Dave Morrissey.

The arrival of the Beatles in Ireland in 1963 closely followed by the Rolling Stones in 1965 for concerts at The Adelphi cinema in Dublin heralded the beginning of a new music era in Ireland with many musicians wanting to emulate their success by joining the up-and-coming Beat Group scene. During 1965, new clubs opened their doors to the sounds of the groups like The Greenbeats and The Creatures. The first of these Beat clubs was Sound City on Burgh Quay in Dublin. Others soon followed like the 5 Club, in Harcourt St, which was modelled on the famous Cavern Club in Liverpool, also Club a Go Go in Sackville Place and The Scene in Great Denmark Street. Musicians in provincial towns were also forming groups and were trying to find any venue to play their particular brand of music, playing in Tennis Clubs and at Hops in their own locality.

One such outfit was The Good Intentions, formed in 1966 and were based in the Curragh Military Camp. This might seem like an odd place to start a Beat Group, but there were plenty of musicians in the Curragh Military bands who had already played with Showbands. Their first line up started life as a 3 piece with Ceannt neighbours Pat O'Sullivan on Bass, Jimmy Kearney on drums, and Arthur Butler from Athgarvan on guitar. Pat worked at Irish Ropes in Newbridge and Jimmy was working as a Jockey in a horse trainers yard near the Curragh.

The line up changed shortly afterwards with the addition of Dave Morrissey from Portlaw. Co Waterford on drums. Dave previously played with an early line up of The Savoy



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Showband in Waterford. He relocated to The Curragh Camp where he joined the 3rd Battalion in Connolly Barracks and became a drummer in the Army Pipe Band based in the same Barracks. Tom Mills (from Newbridge) also a soldier in the 3rd Battalion joined on guitar. Jimmy switched from the drums to rhythm guitar and vocals, and Arthur left the band.



(Tom) I was walking along the middle road in the Curragh when I was approached by Pat and Jimmy asking if I played guitar. They must have heard that I played a bit. I said I did, and I went for an audition at Pats house, played a few tunes and got the job.

Getting a place to rehearse and finding a venue to play in was their main issue to overcome. **(Tom)** We used to rehearse at The Black Hut in Clarke Barracks, and at Ceannt Barracks dining hall and also in the back yard of Pats parents, Bob and May O’Sullivan’s house, at No 9 A block, Ceannt Warrant Officers. The bands outdoor rehearsals attracted its own audience as kids leaned over the railings to get a view. Bob and May were very supportive as the sound of the band resonated around their house and yard, and the general neighbourhood.



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Most Beat Groups at the time covered other artists material and only a few wrote their own songs.



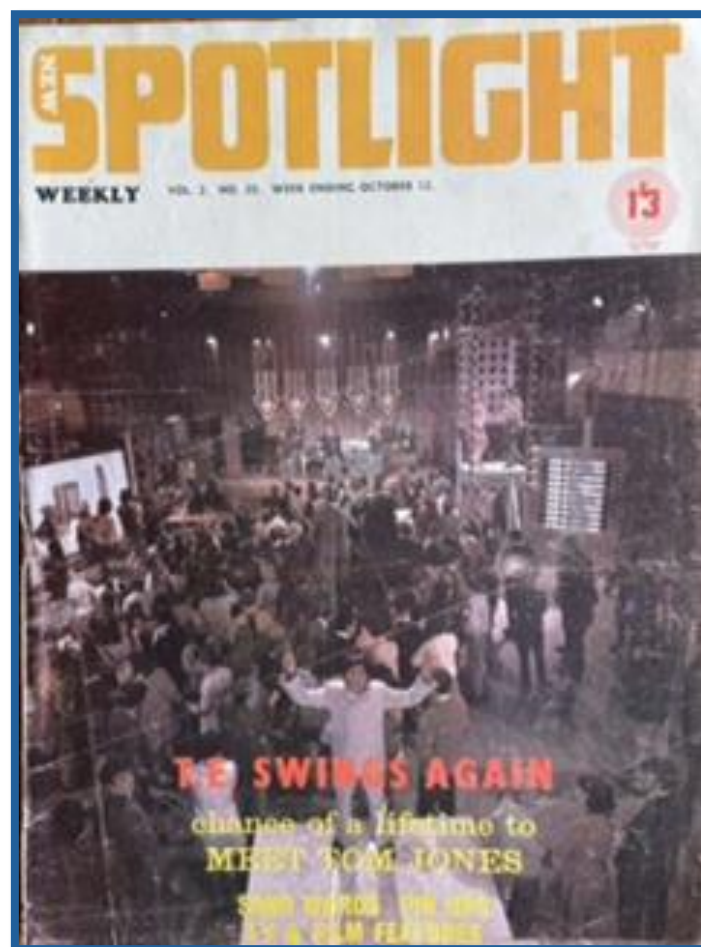
The songs they rehearsed were songs from the charts like 'All or Nothing' by the Small Faces and the 'House of the Rising Sun' by the Animals and various tunes from The Rolling Stones and The Beatles. Another song that became a favourite audience tune was, 'Jailer Bring Me Water,' by Bobby Darin. A recently uncovered set list from 1968 shows the extent of their ability to cover the top hits of the era. (Tom) All tunes were learned by either listening to the radio or playing the various records at home and trying to work out what chords and what key the songs were in. Radio Luxembourg and Pirate Radio Caroline North were the preferred stations to hear the new group sounds as Irish Radio in the 1960s played mostly Showband records. Some backline amplification and P A equipment were purchased from Ron Hennessy's shop in Eyre St, Newbridge.



(Dave) I got myself a different drum kit (Premier) and we were ready to hit the circuit.

The massively popular Showbands were doing great business in the dancehalls and beat groups found it difficult to get bookings in these venues. The groups generally had four or five members, and the Showbands had seven plus members including a brass section which the dancehall promoters insisted on. The showbands in the sixties wore suits onstage and the groups wore whatever clothes they liked.

There weren't many opportunities for Beat Groups to appear on television and appearances were few and far between, for it was the Showbands who dominated our television screens. RTE had 'Picking' The Pops in 1964 presented by Larry Gogan, The Showband Show in 1965 with presenter Paul Russell. Then came the Go 2 Show in 1967, with presenters B P Fallon and Larry Gogan. It wasn't until a show called Like Now aired on RTE on 28th September 1968 that the Beat Groups and Showbands were regularly featured. Recording took place at The Top Hat Ballroom. Dun Laoghaire and the host was Dublin DJ Danny Hughes. The show was produced by Bil Keating. The half hour slot on Saturdays at 7pm was a good platform to promote new bands to a wider audience. The first show featured Granny's Intentions, The Dixies Showband, The Riviera and British group, Grapefruit. Also on the show every week were two dancers named John and Olivia, plus a chart rundown and a fashion update. Danny Hughes was frequently seen driving through the Curragh during the 60s on his way to Brownstown where he had a girlfriend. Sadly, all of the Like Now shows and many other popular music broadcasts from the 1960's were erased by RTE.



(Tom) The first Good Intentions gig was at The Black Hut, close to Clarke Barracks NCO's Mess. The Hut, now long since demolished like several other historic buildings in the Camp. A Sunday afternoon slot was secured from the caretaker Mr Houlihan and it became the Inn place to go for the locals and have a dance to the live band from 3pm to 6pm. There was a potbellied stove in the Hut for heating the room. The cost of entry was 2 shillings, and it wasn't long before it was packed out with fans of the band. They continued to play there for years.

Other venues available for entertainment in the Curragh were The Gaelic Hall, in McDonagh Barracks also Clarke and McDermott dining halls. Ceannt Canteen also hosted The Good Intentions for dancing and regular hops were held there. The Gymnasium was used as a concert venue for Musicals, Drama and Ceili bands. Each barracks had an NCO's Mess and often they were used for kids Christmas party's and other functions where live music was also played.

Dickie Rock and the Miami Showband appeared at the Gymnasium in 1966, causing quite a stir with the dancing public, as Dickie was chosen as Ireland's entry for the upcoming Eurovision Song Contest and finished in 4th place.

As word spread about The Good Intentions, other gigs began to come in for the group. (Tom) A local promoter from Newbridge, Liam Kett, got the band some support slots at Newbridge Town Hall, where the top bands like Skid Row, The Gentry and

Granny's Intentions would draw big crowds. The support acts or (relief bands as they were called) used the headline bands equipment and on one occasion a member of the Gentry tried to scupper their sound by changing the settings of the amplification while they played. As was often the case, the relief bands sometimes played to empty halls until the pubs closed and only then would the crowd enter the hall.

In their early days The Good Intentions had no transportation to and from gigs until Jimmy acquired a Mini car, which was too small to fit all their equipment and meant they had to do multiple trips to and from the various venues. (Dave) The equipment was tied onto the cars roof rack and was prone to falling off when one of my drums dislodged on the way to the CYMS hall in Monasterevin and was sent tumbling down the road. We played at the opening night of the hall and went down so well that evening that people started to boo when the headline act took to the stage.

DICKIE ROCK
AND
THE MIAMI SHOWBAND
At
CURRAGH CAMP
FRIDAY, 4th FEB.
IN AID OF A.B.F.
DANCING 9 - 2 ADM. 7/6 MINERALS



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(Tom) As we had no transport our equipment was stored permanently in The Black Hut. One time we got asked by Joe Larkin to do a Christmas Party dinner dance at the Hospital Mess in the Curragh. (Dave) We didn't have a typical dance program that included waltzes or quick steps so at first, we were reluctant to take the gig. Joe said it would be ok and not to worry about the dancers not being able to dance to the rock and pop songs. He also said he would supply transport to get the equipment to the gig. So reluctantly we agreed to take the booking.

As we packed up our gear at the Black Hut, an ambulance arrived to take us to the Hospital gig. The dancers were none too pleased with our rock program and were constantly asking for an old time waltz throughout the evening. The only live stage photo of the band was taken at this dance and as you can see, no one is smiling.

(Tom) Gigs in Dublin were hard to come by as so many Beat Groups were now playing the circuit. One gig we did do was called The Rink Ballroom, in Aungier Street, Dublin. In the 1950's it was called The Palm Court and was owned by a Jewish entrepreneur named Soloman White. In the 1960's It was a Roller Rink by day and a dancehall by night. Beat groups like The Bye Laws, The Others, Some People and The Movement played there regularly. We solved our transport issues for this gig by hiring a bus from Hal Conway in Brownstown to bring us and our fans from the Curragh to The Rink in Dublin. A passenger list from this bus has survived and contains some names people will recognize. We even went as far as Drogheda for a gig on a snowy night and had snowballs thrown from the audience at Jimmy Kearney while he was on stage singing.

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	TUES	IFRAG
MUST BE PAID BEFORE						
						1
						2
						3
						4
						5
						6
						7
						8
						9
						10
						11
						12
						13
						14
						15
						16
						17
						18-19

MARY MOONEY	20	X	29 x 10 ²
NORLIN SULLIVAN	21	/	
DONALD KEARNEY	22	/	290
MATTIE HAYZ	23	/	
OLGA REARDON	24	X	
WIREN CONNOR	25	X	
JEFF REARDON	26	X	
JOSEPHINE BARNBY	27	✓	
MICK TOBIN	28	✓	
ANDY FOLEY	29	✓	
TIM HOLLIHAN	30	X	
ALICE HUGHES	31	✓	
RICHARD HEFFERNEN	32	✓	
ELEN REVEL	33	/	
JOEAL DEMPSEY		X	14 - 10 - 0

Hal Conway Bus list 1960's

(Dave) Never known to miss a gig, I had an accident at work and broke my ankle which put me in a cast up to my knee on my right leg. This being my bass drum leg I had to swap over and use my left leg on the bass drum pedal while the right leg was laid up. No easy task !

The Beat scene in the late sixties in Dublin continued to expand with new bands being formed and new venues opening. On the downside the groups were always splitting up, with several high-profile members joining top Showbands. Most noteworthy of these was The Chosen Few duo, Fran O'Toole and Paul Ashford who made the national news pages when they joined The Miami Showband in 1967. New Spotlight magazine had a weekly Beat page, written by DJ Pat Egan, which kept everyone up to date with the comings and goings between groups, also a magazine called Hitsville was published in 1968 which dealt solely with the group scene. The letters page in New Spotlight was always full of people bemoaning the lack of publicity and airplay given to the groups on radio.

1969 saw the release of a compilation L P called ' Paddy's Dead and the kids know it', featuring various Beat groups from the scene.



Tom Mills, Dave Morrissey & Pat O'Sullivan (RIP)

Pat And Jimmy had younger brothers, Jim O'Sullivan and Tommy Kearney who were teenagers and were keen to learn from their elder siblings. They had formed their own group with their friends, Con and Willie Farrell. They only had acoustic instruments and cardboard boxes for a drum kit and a frying pan for a cymbal. Jim remembers carrying all The Good Intentions amps and equipment to and from his parents house to rehearsals at the Black hut.

The line-up was.

Jim on lead guitar, Con on rhythm guitar and vocals. Willie on the bass and Tommy on the drums.

Songs from their set included The Beatles 'Eight Days a Week' and 'Get Back'. The Rolling Stones 'Satisfaction' and Credence Clearwater Revival 'Bad Moon Rising'.

With my girl like you		CALL OVER
JOHNNY B. GOODE		BABY COME BACK
YOUR NEVER THERE X		THE LAST TIME
TELL ME X		POOR YOU CLOSE X
AND I LOVE HER X		OUTTA THIS PLACE
WE'RE GOING OUT TONIGHT X		DO YOU WANT A DANCE
SUPRENNELY YOU LOVE ME		SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BE
EIGHT DAYS A WEEK		ROCK'N ROLL MUSIC
BREAKING UP X		BUTTERFLY RED WHITE ^{AN} BLUE
I get so EXCITED		HERE COMES MY BABY
LOVIN FEELIN X		ALL OR NOTHING X
UNCHAINED MELODY		
UNDER THE BOARDWALK X		
OB LA DI, OB LA DA X		
HEY JUDE		
HERE COMES THE NIGHT		
HOMBURG		
IM DOWN		
SLOW DOWN		

Original Good Intentions Song List 1960s

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Just after Christmas 1969 they were invited to get up and play at the Good Intentions gig in The Black Hut. They used the bands electric instruments on this occasion.

The cashier on the entrance door suggested they name the band The Rangers after the Army Rangers who exercised around the camp at 6am whilst singing We Are Rangers, Mighty, Mighty, Rangers and woke everyone in the Camp up.

As with all groups the day arrived when The Good Intentions decided amicably to part ways. Many bands put this down to playing the same circuit or musical differences, when some group members want to play a different type of music. As the 1960s came to a close and the summer of love rolled over into the 1970s, the lads, while remaining good friends, went their separate ways. They were the only Beat Group to emerge from the Curragh Camp.

And In The End !!!!!. The Beatles broke up in 1970 and so did The Good Intentions.

Many thanks to Tom Mills and Dave Morrissey for their recollections.

Dedicated to the memory of former colleagues and founding members Pat O'Sullivan (R I P) and Jimmy Kearney (R I P)



Niall Power
Fire Station Terrace
Curragh Camp

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