

The Good Life Festival Hosts The Guess Who

Written by Sona Patel

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If you experienced the previous Good Life Festival at the beautiful Encanterra Country Club in February, we don't have to tell you twice how incredible it was. If you missed out, here's your chance to experience the Good Life Festival on March 5, 2011.



Encanterra invites bands, The Guess Who and Three Dog Night to take the stage. The Guess Who emerged from Winnipeg, Manitoba as Rock N' Roll artists in 1960. They struck a chord with international audiences with their hit songs, "Shakin' All Over," "These Eyes," "Clap For the Wolfman," and "American Woman." By 1975, most of the band had retired and taken on different lifestyles while some pursued solo careers. A few years later, reunions and joint efforts slowly brought members of The Guess Who back together. They are currently on tour with the rock band, Three Dog Night, both of whom will hit the stage at the Encanterra Country Club on March 5, 2011. The Guess Who drummer, Garry Peterson, is here with us today to talk about his experiences with the band and their upcoming show.



Q: With so many past members, has your music changed over the course of time? How have you evolved overall?

A: Much of our music was developed by the original four members, and after 1970 we had two different guitar players to replace Bachman. We were well established, so there wasn't really a drastic change but the rhythm is always important and it's still there. The foundation of the house is still very solid. Most of the newcomers have added something on stage or with how they play. It would be great to have the original band but obviously that's not possible.

Q: Would the same audience appeal to your music today as they did in the 70's and 80's, or have you gone in a different direction?

A: Well the audience of today is about five generations. We have people listening to us from five- years-old to 85-years-old. I think it's partly because of how the delivery system of music has changed. It went from vinyl to eight tracks to tapes to CDs to digital downloads. People no longer have to listen to only the radio to get their music. It's all available on iTunes or online. Internet has been a great invention for young bands today but also for classic rock acts. We're very fortunate, though. You used to need a record company to sign you and like you enough to put your album out, but today you can put it out by yourself so younger bands are being exposed. It's an exciting area because now there's an outlet. I think it's probably one of the reasons that come April when we go back to Winnipeg, we can get in the studio and record two new songs. There's a way to get them out to people.

Q: What have been the best and worst moments, being a musician?

A: I like to call it the "big drug." The "big drug" for a musician is to entertain people for however long you have them; 60 minutes, 90 minutes, whatever. The best thing is to make people feel happy. It's a worthwhile effort because you see what it does to them. But after a while there was no place for us. Country music started to sound like old rock and that became very popular. There was nowhere for a classic rock act. Radio formats are programmed for things of today or just oldies. There's no one saying, "This is the old hit and here's the new song from The Guess Who!" We had to wait for the internet, which is sometimes too late. After a while your energy level lowers. It's a matter of timing.

Q: What was it like going overseas for international tours in the 1970's?

A: We didn't do a whole lot of touring in Europe. But otherwise it was quite exciting. We went to Australia, New Zealand, and Japan. You learn that even with a language barrier, the kids that were there knew all the words phonetically. It was amazing. Music is an international language, and it's like art. It's still beautiful and exciting. You're more affected by different customs. We played mostly in the US and Canada, though. We'd get fan letters from behind the Iron Curtain in Russia, so people knew about us around that time.

Q: What is it like to be back with the band?

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A: I've been with the band for 49 years. It's been my lifetime work, with the exception of a minor break for 3 years. I started drumming when I was two years old and started professionally at age four. I think at this point, Jim Kale and I deserve gold watches. We should each have an engraved Rolex that says, Fifty Years in The Guess Who. I'm proud and honored to be in the band so long. It's not always easy. We're comfortable, but not gouging people or making hideous amounts of money. Now we're getting equal pay for equal play.

Q: Obviously it's much different performing now than it was back in the 80's, but how would you describe the band today?

A: We don't try to fool anyone into thinking they're seeing the original band. We're just playing the music. We have done a show three times in Biloxi. It's been sold out all three times. And I'd say now, were as good as we've ever been, even without the original members.

Q: Who is the song-writer for the band?

A: I've had my name on a couple. I was one of the writers for "American Woman." We all contributed. It was a jam on stage. But I think it's better if two guys or one guy writes the song over many. Maybe everyone just put their heart into that one that the audience could hear over the record. I don't know why we never tried that strategy again.

Q: What do you hope to gain from this performance and give back to the crowd?

A: If you came to the show at Encanterra, you'd find out! The people that made this band famous live in all places in United States, not just the so-called "groovy" places. When we go to all these places, they probably bought records of ours, but some may have never seen us live. We gain knowing that we're making them feel good. We're thanking them for putting us on stage. When we finish a show, we clean up, or dry off, and go down to the merchandise table and sign autographs until everyone is gone. We like the feedback. It's an experience. We always execute the music great, but it's about interplay of the musicians on stage.

Q: Do you have any last thoughts to share with us?

A: It's interesting going back and seeing the foundations of the music. Music is always changing. People say, "This is shocking music! People are dancing? We usually go to the symphony, people don't dance to this!" Every year has its own stars. It's about rebelling from what is or what was.

To purchase tickets for The Good Life Festival featuring The Guess Who and Three Dog Night, [click here](#) for a special discount. For more information [click here](#).

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