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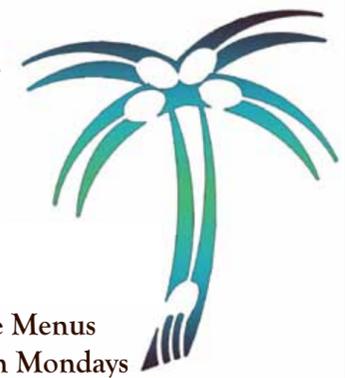
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SCAN FOR MORE INFO

Pink Lady

A blog by Luke Sommer Glenn

Peggy Caswell was the first victim of breast cancer that I knew personally. She played the piano/keyboard in one of the very first bands to hire me as an aspiring guitar player.

She read music and charted out all the songs we played. The other guitarist in the band was a lot like me; better at leads than finding the right chords. She would whip us into shape, showing us the proper chords to play but she was dependent on her charts, or so she thought.

She would bitch at the guitar players for using too many effects and as an insecure young guitar player I tended to hide behind a wall of effects...echoes, reverbs, digital delays. One night she "stole" my new Boss ME-1 pedal. I had to play all night "naked," nothing to cushion the blow of my sloppy fingers on the fretboard.

By the end of the gig I had learned how to make tone with my hands, not a box on the floor. At the time I was LIVID! The next week it "magically" appeared at the gig and being the gullible trusting soul I am, I completely believed her when she said that it was just "there." I didn't bother to plug it in. I gave the pedal away to a beginner guitar player.

The other guitar player, bassist, drummer and I had been conspiring to hide her sheet music from her as that was the only thing we could pick on her about. I've always been a "No Music Stands On Stage" type...have your shit down pat BEFORE public display. Nowadays everybody has these damn pads affixed to the mic stand...and they still blow the melody. At any rate...

She guarded her music "bible" as if it were hand written by the prophets and the saviors themselves. It was going to take some serious Mission: Impossible trickery... and she was smarter than the rest of us...and paranoid about us stealing her sacred notebook although since there was intent to scheme, the paranoia was justified. It seemed it was going to require a confederate on the inside.

She was a great player, she never really looked at the sheet music anyhow. She didn't flip the pages or look up the next song, it was more a handy place for her set list. Still, she had to have it.

Her husband wasn't about to help; he didn't like any of us. The other guitar player's wife who sang a sets worth of songs wasn't going to betray the sisterhood... Our big chance came when her car was in the shop and her husband wouldn't do without his car, forcing her to ride with the pothead guitar player.

I was to pick her up for the gig and back in those days one of my nicknames was Late Luke (that's a whole nother story). Peggy was the polar opposite, always the first one to show. Needless to say she felt quite harried by my tardiness and I took full advantage of the confusion.

She was a "bring home the bacon and fry it up in the pan" kind of modern woman. (You're



L-R Moose, Peggy, Dave, Kirk, Sue, The Hog Heaven Band circa 1989.

getting on if you remember that commercial). She was still barking orders to her husband and boys as I helped load her stuff in the back of my Mustang. Then it happened. THE opportunity.

Sitting right there, pretty as you please, unattended, unguarded, was the Holy Grail. Her trusted companion, just like Linus' security blanket I could have picked it up and placed it in the car...I could have. But I placed it on a top shelf in their garage. She was very petite so it was out of sight, out of mind as she stormed out of the kitchen door into the garage, exchanging harshness with her old man as I opened the door to my car for her to jump in.

In her rush, she didn't even think about her bible, she was too busy chewing on me for being so nonchalant about time. Being the bad influence I've always been, I had her drinking a beer with me on the way. She wasn't the party girl she was before having children but that girl was still there and I am known to drive a person to drink.

The rest of the band were caught off guard by Peggy's intensified personality, she was usually the shy one, preferring sobriety over indulgence. Usually. She was trying to make fun of me by pretending to move in slow motion while she sucked down another beer. The other guitar player and bass player had the "PA" already in place so it only took a couple of minutes to get Peggy and I set up and we immediately kicked off the first song.

She was still so hacked at me for making her "late" that she shot me the shit eye every chance she got during

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For more info: www.lukesommerglenn.com

the first set. It wasn't until the end of the set that she noticed something missing. We started to play a song that Sue wanted to sing and she reached for the book that wasn't there.

We were playing at Desperado's on Cocoa Beach so that was the song Sue wanted to sing. Peggy played it perfect at practice. "I can't play this!" she said in a panic.

"Sure you can" said the eternally optimistic and perpetually happy Dave on guitar as well as on Sue.

"Start it on guitar."
 "No, it's a piano song" complains Sue who demanded, but seldom got, note for note perfection.

A tense exchange ensured while the bar crowd quickly becomes restless. The manager is concerned.

Peggy is frozen. I lean over to remind her what key the song is in like a smart ass but I got it wrong. That aggravated her enough that she started playing the intro perfectly, like always. She gave me the shit eye all night.

After the gig as I was dropping her off and unloading her gear I pointed out where I had hidden her bible. Never saw it again after that, she'd come through, trial by fire.

Peggy had beat breast cancer or so we thought. It came back with a vengeance and took her beautiful soul from the world before she really even got started living.

Dedicated to Kathy Snow and Debbie Johnson, survivors.
 Peace and Love & Kindness. Luke