

COMMUNITY

"Mr. Mike's" determined to stay low key amidst development

From 6

Since Tone Loc was staying in Harrisburg Clory said they suggested driving him back to his hotel but by way of the record store, of course. The photographs on the wall of Tone Loc posing in front of a shiny, white limousine with the staff of Mr. Mike's and several friends were taken that night.

"The night Bobby Brown was to perform," Clory said, "was extremely intense." Between 700 and 800 tickets had been sold and on the day of the show Bobby Brown's spokesperson called and said he could not make it.

When the staff of Mr. Mike's arrived at The Forum fans were being turned away at the doors. Once the staff was recognized, angry, frustrated ticket-holders shouted sneering remarks and derisive comments in their direction. "We didn't get out of the car for very long," said Clory.

Two months later the rescheduled Bobby Brown show went as planned at the Zembo Mosque.

"Bobby Brown was very nice," said Clory. "He came off as slightly cocky at first, but he was very apologetic [about missing the last show] and turned out to be a really nice guy." The photographs with Bobby Brown seem to attest to that fact.

It was pouring the night Kenny G was appearing at Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C., and we parked eight

blocks away, Clory said. When they finally arrived backstage Mr. Mike's staff was surprised to witness a full-scale war between Kenny G and his band all of whom were fully-armed with battery-powered water guns.

"They were wild," said Clory, "sliding down the hallway and crouching at [every corner]."

Kenny G told Clory they had been sleeping on the tour bus for four weeks performing one-nighters night after night. Clory reasoned that the water gun battle was simply a way of letting loose.

"We did get hit a couple of times," Clory said, "but we were already soaked from the rain." By the time the photographs were taken, however, everyone seemed to have dried.

In Mikki Howard's dressing room on the night of her performance at Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C. reps from Elektra and Mr. Mike's very own photographer, Willie, were taking advantage of a great photo opportunity. After reading her review in "Mr. Mike's Likes" Howard showed her appreciation by jumping in Albert's lap for a picture.

"I was mad," said Clory, "because I wrote the review, and she should have jumped in my lap."

"The first in-store (an autograph-signing session) we did [was with Keith Sweat] and we had in excess of 300 people and record reps from Elektra and

Warner Brothers who were there charting his [popularity] progress," said Clory.

We remember that day vividly, Clory added. A starstruck girl barreled through the door; leaped over the autograph-signing table; and, landed in the lap of Keith Sweat, he said. "We had to peel her off [of him]."

"Our first in-store legitimized us with the industry people and our customers," said Clory. "That was the snowball that got things going for us."

Mr. Mike's was ill-prepared for their biggest in-store scheduled with rap group Kid 'N Play.

"That whole situation was pandemonium," Clory said. "Local radio stations got wind of it and [announced the in-store continuously] the day before the show."

Consequently, we had better than 400 people waiting outside; television crews jockeying for good camera angles; police on horseback; the 20 security personnel we hired; and, local plainclothes and uniformed police to contend with, Clory said.

"The first time the limo came down the street, we waved them on because kids jumped on the car," he said.

The in-store lasted only 30 minutes. "We didn't want anyone hurt so we called it short," said Clory.

Fifteen of us surrounded Kid 'N Play to escort them to the car, he said. Unfortunately, in the process "Play" lost his jacket, and "Kid" lost a ring right off his finger.

"They were more nonchalant about it than anybody," Clory said. "In fact," he said, "they were upset when we said they had to leave."

Mr. Mike's has played host to numerous superstars in the past three years. The staff has enjoyed interviewing, transporting, and sometimes partying with groups such as Ramsey Lewis, Grover Washington, Jr., and Angela Bofill just to name a few.

Mr. Mike's has come a long way since its first days as a mere suggestion. When Kaplan Records, which had been an institution in downtown Harrisburg for 60 years, decided to close its doors forever Joseph Kaplan strongly encouraged one of his dedicated employees, Mike Albert, to carry on the legend.

After careful consideration, Albert, Cathy, and Clory began a location search for their new record store. Several days before Mr. Mike's opened, the staff carried the record bins and price guns around the corner from Kaplan's location off of Market Square to their newly painted store two blocks away.

Deliveries of records and tapes began almost immediately and aroused the curiosity of potential customers. Word traveled fast about the brand new record store soon to open its doors.

The day before the grand opening, scheduled for May 10, 1986, a passer-by could hear the almost continuous ringing of the cash register as Mr. Mike's welcomed its first customers who could not wait another day.

Small but mighty this record-selling powerhouse has become, in just three years, a leader in the R&B and jazz music industry.

Mr. Mike's is open Monday thru Friday 10:00 to 5:15 and Saturday 10:00 to 4:00.

This isn't the Batcave, Robin!



photo by Sondra Kinsey

Haunting season is open at Indian Echo Caverns, near Hummelstown.

Sondra Kinsey
Capital Times Staff

"Stay with your ghoul," warns the red-haired, bewitching greeter. "That will be your best friend." The creepy music continues. She pounds a log slowly three times on the huge wooden door. It opens and the brown-robed ghoul appears.

Another group of 15 enters the dripping darkness of Indian Echo Caverns, just off Route #322 at Hummelstown. During the 15-minute tour, they will encounter Dracula, The Hanging Man, Jason, Wolf Man, the Joker, the Vampiress, the Mad Doctor, and more.

"We all ad-lib our lines," said Mike O'Connell, 27, a ghoul-guide tonight. A food science major at the Penn State's Berks Campus, he likes acting for fun and money. This is his first Halloween Season on the job and he's only seen "one or two kids get scared enough to need an escort out."

"But last night two kids did run through a wall," added a co-worker.

"Usually older people just laugh," said owner Dr. Edward O. Swartz, a Middletown veterinarian. "It's the kids and young girls who get scared. The guys are there to 'comfort' them."

The haunting will continue through October 29 from 5:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at \$2.50 for children 4-11 years and \$4.50 for those over 11 years. Regular 45-minute guided tours of the local landmark will continue weekends through November and begin again in March.

ACOA

Lakeside Lutheran Church in Harrisburg has announced the formation of an Adult Children of Alcoholics group for Gay and Lesbian individuals. The group meets Thursday nights at 7:30 p.m. For more information, contact Steve at 238-9089, Colleen at 232-4391 or Joanne at 731-0857.

We are holding the Hugo Disaster Relief Drive open until Friday, October 27, for any clubs still wishing to make a donation. Donations of any amount will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your help in this effort.

Cindy Vartenisian,
I.A.A. president

