



It Rocked!: Recollections of a reclusive rock critic

Ed Kociela

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“I was impressed by the warmth and deft touch of the chapter on George Harrison. I can understand why the misnamed "Quiet Beatle" was always willing to talk with Ed, and trust him.” —Gavin de Becker, bestselling author, “The Gift of Fear” “The thing about Ed as a critic is that he comes to have fun (and usually does!)” —Jimmy Rabbitt, singer-songwriter-renegade disc jockey As the Woodstock Nation grays, its members may forget where they put their car keys, but can still recall every word of The Beatles’ epic “A Day In The Life,” The Rolling Stones’ dark and dangerous “Sympathy for The Devil,” and Bruce Springsteen’s glorious ode to freedom, “Born To Run.” They recall the messengers of a generation, the troubadours who roamed the land, six-string in hand, touching our souls and igniting our passions. And though the troubadours, the street poets, the artistes of a generation opened their hearts nightly to crowds of adoring fans, there was often a much different persona behind the stars when they stepped away from the stage and spotlight. As a rock critic for the Los Angeles Herald-Examiner and later, entertainment industry publicist, I was privy to that world, engaging with some of the biggest stars in the history of rock ‘n’ roll. “It Rocked! (Recollections of a Reclusive Rock Critic),” is my invitation to go backstage, into the studio, hotel rooms, and homes of rock ‘n’ roll’s biggest stars. In “It Rocked!” I introduce you to The Animals, Bruce Springsteen, The Rolling Stones, Rod Stewart, Peter Frampton, Eddie Money, Hall & Oates, Frank Zappa, Journey, Foreigner, KISS, Jimmy Rabbitt, Willie Nelson, The Beach Boys, Mark Lindsay, Steven Tyler, BB King, Kenny Rogers, Dottie West, Santana, Dick Clark, Jackie De Shannon, Tina Turner, Christine McVie, Stevie Nicks, Kiki Dee, Tom Petty, and, of course, George Harrison as I knew them and interacted with them. Oh, and there are plenty of guest appearances as well. There were struggles, triumphs, failures; there were break-ups, make-ups, shake-ups; light and tragedy; humor and inspiration. But, through it all, there was the music, which led us through our misguided youth and into a reluctant adulthood. I was there for the rise and fall of Peter Frampton; the shattering break-up of The Beach Boys; the dogged determination of Bruce Springsteen; and the launch of Tom Petty’s career. I raised hell with Eddie Money, drank with Rod Stewart and Keith Moon, and watched Mick Jagger overtaken by stagefright, and, sadly, lost several close friends. Still, looking back at those days, all I can say now is “It rocked!”...and I have the hearing loss to prove it!

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