

More Stories No. 7

Bands with “Soul” flourished in the 60s. But by the early 70’s most of the bands that stayed in business got rid of the “Soul” in their names and replaced it with a more “with it” name like The Friends of Mind as did the former Soul Syndicate. Just how many bands traveled the South in the 60s with “Soul” in their names ? We’ll let you know as we begin research on the “Soul” bands of the 60s. Here follows a narrative of a band with “Soul” from Camden, South Carolina.

The Soul Syndicate 1967-1969 Camden, South Carolina – submitted by William “Rusty” Major

We came together in high school, all of us being a part of an earlier band. Five of us had classical music training. Myself having a prior seven years of piano, trumpet and choir. The other horn had six of the same. Both of us (horns) were South Carolina ALL STATE trumpeters in the high school band.

We were known as the "great imitators" because of our ability to perfectly cover an artist. With 2 horns, 3 lead singers (one female), base, lead, organ, electric piano and drums, we were a very large band for the times. All of us (except our main lead singer) had the ability to switch instruments; Myself being one of the horns, a lead singer on two songs, backup on most, rhythm guitar on two, and drums on one. The other horn switched to electric piano or organ when needed. One of the lead singers also was a horn player and drummer. The female lead could switch to guitar, the main drummer stepped out for four songs as lead singer, and all of our regular guitarist and organist could switch around to each others instruments. All of us except the organist and lead guitar performed back up vocals. This "choir" gave us a fat sound. Our horns were amplified, also. We had excellent equipment... i.e.: Two super-beetles, Custom organ and sound system, and a double drum set. We could be heard blocks away!

We were the first in the midlands of SC to produce our own light show, using a strobe as early as 1968. All of the members were from Camden. We were booked through Ken Mims Productions out of Myrtle Beach. In 1970, we changed the name to The Friends of Mind. Most of us attended USC. In 1971, we split into three different bands.