



## **The Bands .....1960's**

### **The Lost Souls**

Around ninth grade, I, along with my friend, Larry Tomczak, watched the Beatles on the Ed Sullivan show and decided that we were going to start music lessons and start a “real” band. We started our lessons at a local store called Sodja’s Music.

There were roughly seven or eight of us who decided in the tenth grade to actually study music. By the time we were juniors, five of us were ready to play in a band. Larry would name the band the Lost Souls, named after a 60's Sci-Fi movie called *The Island of the Lost Souls*. Within nine months, our band was formed. So, I went from being a baseball card collecting kid to a professional musician.

Time is mysterious. Today, in some ways, it seems like yesterday that the Lost Souls were packing up the Silvertone amps, dressing in polka dot and striped shirts, piling in the manager's station wagon and hauling off to perform at a teenage dance somewhere in the Greater Cleveland area where the teenage girls were wearing miniskirts, go-go boots and long straight hair while, the boys all wore bell-bottom, hip hugging pants and Beatle boots. And, yet, these memories are, for the most part, buried and vague.

Just before my sixteenth birthday, the Lost Souls played their premier performance. The original lineup was Larry Tomczak on drums; Chuck McKinley, bass; Rick Schoenaer, sax and flute; Ed Gozoski, lead guitar and I played rhythm guitar.

This was a very special bonding experience for us because this was the first time for all of us playing in an organized band. As with your first love or first kiss, this was an experience to treasure and never forget. Now, let's see, as I remember this period in my life.



When I first started playing the guitar, as Brian Adams says in his song *Summer of 69* -- I played so much that my fingers bled. I would play for hours and hours when my parents would leave the house. I practiced playing the guitar in front of the mirror to see what rock star I most looked like. Was it John Lennon? Or, was it Mike Smith from the Dave Clark 5, (DC5)? DC5 wore white turtleneck shirts. Since I did not own one of these shirts, I put on a white shirt backwards so it would look like a turtleneck. I played the guitar while on the phone, watching TV and, basically, all the time.



The first time we played together was in my parent's garage -- a true garage band. The next gig we played was at the Euclid Beach Club. To my surprise, everyone liked us. People commented how good we were and liked the original song I had written, *I Want You*. I remember someone commenting on my lyrics after the song was over. The lyrics were:

Now, now I know  
Now, now I'll go  
Now, now I see  
Now, you don't like me.



They thought I should change the last line to “Now you don't love me.” I said “I'm only sixteen, I like them now romantically, I don't love them yet.”

Ed played lead for about three months and then Denny Marek joined us on lead guitar. Denny had been playing since he was eight years old and was already a guitar teacher. He helped the band to grow very quickly.

We were all in the same grade at the same high school, St. Joseph or commonly referred to as St. Joe's. Denny had known each of us personally and could see that we were going to be good so he wanted to be a part of our band. Ed, sometimes, played tambourine or twelve strings to give us a different sound. Ed would play another year with us before leaving the band. Denny was to be the only lead guitar player.

Having Denny Marek in the band helped me to grow as a musician. I was able to make a quantum leap by playing alongside a musician with that breadth of experience.

The Lost Souls were popular on all sides of town. To cross over town lines like that in Cleveland's unmelted pot was a huge achievement. We did cover songs most often of the Beatles, Paul Revere, Rolling Stones, Jimi Hendrix, Cream and groups like that. The band played local Catholic Youth Organizations (CYO's). Most Catholic parishes had dances for the teenagers.

I remember a time when I was playing out and someone told me that a girl named Joyce liked me. Joyce was a very cute, young lady as I recall. I couldn't even imagine that a young girl who looked like she did would like someone like me. I was a young boy in a teenager's body.



The Lost Souls were managed by the manager of Larry's little league team. He would drive us in his station wagon to our gigs. All of our parents were blue collar, hard-working people and were pretty good at understanding and accepting the culture shift that was taking place. My mother made clothing for everyone in the band. She made Nehru jackets with the American eagle on the front and frilly shirts like those Austin Power wears. Mom also made outfits for Rich Schoenaer, Larry Tomczak and Jim Bonfanti of the Choir.





All five of us had different personalities and skills. Ed Gozowski played a 'classic garage' band-kind of lead. Ed played a Hagstrom guitar, but eventually got a twelve-string. Ed always had the nicest car too. We would pile in his car and drive to McDonalds where we would park and watch all the girls coming out of Villa Angela, an all-girl high school.

Chuck McKinley did most of the virtuoso singing, and although he was the bass player, he would come out front and sing lead. Chuck had some tough-guy friends who he would tell that, even though I looked weird, I was cool. He told them that so they would be on our side just in case some delinquents wanted to attack us. The thinking was something like this: "Denny may be a blankety, blank, blank, but since he is your friend, I'll leave him alone and maybe he is not such a blankety, blank, blank after all."

Rich Schoenaer had a smooth and pleasant personality and voice to match and would sing songs like *Walk Away Renee* by the Left Banke; *Till the End of the Day*, the Kinks; *Mr. Postman*, the Beatles or *Friday on my Mind* by the Easy Beats. Rich looked

like Bert Reynolds and played a good sax, a nice flute and did excellent harmonies. Every band needs a Rich. The fact that Rich played these so well gave our "British Invasion" band a real edge in sound and the ability to cross over to play different material. Rich's flute and sax really comes across even better when we recorded our originals later.

Denny Marek did Kinks-type songs like, *I'm Not Like Everybody Else* and *Beautiful Delilah*. Denny could play any style, replicating each band's song or nuance. He played *I Feel Fine* by the Beatles, perfectly; complete with feedback. Denny was also a Ventures guy, so we did *Walk Don't Run* and *Diamond Head* complete with every nuance the Ventures incorporated into each song.

When the times changed, Denny played a perfect *Purple Haze* with distortion, and when playing *I'm a Man* by the Yardbirds, Denny bought guitars at pawn shops to break on stage as was a strange custom of the sixties. Besides smashing his guitar, Denny had another idea for the shows. A few times he would nail his shoes to the floor and lean forward; very funny and odd to see.

Larry Tomczak was a good, solid drummer. He sang lead on *Mr. You're a Better Man Than I* by the Yardbirds, *Summer in the City*, by the Loving Spoonfull and some novelty songs like; *You Turn Me On* by Ian Witcomb. Larry, one of the founders of The Lost Souls, was a great drummer and popular guy. Larry always chose his words carefully and was determined to make the most of his life. He read books on how to be positive. Larry worked out with weights and was physically fit. Larry liked to interact with the crowd and talk over the PA.

In hindsight, it was probably Larry who was instrumental in most of the band's bookings. Larry



went on to be Class President at Cleveland University. Eventually, he became a minister writing several books. One of Larry's books, *Clap Your Hands*, gives an account of his time with the Lost Souls and describes his journey to Christ.

I was the artist/writer type, with a million ideas. Because I was so comfortable with everyone in the Lost Souls band, I was able to exercise my creativity there. Because we had so many singers, I was able to be featured on what I did best....sing Van Morrison, The Kinks and John Lennon, as well as my original songs which the band supported.



The music scene in Cleveland during the Lost Souls period was very rich. Our peers at that time were The James Gang with Joe Walsh and Glenn Schwartz; the Choir; Eric Carmen; Circus; Eli Radish with Danny Sheridan and Tom Foster; The Glass Harp with Phil Keaggy; The Damnation of Adam Blessing; The Tree Stumps with Michael Stanley; Bocky and the Visions; The Outsiders with Sonny Geraci, and their hit *Time Won't Let Me*. There were countless local musicians who have gone on to be

music professionals in playing, production, teaching or management.

During this time, the Lost Souls played a variety of functions; one being CYO (Catholic Youth Organization) dances. We played at every Catholic parish but our own, Holy Cross. The Lost Souls were going to Mass every week, but were banned from playing at the dances, citing the name of our band as the reason. We also played almost every area high school. Our own high school was the hardest sell because we had long hair and the school viewed long hair then as rebellion... what once was a reality seems so silly now.

Larry Tomczak remembers the Lost Souls as bad boys, as was thought by the high school. Our school would not allow us to play at our school mixers at first, but caved in the end. The school finally gave us a chance to play. They opened the curtain to introduce us to approximately 2,000 people. We opened with *Til the End of the Day* by The Kinks (three chords), then silence..... then played, *I Feel Good From The Moment I Rise*. We felt like conquering heroes and a bit vindicated. Both the dance and show went extremely well. It was the largest dance crowd the school had ever hosted.

Other venues we played were local clubs, hullabalooos and armories which were all popular places where teenagers would come together to hear bands and dance. The Lost Souls also rented out the K of C (Knights of Columbus) halls and charged an admission. The environment seemed perfect at that time for non-alcoholic, teen dances with bands.

The Lost Souls became popular on all sides of town. Cleveland is a town with people of many different nationalities concentrated in neighborhoods around Northeast Ohio. Cleveland never got the

memo about the 'melting pot', or if they did, they managed to keep their ethnic heritage very colonized. Cleveland is divided by its metropolitan downtown and a river, and there are some musicians who do not like to go to the east or west side.

Back then teenagers were divided into social categories. There were the "mods" who liked the English-British Invasion music and clothing. There were the "collegiate" with penny loafers who most likely ran for student council; the "greasers" who liked Motown and applied grease to their hair and dressed like "The Fonz" from the 70's sit com Happy Days. The Lost Souls were fortunate to have had the instruments, the talent and the look with the ability to play in genres appealing to each of these groups. This is where the Lost Souls were able to bridge the divide between Cleveland's west and east sides.

Now a junior at St. Joseph's High School, 1966, I had the longest hair at the school. Jane Scott, the *Cleveland Plain Dealer's* columnist almost got the band expelled from school. Jane was writing an article about long hair. She interviewed Larry and me, took our picture and then printed it rather BIG. The school principal called me into the office and said because we made our views public, the entire band would be suspended.

Here are some excerpts from that article:

**"Alright fellows, let's stop beating around the bush. Why do you wear long hair?"**

"I have a baby-face and I look better with long hair" said Denny Carleton of St. Joseph

High School. “Denny washes his hair every other day and brushes his hair behind his ears for school” was written (not an intelligent thing to say in the paper at the time since having your hair long could get you thrown out of school).

**“What do girlfriends think about all this long hair?”**

“It’s like me; love my locks” says Denny “and I wouldn’t go with a girl who didn’t like my hair.” “It makes you look more professional” added Larry Tomczak, 17, St. Joseph High School and drummer of the Lost Souls. Larry then stated his hair feels funny when it gets cut, like his head is sort of just out there.

**“Do they resent the glares, stares and remarks?”**

“You’re willing to take ridicule” commented Larry Tomczak. “It may set you apart, but that’s your sacrifice to be part of the group.” “I just like to be left alone” Denny remarked. “I don’t criticize anyone else. People should learn to get along.”

The Lost Souls' popularity and success continued to grow. We now owned our own PA system and van. We opened for The McCoy's. Larry remembers that gig; none of us had a lot of money and Larry had saved some of his money to buy a brand new set of Ludwig drums. It was a big deal to him to spend that amount of money. He took very good care of his drums treating them gently. A few weeks after purchasing the drums, we had a chance to open for the McCoy's. We were told they would use our equipment and to Larry's horror the drummer of the McCoy's came in, yanked at Larry's drums and proceeded to set up. The drummer then proceeded to pound heavily on the tom-toms for the drum intro to *Hang on Sloopy*.



**Left to right – Rich Schoenaer, Larry Tomczak, Chuck McKinley, Denny Marek and Denny Carleton**

We also opened for the Shangri La's (of the *Leader of the Pack* fame), but the peak of our success came when we opened and played at the Cleveland Municipal Stadium with The Lemon Pipers, Bobby

Vee, and The Poor Girls. Denny Marek recalled that the last band to play at the stadium on the same stage on which we played, was the Beatles who had played the stadium a few weeks earlier. What I remember was finishing our show amidst a crowd of screaming girls who, after the show, chased the Lost Souls and The Lemon Pipers into the dressing room. This may seem hard to believe, but I was frightened because there were so many girls. I thought we would be crushed before we all fit through the door. Such problems!

Because of the versatility of the band, the Lost Souls was able to vary stage shows to include, for example, a lead singer singing without an instrument. When the band started out, the members wore outfits resembling the early Beatles uniforms. After that, the band switched to wearing huge sunglasses, Austin Power's lolling frilly things, polka dots, bell bottoms, scarves, Beatles boots and stripes. Sometimes we just dressed strange in capes or raincoats, and, one time, football shoulder pads. Denny and I would do our best Peter Townsend imitation.



Lost Souls did something that I don't recall any band ever doing before or since. During performances, we would take the Silvertone tops off of our amps, put them on the floor and stand on top of the amps. I guess we did this for fun, but it also set us apart as showmen.



We were voted fourth in the Battle of the Bands at Cleveland's Teen Fair in 1967. We were edged out by a band called the Penny Arcade who copied the Beatles and made their amps look psychedelic. The truth be told, we couldn't believe we didn't win first. On my website [www.dennycarleton.com](http://www.dennycarleton.com) as well as YouTube, there is a video of the Lost Souls playing at the Teen Fair in 1967.

I met Vickie during the third year of the Lost Souls. Vickie lived in Solon, Ohio; she would become my first girlfriend. Vickie was very cute and nice; her father was a Methodist minister. My relationship with her helped me through my remaining time with the Lost Souls, and later the Choir, the Vietnam draft

and Moses. We went to Vickie's prom in Solon and all my memories of that are very pleasant.

I remember one time being at Vickie's house and going into a private room by accident and there was her father deep in prayer. I remember seeing him in prayer had really impressed me. It was like he was yearning to God and talking to Jesus, and it was so impressive to see an adult doing that.

After graduation, I attended Cuyahoga Community College where I began to think of how I could influence the world positively through music. It was during this time that the way in which I thought about things shifted. Maybe it was the Beatles influence with *All You Need Is Love* or more realistically, it was The Holy Spirit. I began thinking about using my musical talent in a Christian way. I thought that maybe a band could subtly have a positive impact on kids since many bands were able to affect the opposite. So this became my vision when I was eighteen or nineteen and to this day my vision has never changed.

While in college, I read books by Kurt Vonnegut and Eric Fromm. It was a time of exploring and revelation. For me, attending college was not all that much about finding a job because in my mind, I was going to be a musician. I was attending Tri-C, dating Vicky and playing in the band.

To give you an idea of how serious I was during the college years, here are some lyrics from a song I wrote called *Things That Are Important To Me*:

The only things that are important to me  
Why do I do things important to me?  
What does important mean?  
Who gave me important things?



Why do I ever change from things that are important to me?

After graduating high school, the Lost Souls wanted another challenge, so we began talking about playing fewer covers and doing more of our own arrangements to include off-beat pieces and originals. We found that most people were not familiar with this type of music, didn't like it and were unable to dance to it. You have to remember these were the 60's and very heady times. There was a lot of experimentation going on, both in music and in life and we were part of that scene. We were going to college while the Vietnam War was in progress.

The tempo in our music arrangements began to change so at any given time in our originals you could hear British pop, American soul, Asian musical scales, Egyptian-sounding scales, the Who, Jefferson Airplane, flutes, melodica and sax. This was too much for the audience.

After we worked out the songs, we did some recording. Denny had the foresight to tape our gigs live, but we needed some originals. Denny set up his reel-to-reel and, in Chuck's back room, we recorded four songs on Denny Marek's two-track. We also recorded at Audio, and at Cleveland Recording which is now Suma. Our manager did very well in promoting us on a local level. We were popular without a hit record. He just didn't have the skills or the vision to take us higher. There wasn't anything devious going on, as is often the case with rock and roll management histories, he just did not have that skill. Also, our families were blue collar workers in a blue collar town; they were unable to recognize how big we actually could have been and how far we could have gone.

We began to drift apart as we went through college. Our band and music was never signed to a label, but, and not until 1984, when I was self-publishing my music and with the advice of some younger Lost Souls enthusiasts who had heard our demos, did I release a cassette of the Lost Souls original recording. We received air play in hundreds of college and public radio stations in the USA and around the world with many glowing reviews.

**Here is one of the reviews from Ritchie Unterberger of *Option Magazine* from 1984:**

The Lost Souls never released any records, yet the meager recorded evidence that survives indicates they were one of the finest unknown American groups of the mid-60's, able to write both catchy British Invasion-type rockers and, in their latter days, experimental psychedelic pieces with unusual tempo changes and song structures. The band was also unusual in their occasional embellishment of the typical period guitar-bass-drums lineup with flute, sax, and mandolin. Although popular in their Cleveland hometown, they broke up in 1968 to attend college.

**Here is a review by Steve Petryszn from *Record Roundup* and co-producer of *Pride Of Cleveland Past*:**

The Lost Souls is a super collection of unreleased tapes from the mid 1960's. Cleveland local sensations, the Lost Souls, included Cleveland legend, Denny Carleton. These guys were one of the great lost groups of the decade. Lost Souls indeed -- this is one of the great lost groups of the 60's.

Our last hurrah was the Teen Fair of 1968. We changed our name to Miniver Cheevy for one job only and I'm not quite sure why we did that. We entered the competition as both the Lost Souls and Miniver Cheevy and somehow in the paperwork mix-up they discovered we were the same band and disqualified us for entering twice. The James Gang with Joe Walsh won that year. The band slowly broke up in 1968 with each of us beginning to go our own way in the college years.

### **Where Are They Now?**

Sadly, Chuck McKinley passed away in 1976 at the age of 27.

Rich has gone on to work at Mentor TV, is currently married and living in Chardon, Ohio.

Denny Marek continues to play in bands in Sedona, Arizona. He started his own photography business there.

Ed Gozowski continues to play some guitar; he owns five. Ed practices law as an attorney in Columbus, Ohio.

Larry has gone on to write many books and is a Christian evangelist. He currently lives in Franklin, Tennessee.

Me, well I have continued to be active in music, writing, the arts and the Church