

Sharks Come Cruisin' Interview



by
Eric
Bayli
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Sharks Come Cruisin' is a hard band to categorize. A land-based band singing songs of the sea with rocking drums and banjos, they frequently ply their musical trade around New Bedford. I recently spoke with lead singer Mark about the group.

How did the band start?

Mark: I was watching Jaws in 2003 and heard Quint singing "Spanish Ladies". That's when I started researching sea shanties. Originally I performed the songs solo, singing mostly at open mic nights. As the years went by, more members were added to the mix. In 2006 we released a live record recorded at Jakes in Providence. In 2008 we released *Four Years Before the Mast*, and we just got finished recording a full length record, *A Past We Forget That We Need to Know*. We'll be releasing that soon.

Were you originally a rock band or was it always The Shanties etc?

Mark: I had been playing in bands around Providence for a while, mostly punk/hardcore bands. When Return Around broke up around 1998, I took a long break from playing in bands until I found The Shanties. I had been searching for these kind of songs for a long time. When I found folk songs from

New England about New England, I knew exactly what I wanted to do.

✘ Where did this fascination come from? Did you grow up by the sea?

Mark: The fascination comes from growing up in Rhode Island and feeling a real connection with the songs. I grew up listening to a lot of late 80's, early 90's hardcore and going to a lot of shows. The crew call vocal style has always really appealed to me. It made me feel like I was part of something bigger, like a community. When I heard the big sing-a-longs of The Shanties it seemed very familiar. I like to think Sharks Come Cruisin' shows have the same sense of community and celebration that I experienced at those shows as a kid.

We always have a good time playing in New Bedford. Our friends in the O'Tooles have been good enough to put us on a bunch of shows in New Bedford, and we've had the opportunity to play at the Working Waterfront festival a couple of times.

Have you ever been to the Whaling Museum in New Bedford?

Mark: I have been to the Whaling Museum a few times. It is an amazing place and an amazing resource. I remember stopping there alone on a trip back from Nantucket and getting lost for hours.

Do you have any New Bedford shows coming up?

Mark: We will be playing at the Black Watch Pub with the O'Tooles on Friday November 19th. Be sure to come out and sing along.

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