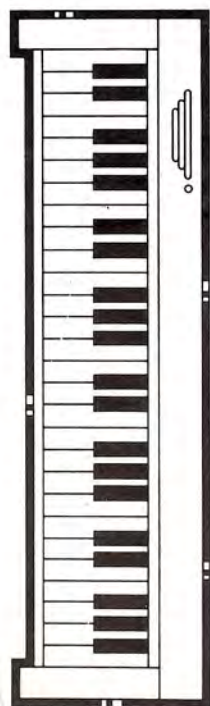


DUKES COMBO

Anniversary



*Souvenir
Brochure*



Message

William Shakespear's proverb — "If music be the food of love, play on", is very appropriate to the Dukes and myself, because music has always been first and foremost to us. We have always played music for the love of it, the pleasure it gave us and the pleasure it gave to those that love music.



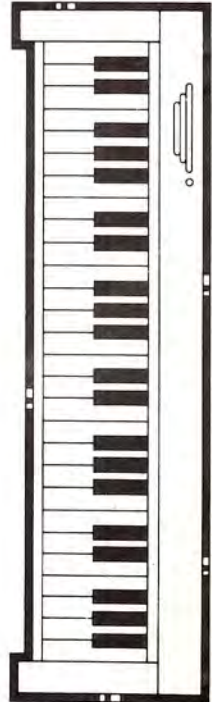
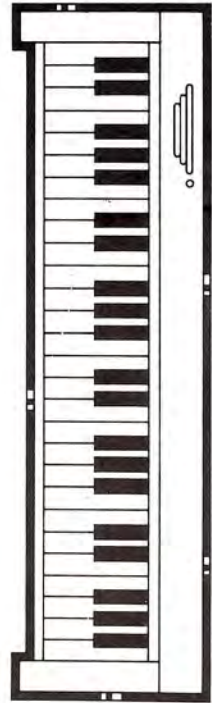
I believe music is one of the highest of all the artistic forms, where one is able to create and express ones true and innermost feelings, be it happy or sad. It requires one to utilize all one's faculties, self discipline and self sacrifice. Music is derived from one's experiences, trials and tribulations in love and life and what one sees in nature and in all God's creations. In fact one can say that "MUSICNESS" is next to "GODLINESS".

Tonight we celebrate our 25th Anniversary in music and hope and pray that you will have a most enjoyable evening with us. We thank you for your love and support and hope that we carry on giving you good music for many years to come — May the "Dukes" go on and on

I repeat, in closing "If music be the food of love, play on."

Enjoy your evening of music and dancing.

DEE SHARMA ROOPANAND



Background And History Of Band

During 1956 I met and befriended Harry Naidoo at a talent contest at the Himalaya Hotel. Thereafter we met at several other occasions and discovered that we had quite a few similar interests - the main one being music. Harry was learning to play guitar and used to sing with a vocal group called "The Keytoppers". This group was very popular and performed at various shows and talent contests.

I entered and won a few of these talent contests playing the "penny whistle". This subsequently led to Harry and I deciding to rehearse and playing together - forming an unusual duet of two musicians which we called the "D & H Duet" and we started playing for various shows successfully. At these shows we met various artists one of which was "Midget Vahed" a school friend of mine. Midget sang rock 'n roll songs of the era and asked us to back him, which we gladly did. We thus became a "trio". What we needed now was a drummer. After a while Harry started playing with a dance band "The Debonaires" to improve himself as a guitarist and befriended their drummer Yenkana Gartiah (Moon). Moon heard the "D & H Trio" play and wanted to join us. We welcomed him with open arms. The group - now a quartet - started taking on jobs together with the "Debonaires" which was convenient as the one group played dance music whilst the other did more rock/pop numbers. Moon and Harry, during this period of approximately two years encouraged me to purchase a saxophone. I purchased a tenor saxophone which was suited to the music we played, I was also strongly influenced by the rock bands of the period (Bill Black's Combo / Johnny and the Hurricanes, etc.).

In the course of this period we met Vassie Naidoo, a very talented accordianist and guitarist who played with various dance groups, making a comfortable living out of music. He also did solo gigs at some night spots in Durban. Vassie offered Harry and Moon to accompany him for some of these gigs with me filling in on suitable occasions. We enjoyed doing this as it gave us the opportunity to gain experience, build up a repertoire and give us a good grounding as musicians. Vassie enjoyed working with us and vice-versa, we had similar aims and aspirations etc, - we enjoyed each others company with similar likes and dislikes. Thus was born a group that would go very far - a group that came together naturally with no pre-planning - a group that enjoyed being together for the sheer enjoyment of it - that grew up together and became a family.

1958

Choosing a name for the group was difficult. We wanted something different from the dance bands in existence at that time. We wanted a short simple name that would be easy to remember. We saw the advert "Iron Duke Paints" whilst walking in town one day and decided on the name "The Dukes Combo".

In the year 1962 we started taking on jobs / contracts as The Dukes Combo. Our first resident job was at the Ocean Terminal for a short period of approximately three months in 1963. We then signed up as the resident band at the Imperial Hotel. We decided then that we should get a bassist in the band and to our surprise David Royepen who had played with the "Masterkeys Dance Band" approached us. We found him most suitable and gladly accepted him. He fitted in perfectly as he also had similar aspirations as the rest of us. We proved to be very popular with the crowds at the Imperial Hotel and wherever else we played. I think our success was due to the fact that we were a very versatile group. We played rock, pop, dance and Latin-American music. In fact we believed strongly that we should play to please the crowd. I still believe in this policy up to now. We also believed in being progressive and always strived for perfection.

Our stay at the Imperial Hotel lasted approximately three years, after which we went to the "Pelican Restaurant" in Chatsworth which was the top night spot in Durban for a period of one and half years, then to the Isipingo Island Hotel for a year, back to the Pelican Restaurant for another two years, then to the Starlite Hotel in Verulam for one year, the Green Cat Restaurant for two years, Himalaya Hotel for four months and the Ashoka Hotel in February 1975 for a year and a half.

The original group played together for a period of approximately 14 to 15 years, an achievement in itself, as we saw many groups start and break up in that period. In 1967 we recruited Teddy Peters a top drummer due to Moon's illness of rheumaticis - arthrititis. (Moon stayed on with the group as percussionist until he died in April 1979). Another addition to the original group was Sonny Naicker on trumpet in 1969. Our achievements up to this time included:-

- a. Four seven-single records of dance / contemporary music which were big sellers.
- b. One seven - single record titled "Sing out a Song" a pop song composed by Robert Schroëder and Peter Vee and sung by Ronnie Dallas who was our vocalist in 1970/1971. This record made it in to the top three of the Springbok and L.M. Hit Parades.
- c. A total of eight dance LP's that are now collectors items. A number of these LP's were taken by fans when emigrating overseas where they are still treasured.
- d. Four eastern LP's which started a new trend in the eastern music scene in South Africa.
- e. Several successful tours to the other provinces playing for dances and shows, etc.

This success of the band eventually took it's toll on us as far as our home life and work were concerned. In 1975, Harry, Midget and David decided to "pack it up". This was a great set-back to us after having been together for so long. Our parting members insisted that we carry on by adding young blood into the group which could possibly bring about improvements. We did this and recruited talented young musicians in the years to come. These included Sydney Caine - one of the best singers and flautists I have come across in my career, Brian Thusi - a fantastic trumpeter and jazz man, Eugene Mkize - a highly talented guitarist and vocalist, Sagie Naidoo - who can be classed as one of the top bass guitarist in the country and Phillip Thusi also a top class trombonist.

With the new line-up in the band we started playing more progressive music with an afro-jazz flavour. Also with the change in personnel and direction we started doing more work in the Black community eg. The Milkafrika Jazz and Soul Festival. We started a series of shows in the townships - Umlazi, Kwa Mashu, Imbali, Edendale, etc., which we called "SOUNDPOWER" that really "took-off". We got contracts backing some big Black recording artists, viz., Daisy Dumagude, Daphne Dhlomuka, Patric Mbutho, etc.

In February 1978, we decided to turn professional, ie., quit our day jobs and make a full-time career of music. This created a problem as Vassie was unable to take the plunge with the rest of us. He had established himself as an ace furniture salesman and had family commitments. It was a sad day for me as Vassie had always been virtually my "right arm".

Thus started another phase in the band's life. Sydney doubled-up as keyboard man, vocalist and flautist. We secured a tour of the country with the "Madi-Nelson Show", we did many other tours and took on contracts at some of the top disco clubs in the Transvaal, Swaziland and the neighbouring Black states. We also did a number of Jazz festivals playing with some of the best groups and artists in the country. I reckon this was the most rewarding and yet the toughest period of our musical career. It was rewarding in that we had to utilize all our skills to play with and compete with the best in the country, which included groups like Drive, The Malombo Jazz-Men, Harari, Crossroads, The Prunes, The Spirits Rejoice, The Minerals, The Rockets, Pacific Express, etc.

Cont. Page 11

This I am proud to say we did with great success. Some of the renowned artists / vocalists we backed during our career, ie., from inception, include:- Eve Boswell, Rodger Moore, George McRae, Terry Fortune, Ben Msinga, Brian Mulder, Pappa & Blondie, Ronnie Madonsele, Zane Adams, Sammy Brown, Vivienne Kensley, Essop Ganie, Eddie Watts, Gobi Martin and many others.

By February 1981 after three years some of the members and I decided to quit playing music full-time. Some of the reasons being:-

- a. We had to be away from home for long periods as we could not accept contracts at liquor - licenced "white" venues in Durban.
- b. We felt we were losing direction.
- c. We were satisfied in that we had tried and achieved what we wanted as a full-time professional group.

Of the group Sydney wanted to complete his studies (matric), get a day job, marry and lead a settled life. Errol and I also wanted to get day jobs. The rest of the group were keen to carry on and get replacements. I offered to carry on as manager for the group on a part-time basis. This we did until June 1981 under the co-leadership of Teddy and Sagie, till Teddy accepted a lucrative offer from Vassie's group "Kreme" who were and still are playing at the Isipingo Island Hotel. It was then that we decided to break-up.

After a period of about a year, I decided to resurrect the Dukes as I had numerous requests from fans and friends to revive the group. There was a definite lack of good dance bands in Durban. I was also fortunate to meet some very keen young musicians who wanted to learn and play music under my guidance. Thus began another process of building-up, which I gladly accepted as a challenge. I am proud to say that the group to date has progressed tremendously and is back in the scene to everybody's satisfaction. These young men remind me of the group when we started in 1962. We enjoy being in each others company; we are like one family unit; we are a versatile group and it is our aim to please with our music.

Long live the "Dukes Combo".

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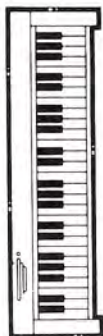
KEYBOARDS
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Past Groups





Programme

08-00 Dancing To The Music Of The Savoys

09-00 Cutting Of The Anniversary Cake

09-45 Interval

10-00 Duchess Contest

10-30 Dancing To The Dukes

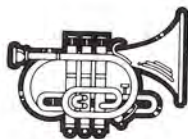
11-45 Interval

12-00 Crowning Of Duchess

12-15 Dancing To The Dukes

01-00 Close

Programme Subject To Alteration



Present Members



Back Row — L to R

MARTIN SIGAMONEY BORN — 11/11/66 SCORPIO

Baby of the band, plays keyboards, also a good vocalist. Started musical career at a young age with encouragement from his dad, was organist for the Church in 1985. Presently, official organist for the church of the EPIPHANY, also assists the choir. Has a flair for many instruments, eg., played drums and bass guitar with various small groups, doing gigs and cabaret stints, locally. Presently studying piano and flute at Natal Technikon for his LICENTIATE. Arranged and composed some songs/tunes for the group. Favourite musicians/singers: — Oscar Peterson — Peter Cetera. Likes playing squash and reading comics, thus, he is the funny man in the group.

GABRIEL JOSEPH BORN — 27/02/59 PISCES

Solo trumpeter and vocalist in the band. Started studying piano at an early age. Has passed his Grade 5 in Theory of Music with the Royal Schools of Music. Favourite musicians/singers: Stevie Wonder and Dizzy Gillespie. Likes playing soccer, swimming and billiards.

DEREK MURUGAN BORN — 25/11/65 SAGITTARIUS

Plays bass guitar in the band. Has been associated with church/gospel groups playing the guitar, also played for concerts during his schooling career. Favourite musicians/singer:- Herb Alpert and Bob James. Loves playing soccer.

MARK (CHAKLAS) PILLAY BORN — 25/06/63 CANCER

Vocalist and percussionist in the band. Can also play the rythm guitar and trumpet. He has passed the Grade 5 in Theory of Music with the Royal Schools of Music. Favourite musician/singer: — Michael Jackson. Loves playing volley-ball and billiards. One of the group's naughty boys, always up to mischief.

JOHN DAVID BORN — 29/03/65 ARIES

Plays lead and rythm guitar and sings harmony in the band. Self taught and started playing guitar at a young age for his own pleasure. Presently studying to read and write music. Favourite musician: —Earl Klough. Likes to tease all the girls.

Front Row — L to R

GORDON PADAYACHEE BORN — 23/12/63 CAPRICORN

Drummer and percussionist in the band, also plays tabla for a Sungam group from an age of 9 years. He had no previous experience with a dance band until he joined the Dukes. He has passed his Grade 5 Theory of Music with the Royal Schools of Music and presently studying to further himself to read and write music for drums and percussion. He plays volley-ball as a sport.

DEE SHARMA ROOPANAND (L.T.C.L.) BORN — 08/05/42 TAURUS

Leader and founder of the band. Plays alto and tenor sax. Long career in music. (See History and Background). Loves dancing and socialising.

RAMA (SPOKES) PATHER BORN — 30/08/39 VIRGO

Plays alto and tenor sax in the band. Started musical career at the age of 18 years playing drums for "The Strike of the Band" and then alto sax with "Lotus Serenaders" thereafter, "Swing Serenades", "La Mellotones", "Maracibos", and "Magnum Force". He is a self taught musician and had the opportunity of playing the "Tanpura" with Mr S.P. Pillay a renowned local South Indian Classical singer. At present learning to read and write music under the guidance of Dee. Plays cricket and does jogging also a keen fisherman.

Past Duchesses

