

The Musical Life of Kevin Feeney

Kevin has been in the drum world for as long as he can remember. He learned about a wide variety of drum gear at a very young age from his father, also a lifelong, talented drummer. With the help of his dad, he started getting on the kit at around 22 months old. When he was old enough to carry stuff, he started helping his dad at gigs and seeing, first hand, what it takes to be a drummer. Kevin had the honor to be introduced to many musicians at a young age, including Louis Bellson. Growing up, the house was always filled with music. There was never a dull moment in the Feeney household!

School days: Kevin started with private drum lessons at age 12 and played in the school band. In Jr High, he joined the Jazz Band, this is when his brain went “full drummer” and he started to get more serious about playing. He continued with lessons into High School and joined the Marching and Pep Bands. He was the little guy with the heavy, old-school tri-toms, having to walk double-time to keep up with the 6-foot giant he walked with. The school band played many basketball games and pep rallies and even played at President Reagan’s inauguration in Washington, DC! Kevin has never really been able to sight-read, but he certainly faked it well! The band played the themes to Hawaii 5-0 and Rocky as well as music from Chicago and many other songs. He learned most of these songs on the spot, a talent that would make him stand out from the crowd later in life. During this time of life, he played in about a million garage bands and had rehearsals galore, but gigs were not really a thing, besides the High School Talent Shows.

Kevin had a few standard kits growing up but, at the age of 14, he stumbled across the opportunity to build and refurbish his very first custom drum kit, lovingly called the “Dump Kit” because it was, literally, built from drums he found at the dump. He played these for several years and turned a great profit when finally decided to sell them.



Young Adult Life: After High School, in 1985, Kevin joined his first official band, 6 Gun. They played a lot of Rock songs, mostly progressive stuff with a lot of time changes. Looking back, he sees how far he’s come and how much he “over-played” during that time in his life. It was with 6 Gun that he had his first studio experience. They recorded a 4-song demo and he learned so much. A couple years later, in the late 80s, Kevin joined Ivy Stone. They were more “Zeppelin-influenced” rock and had two guitar players, which added a whole new dimension of learning. He and Ivy Stone played several local bars, with the most regular gig being at The Rock Pile in Saugus, MA. They recorded several 4-song demos and were together for about 4 years, on and off.

During the Ivy Stone hiatuses, he played with Seventh Sign, a hard rock, “Queensryche-influenced”

band. This was the first opportunity Kevin had to play with a band having a keyboard player. He recorded one demo with Seventh Sign and moved on to other projects. Seventh Sign loved Kevin's track so much that they used it when recording their second album, even though Kevin was no longer in the band. Kevin had also been playing with a separate instrumental group, Shylock. Shylock played progressive rock and auditioned at least 10 singers, but they were all...well...not good. They made a 4-track demo in Kevin's basement that came out so good, it sounded like it had been done in a professional studio.

When things get really good: After Ivy Stone officially disbanded, Kevin played with several other bands, including the Gary Butler Project and also started attending jams at the 151 Club in Lawrence, MA. This is where Kevin really cut his teeth! The jams were every Sunday and many times, Kevin would be the only drummer there. In fact, he'd sometimes play for six hours straight because they just wouldn't let him leave! The other musicians would throw songs at him that he didn't even know. This is where his talent to play by sound and not by sight-reading proved its worth! He could listen to the song on break and somehow get through it all, and sound great doing it...well, most times anyway. On the rare occasion that Kevin wasn't playing, he



was able to hang out with some good friends, including Joey DellAli, who played with Jonathan Mover and owned the Sidewalk Café in Salisbury, MA. Joey tracked Kevin down one day because his band needed a drummer at the last minute to do a show on a local radio station, hosted by Harvey Warfield. During an interview, Harvey asked Joey the band's name, and, in a panic, he looked at Kevin, then back to Harvey and said, "Cold Blooded Babies"! And that was the start of a new band, with a memorable name... that never played together again. LOL But, still a cool story and exciting experience, which led to Kevin playing with Carmen DiMarca and a band called The Markers, another spontaneous grouping. This group of musicians, sometimes up to 9 at a time, would throw gigs together and play at Leo's in Lawrence, MA. This was a great experience and allowed Kevin to learn how to work with several musical styles and personalities.



In October 1993, in an "everything happens for a reason" moment, Kevin got a call from his buddy, Chuck, saying his band was looking for a new drummer. As fate would have it, Kevin had just picked up all his drums from his last band and they were still in the van. This is when the real magic started, and he joined Mugsy!

Once settled into the new band, Kevin and the other members, Chuck, Sean and Steve, got to work writing songs, rehearsing all the

time, working on vocals and harmonies, and recording jam-room demos of their original songs. Then they realized they needed to make some money so they decided to start gigging as a cover band called Free Beer, thinking that people would come into the bar if they saw a sign that said Free Beer! That name didn't last long, and in an effort to keep the Mugsy originals band separate from the cover band, they went by "Mugsy" for about a year. Eventually, they merged everything and started going by Mugsy.





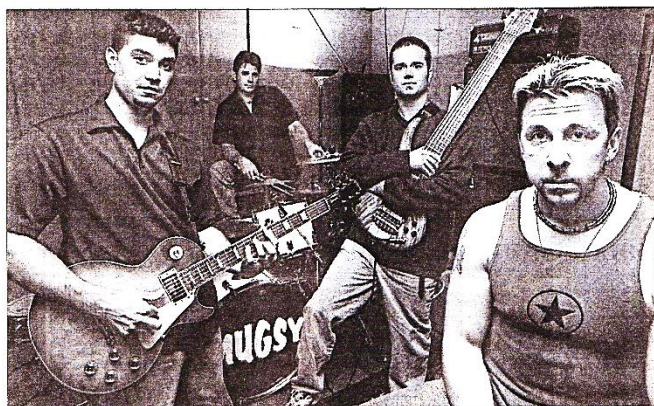
Mugsy gigged heavily 1994-2000, 3-5 nights per week. They played all over the northeast and became one of New England's premier bands. They played Portland, ME, Ascutney, VT, Keene State College, Fitchburg State College, throughout NH, ME and MA. They dominated the Haverhill, MA scene. The Sidewalk Café in Salisbury, MA (remember Joey DellAli?) became their summertime home gig. They hosted massive Halloween parties with elaborate sets, built by Kevin. They did KISS, Blue Man Group, and Elvis, to name a few. They never had a set list and coined the motto "Never the same show twice!". In 1998, they adopted Mark as their guitar player.



Between 1995 and 2000, Mugsy played venues such as Sharkey's in Nashua, NH, The Cage in Manchester, NH, the Casino Ball Room in Hampton Beach, NH and several others. They shared the stage with bands such as Godsmack, System of a Down, Jeff Healey, Vince Neil, Stir, Firehouse, Quiet Riot, Ratt, Great White, Dokken, Days of the New, Creed, Warrant and LA Guns. Mugsy performed outside the Fleet Center in Boston as guest openers for sold out Bruce Springsteen shows in August of 2000. They also played events like Locobazooka 1999 and several events at NH's Bike Weeks.



Mugsy recorded two CDs and two EPs and, to this day, have a very loyal following who sing along and know every word to their originals. They were chosen and featured on four compilation CDs of New England's best artists. They were featured in several magazines circulating throughout New England and were played on all the big radio stations in the New England area, including WGIR FM Rock 101.1, WHEB 100.3, WHOB 106.3 and WAAF 107.3. Their album "King for a Day" hit the top 10 of The Big Friggin' Chart for NH Radio in November of 1998.

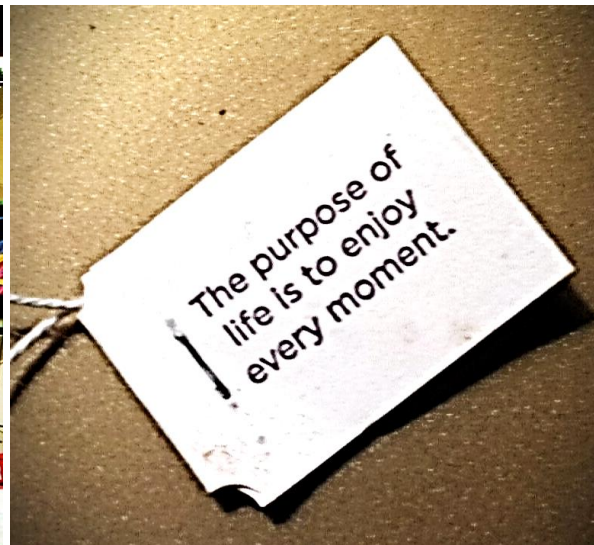


One of the hardest working bands in Merrimack Valley, Mugsy records its own music in its own studio for its own record label. Here band members (from left) Mark E. Fitzpatrick of Haverhill; Kevin P. Fooney of Plaistow, N.H.; Sean P. Corcoran of Haverhill; and Steven R. Archambault of Haverhill stand in one of the sound-proof rooms at Shag 54 studios in downtown Haverhill.

Doing it their way



Mugsy Plays The Crowd



In 2000, Mugsy took a hiatus. Sean branched off to play with Blind By Noon, Steve and Mark moved on to Craving Lucy. Kevin focused mostly on his construction business, starting to make custom drums (Feeney Custom Drums), and jamming occasionally with Ivy Stone. After a family health issue in 2005, he stopped playing all together and focused on making custom drums and rods.



In 2008, Kevin rejoined Mugsy doing covers and some originals. It was a more laidback time and they all just played to play, with no agenda. They weren't hell-bent on getting signed, they just wanted to play and enjoy a couple gigs per month. This allowed Kevin to continue with Feeney Custom Drums and gave him time to reignite his passion for building. He crafted custom snares for Chad Smith (Chickenfoot, 2009), Daniel Adair (Nickelback, 2009) and his idol, Pat Torpey (Mr Big, 2010). Mugsy continued to play and, what started as a couple gigs per month, turned into every weekend, then 3 gigs per week, right up until 2020 when the world shut down.



In 2010, Kevin invented Twist Rods. This innovative "twist" on multi-rods really got him thinking about how to address drummers' needs. Several companies were interested in Twist Rods, but nothing came of it. We now view this as another "everything happens for a reason" event. He then revisited the bass drum beaters that he had built over the years. In 2014, Kevin started working with Rich Sticks drumstick company. Rich Sticks started selling Twist Rods and some of Kevin's bass drum beaters. In 2015, the Drum Taco was born, and Rich Sticks added this item to their product line. Kevin learned a lot working with Rich Sticks and is grateful for the opportunities he encountered with them. In 2016, Kevin decided to pursue his passion for invention and focused on developing his own brand. In 2017, Creative Percussion was formulated, and it officially came to life in 2018. Since then, we have sold several thousand products across the globe and met some truly amazing people. What a ride, and it's only just begun!

