



Take a bit of classic British rock, throw in some vintage, '70s American rock, mix in some blues, add a touch of the Jersey shore sound, and you have the music of Lone Shark, a new group just starting to make its mark on the Jersey music scene.

"In typical 21st century fashion, three of us met through online ads placed on several musician websites," laughs Wayne Kessler, who handles vocals, guitar and harmonica for the fledgling band. "We found our current bass player through someone we met in another band." The other members include Ron Banas on vocals and guitar, Greg McDermott on drums and percussion, and Jerry Otero on bass.

The group has already graced stages at festivals and clubs in Belmar, Asbury Park, Ocean Grove, and Hoboken, including the headlining slot at the Ocean Grove Music Festival, and regular appearances at The Wonder Bar in Asbury Park. They've also just released their debut album, titled 45 RPM.

The new release is a reflection of their varied influences, and thus far has received positive reviews. "The band has a fairly hard driving sound, but not over the top," relates Wayne. "We were all influenced by the Rolling Stones to some degree. We've also been influenced by The Faces, The Yardbirds, and Led Zeppelin. Obviously we each have individual music influences, but those are so numerous because we've all been influenced by either the blues, jazz, funk, and even some Latin vibes. Interestingly enough, there is no single favorite tune. Everyone we speak to seems to have one or two that they really enjoy, but it has been different for everyone. That is probably because each of our songs, so far, have had unique sounds. They don't all fit into one mold. We entered our songs on garageband.com, and thus far they have all had very nice reviews."

Most of the songs stem from

a collaboration between Wayne and Ron. "Both myself and Ron Banas write the music and lyrics," Wayne explains. "Typically either Ron or myself will have a riff that we were working on and he and I sit in his basement messing around with it. Other times Ron presented a chord structure that needed lyrics, etc. Usually the music comes before the lyrics and either Ron or I write them based on any feel we get from the music. However, sometimes the antenna just goes up and the lyrics and music start to flow out."

While their influences are readily evident, there's also an element of the Jersey shore combination of rock fused with R&B, funk, and jazz. Wayne's harp is reminiscent of Southside Johnny, and the blues based guitar riffs lend themselves to comparisons with shore stalwarts such as Bill Hector, Bobby Bandiera, Matt O'Ree and Sonny Kenn. The frenetic drums add a keen sense of dynamics, along the lines of the early Bruce Springsteen recordings.

The group hopes to promote the album through live performances in the area. "Since we have finished and released our album, we are now in the process of booking shows for the spring and summer," Wayne says. "At the moment, we are booked as a featured band on June 28th at a music festival in Hamilton, NJ. We are also pursuing other festival and club opportunities right now."

As far as major touring, or the possibility of taking things to the next level, Wayne is very realistic.

"Well, we all have full-time jobs," he exclaims. "We also have families and other obligations. However, the one thing that we all have is a love for making great music. We want to see how far we can push this thing. We think that we have written and continue to write pretty good songs and hope that others will think the same. Right now, if we can continue to play music festivals in the surrounding area that would be great. We'd also like to open for larger local and national acts that come through the area at original music venues. Last summer we opened for Billy Hector and really enjoyed that. That's something we want to do more of, support others and get our music out as much as we can. At the same time, we are always looking to participate in fundraisers and other benefits where we can help. That's always been a part of what we do."

And does the name of the band have some significance? "That's a great question," Wayne laughs. "When I know, I'll give you the answer! Seriously though, about three years ago we were working as a cover band and someone we were playing with threw it out there. I don't know where it came from, but after paying for the website and business cards, I guess it stuck. It helps that Ron is an accountant!"

For further information about Lone Shark, and to find out about the new release and upcoming appearances, check out loneshark.net, or contact the band through lonesharkband@loneshark.net.

