

## **Don Hull's Reflections of "Travelin Suite"**

### **June 1973**

The draft had ended. An all volunteer army had begun. My four year last of a kind 2-s student deferment had ended and the low 38 number associated with it had expired, all under the wire. Richard Nixon was in the middle of Watergate and I moved to the bottom apt. at 306 S. Park St. in Madison, Wis.

Mario and Don had exited and dissolved their White Duck project after two albums and were looking for something new. At first, Mario and I lived in that 2 bedroom apt. writing songs and developing guitar parts to accompany those songs. We bought old mattresses and anything sound absorbent from a thrift store and soundproofed the basement under our apt. to deaden the electric guitars. After a few weeks, Mario suggested we have Don Kloetzke come down from Fond du Lac to help in the songwriting process, which he did. We recorded everything on a Sony reel to reel recorder but had very few lyrics to go with the mostly completed musical songs.

I went home for Thanksgiving and talked my mom into financing a recording trip to Nashville. Mario called Buzz Cason at Creative Workshop Studios and got the ok to use the studio free of charge at off hours. Mario also lined up Lump Williams to play bass while Buzz secured Karl Himmel to drum.

### **December 1973**

All was set. The three of us left Madison the first weekend of December, 1973 with a cooler of drinks and sandwiches made by friend Jane Kremer, guitars, and amps all in my 1966 Pontiac Bonneville station wagon.

We rehearsed with the at the studio and the engineer, Travis Turk pulled out a free 2" tape of spliced ends to use for the recordings. When Buzz heard the first playback he was excited saying he could make that one a hit. Travis also wanted to take the finish tape to Canada to his new job. "I'll make you stars in Canada" he said. After two days of late night recording (supplying Travis with orange juice and snacks to keep him awake) we were finish and mixed down a mono mix onto quarter inch tape. We were lucky to also hire Andy McMahon to play vibes and piano on a few cuts. Each session player was paid \$75 for their work and we headed back north.

### **January, 1974**

I went to Los Angeles to make copies and see my old publisher at *Wednesday's Child Music*, Jackie Mills. He said he would take it around and pitch the songs, but nothing happened. I went to Goldstar studios, (home of the famous wrecking crew session players and Beach Boys records) and distributed as many as possible to outlets at the time.

### **1978**

My Mother taught acting at the *Lee Strasberg institute* and was always running into someone famous. Of course, she had plenty of Goldstar copies of the 1973 recordings. One of her students was Rosanne Cash who in turn sent the tape to her friend in New York, Mike Apel. Mike had discovered, signed, and produced the first three albums of Bruce Springsteen. He had recently been replaced by Springsteen and was looking for new talent. He loved the tape and asked to meet me which I did. During the meeting, I told him this was a band and not just me and were not just going to sign anything. Looking back, him having just lost the biggest star on the planet, I think this was not the right thing to say. Nothing came of the meeting after that. So, there you have it, the lost tapes so to speak. Many people in the years since have referred to it as "The Beatles meet the Band" in style and substance.