

## Mixed drinks and music

# Pittsboro becomes part of the nightclub circuit

by Deborah Duffy  
DTH Contributor

Liquor by-the-drink in Chapel Hill? Well, not exactly, but Gryphon, a new bar, comes as close to offering that as possible in North Carolina. Instead of serving setups as most brown-bagging places do, Gryphon offers drinks mixed by professional bartenders. No longer does a person have to settle for cola with his liquor. The bartenders fix whiskey sours, tequila sunrises and a wide variety of other mixed drinks.

Besides being the only bar in the Triangle area featuring full bartending services, Gryphon offers an intimate atmosphere for listening to all kinds of live music. Doc and Merle Watson, South Wing, Red Clay Ramblers and Preservation Jazz Band are just a few of the groups that have played there.

"We hope to get name people from all aspects of music," said Ken Watkins, co-owner of Gryphon. "We get a lot of bluegrass because a lot passes through this area." Watkins and his partner, Charlie Dysart, constantly work on pulling in big-name musicians or groups who aren't necessarily nationally known but are on their way up.

"One way we hope to get name people in such a small place," said Watkins, "is through block-booking—opening the lines of communication between different clubs in surrounding states and bringing people on the east coast club

circuit. Those would be mostly medium-name acts."

It seems rather odd that this place is located in the country, out of the mainstream of Chapel Hill night life. Watkins admitted the reason was an economic one: rent is cheaper, and when he wanted to start a bar, the building (located a few miles down 15-501 towards Pittsboro) was empty.

Watkins opened Starpoint Tavern at that same location with a friend, Bobby Jacobs, in the fall of 1975. "We were sitting around one afternoon, applying for jobs," Watkins recalled. "Then we decided, 'Well, hell, let's open a bar.' We signed the lease three days later."

Starpoint was a tavern, offering beer, pinball and live music. It began to pick up a reputation as a "redneck" bar after a few fights broke out. "Things were getting kind of hectic," explained Watkins. After eleven months, he decided to sell it.

Then Dysart came along, wanting to buy the bar. He had formerly been assistant director of Penland, a school of arts and crafts in Spruce Pines, N. C. He worked at Starpoint a few weeks to see if he really wanted to get into the bar business, then decided to buy it and change it. After much discussion with Watkins, the two became partners and closed Starpoint down to renovate.

"We wanted to have a good listening room with brown-bagging," explained Dysart. Starpoint underwent a

complete transformation to become Gryphon. Out went all the pinball machines. In came tables, carpeting and a good sound system.

Much of the bar's decor, such as the carpeting and the wood-paneled walls, is there to ensure good acoustics. The sound system, acknowledged Watkins, "is our biggest and most consistent compliment from musicians. And it's a big thing to develop a good reputation among musicians."

Gryphon is open in the afternoon so that musicians can have a place to rehearse and customers can enjoy some informal jamming.

The friendliness of the two owners adds to the attraction of the bar. Either Dysart or Watkins greets everybody at the door. They make a point of getting

to know the people that frequent Gryphon, which helps create a more relaxed and comfortable atmosphere.

To gain admission to the bar, it is necessary to buy a membership card or be with a member. This is required by North Carolina law. In order to have a brown-bagging license, a place must sell food or memberships. Gryphon has two levels of membership. One costs \$2.50 and is good for a quarter of a year. The other is a "perferred" membership that costs \$25. With the higher-priced one, a person gets a liquor locker and priority on tickets to big-name groups that may sell-out.

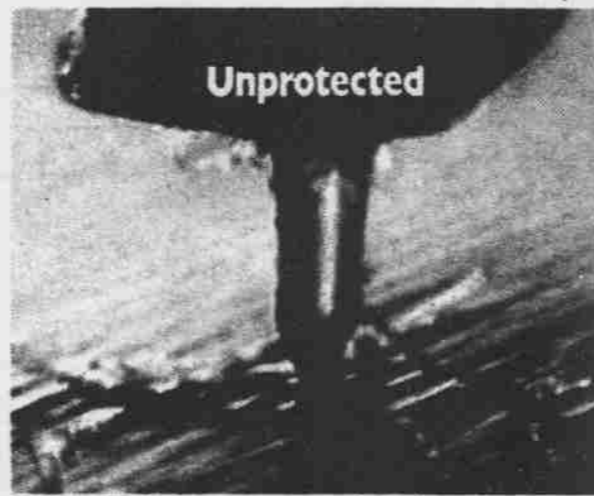
For those people who get the urge to go to a nightclub but lack the time and money to travel to New York or Atlanta, Gryphon is the closest substitute around.



Staff photo by Rouse Wilson

Local musicians perform at the Gryphon, the recently renovated Starpoint Tavern. Gryphon is noted for its excellent acoustics.

## Before Sound Guard<sup>®</sup>, the only way to prevent your records from wearing out was not to play them.



Magnified, you can see record vinyl wearing away.



With same magnification, record vinyl shows no wear.

The villain behind this destruction is friction. (If a diamond cuts through steel, you can imagine what a diamond stylus does to vinyl records.) Fortunately, from outer space has come a solution to record degradation. It's called Sound Guard<sup>®</sup>.

A by-product of research into dry lubricants for aerospace applications, Sound Guard preservative puts a microscopically-thin (less than 0.000003") dry film on records to protect the grooves from damage. Yet, remarkably, it does not degrade fidelity.

Independent tests show that Sound Guard preservative maintains full amplitude at all audible frequencies, while at the same

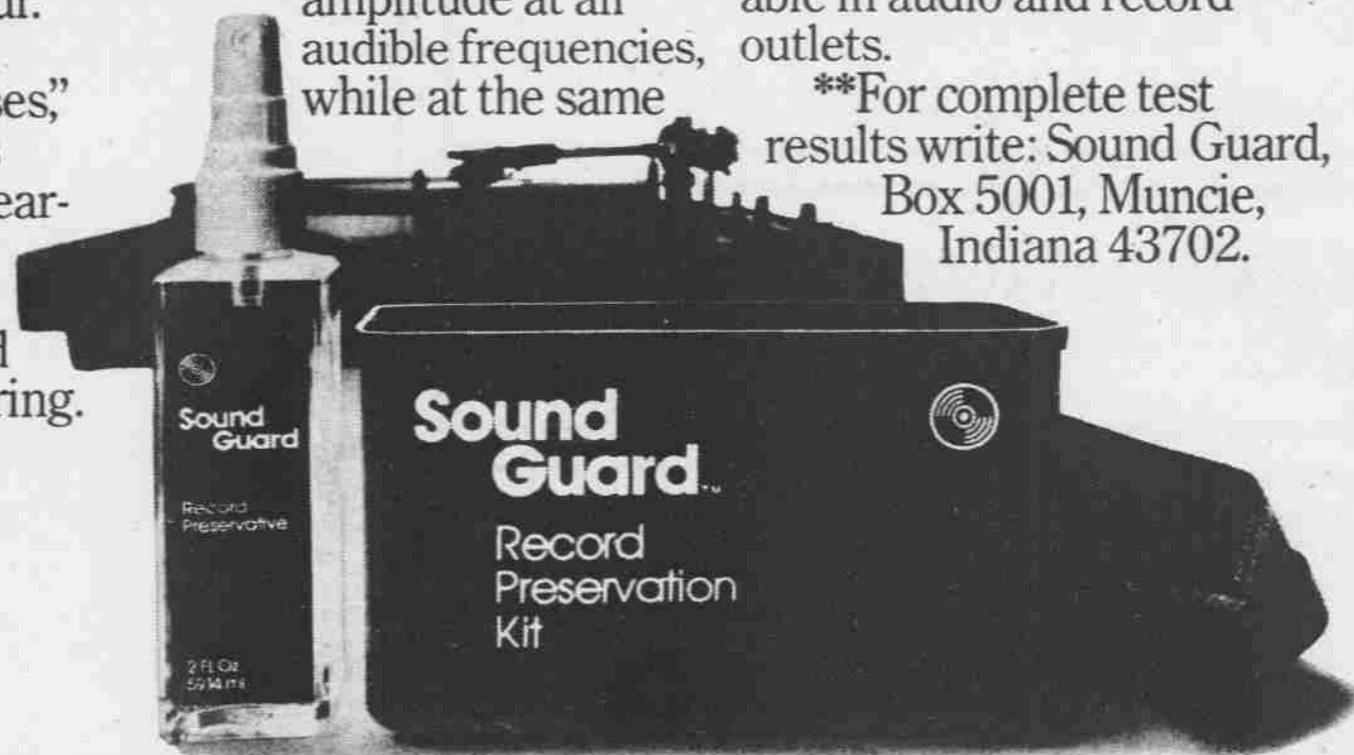
time significantly retarding increases in surface noise and harmonic distortion<sup>\*\*</sup>.

In other words, when applied according to instructions, a new record treated with Sound Guard preservative and played 100 times sounds the same as one in "mint" condition played the first time!

Sound Guard preservative comes in a kit (complete with non-aerosol pump sprayer and velvet buffing pad). It is completely safe and effective for all discs, from precious old 78's to the newest LP's including CD-4's.

Recently introduced to audiophiles, Sound Guard preservative is now available in audio and record outlets.

<sup>\*\*</sup>For complete test results write: Sound Guard, Box 5001, Muncie, Indiana 43702.



**Sound Guard<sup>®</sup> keeps your good sounds sounding good.**

\*Sound Guard is the registered trademark of Ball Corporation for its record preservative. © 1976 by Ball Corporation.

## Correction: P is for....

The "How does she do it?" picture which appeared in the *Tar Heel* yesterday was not a member of the Pilobolus Dance Theatre but Jeannette Triomphe of Pegasus Theatre Troupe, also appearing on campus this week.

Pegasus, a modern band of strolling players, will perform a medicine show at noon Thursday in the Great Hall and "Reflections in Flight" at 8:30 Friday and Saturday in Hill Hall Auditorium.

Monday through  
Friday  
the *Daily Tar Heel*  
reaches over  
20,000 people.

## Three days left to have your portrait taken for the '77 YACKETY YACK

**FREE**

Wed. 9-5  
Thurs. 1-9  
Fri. 9-5

Room 217, Carolina Union  
No appointment necessary

Ten days left to buy a '77 YACK for \$8.00. Subscriptions \$10.00 after Feb. 18. Available YACK office, Suite D, Union.

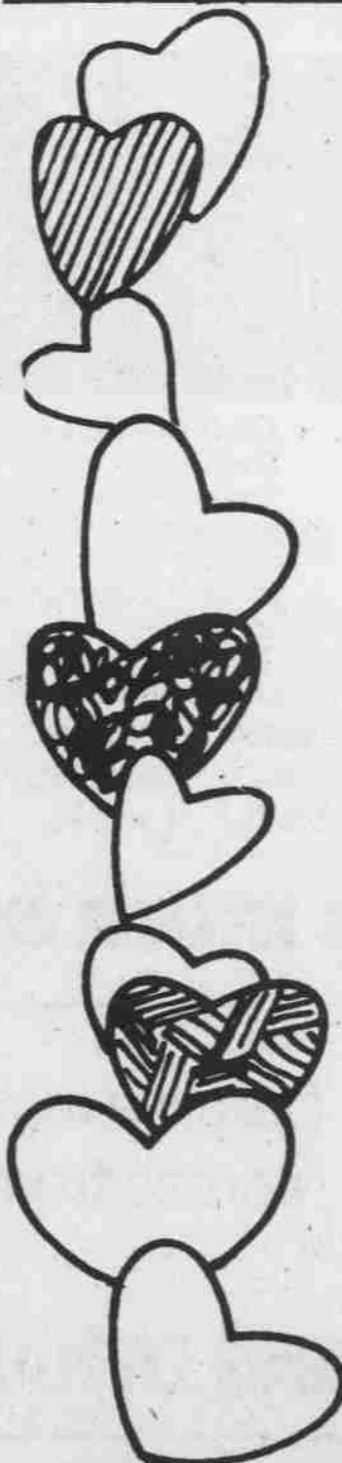
Tar Heel  
Classifieds  
Cost Only \$1.50

CARDS  
GIFTS  
BOOKS

logos  
book store

NCNB Plaza -  
Over Ram Theaters

## Let the Student Store Help You Make Valentine's Day a Special Day!



Chocolates by Pangburn's  
Stuffed Animals  
Cards

We'll mail your gift for you!  
(50¢ mailing charge)

There's More in the

# STUDENT STORE

