



Doug Clark's band in 1957: (l to r) Doug Clark, Ralph Edwards, John Clark, William Little, Thomas Booth

Hot Nuts still heating up the stage

By **DONNA LEINWAND**
State & National Editor

When the sound of beach music drifts from Little Fraternity Court and alumni complain of boisterous crowds tramping on the Carolina Inn's manicured lawns, chances are Doug Clark and the Hot Nuts are belting out their tunes nearby.

"We're known for our college parties," said Doug Clark, 50, who founded the band in 1955 as a sophomore in high school.

Clark, whose band has been playing for almost 32 years, said he heard a band at the Sigma Nu fraternity house in 1955 and he asked the social chairman how much they were getting paid.

"They were getting \$65 for the night," Clark said. "Back then, that was a lot of money and (the fraternity band) was only three pieces."

The next summer Clark, who was a drummer in his high school band, got together with a few friends and his older brother, John, now 52, and formed a band.

"We were always jamming out with the band after games anyway," Doug Clark said.

Their first job was at the Old Schoolhouse, a bar turned art gallery on Highway 54.

Doug Clark and the Hot Nuts have a long history with UNC.

In the late 1950s and in the early 1960s the Hot Nuts often played at Sunday parties in Phi Gamma Delta's backyard, Doug Clark said, before the Board of Governors banned the Sunday parties.

"In 1958, UNC was probably the party school of the country," he said. "Dean Ray Jeffries, he used to threaten us about us doing gross material. He said we'd better not do it on campus."

The BOG's ban didn't stop the Sunday parties, he said. They just moved off campus.

Now the band plays at UNC about twice a year and Doug Clark

days of the Sunday parties.

"The students really, really changed," he said. "Frats aren't as strong anymore. University of Georgia and Ole Miss spend the most for party weekends. The fraternities used to keep the houses spic and span. I guess it's hard to get pledges that want to spend so much for a fraternity."

The Hot Nuts have had their share of changes as well.

Only three original members still play in the band. Two are Doug and John Clark. The third is piano player Tommy Goldston.

And their name hasn't always been the Hot Nuts.

"First, in high school, we were The Tops, just The Tops," John Clark said. "We were kidding around with an old song called the Hot Nuts."

Doug Clark added, "It was back in 1956. They just started calling us the Hot Nuts because of that song."

"People just recognized us more as the Hot Nuts," John Clark said. "I was at (North Carolina) A & T at the time. It was a gimmick and that's what kept us going."

And so the act developed from that, Doug Clark said.

The Hot Nuts' act contains risqué and suggestive elements, the brothers said.

"It's just songs and jokes," John Clark said.

"Yeah, nothing visual," Doug Clark added. "We're like the original Animal House band."

After the movie Animal House came out, Doug Clark and the Hot Nuts received letters from all over the country asking why they weren't the band to play in the movie, Doug said.

The band has produced nine albums, of which four have made Billboard's top 10 in the adult comedy division. They made their last album in 1969.

"We ranked up there with Bill Cosby but he made the big money," Doug Clark said.

The Hot Nuts name reigns supreme among college party-goers.

"We've played every major college from east of Colorado and Texas," John Clark said.

But times haven't always been good for the band, Doug Clark said.

"The worst time was when disco was popular," he said.

But disco wasn't the only problem for the Hot Nuts.

"We have been threatened," John Clark said. "During the early 1960s we were banned from many schools mainly because of the name."

Doug Clark added, "What we were doing then compared to now is popcorn."

Their second album, which they made in 1963, was kept under the counter in record stores.

"You had to go in and ask for it," John Clark said.

Now, Doug Clark said, it seems like college students are listening more to older songs.

"It's great for older musicians," he said. "Some of this new stuff you can't understand what they're saying."

Doug Clark, a Chapel Hill native who still lives in his childhood home, said of all the places he's seen while touring there is no place he would rather be than Chapel Hill.

"No way. Chapel Hill is hard to beat," he said. "I grew up here. I know all the merchants on Franklin St. We know everyone."

John Clark now lives in Durham.

The duo attended Lincoln High School in Chapel Hill.

The band will be playing at Wake Forest and Duke Universities in the next few weeks.

 American Heart Association



drymount SALE
15% off!

All settled back into your dorm room, huh? Well, that's what I thought. Then I heard about the Drymount Sale at The Print Shop. Drymounting is the quick, inexpensive way The Print Shop mounts posters and prints onto styrofoam so they're ready for hanging. Anyway, at The Print Shop, all drymounting is 15% off 'til January 17! Awesome.

Sale Wed., Jan. 7-Sat., Jan. 17
the print shop

Northgate Mall, Durham
North Hills Mall, Raleigh
University Mall, Chapel Hill

LIMITED TIME OFFER!



\$20 to \$30 OFF ACT NOW!

January 15 10-3 pm
\$20 deposit

Free Engraving and Free Fraternity, Sorority and UNC Encrusting

HERFF JONES
Student Stores 