

The Connells

Local band draws crowd of 1000

Russ Smith
The Pendulum

The Connells, a local band from Raleigh, played for approximately 1000 people Sunday night in Alumni Gym.

Enthusiastic fans could be seen on top of their friend's shoulders just to get a better view. Some students were being passed around the tops of fans heads.

"The concert was a blast," said senior David Kuehl. "They were so loud it was incredible. I had a really good time."

"I had a lot of fun," said Mark Zolkowski, director of hospitality for the band. "I thought I was going to be waiting on them hand and foot but they were so cool. They told me to have a good time during the concert. They put on a great show."

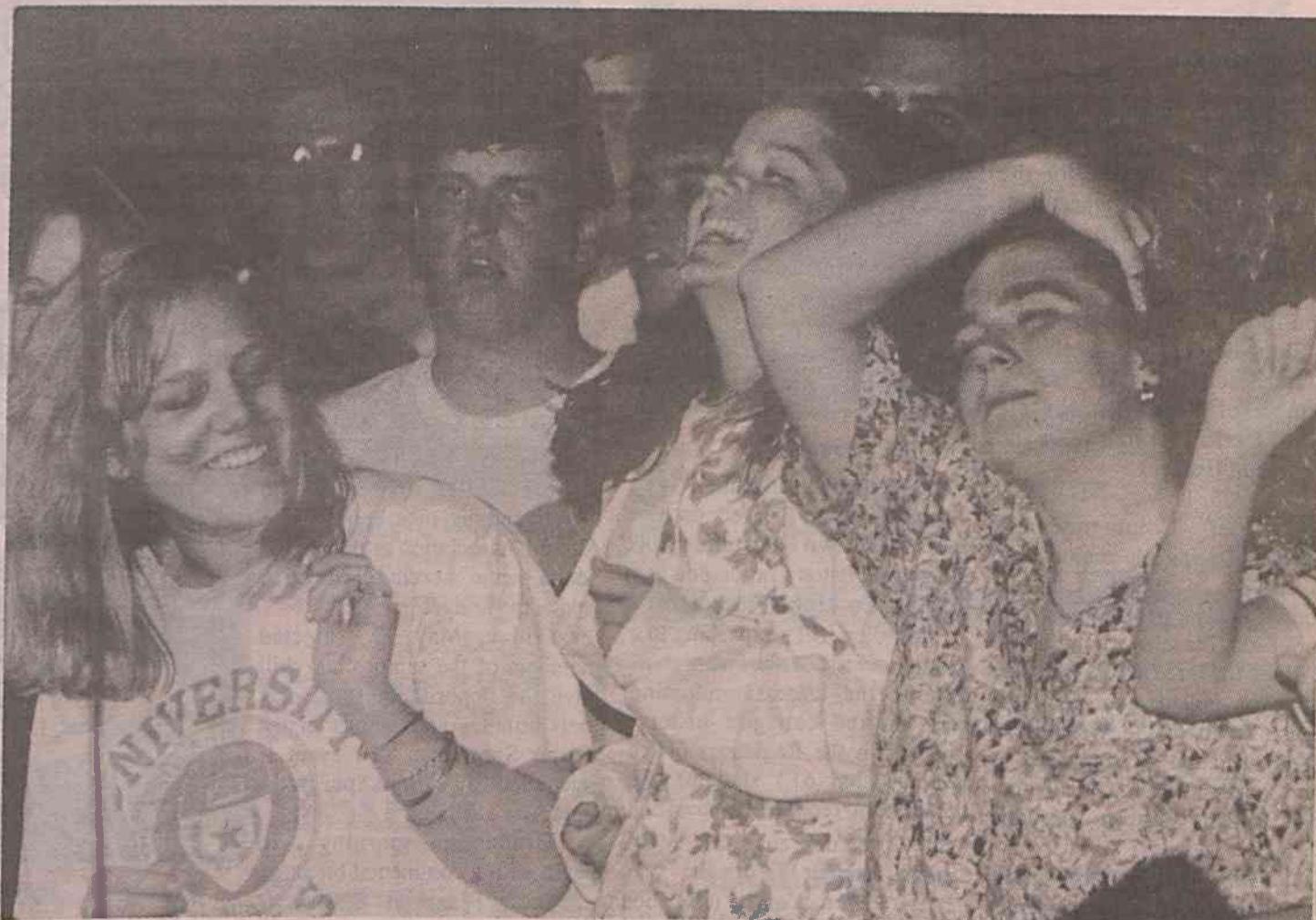
"As far as the crowd control went, the concert went better than we expected," said Kathy Kern, director of student activities. "The students were mostly well behaved. Even the Elon Police didn't have any problems."

Tallies of ticket sales were incomplete at press time but Kern said approximately 1000 people purchased tickets. "Last year about 1500 people attended the Smithereens' concert. There were also more complimentary tickets last year. The laser-light show that the Student Union Board sponsored this year limited our budget so we had to sell more tickets."

Kern said that there was more interest in signing the Connells than any other band. "Everyone wanted the Connells. They were the group everyone was talking about. When we heard they were heading out West, nobody wanted to book another group. Luckily they added a few southern dates and we got them."

The Connells can familiarize with a college atmosphere. "We played our first gig at a fraternity house during the summer at North Carolina State," said Doug MacMillan, the Connells' lead singer.

"We had a friend who lived there and asked him if we could play. He said sure, so we played about seven songs over and over again. The people there were just looking at us. We were



Elon students dance in alumni gym while enjoying music played by The Connells.

Scott Lansing/The Pendulum

terrible."

"We started off as a college radio band," MacMillan said. "We're basically a rock-pop band. Our songs have a dominant vocal melody."

The Connells' success has led to fame and fortune, but they haven't let popularity get in the way. Some might even call The Connells a "laid back" band. "I went fishing at Elon's lake," MacMillan said. "I know I got a bite, I know it. I didn't catch anything though. I haven't landed any lunkers yet. I just like to catch anything."

MacMillan said that life on the road isn't always glamorous. "Sometimes we play four or five times a week. Sometimes we play more than six days in a row. We like to relax on the bus, talk, and drink a few beers. We get a vacation in May and June, where we'll probably be in Raleigh," MacMillan said.

"I didn't know what I wanted to do when I was young," MacMillan said. "I guess everybody thinks it'd be kind of neat to be in a band. I definitely didn't want to work in an office."

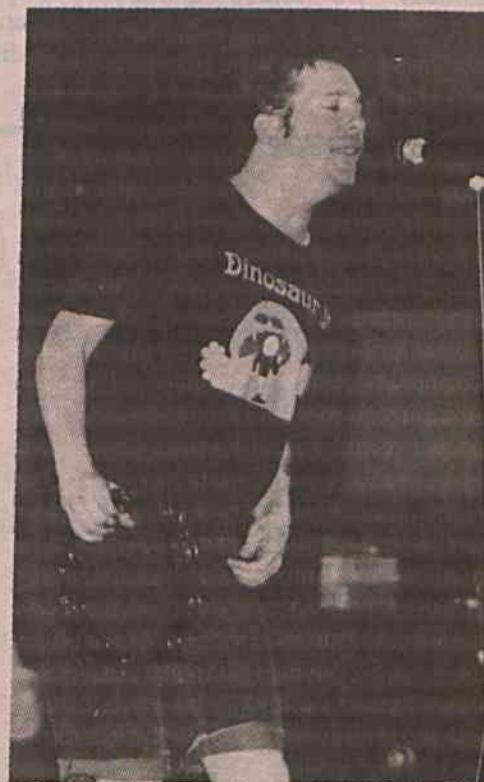
After playing together for six years, MacMillan said he still has a hard time

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listening to their early works. "We were pretty bad the first two years. I have a hard time listening to our first album just because I don't like the way I sang."

"I've only written a couple of songs," MacMillan said. "It's a laborious task. As far as a favorite song goes, it depends upon the night. It varies from night to night."

"Our most memorable gig this year was in Philadelphia. We opened for the Replacements. Our truck broke down on the way up there. We had to rent another truck, put all of the equipment into it and get to Philadelphia. We were supposed to be there at five but didn't arrive until seven-thirty. We went on at eight. It was so wild," MacMillan said.



Scott Lansing/The Pendulum

Lead singer... Doug MacMillan