

The Musicians

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The quality of the musicianship is one of the reasons why THE BEATELS is such a compelling live act. The Beatles were highly talented musicians, and that makes it no easy task to reproduce their performances night after night. It takes great skill and years of dedication to the task of understanding the style and techniques of The Beatles to put on a polished performance like that of THE BEATELS.

THE BEATELS are:

- Bruce Coble (John Lennon)
- Steven Shipley (Paul McCartney)
- Marcus Phelan (George Harrison)
- Neil Rankin (Ringo Starr)

So who are these talented individuals? Find out more about the musicians that make THE BEATELS the world class act that it is...

{mospagebreak title=Bruce Coble is John Lennon}

Bruce Coble - AKA John Lennon

Bruce is one lucky guy. Not only does he love playing the role of John Lennon with THE BEATELS, he just happens to bear an uncanny resemblance to the great man. The Sydney Morning Herald called his resemblance "spooky", but no matter what you call it, it's a handy thing. Combine that with the stances, the accent, the style - and you have one breathtaking impersonation of John Lennon.

Bruce first started impersonating John way back in 1990, when he joined another Sydney-based act by the name of Beatnix, which is where he first met Steven Shipley, who was the resident McCartney in that group back then. When he and the other three musicians in that band decided to leave Beatnix and form THE BEATELS at the end of 1995, little did he realise that the 5 years he had already spent in that group was just a warm up for something much bigger. Nearly 10 years later, his impersonations of John Lennon with THE BEATELS have been applauded around the world, and it doesn't look like stopping!

Bruce uses a range of authentic Beatle gear:

- Vox AC30 Amplifier
- Rickenbacker 325
- J160e Acoustic
- Epiphone Casino
- Fender Sonic Blue Stratocaster
- A variety of harmonicas

As well as being John, Bruce has played in a number of original bands, starting with his school band Alternative Carparks, as well as 7 Zark 7, Earthworm and The Futureeaters.

As well as that, he makes web sites (including this one) and tinkers with multimedia, not surprising, given that he has a Bachelor Of Arts in Mass Communication and Politics.

Bruce is one of the founders members and managers of THE BEATELS.

{mospagebreak title=Steven Shipley is Paul McCartney}

Steve Shipley - AKA Paul McCartney

Steven Shipley was born to play Paul. Since seeing the real McCartney as a kid in the 1970's, his appreciation of the talent of McCartney has left him with little real option but to emulate the great man himself. And a good thing too, because Steven's voice is a dead ringer for Paul - in range and in tone! When Steven sings, the crowd relaxes, happy in the knowledge that they are enjoying one of the best McCartney impersonations they are ever likely to experience. And when it comes to the bass playing, it is no exaggeration to say that McCartney's bass lines are among the most challenging that a musician is likely to come across. Watching Steven perform those bass lines to perfection is one of the elements of the musicianship of THE BEATELS that makes them the world class act they are. The intricacy of McCartney's bass lines is one of the keys to the sound of The Beatles, and Steven is one of the world's best.

Steve uses a variety of authentic Beatle gear:

- Vox amp

- Hofner Bass

- Rickenbacker Bass

Steven began playing in local bands in the Newcastle region - The Feds and Rockefella to name a few. He was recruited by The Beatnix in the late 1980's by word of mouth, and he became the cornerstone member of a lineup of that group from that time on until late 1995, playing the role of "musical director", and creating the backing tracks in use at the time. When he left with the other musicians in that group to form THE BEATELS, he consolidated his position as the foremost McCartney impersonator in Australia, and has since proven to be one of the best in the world. Steven continues his role as "musical director" within THE BEATELS, and also makes the majority of the backing tracks used by the group.

Steven has also studied to be a certified studio engineer in Sydney, ironically under the tutelage of the producer of the album he recorded in 1994 - It's Four You (see our Audio Samples page) - Pete (The Count) Contini. As well as co-managing THE BEATELS with Bruce Coble, he also produces and engineers the recordings of many Sydney artists (including recordings by THE BEATELS). He has also written and recorded for a studio group called Post (along with Marcus and Neil), featuring on their debut Late Mail.

{mospagebreak title=Marcus Phelan is George Harrison}

Marcus Phelan - AKA George Harrison

Marcus is a guitarist's guitarist. He spent the 1980's and much of the 1990's playing in some of the top original bands in Australia - Spy v Spy, The Numbers, Jeremy Oxleys Allstars and The Allnitters to name a few. He also spent a few years in the early 1990's playing the part of George Harrison in The Beatnix with Bruce and Steven, before heading off to play original music again.

Marcus re-joined Bruce and Steven in THE BEATELS in 1999, and has been the resident George Harrison ever since. His strong voice and stylish guitar technique have made him one of the best Harrison impersonators in the world. When THE BEATELS were in Liverpool in 2004, Marcus developed a following among the musicians at the festival, who all "oohed" and "ahhed" at his ability to pull off the highly challenging parts that George Harrison played in the Beatle recordings.

Marcus uses a wide variety of Beatle gear:

- Vox AC30 Amp

- Gretsch Country Gentleman
- 12-string Rickenbacker
- Sonic Blue Fender Stratocaster
- Psychedelic "Rocky" Fender Stratocaster
- Gibson SG
- Epiphone Casino
- Les Paul (Lucy)
- Rosewood Fender Telecaster

Marcus helps out with making some of the backing tracks currently used by THE BEATELS, and also writes and records original music with the group "Post".

{mospagebreak title=Neil Rankin is Ringo Starr}

Neil Rankin - AKA Ringo Starr

Neil Rankin makes the perfect Ringo. The attention to detail, along with the thumping spirit that was The Beatles' rhythm section,

recreates the distinctive sound of Ringo Starr, and completes the world class lineup that is THE BEATELS.

In his earlier days, Neil was an English teacher for high school kids, but he is no stranger to world class tribute acts. During the 1990's, Neil was the drummer for one of the best tribute acts Australia has produced - The Australian Doors Show. In that group, he toured the world, playing to packed theatres throughout Europe and elsewhere. He was also the one who ironically convinced Bruce and Steven and the other then members of The Beatnix in 1995 to leave that group and form THE BEATELS, which they promptly did!

Neil joined THE BEATELS in 2002, and since then, has completed the world class lineup that we have today. He uses an authentic set of Ludwig drums, to recreate the look and sound of Ringo Starr. Neil also writes and records original music with the group "Post", and also in his spare time runs a Video Production company, Rankin Video Productions, which produces music videos, amongst other things. He also runs a record company Cabbage Records, which releases music for the group "Post".