



The songs

Side One

- *Don't Look Back*, by B. Vera (The Remains).
- *To L.N./Who Doesn't Know*, by R. Cohan (Rising Storm).
- *I'm Coming Home*, by The Rising Storm.
- *A Message to Pretty*, by A. Lee (Love).
- *In the Midnight Hour*, by W. Pickett and S. Cropper.
- *Frozen Laughter*, by A. Thompson (Rising Storm).

Side Two

- *She Loved Me*, by R. Cohan and A. Thompson (Rising Storm).
- *Mr. Wind*, by R. Campisi (Ramrods).
- *Big Boss Man*, by A. Smith and C. Dixon.
- *Bright Lit Blue Skies*, by R. Campisi (Ramrods).
- *The Rain Falls Down*, by R. Weinberg (Rising Storm).
- *Baby Please Don't Go*, by J. Williams.

The value of vanity fare

Why is an album by six unknown players worth \$1,300? The Rising Storm's bassist can explain

By **TODD COHEN**

Staff writer

Twenty-five years ago, a rock band at a New England prep school spent five days in a studio in Framingham, Mass., laying down tracks for a vanity album.

Today, to a degree far out of proportion to its collective talent, The Rising Storm has developed something of a cult following among serious collectors of records.

An Italian collector recently paid \$1,300 for a copy of the album, "Calm Before." At that price, it would rank among the 50 most collectible albums, according to Goldmine, a magazine for music collectors.

The celebrity of this obscure band's obscure album might be remotely interesting to some rock fans and record collectors. It's intriguing to me — and most puzzling — because I was in the band.

It's on my mind because I spent four days in Washington this month cranking out rock 'n' roll with the Storm's five other members. We were rehearsing for a dance this spring at the 25th reunion of our class at Phillips Academy in Andover, Mass., and for a gig that weekend at a Boston nightclub.

These developments — the reunion, the quasi-celebrity — yield rare insight into growing up.

Teenagers in the 1960s came of age with rock 'n' roll. The music, it seemed, was an anthem for youth and its rebellion, which expressed themselves in sex and politics.

Playing in a band was a kid's dream. You pumped out the rhythms — even if driven by adolescent emotions — that moved other kids.

But the children of the '60s got older. And as they matured, many of them becoming professionals and yuppies, rock 'n' roll became more of an entertainment or nostalgic reminder and less of a lifeblood.

Sure, much music today sings in an adolescent voice to adolescents. But the music of some rockers — think of Bruce Springsteen, Van Morrison, Joni Mitchell — reflects their own maturity.

So, it was with much curiosity that I drove to Washington on New Year's morning for the rehearsal.

It was an exhumation of sorts.

I certainly recognized the faces of the other band members, but it was if someone had fast-forwarded time-exposed film: The faces were more haggard, the jowls fuller, the hair thinner and grayer, the waistlines larger.

We weren't kids any more: Two are lawyers (in Washington and Boston), one a doctor (Richard Weinberg at the Bowman Gray School of Medicine at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem), another a surveyor who also works as a ski instructor and is a lieutenant colonel in the Vermont National Guard, the others a college professor (Tom Scheft at the School of Education at N.C. Central University in Durham) and a newspaper editor (me).

But despite the outward changes, the reunion seemed to revive our former personalities. The group leader still led; the comedian still quipped. The group's social structure and dynamics seemed eerily frozen in time. Old jealousies and insecurities seemed intact.

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