

Commitment to the classics unites young rock group



By Brock Weir

Once upon a time, well, almost exactly a year ago, The Undeclared were known as 'Trixt?', and they were going head to head with other groups as part of the Battle of the Bands, held last June at the Aurora Community Centre as part of the Town's Sesquicentennial Celebrations.

The Undeclared have their roots in 'Twix?', a band formed by students Charlotte McMunn and Peter Cardillo who came together through the Rock Band Camp program, hosted by The Arts music store. The duo selected the name in honour of the chocolate bar, quite simply because there were two of them. When Ian MacPherson joined the act, however, the name didn't fit and 'Trixt?' was the next logical step, according to the boys. And, according to Charlotte, she grudgingly went along with the rebrand.

When their trio became a quartet, the next step up the ladder didn't have quite the same ring to it and they decided to dub themselves 'The Undeclared.'

Jack Davies, an Aurora native and King Township resident, was the one who bumped them up to The Undeclared.

He defines their individual style as 'alternative rock' in their original song, but when they play covers they tend to choose bands and songs that cover a vast array of rock through the ages from Bachmann Turner Overdrive to his personal favourite, Rush.

'Our talent and our passion for music [makes us gel] and we get along together pretty well,' says Jack. 'There is no weak link and we can all keep up with each other.'

Jack says he first realised music was something he truly wanted to focus on when he first took up playing bass guitar for his school band. He thought it was fun and started to take lessons at The Arts.

'It is a lot of fun and it is a great experience just to learn about music,' he says. 'I like music in general and I get to play it all the time. I just really like playing in front of people and it is a great thing to see when everybody seems to be having a good time. It is inspiring to make people excited about that!'

It is very similar for Charlotte. When asked what she enjoys most about performing, she replied simply, 'I enjoy making people happy.'

?We play for mostly a family crowd and there are adults and kids, but adults just come on their own to watch us,? she says. ?When people first get to [places like Sgt Peppers] they might only be able to hear us but not see us, and they don't think it is a kids band. They never really expect us to be kids. We range from pop to rock and for pop, we don't do things like Justin Bieber. We go towards classic and indie modern rock and pop.?

Charlotte has her musical roots as a drummer. She first picked up the sticks at the age of five, but it wasn't until she was seven she realised it was something she wanted to commit to. From the age of 10, she began going to music camps and that is when the passion came in.

?I think it was more of a look,? she says of what attracted her to the drums in the first place. ?I think it just looks cooler than some of the other instruments and I gravitated towards that. I had never really seen any girl drummers when I was little and I liked the fact you could just bang on the drums. Now, I know it is not unusual to see a girl drummer. I watch for them and it is really cool to watch their techniques.?

However they got to this point, whether picking up the bass guitar in school, or being attracted to the drum pad because it looked a bit badass, The Undeclared are now doing gigs around Aurora and York Region, coming a long way from when they were first thrown together as strangers at Rock Band Camp united by an affinity for music.

?The best part of band camp is the learning experience to cooperate with others and being able to learn through all the workshops they have like recording, software, and lights. It is really a whole learning experience. You just have to go for it and not be shy. Music is a unisex hobby. You don't have to be a certain gender or a certain age. Just because you happen to be a little bit younger than pros, it doesn't mean you can't get to that level eventually. It is just about committing yourself and throwing yourself out there.?