



Mickey: Well I was listening to Mott the Hoople, and I happened to get a copy of "Raw Power" (Stooges) on tape; from that point on I loved the Stooges. Then I ran into Frankie (Teenage Head) standing on the corner by summer hazes variety... we were on our way to Tim Horton's. (Tim Horton comes into the picture a lot!!!) Frankie asked me if I'd ever heard of the New York Dolls. I said that I had heard the name but not the band yet. It just so happens that the Dolls were playing on Don Kershner's rock concert, so I started listening to the Dolls, the Stooges, and still Mott the Hoople. The Dictators got introduced to me by Steve of Teenage Head, and I always thought that "Teen Generation" was one of their songs, and I was wondering how I could steal the riff.... then I found out that it was a Dictators song. Then... to form the Rebels line up I started jamming with Dave Rave's brother and nothing much was coming of that. Then I ran into Carl Johnson (Chriss Suicide), Carl was going off to jam with a couple of guys and that's when I noticed that Angelo and Tony were pretty good!! So we started jamming and I ended up jamming with Carl, and that's how we formed the Rebels. We had Angelo, Tony and Carl... Carl was Chriss Suicide. Angelo was Mr.. Madness and I don't remember what we called Tony, I think we just called him Tony. We used to just jam in Tony's basement and I think his grandmother was deaf.... or almost deaf!!!! (She used to do the laundry while we were jamming!!! Ha ha! Our first gig was this... We opened for Simply Saucer at the YWCA. On Ottawa street in Hamilton... across from Tim Horton's.

MRR: Tim Horton's again!!!!

Mickey: Yeah... Tim Horton's had a lot to do with the development of punk rock!!!! Ha ha ha (laughter) ha ha ha ha ha!! Tim Horton was Canada's version of James Dean to us.

MRR: What year was this?

Mickey: That was August 1977.

MRR: So the early stages of the Rebels was more of a glitter thing?

Mickey: Yeah... Dolls, Stooges, Mott the Hoople, Kiss... ha ha.. Carl was into Kiss, and I had a Kiss "Alive" album. The glitter thing was a big deal at the beginning and it became a bigger deal near the ending too. The punk thing got drab, we really never became interested in Kurt Cobain... of course that was later. I was never ever interested in Kurt Cobain, I was always more interested in listening to old stuff, like Mott the Hoople, Pistols, Ramones....or new stuff like NY. Loose, the Muffs or GG Allin. I got a laugh out of him.

MRR: What year was your first real gig? 1977???

Mickey: January 1978, we didn't have enough songs to play till then.

MRR: Where was that gig?

Mickey: At the YWCA.

MRR: When you heard the Pistols the first time, were they a big influence?

Mickey: Yeah...I went to a guys house who had a copy of "Anarchy" & "I Wanna Be Me." That was about May 1977. I quit jamming with Angelo after hearing that! After I heard "Anarchy" I wanted to play music like that...and I wanted to do it before anyone got famous. For doing it.

MRR: So what was the scene like in Hamilton in 1977 & 1978? And were there a lot of people involved in that scene in Hamilton?

Mickey: About 75 to 100 tops! That was Teenage Head's full audience... actually we were all the same audience. There was us, Teenage Head & Simply Saucer, and then we discovered Toronto... which had a bigger crowd, so we all went to see Teenage Head there. Eventually I ended up seeing the Ugly, the Viletones, the Curse, Battered Wives, the Dents.... (oh the Dents were good), The Way Outs and there was this other band with a guy named Wayne Brown on vocals... what the hell was the name of that band??? (Starts singing) "I am sailing to hell"...oh yeah, the Fits!!!!

MRR: I remember them, the "Bored With Education" 7".

Mickey: He wasn't on that 7", that was another guy.

MRR: Who ended up on the "Tomorrow Belongs To Us" 12"? Was that the first thing you did?

Mickey: No, we did a tape called "Burning The Flag". That was me, Angelo, Tony and Chriss.... we did it on a borrowed Radio Shack tape recorder!! And that was the first demo. The line up on the 12" was me, Chriss Suicide and Peter Treason.

MRR: Where did you record the 12"?

Mickey: The sound kitchen in Hamilton. The engineers names were Hugh Ferguson and Calvin Sorrow. What a great name eh...(sings).."Sorrow!!!!" Yeah it was Sorrow alright, I was so bad at tuning my guitar that I made Calvin tune it after every song.

MRR: How long did it take to record the 12"?

Mickey: An afternoon. You know what?...we worked real hard and we wanted it to sound good, so we took a whole afternoon! (Laughter)!

MRR: Who came up with the name S & M Records?

Mickey: The "S" and the "M" had a special meaning, Steve was one of the investors and I was the other!!! Hence the name S & M records.

MRR: How many did you press of the "Tomorrow Belongs To Us" 12"?

Mickey: 2,000 of the first release, 1,000 of the second...and I don't know what else???

MRR: That 12" is long gone and worth a lot of money.

Mickey: I wish I had 1,000 of them in my basement at \$150.00 a I would have a lot of money. (Laughter)

MRR: You surprised that people are paying that kind of money record?

Mickey: I can't believe that people are paying that much for that !!!

MRR: Did the release of "Tomorrow Belongs To Us" give the Rebels the push it needed?

Mickey: Yeah it helped!!! It helped because there were so few of that 12" when people wanted it. The demand was so high that the demand dropped off before people actually got it!!!! Then it rose again and went into the new releases... then the bargain bin... then it became a collectible!!!! (That all happened in a 2 year span)

MRR: How long was it between the 12" and "In Love with the System" LP? And how did that line up for the LP come about?

Mickey: A year and a half. Me and Chris Houston (Pogo) were delivering pizza's at MacMaster Universities dorm and Al, our future guitar player, was jamming in a room

by himself... I think he was playing "Pretty Vacant". We knocked on his door and asked him to join the band. How we found Larry (electrician) was this... a stripper ran into Al and I, and at the time Treason was still playing drums with us. So she said that she knew a really good drummer, we took his number and I called him and asked him to come down. He was a jazz guy.

MRR: Hence the shirt he was wearing for the photo for the "In Love With The System" LP

Mickey: It's amazing that you pick it apart that far!!

MRR: Oh yeah. I think the "In Love With The System" LP is right up there with "Bullocks" and "Give 'Em Enough Rope". Do you agree? (Mickey's head is getting bigger as we speak!!)

Mickey: I think it's a great album.

MRR: It says the Rebels!!

Mickey: That's what people tell us.

MRR: Everybody knows "Bomb The Boats".

Mickey: And "Surfin On Heroin".

MRR: Yeah that too, can't forget "Surfin!!" Now after "In Love With The System" you did "This Ain't Hollywood"... how did that do in sales? And was it as popular as "In Love With The System"?

Mickey: Well it wasn't popular right away, it took about a year for it to take off. And I have to thank Mike Shuga at Star Records for that. As for sales, it sold 15 thousand copies and so did "In Love With The System".

MRR: You did a show opening for the Ramones in Burlington in 1980. Now is it true that you did "Nazi's" and came out with swastika arm bands on?

Mickey: No!!!!!! We did play the song, and we did play it up... but we did not wear the arm bands. We were never a nazi band! Never!!!! We did it for a joke and people took it seriously.

MRR: I never thought you were a nazi band anyway.

Mickey: You know where we got the idea for that song? It was from the Mel Brooks movie "The Producers". It was the part of the movie where they do the song "Springtime For Hitler", and leaves the audience with that look of shock. That was the idea behind it. There was never any real nazi stuff, we're about as nazi as Hogan's Heroes!!!!!! People got the wrong idea and that was very stupid of them.

MRR: Did the song "Third Homosexual Murder" have anything to do with the headline in the paper back in 1978?

Mickey: Only by coincidence, Carl (Suicide) had this great riff. I was sitting there reading the paper (starts humming the riff) and there it was... the headline in the paper!!! "Third homosexual murder". Carl was playing the riff and I started putting the lyrics together.... "Wow that fits.. that's funny!!". People didn't understand the humor behind it, but people have an uncanny sense of humor!

MRR: Why weren't the Forgotten Rebels included in "The Last Pogo"?

Mickey: Some of the bands on the soundtrack were garbage and they didn't want to be overshadowed, 'cause the only "real" good bands that could have been on "The Last Pogo" were: Teenage Head, Viletones, Ugly, Forgotten Rebels, the Curse and probably the Dents! Not bands like, (I don't like putting people down, but come on!!)... Drastic Measures, the Everglades, Cardboard Brains... the Mods deserved to be on the soundtrack though!!

MRR: Who do you think was behind you guys not having a part in "The Last Pogo"? The Gary's??? (Famous punk promoters of the '70s and '80s)

Mickey: No... not them, the Gary's were always good to us. It had to be someone else, but I have no idea who!!

MRR: How do you feel about the "In Love with the System" being re-released on CD? And what do you think about the live tracks on it?

Mickey: First of all, that LP was not allowed to be released on CD... so we confiscated a few of them and sold them ourselves. We actually sold about 500 of them! As far as the live tracks on the CD... I have not heard them. (Mickey & I go off and listen to them)

MRR: So, what do you think of them?

Mickey: I've heard it.. I've heard it all now. It was bad, but it was good (if you know what I mean). It's something kids should do more of these days. It's funny how we did that with a Radio Shack tape deck, with what little we did at the time we did a fair amount. Hey.. did you know that there was no such thing as guitar tuners in those days?!

MRR: I guess you just had to figure it out on your own then!!??

Mickey: We had to figure out that if we picked up the telephone the dial tone was A440. And we could tune to standard pitch if we tuned the a string to the dial tone. It's

not the same anymore with punk... It's just a fashion now, it's a technique of playing that people learn and know. Back then we were playing it that way because that's the way we played

MRR: You didn't know any better.

Mickey: We didn't know any different, well we did know different but that's the way we chose to play our material, I guess that's what made it different

MRR: Why do you think there's been such a great new interest with labels like other people's music etc... re-releasing your stuff and other old Canadian punk? Are you surprised that a lot of it is being heard for the first time? Can you really give credit for the "mainstream" interest in punk bands like Green Day & Offspring!!!!!!

Mickey: Well, first off it was actually good in those days cause the corporates were pushing your "ELO'S & Joe Walsh's, and this stuff emerged on its own... people actually wanted to hear this stuff without it being pushed down their throats. This was something that they wanted to hear, but didn't realize it until later when it was gone. Nowadays, people are going to tell you that Offspring or those type of bands are like the Pistols, the Clash, or the Ramones... They're not! They have their talent, but they're not making any breakthroughs... even the good ones, like if you listen to the Queens or the Riverdales... they're O.K., they're just having a good time!

MRR: Why was there no interest in Canada by the majors, but it the U.K.. They were all over them?

Mickey: Europe has always moved faster towards trends and stuff. In Canada, in those days people were still wearing lumber jackets!! But in Europe they had already discovered leather jackets & rubber mini skirts etc.....!!!! In today's dance clubs are the fashions that were popular in punk clubs 20 years ago. What we were doing fashion wise then is standard dress now

MRR: Do you think what happened music wise in '77 would ever occur again?

Mickey: It won't happen again, cause the same hysteria won't come around again. I mean the music happened, it was good and when I listen to those records it's great, but the same hysteria doesn't hit you because it's not something new. It's not like "wow" these are the Pistols, or it's like the first time you saw someone fall off their bike.... it's funny the first time and you laugh about it for days. You're always comparing it and the new bands, it's just watered down.

MRR: What you're saying is that if the Pistols came out in '97 they wouldn't have affected the music scene?

Mickey: No it wouldn't. You know back then it was weird to see "Clockwork Orange" or "The Rocky Horror Picture Show", but now it's nothing to see "Lost Highway" or "Crash". So what I'm saying is the people going to see these films were the same people who were into the Pistols... it all went hand in hand.

MRR: What was your most memorable gig back then? (Wait for this response!!!!)

Mickey: Well I hope I don't ever have another one like this!!!! It was just after we fired Al & Larry. Me and Chris (Pogo) needed a drummer, cause I was going to play guitar as well as sing. So we called up Cleave Anderson who was from the Battered Wives, who later formed "Blue Rodeo". the gig was at Eagerton's in Toronto on a Labor Day weekend, so we go there and it's a packed club. We had barely practiced and barely knew the songs... cause at the time we wrote the songs I wasn't playing guitar anymore. So we get on stage... the "spitters" were definitely in full force that night!!!!!! I was wearing this velvet jacket, guitars were shorting out because there was gob on the insides of the guitars. I was wearing a pair of sunglasses that I had to take off cause there was so much gob hanging from them. Pogo was sooo mad that he said, "I'd like to spit in all of your faces" just to insult the crowd. Just as he said that... someone spit right in my open eyeball!!!!!! The place was going nuts. What I'd be doing was wiping the gob off my velvet jacket and I'd be throwing handfuls of gob at people. It was sickening!! I took off the jacket at the end of the night and wrung it out into a salad bowl, there was that much gob, it's making me sick even thinking about it. I looked like I had just stepped out of a shower of slime. Also... to top off such a wonderful night, someone let off a smoke bomb and there was all this green smoke everywhere. I thought there was a fire.... so I yelled through the mic.. "Fire".. "Fire". So the place cleared out and we only played half a set, but they paid us anyway. What a night, eh?

MRR: What year was this?

Mickey: It was September 1980. A few other great gigs.... we opened up for the Clash in Buffalo, and meeting Joe and Paul

was cool. Also Iggy at the concert hall and the Cramps as well.

MRR: Are there any other gigs worth mentioning?

Mickey: Yeah. We opened up for Ian Hunter and Mick Ronson at the Hollywood Palace, that was the most fun.

MRR: What has kept you into punk? And why have the rebels kept going for such a long time?

Mickey: We have fun, that's the only reason we did it, and still do it. If we made money at this, no matter how much money or how little you'd say we made... we only did it for fun!! Whatever money we made was unexpected. It's great to record stuff and fun to write new stuff. Maybe this is an odd way of doing it, but there's always the forty year old guy who plays hockey ever weekend or goes fishing, so why can't we be rock stars ever weekend... well I wish it was every weekend. You know... James Brown is the hardest working man in show business. I guess there has to be someone like us, who are the biggest slackers in show biz. It's still fun, but it amazes me being 40 years old and seeing 15 year old girls crawling to get a shoelace from me!!!! (Laughter) it's not easy being a rock star, just smiling at them breaks their hearts. (Even more laughter!!) isn't that a great quote? They think I'm an ego maniac. The only thing bigger than my ego is my cock!! In all seriousness, being in the band is great, I couldn't think of a better way to spend a night.

MRR: I think that the Rebels are right up there with the Pistols. Why don't you think it ever happened for you?

Mickey: Well, thanks. I wish we would have been. We should have moved to New York in '77, if I could have moved to N.Y. In '75 and being a kid... I think I would have ended up in the Heartbreakers, on guitar second string. If the band had moved there it would have made a big difference, at the time when N.Y. was most media covered.

MRR: The way I looked at it, punk was punk... no matter which country you came from.

Mickey: That's the way it should have been people were more into English bands, just 'cause the media covered the English bands. That's what really pissed me off. In Canada they were always promising that the Canadian scene would get big. It was good, but it never got big!!

MRR: So you're saying that the music scene in Canada never got what it deserved?

Mickey: No. Never... never!!! It never did.

MRR: Only now are people realizing how good it was

Mickey: Yeah... Toronto was the most important scene in Canada in '77.

MRR: What are the Rebels up to these days?

Mickey: Well... we're writing new material for a new CD

MRR: Any name for it?

Mickey: No not yet, but we've got some interesting songs down, and I'm always recording stuff like the GG Allin stuff you heard in the car that Tony, myself and Mark did. I've also recorded a solo album but I don't know if I'm going to release it. Maybe I might release parts of it. I might re-record some of it 'cause it sounds too much like a demo... but something might come out of it. I might get tired of sitting on it and release it on Other Peoples Music or Donny Blaze Records... or Magnetic Air. I know someone will put it out! (How about "Soap & Spikes" Records??? Ed.)

MRR: Who else do you think will re-unite from those days?

Mickey: The Viletones will probably re-unite once a year, they'll be back with a whole new bunch of Viletones.

MRR: How did you get Steve on bass? (Teenage Head)

Mickey: Steve has been a life long friend and I figured that he would be a good member of the Rebels, the other guys in the band didn't even debate that. They agreed ya know.... the old scene will never be captured again. You'll never have that sleazy scene in front of pinball joints anymore, we're not going to be into it. You know you don't have the blue eye shadow anymore... that's not going to happen again!!!

MRR: Any other things you want to share with us?

Mickey: Yeah... there was a rumor that we supported our first E.P. by stealing 8-tracks from cars!!! There's no proof of that!!

MRR: You're not denying it then?!!!

Mickey: (Laughter) you'll never prove a thing!!!!!! (Laughter) and you know.... there were jokes about us sending a hooker downtown to give blow jobs to pay for the E.P.!!!! Do we look like those kind of guys?? Look at us on that EP.Do we really look like the kind of guys that would do a thing like that????!!!!!! (Laughter)

MRR: How do you feel about "Tomorrow Belongs To Us" coming out on CD?

Mickey: I don't know, I think that some things should be left to history, but I said well... if they really want it, lets put it out.

