

# Travis Pike: Feelin' Good

Harvey Kubernik talks to the man behind New England garage icons Travis Pike's Tea Party and reveals the secrets of a must-see 1966 teen flick, lost and now found...

David Carr, former keyboard player and vocalist with the Fortunes, first introduced me to Travis Pike more than 20 years ago. It was a pleasant enough meeting, but Travis was all about movies by then, and I was more intently focused on music and active performers. Then, suddenly, in 1997, he whisked David off to England for a performance in Blenheim Palace for the Queen's Save the Children Fund. That was a very big deal, especially to David, who arranged Travis' music and conducted the orchestra for the live performance of Pike's original epic narrative rhyme. I next spoke to Travis when David died in July, 2011. Travis had been asked to do the eulogy and wanted to know if there was anything I particularly wanted said. Frankly, I was at a loss, but I told him to stay in touch.

It was about two years later that Travis called to tell me that he and his younger brother, Adam, were recording his back catalog. Well, I knew Adam from the Syrups, whose music had drawn Grammy Award winning recording engineer Geoff Emerick out of retirement. Travis and I met again, without distractions, and he gave me the galleys for his book, *Travis Edward Pike's Odd Tales and Wonders, 1964-1974 A Decade of Performance*. He wanted to know if I'd write an introduction.

I read it and was hooked. And then, considering that this singer-songwriter, poet and lyricist, writer, producer, actor and filmmaker was now also a publisher, and I suggested that he publish my book *It Was Fifty Years Ago Today The Beatles Invade American and Hollywood*. He did and agreed to publish it and I've been following his career, and discovering his very unique and extraordinary entertainment history background ever since.

Take me back to 1963.

In 1963, home on leave on my way to report for duty with the US Navy in Germany, I wrote a title song for my father's 28-minute action featurette *Demo Derby*. I was still overseas in the summer of 1964 when *Demo Derby* opened in Boston with the Frank Sinatra film *Robin and the Seven Hoods*, and in Hartford, New Haven, and Worcester with Elvis in *Viva Las Vegas*. Within ten days it had been booked into 61 New England theaters, and later, paired with the Beatles' *A Hard Day's Night*, played on some 6,000 screens across the country, and continued to be booked into theaters and drive-ins for ten more years.

Apart from singing with a garage band when I was 14, my real beginning probably dates from 1962, when I graduated from high school and purchased a pristine 1955 Studebaker Commander with a blown engine. Rebuilding



Left: Travis Pike in the 1966 movie *Feelin' Good*, produced and directed by his father, James A. Pike.

that Bearcat motor was a costly proposition and I didn't know where to begin. Fortunately, I had older friends, speed shop mechanics, who did. I earned the money to buy parts and pay them for their labor by driving a delivery truck during the day, and at night, going to bars with them (since they had an abiding interest in making sure I had enough money to pay for their efforts), where I was allowed to earn tips for singing special requests, played live by the bar bands.


Arguably, my professional debut came in Germany, when a German mechanic friend learned I used to make money singing rock 'n' roll, and began taking me around to clubs, and

getting me up on stage to sing American hit songs with the local German rock bands. Those German audiences took to me, and although tips were non-existent (gratuities usually came in the form of drinks, and I wasn't much of a drinker), the club owners began offering to pay me to come in and sing with their house bands. That brought me to the attention of Werner Hingst, a rock promoter who assembled the Five Beats for me, began booking me as "The Teddy, die Twistsensation aus USA," and in a matter of weeks, brought me to the attention of the A&R people at Polydor and Phillips Records.

Stationed in Northern Germany, I soon had Danish fans driving down from Jutland and German fans driving up from Hamburg. But before we ever got around to seriously discussing a recording contract, I was in an auto accident that ended my reign as a "Twistsensation" and, I thought, any hope of a musical career.

Returned to the States, I was admitted to Chelsea Naval Hospital, where a bone graft was scheduled to reconstruct my ankle, which had not knitted properly. The large orthopedic ward was regularly visited by Red Cross volunteers, some of the sweetest elderly women I have ever met, who did what they could to make our ordeals bearable. I requested German language magazines, and the next time they came they brought *Der Spiegel*, *Bildzeitung*, and *Stern*, (similar to our *Time*, *Look*, and *Life* magazines). I wanted to try to keep my information and language skills current. One old dear asked why I wanted German magazines, and I told her about my short-lived European stardom, and the next time I saw her she brought me a guitar. I had been an athletic dancer and rock singer, not a musician, but with nothing better to do I taught myself to play guitar and even began writing songs. One of the first was

**The Five Beats international showband**

<b>Besetzung</b>	
<b>Teddy Pike</b> USA	Twist and Show Sensation
<b>Enriko Lombardi</b> ITALIA	Gesang, Gitarre
<b>Eddy Christers</b>	Gesang, Gitarre, Klarrinetta, Baß
<b>Charly Ross</b>	Saxophon, Baß, Gesang
<b>Ringo</b>	Gesang, Schlagzeug
<b>Chorty West</b>	Gesang, Gitarre, Saxophon
Die Stationen dieser erfolgreichen Band waren:	<b>Star-Palast-Kiel</b> <b>Studio 62</b> Eckernförde <b>Schützenhof</b> Rendsburg
Demnächst auch	

“End of Summer,” written in English, but with verses in German, too. If I ever did get back to Germany, I wanted something to show I had been thinking of my fans.

With a large repertoire of pop tunes, I was soon playing and singing requests for the patients on my ward, and by the summer of 1965 the Red Cross was wheeling me around to the other wards to entertain the sick and wounded. My audiences were young servicemen, and they liked my parodies of popular songs. For example, Herman’s Hermits’ “Mrs Brown, You’ve Got A Lovely Daughter” quickly became “Mrs Brown, About Your Pregnant Daughter.” But it wasn’t all fun and games. Orthopedic surgery is extraordinarily painful. Performing gave me something else to think about, and without my realizing it, laid the groundwork for my future in Boston’s coffeehouse scene.

**How long were you in the hospital?**

I was admitted in mid-October 1964, and returned to limited duty in the Flag Administrative Unit of the Commander-in-Chief of the Atlantic Fleet, headquartered in Norfolk, Virginia, in August 1965. When my condition failed to improve, in January 1966 I was admitted to Portsmouth Naval Hospital, Virginia, and began flying home on weekends to be in my father’s film, *Feelin’ Good*. In all, I spent most of two years in and out of hospitals.

**How did the film come about?**

One liberty weekend, when I was still a patient at Chelsea Naval Hospital, I sang a few songs with a high school garage band in Natick, Massachusetts, made up of the younger siblings of the first rock band I ever sang with. I wasn’t able to drive, so my father drove me over and was there when I began. The roar of that high school audience threatened to bring the auditorium down. That’s what inspired him to make a rock music movie, if I could come up with some new songs for it.

**You told me your dad wanted to make a film that was the antithesis of the beach party flicks done on the West Coast, and that concept was carried right over into the music, too. He wanted songs that were more R&B and tra-**



JAMES A. PIKE PRESENTS  
**Feelin’ Good**  
 featuring TRAVIS PIKE AND 8 OF HIS SONGS  
 INTRODUCING THE MONTCLAIRS  
 WINNERS OF THE JAYCEES BATTLE OF THE BANDS  
 WITH THE BRATTLE STREET EAST  
 FOLKSINGER BRENDA NICHOLS  
 IN WIDE-SCREEN COLOR

COPYRIGHT © MCMLXVI BY PIKE PRODUCTIONS, INC. U.S.A. UTMO IN U.S.A.  
 Property of National Screen Service Corp. Licensed for display only. In connection with the exhibition of this picture at your theatre. Not to be returned immediately thereafter. 66/364

**ditional rock ‘n’ roll, not West Coast surf music, or British Invasion.**

Yes. From the beginning, his concept was to contrast what kids in the Northeast did for the summer with what Southern California kids did. While there are some pretty beaches along the coast from Massachusetts to Maine, the water temps are generally cold, as is the night air when the sun goes down. Cape Cod is a major tourist attraction, but it has more to do with nautical museums, seafood restaurants, and antique stores than playing in the cold water. New England doesn’t have the surf that Southern California has, and those hardy souls who are determined to surf its shores are usually clothed head to foot in insulated wetsuits, not bikinis. Apart from drive-in theaters, coffeehouses, dance clubs, art and music festivals (generally nowhere near the cold ocean winds), stadium and indoor concert venues are popular with the young Yankees, and that contrast was what he hoped to capture and present to the rest of the country.

As for the choice of the musical styles, Southern California had the surf and the surf music. Boston was more into R&B, soul, and rock ‘n’ roll, and there is always that American revolutionary mindset held by many native New Englanders, especially in Boston, which is, after all, the “Cradle of Liberty,” site of the Boston Massacre, famous for its “Boston Tea Party,” the “shot heard ‘round the world,” being the home port of “Old Ironsides” (the USS Constitution), Paul Revere, Minutemen and yes, the AFL Boston Patriots football franchise that Pike Productions introduced to New Englanders in films commissioned by the Sullivans.

Not that Jim Pike had anything

in particular against that current British music invasion. *Feelin’ Good* was funded in large part by the enormous success of his 1964 *Demo Derby* theatrical run as second feature to *A Hard Day’s Night*. I should also mention that Jim was a big fan of British filmmaker, Richard Lester, whose style I think he was trying to emulate, selecting those elements that he felt would best entertain outsiders and support his unique cultural perspective of Boston.

**What do you remember most about making the film?**

My most immediate memories of the production are of my weekend flights from Norfolk to Boston and back during the shooting. When principal photography began, I was still in the Navy, a patient in Portsmouth Naval Hospital. On liberty weekends, my friend Judy would drive me to the airport, and I’d fly from Norfolk to Boston Friday night, shoot all day Saturday, have dinner with the family on Sunday and fly back to Virginia Sunday night. I always wore my uniform and flew standby. The airlines were courteous and helpful, and Norfolk is a Navy town, but in Boston, if I had to take public transportation, I sometimes ran into the haters, who reviled anyone in uniform—more so in the upscale bedroom community of Newton than in downtown Boston. When I complained about it, my father made sure I was always driven to and from the airport, usually by him, but sometimes by a friend who volunteered.

Shooting could be an ordeal, too. Standing for any length of time was difficult. I remember the scene on the Charles River Esplanade. I was up on a stage with Oedipus & His Mothers (called the Brattle Street East in the movie). There were kids dancing in front of the stage and if I remember correctly, I sang three songs, several times over, to get all the angles required for the film. It was a windy day, which presented difficulties for the guys trying to keep the re-

James A. Pike presents

**DEMO DERBY**

A 28 MINUTE FEATURETTE  
 with CRASH ACTION  
 filmed on location at Norwood Arena

flectors from blowing over, and the cast, trying not to freeze to death between dance sequences. I was plagued by gusts of wind threatening to blow me off the stage. Normally, I'd have rocked back on my heels or forward on my toes, but with my bad ankle those movements were painful, and some takes were ruined because of my pained expressions. This was the "happy ending" sequence, a party on the banks of the Charles, reunited with my lovely co-star, and I was supposed to be having FUN!

**How did this movie do outside Boston? Was it widely distributed?**

It didn't have anywhere near the success of *Demo Derby*. Richard Lester's 1965 movie, *The Knack*, played well in art houses, but was not widely released in this country, even though he had made a name for himself with *A Hard Day's Night* and *Help!* My father went for a wide release with a film that probably belonged in art houses.

But the worst blow of all, and perhaps one of my father's finest hours, came when the Southern distributor who had done so well with *Demo Derby*, refused to book *Feelin' Good* unless the pizza parlor scene was cut from the movie. None of what follows makes any sense unless you place it in its historical perspective.

The Montclairs were a mixed group—three white musicians and three black singers. They sang the title song, but I don't think they were on-screen during the title sequence, which featured a giant girl towering over the city of Boston, dancing up a storm. They'd earned their place in the movie when they won the 1965 Massachusetts Jaycees Battle of the Bands. It only made sense to introduce their sub-plot in

a familiar location, where they regularly met to discuss their gigs, aspirations and what they hoped might come as a result of their sudden notoriety. I think one of the guys in the band or a relation worked in the pizza parlor, so my father opted to film part of their story in that environment. I wasn't around when the sequence was shot, and if I had been would have thought nothing of it. I don't think my father gave it any thought, either, but when the black boys sat at the same table with the white boys, sharing a pizza, the racism in our Southern states suddenly got between *Feelin' Good* and the box office.

The South had been a most profitable market for *Demo Derby*, and remained so for another six years. My father had every reason to believe that *Feelin' Good*, with its American-style rock 'n' roll music, would play well there, too. I wasn't around when my father got the news or made his decision, either, but I know what he decided. He refused to cut the scene, and therefore forfeited the potentially lucrative Southern theater circuits.

**Tell me about the ten songs you wrote for the movie, incorporated in the *Feelin' Good* soundtrack that you produced and coordinated.**

I didn't produce or coordinate the soundtrack. Arthur Korb did that, and he arranged the recording session with Oedipus & His Mothers at AAA Recording Studios. All I did was sing the songs. When my father decided to make *Feelin' Good*, he introduced me to Arthur, who had arranged and recorded the title song to *Demo Derby*. He had Arthur and I sit in the screening room on Lake Avenue, and



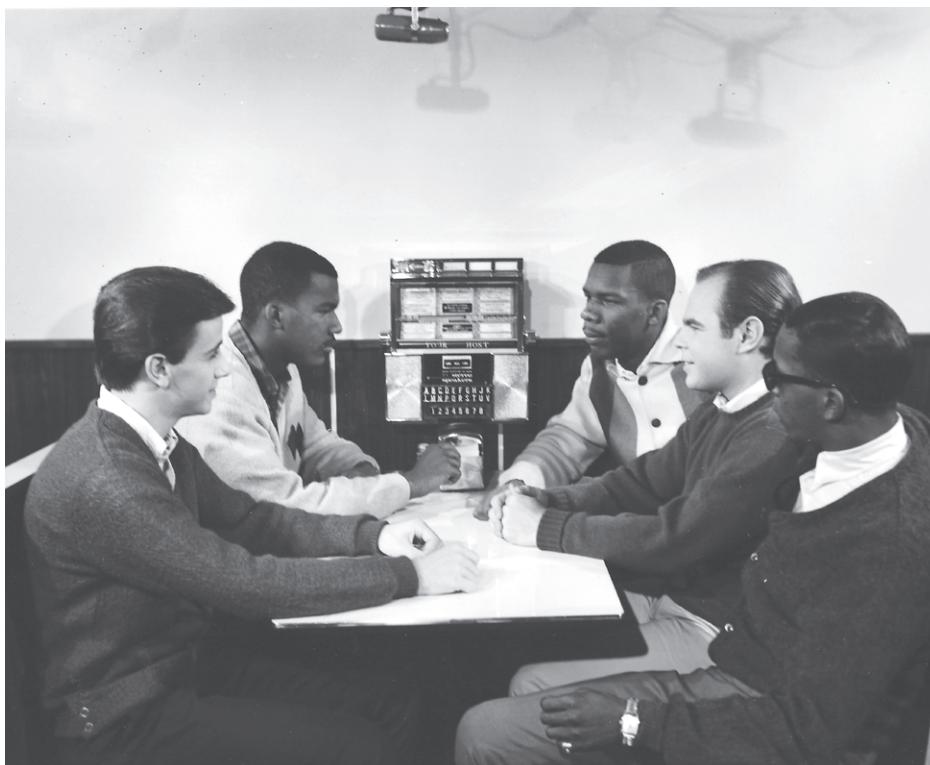
Arthur took notes while I played a number of my original songs into a tape recorder. Between songs, we talked about them, and my German-Italian band, the Five Beats. When we were through, he took the tape and left. I never saw him again until the recording sessions. Even the lead sheets were all created by Arthur Korb from that demo recording.

Not being included in the production of the music was one of my biggest disappointments in making of *Feelin' Good*. I didn't know, until I read the article in the paper, that my demos had been to New York City and run by the "tunesmiths," but the recorded arrangements I heard in the studio were not as I had imagined they would be. I would have liked to redo some of them, but the additional cost made that out of the question, so I sang them as presented. I don't blame Arthur or the band. I wasn't there to offer my suggestions during development—and I wasn't paying for the sessions.

It was the same way on the shoot. I had no clear character arc. I never saw a complete script, and not knowing what came before or after on the day we were shooting, it was too late to offer suggestions. It was my father's money, and my father's movie. He was the writer, producer and director. All I could do was trust that he knew what he was doing, and do as I was told.

**But your father used ten of your original songs in the movie, so he must have liked them. Tell me about the songs.**

I wrote the "Feelin' Good" title song and the R&B tune "Come Back Home" for the Montclairs, and they sang Gershwin's "Summertime," too. Brenda Nichols, a visiting English folksinger, performed her own original song, "Ride the Rainbow," in the Boston coffeehouse scene, shot in *The Loft*, which was later the scene of my own coffeehouse debut. In addition to the two songs I wrote especially for the Montclairs, the eight songs I performed in the movie were written in Chelsea Naval Hospital, in anticipation of one day going back to Ger-



*The Montclairs in the pizza parlor scene that caused distributors in the South to refuse to screen the movie.*



**Above: Travis Pike (right) with co-star Judi Reeve. Left: Arriving at the movie's premiere at Boston's Paramount Theater in October 1966.**

many, to take up where I left off with The Five Beats.

**When you look at the movie lobby card and color photos of you singing in front of a band 50 years ago, what flashes in your mind?**

More than anything, it takes me back to how painful it was for me just to get around. I didn't know the guys in the bands, and never performed with them outside the movie. I knew my father's film crew better. My younger brother, Gregory (who found the three reels of *Feelin' Good*), and some of his friends appeared in the dance sequences. The only actor I knew was Ron Stafford, a friend from high school, who not only played an important supporting role in the movie, but was the guy in real life who dragged me out to the hootenanny at The Loft coffeehouse, in downtown Boston, that inspired me to get back into music, and ultimately led to Travis Pike's Tea Party. In the lobby card, Ron's in the roadster, and behind me is Leslie Burnham, who plays his girlfriend and the trouble-making femme fatale in the tale.

**Your song "If I Didn't Love You Girl," originally recorded almost half a century ago by Travis Pike's Tea Party, has enjoyed an amazing and ongoing journey. I've seen it on lists of rare records where collectors have paid in excess of \$600 for an original pressing. How, where, and when did you write that tune?**

Songwriting is harder to describe than it is to do, so how is difficult to explain. I was 23 years-old, unattached, a singer-songwriter with a really good band, for which I composed 99 percent of the songs in our entirely original repertoire. I suspect I was musing on the journey all young men undergo in search of that one special girl, considering my teenage misadventures and then current, unfruitful search for a mate, recognizing the need to expose one's own vulnerability to win that mate, and the spirit-crushing gloom when one's attentions

are rejected. While contemplating all that, I was no doubt diddling on my guitar. At some point the two activities merged and a new song was born. As for where, I suspect it was in my apartment on Commonwealth Avenue in the Brighton neighborhood of Boston in 1967.

**Who are the musicians on the track?**

In describing Travis Pike's Tea Party at that time, all the original members were there. Two requested that when I write of them I am to use their stage names. So, "Uncle Phil" (ex-Navy band) was the drummer, and "Mikey Joe" played bass. George Brox, now long gone, played rhythm guitar and sang harmonies, Karl Garrett played lead guitar and sang harmonies, and for that song, I sang the lead vocal, joined the others in the clap track and may have played tambourine.

**Where was it recorded?**

It was recorded at AAA Recording Studios in Boston. It was, at that time, one of the oldest, largest and busiest recording studios in the area. It was there that Arthur Korb recorded the



*Demo Derby* title song performed by the Rondels in 1963, as well as the thematics for that film. Later, he recorded the ten songs I wrote for the movie *Feelin' Good* there, eight with me and the Brattle Street East (aka Oedipus & His Mothers), and two, including the title song "Feelin' Good," with the Montclairs. Travis Pike's Tea Party recorded the music for the WBZ-TV show *Here and Now* there and then, which led to our contract with Alma Records and recording of "If I Didn't Love You Girl." One of the major attractions at AAA was that by then they had two four-track sound-on-sound Scully recorders, which meant you could lay down your rhythm tracks, and bring in strings, woodwinds, and brass sections to play your arrangements. All were readily available, classically trained musicians moonlighting from the Boston Pops, and others, more jazz and pop-oriented musicians from Berklee.

**You were in the middle of a new psychedelic audio world in 1967, and you were a 23-year-old Navy veteran, not a teenage hippie, but you performed at some pretty trippy psychedelic-themed venues.**

We did. Apart from college gigs, they were among the largest and best-paying venues for rock bands, and we were Travis Pike's Tea Party. We took our name from the pre-revolution Boston Tea Party, and our "Very Merry Unbirthday" break song from the tea party sequence in Disney's 1951 production of Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*. Tea is a popular euphemism for marijuana, and by definition psychedelic connotes a relationship to LSD and other hallucinogens, with the expectation of expanded consciousness, but as far as suggesting the existence of alternative realities, program music had been doing that for at least two centuries without the drugs.

Travis Pike's Tea Party was still very much a rock group, but the Side B of "If I Didn't Love You Girl" was "The Likes of You," a lyrical love song to a goddess, for which we required musi-



Travis Pike, ca. 1967.

Right: Travis Pike's Tea Party flyer, ca. 1967.

NAME: **Travis Pike's TEA PARTY**

**TRAVIS PIKE**

**THE TEA PARTY IS:**

- A HISTORICAL HAPPENING
- A REVOLUTIONARY CONCERT ORIENTED GROUP FOR MAJOR TOURS, COLLEGE WEEKENDS, ETC.
- AVAILABLE NOW TO BRIGHTEN YOUR NEXT ENTERTAINMENT EVENT
- FUN

**THE TEA PARTY DOES:**

- A VARIETY OF ORIGINAL MATERIAL
- HARD AND FOLK ROCK
- BLUES, BALLADS AND NOVELTIES
- FEATURE MUSICAL COMEDY HAPPENINGS

**THE TEA PARTY BELIEVES IN:**

- LOVE
- TRUTH
- BEAUTY
- THE SECURITY OF A CONTRACT

**THE TEA PARTY WANTS:**

- LOVE
- TRUTH
- BEAUTY
- THE SECURITY OF A CONTRACT

**THE TEA PARTY HOPES THAT YOU'LL:**

- SEE THEM
- HEAR THEM
- LOVE THEM
- BOOK THEM

(Score 100% if you checked all of above)

Personal Manager: **DICK TURNER**  
(617) 536-3075

**J. RICHARD TURNER & ASSOCIATES**  
29 Commonwealth Avenue  
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

about the Boston Sound, but after I gave him an "If I Didn't Love You Girl" 45 and played him our album demo, he agreed to book us. Unfortunately, he was booked ahead, too, but if I could get the band there by a certain date, he'd bump one of the scheduled bands and put us on.

I called the guys and said to pack up, we were moving to LA. I already had us booked into the Whisky. Lead guitarist Karl Garret flew out on a round trip ticket and I used his return ticket back to Boston to get the rest of the band and equipment packed up and on the road. But I couldn't find George, second vocal and rhythm guitar player. He'd gone to Cape Cod for the summer, and no one knew where he was staying. For a Top 40 band, that might be a problem easily overcome, but for us it was a disaster. Our repertoire was limited to my original songs, and teaching 40 totally new songs to a new singer/guitarist would require a Herculean effort. I thought I

cians from the Boston Pops to play the strings and woodwinds. "The Likes of You" has now been incorporated into *Morningstone*, the evolved 1987 version of my mid-70s rock opera, *Changeling*.

"If I Didn't Love You Girl" is a good dance tune on its own, arranged for live performance by the band without the need of additional musicians, and in the original recording, the pronounced dissonance in the rhythm guitar underscores the cognitive dissonance of the lyrics and vocal performances. The lead vocal claims "I wouldn't cry all night, If I didn't love you, girl," but the concurrent backup vocals loudly proclaim "I didn't love you, girl!"

According to psychologists, one attitude should eventually triumph over the other, but the modulation in my song indicates the rising tension until finally, unresolved, it self-destructs (the final explosion). So while not, of itself, psychedelic, it deals with an almost schizophrenic desire, coupled with a desperate fear of rejection (frequently observed in adolescent minds), neither of which require the influence of drugs to plague the unconscious.

I may be the only person in the world who knows what my program was supposed to represent, but it is definitely a head trip. Progressive rock tunes tend to demand a little mental effort, but for Boston audiences I think that was a good thing—or maybe they just liked the beat.

**What do you remember about the initial record release in 1968? Did you garner regional airplay? Did you have a working band at the time just before you moved to Southern California?**

It was terribly disappointing. We were the house band for a new WBZ-TV show, and WBZ Radio, with DJ Bruce Bradley (8pm-11:30pm), and DJ Dick Sommer (11:30pm-6am) was one of the hottest contemporary rock stations in New England at the time we recorded it, but by the time the pressings were in hand, the TV show had been cancelled, WBZ had changed its format, and WRKO was the new Boston rock powerhouse. WRKO had even hired Arnie Ginsberg away from WMEX, which meant they were suddenly the biggest game in town. Worse, the previous year (when we were still calling ourselves Travis Pike & the Boston Massacre), we had been featured in a big promotion for then-emerging WRKO, and their pro-

gramming director decided our TV show stint on WBZ was a betrayal and refused to play our record.

We sold a few copies at gigs, and it showed up in jukeboxes, but that was about it. As for having a working band, we were still together, but since this all happened at the beginning of the summer, when the TV show cancelled, all the summer venues had been booked. We were suddenly out of work, and frankly hadn't any prospects until the fall semester, when the college crowds come back to town.

**And that's when you packed up and moved to Los Angeles. So what was your West Coast reception like? Were you well-received or was it like starting over?**

A little of both. A visiting Boston biker fan who had recently relocated to West Covina, California, visited me in hopes of getting into a Travis Pike's Tea Party concert. When I told him we had nothing going, and wouldn't until the colleges' fall semester, he offered to take us back to California with him and show us around. I jumped at the chance. Armed with our 33 1/3 demo album and a fistful of "If I Didn't Love You Girl" 45s, the bass player and I went west. We spent a day or two recovering from the trip, then took a driving tour through Hollywood. I never felt more like a tourist, cruising the famous Sunset Strip—and then I saw it: the Whisky A Go Go looked like just my cup of tea. I had an excellent meeting with the proprietor. I couldn't swear to it, but I think he'd heard of us, which wouldn't be a complete surprise. We'd played the Psychedelic Supermarket with San Francisco's Moby Grape, LA's Spirit, and were frequently featured in articles

had my Hercules in Karl. He was an incredible guitarist and third vocalist. Between him and Mikey Joe, our bass player who came west with me, they should be able to find someone and get him up to speed during the two weeks it would take me to get everything together and set out, for the second time, on the long trip to California—and that would still leave us with two weeks before we were scheduled to start at the Whisky.

Just before I set out from Boston, they told me they'd found a new rhythm guitarist who could sing well, and with the drummer and his wife, and my wife-to-be, Judy, I set out on my second exhausting road trip to California in as many months. On the way, we burned out an axel in our overloaded Rambler station wagon in Oklahoma and lost three days while the part was located and the car repaired. Worse, when we finally arrived, Karl told me they'd decided to postpone teaching the new guys any songs until we were all together. The drummer and I needed a few days to recover find lodgings and recover from the trip, but during that time I managed to arrange a place for us to rehearse at a new club called Guru-V that was about to open out on Arrow Highway in Glendora.

With only around a week in which to confirm or cancel our gig at the Whisky, I learned that the new guitarist was either a very slow learner or deliberately sabotaging my efforts to prepare us. His solution, embraced by the desperate band, was to play Top 40 tunes he knew until we got up to speed with my original songs. I had to cancel the Whisky. Forced to start over, we opened at Guru-V, and played for subsistence wages for over a month. Luckily, I had a new fan and he got the guys who owned The Posh, a dance club in Pomona to



JAMES A. PIKE PRESENTS  
**Feelin' Good**  
 featuring TRAVIS PIKE AND 8 OF HIS SONGS  
 INTRODUCING THE MONTCLAIRS, WINNERS OF THE JAYCES BATTLE OF THE BANDS WITH THE BRATTLE STREET EAST FOLKSINGER BRENDA NICHOLS IN WIDE-SCREEN COLOR

## Local Youths Premiere In Color Picture

Gifted young Newtonites appear in "Feelin' Good," a widescreen color feature film, which had its premiere last night (Wednesday) at Boston's Paramount Theater.

Produced and directed by James Pike of Newton, it provides an impressive showcase for budding local teenage talent. Travis Pike, 21, of Newton plays the male lead, and he wrote eight of the songs in the picture.

Others from the Newton area are Arthur Korb, composer and conductor of the music; Stephen Cooper, Walter Cooper and Brian Houston, who sing as "The Montclairs;" and the following dancers and extras: Dorry Silver, Neal Ochs, Debbie Ritzhaupt, Harriet Katz, Elliot Feldman, Jeanne Brodneyn, Gregory Pike, Joanne Levine and Sarah Stitt.

come hear us. They liked what they heard, offered us a bigger venue, better pay, and permission to play our original material, if we played at least two-thirds Top 40 tunes. I'd call that starting over, and disheartened by the direction our once top-notch all-original group had been, I only managed to hang in for another year before the drummer and I both quit. I told them they'd have to come up with a new name for their band, and they asked me to help. I suggested Quo Vadis—and even told them how to pronounce it properly. It was classy sounding and they loved it. They didn't ask and I didn't bother telling them what it meant.

**It's been 50 years since the 35mm, widescreen, color movie *Feelin' Good* premiered in Boston, and only now do you finally have possession of the last three reels of a five-reel print, reels that survived, literally, both time and tide. How did this happen and what condition are they in?**

When my father retired and closed the Pike Productions offices in Newport, Rhode Island, he moved all the negatives, inter-positives and prints he thought were important from his library in Newport to the vault beneath his screening room in Wakefield, Rhode Island, where he had a cottage near the beach. Then, in the record-breaking flood of 2010, a ruinous combination of salt and fresh water inundated the vault, and when he died in January 2012 I was told that all the negative, inter-positive and extant prints of *Feelin' Good* were lost, along with all the rest of the historical New England stock shots and family movies going back to the 1940s. It was only when my father's estate was settled that I learned of the three rusty cans from a print of *Feelin' Good*, discovered on a shelf at the top of the vault. My brother, Gregory, who lives in Manchester, New Hampshire, went down to the cottage in Wakefield, retrieved them, and shipped them to me.

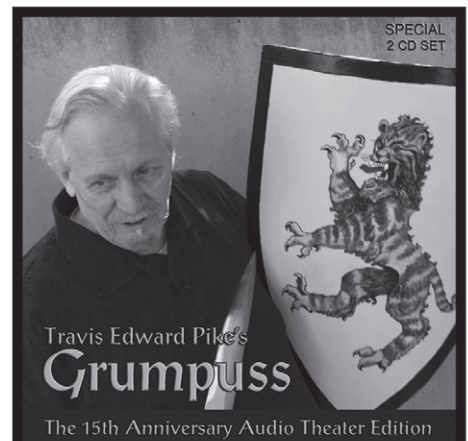
When they arrived, they were so dirty I didn't even dare to open them for fear of scattering particles that might damage the prints inside. Instead, I took them to Deluxe Labs and asked them to clean the prints as best they could and digitize a one-lite for me to use as a reference to determine if there was anything worth salvaging. I was there for the telecine process. The

once-color images that appeared on the screen were so faded they looked more like faintly tinted black and white, but the mono sound track still sounded good. We transferred the reels to files I could put up on my Avid system to attempt to restore the color, and now, with the considerable aid of Brent Backhus, the digital video editor who recently joined the Otherworld Cottage Industries creative coalition, I have six music sequences from the 1966 movie restored enough to be published on YouTube. Frankly, the color is iffy, even psychedelic at times, but I was 21 at the time, and now, at 72, it's rather startling to see what Boston and I looked like back then. •



Harvey Kubernik has been an active journalist for over 44 years and is the author of eight books. During 2014, *Harvey's Turn Up the Radio! Rock, Pop, and Roll in Los Angeles 1956-1972* was published by Santa Monica Press. In 2017, his *Complete Rock Music History of 1967 and the Summer of Love* will be published by Sterling.

Thanks to Mike Markesich for label scans.



"It sounds like a cross between "The Reluctant Dragon" and "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight," with a game of Dungeons and Dragons thrown into the mix. Pike's imaginative narration harkens to a medieval storyteller, which REALLY makes this piece work." — Bennet Pomerantz, audiobookcafe.com, June, 2000.

This critically acclaimed 80 minute fantasy told entirely in rhyme has been remixed and remastered for this 15th Anniversary Audio Theater Edition.

Go to [www.grumpuss.com](http://www.grumpuss.com) for Production Office links to audio samples and video clips, and discover its history in the Legacy Pages featuring reviews, testimonials, and a pictorial essay on the 1997 charity gala live performance at Blenheim Palace.

Grumpuss is a great gift, suitable for all ages.

### ORDER IT NOW!

Dual CD \$22.95 Digital Download \$14.99  
<http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/travisedwardpike3>



In the summer of 1964, *Demo Derby* opened in Boston with Frank Sinatra in *Robin and the Seven Hoods*. The same day in Hartford, New Haven and Worcester, it opened with Elvis Presley in *Viva Las Vegas*. But when it was paired with the Beatles *Hard Day's Night*, it played on more than 6,000 screens, all across the country.

If you remember Madras shorts, penny loafers, and crew cuts, don't be surprised if *Demo Derby* brings a smile. It is so real, so us, that by the time the show is over, you may have to look outside to be sure your old car isn't still there. So, turn your DVD player into a time machine and buckle up for a wild ride down memory lane.

DVD Bonus Features: Theatrical Trailer  
 Interview with producer James A. Pike

4:3 Aspect Ratio / DVD Region 0 / NTSC / 1964 / BW / 28 MIN / Unrated

**WARNING:** We, of the sixties generation, have been romanticized for our rebellious idealism. Unless you want your children and grandchildren to know just how incredibly naive and innocent we really were **KEEP THIS DVD UNDER LOCK AND KEY!**

ORDER IT NOW, ONLY \$12.95 + S&H  
<https://www.createspace.com/265720>