

## Groovy Tunes with Ronnie Kaye and The Scene

Written by Administrator

Wednesday, 02 September 2009 02:19 - Last Updated Friday, 25 December 2009 22:01

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From Michael Dean at the Oklahoma History Center:

The Oklahoma History Center presents a tribute to Ronnie Kaye and The Scene TV Show this Friday night from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. The tribute will include music from four bands including: The Five Americans, Jim Edgar & the Roadrunners, Uptown Syndicate, and Brewer and Brewer. In addition a number of former WKY DJs will also be present including Danny Williams, Don Wallace and Dale Wehba. To set the scene for "The Scene" a group of dancers from the Oklahoma City Thunder and UCO will be performing as Go-Go dancers. This event is part of the ongoing programming related to "Another Hot Oklahoma Night: A Rock and Roll Exhibit."

The Scene ran on WKY-TV from 1966 to 1974. The show was unique in that Ronnie Kaye was able to feature many national recording acts that were appearing in Oklahoma City. The list includes Ray Charles, James Brown, Jerry Lee Lewis, Ike and Tina Turner, and Smokey Robinson among others.

Some of the local bands who appeared on the show included the Innkeepers, Centuries, Midnight Rebels, and Chosen Few.

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Tickets for the event are \$15 each and must be purchased before 5:00 p.m. Friday. No tickets will be sold at the door. Tickets are available at the admission desk at the Oklahoma History Center, 2401 N. Laird. They are also available at the two Thrifty Pharmacy locations at May and Hefner and 15th and Santa Fe in Edmond. For ticket information, please call the Oklahoma History Center admission desk at (405) 522-0765.

The Five Americans first got together at Southeastern State University in Durant as The Mutineers and later relocated to Dallas and renamed themselves The Five Americans. They enjoyed a string of national hits from 1966 to 1968. Among their hit recordings were "I See The Light," "Western Union,"

"Sound Of Love," and "Zip Code." The band appeared many times on The Scene.

Jim Edgar & the Roadrunners are an Oklahoma City based band who influenced many other local bands and artists. They were one of the first bands to appear on The Scene. Jim Edgar is known as the "Godfather" of the Oklahoma City Rock and Roll scene.

The Uptown Syndicate were based in Oklahoma City and were contemporaries of Tulsa's GAP Band. They toured regionally and were a pioneer Funk and Soul band. When the Uptown Syndicate formed most of the band members were music majors at the University of Oklahoma. Several of the members were also products of the renowned Douglas High School music program.

Native Oklahoma City musician Mike Brewer graduated from Northeast High School in a class that included noted guitarist Jesse Ed Davis. Brewer and his brother Keith formed a short lived band Brewer and Brewer. Mike later moved to Los Angeles and joined Tom Shipley to form Brewer and Shipley.

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Their biggest hit was "One Toke Over The Line" which peaked at number 10 nationally in the winter/spring 1971. The song was performed on the Lawrence Welk Show in a duet featuring Gail Farrell from Durant and Dick Dale. Following their performance, Welk called the song "a modern spiritual."

The three former WKY DJs attending Friday night have significance as well.

Danny Williams was the program director for WKY radio from 1959 to 1979. He hired Ronnie Kaye from a Lawton radio station in 1962. Ronnie described Danny as having "seen something in me that I never saw in myself. And he taught me many things over the years."

Don Wallace is believed to have been the first DJ to play Rock and Roll records on any radio station in Oklahoma. Wallace was an announcer at a station in Tulsa in 1954 when he began playing the top 10 most popular records in Tulsa on his program. In short order he began booking sock hops at high schools in Tulsa and built an enormous following. When WKY began playing Top 40 in 1958, Wallace was one of the first DJ's hired for the new format. He later enjoyed a run of almost 20 years hosting the weekly Wallace Wildlife TV program that focused on hunting and fishing.

Dale Wehba began his radio career while in high school as host of Classen High School's "Teen Canteen" program on KOCY. He was also hired at WKY shortly after they switched formats to Top 40 in 1958. Wehba worked at WKY until 1965 when he became program director at KOMA. He later was program director at the number one radio station in the Detroit/Windsor, Canada market. Wehba was another of the influential disc jockeys from Oklahoma City.

Kaye has invited members of a number of Rock and Roll bands from Oklahoma City and Central Oklahoma from the 1960's and 70's to attend the event.