

Pete Shotton - 1941 - 2017

'Shennon and Lotton or Lotton and Shennon'

Peter Shotton was born on 4th August 1941 – and was a childhood and life-long friend of John Lennon. He attended Dovedale Primary School and Quarrybank Grammar School with John, where they were frequently in trouble with their teachers, the duo becoming known as Shennon and Lotton or Lotton and Shennon. Pete was a founder member of The Quarrymen skiffle group with whom he played washboard, though John later dismissed him from the band by smashing the washboard over his head! He remained close to John throughout the Beatles years and attended a few recording sessions as well as being involved in the background to songs such as 'Eleanor Rigby', 'Penny Lane' (the pretty nurse was Pete's wife Beth), 'Being For The Benefit Of Mr Kite' and 'I Am The Walrus'. He became manager of the Apple Boutique and a director of Apple Corps. In the mid-60s John bought him a supermarket business in Hayling Island, proceeds from the sale of which he built the Fatty Arbuckle's chain of restaurants. In later life he obtained a new washboard and re-joined The Quarrymen. His close friend and fellow Quarryman Rod Davis wrote these words on his passing:



I first got to know Pete when we were classmates at Sunday School at St. Peter's Church in Woolton, Liverpool in about 1946, then again at Quarry Bank School in 1952 when we were in the same year and the same house until Pete left after five years to become a police cadet. After I left the Quarrymen in 1957 our paths parted for the next 40 years and Pete followed a varied career, much of it involving his continued friendship with his best buddy, John Lennon, including a spell at Apple and another as John's personal assistant. After John's death Pete's business career culminated in his setting up of the Fatty Arbuckle's restaurant chain. At the Cavern Club's 40th Birthday party in January 1997 the Quarrymen - Pete Shotton, Eric Griffiths, Colin Hanton, Len Garry and myself, who were on stage with John the day he met Paul, got together for the first time for virtually 40 years. We were asked to play at a recreation of the Day John Met Paul to be held in Woolton that July, which was a great success and as a result we made a CD called GET BACK TOGETHER which resulted in invitations to play if not quite all over the world, certainly over a great deal of it. Although Pete claimed he hated playing the washboard, his real talent was as a raconteur, and he used to enjoy holding the audience in the palm of his hand at a Quarrymen performance as he unfolded some amusing anecdote while he introduced the next song. Over the next four years we visited the USA several times, appearing in New York, Las Vegas, Boston, Orlando, Chicago, Vancouver, Dublin and even Havana, Cuba and made numerous TV appearances. At a Fourth of July concert in 1998 beside the Hudson River, Pete, who at that time was living in Dublin, announced to the audience that "We don't do this for the money, we only do it for the craic!" An Irish word approximating to 'fun with your friends'. This however was totally misunderstood by the family audience of good clean-living Americans who obviously thought we were a bunch of British druggies and we were lucky not to have been run out of town. With Pete and the Quarrymen we enjoyed many good laughs over the years.

Pete hung up his washboard in 2000 after a couple of heart scares but he refused to have surgery and he retired into what was for him a welcome obscurity from which he rarely emerged despite the constant clamour for interviews about his relationship with John and the Beatles. Over the last couple of years I dropped in to see him occasionally and found an increasingly ill man who had nevertheless not lost his old sense of humour. He died of a presumed heart attack on Friday 24th March at his home in Knutsford, Cheshire. The world will be a much less interesting place without Pete Shotton. Our thoughts are with his family.



Len Garry-Pete Shotton-Colin Hanton
Pete Nash-Rod Davis

Rod Davis - March 2017