



And so the four Bongos left Hoboken and flew to the Bahamas, where they recorded much of *Phantom Train* in the same legendary studio that had hosted superstars like AC/DC, the Rolling Stones, and U2.

“Here’s the thing that nobody really ever knew,” Barone added. “We were never signed to Island Records. By the time we were recording, Chris had started to get into the film business and he was spending less and less time overseeing the label.” So the Bongos flew home with the master tapes to the sessions in their laps, and hoped for the best.

But by the time the Bongos got back to America, things had started to change for the group. “It was right around that time that I started playing solo gigs,” Barone said. “I was still in the Bongos and still loved playing with the band, but I really loved playing those solo shows in more intimate spaces too. And everybody else just got really busy doing other things.” Jim Mastro formed the band Strange Cave, Norris was working on his career as a massage therapist, Frank Giannini had started a family.

Barone explained that the *Phantom Train* sessions consisted of many sessions in which they taped multiple takes of the same songs, as well as additional recording that was completed in New Jersey and New York City.

“There was a lot of very time-consuming work that had to be done to listen to all those different takes and none of us had the time to do it back then,” he said. So weeks became months, and months became years, And the years stretched into decades without *Phantom Train* ever being finished.

Barone finally found the impetus to complete the project when old friend Marty Scott announced that he wanted to restart his old label Jem Records (which had released *Drums Along The Hudson* in the U.S.)

“It really took a lot of time,” Barone explained. “First those old tapes had to be baked in a convection oven so they wouldn’t fall apart. The companies that made recording tape in the old days did the right thing for the environment by leaving out certain chemicals but what they did was bad for the longevity of the tape itself. Once the tapes had been baked, I was able to transfer them all to digital and then get to the process of mixing everything down.”

Barone found such an embarrassment of riches on those tapes that one song, “My Wildest Dreams,” appears twice on the album with completely different arrangements.

As for the future, the Bongos intend on playing more shows whenever their schedules permit. Norris has lived in Woodstock, New York for decades, Mastro owns Hoboken’s Guitar Bar and Guitar Bar Jr., and Barone not only teaches performing arts at NYU but still tours and performs regularly. “I’m still a troubadour, traveling from town to town playing my songs,” he said. “Marty (Scott) really wants the Bongos to play as much as possible to promote the album but I’ve been doing most of it myself, just because the others are busy with other things.”

Fans will get a chance to see the Bongos perform for the CMJ Music Marathon at the **Living Room** (<http://www.livingroomny.com/artist/bongos>) in Manhattan on Tuesday, October 15 at 8 pm. Standing room tickets are available for \$20 from **Ticketweb.com** (<http://www.ticketweb.com/t3/sale/SaleEventDetail?dispatch=loadSelectionData&eventId=3793244&pl=livingroom>) along with seated VIP seats for \$45.

JESSE NAHEM, RIP

The Hoboken musical community lost a precious member of its extended family when Jesse "Sanwich" Nahem, 25, passed away in his sleep this past Sunday night. Jesse, like his mom Alice Genese, was a gifted bassist, born and raised in Hoboken. We spoke to his mom Alice about her teenage years growing up a few doors away from Maxwell's **back in July** ([http://www.nj.com/hobokennow/index.ssf/2013/06/alice\\_genese\\_and\\_karyn\\_kuhl.html](http://www.nj.com/hobokennow/index.ssf/2013/06/alice_genese_and_karyn_kuhl.html)) and we reviewed Jesse's metal band Swamp **around the same time**.

([http://www.nj.com/hobokennow/index.ssf/2013/07/next\\_generation\\_of\\_new\\_jersey](http://www.nj.com/hobokennow/index.ssf/2013/07/next_generation_of_new_jersey)) I can remember Alice pushing Jesse up and down Washington Street in his stroller as an infant, and Jesse as a strapping young teen skateboarding around town. Recently he had been performing with his mom's band Alice KG & The Flirty Three as well as his own group, and like his mother, had become a treasured member of Hoboken's musical

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**(<http://www.nj.com/hobokennow/index>)  
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essays, and haiku**

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