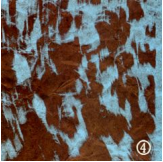


Woodstock - Three Days Of Peace And Music 1969 – CD4

Written by bluesever

Friday, 06 July 2012 16:43 - Last Updated Thursday, 11 April 2019 20:00

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01. Crosby, Stills & Nash - Suite: Judy Blue Eyes - 9:00 02. Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young - Guinnevere - 5:29 03. Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young - Marrakesh Express - 2:33 04. Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young - 4+20 - 2:42 05. Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young - Sea Of Madness - 3:33 06. Crosby, Stills & Nash - Find The Cost Of Freedom - 3:11 07. Paul Butterfield Blues Band - Love March - 9:44 08. Sha Na Na - At The Hop - 3:12 09. Jimi Hendrix - Voodoo Chile (Slight Return)/Stepping Stone - 12:19 10. Jimi Hendrix - Star Spangled Banner - 3:43 11. Jimi Hendrix - Purple Haze - 3:50

A legend made alive, by the hands of music and peace. Half a million people gathered for three days at a little place called Woodstock in the New York area. The concert is today known as the best rock concert ever. But what was it with Woodstock that made it so special? Was it more behind the festival than the eye could see?

The whole concert was set to run over three days; August 15, 16 and 17 in 1969. Four producers, and a number of financiers arranged everything. The concert was planted on a huge farm owned by Max Yazgur, and it was perfect in size and manner. The police were prepared, and were sure that they could handle the traffic and crowd, according to the book, they were prepared of anything, except 500 000 people.

Everyone was welcome at Woodstock, there were no dress code or age check, and it did not matter if they were black or white, they could be gay, or they could even be war-veterans. As long as they had peace in mind, they were welcome. What they had expected was a lot of music, drugs, peace and balling. That was also what they got, except for a few minor inconveniences; there were sparse sanitation facilities, the so-called port-o-sans, and because of the drug-use, thousands got ill and somewhat reduced, so problems regarding where their friends were, or their car, were absolutely normal. Because of the high numbers of visitors, the

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opportunities to go out and get some food were moderate. So that became a problem, and the solution was breakfast in bed for half a million. Which were actually flown in by choppers, also called choppeti-choppeti.

When the producers arranged this festival, they also had a lot of minor problems. One was finding the financiers, but another was to actually retrieve permission to run the festival. What they did was to lie, they said that it was expected to be around 50 000 people there, while they knew they would get over 150 000. The positive side about this is that they actually accomplished to find land for the festival. But the negative was that the police force were highly reduced, and the sanitation facilities also. They also had problems with the sound system. If they were to fill the whole farm with sound, they had to have some astonishing speakers. Alan Markoff got the assignment, and he created a system where the speakers were built up in high towers, to diminish the pain and damage of those who were standing close.

Woodstock was remarkable in every way, especially in the music. Michael Lang was the main boss and manager at Woodstock, and he also was the one that gathered all these musicians. Among them were Jimi Hendrix, Santana, Joe Cocker, Janis Joplin, Creedence Clearwater, Canned Heat, The who, and Crosby, Stills and Nash. Bob Dylan was there also, but after a few beers, he got too lazy to play and did not bother. Santana and Joe Cocker actually had their break-through at Woodstock, and before it, they were hardly known.

Another thing Woodstock -69 is known for is that when the people came and the ticket problems ascended. The solution was not to try and keep the crowd calm and wait in an ordinary fashion. But from then on, the concert became free. Everyone could come in, and when someone cut the fence down, it did not mean anything and they were welcome all of the same. That was the reason why Woodstock became a financial disaster. Most budgets were broken, but they kept on running the festival. When a man from Warner Brothers interviewed Michael Lang, he explained the financial situation like this, don't worry about the economy, the main thing is that it's happening, and it's working.

Woodstock started on a Friday, and that day had been a huge success. But when Saturday rose, a horrific rainstorm hit Woodstock. The farm was turned in to a mud-festival in a matter of seconds, and people hid in small plastic tents, or if they were lucky they had bought raincoats at 5 dollars apiece. The storm was dangerous to the technical equipment, especially the speakers who were up in high towers, it would have been a disaster if a tower should break and fall upon the crowd. But the management crew had it all under control and when the rain stopped, the smiles came forward again. There had been some problems with clothing after the rain, but that was also sent in with choppers.

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Everyone knew that the main group of visitors at Woodstock were hippies, but what were exactly hippies? The local town members would call them freaks. But the hippies did not mind that, because they knew they were. They were the young generation, and had rebelled against the government and the system. They often had none or little contact with their family, either because they were thrown out, or because they had run away from them. A hippie was against all wars, and often wore the flower symbol as a proof of that. The hippie was on the left side in politics, thinking about what was best for the people, instead of the economic issues. They looked shabby, and wore dirty and worn-out clothes. Music played an important part in their lives, because they meant that the music spoke to them. The hippies also used drugs, either to get a rush from them, or to let themselves free from any problem that was bothering them.

The festival did not have single documented fight, there was as little violence as there could have been in a small country with half a million. The police had created some violence, as the result of their prejudices against the hippies. But this festival proved that there did not have to be violence when large groups gather, most of them were highly influenced by drugs, but still there was no violence. There were two deaths at Woodstock, one by narcotic overdose, and one who were driven over by a tractor while he was asleep. This is still under the average rate of death, because there were over 500 000 people there and the festival lasted around 3 and a half day. But in opposition to the two deaths, there were also three births!

There were a lot of things that made Woodstock -69 more memorable than other festivals; first of all, it became a mud-festival when the rain poured down, and it must have been a sight when the hippies started to slide down hills and grounds. Or what about when Joe Cocker sang with a little help from our friends? That song kind of sums it up what the whole Woodstock community was about I think, helping each other for the better. He should have won a prize for that presentation, because that is one of the best vocal performances ever made, even though he did not remember doing it. Even better was it when Michael Lang presented that there were some bad acid in motion. He did not even say that it was illegal or the likes, instead he just said that they should not take such a high amount of it, because we have enough folks at the freak-out tent already.

Personally, I have fallen in love with some of the Woodstock music. Especially Jimi Hendrix, there are not many who could use the guitar like he did. His songs are filled with such passion and rhythm, that they are bound to take you away. It is a pity however that he died from drug-abuse three days later.

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Woodstock has actually been repeated two times after the first festival in -69. The second was in 1994, when Woodstock had their 25years anniversary, and the next in 1999. But none of those have ever been compared to the original, even though the crowd were just as big. There was something about Woodstock in -69 that signalled quality and grandness like nothing else. Why it became that way, is something that this generation never could understand. One theory is that the first one was much more free, it was more real in the sense that it was not created because someone wanted to make money. The two following festivals seemed to commercial, and perhaps it was there it went wrong.

But was there actually something behind the music at Woodstock? What was Woodstock actually about? Personally I do not believe that good music was enough to gather a crowd of up to half a million at that time. It seemed like everybody was looking for something, like the hippies were lost in life, and that they were searching for answers. Perhaps many came to Woodstock because they thought that many knew, but no one did. Another theory is that Woodstock was a huge protest camouflaged in music and drugs. It is a fact that many protested against the Vietnam War, but that is not what Woodstock was about. Generally, thousands of people came just because of the music. But something happened on that festival, on some level, a society was created, and the youth showed the world that with a little peace in mind, the world would have been a better place.

500 000 people were virtually left alone on that farm, the supreme majority was under thirty years old, and the only one that was "above" them was the management and the police. The fact that they were supplied with food and clothes meant nothing, and was something that they had to get, because they were unable to get out and get it for themselves. A society was created that weekend, and the young citizens discovered that they could live in peace and harmony just by sharing and helping each other. The society could come a long way just by showing some consideration and respect.

Thousands left the Woodstock festival with a totally different outlook on life. --- skoleforum.com

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