

It's also fitting that an Irish band would get its' name from a rehab center. "Dropkick Murphys' was the name of the first actual dryout house in Boston,"

Get Pumped

It all started with the SOX



photo caption: lead singer Al Barr pumps up the crowd during a St. Patrick's Day show

photos courtesy Dropkick Murphys

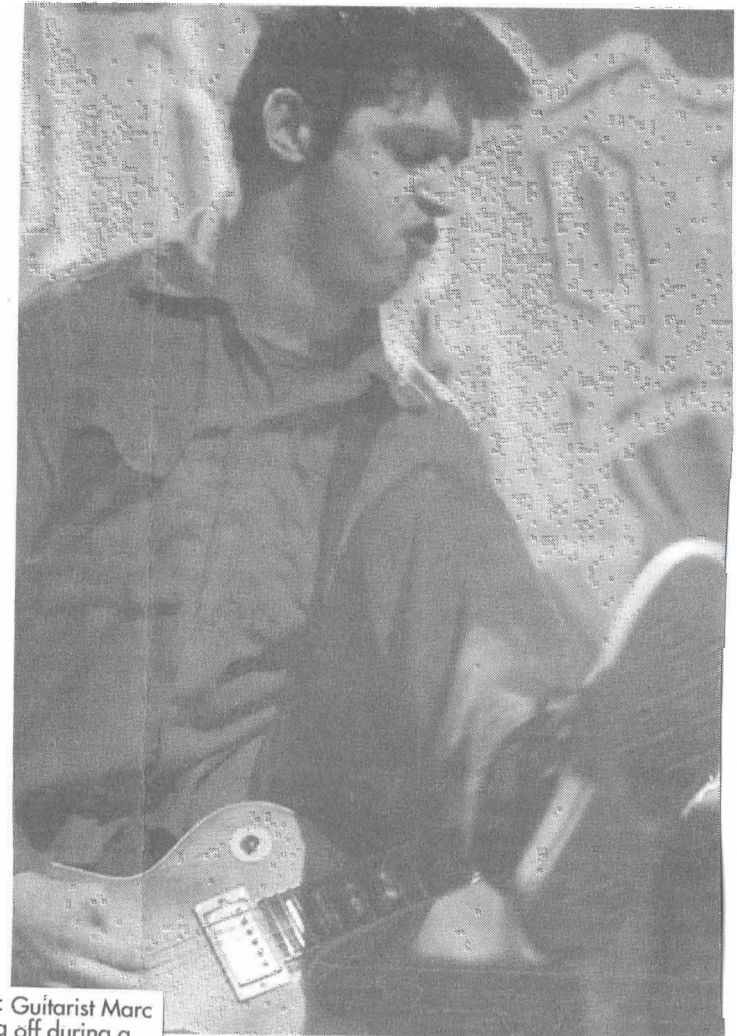


photo caption: Guitarist Marc Orrell showing off during a recent show

BRIAN CARLTON

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Their songs have been in major movies, their St. Patrick's Day shows are legendary and they've played in front of sold out crowds. But more important than any of that to the Dropkick Murphys is the fact they're the band that saved the Sox. Taking time out after a recent show at Amos' Southend, lead singer Al Barr talked with the UTimes about baseball, breaking curses, making music and that little known team called the Sox.

That would be the Red Sox, for those counting at home. But to understand this group's love of baseball, you have to go back a few years and understand the difference between a normal fan and a rabid Sox fanatic. Go back to a time before steroids, when the only teams that mattered were the Red Sox, White Sox and the Yankees.

"The whole band backs the Red Sox," said Barr, "although some are more rabid than others. Our bass player Kenny used to jump the fence at Fenway to get in and watch games"

The band's love affair with the game drove them to remake "Tessie", an old barbershop tune sung back in the early 20th century at Sox games. The song comes from a Broadway play called "The Silver Slipper" and was used as a rallying cry by the Royal Rooters, the original Rex Sox fans that got their start in 1903.

"Back in the day," Barr says, "when the Sox used to win all the pennants, there was a fan club called the Royal Rooters. They'd sing the song 'Tessie' as a way to jeer the other team. But then as history goes, the Babe was traded and if you believe in curses, we had one for the past 87 years."

Then in 2004, the group decided to remake the anthem and break the curse. 'Tessie' soon became the official Red Sox team song as they marched into the playoffs. Then, call it coincidence or a twist of fate, that was the same year the Red Sox won the World Series, beating the St. Louis Cardinals in four straight games.

"That was just crazy man," Barr said. "It was like we just knew it was time to end this thing."

The band has become local celebrities in the Boston area, to the point the Globe has daily coverage of the three day St. Patrick's Day celebrations they put on. It's a simple recipe. Take some Guinness, add about 300 people and stir.

"We don't do anything to create the craziness, we don't need to," Barr

said. "This year, we did six shows in three days. When you've got 200 to 300 family and friends hanging around in one place, the crazy just happens."

It's also fitting that an Irish band would get its name from a rehab center. "Dropkick Murphys' was the name of the first actual dryout house in Boston," Barr said. "John Murphy used to go around and pick up the bums in Boston, then they'd get tossed in this place til they got cleaned up."

Apparently several old timers in the Murphys' neighborhood would talk a lot about being locked up at the center and so the group vowed if they ever became a band, that would be their name.

The group also has one very famous fan, who they found out about back in 2005. A friend of Martin Scorsese had given him "The Warriors' Code", the band's last CD and he liked it so much he put the song "I'm Shipping Out To Boston" in his movie 'The Departed'.

"It doesn't get much better than that man," Barr said. "We got in touch with him when we were doing the music video for 'Shipping Out...' and asked if you could use some footage from the film. You know, nothing ventured, nothing gained. We get an email back, saying 'Tell them I love 'em and they can have whatever they want'-signed Marty." The group's impact on the director was so profound that he thanked them in his speech when getting his Oscar for Best Director last year.

So what does a group do after saving a baseball team and landing on a movie soundtrack? Go back into the studio to put together their latest album, "The Meanest of Times", which is set to come out in September.

"Being in the studio is overrated," Barr said. "It can get boring quick. But on tour is where you can really test out the new stuff, because you're in front of new faces every night and you can tell what the crowd likes."

More than just music, he and the rest of the group wanted to have a message with this latest offering.

"It's about living in the moment, he said, "being thankful for all the time you've got to spend with family and friends, not taking anything for granted."

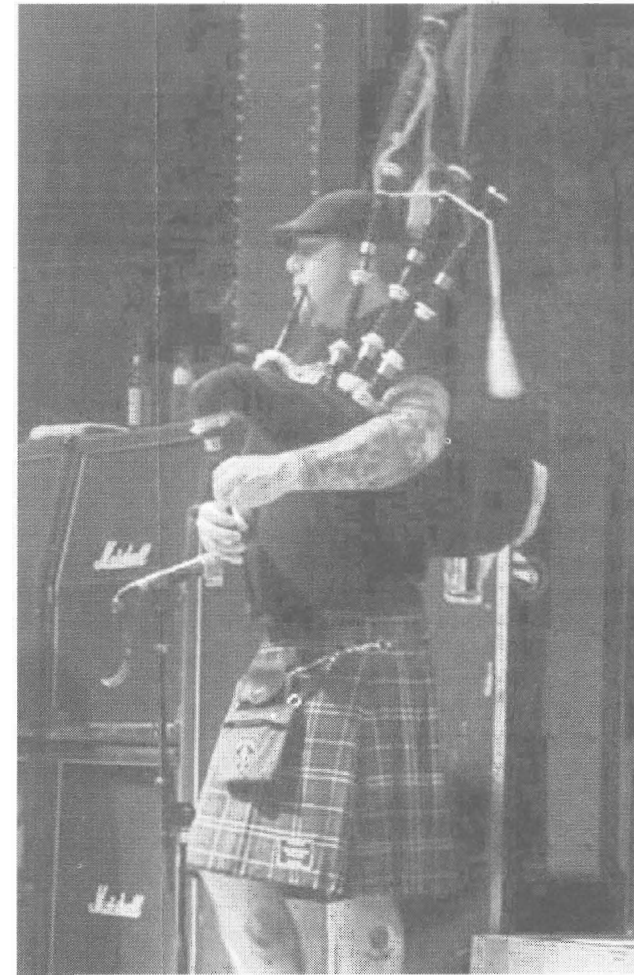


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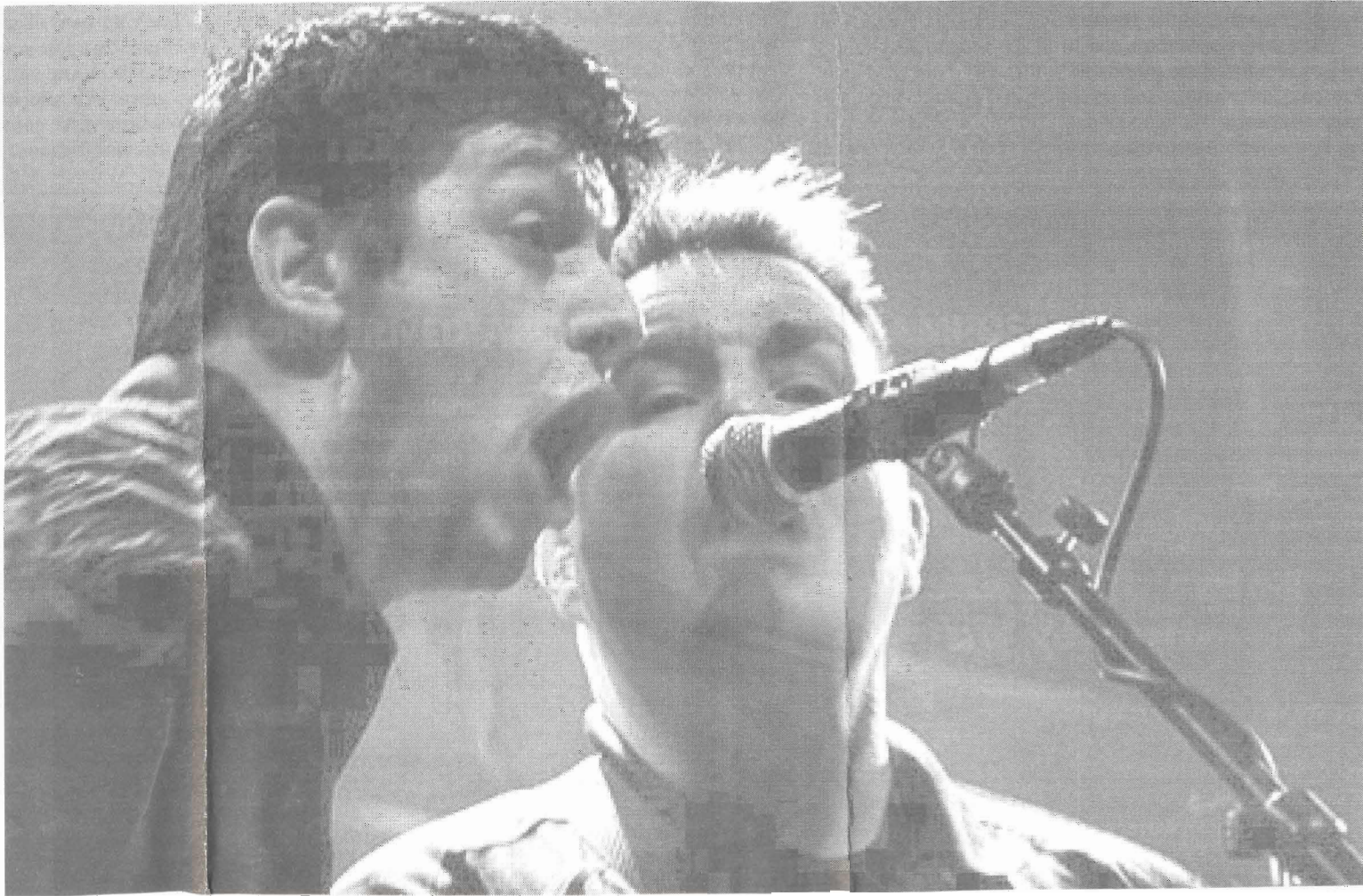


photo caption: Ken Casey and James Lynch pull double duty on guitar and vocals