

THE KISS FAMILY TREE: PETER CRISS

THE STARS (c. 1958)

If this could even be called a group, then it would be one step up from a gang - a group of kids hanging out on street corners singing. Other members of any, if any, lineup are unknown.



JOEY GRECO & THE "IN CROWD" (c.1963-6)

Unknown ?	Unknown ?	Joey Greco Guitar/Vocals	Peter Criscuola Drums/Percussion	Unknown ?
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Replaced Bobbie Clarke on drums? During his time with Joey Greco, Peter would also play one set at the Metropole as the drummer for Joey Dee...



THE BARRACUDAS (c.1965 – Late 1966)

Carlos Cancel Vocals/Guitars	Alan Rosen Guitars	Angelo Oppner Bass	Peter Criscuola Drums/Percussion
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Little known about this band except that they released an independent single in January 1967. Peter met his future wife, Lydia, while playing club gigs as a member of this band.



SOUNDS OF SOUL #1 (Late 1966 – Summer 1967)

Angelo Oppner Bass	Joey Lucenti Guitar/Vocals	Jack Edwards Guitar	Pepi Generelli Keyboards	Peter Criscuola Drums/Percussion	Tommy Ventimiglia Horns
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A short lasting soul band by all accounts! This band did record several cover demos though and had a varying line-up.



SOUNDS OF SOUL #2 (Summer 1967 – March 1968)

Angelo Oppner Bass	Joey Lucenti Guitar/Vocals	Pepi Generelli Keyboards	Peter Criscuola Drums/Percussion	Tommy Ventimiglia Horns
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A short lasting soul band by all accounts! This band did record several cover demos though and had a varying line-up.



THE BROTHERHOOD (March 1968 – Late 1968)

Angelo Oppner Bass	Joey Lucenti Guitar/Vocals	Pepi Generelli Keyboards	Peter Criscuola Drums/Percussion	Tommy Ventimiglia Horns
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Since the band that followed The Brotherhood included members from Sounds Of Soul, it is possible that there was simply a band name change, or that some members of that band were also members of The Brotherhood.



THE VINTAGE (Late 1968 – April '69)

John Balsamo Bass	Joey Lucenti Guitar/Vocals	Pepi Generelli Keyboards	Peter Criscuola Drums/Percussion
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This band won a talent show at the Academy of Music in January 1969. Angelo Oppner was initially the bassist in this band, and Frank Muller served for a while, but the time-frames for their participation is unclear. The Vintage ended when Joey got married and decided to leave the band.



NAUTILUS (Mid 1969 – Aug. '70)

Peter Shadis Bass	Kevin Reese Guitar	Pepi Generelli Keyboards	Peter Cris Drums/Vocals
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Members from this band would be part of the jam band that Peter played with at his wedding in January 1970..



CHELSEA #1 (Summer 1970 – Summer 1971)

Pete Shepley Lead Vocals	Mike Brand Guitar/Vocals	Michael Benvenga Bass/Vocals	Peter Cris Drums/Percussion/Vocals	Chris Aridas Guitar/Vocals
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After being recruited into Chelsea via a Rolling Stone ad the band managed to secure a 2 record deal on Decca Records, distributed via MCA. When the first album was released it did so poorly that Aridas quit. Chelsea was built around the partnership of Shepley/Brand who had written together since at least 1964. Michael Benvenga came to the band from the locally popular Brooklyn band "The Wall"...



CHELSEA #2 (Summer 1971 – Aug. '71)

Pete Shepley Lead Vocals	Mike Brand Guitar/Vocals	Michael Benvenga Bass/Vocals	Peter Cris Drums/Percussion/Vocals	Stan Penridge Guitar/Vocals
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This second lineup of the band started working on material for their second Decca album, mostly writing and demoing songs before the acoustic versus electric split in the band cause the group to completely break in August 1971.

Mike Brand and Pete Shepley, the acoustic members of Chelsea apparently moved to upstate New York after hearing the material that their three band members were performing on their own. They were teamed as producers in 1974...



LIPS #1 (Aug. '71 – Apr. '72)

Michael Benvenga
Bass/Vocals

Peter Criss
Drums/Percussion/Vocals

John Amato
Guitars

Stan Penridge
Guitar/Vocals

Lips in its' original incarnation was simply the more electric, or "rocking" side of Chelsea. Mike Brand and Peter Shepley had departed to pursue their more acoustic folk upstate while the other band members stayed in the city. Michael Benvenga quit the band to settle down.

Michael Benvenga, after years of trying to make it in the music industry left Lips to do session work. Sadly, as Peter's dedication to him on his 1978 album shows, he had passed away in March 1978...



LIPS #2 (Apr. '72 – May '72)

Peter Criss
Drums/Percussion/Vocals

John Amato
Guitars

Stan Penridge
Guitar/Vocals

By the time that Lips were reduced to a duo Peter and Stan were still trying to get a recording deal, never with any luck. Eventually, they called it quits with Stan moving on to work in St. Elmo's Fire, a local NY band. Peter and Stan continued to work together even after KISS had formed.



LIPS #3 (May '72 – May '73)

Peter Criss
Drums/Percussion/Vocals

Stan Penridge
Guitar/Vocals

By the time that Lips were reduced to a duo Peter and Stan were still trying to get a recording deal, never with any luck. Eventually, they called it quits with Stan moving on to work in St. Elmo's Fire, a local NY band. Peter and Stan continued to work together even after KISS had formed.



INFINITY (July '72 – Sept. '73)

Peter Criss
Drums/Percussion/Vocals

Tommy Dimitri
Bass

Joey Lucenti
Guitar/Vocals

Infinity was an on-going 50s covers band that did more gigs than KISS in 1973. Peter continued to work occasional gigs with Stan Penridge, and gig with KISS in the clubs.



WICKED LESTER #3 (Sept. '72 – Dec. '72)



KISS #1 (Dec. '72 – March 1980)



PETER CRISS SOLO BAND #1 (1980-1)

Peter Criss
Drums/Vocals

Stan Penridge
Guitars

Session Players
All Other Instruments

Simply the session group that Peter used for the recording of his first post-KISS solo album "Out Of Control" in 1980. There were plans to tour, but these never solidified.



PETER CRISS SOLO BAND #2 (1982)

Peter Criss
Drums/Vocals

Session Players
All Other Instruments

For the recording of "Let Me Rock You" even Stan Penridge was absent, working on other projects. Peter had to rely heavily on session players and producer Vini Poncia.



CRISS-PENRIDGE ALLIANCE/THE ALLIANCE (1983 – 1985)

Peter Criss
Percussion/Vocals

Stan Penridge
Guitar/Vocals

Alan Woody
Bass

Tony Crow
Keyboards

Mike Hutchins
Guitar/Vocals

Not such a brief encounter that the band didn't get the chance to record demos at Cinderella Studios in Madison, TN during 1984-1985, but this project's end would also mark the end of Peter and Stan's personal relationship. The band were initially to be called "The Desperate Men."



JANE/BALLS OF FIRE (Spring 1986 – Nov. 1986)

Peter Criss
Drums/Vocals

John "JP" Pakalenka
Guitar

Jane Booke
Lead Vocals

Bobby Raylove
Bass

For the shortest period in the summer of 1986 it seemed that Peter was back, this time as a member of an upcoming rock band with a female lead singer. Live performances were made in August, with Peter even getting to dig out "Feel Like Heaven" from his past, with the rest being original material. However, the project did not last long, and Peter took up the house husband role to enjoy his daughter Jenilee's growing up...



Session work with Nelson Rangell and Alexander Day...

THE KEEP #1 (1989)

Peter Criss
Drums/Vocals

Kevin Russell
Guitars

Joey Mudarri
Bass

Michael McDonald
Vocals

Allegedly – it is not clear if this lineup was ever an 'actual' band or a phantom proposed lineup. Michael McDonald is a phantom, his real name was David Donato, and had been in Mark St. John's White Tiger band (and Black Sabbath, briefly) ...



THE KEEP #2 (1989)

Peter Criss
Drums/Vocals

Mark St. John
Guitars

Jim Barnes
Bass

Michael McDonald
Vocals

Allegedly – it is not clear if the lineup was ever an 'actual' band or a phantom proposed lineup...



TREE/THE KEEP #3 (Jan. '90 – Early 1991)

Peter Criss
Drums/Vocals

Mark St. John
Guitars

Michael Norton
Bass

Michael McDonald
Vocals

The Keep (note: it really didn't have a proper name) was a short lived but incredibly cool project that featured two ex-KISS members, along with Mark's brother Michael who had been with him in White Tiger. Demos were cut at Sound City Recording Studios, but unfortunately the tapes got rejected by all the labels they were submitted to... This lineup would perform live just once, on May 2, 1990 at a drum clinic at Guitar Center music store in Lawndale, CA.



Following the demise of his relationship with Peter, Mark St. John did some session work for Ken Tamplin, and then returned to teaching though in recent years he has resurfaced with new music and as an Expo guest.



LAIDLAW

CRISS #1 (Early 1991 – Autumn 1991)

Peter Criss
Drums/Vocals

Ray Carrion
Guitars/Vocals

Phil Naro
Vocals

Mark Montague
Bass/Vocals

This lineup is short lived (around 7 months), following the recruiting of ex-Talas singer Naro, and doesn't play any live gigs. However, the rehearsals do result in a number of good demos, notably due to Naro's writing...



Phil moves on to front his own NARO project while also doing some work with Mark St. John...



CRISS #2 (Autumn 1991 – Dec. '92)

Peter Criss
Drums/Vocals

Ray Carrion
Guitars/Vocals

Phillip Anthony
Vocals

Mark Montague
Bass/Vocals

Phillip's tenure did not last long. His real name is Phillip Anthony Bardowell, and Peter had originally wanted to have him used the stage name Tony. However, this lineup does make the debut of Criss live at the Exposure 54 Club in Los Angeles, CA on November 11, 1991...



Phillip spends four years as a vocalist/backing vocalist with the legendary Beach Boys before cutting his own solo record...



CRISS #3 (Dec. '92 – 1993)

Peter Criss
Drums/Vocals

Ray Carrion
Guitars/Vocals

Mike Stone
Vocals

Mark Montague
Bass/Vocals

Mike Stone, who had previously recorded with Jonas Hansson joined the group...



CRISS #4 (1993 – June '94)

Peter Criss
Drums/Vocals

Kirk Miller
Guitars/Vocals

Mike Stone
Vocals

Mark Montague
Bass/Vocals

Recording phase of the band where Criss goes through several guitarists...



CRISS #5 (June '94 – Spring 1995)

Peter Criss
Drums/Vocals

Mike McLaughlin
Guitars

Mike Stone
Vocals

Mark Montague
Bass/Vocals

Line up was supposed to go into pre-production for the second CRISS album in early September 1995. Mike Stone would leave the band in December 1995 and eventually end up in Boston, and would appear on a track on five tracks on Iain Ashley-Hersey's "Fallen Angel" album



CRISS #6 (Spring 1995 – Dec. '95)

Peter Criss
Drums/Vocals

Mike McLaughlin
Guitars

Jason Ebs
Guitars/Vocals

Mark Montague
Bass/Vocals

The final CRISS lineup. After TNT's option for the second album from the band expired on 18 December 1995, the band remained in existence, in name only, for a few months before the KISS Reunion was officially announced. Mike would sometimes sign his nickname, "Angel"...



The former members of Criss continued for a short while as SKOFF before heading off for individual projects... Jason is most recently with his own project, Twisted Roots. Mark would work with Richie Scarlet in his NYB project... Mike apparently works in Taiwan.

KISS (1996-2001)



Solo Again

Peter reunited with members of Criss in 2005 to work on new recordings.