

Heart photographed in February 1980. L-R: Ann Wilson (lead vocals), Michael Derosier (drums), Howard Leese (guitar), Nancy Wilson (guitar and vocals), Steve Fossen (bass)

FROM THE Heart

Heart guitarist and vocalist **Nancy Wilson** gets together with *Howard Johnson* for a detailed, wide-ranging and endlessly fascinating interview discussing the band's long career, their '80s commercial peak, her relationship with sister Ann, and her soon-come debut solo album...

Photo: Getty Images/Michael Putland

LET'S START AT THE BEGINNING, NANCY. WHAT WAS YOUR EUREKA MOMENT, THE INSTANT WHEN YOU KNEW YOU WERE HOOKED ON MUSIC?

"When we first saw The Beatles on *The Ed Sullivan Show* here in the States it was truly life-altering, like a lunar landing moment. I was only nine at the time, and my sister Ann was 13. But we'd heard all about this sensational hot new band from England. Their album had preceded them, so even before they appeared on national TV Ann and I were already in the basement doing the Twist, the Watusi and the Mashed Potato to Beatles songs. But to see them... well that was a moment of moments."

AND WAS IT THERE AND THEN THAT YOU DECIDED TO BECOME A GUITAR PLAYER?

"It really was. That moment provided nothing less than

a culture shift for Ann and me. It led us to *need* guitars; it was absolutely *imperative* that we started start to play guitar immediately, to explore and discover this wild new terrain.

"Because Ann was older than me she got the first guitar. Our grandma took pity on her, because Ann had glandular fever at the time. So she bought her a guitar to play while she was recuperating in bed. I'd steal it and learn to play Beatles and Top 40 songs on it – and she'd get really mad at me: 'That's *mine!*' So eventually I talked my parents into renting me a guitar from the local Ma and Pa music store, but it was virtually unplayable. The neck was like a pipe and the action was way-off-the-charts high. Trying to play a barred F-chord was hard, but I was so determined to play this piece of crap guitar that I just *had* to do it. The bridge wasn't glued down, but at least that meant that when it was