brothers attended school as external students, travelling from Schrecksbach. The school offered us good opportunities to develop musically. There was a Dixieland band, and we then started to play tracks by the Shadows and soon American and English groups."

The school's trad jazz band, known as the Magic Stompers, predated the arrival any of the future Petards. The Magic Stompers had first come into existence back in the mid-fifties and continued through successive lineups as new students arrived and old ones graduated. It was through the Magic Stompers that the future Petards first got together with Klaus Ebert, the youngest and most musically gifted, leading the charge. Klaus was a musical prodigy who, after beginning piano and clarinet lessons at the age of 10, went on to teach himself to play guitar, accordion and saxophone. His musical pursuits were encouraged by his father, who played classical violin and had led his own dance band during the war. After arriving at the school in 1961, Klaus began playing piano, guitar, clarinet and tenor sax in the Magic Stompers in an evolving lineup that also included, among others, Hans-Jürgen Schreiber on trumpet, Ingo Teckenburg on guitar (originally banjo), Fritz von Massow on drums, and, by 1962, Roger Waldmann on bass. As their repertoire expanded to include twist and rock 'n' roll numbers, they gradually shed the Dixieland numbers, cast aside the Magic Stompers name and became the Lemon Drops and then the Blizzards. In 1963 Horst, less musically inclined than his brother, was roped into the group, as their drummer. But when he was called away for a year of military service in 1964, Hans-Jürgen took over on drums. As a parting gift, Horst provided the group with a new name. Thumbing through an encyclopedia, he's spotted the word 'Petard'—French for firecracker. From that point on they were the Petards (pronounced "Peh-TARD," accented on the second syllable).

In 1965, shortly after Horst returned from his stint with the Bundeswehr, Ingo was hospitalized with a serious illness. The Petards had some lucrative gigs lined up that summer so Horst was pressed into duty as rhythm guitarist. After a crash course from Klaus, he soon got up to speed on the instrument, and also joined Roger and Hans-Jürgen on background vocals. Having two brothers in a band can sometimes be a volatile situation (see: Ray and Dave Davies in the Kinks), but as Roger remembers, "There were rarely arguments between the brothers," adding that "Horst was the more balanced."

Roger picks up the story: "After our high school diploma we began our [university] studies: Horst studied photography, Klaus veterinary medicine, Hans-Jürgen human medicine and I economics." This meant that the band members were temporarily dispersed to different cities: Roger to Marburg, Horst to Essen, Klaus to Frankfurt, and Hans-Jürgen to Erlangen. The Petards nevertheless continued, reconvening during holidays. "During the semester break we met in Schrecksbach," explains Roger. "With performances in clubs in the vicinity we wanted to improve our financial means for our studies and of course buy instruments and amplifiers.

"We had fun with the music right from the start," he continues, "and we managed to get a decent volume out of our initially small amplifier system. This prompted a retired chimney sweep to sue us in court for disturbing noise during a nightly performance. We each received a fine of 50 DM [deutschmarks]. We did not want to accept this and it came to a hearing. We tried to make it clear to the judge that modern beat music needed to be played at a certain volume."

The judge called for a demonstration to allow the group to make their case. He ordered tables and chairs in the courtroom to be moved aside to make room for the band to set up their gear and play.

"After the first unmistakable bars," remembers Roger, "all the doors suddenly opened a crack. The spectators, who had been few until then, were soon no longer alone. Even the official witnesses bravely persevered, despite the



Schrecksbach, Germany, ca. 1968. The Petards and local women outside the Ebert family home.

6 Ugly Things