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Eric outrages Aussies-questions in House



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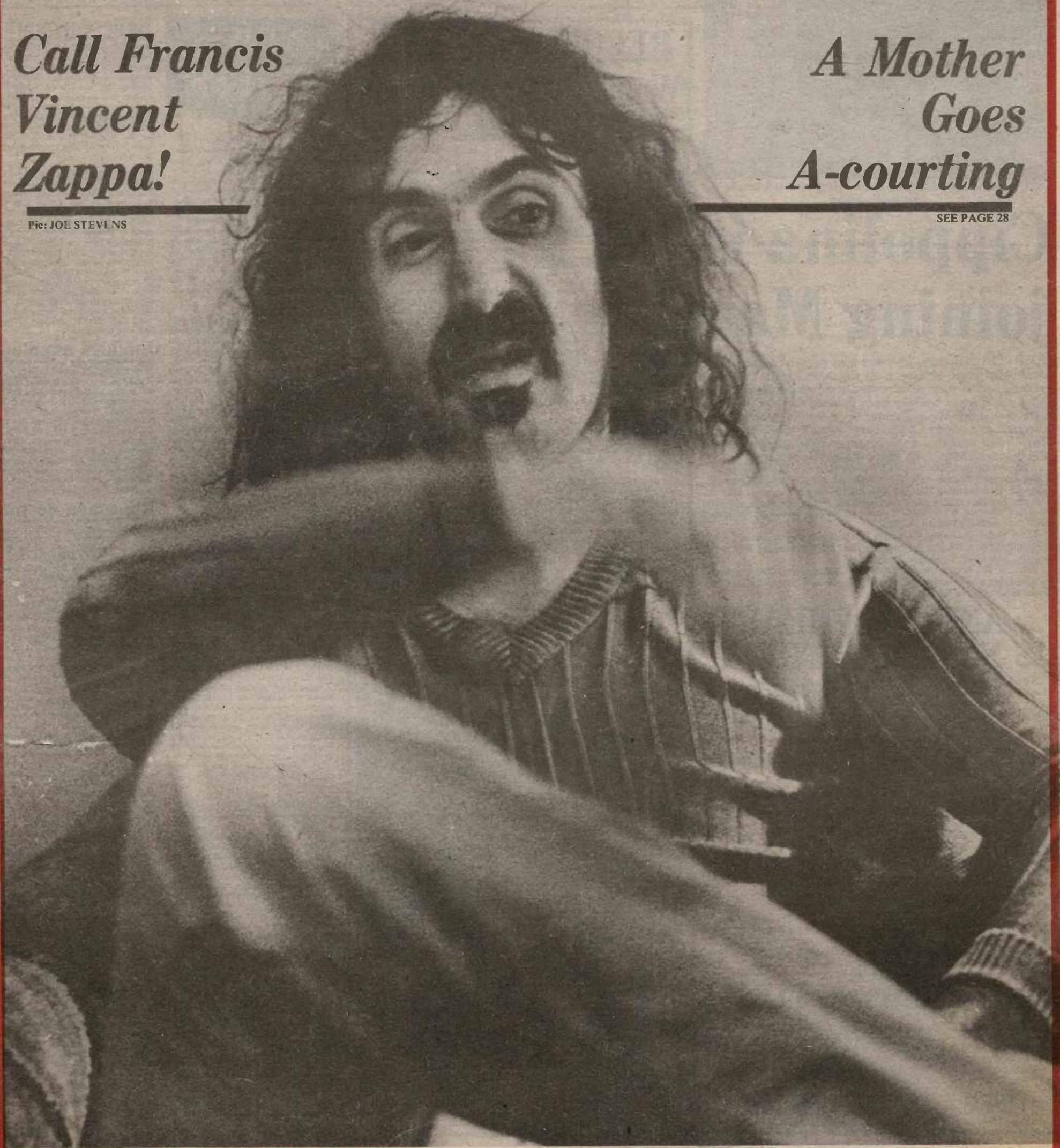
12p

*Call Francis
Vincent
Zappa!*

Pic: JOE STEVENS

*A Mother
Goes
A-courting*

SEE PAGE 28



THRILLS

Eric's blunder down-under

WHERE PEACEFUL LAGERS FLOW

AUSTRALIA, THE land where the Fosters lager flows, doesn't seem to have done much for the rehabilitation of Eric Clapton.

His behaviour at a Festival Hall concert last week caused enough of an uproar for a local MP to accuse the show's promoters of "abusing and swindling the pop enthusiasts of this state", and to call for an official investigation into the gig.

The MP, a Liberal called Lacey, went so far as to bring the controversy to the attention of Parliament. In a question to the Chief Secretary, he claimed that the "world-acclaimed guitarist gave a performance to 4,000 young people which lasted less than one-and-a-half hours," during which "he completed four numbers only."

What's more, "for most of the time he had his back to the audience", and "appeared unsteady on his feet and not in control of his faculties."

The crowning insult, according to Mr. Lacey, is that fans had paid A\$6.80 (£3.80) for their entrance to this debacle.

Before you dismiss the whole affair as a story of Canadian Clubland, hearken to the grievances of C. and M. Driver, who actually attended the concert and sent us news of the contretemps. Eric, they claim, played "only five minutes of listenable music" during the whole evening, and for the rest of the time he tottered about with glazed eyes and "giggled like Shirley Temple auditioning for the Black and White Minstrel Show."

Either Australian MPs care more about rock than ours, or Eric really blew it at the Festival Hall.



"It's my concert and I'll drink if I want to."

Yin Yan—who's that man?

HARDLY "Hold-the-front-page"-type news but Yin and Yan — who recorded the Telly Savalas urine-extraction job — have at last decided to reveal their identity! Yay!

And as predicted by Thrills correspondent Hercule Poirot last week...

"Yin" is actor/singer, voice-over ads man, Chris Sandford — who, you may remember, once appeared in *Coronation Street*. "Yan" is a Canadian, name of Bill Mitchell, whose gravelly tones endorse products like Faberge and Carlsberg lager.

They first cut "If" when Savalas' version was 13 in the charts, and are currently working on an album tentatively entitled "Tales For Heads."

Sandford says "We look upon ourselves as album artistes, unless someone gets too outrageous in the singles chart. In which case Gaud help them."

On the album they'll be attacking things like "chat shows, phone-ins, Hollywood legends, Transylvanian legends and fat old pop stars."

So far they've been tagged Britain's answer to Cheech and Chong, something Sandford refutes: "I like to think we bridge the gap between American and British humour. Our roots are different from Cheech and Chong. I've been more influenced by people like Max Wall and Stan Freberg."

For the future, both Yin and Yan have their eyes on a certain single at the moment they are thinking of "doing a job on," though they won't say which one it is. They won't, however, be doing a version of the new Savalas single "You've Lost That Loving Feeling."

Incidentally Savalas' reaction to the single (which is a double A side, the funnier one really being "Butch Soap") was to laugh and order 50 copies for the folks back home.

□ JULIE WEBB

A hippy's decay halted

PIE & CHIPS IMPROVES MIKE HERON'S REPUTATION

MIKE HERON says he wants to be part of 1975 as well as 1967. Ten years is a long time to sustain the same image, and the Incredible String Band was indelibly and genuinely associated with the whole Flower Power Summer of Love syndrome.

The Incredibles split up just six months ago, and Heron says he's rather more than "a decayed hippie".

As if to prove the point, Heron's taking a late

his previous work. Heron acknowledges that there's something in that, but it wasn't a conscious decision. It just happened that way.

REPUTATION are intended, in part, to fulfil Heron's ambitions as a rock musician — something for which the Incredibles never catered, despite their eclectic approach. A musician he respects told him the new album sounded like a cross between Elton John and Simon and Garfunkel. Heron says he likes the description, but isn't making a bid for reflected glory.

Heron denies the Incredibles split because they were exhausted musically. The final album was far from the work of a tired group, he says. The PR handout for Heron's new band says the split was down to musical differences. And, as lame as that sounds, the evidence of the new album suggests it's true.

Heron's been chancing his Reputation on tour with the Andy Fraser Band, and he's well pleased with the reception he received. Most of the guys in the band were with the Incredibles, which presumably meant a degree of continuity as well as established respect for Heron's work.

The stage act had neatly meshed together before the tour, says Heron, and the band's evolved a distinctive style.

Some observers have expressed puzzlement at the way Malcolm Le Maistre's dance routine, "Only A Street-lamp", is thrust into the middle of the set. However skilful, disciplined, and witty this performance might be, wasn't it a distraction from the band?

Well, says Heron, it is a distraction, but he felt that was needed — some variety in the middle of the set. Even in the States they'd probably like it, he thinks. There was plenty of room for artistic complexity in rock — look at Yes and Genesis, he says.

If and when Reputation cross the Atlantic, chances are they'll be a fair success. Heron's under the wing of Melanie's Neighborhood Records — one of the few acts on the label — which came about because Melanie liked the Incredibles, phoned them one day, and they went along and played onstage during one of her UK gigs.

Melanie's hubby Peter Schekeryk, in fact, produced some of the songs on Heron's album. Curious really, that Heron should end up hob-nobbing with Melanie: What do the lady's qualities of child-like naivety and sentimental optimism remind you of? Yes, 1967 and all that.

There's no way — it seems — of entirely shaking off your past.

□ BOB EDMANDS



Heron and his Reputation: "We just flew in from L. Ron H.'s yacht-boy are our arms tired."

breakfast of non macro-biotic steak pie and chips in a Covent Garden pub. Between mouthfuls, he says he's "a horribly prolific" writer of songs. He was looking at a royalty statement the other day, and the songs filled two foolscap sheets. There were about 70 of them, and those were just the ones recorded. And up to a point, that was one of the problems with the String Band — so much material.

"It got to the point towards the end, where I felt we were conning people a bit," says Heron. There were 14 albums, and the band was constantly changing styles, so they never really knew what people had come to hear."

So while the Incredibles' relentless innovations earned them the respect of critics, to a certain extent they back-fired. "Other people took just some of the ideas we came up with, and based entire careers upon them," Heron notes in a matter-of-fact voice. Perhaps the Incredibles would have been more commercially successful if they'd been less musically ambitious?

Heron's first album with his new band Reputation seems to indicate some support for the idea. It has a distinct stylistic unity, quite at odds with

Wonder Woman
(No. 12 or 35)

MINNIE RIP REVEALED

JUST LATELY Stevie Wonder seems in danger of becoming a kind of hip Hughie Green.

Three of his most recent "Endorsements" are enjoying huge success both here and in the States; Syreeta, Jim Gilstrap, and Minnie Riperton.

Minnie's just slipped off the top of the Cashbox pop charts and thanks to incessant plugging by Tony Blackburn and David Hamilton, breached NME's last week. The song in question is "Loving You", a gentle ballad complete with tweeting birds culled from her slightly overrated album "Perfect Angel" (Epic).

As soon as Stevie knew Minnie was back in the studios for Epic to cut "Perfect Angel" he was at the door, synthesiser and songs at the ready, to help it along. Unlike his "help" with Syreeta, Wonder didn't walk all over the session and only contributes two songs, and although he played lots of instruments, he only gets the label credit on "El Toro Negro."

But Wonder's assistance was certainly instrumental in turning Ms. Riperton into a 1975 star, and it's going to be interesting to see how much he'll contribute to the next stage in her career.

She's no newcomer, having been a member of The Gems, a typical sixties girl group (hitless), and The Rotary Connection, who were formed by Chess (when still independent and under the control of Len Chess) as a kind of East Coast answer to the West Coast's 5th Dimension.

The group recorded some half dozen albums for Chess and were moderately successful, despite being the subject of quiet confusion by radio programmers, critics, dealers, audiences and listeners alike, all of whom were at a loss to know what 'bag' to drop them into.

Whereas the 5th Dimension soon fled the psychedelic magic garden tended by Jimmy Webb

for the relative calm of Las Vegas, Sinatra TV specials and Bacharach/David, the Connection remained relatively avant-garde.

They had no hit 45's but managed to remain recognisable mostly by courtesy of Minnie's remarkable voice. However, after the usual round of royalty hassles, The Rotary Dis-connected and Minnie cut a solo set which managed to stay mainly in the Chess stockrooms.

After these disappointments it was down to session work, and her recent marriage consolidated her feelings that she didn't really need a solo



Minnie Riperton: Stevie's insides quiver.

career. The impression made on the various record companies by her vocal talent wouldn't fade away though and with everybody chasing her signature she eventually signed with Epic/CBS.

"Perfect Angel" was released in the summer of 1974 — quite a sleeper. On the sleeve Stevie says that whenever he hears her voice he feels "my insides rush and quiver", which sounds more like indigestion than a compliment, but the lady does have something: a relaxed singing style, late night and sophisticated, that has been compared to the style of the South American singer Yma Sumac.

Somewhat I find her style too constricting, too inflexible to mean very much in the long term — in fact I'm surprised she's a hit at all. But then I'm no Stevie Wonder.

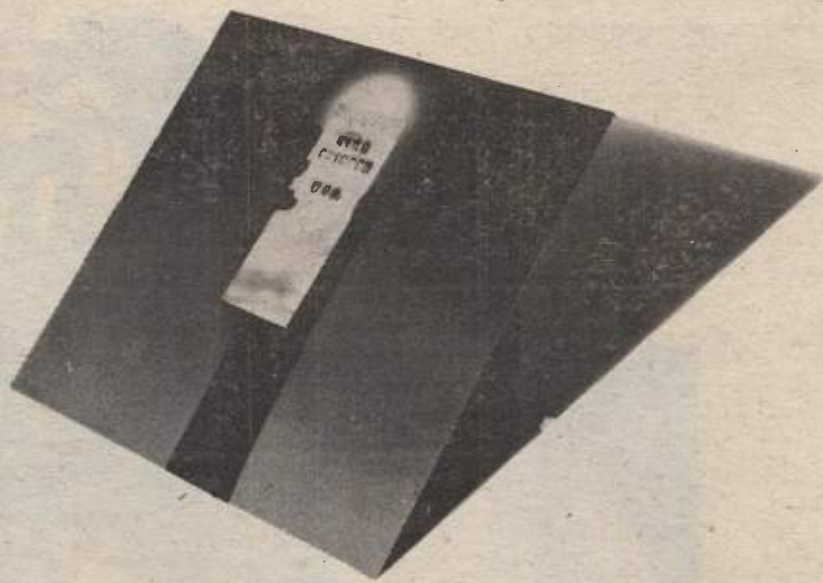
□ BOB FISHER

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THRILLS

Can a man with ruffed pantaloons sing the Blues?

GRYPHON RYPH ON SANS BLONDEL

THE "MEDIAEVAL ROCK" catch-all's been sprayed just a little too forcefully around Gryphon for the now five-piece band to any longer feel its benefits. And anyway, the "mediaeval rock" tag



I should have listened t'me pore ol' grey-haired mother's advice. She said I'd never make it with a B-309 100w. amp, 16 "Loudo speakers an' a Zazzo pickup!

"was something of a PR job" to start with.

This information is imparted to me by Richard Harvey — keyboards, recorder, and crumhorn player with the band — with just the correct modicum of British understatement for the point to be thoroughly driven home.

Meanwhile I'm putting on my coat with a view to leaving the decidedly enervating Battersea rehearsal studio. The Interview as such is over, and after being confronted by the quintet's politely stiff upper lip and generally lacklustre conversation, I sense that their condition is closer to depression than mere lethargy.

Brian Gulland, the bassoon player, whose general Falstaffian air makes it seem most apt that he and Harvey should once have entertained the diners in *The Teddy Bears Picnic*, anow-defunct Fulham Road restaurant, is most prone to none too subtle observations on the band's apparently rather sad financial state.

And the public school accents come on just that touch strong when they're all simpering at once about the amount of hours they sometimes need to put in.

Hard cheese, eh?

Enough, however, of the neuroses of the meeting which does tend to lend it something of the ambience of a rank and file young conservative seminar.

So, Richard, the birth of Gryphon, if you please?

"It started in a very peculiar way," he smiles. "I met a lute player at college (The Royal College Of Music) with whom I used to play at trendy restaurants . . . and after a while we got fed up



with playing in trendy restaurants without a bass part.

"And Brian bounded up to me in the college one day and said 'Hello, Rich. I've meant to ask you. Are you one of us?' I said 'What do you mean, Brian?' He said 'Do you . . . ahem . . . smoke dope?'"

"And we jumped on the back of his Honda 50 and off we went to the Crumhorn shop. And thereupon it was a trio." And he smiles.

Isn't life a bowl of cherries, huh? "T'rific!" says Richard Harvey — as he does quite frequently.

Since then, however, Gryphon have recorded three albums — "Gryphon", "Midnight Mushrooms" and "Red Queen To Gryphon Three" — while Harvey himself has made a solo record of music by Vivaldi.

The original acoustic trio has grown to five: Harvey and Graeme Taylor, the guitarist, who was at school with the former, Philip Nestor, who

joined on electric bass before the second record was made, David Oberle, who has in his past drummed with Kevin Ayers and seems the most — dare I say it? — worldly And, of course, bassoon and crumhorn player, Brian Gulland.

All the same, chaps, accepting that your sound is now a little to the Northeast of Jethro Tull do tell me why, initially, you had this compulsion to utilise crumhorns and bassoons.

"Just forces at our disposal really," grunts Gulland.

Harvey, who is frowning at the bassoon player for belching into his bottle of beer, clearly feels the need to take on the role of head boy: "The thing is I was personally very, very involved with instruments of that kind anyway through having played in a classical group.

"We had no idea we could earn any money from it — and we were right. Examine my tatters."

They all chuckle.



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THRILLS

Version One



Ever been a Bay City Roller? And if not, why not?

YES, YOU can have been a Roller! Discover an alternate past — merely by studying the above photos, checking with the key and selecting the Arthur (anonymous ex-Roller) you like best! Ready?

Pic 1: (Circa 71). Then There Were Six: Gent on the left is named Nobby, next, an Arthur, another Arthur, Derek Longmuir; front: Billy Lvall (now with Pilot) and Alan Longmuir.

Pic 2: (Circa 70-72). Left to right back row: Alan Longmuir, David Paton (now with Pilot), Nobby; front: Derek Longmuir, Billy Lvall.

Pic 3: (Circa 72). Left to right back row: Arthur, Billy Lvall, Derek Longmuir; front: Nobby, Alan Longmuir.

Pic 4: Left to right back row: Arthur, Eric Faulkner, Derek Longmuir, Alan Longmuir, front: Nobby.

Current line up: Back row left to right: Eric Faulkner, Derek Longmuir; front: Alan Longmuir, Leslie McKeown, Stuart Wood.

Version Two



Version Four



Version Three



As we know 'em and love 'em today



However, a fusion of public school rock and mediaeval instruments, eh? (Quite fitting. Snigger, snigger.)

Graeme Taylor, who is probably described by girls as "Sweet", pipes up: "Well, there wasn't any rock in it in the beginning. There was one number which had a beat to it — therefore, it was a matter of Henry the Eighth in a rock and roll band."

"We just got together to play nice little mediaeval tunes, really."

But eventually you decided to make inroads into this totally unviable commercial proposition and make it your livelihood?

"We didn't really have much sense," guffaws Gulland.

"At that time we were just doing what we felt like doing," retorts Richard Harvey, frowning at Gulland once again. "In the days when the idea came about there were only the three of us. That was it — we were having a good time. The initial idea to make a demo tape . . ."

Aha. But surely the general scheme behind a demo tape is to have more than a good time and to sell it to record companies . . .

"Yes. Yes. Well, funnily enough one of the main reasons for the demo tape was that we'd been playing a lot of material for some time and we just wanted to have it on tape."

At which point Transatlantic Records signed them up after somehow coming across the tape: "They came to us." Gryphon all emphasise simultaneously.

And shortly afterwards Brian Gulland, who had met Yes while they were recording "The Yes Album", managed to interest Mr. Brian Lane, the Yes manager, in them. And they're going out on tour supporting Yes in both the States and on the Yes British tour. And Clive Davis, US record company *meisterwerker* has signed Gryphon to his new American Arista label.

And Gryphon are still miserable and unhappy and don't want to talk about mediaeval music.

Ah well. There's always the Stock Exchange.

CHRIS SALIVAWICZ

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ROCK SNOBBERY. That's what it is. A prevailing attitude that anything commercially successful in terms of the charts must therefore be top-twenty hype, not suitable for those who really Know About Good Music and best left to moronic boppers who actually get off on dancing and contrived, simplistic music.

Take a look at those charts and you'll find plenty of evidence to back up such a view, the sort of records that it isn't Cool To Like. Admittedly separating the wheat from the chaff is superficially quite easy — but just how bad is the output of bands such as Showaddywaddy, The Rubettes, First Class and The Sweet?

In fact all these groups, and probably a few more, make records which sound great on the radio and occasionally transcend the awesome and stultifying spell that Robin Nash, Blackbum and co. manage to weave in order to trivialise everything to their own special brand of bunkum.

And occasionally a classic example of the genre emerges which rightfully assumes an elevated status. Sometimes one offs having nothing to do with formula also grab the spotlight, like "MacArthur Park" or "Riders On The Storm", but these are exceptions not norms. Excellent forty-fives are there for the listening to now, and holding the view that everything contemporary is necessarily rubbish will prove far more detrimental to rock and roll than maintaining more tolerant critical standards less clouded by blind prejudice.

IN THE PAST I've probably been as guilty as anyone when it comes to sneering at chart-orientated groups. I wasn't exactly delighted at being asked to cover Sweet in Copenhagen but having done so I'm convinced that Sweet, and others like them, fill a need as relevant as that supposedly provided by artists like Rick Wakeman or ELP.

Inside the Brondby Hall are five thousand people who already have their opinion firmly entrenched and altogether they've paid close on thirty thousand pounds to have it reinforced.

Sweet mix their hits liberally with tracks from "Sweet P.A." and "Desolation Boulevard" and the audience enjoys it all. It's one thing to singalong with "Hellraiser" and "Blockbuster", quite another to enjoy cuts like "Restless" or "Set Me Free" that indicate Sweet really do rock as hard as anyone. Mick Tucker's drum battle against a double-screaming of himself and Andy Scott's guitar work throughout have more in common with the Spiders From Mars than The Bay City Rollers.

And that's a fact.

Sweet's slick presentation, volume and choice of material may not allow one to extend the comparison too far but really they're every bit as enjoyable as, say, Slade, Queen — and a host of other bands who exist in that rarified atmosphere where their work is Taken Seriously.

When I spoke to Mick Tucker after the gig it was bade abundantly clear to me that Sweet feel they are most of the way to justifying their musical existence in an arena where everyone is working towards a similar end. Sometime back they were a much despised band, accused of being just another synthetic Chinn and Chapman product. There's some truth in that, particularly as their last two London shows (The Rainbow and Imperial College) were both unqualified disasters (owing to P.A. breakdowns which indicated a marked lack of professionalism on someone's part).

It was therefore natural to assume that the band were inept, safe in a studio but unable to reproduce the most undemanding proof of live ability. Yet since then — with the publicised support of respected old-timers like Pete Townshend and even John Peel — the band are overcoming various barriers.

"I think we've achieved it in

Europe, though in England there's still a stigma that dates back to our stereotyped image of four years ago," says Tucker. "People find it impossible to accept we have some talent even while the albums have brought that talent to the fore."

"In terms of measured success we've been accepted on the continent. It's coming round now but we don't shout 'we want respect' anymore. You don't get that until you actually lay your balls on the line and prove it."

The factor of such a diverse age range at their concerts resulting in the presence of so many younger people, is some cause for frustration but, according to Tucker, it's acceptable: "They are very familiar with the albums, whereas in England the act went over the kids' heads. I think our audience will change when we've done something in America because the English are so cynical. We're beginning to get encouraging feedback now. John Peel had a competition playing one of our B-sides asking who it was and the answers ranged from Gracie Fields to Led Zepelin."

"We deliberately played colleges on our last tour to bring the act to an older audience although obviously we can't stop younger kids from coming. And we missed out by not doing Charlton when Pete asked us."

Last year's break with the consistently reliable Chinn-Chapman team hasn't done Sweet any harm — if the success of "Fox On The Run" is anything to go by. Tucker sees the change as inevitable and beneficial:

"We'd been striving for our

own material as our demands got greater, particularly when they became involved with other acts. When we needed a new single they weren't around so we went in and did it ourselves, that was it. They knew there'd be a split eventually."

"See, their strength is limited. It doesn't lie in albums, and we were getting dead lazy relying on them. Now it's just easier if we do it and we get a truer reflection of our sound. Before, Brian (Connolly) would be under the direction of Mike Chapman and the sound wasn't always ours. On album we told him to do what got him off and as you can see, live it's much rougher, less clean-sounding."

This independence is reflected in a playing competence that most people wouldn't expect to witness at a Sweet concert. Their past record may have worked against them once but they no longer shout the odds:

"We're adequate. We'd rather let people assess our talent from coming to see us — though I suppose we are pretty good. Lots of press wrote us off, turned their backs."

"We do want to drop the singles tag because it holds you to ransom. You're only as good as your next record."

Surely a predicament arises here in that you've built a reputation on singles and yet you also want to make the transition to something more adventurous. What's wrong with making commercial records any more?

"Well we did get channelled and we got fed up."

But I'm not ashamed of what we used to do. In fact, I'm positive it lengthened our lifespan."

Announcement: it is now cool to say 'I dig the Sweet' in mixed company

Rehabilitation by MAX BELL



Off with the motley! Pic: JORGEN ANGEL

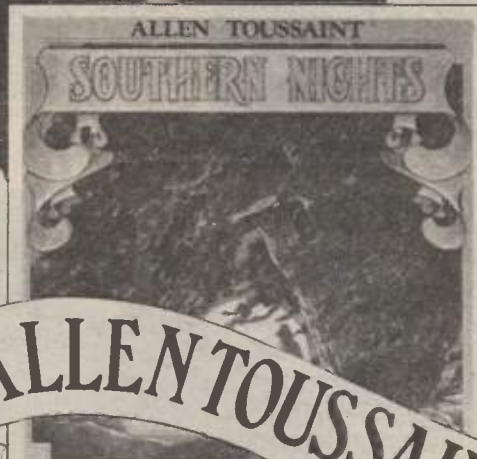
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- 2nd. London City Polytechnic
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Such were the critical reactions to "Driving Through Mythical America", Atkin/James' second album, released four years ago. And, for once, the promo copy-lifters could play it straight — hardly a murmur of dissent has greeted anything the partnership has produced before or since, and the plaudits have come from all colours of the critical spectrum.

Rock weeklies and monthlies, trade papers and folk periodicals, college rags and Fleet Street heavies — all have gone out of their way to lavish praise on an unprecedented scale in the general direction of Islington's dynamic duo and, although their work has yet to achieve relative commercial success, they're certainly sufficiently "established" not to begrudge Elton John and Bernie Taupin their fiscal millions.

Well, the first two or three millions, anyway.

ALTHOUGH Pete Atkin gets top billing on their albums (he does after all write the tunes, sing them to the accompaniment of guitar or piano, arrange them, conduct them, and produce them), he's really a multi-handed second-fiddler to Clive James — by simple virtue of the fact that all their collaborations originate on the paper in James' prolific typewriter.

This, for rock, is an unusual discipline in itself (although, oddly enough, shared by John/Taupin); but where discipline in creation is concerned, few if any other rockers or "folk-poppers" come anywhere near the ruthlessly diligent cultivation of ideal standards, indulged in by James and Atkin.

They're perfectionists of a sort — and that alone puts them beyond the pale of most competition in the idiom.

As such, their success can only usefully be measured in its own terms, if measurement of one sort or another is what's required.

Arguing the validity of their place "in" rock or "out" of it is clearly fruitless until they achieve the degree of popularity or notoriety necessary to breed influence. Since this eventuality would concomitantly require talents specific enough to receive that influence — and I detect none at present — the Atkin/James phenomenon must be examined in the context of its own self-sufficient isolation.

CLIVE JAMES is, as they say, a man of many parts — most of which we're all by now familiar with.

At present he's doing little "tele" apart from the odd gig on *What The Papers Say*, sublimating his enthusiasm for the medium in probably the sharpest TV column currently available (every Sunday in *The Observer*).

Aside from that, he writes regularly for the *T.L.S.*, *New Statesman*, and *New York Review*, filling the gap in his workday between journalism and song-writing with the on-going composition of a long satirical poem "about an actress".

"I have a lot of fun making it appear that I'm doing a lot," he

confides. "But actually I spend a lot of time just lying around thinking — which is handy because writing lyrics does take a lot of spare time. You've got to spend days doing nothing until the idea's right, and then write it."

"Lyrics are the most important thing. I build everything around them."

At 35 ("six years younger than Yoko Ono"), he displays the kind of double-edged restless energy that can prompt ill-concealed impatience over a laboured point, but just as easily reveal an ingenious facility for leaning away from an issue near which he feels unhappy.

This is not to accuse him of dodging certain questions — although openly inviting them, on the other hand, is just as much a part of the defending debater's art; it's more to do with his own brittle self-awareness which, at times, is so much to the fore in his assimilation of another person's point of view that he misses that view entirely.

There again, lucid exposition and precise definition of terms are held to be basic etiquette in James' cerebral household, and since Seventies youth has, rightly or wrongly, relaxed its standards in this department, a perceptible culture-shock can result when one of its members encounters James' old-style articulation — a fact which may account for the sort of stunned wonder aroused in some quarters by the man's work (and which certainly accounts for my personal difficulty in getting across to him what was on my fashionably muddled mind).

Speaking with spandau rapidity, sharpshooter succinctness (ouch!), and the self-assurance of a pre-Einsteinian physics whizz, Clive James can, with his non-stop *tour-de-force* of tumbling aphorisms, leave an interviewer fumbling for all the wrong words to frame all the right questions.

He's a bright geezer, in other words.

But is he more than that? Is he a genuine artist, engaged in the creative juxtaposition of his sensibility with the spirit and corpus of his society and time?

Or is he just a hustler from the outback who writes limericks?

One thing he's not worried about is his multi-denominational career and the effect it might have on his cultural credibility.

"If the public regard me as lightweight because I do all this," he remarks with the tiniest frown of annoyance, "that's their problem — and, in time, I think that'll sort itself out. A reputation for frivolity doesn't hurt me."

After a pause, he adds the hasty qualifier: "Not in the long run, anyway." — And then looks at me with brief anxiety, evidently hoping that I'm hip to the quote-game rules.

I savour a millisecond of command — before another question bumps and slithers out of the scrum and James is off again on a mercurial, side-stepping verbal sprint down the touch-line of rationalism to ground his thesis between the twin posts of dialectic at the far end. (Ouch! — Ed.)

Very much the man in form — and, speaking of "form", let's begin with the kind of technical enquiries only a don or an academic maverick could possibly find interesting. — Why? Because I'm writing this *my* way, that's why . . .

Are you a poet or a versifier?

Neither. I just think of myself as being involved in popular music. I don't feel very "poetic" — I try to keep that side as unconscious as possible. I tend to think about the Idea. Is the Idea alive or not? If the Idea's alive, I might carry it with me for years before I find out how to express it in a lyric.

Who does what first in the partnership?

I usually write the lyric first and

give it to Pete. He keeps it for any length of time — maybe a couple of days, maybe a couple of years — until he thinks he knows where it should be stressed and roughly how the melody goes. And then we have a *crucial* session which may last any length of time, where we work on it together — and in that time any amount of the lyric can be thrown out. Sometimes two-thirds of it'll go, sometimes nothing changes. But Pete's a very fine natural critic of English and can always tell when I'm writing badly. And everyone needs help . . . in writing. So I don't mind that a bit.

Do you "hear" a rhythmic pattern or a stanza form?

I do hear a rhythmic pattern and maintain it in the stanzas as they're written — but sometimes that's just scaffolding and it can drop away. Pete may set the thing entirely differently. For example, "The Last Hill That Shows You All The Valley" from "A King At Nightfall", which I wrote as a very slow lament stressed in all kinds of different places — and Pete set it as the rocker that it is.

The important thing is to have a discipline, to hear a certain pulse, even though it might change later. But the first thing I hear is an idea. I had the idea for "Beware Of The Beautiful Stranger" ten years before I wrote it. I simply didn't know how to do it — until one day I happened to write down all the words in English which rhyme with "stranger" — there are about five — and that's when I realised it had to be a comic song.

So quite often inspiration can start from a small thing. A technical problem.

But the "technical problem" there was surely that you were using a double-syllable rhyme, which nearly *always* produces a comic effect?

Yes, that's right. Absolutely so.

You describe what sounds, superficially at least, to be an extraordinarily objective process of composition — something completely alien to rock's original ideal of spontaneity, for example.

Yeah, it *sounds* that way — but only because we're articulating it. It'd be much easier for me to sit here and say 'I'm engaged in an extremely mysterious process which I'm incapable of analysing. I'm just taken over by this mystic feeling.' And be George Harrison and talk about the Inner Light. But the mere fact that I'm capable of analysing it makes it *sound* conscious. It's not — all that much. We do work very *precisely*. There's no way you can be deliberately casual.

So where does that fit in with the aforementioned rock ideal?

The rock ideal is changing, anyway. I'm not saying we're replacing what rock there was — we're not that large — we're just a *part* of rock. But the thing I like most about rock is that, within it, you can encompass thousands of styles. It's a journalistic restriction to consider that rock 'n' roll is confined to certain ways and means.

Well, I don't believe that either

But a lot of journalists *do*. In fact, we've been hammered on a previous occasion by NME in a disastrous interview (by Chris Salewicz). I mean, Pete never said any of those things. I don't know whether you want to print any of this, but I'd just like to get it off my chest. Pete simply hasn't got that kind of conceitedness.

(As a matter of interest, I mentioned this to Chris who

By IAN
MacDONALD

Klever Klive and the James Gang

(Subtitle: from little Atkins great Oak Trees grow)

A fearsome encounter between two of the foremost minds of a Generation...uh...two of the most cerebral Rock Critics afloat...um,two of the most Accomplished Raconteurs...the most Polysyllabic Pussycats? The most —aw Hell,two of the Baldest Men in Town.

looked up the tape of the interview and compared it with the article in the paper. He maintains that every last quote was accurate. But let's not get bogged down this early on. My next question concerned a series of articles James wrote for the now-defunct British rock monthly *Cream* a couple of years ago. These pieces amounted to a James-eye-view of the creative process as it applies in rock — and they drew a lot of adverse reaction from the Awopbopaloooppers.) James: Well, the series was written from the viewpoint of a lyricist who wants to think about the kind of lyrics you can write now. And just because I admire Sebastian and Newman doesn't mean that I don't enjoy Holland-Dozier-Holland — in fact, I'm more likely to put on a Supremes track than anything when I'm relaxed. It's just that you write criticism for a very specific reason — and that's to clear the ground for yourself. I put on rock records for the sound, just like anybody else — but there's no point in my writing criticism about it.

Last year we re-printed one of those articles, the one on Dylan. There seemed to be a general feeling that the mode of criticism was foreign — that kind of Lit. Crit. "the text must stand up by itself" thing — I never said the text must stand up by itself. You won't find that anywhere in those articles. I simply said that I couldn't understand why all the bits weren't as good as the good bits. If

one stanza of "Like A Rolling Stone" is better than all the rest, why can't the others be as good?

You said that each successive idea was introduced under less logical pressure than the previous one... The stanzas didn't build, yes.

But you didn't say what you thought he was saying. What I was saying was he didn't explain what he was saying.

In that case, how can you talk about "logical pressure"? It's one game to pin down a song as a song. It's a whole other thing to try to evaluate a song as a phase of an expression of a dominant philosophy, itself undergoing continual change. To me, what you were doing was analysing the lyric as an internally coherent system without identifying what the system had been evolved to cope with — structure, as in your own song-writing method.

Yeah, I'm sure you're right — but don't forget that my article was written as a polemical piece at a time when nobody had said that the poetry of Dylan was suspect.

Sure. It was as a polemic that we printed it, but —

And when I wrote that series for *Cream* it was never meant to be as important as it turned out. It was just me getting my rocks off about certain artists

that interested me. I thought it was worth saying at the time that Randy Newman was the most important songwriter to have recently emerged — because not many people were saying that then. And it was worth saying that John Sebastian wrote terrific lyrics.

So how do you feel about the opinions expressed in that series now?

I think I came on a bit strong, because it was very important, I thought, that my kind of criticism should at least be written in English. In fact, I write far more hiply for *The Observer*. It was a deliberate policy. I was sick to death of the monosyllabic gunge that was appearing as rock criticism at the time.

And they mistook your linguistic facility for glibness?

Yeah, this is an equation which will eventually die out by itself. Even Charles Shaar Murray — what am I talking about, especially Charles Shaar Murray — talks about my academic background. This is all nonsense. I'm the least academic of people — and I've got plenty of professors in universities who'll testify to that! I was a disastrous student... but never will I apologise for my own facility for stringing a few words together.

I still think that's what lyrics — my kind of lyrics — are about. Pete thinks the same, thank God.

I don't want to harry you about

those articles... Harry me, harry me.

Concerning The Beatles, you said that, around the time of "Sergeant Pepper", they were moving from "accurate complexity" to "inaccurate complexity." Would you care to define your terms there?

What destroyed them was a combination of acid and The Wisdom Of The East. Acid and The Wisdom Of The East are the same thing of course. It's just that one of them is taken in tabular form.

This is a prejudice of yours, this Wisdom Of The East Bit?

Oh absolutely. I've got an analytical brain, not a synthetic one.

That must cut you off from a lot.

Not necessarily. People can have terrific spiritual scope and still be specific. Yeats is a good example — but The Beatles weren't up to that.

What about the contention of people like Goldberg and Pickering that Dylan is a great mystic, a great religious figure of the Twentieth Century?

I think he's a great cultural figure of the Twentieth Century. I think his religious content is... open to question. The trouble is, of course, that he's so vague on the subject that almost anything can be read into it.

Uhuh. Well, it's this area of "specific" versus "vague" that I was trying to draw you into when I asked you whether you were a poet or a versifier.

Okay — technically it's a versifying process — because I'm not writing self-sustaining poetry. The ideal lyric simply wouldn't stand up without music. That they do is just an accident.

What sort of "sense" do you expect out of poetry — and I'm thinking of Poetry in terms of it being a mode of thought diametrically opposed to The Prosaic, if you like.

Well, Yeats wrote two of the greatest poems I know — "Byzantium" and "Sailing To Byzantium" — and I can't understand them. But they're very great poems. Any poem that was less than that, I'd want to understand.

Er...

Mine have to be understandable because I'm not good enough not to be.

So there's nothing that you've written that you don't understand?

(Laughs) Yeah — there are. That was usually because I was fooling myself at the time. I think, er — No, I take that back. There's nothing on the records that I don't understand. I have written the odd visionary thing which I'm temporarily elated with — and then I realize, much later, that I've been fooling myself. Usually when I give it to Pete. He infallibly spots when I'm faking — you can tell 'cost the language goes soft.

Okay. You mentioned the importance of "having a discipline" in terms of attention to form. Isn't there a danger of over-doing that aspect and thereby squeezing out all the "variables" which might otherwise lift the thing off the ground?

The answer's yes. Stiffness is a constant worry. It's the danger of discipline — but it isn't as great as the danger of lack of discipline.

No, it wasn't stiffness I was talking about. It was the danger of concentrating so much on formalistic elements that you eventually forfeit all options on surprising yourself.

No. I flatly contradict that. It's only out of technical problems that the ability to surprise yourself comes.

Only?

Absolutely. I'm certainly not a good enough poet to discover things that I didn't know I knew simply by letting it all hang out. In other words, I'm not Blake. And if Blake were here, he'd say that. He'd say: "You're not Blake."

Look — I believe firmly in the principle that there's no art without resistance from the medium. Someone else put it like this: the departure point for inspiration is the obstacle. I believe that absolutely.

As far as arranging your own obstacle course?

Well, I couldn't dream of functioning without rhymes. I'll put it more strongly: I couldn't dream of functioning without pure rhymes. I don't use vowel-rhymes — although I admire a lot of people who do. Randy Newman, for example. He vowel-rhymes brilliantly. But

I'm not that good, I think.

You think vowel-rhyming is a higher level?

No, it's a different area. The Beatles did it because it would never have occurred to them to think that a solid rhyme was better than a vowel-rhyme, or vice-versa. They were unconscious technicians. Now there are certain penalties you pay for being conscious of what you're doing — and one of them for me is simply not being able to allow myself to do certain things. Like vowel-rhyming.

How would you feel if a revolutionary walked in here and accused you of playing The Establishment's game by adhering to these age-old inherited cultural disciplines?

I could attach no meaning to such a statement whatever. To represent the artist as a fool who doesn't know where his inspiration is coming from — that's playing The Establishment's game. The most anarchic thing I can think of is to be a formalist. You're implying that everything about the world is transient except art — which I sincerely believe. I think art is the only true continuity.

What if this revolutionary then said that art is bound to be artificial in the face of the continuous flux of life? That art just has to come out second best?

In his case he'd probably be right.

You don't think anyone could be serious and still hold that view?

I'd think they'd probably grow out of it. Most of the artists I'm interested in are no longer young. And the thing we haven't said in this interview so far is that those of us who first danced to Little Richard and Elvis Presley are now approaching our middle thirties. And the time for youthful inarticulacy is gone. Middle-aged inarticulacy always sounded foolish.

Maybe we ought to define inarticulacy?

I don't have to because, right now, that's what John Peel says I need. He's saying Clive James is a very intellectual fellow and he's trying to impress us with his knowledge. To which the answer is Clive James is not an excessively intellectual fellow — and I'm certainly not trying to impress him with my knowledge. If I were trying to impress him with my knowledge, the songs would be very different. What John's missed out on is that he's acting harder than I am. He's really straining his brain in an effort to appear stupid. Which he certainly isn't — in fact, we've got a hell of a lot to thank him for.

Yes, but Yeats, to use your example — in fact you've used him once as a certificate of precision and once as transcendent purveyor of vagueness — couldn't it be said in this context that he sometimes rose to heights of sublime inarticulacy? I'm trying to open the word up.

Yeah, I know the feeling. You're getting to the point where you can really no longer explicate what's in front of you — but I think that's actually poetry being so clear that it's dazzling. In my view, the only valid obscurity arises from an excess of clarity. Get that down, Boswell! (Laughter.) But, on the other hand, I would never say that Dylan was inarticulate. He had a problem of which traditions to inherit and was naturally a very inclusive

There stood Rimbaud, arms akimbo...

Ouch?

Pic: PENNIE SMITH

Well, Eric likes him. So does Pete

"I'M JUST very, very tired of mass produced rock 'n' roll albums with hundred watt Marshalls and lead guitar and boogie and blues and all that. I'm sick of it. All I want to do is play quality music in smaller places," said Joe Walsh on quitting The James Gang a good two years ago.

The James Gang were a three-piece American power trio born in the late '60s, when hard rock was the thing to play. No-one British really got off on the Gang too much, save for one Pete Townshend who lauded them to the heavens, brought them over here to accompany The Who on tour and, apparently, encouraged their moustachioed guitarist Walsh to quit the trio and embark on a solo career.

(Actually, E. Clapton said he dug him as well.)

Quit Walsh did and now some two years later he's riding high, as they say, after several inroads into the US charts as a solo artist, and will make his first British appearance in his own right in June at Elton's Wembley Stadium gig alongside The Eagles (a band who share the same management as Walsh3 and The Beach Boys).

But back to that quote which provides a convenient starting point for this assessment of Walsh's work to date. It seems to me that what Walsh was saying, and rightly so, was that he was proper juiced off with The

James Gang.

In fact for the most part, his guitar playing was the only truly fine thing about the Gang who seemed to spend a great part of their time pumping out hard-rock clichés and only very rarely became genuinely inspired.

So by saying he wanted to play "quality music", Walsh didn't really have to top too much that he laid down before.

The vehicle he chose was "Barnstorm" — the name of Walsh's first album and also the name of his band. Again it was a three-piece, consisting of drummer Joe Vitale, formerly of The Amboy Dukes, and bassist Kenny Passerelli who in his time has played with none other than Stephen Stills.

Walsh was adamant about not using his name to front the band — "I don't want to feature Joe Walsh and become a superstar. I could have stayed with The James Gang and remained in the spotlight, but you can't go that way and not go entirely nuts."

"As soon as you get into the spotlight the emphasis comes off the music and goes on to the gate and that leads down a dead-end street. I've agreed to call the group and LP 'Barnstorm' featuring Joe Walsh'. There was a lot of discussions about it because they wanted an even greater emphasis on my name. Even though I guess it's right, I'm not really into it. I don't want to become the Joe Walsh Show. Just Barnstorm



Joe: the doctor advises a dose of hard rock with melodic flair.

should do fine, thanks."

It wasn't long until Walsh did, however, drop the name Barnstorm and begin recording and touring under his own name, so perhaps the guy is go-

ing nuts.

Recorded for the greater part at Colorado's Caribou Ranch, "Barnstorm" was approximately ten times as good as anything Walsh had done with The James Gang and immeasurably more creative. In fact, some two albums later it's "Barnstorm" that still stands as Walsh's most creative album.

Bill Szymczyk produced and the accent was on sound and experimentation with sounds. Take the opening cut for example. Called "Here We Go" it is the best thing Walsh has ever recorded and in turn illustrates his compositional imagination, singing (he'd maximised the style he used with The James Gang so that his vocals, often multi-tracked with a lot of echo, were often like an expansive whine), and guitar playing ability.

Walsh seemed more concerned with producing new sounds than actually writing well-honed songs — as "Here We Go" demonstrated.

Starting out as a slow brooding acoustic number, the number swells dramatically until Walsh delivers a guitar solo on the melodic side of Jeff Beck, with his eye fixed firmly on construction. Another solo comes next and this time it's harder, with a lot of fuzz. Synthesizers buzz, a grand piano rears itself and what so easily could have become over-kill leaves the listener thinking that Walsh is up to something good.

Although there isn't another cut on "Barnstorm" with a similar approach as entirely successful as "Here We Go", cuts like "One And One", "Giant Bohemoth" — a snippet of sound reminiscent of Yes at their most tranquil — and "Mother Says" proved that Walsh was into experimenting with arrangements of symphonic proportions while retaining a basic rock ethos; listen to those power chords on "Mother Says".

In actual terms of writing a good song that, say, someone else could cover, Walsh didn't have that much to offer on "Barnstorm" since for the majority of the time the material relied heavily on studio techniques.

"I'll Tell The World" was the album's finest song and that was written by a couple of people called Gordon-Jacobs. A pretty love song, it had Walsh's guitar work in lyrical vein, serving as the song's hook.

Although Passerelli and Vi-

But STEVE CLARKE says, 'One more loser album like that and JOE WALSH is going to prove them wrong...'

tale cropped up in a couple of song-writing credits, their musicianship wasn't crucial to the overall scheme of things and "Barnstorm" came on as being Walsh's studio solo album without a hint of the three musicians playing as a band.

There was, however, more band identity for Walsh's second solo work, brilliantly titled "The Smoker You Drink The Player You Get" but ironically credited to Walsh alone — the Barnstorm tag had been dropped.

Vitale and Passarelli were still in tow and a keyboard player called Rocky Grace had been added. In terms of a follow-up to "Barnstorm", "The Smoker You Drink" was an odd record in that Walsh didn't expand on what he'd done on the earlier album. If anything it was a regression as far as the actual music went, but a step onwards in terms of commerciality.

Consequently it sold strongly over in America and broke Walsh as an artist in his own right, with the opening cut "Rocky Mountain Way" being one of the few pieces of hard rock produced in the '70s to make any kind of advancement on '60s hard rock, and also making it as a hit single.

This time round, Walsh co-produced the album with Szymczyk, and the sound of "The Smoker You Drink" was, like everything else about the record, more well-defined and therefore more instantly accessible than "Barnstorm". Although Walsh's music still featured a lot of electronic trickery — synthesizers, phasing etc. — the instrumentation and arrangements were less noticeable than with the previous album.

"Rocky Mountain Way" and "Meadows" both featured Walsh doing fresh things with well-worn hard rock clichés, and succeeded in confirming that as a musician and writer Joe Walsh had a considerable amount to offer. His guitar playing was way above the average without possessing quite enough originality for Walsh to make it into the Guitar Hall Of Fame.

Some of his other songs on the album weren't that inspired, however, although "Bookends" showed him thinking more about writing a song and less about its overall sound. "Wolf" showed him short on imagination.

Fortunately Grace and Pas-

sarelli came up with a couple of songs good enough to make "The Smoker You Drink" an above-ordinary album.

Grace's instrumental "cut "Midnight Moodies" was a fascinating piece of music with an unusual chord-progression, fine playing from Walsh and a slant towards the Latin. "Happy Ways", written around a bass riff that smacked of The West Indies while being a hundred miles from reggae, was enjoyable music too.

Two albums to his credit and Joe Walsh was a Big Name — although the music he's laid down so far still makes one curious as to his real musical soul other than his being fond of whipping out some fine guitar and a lot of power chords.

Obviously there was more to him than this, but if he was indeed a bona fide rock giant he'd have to come up with something a little more substantial while retaining some thread of continuity material-wise, for his guitar playing wasn't quite enough to reserve him a place in the Rock Giants' Hall Of Fame.

Walsh's third and most recent album, "So What", didn't do anything more to convince the world's record-buying public that he was such an artist. In fact, it did the opposite. It's the weakest album he's made to date, showing him devoid of any real identity.

The impression I get from "So What" is that Walsh, who's association with Vitale, Passarelli and Grace was coming to an end (the musicians on "So What" are essentially backing Walsh as studio musicians), was getting a little short on material.

Why else would he bother to re-do "Turn To Stone", a song of his that appeared on "Barnstorm"? Or a version of Ravel's (yes, the Ravel, French classical composer) "Pavane Of The Sleeping Beauty" on which he plays moog and ARP?

The guy is obviously having to fill up his album — I'm pretty sure a Walsh audience don't really want to hear their hero play something by a French guy most of them have never heard of.

Then there's "All Night Laundry Mat Blues", a send-up of the blues which might raise the odd laugh or two but again rates ultimately as a filler. And it isn't as if the rest of "So What" ranks as truly inspired music.

Walsh has obviously been doing a lot of hanging out with The Eagles, and has got into that whole LA soft rock thing hence his producing Dan Fogelberg's (he's on the album too) "Souvenirs" album. Messrs. Henley, Frey and J. D. Sother all sing harmony on "So What" and their singing, plus Walsh's guitar, are the two most distinctive aspects.

Even though Walsh's guitar playing is still excellent, that too — like his writing — has lost a lot of its identity and lacks the excitement and good taste of some of his earlier playing.

Walsh produced "So What" alone and some of the tracks aren't that well recorded. Perhaps Szymczyk's role in Walsh's music is more important than it seemed from just reading the sleeve credits.

If Walsh doesn't do it the next time round then he's in trouble, and the best way to do it is for him to stick to playing his own kind of music; hard rock with a melodic flair, well played and imaginatively arranged with the odd well thought out ballad to balance things out. Basically that's why "Barnstorm" and "The Smoker You Drink" are essentially good records.

There aren't that many decent musicians, outside Led Zeppelin, who can still do anything with that type of music.

Surely Walsh doesn't want to prove Pete Townshend wrong?

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News Desk

Edited: Derek Johnson

KNEBWORTH: FIRST OFFICIAL DETAILS

Floyd preview album at outdoor gig

PROMOTER Frederick Bannister has now officially confirmed that Pink Floyd will be topping the bill at his open-air concert at Knebworth Park, Hertfordshire, on July 5. He said this week: "The licence enabling me to stage the event was only granted a week ago — so, although Floyd's name has previously been mentioned in connection with this concert, it has been impossible to confirm them until now."

Pink Floyd's office revealed this week that the band will be previewing material from their next album at Knebworth — as yet untitled, the album is their first since "Dark Side Of The Moon" and is planned for release later in the summer. Tickets for the concert are expected to be available around May 9, although postal bookings will be accepted beforehand by Harlequin Records, who said that admission price will probably be £2.75.

(Readers should check with Harlequin before applying at 01-439 3063 or 01-636 1348).

This will be the second concert to take place at Knebworth Park, which is 28 miles north of London and close to Stevenage. The previous one was on July 20 last year when Allman Brothers topped the bill, supported by the Mahavishnu Orchestra, Van Morrison, the Doobie Brothers, the Alex Harvey Band and Tim Buckley.

Bannister has not yet finalised his support acts for this year's event, but it is known that permission has been granted for a larger audience than in 1974. On this occasion, 25,000 will be able to attend. Once again, it is expected that special trains will be running from London King's Cross to Stevenage, and returning after the concert; with a day-long connecting shuttle bus service to and from the site (which is also easily reached by road).

The show will last approximately 12 hours. There will be ample toilet and refreshment facilities, plus a limited amount of camping space for those unable to get home after the event.



JOHN CIPPOLINA (left) with Man's MICKY JONES turning his back on the camera

Cippolina is joining Man

JOHN CIPPOLINA, who was lead guitarist with Quicksilver Messenger Service, is to join Man for the duration of their British tour which opens at Southend Kursaal on May 10. It had originally been planned for him to come here with Link Wray Group, as guests in Man's three concerts at London Chalk Farm Roundhouse (May 24-26) — but now that Cippolina has been asked to work full-time with Man, Link Wray will not be coming.

This means that Man's line-up for the tour will be Micky Jones, Deke Leonard, Martin Ace, Terry Williams and Cippolina. The U.S. guitarist thus becomes the first Quicksilver member ever to play in Britain. The idea occurred after he jammed with Man three weeks ago at San Francisco Winterland. It is not yet clear if he will be remaining with the group after their U.K. tour.

Since Quicksilver split, Cippolina has had one album released with Copperhead on CBS. For the past year, he has been working in 'Frisco with his own band, Terry and the Pirates.

The bill for Man's three Roundhouse concerts has not yet been finalised, but it is expected that Barry Melton (ex-Country Joe and the Fish) will be among the guests.

... AND BEEFHEART IS NOW A MOTHER!

CAPTAIN BEEFHEART has joined the Mothers at his own request, Frank Zappa revealed to NME this week. Said Zappa: "Seems Beefheart split from his managers and his Magic Band, and despite the adverse comments he's been making about me for some years, he phoned me up and asked for a job — which I was pleased to give him". The Mothers (the abbreviated name for the Mothers Of Invention which is now being used) are already working in the States with Beefheart, and they will cut their first album together at the Armadillo Centre in Austin, Texas, on May 20 and 21.

ROLLERS IN FILM

BAY CITY ROLLERS are to star in their first full-length film this summer. It will be a semi-documentary based on their own life style — but, says producer Mike Mansfield, "with a touch of fantasy". Screenplay is by Russell Harty and the movie will be shot on locations in England, Scotland and the Caribbean.

The film announcement explains why the Rollers' world

tour, reported last week, will occupy a full year. From July onwards, they will be playing concerts in more than a dozen countries, as well as making the movie. British dates will be virtually non-existent during this period, with one exception — they will undertake a major London concert in the summer, specially for filming for inclusion in the picture.

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RECORDING NEWS

Womack on Wood LP

BOBBY WOMACK has flown to Amster 'am for recording sessions on Ron Wood's second solo album, which has the tentative title of "Now Look" and is planned for mid-June release. Womack will be featured on guitar and backing vocals. Other supporting musicians are the same as on Wood's first solo set "I've Got My Own Album To Do" — Ian McLagan, Jean Roussel, Willie Weeks and Andy Newmark. After completing the album, Wood heads for the States to prepare for his upcoming American tour with the Rolling Stones, reported last week.

Records avoid tax increases

RECORDS were one of the few "luxury" items not affected by the Value Added Tax increases in last week's budget. Cassettes and cartridges were also unaffected. Yet paradoxically, the apparatus on which they are played — record players and tape machines — had their tax increased from 8 to 25 per cent, along with TV sets and radios. A Government spokesman said the reason was that the Chancellor wanted the tax rises to apply only to larger items.

● Slade have a new single issued by Polydor on May 9 titled "Thanks For The Memory (It's A Wham Bam Thank You Mam)". It was penned, like all their previous hits, by Noddy Holder and Jimmy Lea, and the band are featuring it in their act on their current British tour.

● Caravan have changed the title of their upcoming album, for June 1 release by Deram, because a U.S. album has just been issued bearing the same name. It was to have been called "Toys In The Attic", but this is now changed to "Cunning Stunts".

● The Carpenters' next album, their first containing new material

for two years, is titled "Horizon" and will be issued by A & M in the early summer.

● Leon Russell's seventh album on the Shelter label is "Will O' The Wisp", and it is due for release in this country next week.

● Poco have been signed to a long-term deal by ABC Records, which are distributed in Britain by Anchor. They are currently cutting a new album, hopefully for June release.

● James Taylor's latest album "Gorilla" is now scheduled for May 9 release by Warner Brothers. Out on the same day and label is the new Cher album "Stars".

● In view of the current interest in Labelle in this country, RCA are to reissue the group's "Pressure Cooking" album early next month.

● U.S. guitarist Barry Melton, formerly with Country Joe & the Fish, is producing the new album by Welsh band Quicksand. Release is planned for early summer.

● Frank Sinatra's new single, for release by RCA in mid-May to tie in with his European tour, is another composition by Paul Anka who wrote the highly successful "My Way" and "Let Me Try Again". It is called "Anytime I'll Be There".

● Fox follow up their recent debut hit "Only You Can" with a new single released by GTO on May 2. Titled "Imagine Me Imagine You", it is taken from their album "Fox".

Quo release live EP for 13th anniversary



STATUS QUO are to issue a live EP to celebrate their 13th anniversary next month. It runs for 13 minutes and comes out on May 13, to coincide with the 13th British tour — which (unfortunately for the numerical sequence) starts on May 8! Titled "Status Quo Live", it contains three of their most popular stage numbers — "Roll Over Lay Down", "Gerdundula" and "Junior's Wailing". The tracks were recorded on the Rolling Stones' mobile unit during concerts at Southend Kursaal and

Stoke Trentham Gardens on March 1 and 2 respectively.

A Quo spokesman commented: "After topping the charts with their last single 'Down Down' and their last album 'On The Level', it will be interesting to see if they can achieve the same result with this EP". Although an EP is by definition a four-track record, and a three-track release is usually described as a maxi-single, Quo say that their new disc qualifies as an EP because of its lengthy playing time.

NEWS BRIEFS

Arsenal rock off

ARSENAL Football Club have abandoned plans to stage a rock concert at their Highbury ground in North London in late May. They had applied to the GLC for an entertainment licence, but have now withdrawn their application because — they say — they did not have sufficient time in which to sign acts. A spokesman for the club said that, although they had scrapped the May concert, the idea still stood in principle. "It's possible that we shall try to put on another concert in the future", he added.

Tundra re-formed

GLEN TURNER has re-formed Tundra, the band originally launched just over a year ago by Chris Stainton. The band have been off the road since Stainton's departure at the beginning of this year, but they are now rehearsing with their new line-up, which does not include a keyboard player. Their album titled "Glen Turner's Tundra" will be issued by Goodson on June 6, and the band will be going out on the road next month to promote the album.

Decameron dates

DECAMERON, who return this weekend from a German tour, resume British dates at Bristol Victoria Rooms on May 9. Also set are Worcester Swan Theatre (May 25), Farnham Redgrave Theatre (26), Peterborough Key Theatre (27), Dunstable Queensway Hall (29), Bromsgrove Shenstone New College (31), Birmingham Repertory Theatre (June 1) and, as reported last week, London Queen Elizabeth Hall (4). They undertake a six-day French tour from May 17.

Rank club closes

DONCASTER Clouds, formerly the Top Rank, has closed at short notice — so adding another chapter to its chequered career. The Top Rank originally closed on June 15 last, and was expected to be taken over by the Bailey Organisation, but the deal did not materialise and Rank eventually re-opened the venue on November 14 as Clouds. Now there are again rumours of a take-over by Bailey's, who bought out several Top Rank venues last year.

Kilburn tour soon

KILBURN & The High Roads set out on a British club and college tour in mid-May to promote their new album "Handsome", released by Dawn on May 23. A new single will be issued simultaneously. They also appear in concert at London New Victoria on May 4 when they support Dr. Hook & The Medicine Show. Kilburns are set for a tour of Holland, Belgium, France and Germany from July 24 to August 7.

Rest of the news

DAVID GATES has added an extra date to his British mini-tour at Southport New Theatre next Tuesday (29), which now becomes his opening venue. . . . Two extra gigs in the Drifters' current U.K. schedule are at Bedford Civic Hall (May 2) and Chester Celebrity Club (3). . . . Jack The Lad play a charity concert at Newcastle City Hall on May 30, and close the first night of the three-day Cambridge Festival on July 25. . . . Scottish folk-rock band Contraband have broken up. . . . Fruupp undertake a short Irish tour next month, opening at Belfast Whitla Hall (May 8) and Coleraine Ulster University (9).

Rollers' support

BAY CITY ROLLERS have chosen Northern Ireland band Chips as the support act for their nationwide tour opening this Sunday in Glasgow. The Rollers say they were particularly keen to find an unknown band for the tour. Chips have been signed by Decca, who release their first single "Love Matters" this weekend. It was penned by the Arnold Martin & Morrow team, who wrote the current Guys & Dolls hit.

Monroe concerts

BILL MONROE and his Bluegrass Boys start a short British tour this weekend, his first since 1966. Acknowledged as the "father of bluegrass music", Monroe plays Redcar Coatham Bowl (this Saturday), Newmarket Grand Ole Opry (Sunday), Liverpool Philharmonic Hall (next Monday), Birmingham Digbeth Civic Hall (Wednesday), Eastbourne Congress (May 1), London Hammersmith Odeon (2) and Bristol University (4). MCA are issuing the 20-track album "The Best Of Bill Monroe" to coincide with his visit.

Nucleus augment

IAN CARR's Nucleus will be augmented by several big-name jazz stars when they play and autumn college tour, performing Neil Ardley's major new work "Kaleidoscope Of Rainbows". Joining the band for this tour are Jon Hiseman, Tony Coe, Barbara Thompson, Dave Macrae and Paul Buckmaster. First confirmed dates are Plymouth University (October 11), Exeter University (12), Leicester University (13), Manchester University (14) and Leeds University (15).

Bluesmen on tour

THE 1975 American Blues Legends tour — featuring Homeless James, Tommy Tucker, Eddie Burns, Billy Boy Arnold and Little Joe Blue — plays Birmingham Barbarella's (this Sunday), Hatfield Polytechnic (Monday), Brighton Sussex University (Tuesday), Bristol University (Wednesday), Nottingham Albert Hall (May 1), High Wycombe Hall (2), Stafford Polytechnic (3), Portsmouth Centre Hotel (4), London 100 Club (5 and 6), Bangor Arts Festival (7), Leeds Polytechnic (8), Sunderland Barnes Hotel (9), Manchester Polytechnic (10) and Gravesend Woodville Hall (11).

Geno venues set

GENO WASHINGTON, whose comeback to the gig and recording scene was announced last week, has now formed a new backing band and is starting live work. His gigs include Barrow Maxim's (tonight, Thursday), Newcastle Northern Counties College (Friday), Skegness Variety Bar (Sunday), Ilford Room at the Tow (next Tuesday), Rhyl St. Asaph Stables (Wednesday), Cambridge Rex (May 1), Hanley Heavyside Machine (2), Strood Amega Club (3), Shrewsbury Tiffan's (5), Leicester Freewheeler (6) and London Marquee (7).

Hollies U.S. trek

THE HOLLIES, who are appearing all this week in cabaret at Manchester Golden Garter, leave on Tuesday for America for a string of concert appearances — four each in Los Angeles and one in Chicago. They are also booked for three major TV guest spots. For this trip only, they are being augmented by keyboards player Pete Wingfield.

White sells out

TICKETS for Barry White's two concerts at London Royal Albert Hall on May 12 sold out within four hours of the box-office opening, despite the top admission price of £6. A spokesman commented this week: "The £6 top is not that high when you consider today's inflated prices. For Barry's concerts in Germany, £6 is the lowest price, with a maximum of £18".

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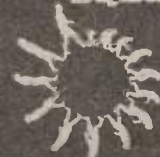
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PLATTERS

SINGLES REVIEWED THIS WEEK BY CHARLES SHAAR MURRAY

The crackle of the electrodes The wail of the Lennon

THE COMMON HERD

GARY GLITTER: "Love Like You And Me" (Bell). Not one of Captain Sheepdip's finest hours, this features an uncharacteristically strained and ragged vocal over a severely modified version of the Glitter Sound that actually includes recognisable instruments and — dare I say it — a discreet Philly influence. Watch for it on your friendly local "Top Of The Pops" and see if hanging out wiv Keef'n Woody'n Rod has given Gary the Gee cultural validity. If it has, you'll probably see him on the Woosle Test.

NAZARETH: "My White Bicycle" (Mooncrest). Ulp! Hoist with my own petard, already. If you'll consult the second part of the already-legendary (or legendary, already) psychedelic compilation currently lurking on page 36, you'll know all that any human being needs to now about "My White Bicycle", a highlight of '67 when introduced to the world by Tomorrow. Now Nazareth have bounced it back into the spotlight of mass attention, complete with a singularly nasty vocal by Dan McCafferty: proving only that the charming eccentricities of '67 survive but poorly when subjected to the clodhopping heavy metalisms of '75. Love it and leave it.

KELVIN COYNE: "Rock And Roll Hymn" (Virgin). From suave, elegant Kevin and his collection of sophisticated men-about-town emanates one of the week's few respectable singles. "Rock And Roll Hymn" is, in fact, considerably better than respectable, and if you (or anybody else) were to twist my arm, I'd admit that it's nothing short of excellent. With some magnificent mouth harp from Gordon Smith and a discreetly funky rhythm section to anchor him down, Coyne flails his way through possibly the best new song of the week. If the past seven days had produced nothing but "Stand By Me", "Tom The Peeper's Brother John" and "Rock And Roll Hymn", it'd be a great week. As it is, all kinds of other nonsense has hit the stands, so reluctantly dragging myself away from Mr. Coyne's single, let's mosey along and meet up with...

FANNY: "Butter Boy" (Casablanca). ... which is a pleasant but inconsequential

SINGLES OF THE WEEK

JOHN LENNON: "Stand By Me" (Apple). And as the awesome God-given power of the lightning crackled into the electrodes, the massive figure stirred. A convulsive shudder ran through its misshapen frame as the machines began to quake, shaken almost asunder by the unimaginable energies they harnessed. "Life!" screamed the doctor, hurling his bloodstained overall to the floor. "I have created life!" He ran, trembling, to the table, and with quivering hands, unlocked

the massive bolts that held his creation prisoner. Slowly, agonisingly, the thing swung its massive legs to the floor, and with a titanic effort, stood upright. "Speak to me, I conjure thee!" howled the doctor, gesturing like a madman as he gazed up into that impassive, hood-eyed face. The great mouth opened. The vocal chords worked convulsively. The doctor watched with bated breath as his creation struggled for the words to express what was locked in his soul. Sudden-

ly, he burst into song. "When the night ... is cold ... and the land is dark ... " From nowhere, the sound of an excellent New York studio band wafted through the darkened laboratory. "What a faaaaabulous rhythm section," murmured the doctor as the agonised tones of the creature rang out proud and clear. "He's a great, great singer and he sings this song like he was born to sing it," he thought. "But if only the bugger could write some songs ...

SOUL FOOD: "Tom The Peeper's Brother John" (Power Exchange). Ian MacDonald informed me that this is a sequel to some arcane obscure disco goodie entitled "Tom The Peeper", but as one who was unaware (who was blind but now I

see), I'm here to testify that its genial absurdity works more than adequately on the uninitiated. It's undoubtedly the best of the three H. B. Barnum productions that Power Exchange have unleashed this week, has a gorgeous groove so that dancers

just can't hide, is all about this kid who's following in the voyeuristic footsteps of his big bro', and trades off Amos'n Andy dialogue with a cute female vocal group. Looks good, sounds good and theoretically does you good. Approach.

Jean Millington song taken from the band's last album "Rock And Roll Survivors", and along with Jean and Patti Quatro, it features Nickey Barclay (who has since gone into hiding) and Brie Howard (who has been replaced by Cam Davis and who had a navel that makes Maria Muldaur's look like a diseased nostril). If the BBC didn't like "Voulez-vous coucher avec moi", they sure ain't gonna go for "He was hard as a rock and I was ready to roll," so that's the end of this bit.

GRAND FUNK: "Bad Time" (Capitol). Curiously enough, that's exactly what I had when, against my better judgement, I went to see G. Funk at Wembley last Friday. "Bad Time" is a totally lame song whose existence is semi-justified by a startlingly pretty chorus. Memo to the Scottish girl with the bad breath who harangued me unmercifully during G. Funk's set and threatened me with physical violence of a peculiarly unpleasant nature because I hadn't enjoyed the band's last album: "Hi, angelcakes, hope you enjoyed the show!"

SPEEDY KEEN: "Someone To Love" (Island). The reappearance of somebody who has at some time exhibited signs of rock and roll genius is always welcome, and as John (Speedy) Keen was the man who wrote

"Something In The Air", "Accidents" and all the other great stuff on Thunderclap Newman's superb "Hollywood Dream" album, it is my pleasure to inform you that this here is his new single. The voice is the same, the sound is similar, and even though the song is by no means in the same class. "Someone To Love" is still an exceedingly pleasant record. Hear it at least once.

ROY ORBISON: "Hung Up On You" (Mercury). In the days of my youth, Roy Orbison knocked out a few amazing singles, notably "Only The Lonely", "Running Scared", "Candy Man" and best of all, "Oh Pretty Woman." "Hung Up On You" is almost in the league. To those who know — who truly know — that should be well sufficient. Investigate.

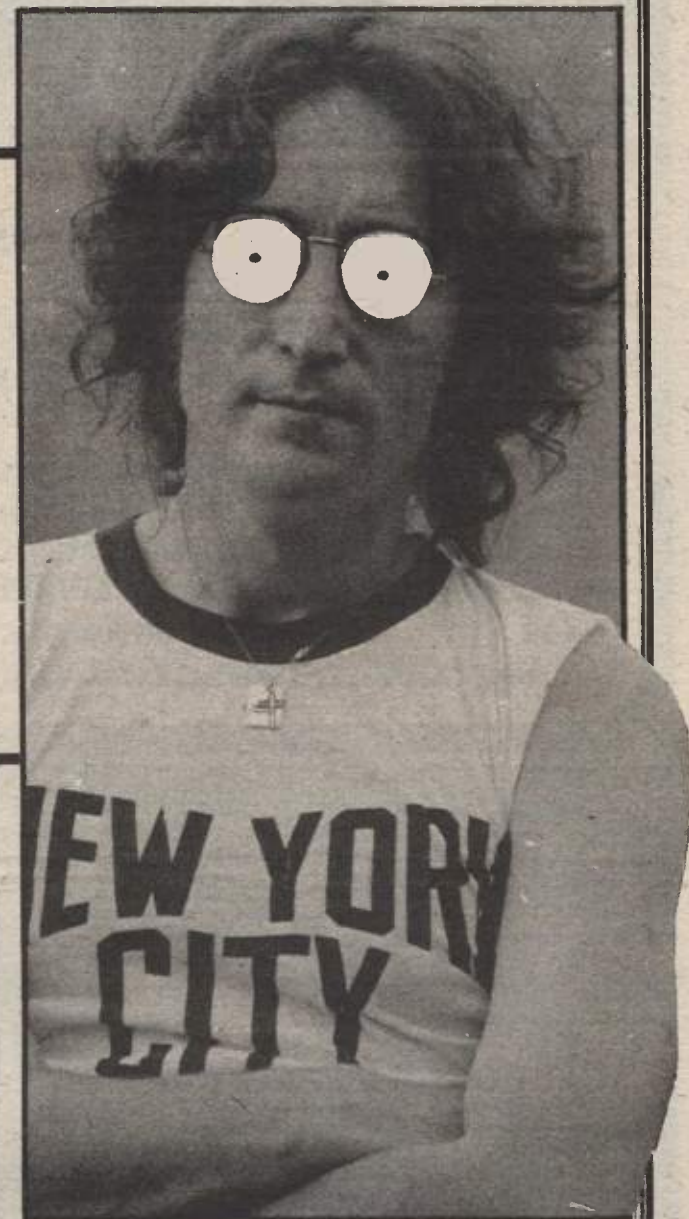
THE GOODIES: "Stuff That Gibbon" (Decca). What has the British record industry come to when it's reduced to digging up old Goodies records? "Stuff That Gibbon" is remarkably dumb and unfunny even by the standards of the Goodies' current work, and probably wouldn't have been re-released if it didn't have the word "gibbon" in the title. You know just where to stuff that gibbon, don't you?

CHER: "Rescue Me" (MCA). Yes, it is the old Fontella Bass classic. No, it isn't any good.

DISCO TEX AND THE SEX-O-LETTERS: "I Wanna Dance Wit Choo (Doo Dat Dance)" (Chelsea). ... and back to our regularly-scheduled singles column. This sounds remarkably like "Get Dancin'", except that it rates even higher on the banal-o-meter, and whoever Choo is, I hope Disco Tex has a good time with him (or her). Those of you who frequent discos will undoubtedly be hearing a lot of this one, and those of us who don't will probably be hearing a lot of it as well. It's gonna be a long hot summer.

THE KINKS: "Ducks On The Wall" (RCA). With his thumb firmly on the human interest button, Ray Davies programmes another insightful look at the foibles of the lower middle class, with rumbustious guitar and piano and his least languid vocal for ages. The trouble is that the tune's pretty nondescript and the satire's worn so thin that on a clear night you can sight Alpha Centauri through it. I like that line about "the duck's getting up my nose" though.

GENESIS: "The Carpet Crawlers" (Charisma). With a press handout comparing this to the early works of Procol Harum and the Moody Blues, you could rightly expect something fairly unpleasant, but "The Carpet Crawlers" reminded me more of Bowie's "The



Bewlay Brothers" than anything else. Despite the fact that it's been edited down to make it all commercial and appealin' like, it's still too slow and sinister to make any impression on what passes for the public mind these days. Very artful and moderately interesting, though I'd hate to be marooned on a desert island with it.

BILLY SWAN: "Don't Be Cruel" (Monument). The famous suspended-animation version of Elvis' far-famed diddy-bopper sounds even better by Swan than it did when Mike Berry and Miki Dallon — uh — borrowed it a couple months back. Mightily intriguing and rates fairly high on the intense-o-meter.

BILLY JOEL: "Piano Man" (CBS). Lame pseudo-Kristofferson song performed in anguished yelp faintly reminiscent of Elton John with laryngitis. Billy Joel is currently the recipient of much laudatory attention in Los Estados Unidos, but if we all get together and ignore "Piano Man", then maybe he can be discouraged from trucking over here and attempting a repeat performance. And over in the silly department we find "T.S.O.P." performed by the Nite Blues Steel Band (Pye) and the Coasters' "Yakety Yak" rendered a la bluegrass by Eric Weissberg and Deliverance (Epic). Both are recommended to those of you who still have a sense of humour.

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 Saturday 3rd CAMBRIDGE Corn Exchange
 Sunday 4th Chancellor Hall, CHELMSFORD
 Wednesday 7th University, LIVERPOOL
 Friday 9th Surrey University, GUILDFORD
 Saturday 10th University, LOUGHBOROUGH

Sunday 11th
 Tuesday 13th
 Saturday 17th
 Sunday 18th
 Thursday 22nd
 Friday 23rd
 Saturday 24th
 Sunday 25th
 Thursday 29th
 Friday 30th
 June
 Sunday 1st

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TOULLITTLE TOULLATE, TOUSSAINT



The man behind so many and so much finally steps out from himself.

ALLEN TOUSSAINT: "Southern Nights" (Rise)

IF ALLEN Toussaint ever wants to make the great album he's obviously capable of, he'd be best advised to first take a year's sabbatical from his New Orleans studios.

Writing, arranging, and producing for so many artists has invariably led him in his solo efforts to a situation where, on the one hand, his inspiration's strained and, on the other, his own personality seems to find itself stranded, bereft of the interpretative intermediary which his artistic associates — from Dr John down to whoever — represent.

Toussaint's problem is one of focus. The "I'm-too-close-to-it-to-know-whether-it's-any-good-or-not" syndrome — one to which "Southern Nights" like its predecessors, necessarily conforms.

However, "Southern Nights" also demonstrates the man beginning to get a perspective on himself (rather than on the singer out in the studio), closing that gap on his relationship with his own material represented (say) by the startling difference between his lame version of his own "On Your Way Down" and Little Feat's gripping reading on "Dixie Chicken."

"Last Train" is classic Toussaint — bass clef piano riff, wailing horns, primitive, chord run-down — and "World Wide World Wide" draws off the exotic setting he conjured for Labelle on "Nightbirds" with effective vocal sub-plots and a lighter-than-usual beat.

Elsewhere, those querulously decadent horns, first let off the leash on "In The Right Place," see "You Will Not Lose" eerily approaching the line Bowie drew between himself and cer-

tain aspects of Kurt Weill — a neat coincidence in the light of "Young Americans" — whilst "Basic Lady" showed as an under-rated lyric talent that falls interestingly between the acid urbanity of Don Covay and the compassion of Curtis Mayfield.

But still Toussaint falls regular victim of his own clichés — the riff and general plodding demeanour of "Country John" and the directionless sentimentality of the title-track, for example — rendering "Southern Nights" as a whole, despite its promising highspots, a directionless and unsatisfyingly low-profile album.

Time and again he seems unable to distinguish between a workable idea and a dead loss. Several numbers are mundane whichever attitude you bring to them and the afterthought of spreading bits of the title track around the cross-fades in order (presumably) to intensify the over-all atmospheric content, is ultimately merely annoying — mainly because so poorly executed.

Swinging constantly back and forth between negligence and contrivance, Toussaint forever misses his true self, waiting there patiently in between. As long as he maintains this journeyman approach to recording, he'll inevitably continue to fool himself with his own sophistication.

Which is a crying shame, since "The Allen Toussaint album," should it ever turn up, would certainly be one of the definitive classics of these twenty years.

Ian MacDonald

JET: "Jet" (CBS)

AT LAST the 1972 show!

Jet are a motley crew made up of ex-members of Sparks and John's Children, plus David O'List, guitarmeister for the Nice and the trade-preview-only edition of Roxy Music.

Due principally to the efforts

of singer Andy Ellison and bassist Martin Gordon (composer of most of the songs), Jet come on like a Nesquik composite of various stylistic devices popularised two or three years ago by Roxy, D. Bowie, T. Rex and such latterday pretenders as Queen and Sparks.

The news that they're managed by Mike Leander comes as no real surprise; they're little more than a kind of up-market Glitterband.

Martin Gordon writes songs that give a surface impression of being witty and sophisticated; examine them and they prove to be next door to totally vacant.

Probably the best of the bunch is "Nothing To Do With Us", a kind of disinherited second cousin of "Something For The Girl With Everything," which is catchy enough to make a passable single.

Jet will probably prove a godsend to kids who, in the temporary absence of the real Sparks and Roxy Music, will go and see something vaguely similar, and also to those who were too young to go to concerts in 1972.

Sleeve designer Royslav Szabo gains ten points for using Jack Kirby's "Mr. Miracle" on the cover, and loses fifteen for copying the two figures directly from the cover and page 3 of "Mr. Miracle" No. 11.

Charles Shaar Murray

KANSAS: "Kansas" (Epic)

KANSAS ARE the latest group to hoist the Dixie flag, though thankfully they don't seem anxious to broadcast the fact that "the South is gonna rise again d'ya hear" etc.

The album sleeve has a fairly appealing symbolic representation of the Civil War. North and South being held apart by a gargantuan figure, presumably Kansas State.

The actual band aren't credited, which is either an astonishing oversight or because, as they so forcibly point out, they are a band. Unity negating personality.

And that just about sums up the musical impression. All the elements for subtlety are there; good violinist, guitarist, keyboards, busy rhythm section, not to mention the Confederacy theme itself.

Despite that Kansas come nowhere near to shaping up because obviously they'd rather take y'all by storm. Bristling with hard rock commonplace, speed and beat, they rapidly cancel any hints of originality.

As an introduction, "Can I Tell You" has a slight whimsical charm that doesn't bear the lyrical repetition it gets here and it's left to the longer tracks to show you where Kansas are really at.

Kineticism of the Purple/Yes variety abounds. "Journey From Mariabronn" and "Apercu," particularly, fall into Jon Anderson's patent trap of being literate in an automatic, humourless sense.

"Journey" builds on a wholly English dynamic level. Mostly overblown, it does have an enterprising synthesiser ending that supplies some atmosphere to an otherwise pedestrian, if versatile, plod.

"Apercu" and "Death Of Mother Nature Suite" (combined into a gluttonous fifteen minutes) suffer from a similar self-indulgence. The three-piece suite has the obligatory "trees," "ignorance of man," "war" references, but it's all been done before — better.

"Apercu" is acceptable for its pleasant chamber music interjected with what are politely called complex time signature passages, but "Death Of Mother Nature" has a symphonic climax that's only exciting because you realise it's about to finish.

Not even JJ Cale's "Bringing It Back" moderates to snoring pace. Kansas know that if a thing is worth doing, it's worth doing fast.

Maybe they're right.

Max Bell

JUDY COLLINS: "Judith" (Elektra)

JUDY COLLINS has recently completed a movie about a female symphony conductor.

I understand it's very good, so it's to be hoped we have the opportunity to see it here some time. In the meantime her new album, "Judith" — released a massive 26 months after her previous, excellent album "True Stories And Other Dreams" — is an under-achievement of severe proportions, and demonstrates that the ability to make first-rate records has at least temporarily deserted her.

For a start her own material, so evocatively and dramatically successful last time around when she seemed to be sowing the seeds of a career as singer/songwriter, has nose-dived to the point of self-parody.

There's less of it, which might indicate she writes only with difficulty, the imagery is tawdry indeed, narrative weak, and melodies lacklustre. "Houses" in particular, bears the marks of a limited vocabulary, even — words like "dreams", "clouds" and "feathers" abound: it's insubstantial as gossamer, and the whole thing is vaguely reminiscent of "Sky Fell" (her earliest composition, from "Wildflowers").

"Born To The Breed" is a somewhat more tender song to her son, who's yearning to become another Capricorn guitar man; Judy's posture, maternal and sincere, but patronising as well, is a bit cloying to accept. "Song For Duke", which is mainly about the funeral (of Ellington, that is) is also embarrassing, and in any case seems only to be catching a topical wave of emotion.

Nevertheless, the traditional strengths of Ms. Collins have been her abilities as an interpretative singer, and a few well-chosen songs here are interesting.

The Stones' "Salt Of The Earth" (a good choice as the



Judy blue-eyes: when wildflowers begin to wilt...

single) is well done — it's lustily wrought, with splendid guitar and drums, and good use of a backing chorus, and certainly contrasts with the somnolence of the other material. Even here, though, I have a complaint. In her beach-combing she alights with enthusiasm upon anything that could be construed, however vaguely, as "political", and here she, unforgivably I

think, significantly alters the words in a few places to give the song a more overt socialist bias.

She says that Steve Goodman's "City Of New Orleans" is one of the best train songs ever written, and I think she's right. The version here — Goodman himself gave it a *de facto* seal of approval by playing guitar on the session — is worthy enough, in an unspectacular manner, though it certainly doesn't compare with Arlo Guthrie's treatment.

A few of the more interesting selections are the old schmaltz classic, "I'll Be Seeing You"; the title-song, written in 1932, to the movie "Brother, Can You Spare A Dime?"; and the song "Send In The Clowns" from the Stephen Sondheim musical, recently opened in London, "A Little Night Music."

There are 12 tracks altogether, though there's nothing else of significance (though Wendy Waldman's "Pirate Ships" — a children's song worthy of Tom Paxton — taken in conjunction with the songs of hers that Maria Muldaur has covered, indicates that her album might well be interesting.)

All I can say about Jim Webb's "The Moon's A Harsh Mistress" is that the melody is quite pretty, and that when I first heard it on Cocker's "I Can Stand A Little Rain", I just knew Judy Collins would record it. And now she has, more 'tis the pity, because the words are evidence only of the fact that Webb has few rivals as the most pretentious and over-rated composer in the history of rock music.

"Judith" is very professionally done, of course, and Don Brooks' harmonica playing is always atmospheric.

I think that the main damage has been inflicted by the smothering production of Arif Mardin, who's at least partly responsible for the recent emasculation of Aretha Franklin. It's as though everything has been brought to such a level of technical perfection, that it all seems first uniform, then dull and impotent.

Goodness knows why Mark Abramson, who's been associated with Judy Collins from the outset of her career, has been off-loaded; in the event this album is, with the exception of her misbegotten live album "Living", her worst ever. I just hope it doesn't take another two years to remedy matters.

Bob Woffinden

Honour thy error as a hidden intention

BRIAN ENO AND PETER SCHMIDT: "Oblique Strategies" (Private Edition)

"OVERTLY RESIST change" ... "Don't be frightened to display your talents" ... "Do the washing up" ...

"... Yeah, it was really funny. People were saying to us: 'We really love the sound you've got down there ... it's such a unique thing.' Yet it was all done by accident. Nobody knew how to work the boards properly. The production was a shambles, yet it seemed to work." (The Moments' Al Goodman talking about the "New Jersey Sound" in *Black Music*.)

"Remember those quiet evenings" ... "Think of the radio" ... "Do something boring" ...

"Drums were recorded with so much treble and echo that they sounded like a stick hitting a biscuit tin full of dry peas." (Ibid.)

"Ask people to work against their better judgement" ... "Shut the door and listen from outside" ... "Give way to your worst impulse" ...

"If you want to hear something really avant-garde, listen to The Upsetters." (Brian Eno in conversation.)

"Get your neck massaged" ... "Tape your mouth" ... "Ask your body" ...

"The idea of a 'good production' is one of the main

enemies of studio creativity." (Ibid.)

"Look closely at the most embarrassing details and amplify them" ... "Go slowly all the way round the outside" ... "Faced with a choice, do both" ...

"These cards evolved from our separate observations of the principles underlying what we were doing. They can be used as a pack or by drawing a single card from the shuffled pack when a dilemma occurs in a working situation. In this case the card is trusted even if its appropriateness is quite unclear. They are not final, as new ideas will present themselves, and others will become self-evident." (Brian Eno and Peter Schmidt: "Oblique Strategies").

"Look at the order in which you do things" ... "Discover the recipes you are using and abandon them" ... "Don't be afraid of things because they're easy to do" ...

"What about 'Don't be afraid of things because they're hard to do'?" (Robert Wyatt after employing "Oblique Strategies" during parts of the mixing of "Ruth Is Stranger Than Richard".)

"Into the impossible" ... "Courage!" ... "Is it finished?" ...

"Oblique Strategies" (over one hundred worthwhile dilemmas) is available for a limited period from Compendium, Camden High Street, at £5.00 per set.

Ian MacDonald



PLATTERS

KEVIN COYNE:
"Matching Head And Feet" (Virgin)

HOWLING AT the moon or chortling to himself in the corner, our Kevin hasn't been the easiest of singers or songwriters to confront in the past.

Once you'd grappled your way through the protective screen of idiosyncratic weirdness and got to the pain perception and humour at the heart of the man's individual compositions, the rewards more than justified the effort, but overall, Coyne's penchant for the psychotic, the desperate, the alienated — invariably the extreme — has tended to work against rather than for him.

"Matching Head And Feet" is a significant departure from that because its songs are not only approachable at first or second listening, they leap out and grab a hold of your throat.

It is, in fact, a far more accessible enterprise than either "Marjory Razor Blade" or "Blame It On The Night" — more commercial in short — but that doesn't imply a sell-out or compromise; this is nothing if not an honest album.

It's simply that the songs come over a lot more direct, a lot less self-indulgent.

Much of the change is down to the almost complete shake-down of the Coyne band's line-up since his last album, which together with some sterling production work from Geoffrey Haslam (who produced the MC5's "High Time" and the Velvet's "Loaded") has added incision and polish to Coyne's hard-bitten rock and boogie, and atmosphere to his expeditions into the weird side of the psyche.

In particular, the booming

Out of the corner — and into the limelight?

bass runs of Archie Leggett and the metallic flourishes of Andy Sommer's guitar put "Matching Head and Feet" into a different class musically to Coyne's previous work.

There's also been a change in Coyne's vocal style, which has metamorphosed from the cramped, inward twisting antics of "Marjory Razor Blade" into a more varied, open-throated style that's given him more power on the uptempo cuts and a moodier, bluesy feel on the slower numbers.

Kev's new confidence is immediately apparent on the storming "Saviour" which bravely opens the proceedings. The Peter Wolf/Archie Leggett rhythm section surges into action, and Coyne gives out with some neo-Beefheart swamp toad growls in between the fraught lyric, itself a call for spiritual salvation (them of catholic blues).

There's also a strong Beefheart flavour on "Little Lucy", though overall there's more diversity on "Matching Head and Feet" than on either of the

man's previous Virgin releases.

"Sunday Morning", for example, is a simply stated love song with its heartfelt vocals given added poignancy by the haunting atmospheres of Sommer's guitar. "Rock and Roll Hymn", which extends rock salvation to "old men and businessmen" slips into an easy relaxed groove by comparison, embroidered with some gutsy harp and "Astral Weeks" style strings reverberating above the vocals.

There's compassion too on the creepy menacing "Tulip", while "Mrs. Hooley" is archetypal Coyne: solid unpretentious boogie supporting a tale of working class life like you see down the street but don't hear on the records. Not usually.

"Turpentine" on the other hand is the other side of the Coyne vision, full of misanthropic disgust, its demands to "burn the whole world down" played out with no small ferocity by the band.

In fact, there's only a brace of tracks that don't really cut



Kevin Coyne's in the paper this week 'cos Derby are winning the championship; when West Ham win the Cup, we'll do an article on Richard Digance.

the chip fat — "Lonely Lovers" and "It's Not Me", both of which sound a trifle tuneless in the context of the rest of the songs.

Which still makes this an impressive album by most standards. Don't be surprised to see it creeping into the charts.

Neil Spencer

B. J. THOMAS: "Reunion" (ABC)

IN THE AREA in which B. J. Thomas operates, there is a thin line between sentiment and mere schmaltz; regrettably on "Reunion" — which is not up to the standard of his previous album on Wand — he's falling on the wrong side.

He is cultivating the same pastures that Charlie Rich has grazed so well; middle-of-the-road, country-flavoured pop. As it was recorded in Nashville, with the assistance of some stalwart sessioners it's perhaps not surprising that the C&W flavour is predominant, but, although his voice is not unattractive, the result is merely pleasant.

The resemblance to Rich is most striking on the opening track, "(Hey Won't You Play) Another Somebody Done Somebody Wrong Song," which is remarkably like "The Most Beautiful Girl," though it suffers by comparison; as do his versions of "Crying" and "Sea Of Love" with the origi-

nals. There is none of the intensity of Roy Orbison, (and he chickens out of the falsetto), and none of the charm of Marty Wilde's 1959 hit, and in fact, on the latter, he sounds more like Jack Jones letting rip.

Michael J.

THE GREASE BAND: "Amazing Grease" (Goodear)

YOU DO remember The Grease Band, don't you? Originally a five-piece back-up band for Joe Cocker who, after shedding their two keyboard players and drafting in one Neil Hubbard, guitarist, had a line-up that went: guitarist Henry McCulloch, bassist Alan Spenser, drummer Bruce Rowland and Hubbard.

They went on to work in their own right, producing one very excellent album some four years ago on Harvest before self-destructing shortly after, while never actually coming out and announcing their non-existence. Not that long ago I asked Hubbard about the state of the group's existence and his reply was kind of vague.

McCulloch went on to work with Wings before re-uniting with Cocker for a short time, seemingly unable to find complete musical satisfaction with one particular band.

Bruce Rowland is currently in harness as drummer with Fairport Convention, and Spenser and Hubbard are now two of the marvellous Kokomo who, like The Grease Band themselves, have made a very splendid debut album.

But to the point.

Apparently "Amazing Grease" was commenced shortly after the first album came out and completed in spurts, if that's the word, over the last three years. Apparently (again) the group weren't exactly falling over themselves in their enthu-



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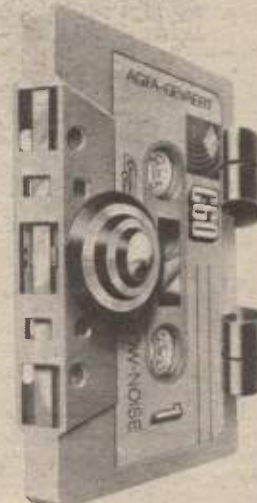
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The Sound Safe

PLATTERS

siasm for the project and consequently, the music that lies herein is hardly compelling, coming over as it does as little more than some very brain-damaged jamming.

All four members of The Grease Band are fine players, particularly Spenner and McCulloch, but their individual skills are barely noticeable here. Not surprisingly horn-player

DADAWAH: "Peace And Love" (Trojan)

C'EST IMPOSSIBLE. A reggae album with a mere four tracks.

Could these guys be the Caribbean's answer to the Grateful Dead? They sound they could manage a four hour set with only one tune, or even one note.

The guitarist seems more spaced than a stoned Sontaran. There are bass lines thicker than palm trees, and dumber drums than Ringo plays in his sleep.

The album is more hypnotic than a gallon of cough mixture.

With one reservation. Someone has laid vocals over all this zomboid excellence, and he's very heavily into religion and politics.

And if you want to get the low-down on the world political scene as observed from 220 Marcus Garvey Drive, Kingston, Jamaica, this baby is more than ready to oblige.

In detail. In depth. At length. And loudly.

Occasionally, he leaves room for the band to do their dazed but dogged thing, but all too rarely.

Still, if Rastas and Haile Selassie are your idea of a fun time, you may care to pay some attention. Otherwise, stick with Jimmy Cliff.

Bob Edmands

Mel Collins (allegedly a member of Kokomo but Alvin Lee also appears to lay claim to ownership of the guy), Chris Stainton (an original member of The Grease Band when they supported Cocker) keyboard player Mick Weaver and Kokomo's drummer Tony Stannard mess around on some of the cuts.

In actual fact Collins' soprano playing on "Reminiscing" is a treat and along with some of McCulloch's guitar work it ranks as the only music laid down here which really makes it.

Kokomo aficionados might be interested to know that "Amazing Grease" opens with Dylan's "New Morning" and predictably enough The Grease Band's treatment of it — easily the record's best cut — is similar to how Kokomo play it on stage.

This album is best forgotten. In any case, I'm sure those involved don't remember too much about it. Steve Clarke

DAVE MASON: "Dave Mason At His Best" (ABC/Blue Thumb)

THIS IS not an album of previously unreleased cuts Mason might have left at his old company. Blue Thumb, but — yawn — yet another compilation set from the said firm.

B. Thumb have the rare distinction of now having released four albums by Mason, of which only one, "Alone Together", is completely original material.

Making mileage I think they call it.

So what we have here are five cuts from "Headkeeper": the title track, "A Heartache, A Shadow, A Lifetime", "In My Mind", "To Be Free", and "Here We Go Again" — which should have been the title of this set.

And from "Alone Together" there's: "Only You Know And

I Know", "Look At Me Look At You" and "Shouldn't Have Took More Than You Gave". Plus a live version of "Can't Stop Worrying, Can't Stop Loving".

All very good material, but if you're looking for an introduction to Mason, then "Scrapbook" on Island is by far the best bet, being a double set which includes five out of these nine tracks anyway.

By the way, Dave Mason now records for CBS, and has released two albums of original material for them.

Tony Stewart

Justice this time for the Groovesville Eight?

J.J. BARNES: "The Groovesville Masters" (Contempo)

DESPITE A couple of very successful tours of



J. J. Barnes: Northern Soul can be good for you

the Midlands and the North, J.J. seems dogged by bad luck.

His last tour was cancelled by Union objections just when his career looked set for a real boost, and he has been too long in the recording wilderness. This album, although flawed, should set him up for a short time — apart from anything else, its rarity value is quite high.

But to begin at the beginning or thereabouts...

When Motown were kings in Detroit several other record companies existed. Most of the musicians were the Motown boys moonlighting and their work behind the acts that Berry Gordy didn't want to sign was at times superior to their work for Hitsville USA.

The artists concerned included Edwin Starr, The Fantastic Four, Darrell Banks, The Detroit Emeralds and The San Remo Strings. The labels — now legendary amongst Northern soul collectors — included Ric Tic, Revilot and Groovesville.

J.J. Barnes recorded for them all and, like the aforementioned, scored several big R&B hits. One for Ric Tic "Real Humdinger" (not on this album, but available on the Tamla Motown album "Ric Tic Relics"), and two for Groovesville.

It is these two hits that open each side of the album — "Baby Please Come Back Home", which reached No. 9 and stayed on the Soul charts for 15 weeks in 1967, and "Now That I've Got You Back", which reached No. 44

the same year.

Both items are very Motownish and Barnes is very influenced by Marvin Gaye delivery-wise.

Berry Gordy couldn't stand by and let these "small fry" undermine his stature, so Ric Tic was bought out and the artists either released or, like Edwin Starr, retained. Barnes himself was contracted to Motown for a while, though without having a single item released.

He was, and still is, a very creative artist, despite his somewhat unoriginal vocalising. All of these 11 cuts are part, or wholly, self composed. In fact there are only eight Groovesville masters, including the near legendary "Sweet Sherry". The other three cuts are from the Perception label, for whom Barnes cut a fine, but unheard album.

The Groovesville Eight though are what's going to sell this LP, and sell it certainly will. The tracks were produced by Don Davis (who now works with The Dells, The Dramatics and Johnny Taylor among others), and the use of congas on several tracks gives them a very modern feel. Without realising it, Barnes and Davis probably produced music that sounds a deal better than some of Motown's output of the same period. If you're a sucker for that original sound of Detroit, you'll enjoy this too.

If the Northern soul syndrome never achieves anything else, it will at least be remembered for resuscitating the career of J. J. Barnes.

Bob Fisher

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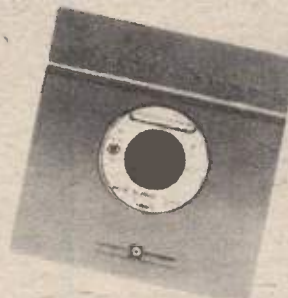
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PLATTERS

But God wasn't on his side ...

NILSSON: "Duit On Mon Dei" (RCA)

RELEASED ON the heels of "Pussy Cats", "Duit" appears to have been as much a spontaneous social event as a recording effort, with the likes of Ringo, Dr. John, Klaus Voormann, Doug Dillard, Jim Price and several dozen others credited for their help, inspiration, liquor or motherhood.

Some of the material is beautifully performed nonsense, quite delightful in spots, but a good portion is simply a mess — studio jokes that should never have been released.

More shocking than the decline we have witnessed in Nilsson's productivity since "Schmilsson" is the cheek displayed in even selling this at a time when albums are so expensive and many good, hard-working artists are struggling.

Side one opens with "Jesus Christ You're Tall", which is only funny for 20 seconds, not the 90 or so it runs before Nilsson breaks it off.

This is followed by more

pretentious inanities. "It's A Jungle Out There" is a Tarzan-Jane monkeyshine about all those nasty things waiting Out There to get you, and a real bore. The marginally-better "Kojak Columbo", a maniacal love song to television, has the helpful stamp of Dr. John on it.

Only two of the tracks on side one are comparable to his earlier songs, and not at all favourably.

"Down By The Sea" is familiarly Nilsson, an eye-winking cynicism crooned to a twee, forgettable melody — a long slide down from his "1941" period on "Harry".

"Easier For Me" is in the mood of his work on "A Little Touch Of Schmilsson In The Night", suggestive of Irving Berlin and unsuccessful as an emulation of 40s standards.

Side two is another basketful of coconuts, with the steel band still hanging in there within the grand film theme orchestration of "Salmon Falls".

But this one is very serious.

It's to do with the life of a man being analogous to the struggle of the salmon to fight its way upstream, the renewal

of life and the collective experience connecting all men. Get the picture?

Really, it's rather beautiful; but by the time you get to there you still expect Nilsson's tongue to be glued to his cheek, and the song is nearly over when you get used to the idea that it's the album's one heavy intensity number.

"What's Your Sign" is the one outstanding number. An ensemble opens with "Hey baby/Do you come here often/What's your sign" as if they were singing the "Hallelujah" chorus. Gloria Jones wails over, under and around a soaring Nilsson in a duet on a classic pick-up, in which he gives her the eye, they have some wine, discuss her moon-sign and he rips her off. This I like.

After this it's back to the chachacha on white sands stuff, and "Good For God" finishes the set almost fittingly, in very, very silly style. "Good for God/Good for God/He goes and makes the planet blue/And all the thanks he gets from you/Is look at all that poo poo in the yard."

It's a scream for one listen, but definitely a throwaway, as is the lp.

Okay, rock and roll is supposed to be fun, but Nilsson can't afford so many jokes on himself. It's been a long time since he came up with the goods, and he was only ever good if you liked the commercial bathos of ballads like "Without You" and the clever children's material like that on "The Point".

All the superstar friends in the world aren't going to carry off any more duff material.

"Duit On Mon Dei" translated, incidentally, is given as "God's Greatest Hits". Phooey. He wasn't dumb enough to play on it.

Angie Errigo

GOLDEN EARRING: "Switch" (Track)

TO THINK, as the accompanying bio with this set suggests we do, that when The Beatles first emerged Golden Earring had already been together for over a year! Who'd have believed it? Not me. And ... today (says here in printed matter) they've now outlived The Beatles by five years. Boyoboy!

Really, such comparisons mean very little — except that it's taken Earring so many years just to score one hit single ("Radar Love") in this country (though they may very well be the dog's biscuit in their own country, Holland).

Maybe it's because they're not innovative, not particularly gifted, and don't have any great aura surrounding them. They're just another rock and roll band — now. Whereas two years ago they were about the best R&B outfit kickin' grit in the Marquee, but they blew that direction.

Instead they opted for a course indicated by their previous set, "Moontan", continued less successfully with this new album which is, yessur, basic rock'n'roll. In fact, it's one long cliché from the beginning of side one to the end of side two, even taking in a little fashionable (at least they're with it, as we say) reggae for "Tons Of Time".

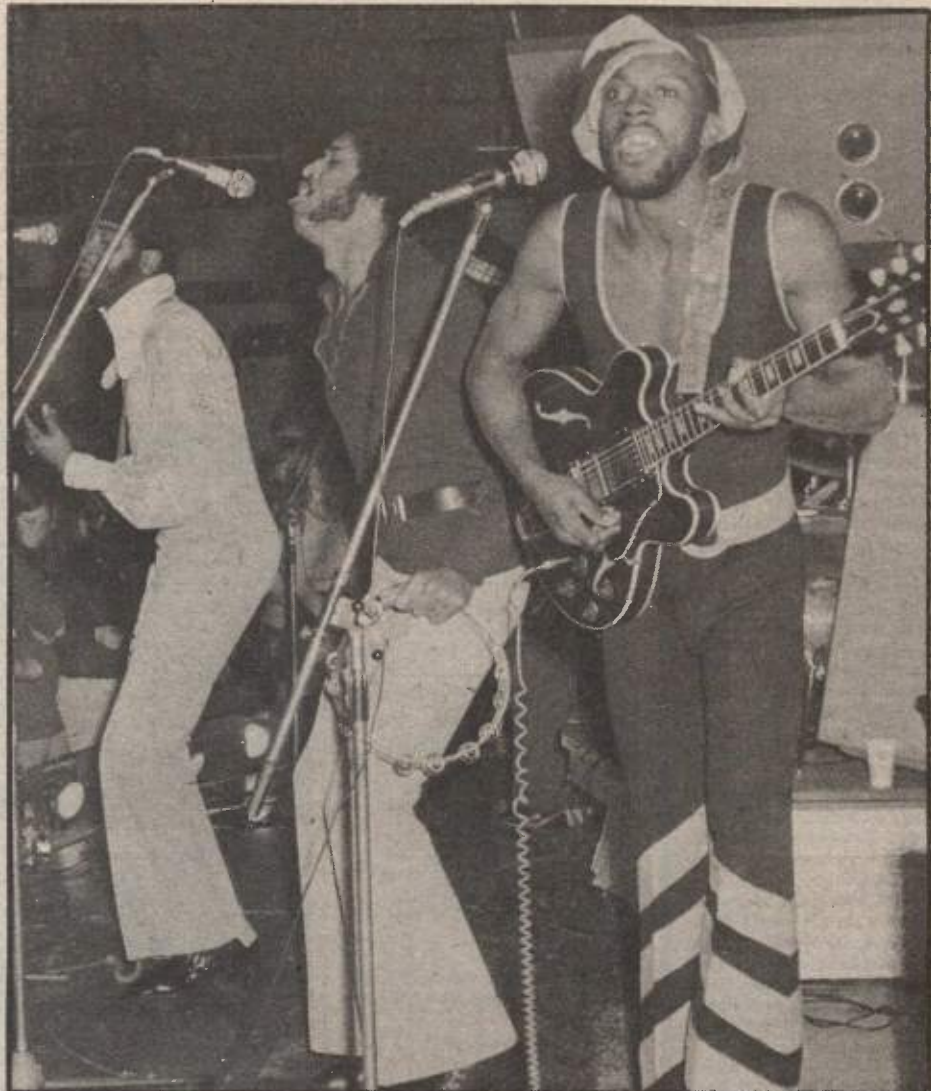
G. Earring's whole stance is so laughable they're now almost a parody of themselves. The vocals of Barry Hay are passionately tortured; likewise the howling electric guitar licks from George Kooymans; with a hard-as-a-rock-and-as-unshakeable rhythm section comprising Rinus Gerritsen (bass) and Cesar Zuiderwijk (drums).

Even the organ textures from Robert Jan sound like he's laying into a Hammond B3 tilted on its end.

The material, which includes the single "Kill Me (Ce Soir)", is boring, and what makes the album even worse is the production. Often the sound is cluttered, the mix is clumsy and ...

I don't really think it merits further comment.

Tony Stewart



"Lissen, bro' — all I want is you better take me to vo'lieder ..."

A night at the opera

OTIS B. DRIFTWOOD reviews the month's Black opera releases

Z. Z. HILL: "The Brand New Z. Z. Hill" (Contempo)

BLOODSTONE: "The Riddle Of The Sphinx" (Decca)

DAVID PORTER: "Victim Of The Joke? An Opera" (Stax)

WITH THE success of Millie Jackson's "Caught Up" and the latest retooling of "Tommy" (who'll do the soul version?) rock concept and opera albums are very much in evidence again at the moment.

Despite the fanfare surrounding Millie Jackson her concept album really wasn't anything new. She just struck lucky with the right combination of good songs at the right time.

Jerry Williams Jr., alias Swamp Dogg, was doing it three years ago with two of the acts he produced.

The first was Doris Duke: her "I'm A Loser" set was even more painful than Ms. Jackson's experiences. In true Swamp Dogg Style, he had Doris just escaping the clutches of a pimp of notoriety.

His other "opera" was with Z. Z. Hill: the album was originally released by Polydor's short lived Mojo label in 1972, and is now reissued on Contempo. Quite right too.

Hill had been around for years before tying up with Swamp Dogg, and despite his very long career had never scored a chart hit till 1971 when he had three simultaneous hits, all on different labels, one of which was a cut from this album.

Williams and Hill work their "Opera", which covers side one of this album and is entitled: "Blues At The Opera (Communication In Regard To Circumstances)" better than most.

The cuts are interlinked by dialogue from The Swamp Dogg Theatre Players (really). Some of it is very funny, especially when ZZ tells his chick that they ain't never gonna get it together 'cos she hits the booze too much. ZZ gets the upper hand all through this story, which makes a change from all the other whimpering singers constantly bemoaning how badly their baby treats them.

The wedding scene works quite well too, as the guests whisper to themselves stuff like "I never thought of Z would get married: is she pregnant or sumpin'?"

The music though is excellent, being in the main straightforward Southern soul-blues of the kind served up by such as Little Johnny Taylor, Ted Taylor, Little Milton. Even in '72 it was a bit of a throwback, sounding a lot like the early Memphis recordings of James Carr, etc.

The lyrics are REAL. There's no tweeze, no pop poetry. Williams and his co-writers (mainly Gary US Bonds) deliver the realities of life, whilst ZZ sings and emotes with a voice hewn from granite in the great Southern tradition.

Side two is a collection of typical southern blues, thematically unrelated, but delivered with equal panache. Dig the rockin' version of Bobby Darin's "Early In The Morning".

An album of rare beauty.

THE OTHER entrants in the Opera stakes don't fare quite so well.

The only genuine 1975 vintage is from the very fine Bloodstone, purveyors of some exceedingly good singles of late ("Natural High", "That's Not The Way It Goes" and the current "My Little Lady").

Their album is devoted to the life of man from birth to death.

All the facets work well. Bloodstone sing admirably: they can funk, harmonise and

wail with the best of 'em. Only one track really grates. "I Just Learned To Walk". The addition of "W"'s to many words is really silly. Shame on you Bloodstone. "Pwease whatever you do twip me", indeed.

Disregarding the rather overblown sphinx concept, the album is an admirable attempt to do something different in the R&B framework and as such deserves attention.

In the midst of all the publicity about Sweet Sensation and English soul in general, everybody forgets Bloodstone (who are actually American of course) and Mike Vernon and the fact that most of their albums are recorded in Chioping Norton with English musicians Pete Wingfield and Howie Casey amongst them.

Food for thought.

And so from the brilliant to the good to the downright awful. "Victim of the Joke?" David Porter, half of the Isaac Hayes songwriting team, seemingly intoxicated with Black Moses' success, burst into the Stax studios in 1972 and recorded this nonsense.

It is thoroughly embarrassing, like Radio 4's Saturday matinee with interjections for song.

The songs themselves, with the exception of "I'm Afraid The Masquerade Is Over" and a version of Tommy Hunt's old hit "Human", are almost instantly forgettable.

Why on earth Stax UK see fit to issue it now when there's a back catalogue of Johnny Taylor albums awaiting release is beyond my comprehension.

I suppose David Porter deserves a little bouquet for being one of the first to come up with an idea like this (he uses far more dialogue than other comparable works), but that's all — this is real agony. The victim of the Joke would seem to be Mr. Porter whose work is more suited to the Marx Bros' concept of Opera than Sadlers Wells.

Bob Fisher
p.p. Otis B. Driftwood

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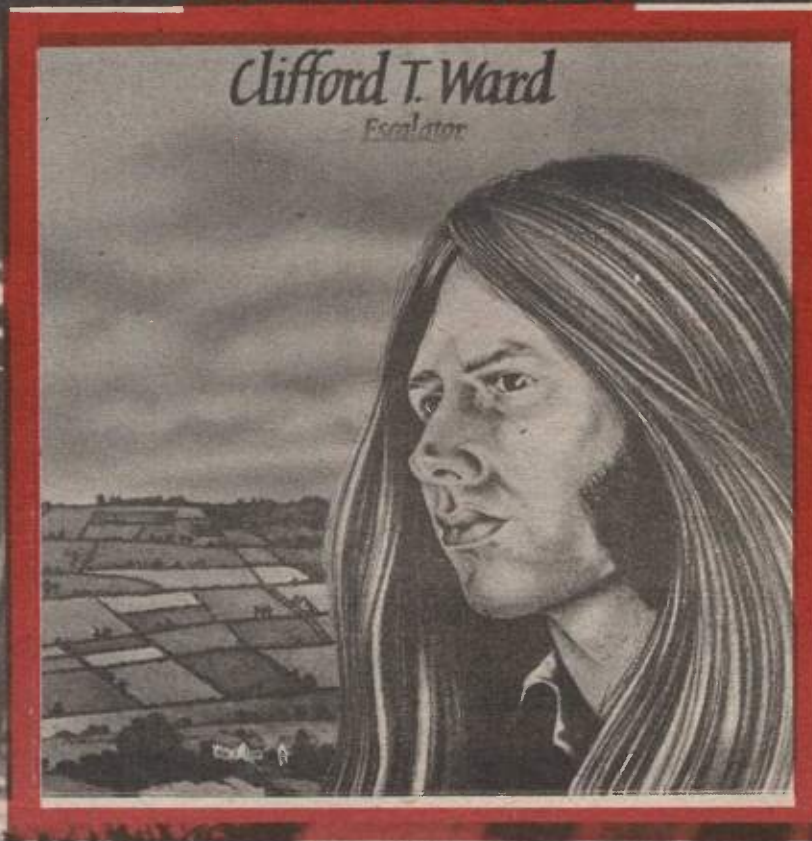
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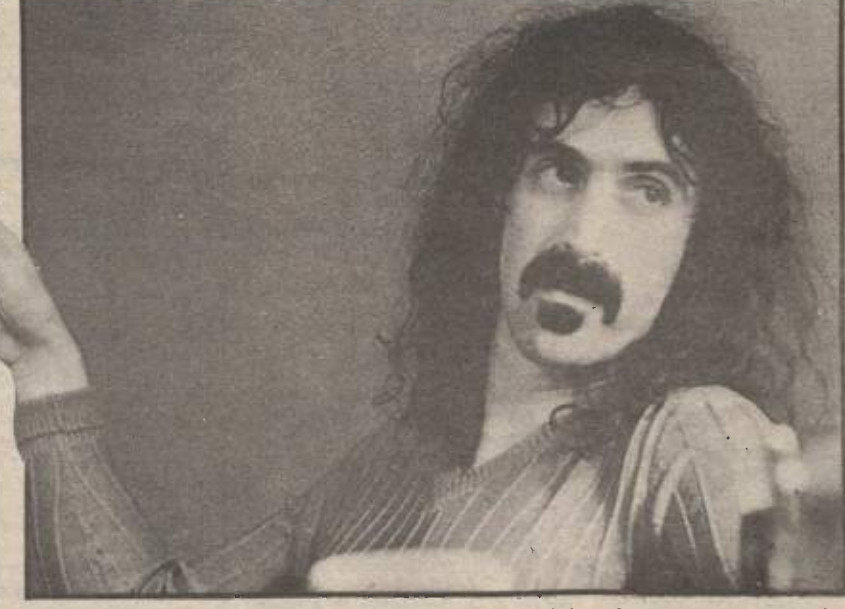
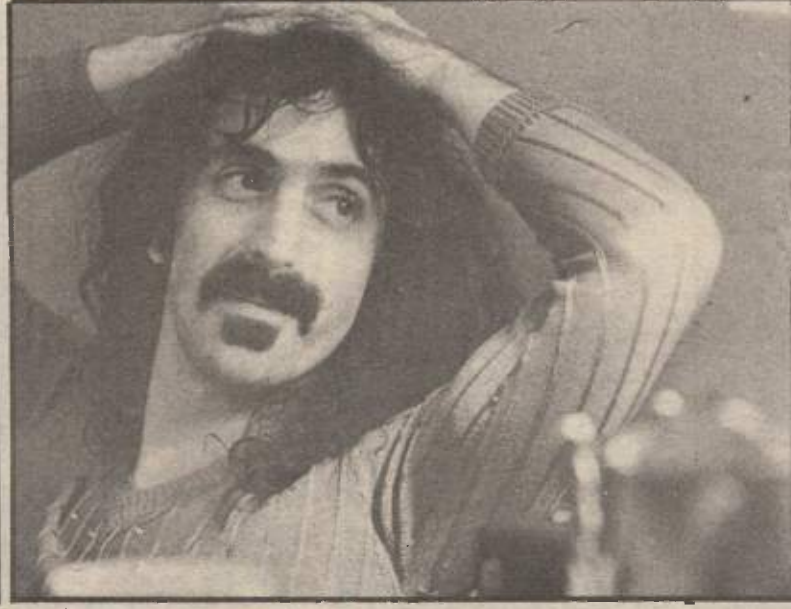
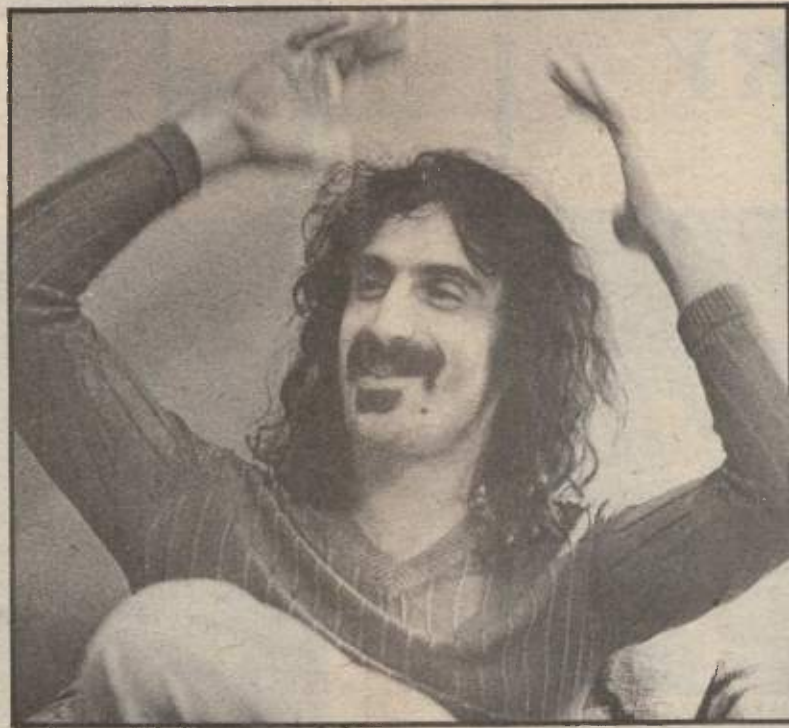
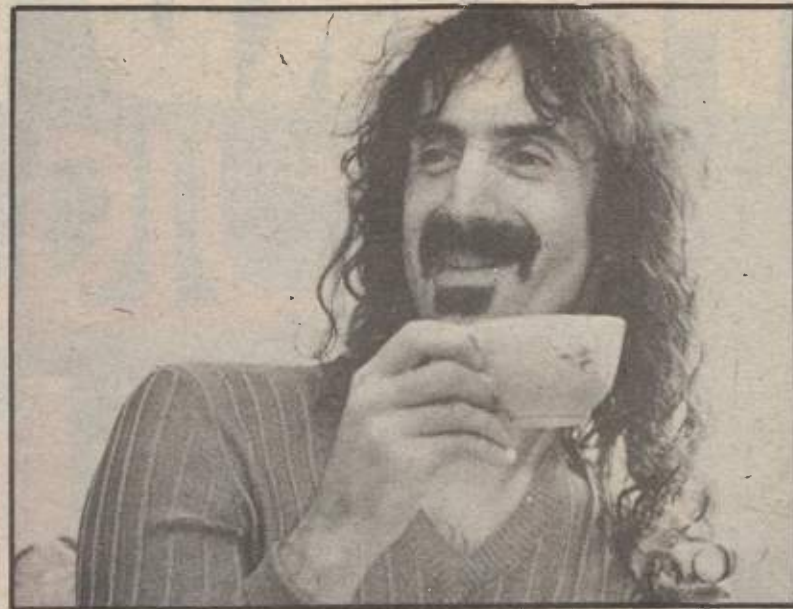
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"You could say I hire the handicapped,"
Frank as General Secretary of Mutant
Control.

'What is a groupie?' asked his Lordship...

Mothers albums nestle amongst the legal papers. A stereo system has been set up in front of the judge. The scene is Law Court Seven. The topic: The Suppository Principle Of Culture. Adjacent matters of interest: dog continuity, The Groupie Papers, and the magnetic deviation of San Clemente. Kids—be upstanding for Uncle Frank...

the very different world of the law. The judge has had problems with the terminology of rock. The word "groupie" seemed to puzzle him. "Is a groupie a girl who is a member of a group?" Zappa shakes his head. "No, she is a girl who likes members of a rock-and-roll band." The judge has encountered other troubles. "When I started this case, I knew very little about pop and beat music. I knew it was to do with rhythm, banging, and an infectious atmosphere. I didn't know it was anything to do with sex or drugs." Zappa points out that the majority of pop music has some kind of sexual connotations.

ONE OF THE FIRST highlights of Wednesday afternoon was when Zappa was shown one of the now-legendary posters of him sitting naked on the can. The counsel for the Albert Hall asked if the poster had been produced with his knowledge. There was a short pause. It hardly seemed possible that anyone could be photographed in the privacy of their own john without having knowledge of it. Zappa answered carefully. The poster had been published without his consent.

The subject was pursued no further. One of the points of the Bizarre case is that if the Albert Hall management had objected to the lyrics, Zappa would have been both willing and able to adapt and change the words, had he been consulted. He alleged that he could have done it at very short notice.

In order to demonstrate this, Zappa's counsel handed him a script of "200 Motels" and asked him to "render the lyrics suitable for a socially-retarded audience."

("A socially-retarded audience" is the term used by the Bizarre side for the kind

of crowd who would find the Mothers' lyrics objectionable). Zappa started to render. The results were startling. Lines came out like: "The places she goes/are filled with guys from Pudsey/Waiting for a chance/To buy her Sucky." This was the moment, reading in a slow deadpan voice, when Zappa the witness came closest to Zappa the performer. The judge, however, seemed confused. "Pudsey?" Zappa's counsel attempted to help. "Pudsey, Yorkshire, m'lud." "It's produced some fine cricketers, I believe."

SOON AFTER that, Zappa completed his testimony and left the stand. He walked straight out of the court. It seemed to be a signal for most of the spectators to rush out for a smoke.

Zappa sat on a bench in the corridor. He looked tired. "You realise I can't say anything about the case."

Inside, Herb Cohen is running the fiscal and logistic facts about the deal on the Albert Hall.

The long-haired legal clerks who seem to have taken time off to watch Zappa decide to go back to work. One of them expresses a very positive desire that Zappa will win.

AT JUST after six the same evening, Joe Stevens and I walk through the gilded portals of The Dorchester in Park Lane. We have come to talk to Frank Zappa.

Up in room 640, Frank is already talking to a rival journalist. The journalist is a fairly nondescript, average rock writer.

He has a lady with him. She possesses the most amazing nipples.

As far as it is possible to judge through half the gross mass of her breasts, perhaps it's an illusion, or maybe even a device from Frederick's of Hollywood.

Zappa has changed out of his court clothes into pink jeans, a tan sweater, orange socks and brown slippers—not Gucci, however. No little chains across the tongue. (How'm I doing, Lisa?)

He looks even more tired than he did in

court and sits almost motionless in a Dorchester brocade armchair. He's obviously unhappy at the fact that the next afternoon he has to fly back to New York, and go almost directly from plane to stage to play a concert with the Mothers.

Joe and I are offered coffee. Frank does it in a way that makes it very clear that requests for large bourbons or tequila sunrises will not be entertained. We settle for coffee, and wait politely while the rival journalist notes down Frank Zappa's top twenty in rather slow longhand.

There is a long discussion that centres around the enema scene in Paderewski's opera "The Devils of Loudun." This is a prime item in Zappa's top twenty.

Another item listed is anything by Richard Berry. It appears that Richard Berry, the man who actually wrote "Louie Louie" and recorded it as Richard Berry And The Pharaohs, sold the entire rights to the song for \$5,000.

Zappa considers Berry one of the most important figures in the West Coast rhythm-and-blues scene of the Fifties. He even goes into detail:

"He heard a band playing a Latin instrumental called 'Cha Cha Loco'. It had the same basic ba-ba dum, dum-dum riff. Berry scribbled some words down on a brown paper bag. That's how 'Louie Louie' was written."

"The Kingsmen later mutilated it." All fascinating stuff. Hardly to the point, however.

The rival journalist has finally finished and it's time to get down.

WHAT ABOUT the trial, Frank?

"I can't talk about the trial." After having spent nine days at the Old Bailey a couple of years ago, defending myself on a criminal obscenity rap, I still have a morbid interest in the legal process, particularly where it encompasses censorship.

I ask Frank if he'd be willing to talk, off the record, about the general background of the case.

"No." Why? (Politely). Zappa is very matter-of-fact. "I don't trust anybody."

Just then the phone rings. Frank has a five minute conversation with his lawyer. He hangs up, and looks around the room.

"I will have to ask you all to forget anything you might have overheard."

Report:
MICK FARREN

The turnaround is fortuitous. Fate (or the GPO) forces the Twentieth Century Zen master into a position of human. We smile, and the conversation is duly forgotten.

It's kind of hard to hold a conversation when the central topic of interest is verboten. The only answer is to take care of business and let the pearls drop where they may. I cop out and go for an awful stock opener.

Do you have any plans to play the UK? (At least I didn't get the answer "Play them at what?")

"We have no plans for England at all. It is a simple matter of being unable to find suitable venues."

It's obvious you like to play in Britain. You sell records here, and generally make money when you tour.

"London is very important. If a person plays in England it contributes to the overall European promotion. The media are in London. You get written about in London, and it gets translated for other European countries."

I ask him if he has ever explored the possibilities of Alexandra Palace. I'm very fond of Alexandra Palace with its pillars and fountains.

"I understand it's impossible to get a sound there."

The Grateful Dead managed it with their monster sound system.

The Zappa deadpan comes down.

"I only deal with mortal equipment."

THE CONVERSATION moves on. The next subject is Captain Beefheart. Zappa seems pleased that this has come up.

"I can officially tell you that Don is a member of The Mothers Of Invention. He is part of our current US tour."

Zappa consistently refers to Beefheart as Don Vliet. They've been friends since their teens, cruising for burgers together and singing along with the radio. It makes a touching picture.

"Don will be singing, playing harmonica, dancing and having a good time for the first time in his life."

"I had a very harrowing experience with the last band and his management. They made a fool of him. He called me up and asked for help."

"I told him that the Mothers were holding auditions on Tuesday and Thursday, and that he should come along. He flunked the first one, but the second was okay."

All this, after he's been badmouthing

you for the past three years or so?

"There really has never been any animosity on my part. He asked for help. Any idea of a feud between us is quite pointless."

The way he relates to language is unique, the way in which he brings my text to life. Of course he has problems. His memory causes him trouble. He won't be separated from his sheets of paper that have his words written on. He clings to them for dear life.

"He also has a literacy problem. He can hardly read. He also has trouble staying on a beat. Captain Beefheart has no natural rhythm."

"He does have this thing inside him. It's dynamic and he wants to express it. In a voice like Howlin' Wolf."

The conversation veers from Beefheart and moves on to Howlin' Wolf. It's a strange experience to see Frank Zappa actually talking in a tone that comes close to awe.

"The Howlin' Wolf could really get across."

The Wolf talk goes on. Wolf anecdotes come too fast to record. Zappa also relates his persona as a Wolf fan to Beefheart and his new slide-guitar player. Beefheart's harmonicas seem to play an essential part in the new Mothers repertoire.

The rival journalist asks if Frank is moving towards a blues thing. Frank smiles and nods. You get the feeling that it could be like no blues ever seen on the planet.

WE MOVE from Wolf and Beefheart to the general area of people like them—individuals with a unique talent, but one that can't be pigeonholed by the entertainment industry.

"In society today those people get the worst deal. Society retards the individual. An example is Bob Dylan. When he came out with 'Like A Rolling Stone' the industry reacted by creating 'The Eve Of Destruction'."

"You could say that I hire the handicapped."

Zappa goes on to define.

"I admire anyone who makes a positive statement, even if it's moronic. I can admire the positively moronic, anyone who sits down and says: this is my statement, stick it up your ass."

I venture a Zen pupil joke.

"I don't trust anybody." Frank as Co-Ordinator of Propaganda for Paranoia Incorporated.



"The suppository principle of culture?" I get the deadpan. "That's the kind of thing they talk about in court."

Then, later, Zappa used the phrase himself a couple of times. I venture an awkward question. How does Frank relate the early Zappa—the abrasive social commentator—to the present-day, saucy individualistic musician?

What happened to the political songs, Frank?

Zappa dismisses the whole thing very quickly. Not quickly enough to betray embarrassment, just sufficiently fast to indicate that it's not very interesting.

He sees his songs as timeless. He's written "Brown Shoes Don't Make It." He's written "Trouble Coming Every Day". They are still appropriate. He doesn't need to write them again.

"If you have a band with Mark and Howard in it, you find yourself documenting the trivia that form society."

"People in fifty years' time should have documentation of monsters like Cal Worthington."

Cal Worthington is a singing cowboy used-car dealer who has immensely long TV commercials during L.A.'s late, late show.

So the groupies and the stars on Hollywood Boulevard say John Provost and Leo G. Carroll are as important as Richard Nixon?

"In a way, I have written a song about Nixon."

Son of Orange County? "No, another one. It's called 'Dick's Such An Ass-hole' or 'San Clemente Magnetic Deviation'."

Magnetic deviation?

"Aviation pilots stay away from the San Clemente area. There is a deviation from the earth's normal magnetic field around San Clemente island. That's not actually where Nixon lives, but it's very close."

There's speculation in room 640 about alien invaders sitting on San Clemente is-

land plotting the whole dirty business. When Grand Funk tell you aerosols are going to destroy the atmosphere you're frankly not impressed. When Zappa starts on the earth's magnetic field, you tend to give it a little more credibility.

WE MAKE a jump to his more recent work. It turns out that he spent the period off the road after his Rainbow accident working on his singing. He confesses that he never had much confidence in himself as "the dynamic lead singer in a rock-and-roll band."

A lot of this experimentation took the form of fitting words to guitar licks.

So 'Penguin In Bondage' is simply a set of words fitted around a riff?

Zappa pauses to light a Winston.

"Penguin In Bondage" is a true story."

Everything stops dead.

Would you like to relate it?

"It's far too personal."

The conversation goes round and round. More journalists come in. Soon everyone is vamping on each other's action. It tends to be confusing.

Frank seems delighted. A session of "Whatever happened to" seems a painless way to ace out the competition.

What happened to Larry (Wild Man) Fischer?

"Larry Fischer is still on Sunset Strip. He still sells original songs for a dime, and my address and phone number for fifty cents. He carries his album under his arm. He wants to make another one. It ought to be called 'The Cheek of Wild Man Fischer'."

The twelve-album set that constitutes a history of The Mothers in unreleased material?

"I only deal with mortal equipment."

Frank as normal human being masquerading as freak masquerading as normal human being.

There's a very sad Polaroid picture of them both sitting up in bed after it has all been a terrible failure.

Cynthia's diaries are quite incredible. She makes strange clinical notes about who she balled, and if she casted them. There's even notes on how she goes about locating rock stars. They would be great for Sherlock Holmes.

Her diaries are scientific and detached, even down to the formula of her different casting materials.

She also draws cartoons—strange and well-executed. They're rather like Little Orphan Annie, except she's chasing down—who's an example?... say Paul Revere and the Raiders.

"It would make one hell of a movie."

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AFTER THAT it seemed as though it was time to leave.

Journalists just kept coming. How could we top the true story of the Groupie Papers? Then, as Joe and I were making our farewells, it happened.

Frank Zappa introduced us to The Dog Continuity.

"It's not actually so much of a Dog Continuity as a Poodle Continuity. It recurs on each record. It's an abstract concept, much in the way that Rembrandt added brown to all his colours. That's the level."

"On the next album it will be conceptually reduced to the word art."

With that, we left.

It wasn't quite the end, though. We caught up with Frank at Dingwall's.

He sat calmly enjoying himself, comparing it to the late Max's Kansas City, eating one of those Dingwall's hamburgers (that, for some inexplicable reason, come encased in Greek bread, praising Jackie Lynton's Grande, and telling one of the waitresses that she "had a fine walk").

"If you have a group with Mark and Howard in it, you find yourself documenting the trivia that form society." Frank as scenery-arranger to the rock industry.

Zappa looks a little sad.

"This is a very difficult and expensive project. We currently have someone canvassing retailers. If we can get orders for five thousand, the company will release it, but it's very difficult."

The Groupie Papers? Zappa looks enthusiastic. The Groupie Papers seem close to his heart.

"My secretary Pauline was transcribing them, but that stopped. Noel Redding also asked for his diaries back. Cynthia Plasterkaster still lives about a hundred miles from Chicago. She's still keeping diaries. Miss Pamela has a straight acting job. She plays the ingenue in a soap opera called 'As The World Turns'. Miss Sparky, another of the G.T.O.s, wants to do a parody of the show called 'As The Turd Whirls'."

Frank warns to his subject.

"They really would make a fantastic book. There are Cynthia's diaries, Pamela's diaries and Noel Redding's diaries. They start out by not knowing each other, and slowly they converge. At first they talk about each other, then they meet."

"It's a dramatic, factual insight into the Sixties and rock hysteria."

"The main problem with putting the book into logical form is how you arrange the separate continuities."

"You have Noel. He joins Hendrix and keeps a diary, all in code, of how many girls he had and what they did. Then you have Pamela who records, at nine, how she cried when Caryl Chessman, the red light bandit, was executed and Cynthia, whose father attacked her because she had an unnaturally big tits for her age."

There's a sequence when Pamela falls in love with Cynthia. The problem is that Cynthia isn't the least bisexual. Pamela hooks her record-player and, without any real idea of what it's like, goes to Chicago in the middle of winter, to get into Cynthia's pants.

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Pictures:
JOE STEVENS

THERE HAVE BEEN other odd touches of the kind that always seems to occur when the world of rock-and-roll confronts

News Desk

MOON DUE IN FROM L.A.

Who plan comeback concerts

DESPITE persistent reports over the last few months suggesting that the Who have broken up, the band are in fact getting together again this weekend as a prelude to recording and live dates.

Keith Moon was arriving from his new home in Los Angeles, and Roger Daltrey has a break in the filming schedule of his new movie "Lisztomania". John L. Tittle has completed his touring commitments with his band The Ox, and Pete Townshend now has a stockpile of new material.

The Who will shortly be going into the studios to start work on a new band album, and sessions will be getting under way before Daltrey has actually completed his Liszt film. They will also be discussing their return to the concert platform and considering the many offers they have received. It is understood that an appearance at a major open-air event this summer may herald their live comeback.

A Who spokesman commented: "They are anxious to show

the public that the Who have not disbanded. Because of their various solo commitments, there have been many reports to this effect. Even Warner Brothers Pictures have fallen into this trap, describing Daltrey in their publicity blurbs as 'former pop star'. But they will be back in live action again before long.

Meanwhile, Daltrey has won a major award in America for his role in "Tommy". It is the ABC Interstate Theatres "New Star Of The Year" award, which has previously been won by Paul Newman, Steve McQueen, Warren Beatty and Dustin Hoffman. "Tommy" has broken all box-office records at London's Leicester Square Theatre and, in the United States, it has taken over two million dollars at 13 selected cinemas.

During Keith Moon's visit to Britain (which is part of his 90-day work permit to which he is entitled every year as a U.S. resident), he will also be promoting his new Polydor solo album and single. The album "Two Sides Of The Moon" is due out this weekend, followed on May 2 by the single "Don't Worry Baby".

NEW MAN JOINS LINE-UP



The new-look SOFT MACHINE (left to right): KARL JENKINS, JOHN MARSHALL, JOHN ETHERIDGE, MIKE RATLEDGE and ROY BABBINGTON

Softs play major 30-gig June tour

SOFT MACHINE are to undertake a massive British tour starting in June. They will be playing up to 30 dates at colleges and concert halls throughout the country, and their itinerary is at present being finalised. They will be featuring, among other material, most of the tracks from their new EMI album "Bundles". Their British gigs will be followed later in the year by an extensive tour of North and South America.

It was announced this week that guitarist Alan Holdsworth has left the Softs in order to take

up residency in the United States. He has been replaced by John Etheridge, formerly with Darryl Way's Wolf. His first appearances with the band will be during a lengthy European tour which opens this Saturday, taking in Italy, Yugoslavia, Austria, Germany, Holland and the Scandinavian countries.

POPE JOINS JOHN BAND

DRUMMER Roger Pope is joining the Elton John Band as replacement for Nigel Olsson, whose departure was announced last week — but a new bassist has still to be announced to take over from the other outgoing member, Dee Murray. Pope is able to join Elton because the Kiki Dee Band, of which he was formerly a member, has now split up. It is understood that the decision for the Dee band to break up was amicable, but was nevertheless caused by musical differences. Kiki will shortly be going into the studios to cut a new album, but the backing musicians have yet to be announced.

STOP PRESS

Booker T due here

BOOKER T. & THE M.G.'s VISIT BRITAIN IN JUNE AS PART OF A EUROPEAN TOUR. THEY WILL PLAY ABOUT EIGHT DATES IN THIS COUNTRY. MORE DETAILS NEXT WEEK.



ROGER DALTREY

Promoters win case, so BUXTON AGAIN THIS SUMMER

NORTH WEST PROMOTIONS are planning to stage another Buxton Festival this year, after winning their legal battle over last year's event. They were taken to court by the local High Peak Council for holding a festival on July 5 and 6 last year — featuring the Faces and Mott The Hoople, among others — without first obtaining a music licence. But they were cleared of the charges in the area Magistrates Court last week, and this has now given them the go-ahead to put on another event this year.

A spokesman for the promoters told NME: "This was really a test case — and we won it! The only snag is that our plans have

been delayed while the case was pending, so we have fallen behind in our bookings. But we are still hoping to be able to present a festival this year — if not in June, then in late July." If the event materialises, it will again take place at the Brandside site in Derbyshire.

Broughtons in U.K. festival

EDGAR BROUGHTON BAND are expected to appear in a major British festival in the late summer. But this will be their only date in this country until mid-October, when they set out on an extensive nationwide tour lasting for two months. They play a 'farewell' gig at London Marquee next Tuesday (29), before leaving for a four-month European tour taking in Holland, Germany, Switzerland and Scandinavia. As previously reported, their schedule in Norway includes concerts in the Arctic Circle. Whilst in Germany, they will be cutting a new album in Cologne.

Coyne playing Lyceum



KEVIN COYNE BAND have added a major London date to their British tour itinerary reported last week. They appear at the Lyceum in the Strand on May 29, as part of the venue's new mid-week rock season which opens on May 15 with Arthur Lee & Love. Other additional bookings for Coyne are at Dundee University (April 27), Leeds Polytechnic (May 22), Manchester Lesser Free Trade Hall (June 5), Newcastle City Hall (6) and Croydon Greyhound (8). Support act on all these extra dates, with the exception of Croydon, is again Starry Eyed And Laughing.

Edited: Derek Johnson

DYLAN-'NO' TO BRITAIN

(Well, it makes a change from Elvis)

PLANS FOR Bob Dylan to headline two open-air concerts at the massive Wembley Stadium in September have been scrapped, the NME learned this week — and the reason is apparently that Dylan simply does not want to come to England. The cancellation has come as a major let-down, because a tentative booking has been made at the stadium, and CBS were planning a major campaign to tie in with Dylan's proposed visit.

But it is understood that when the details were submitted to Dylan for his approval, he rejected them out of hand, for no reason other than his lack of desire to come here. It was confirmed this week that Dylan will not be coming to Britain in 1975, but it is not yet clear whether he is prepared to change his mind next year.

U.S. VISITORS TOURING HERE

More McLean dates

THE OPENING concert of Don McLean's British tour, at London Royal Albert Hall on May 13, has been sold out and he will now play another date at this same venue on Tuesday, May 27. Another new booking is for Oxford New Theatre on May 18. His gig in Brighton on May 14 is now at The Dome (and not the Festival Hall), and his Manchester concert on May 25 is at the Hardrock (not the Opera House).

DETROIT EMERALDS return to Britain next month for a one-nighter tour. They will be here for the period May 9-31, and dates are currently being lined up for them by IPA.

DUANE EDDY tours Britain in the late spring, to consolidate his recent chart comeback with "Play Me Like You Play Yqur Guitar". He will be gigging here from May 30 to June 22 inclusive.

ARTHUR CONLEY and RUFUS THOMAS are both undertaking short tours for the Barry Collings Agency. Conley opens on May 23 for nine days, and Thomas plays one-nighters for the period June 20-29.

LIMMIE & The Family Cookin', who toured here for four months last year, are coming back for another three weeks. Dates are being lined up for them from June 6 to 28.

BACHMAN TURNER Overdrive will now play two days at London Hammersmith

Odeon on May 3 and 4 during their brief four-concert mini-tour. This means their projected May 3 concert in Birmingham is now cancelled.

EDWIN STARR starts a short one-nighter tour for promoter Henry Sellers at Stafford Top Of The World on May 1. Other gigs confirmed so far are Birmingham Barbarella's (2 and 3), Gloucester Tracey's (7), Ipswich Tracy's (9), Worley Pembroke Hall and Leigh Casino (10) and Canvey Island King's Country Club (12).



RUFUS THOMAS

B.T. Express cancel

B.T. EXPRESS who were to have played their debut British tour during the period May 14-25, have postponed their visit. Their schedule included a concert at London Hammersmith Odeon on May 15, and ticket-holders should now apply for cash refunds. It is understood that two members of the band contracted hepatitis while touring America and, as a result, they will be out of action for up to eight weeks. A spokesman for IPA, who were bringing in the group, told NME: "They are anxious to come as soon as possible, and we hope that we can re-arrange their visit for August or September."

Harrison (ex-Spooky) to play solo concerts

MIKE HARRISON, former Spooky Tooth vocalist, is to play a few selected dates in this country in early June — including a leading London venue — as part of a European tour. Harrison devotes the whole of May to touring the United States with a full orchestra and the Memphis Horns, and it is likely that he will have this same support for his dates on this side of the Atlantic. To coincide with his British gigs, Goodear are releasing a solo album by Harrison on June 6, titled "Rainbow Rider". It will be preceded next month by a single extracted from the album, "Somewhere Over The Rainbow".

CLIVE!

● From page 17

talent. Which led him to expand radically the subject-matter available to rock — him and The Beatles, they did the job.

Involuntarily, of course. Yeah, but they still did it.

True. And we're back to the rock thing, so it's time to try to pin-point the tradition you are operating in. For example, how do you feel about being diagnosed as a descendant of Cole Porter?

Very flattered. I wouldn't say we're inheriting the tradition of Cole Porter — even though I admire Cole Porter to distraction. Almost as much as Rodgers and Hart, which is saying a lot.

Well, to me Porter's a slick versifier — but, beyond that, far too brittle and limited to, er... satisfy my soul.

The reason it's brittle is that he was working in a tradition that demanded brittleness. Rock 'n' roll changed all that. If Porter

could have had access to some of the raw material of rock 'n' roll, he'd have been an entirely different artist.

I was under the impression that he was a conservative.

Oh no. He pushed all the conventions to the very limit.

I thought that was just bad temper.

No, no. He went as far as he could go. In fact, he was still being censored until very recently. But influence isn't a rational thing. Though I admire Porter, I've been less influenced by him than I have by, say, Oscar Brown Jr — who comes just before rock 'n' roll and really is the jazz lyricist *par excellence*. I learnt a lot from him. He really opened my eyes.

Is it an interesting or a boring question to ask you where you and Pete fit into today's scene?

It's an interesting question that I can't answer. I try to keep my expectations low, because it's a foolish man who expects commercial success from the kind of thing we do. You have to

train yourself psychologically to do without it. The work is its own satisfaction.

Do you feel like a crusader of any kind?

Absolutely not. We just want to be part of rock 'n' roll. I'm always bad-mouthing things like Alice Cooper and David Bowie, but that doesn't mean I think we're the replacement — or what should be happening. I never feel the wrong people are getting the knighthoods. As far as I'm concerned, David Bowie can wag his brassiere at the audience until the cows come home — as long as I retain my right to say it's rubbish.

What, finally, in your opinion, is happening?

Well, my view of it is so limited and particular that it's not even interesting, probably. I tend to listen to the kind of rock that relaxes me. I must have played the Aretha Franklin version of "Spanish Harlem" a thousand times — it's the only thing I can dance to while shaving. It's so sweet.

I also play The Beach Boys.

Love them. I've no interest in Van Dyke Parks, who is in no sense a lyricist — just a guy who sort of scatters words around — but I think Brian Wilson is a genius. And The Beatles, of course.

Generally speaking, people who are breaking new ground. Like Randy Newman — when he came along I just sat up like a ramrod. I just hadn't been expecting anyone like him to appear. He's the classic Artist on the scene. Not a word does he waste.

But you couldn't erect this into a critical canon. You have to reserve the right to ignore stuff. Van Morrison, he turned up. I was told to listen. I listened. Music was alright — fine for kids to smooch to, etc. Lyrics were rubbish. That happens all the time.

Of course, I'm no chicken anymore. I can't keep up.

NEXT WEEK I'll be Lookin' Back on the collected recordings of Clive James and Pete Atkins in the light of the preceding interview. Hope you'll be there.

COUNTRY

DAVID REDSHAW

DAVID ALLEN COE was standing among a crowd of people in the entrance of George Jones' Possum Holler club in Nashville. I knew who it was before I was introduced — you don't see many people wandering around in black suits with funny coat tails, black cowboy hats and bits of glitter splashed around the ensemble.

It wasn't exactly far out but it was definitely *strange*, and besides, Coe is a rather formidable looking guy. What they call a *heavy dooty doode* locally.

Located... the man who, more than any other, I'd travelled from London to Nashville to see.

Next day I was ushered casually into one of the inner offices at the Nova Agency and there on a settee was the self-same David Allan Coe, writer of Tanya Tucker's hit "Would You Lay With Me In A Field Of Stone", who has spent approximately half his life behind prison bars — including a spell on Death Row — and the man who, as much as anyone, I'd come to see.

He once told a reporter he liked people being wary of his dress and manner. "I don't want them to think they can walk right into me, man — I want them to know to keep their distance."

You approach him politely. He starts chatting — about England. Alvin Lee is a good friend — in fact they played together recently in Knoxville. Some country-rock and a lot of blues.

Coe was originally a blues artist but, "I found out that no one wanted to hear a white boy sing the blues."

Even so, he was voted top white blues artist at one stage in a poll run by the specialist British magazine *Blues Unlimited*. Later, at his house, he played some sides from those days and the raw, desperate power was like a shock wave, with Coe proving really red-hot on guitar on titles like "Penitentiary Blues" and "Funeral Parlour Blues".

The recordings were on Shelby Singleton's now defunct SSS label.

The thing about this music is that it comes direct from life. Coe was in reformatory at age nine, and a few years later was in prison again, convicted of possession of burglary tools.

"Er", (gently), "can you tell me about this murder rap, David?"

"Sure."

"If I've heard the story correctly, you were taking a shower in the Ohio nick and a guy comes in asks you to, uh, commit fellatio on him?"

"He didn't ask. He was *telling* me. And he had a knife. He was trying to force me into it."

Coe grabbed the nearest available weapon — a wringer from a mop bucket and bopped the guy twice with it, offing him.

He was convicted of murder and sent to Death Row to await execution by electric chair. Three months later capital punishment was abolished.

Some of Coe's songs were written on Death Row and by the time he won parole in 1967 he had the germ of a career in music going round his head.

He finally went to Nashville, and there it was obvious to many people that his songs were original and different enough to indicate a probable big future. Friends like Kris Kristofferson and Mickey Newbury got behind him.

Still tempted to run on the wild side, he filled in his spare time by riding with a biker gang.

Coe's big break came when Tanya Tucker recorded "Would You Lay With Me In A Field Of Stone" and took it to the top of the country charts.

"I would say that it took



DAVID ALLAN COE: spent half his life behind prison bars

Coe since Death Row

DAVID ALLAN COE to be precise — writer of Tanya Tucker's 'Would You Lay With Me In A Field Of Stone' and a real heavy dooty doode

five years," he recalls. "If it wasn't for Billy Sherrill, y'know, I *still* wouldn't be accepted. When he cut that song on Tanya Tucker, that sort of changed the thing around — like Billy Sherrill saying 'He's OK', putting the stamp of approval..."

Part of the trouble was that David then had hair down to his waist. "I was the first long-haired country singer in Nashville Tennessee."

Did this produce problems in the redneck clubs?

"Yeah! Huh? I don't *play* redneck clubs now (general laughter) so I don't *have* that problem."

"Now, I'm wearing what I have on now when I go on stage, which is, like, just levis and a cowboy hat... and I do four songs like that. And then the girls (his backing band, "Ladysmith") come on and they do four songs with me, then I introduce the girls and they do six songs by themselves. When I come back I have my rhinestone boots, rhinestone pants and coat and a red cape. The whole glitter thing. It's going over real well everywhere we play."

"There's only two of us doing this kind of thing — Kinky Friedman and me."

Coe's initial country album was aptly titled "The Mysterious Rhinestone Cowboy" and it's only available on import at the moment. It's a brooding, downer sort of thing, with his own material being mixed in with songs by Mickey Newbury and Buzz Rabin. It has elicited rave reviews in all areas of the American press.

There's just one Coe track available over here and that's on the new CBS sampler, "Country Matters". Hopefully CBS will get around to issuing it soon because the *second* Coe album is being released Stateside just about now.

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- 7 a.m.—KERRYGROUND with KERRY JUBY.
- 9 a.m.—CAPITAL COUNTDOWN—ROGER SCOTT presents the fastest show on radio with Capital's Top Forty Records of the week.
- 12 noon—AMERICAN PIE—TIM RICE features the current American Top Twenty and the best of the American Soul and Country Music Charts.
- 2 p.m.—LONDON LINK—KEITH ASHTON plays four hours of hits and requests from the Commonwealth.
- 6 p.m.—"SOUL SPECTRUM" with GREG EDWARDS. Four hours of pure soul.
- 10 p.m.—TOMMY VANCE and his LATE SHOW.
- 2 a.m.—NIGHT FLIGHT with SARAH WARD.

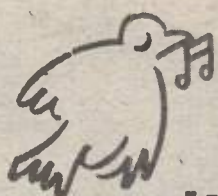
SUNDAY, APRIL 27th

- 7 a.m.—KERRYGROUND with KERRY JUBY.
- 9 a.m.—"SOLID GOLD SUNDAY"—TONY MYATT plays the hits of today and the greats from the past.
- 11 a.m.—GERALD HARPER with "A SUNDAY AFFAIR" Sweet Music dedications, Champagne and Roses of lucky listeners.
- 2 p.m.—JOAN SHENTON with "PERSON TO PERSON" from London Hospital requests.
- 4 p.m.—HULLABALOO presented by MAGGIE NORDEN and TONY LEE with PETER FAIRLEY introducing "Fairley's World" and "Wow". Also featuring each week young DJ spots and Teenswop.
- 6 p.m.—"THE COLLECTION" with PETER JAMES. A collection of classical music.
- 8 p.m.—ALTERNATIVES an Arts Review with SUSANNAH SIMONS.
- 9 p.m.—"A QUESTION OF FAITH" a phone-in on religion on 388 1255 with LOUIS ALEXANDER.
- 10 p.m.—"MARDI GRAS" music of the twenties and thirties with BRIAN RUST.
- 11 p.m.—TOMMY VANCE with his LATE SHOW including Capital's top twenty.
- 2 a.m.—"NIGHT FLIGHT" live from Capital.

MONDAY, APRIL 28th to FRIDAY, MAY 2nd

- 6.30 a.m.—KENNY EVERETT. Two and a half hours of Music and Madness.
- 9 a.m.—THE MICHAEL ASPEL SHOW—a housewife's spectacular with music, advice and features such as "Capital Day", "Swap Shop" and "Super Savers" with SUE COOK.
- 12 noon—CASH ON DELIVERY with DAVE CASH—a music and quiz show with contestants selected from visitors to the Exhibition who will participate and win prizes.
- 3 p.m.—THE ROGER SCOTT SHOW—ROGER SCOTT presents the "Three O'Clock Thrill" and "Peoples Choice". PLUS interviews with stars and personalities from the world of showbiz.
- 7 p.m.—"LONDON TODAY". Capital's feature magazine programme which tells you what's happening in London and who's doing it. Presented by JANE WALMSLEY and TONY LEE.
- 7.30 p.m.—"OPEN LINE" on 388 1255 BRIAN HAYES with Advice, Argument and Comment. Every Friday "MEET YOUR M.P." with ALAN HARGREAVES. May 2nd JOHN HUNT of Bromley Ravensbourne.
- 9 p.m. NICKY HORNE'S Rock Show "YOUR MOTHER WOULDN'T LIKE IT".
- 11 p.m.—TONY MYATT with Music for your evening's entertainment.
- 2 p.m.—NIGHTFLIGHT.

NEWS EVERY HOUR ON THE HOUR
This information supersedes all previous
bulletins.
Programmes are liable to alteration.



in tune with
LONDON

JAZZ

INTERVIEWING CARLA Bley is like talking to a friend. Nothing pre-packaged, nothing tailored for the tape. She does her worrying out front and in the present.

"I think it's important to see both sides of all situations. For instance, if you're a recording artist, to be on the other side for a while and be a producer or record company owner. The only thing I haven't done is manufacturing. I haven't gone in there and poured the boiling hot vinyl into the barrel and stirred it into the mould, but I've done everything else.

"If you see both sides of everything" — and Carla frowned as yet another ideal went up a gum tree — "then you can never pick, never use your judgement... maybe now I'm too easy going?"

"Maybe now you need blinkers to form an opinion?" I suggested. "Ignorance to make judgements?"

"Yes, that's just what I was saying. Hmm. I'm just thinking about that for the first time. I'm not saying it, I'm proposing it... Perhaps..."

Impasse.

"I'd interviewed Paul Haines. Carla's collaborator on "Ida Lupino", "Escalator Over The Hill" and "Tropic Appetites", spent a long summer's afternoon with him and ended up with a cassette full of cumulus. Paul evaporates.

He was recently presented with a questionnaire: "What would you like to say to an audience of 10,000 people?" "Pretty much what I'd say to no one."

We got on to politics. Did she consider herself political?

The JCOA, a non-profit making co-operative, an alternative to The System, seemed to me political. So was "Liberation Music".

"I don't know," said Carla. "I'd never even thought of that. No — I'm no longer political if I ever was. I believe now that the human race is going through a predestined path of some hideous death dance and has no brain control any more."

By BRIAN CASE

"It's just as though the limbs are disconnected from the brain and I just want to get to the quietest part of that body and live out my life. I don't believe any more that there's any hope of change. I've given up."

"Do you blame The System or human nature? Do you think it's inevitable wherever you get two people together?"

"I do believe it's not two human beings. They can live in absolute harmony. I believe that five billion human beings without enough food to go round are going to act in a way that leads only to destruction."

"But you know, Buckminster Fuller has a plan, but we won't listen to him. How to feed the whole world, how to make it work, how to industrialise the unindustrialised countries — and all it would mean is that the wealth would be redistributed, which of course I know is a catch-all phrase for Utopia. But that would be the answer."

"I get Utopian too. I'm not political, but I'm interested in people that are. I'm part of a thing in New York called MAC — Musicians' Action Collective — and we've decided to put on benefits for anything we think is benefiting. The next JCOA workshop is going to be collecting money for United Farmworkers. I'm a sucker for anything like that."

"Charlie Haden was very much into things like the war in Vietnam, and how beautiful life in Cuba was when I was working with him. I became that."

"A friend of mine in New York, a very severe Marxist piano player, always gets me to go along when he's doing something radical."

"But Mike and I are just composers and all we want to do is go down to the basement of our house where we now have a track studio and record. I learn to play all of the instruments. Mike now plays tuba, trumpet, French horn, and trombone, cello. I'm learning the saxophones — she pointed out the tenor that Evan Parker had lent her — "all on the keyboards — there's my synthesizer over there on the piano. Musicians in better

times are just left to play music."

"For what purpose? Self-expression?"

"Absolutely not. Digusting. Number one: to create order on a small scale, the kind of order that we'd like to see on a larger scale. The kind of order that holds the stars on their paths, can be recreated on a smaller scale in a piece of music. And when we're able to do that, and record it, then you have a communication that will get to a lot of people who need this to be reaffirmed."

"And in a sense it's mellowing out a lot of people who otherwise might go absolutely bats. Myself, when I hear a very beautiful piece of music, it can keep me going for like weeks afterwards. I realise how important perfect things are, and they help me out as much in getting by as a loaf of bread."

"I don't believe in self-expression at all, which is why I can't stand free improvising situations any more, or jamming situations. I'd much rather work on my own little piece of perfection and then send it round to my friends."

"But don't you think that in the best of free jazz, the structure that appears is closer to life, architecture on the hoof?"

"Mmm — good point. That's beautiful. Never thought of that. But the trouble is that then you're not re-inforcing what you need to keep your hope up. You're re-inforcing your daily life situation, which is what's more likely to get you down. I really don't see the beneficial value."

"Also, just as a musician, it bothers me that it comes together so infrequently in a free playing situation. You may be just fiddledgooking for 20 minutes before you get this moment of perfection."

"I love those moments where it all comes together. I'd live for that. But I can only do it one minute in 20, about that ratio really, and I don't want the flotsam to stay there."

"Aren't your moments of perfection closed situations? Do you think art should be about products or processes?"

"I don't even know what this is to worry about it. Maybe it's

UP UNTIL recently, the most exposed part of Dutch jazz — invertedly — has been its underground: Han Benninck, Willem Breuker, Chris Hinze isn't too well known here.

Technically he is one of the most accomplished flute players around — Best Soloist prize at Montreux, gigs with James Moody and Charlie Mariano and Sahib Shihab, though I'm not wild about his choice of settings, which range from the baroque 'n roll of Telemann, Vivaldi and Bach to the current Chris Hinze Combination.

The concert that I caught in Delft recently was often in danger of politeness. The band operate in that area of funk that Herbie, Weather Report, Miles etc., have made bankable, but bear down less, strut softer. Even "Sister Slick" comes over tortoiseshell, not tabby.

Hinze's flute is pure and

*Hinze:
the
flute
needs
some
spit 'n'
gristle*

sweet, without any of the spit 'n' gristle of rude Roland, and relies on the placement of accents to increase the attack. "Nothing alien to the nature

of the instrument" was what the man told me.

An erstwhile admirer of Dolphy, he's changed his allegiance to Hubert Laws and Jeremy Steig, cats who's main axe is the flute.

The Combination are passable, but the poor balance on the night makes a pastel group like this hard to assess. The guitar player, an apple-cheeked lad not too many reefs away from Piggy in *The Lord of the Flies*, picked wah-wah and plain. Roger Cooke, doubling on Fender and bull fiddle, took the most adventurous solos but the pitch sounded peculiar.

The young drummer was looser on cymbals than on drums, where he tended to tramp or tattoo.

No doubt the group provides the most commercially viable context for Hinze's talents, but not the most stretching.

Judge for yourselves: they're booked into Ronnie's round about now. —

Brian Case.

Arrangements for the Death Dance

**THE SOCIO-MUSICAL
THOUGHTS
OF CARLA BLEY**

my blinders — blinkers? Oh God, I'll have to think about that."

"I suppose I'm really thinking about collectives like the Art Ensemble of Chicago, or SME. Instant composing that is altered and jostled and refined continually to avoid congealing into hermetic moments of perfection."

"I've never done anything like that... I know what you mean, but I would never consciously do that. I would try to leave a bunch of perfect jewels in my path. Are you sure that's what they're doing? Are you sure they're not just unable to complete what they're doing?"

Now I'm worrying out front. Contagious. We sit there sporting parallel furrows and a small mouse comes out from behind Evan's instrument case and walks out the door. Paul Haines would have made something of that.

"No, they can complete in your sense. They don't choose to."

"I'm a different race," said Carla. "I'm the kind of person that comes along afterwards and, you know, takes the snowball and pats it into a nice shape. I don't make the snow fall. I used to be that kind of a person... I think. I used to be a member of the avant-garde. I'm not any longer. I don't know why."

"But you do still work with musicians of the avant-garde — Cherry, Rudd, Leroy Jenkins. You have to admit that those sort of people have colossal energy."

"I think there's just as much if not a larger energy charge in rock today. Absolutely. I mean, if you just count the drops of sweat that fall off your forehead or the amount of hours that you can play at the loudest possible volume at the greatest tempo, then I really do feel that rock and avant-garde jazz share that kind of energy. Jimi Hendrix and Peter Brotzman. I believe it's an energy created from frustration, sexual drive and the beat of the ego, the throb of the ego — not in a bad way, but that thing inside that just wants to come out and flower all over everything."

"But personally, you've moved away from that?"

"I resented having to play loud and long and fast, so I quit. I quit doing that maybe ten years ago and I just went into myself and I wrote. Now

CARLA BLEY: "I believe the human race is going through a predestined path of some hideous death dance and has no brain control anymore."

I'm coming out and I want to do it again, all of those things. I think everything is a matter of correcting situations. When you work too hard, then you have to rest.

"It's constant correction and adjustment in your own life. Now I feel I don't want to sit down in my room any more. I feel I've gone as far as I can go in that room, that my music was getting slower and softer and sadder and more abstract and withdrawn, and maybe more neurotic. Now I'm going to go about correcting that."

There's something of the serious child about her when she talks about her music. She sits cross-legged on the sofa, a tall, straight-backed woman in pink satin blouse, black slacks and jumper. Her bent head hides her face in the long soft fall of hair. She traces patterns on the cushion.

"Are you saying your music got inbred without the feedback of an audience?"

"No, of course I don't think that because I'm sure there have been composers throughout history who haven't had live audiences, and spent their whole lives writing and the music's great. I really don't agree."

"I became interested in the medium of records about ten years ago because to me everything could be brought together in the space of two sides of a record — it got out of proportion later ('Escalator' is six) — and I thought of it as a totem that you could carve from beginning to end and it would be perfect and last forever."

"I wasn't interested in live performances then because they could be lost. I felt it wasn't a strong enough statement if it was only to 20 people. It seemed a lot more logical to do it on a record and have 20,000 hear it. Does that sound awful? Less of a waste of creativity and energy."

"I started putting everything into making records, going through all the steps of having my own record company, my own distributing service, my own studio. Now I had everything I needed... and the content was somehow not up to my equipment any more."

"Reminded me of the kidnaper in 'Shoot The Pianist'. I've got a tropicalised hat, alligator belt, Pontiac convertible. I've got everything. I'm fed up."

"So I felt I had to go back out to the world and accumulate again. It's a terrible turn. It was a shock to me to find that I hadn't anything to say into the microphone. I mean, I could go on forever, me and Paul Haines, writing our tropical delights and things, but they didn't have the pitch, the temperature that I wanted. How dare we call them tropical. They were lukewarm. They began to lose fever, and that's what I'm out looking for."

"I liked 'Tropic Appetites,'" I said. "I mean, I didn't have to break out my aertex vests and that, but I liked it."

"I must say in my defence that I had no time and no money and I wasn't able to get the musicians together to play feverishly together. We had to use over-dubbing, multi-tracking, building up the layers. By the time we got to the top, what 'Escalator' had was lost. A rather cool venture all round. That left me feeling I had to come out and find something."

"In the future I'm not going to do anything unless I have the time and money, because they're two of the ingredients of the music. Unless we can give musicians more time then we're going to have to stop doing what we're doing altogether. For all the good we think we're doing, we're doing nothing but harm."

"So the next album after Roswell's (Numatik Swing Band) had three times as much time, the album after six times, and the latest, the Leroy Jenkins, had too much and nobody knew what to do with themselves because they were all fi-

●Continues page 50

If you're into beautiful words

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South African Man
BRLS 3013
KBRLC 3013 Cassette

Marketed by **DECCA**

Information CITY

EDITED BY FRED DELLAR

DR. FRED — The date and title, please, of Little Richard's first recording — **READY TEDDY**, Littlehampton, Sussex.

● The first Little Richard single to be issued was "Every Hour"/"Taxi Blues" (RCA 4392), a 1952 release. But the singer's first recording was "Get Rich Quick", recorded in Atlanta on October 16, 1951.

IS A LED Zeppelin songbook available in this country and where can I obtain such a highly desirable item? — **BEN MCCLARY**, Gorton, Manchester.

● The best one I can locate is "Led Zeppelin Complete", an American publication of some 228 pages, put out by Super-hype Publishing. Many British music shops have it in stock, but if you get stuck, try ordering a copy from the Music Department, Foyles Bookshop, Tottenham Court Road, London W.C.2. But I ought to warn you that the price is £3.50.

I READ in Gasbag (NME 1.2.75) that a revised edition of the NME *Book Of Rock* is soon to be published by Star Books in paperback form. Since it might be difficult to obtain a copy over here, I wondered if you could supply the address of the publishing company and also the possible price. — **MORTEN ELTVEDT**, Oslo 6, Norway.

● Wow — I knew we were big in Northampton but I didn't realise how many Norwegians readers we had until I moved into Information City. But in answer to your question — Star Books can be found at all good booksellers in Britain, though readers encountering any difficulty can obtain titles from The Star Book Service, G.P.O. Box 29, Douglas, Isle

Of Man, British Isles. The *Book Of Rock* should be available around the end of June, at a retail price of 75p but readers ordering by post should add 7p (10p outside Britain) to cover the cost of postage and packing.

AFTER A country-wide search I am still unable to obtain a deleted album called "Ptooff" by The Deviants (Decca SKL R4993). Can you suggest where I can find a copy and thus complete my collection of progressive elpees. Also — is Mick Farren of The Deviants the Mick Farren who writes for the NME? — **J. P. SEATON**, Barrow-On-Soar, Loughbor-

● Yes, it is he (see also p.41). Farren admits everything. "A great band — they made lousy records — but they were a great band," he says. He also says he has no idea how you'll obtain a copy of "Ptooff" nowadays, so we've printed your full address just in case some other reader may be willing to do one out of a collection somewhere. Incidentally, The Deviant's long-deleted single of "Let's Loot The Supermarket" was selling for 10p a copy in the Midlands recently — at various branches of Tesco's, ironically enough.

AS I DON'T live in London, I have no idea of the whereabouts of various concert halls. Could you tell me where the following halls are and how to get to them — Hammersmith Odeon and Palais, Albert Hall, Festival Hall, Victoria Palace, Victoria New Theatre, Palladium, Roundhouse. My starting point would be Liverpool Street Station. — **ANDREW MORSE**, Long Melford, Suffolk.

● The easiest way to travel around London is by Tube, and anyone unfamiliar with the underground system is advised to obtain a free map from the first



LITTLE RICHARD in early times, maybe poundin' out "Taxi Blues"...

London Transport ticket office they come across. Without one, things can get a bit confusing. Nearest stations for the venues mentioned are: Hammersmith (for the Odeon and Palais), Waterloo (for Festival Hall), Victoria (for Victoria Palace and the New Victoria Theatre), Oxford Circus (for the Palladium), Chalk Farm (for the Roundhouse) and South Kensington (for the Albert Hall).

ARE THE four earliest Spirit albums available in England? If so, could you please quote the catalogue numbers? — **MORTEN BJERKE**, Oslo, Norway.

● According to the most recent CBS catalogue — which lists albums available up to and including September 1974 — "Spirit" (CBS 63278), "The Family That Plays Together" (CBS 63523) and "The Twelve Dreams Of Doctor Sardonicus" (Epic 64191) are still with us. But "Clear" (CBS 63729), which Lou Adler produced in 1969, has gone where all good deletions go.

I AM HOPING to compile a history of the development of the Music Press to its present-day function. Obviously in compiling such a study I require information that is difficult to acquire through normal sources. Could you, therefore, furnish me with a potted history of NME since it first started? — **A STUDENT**, Bowerham, Lancaster.

● Edition No.1, in March 1952, was actually a major re-launch of the original "Musical Express", a paper dealing primarily with dance music. The weekly circulation was then around 20,000 but, some months later, the paper was purchased by leading agent and promoter Maurice Kinn, who made tremendous efforts to increase this figure — and succeeded beyond anyone's wildest dreams. At the tail-end of '52

the paper printed Britain's first-ever record charts and the following year saw the first of the annual Popularity Polls. There were only five sections in that first poll, the winners being Ted Heath (dance band), Dickie Valentine (male singer), Lita roza (female singer), Johnny Dankworth (small band) and Ronnie Scott (outstanding Musician). This led to the inauguration of yearly Poll Concerts — which, over the years, saw The Beatles appearing three times and the Stones twice. The paper was purchased by the International Publishing Corporation in 1964. In February 1972 our first Nationwide Gig Guide made an appearance and, at the same time, NME with an expanded team of writers, changed direction once more and quickly established itself as Britain's leading rock journal.

PLEASE COULD you tell me David Bowie's home address? — **JULIE**, Wembley, Middlesex.

● Afraid not... there's a sort of code of honour that prevents us divulging musician's home addresses.

ON EASTER DAY the BBC screened a programme about a piece of music called "African Sanctus", written by David Fanshawe. I believe it has been recorded, so could you provide me with the catalogue number and let me know where I might purchase it? Thanqueue! — **CHRIS POX**, Nordan, Leominster.

● "African Sanctus", an album of genuine African music, plus added rock elements, has just been released on Philips 6558 001. Any record dealer will obtain it for you.

■ **WRITE TO** 'INFORMATION CITY', C/O NME, 128 LONG ACRE, LONDON WC2E9QH.

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VOLUME TWO OF "Nice Stuff" is really wish fulfillment on an extremely grandiose scale, as Roy Carr and I discovered when we dreamed up the idea of "Hard Up Heroes" eighteen months or so ago.

We took our little project to E.M.I., dazzled with the extraordinary material that lurked in their capacious vaults, and friends, they turned us down flat.

(They also turned us down flat when we offered to compile the ultimate Yardbirds anthology, on the grounds that their extraordinarily slapdash and inadequate "Remember The Yardbirds" set on Starline was still selling; which it was — in the absence of something better.)

Even the consistently high import sales of a series of compilations put together by E.M.I. Germany haven't convinced them that there is much that can be done in terms of creative recycling of the wealth of legendary stuff still at their disposal, and it doesn't look as if "Nice Stuff Vol. II" will ever see the light of what passes for day on the shelves of record shops.

Time's a-wastin' though, so awaawawawawawaw we go...

SIDE ONE

THE SMOKE: "My Friend Jack"

WHO THE SMOKE were I never knew nor cared.

For all I know they're all butchers or bus-conductors now, though there's always the possibility that one of them joined a group like Supertramp and is currently a teenage idol.

"My Friend Jack" emerged in the misty dawn of 1967 and was built around the central thesis that "my friend Jack eats sugar lumps", which was a cutesy nudge-nudge-wink-wink reference to the fact that users of lysergic acid dihydrochloride (hereafter referred to simply as "acid") used to consume the foul stuff by pouring it onto sugar cubes and crunching same, and then going out and seeing God. Naturally, all the degenerates who indulged in this habit were delighted to hear this public reference to their vice, and enough of them stopped listening to the heartbeat of the cosmos long enough to buy this record.

Without a shadow of a doubt, it was dreadful in the extreme, but it is included herein as an instant cultural reference point. Besides, records as bad as "My Friend Jack" cannot be allowed to vanish into oblivion.

Proudly it stands, therefore, as simultaneously a monument to the excesses of a by-gone era, and An Awful Warning to us all.

TOMORROW: "My White Bicycle"

ONCE UPON a time, a radical group known as the Provos (short for "Pro-votariat") flourished in Amsterdam.

One of their many admirable stunts was to get hold of a bunch of bicycles, paint them all white, and place them at the disposal of the public — i.e., anybody who needed to get somewhere in a hurry could just grab the nearest white bicycle and use it to take him to wherever he needed to go.

With impeccable logic, the Dutch police confiscated the lot because (a) they weren't registered in anybody's name and (b) they were left around unlocked.

Tomorrow were Keith West (vocals, poses and Teenage Opera), Steve Howe (guitars and subsequent superstardom), Junior (bass and mystique) and Twink (drums, lunacy and notoriety as per Mr. Farren's Fairies piece).

During 1967 and early 1968, they were rated by many as being in the same league as the pre-hit Pink Floyd, Arthur Brown and Driscoll-Auger, but despite West's solo success with the abominable "Excerpt From A Teenage Opera", they never achieved what we rock writers are fond of describing as "that elusive hit single."

"My White Bicycle" features loony guitar from Howe, all the production gimmicks popular at the time and a very English vocal. Living history, as is...

THE YARDBIRDS: "Happening Ten Years Time Ago"

THIS LITTLE ditty is a curiosity on many levels.

It was Jeff Beck's last recording as a 'Bird, one of the only two tracks which feature both Beck and Jimmy Page (the other being its B-side "Psycho Daisies"), the only Yardbirds single apart from "Good Morning Little School Girl" to be an unqualified flop, plus it conformed to the demands of

It's dream-time in Compilationsville once again, amigos. This week CHARLES SHAAR MURRAY does his worst to induce EMI into issuing Volume Two in his discocartography of The Golden Age Of British Psychedelia — an auspicious era during which this country's youth eagerly did its brains in on everything from S.T.P. to macrobiotic food, all of us caught crabs, and rock-wise there were...

More zits than hitz ...

the then-imminent Psychedelic Era more than anything else the group ever did.

It has lyrics of the utmost cosmicity ("Is it real or only in my dreams/I gotta know what it all means"), a relentlessly crazy guitar-solo-and-monologue from Beck, and a fabulous impersonation of a police siren by Page. Every home should have one.

PINK FLOYD: "Apples And Oranges"

AND THE flops just keep on comin'! "Apples And Oranges" was the Floyd's last single to involve miracle ingredient "Syd", and it was quite unutterably manic with a vocal line that gradually spiralled ever upwards and then toppled gracefully over the edge. It followed "Arnold Layne" and "See Emily Play", but for some odd reason did absolutely nothing.

Maybe Barrett's lack of communication with the outside world had something to do with it — just maybe. Shortly after its release, he swan-dived into the infinite to be replaced by Dandruff King David Gilmour, who gets his moment of glory over on Side Two.

DANTALIAN'S CHARIOT: "Madman Running Through The Fields"

AND GOD (or someone like him) created George Bruno, and George Bruno created Zoot Money, and Zoot Money created the Big Roll Band, and Sandoz and Owsley created most wondrously fine acid.

The result of all these geneses was Dantalian's Chariot, Challengers Of The Unknown and Hallucinogenic

Warriors Extraordinaire. "Madman Running Through The Fields" was an invigorating riot of backward tapes and other then fashionable devices, and it sold not a whit.

D. Chariot specialised in all-white costumes and instruments, had what was for a while regarded as the best lightshow in town, and lost a small fortune. Such is life, and in the Great Psychedelic Era, it kept getting sucher and sucher.

SIDE TWO

TOMORROW: "Revolution"

IT WAS like this, see Tomorrow were doing this gig at UFO, see, and word of the Jagger-Richard bust came through, see, and everybody got mucho indignant, see, and so Twink grabbed a handmike and wandered out into the audience yelling "Revolution now! Revolution now!", right?

And later it became a song, man, and it didn't sell.

Tomorrow were actually a fine band. I have faint, dim memories of seeing them on this all-night lunatics' convention entitled "Christmas On Earth Continued", and during the set Steve Howe played beautifully, Junior dropped his bass, and Keith West demonstrated a variety of on-stage poses that anticipated many of the excesses of the Sublime Seventies.

In addition to "Bicycle" and "Revolution", they performed a hideous creation entitled "Three Funny Little Dwarves", and "Strawberry Fields Forever". Twice.

THE PINK FLOYD: "Point Me At The Sky"

AND ENTER David Gilmour. "Point Me At The Sky" ran into problems right at the start because it mentioned the *Evening Standard*, and so things had to grind to a halt while the offending phrase was redubbed as "the Daily Standard" so that no-one would feel in any way pressured to buy the *Evening Standard*.

I'm sorry to have to tell you that it wasn't a hit (is this becoming monotonous?), since it was well over five minutes long and not particularly catchy. It operated in sections, something that the Great British Public wasn't quite ready for, and it wasn't particularly orientated towards the taste of Radio 1 producers, which may have contributed to its downfall.

The pirate radio stations, y'see, had been packed up a couple of months before, which had an immediate conservatising effect on public taste. After the "Sky" debacle, the Floyd stopped making singles.

LOVE SCULPTURE: "Sabre Dance"

AT LAST, friends, a bona fide HIT! One of the legacies of the Psychedelic Age was a frenzied outburst of guitar-heroing, based on either Strange Electronic Devices and/or recitals of The Complete Works of Albert King Performed Consecutively In No Less Than Eighteen Seconds.

Dave Edmunds came from a peculiarly demented Welsh branch of the latter school and, as part of Love Sculpture, got signed to Parlophone because

the label at that time was without a blues band.

(It was also 1968, when record companies had to have blues bands or else be Last Year's Label.)

L.Sculpture dutifully made an album entitled "Blues Helping", containing numbers like "The Stumble", "Wang Dang Doodle", "Three O'Clock Blues" and so forth, and then somehow persuaded their record company to go for an absolutely murderous hell-for-leather version of Khataturian's "Sabre Dance", which was first premiered when the group guested on John Peel's "Top Gear".

Their performance so unnerved Peel that he insisted on playing it again later on in the show. It boosted Love Sculpture into a fair-to-medium-sized attraction on the college circuit, and enabled them to only play blues when they actually felt like it.

Eventually they split up and Dave Edmunds, apart from a temporary resurfacing with "I Hear You Knockin'", turned to studio whizz kiddy and bailing out "Stardust".

JEFF BECK GROUP: "Rock My Plimsoul" (single version)

WHILE THE VAST majority were farting around with studio gimmicks and hippie mysticism, a few resolute souls continued to play blues and rock out.

Among the latter division were the Jeff Beck Group, who at that time included Rod Stewart (microphone), Micky Waller (drums) and Ron Wood (bass), with the occasional assistance of Nicky Hopkins (piano).

They in fact recorded two versions of "Rock My Plimsoul" (a bastardised version of B.B. King's "Rock Me Baby"), one of which appeared on the B-side of their "Tallyman" single in 1967 and the other on the "Truth" album in 1968, though they were probably cut at the same session.

In the liner notes to "Truth", Beck claimed that the album version was far superior to the single version, and it is probably due to this that the album version was included on last year's Rak maxi-single of Jeff Beck Group triumphs.

Personally, I always felt the single cut to be more compact, more inventive and to have a far higher energy level, and without wishing to re-open any old wounds, a cursory listen to "Plimsoul" and, to a certain extent, to "Blues De Luxe" on "Truth", should demonstrate fairly definitely that Beck and Stewart were developing at least two years before Jimmy Page and Robert Plant teamed up many of the stylistic devices that were to characterise Led Zeppelin's blues work.

DEEP PURPLE: "Hush"

ONCE UPON a time, before the formation of Purple Records, and even before EMI formally acknowledged the fact that D. Purple were a "progressive group" by switching them to Harvest, they recorded a couple of albums for Parlophone, the first of which was charmingly entitled "Shades Of Deep Purple".

They don't dream up titles like that any more.

Simultaneously, they were signed to Bill Cosby's Tetragrammaton Records in the States, and achieved a couple of massive hits with Vanilla Fudge-style reworks of songs like "Hush" and "Kentucky Woman".

"Hush" was actually an object lesson in how to heavy up a pop song, complete with a neat little organ riff and rather overstated vocals from one Rod Evans, the D. Purple's singer. He was later to reappear in a singularly nasty group called Captain Beyond.

THE EDGAR BROUGHTON BAND: "Out Demons Out"

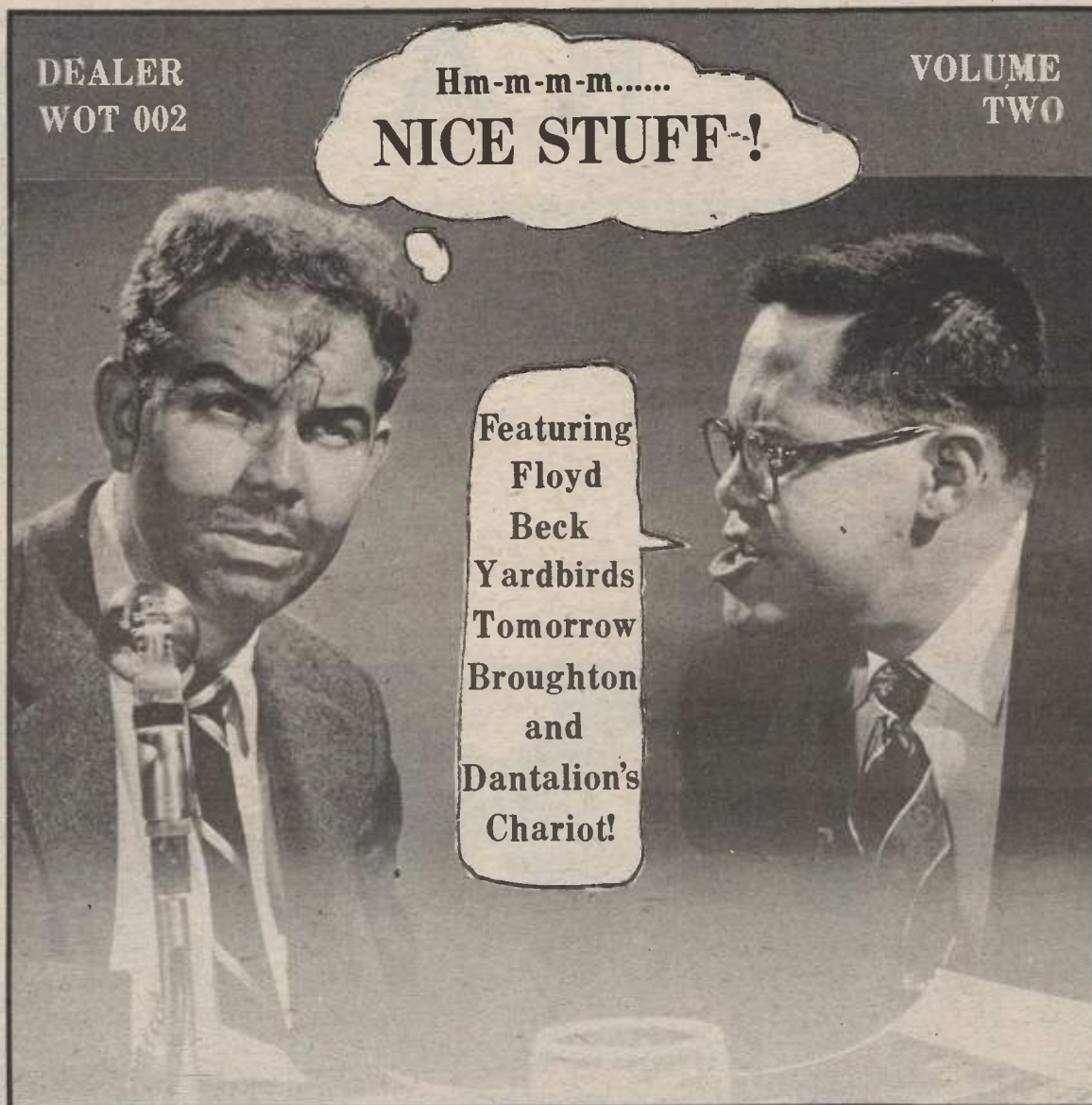
GOD, how I used to hate this song when the Broughtons performed it — as they inevitably did — at large open-air gatherings such as Hyde Park freebies and the Bath Blues Festival of 1969!

As the First Psychedelic Age began to fade from the nervous system and everybody came down, it seemed that its legacy was hordes of shirtless kids in headbands banging Coke tins together and howling "Out demons out!" right along with the Broughtons.

Little did they know, all those years ago, that what they were actually doing was pioneering exorcism-rock.

ADDENDUM: Something that I only noticed when I was halfway through compiling this second volume of "Nice Stuff" is that both anthologies consist principally, if not entirely, of material originally issued on singles.

At a time when only soul and idiot pop actually think in terms of singles as singles, it could be worth noting that the anthologists of the late '70s and early '80s are going to be in one hell of a lot of trouble.



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IMPORTS

Presley's Golden Hits, Vol. DLXXXVI

IN ANSWER to the many queries I've received regarding the availability of Mike Nesmith's RCA albums, the situation is roughly this — "Pretty Much Your Standard Ranch Stash" is around on a home-grown issue but all the rest are obtainable only from import dealers.

"And The Hits Keep On Coming", is a full-price import but "Magnetic South", "Loose Salute", "Nevada Fighter" and "Tantamount To Treason" have all been deleted in the States and are now filtering through to British dealers at a low price. You should, therefore, be able to pick up any of these for around £1.45 — which can't be bad news.

While Gladys Knight may not be too happy to learn that Motown are still moving her old surplus material onto album, I imagine that quite a few soul freaks will be eager to lay their hands on any samples of her work that Gordy and Co. can dig out of the vaults. "A Little Knight Music" (Soul) which appears to be a collection of mainly (though not entirely) previously unreleased items, is the latest of the line, on the surface an interesting enough affair that includes such familiar numbers as "Come Together", "Sugar, Sugar" and "Put A Little Love In Your Heart" as well as four Pam Sawyer and Gloria Jones compositions ("Don't Tell Me I'm Crazy", "I Hate Myself For Loving You", "All We Need Is A Miracle" and "No One Could Love You More").

Also from Motown comes a new Smokey Robinson elpee. "A Quiet Storm," featuring mostly self-penned numbers, plus "Happy", the song from "Lady Sings The Blues".

While this column is primarily concerned with albums, I can't resist mentioning one soul

single that's floating around right now — title is "Pick Up The Pieces One By One", basically an instrumental version of the AWB's hit, played by — wait for it! — AAB, the Above Average Black Band to you, Enoch.

The rumour's goin' around that the perpetrator of this piece of plastic is a well-known Polydor funk-king (the single's on I.D. Identify, which is distributed by Polydor) who's a bit up-tight about Plaid Power taking over in Souldom.

Back to albums now and the news that the Headhunters — Bennie Maupin (sax), Paul Jackson (bass), Blackbird McKnight (guitar), Bill Summers (percussion) and Mike Clark (drums), most of whom played on Herbie Hancock's hit album — are now doing their own thing on "Survival Of The Fittest", which comes to you courtesy of Arista.

Over at RCA it's been extra-mileage-out-of-old-tracks time again. One full-price deal involves El Pres and is called "Pure Gold", a re-run of "It's Impossible", "Jailhouse Rock", "Don't Be Cruel", "Kentucky Rain", "I Got A Woman", "All Shook Up", "Loving You", "In The Ghetto" and "Love Me Tender". £3.25 and it's all yours.

Failing that, you might wish to invest around £2.25 on The Isley Brothers' "Rock Around The Clock" (RCA Camden), a collection that includes "I'm Gonna Knock On Your Door", "Respectable", "Open Up Your Heart" and "Turn To Me".

But if you want some newer black sounds then you might try "Trammps" or the O'Jay's "Survival" (both Philadelphia), or even another slice of street-funk from Mandrill, whose latest addition to the catalogue is "Solid", and on the U.A. label instead of the more familiar Polydor.

FRED DELLAR

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Soul

A whole lot of whiplashes and scars...

NOT MANY artists hot on the US Soul charts have had the apprenticeship of Syl Johnson.

A veteran of Chicago's blues joints and bars since 13; a mad breathless round of blues sessions for all of the windy city's back street labels as well as the likes of Jimmy Reed, Magic Sam and Earl Hooker; a record session with Cincinnati's King label at a time when it was one of the black labels, and in the mid-sixties number one on the Chicago charts while still truck-driving during the day. Even a residency at Chicago's premier nightclub 'The Burning Spear' — and still no real national breakout.

With those kind of dues paid its still hard to figure out why Syl Johnson isn't the superstar his talent and experience deserve, but then America is full of potential — at least Syl knows just what he has to do.

Despite his Chicago blues roots he has no pretensions about the "romance" of the Blues; it was just work, picking up a few extra bucks for pocket money.

He spoke quickly and precisely asking almost as many questions as he gave answers: "Well I always loved the guitar, my brothers and friends played so it was kinda natural we drifted into the tavern life. We lied about our age an awful lot, and we got paid 5 or 6 bucks a night each. Nothing was signed, no agreements. I really didn't start dealin' in contracts till I was 13 or 14.

It may seem strange for one so young to get embroiled in Chicago's very adult blues scene at a time when the music was having little or no effect on black teenagers, but: "I was a Doowopper too man, but where could you play with Doowop groups? There were no guitar stars in the Spaniels or The Flamingos. There was no groups gigging unless they was at the Regal (a large Black concert hall now demolished). The groups weren't in the little clubs so I had to play the blues. I was caught up between Muddy Waters and The Platters. A kid can't really relate to the blues but I played guitar, so I had to lean toward your Muddys and Wolfs. I was raised in Mississippi anyway and that's the kind of music they all dug down there — B. B. King, John Lee Hooker and Jimmy Reed."

After playing the round of Chicago's tough taverns and bars in the company of the late Magic Sam, Billy Boy, Arnold and hosts of others, Syl got into the session field.

"For lots of people, so many I can't even remember them. See in those days they just hired you for about 40 bucks a session, you never got any credits. Many of the sessions weren't even recognised by the unions you know. Like the harmonica wasn't classified as an instrument! Little Walter established it because he was making so much money, and they said we gotta drag this guy into the union.

Johnson had recorded about a half dozen singles for the Federal label in 1959 but it wasn't until 1967 that he recorded anything with commercial success.

"Basically I never thought to be a singer. I was kinda like forced into it. I had a band, you know, but I didn't ever think of a whole-hearted career out of it. The first cut I had with Twilight was "Come On Sock It To Me" and there I was listening to it on the truck radio and they were saying "It's number one (on the Chicago soul charts only; the record was No. 12 on Billboard's R&B chart)."

... is what it's taken to get SYL JOHNSON into shape. Here the man who finds himself in Al Green's shadow talks over his career with BOB FISHER

Syl had several hits on Twilight, the most notable being "Different Strokes" (the inspiration for Sly's "Everyday People") and the powerful "Is It Because I'm Black." The latter with its superior lyric and doom-laden guitar gave Syl a No. 1 on the R&B charts and an almost too convenient No. 51 on the pop 100.

"It never broke pop farther than 51. They not like y'all are here in the States. To a white cat he's gonna say IS IT BECAUSE I'M BLACK, WHAAT!!! In fact they'd rather not hear it. I can't really see how it got to No. 1 — I still don't really know how many copies it did. That was nothing new tho' — I was told I'd got a gold disc for "Sock It" but it never came. So I was young then; I didn't know no better. It takes a whole lotta whiplashes and scars to make a man."

THE next stage in Syl's career came with his signing to Willie Mitchell's Hi label but he and Mitchell had met long before that, when he had produced Syl for Twilight.

"He impressed me with big front money (thirty grand) and at the time I signed, Al Green was only just starting to break. So he was hot with "Tired Of Being Alone" and Willie played "Let's Stay Together" for me when I first started to cut. Anyway, the first record I cut for them was in too high a key

for me but it was a hit — "Love You Left Behind," far too high. Even then, you see, the musicians were getting into Al's groove.

"My problem now is that Al got so big till he just dominates the sound. When anyone hears his kinda intro they just say 'Hey, man, it's a new Al Green record!' Then they say 'Hey no, it's not his voice, it's some other cat copying his groove'."

Syl has had two albums issued on Hi, and the latest, "Diamond In The Rough" (London SHU 8477), is a very definite improvement over his first, which really was too close to the Green sound for its own good. Despite still having a little too much off that Memphis sound it includes some very fine songs sung with Syl's emphatic involvement but it still turned off the majority of critics.

"I think 'Diamond' is a good album. 'Stuck In Chicago' is a good track but it's not personal. I got my own arrangement of it for my own band with the song and the rhythm. In the studio though, along Willie and James Mitchell come with their horns and strings and that, but I set my tracks up different from them. I don't feel the songs the way they do. It don't matter what they do, the horns and the rhythm plays the same way.

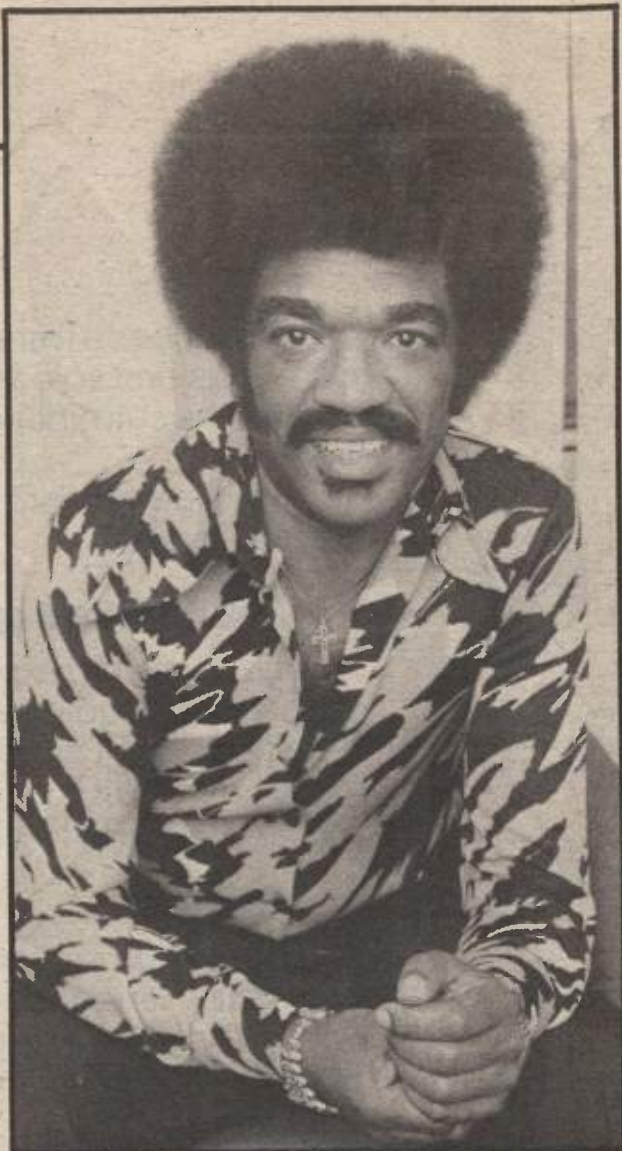
"I'm musically-minded enough to know that my tracks sound a whole lot like Al Green. But I really blame

myself for that sound 'cos you can't always blame Willie. He got a million and one things on his mind, plus he's rich, plus he's getting a whole lot richer with Al Green. So, what can you say?"

The impression of Mr. Johnson was, despite his obvious enjoyment of playing to mainly white audiences in this country, he has no burning desire to break into the pop market himself, or, as he put it himself: "You know what my audience is in the States? Ninety-nine per cent Black. Black people have made me rich and I thank 'em all."

He has definite plans and whether or not they see fruition at Hi remains to be seen. He made it plain that he was beginning to find love songs tiresome: "What more can you say in a love song that hasn't been said a thousand times?"

"There's a whole lot of problems in this world not confined to Black Americans, but relating as much to them. I want to sing about what's happening now. 'Is It Because I'm Black' I'm proud of and I'm gonna do it again."



Syl Johnson: in the Memphis straightjacket?

In a moment of confidence Syl showed some songs he had been working on, constructed in a blues fashion, loose but powerful in a way that the blues in its heyday never was. Syl

knows that Willie Mitchell does not feel this kind of material, but he hopes.

I'll hope with him because if he pulls it off, Syl Johnson will be BIG.

SOUL CHARTS

US R&B TOP TWENTY

1. L-O-V-EAl Green (Hi)
2. SHOE SHINE BOYEddie Kendricks (Tamla)
3. WHAT AM I GONNA DOBarry White (20th Cent)
4. BAD LUCKHarold Melvin & The Blue Notes (Epic)
5. SHAKEY GROUNDTemptations (Motown)
6. SHININ' STAREarth, Wind & Fire (Col)
7. ONCE YOU GET STARTEDRufus (ABC)
8. LIVING A LITTLE, LAUGHING A LITTLESpinners (Atlantic)
9. WALKING IN RHYTHMBlackbyrds (Fantasy)
10. MY LITTLE LADYBloodstone (London)
11. GET DOWN, GET DOWNJoe Simon (Spring)
12. ONE BEAUTIFUL DAYEcstasy, Passion and Pain (Roulette)
13. WE'RE ALMOST THEREMichael Jackson (Motown)
14. LOVE FINDS ITS OWN WAYGladys Knight & The Pips (Buddah)
15. CRY TO MELoleatta Holloway (Aware)
16. BABY THAT'S BACKATCHASmokey Robinson (Tamla)
17. LOVE WON'T LET ME WAITMajor Harris (Atlantic)
18. SWING YOUR DADDYJim Gilstrap (Roxbury)
19. SUN GODDESSRamsey Lewis & Earth, Wind & Fire (Col)
20. SPIRIT OF BOOGIEKool & Geng (DeLite)

Charts courtesy of "CASHBOX."

US IMPORT ALBUMS

- WINTER IN AMERICAGil Scott-Heron (Strata East)
 BARRABASBarrabas (Avco)
 TRAMMPSTrammps (Golden Fleece)
 I'LL BE YOUR SUNSHINEVernon Burch (UA)
 KEEP ON BUMPIN' AND MASTERPLANKaygees (Gang)

UK SINGLES RELEASES

- CALIFORNIA (PTS. 1 & 2) Dynamic Concept (Power Exchange)
 WHERE IS THE LOVEBetty Wright (RCA)
 LOVE DON'T GO THROUGH NO CHANGESSister Sledge (Atlantic)
 S.O.S.Rhetta Young (All Platinum)
 CHANGESVernon Burch (UA)
 PLEASE DON'T RUNGeorge Clinton (ABC)
 HURRICANE COMING TONITECarol Douglas (RCA)
 E-MAN BOOGIEJimmy Castor Bunch (Atlantic)
 CUT THE CAKEAverage White Band (Atlantic)
 GONNA PICK UP MY TOYSDevonnes (UK)

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		Bound for Glory (Guthrie) paper	75p

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Five Minutes Ago

NOW AND...

1. GOOD LOVIN GONE BAD	Bad Company (Island)
2. KINGS OF SPEED	Hawkwind (United Artists)
3. FUNKY GIBBON	Goodies (Pye)
4. LIFE IS A MINESTRONE	10CC (Mercury)
5. PHILADELPHIA FREEDOM	Elton John (DJM)
6. HOW GLAD I AM	Kiki Dee Band (Rocket)
7. CAN'T GET IT OUT OF MY HEAD	E.L.O. (W. Bros.)
8. JIGSAW GIRL	Clifford T. Ward (Charisma)
9. WELLY BOOT SONG	Billy Connolly (Polydor)
10. FOX ON THE RUN	Sweet (RCA)
11. DIXIE CHICKEN	Little Feat (W. Bros.)
12. PICK UP THE PIECES	Average White Band (ATL)
13. YOUNG AMERICANS	David Bowie (RCA)
14. DREAMER	Supertramp (A&M)
15. PLAY ME LIKE YOU PLAY YOUR GUITAR	Duane Eddy (GTO)

... THEN

1. YOU CAN MAKE ME DANCE	Faces (W. Bros.)
2. DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH	Alice Cooper (Anchor)
3. CUT THE CAKE	Average White Band (ATL)
4. STREETS OF LONDON	Ralph McTell (Reprise)
5. BEST OF MY LOVE	Eagles (Asylum)
6. NO. 9 DREAM	John Lennon (Apple)
7. SNOOKEROO	Ringo Starr (Apple)
8. TANGLED UP IN BLUE	Bob Dylan (CBS)
9. DON'T HIDE YOUR LOVE	Andy Fraser Band (CBS)
10. WHEELIN' AND DEALIN'	Sassafras (Chrysalis)
11. BYE BYE-BABY	Bay City Rollers (Bell)
12. DON ALPHONSO	Mike Oldfield (Virgin)
13. LET'S EAT (REAL SOON)	Hatfield and the North (Virgin)
14. I CAN DO IT	Rubettes (Polydor)
15. BILLY PORTER	Mick Ronson (RCA)

*Available from Virgin Record shops in London and Aberdeen, Birmingham, Brighton, Bristol, Coventry, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Plymouth, Sheffield, Swansea.

Five Years Ago

Last Week	This Week	Week ending April 22, 1970
3	1	1 SPIRIT IN THE SKY Norman Greenbaum (Reprise)
2	2	2 ALL KINDS OF EVERYTHING Dana (RCA)
1	3	3 BRIDGE OVER TROUBLED WATER Simon & Garfunkel (CBS)
4	4	4 CAN'T HELP FALLIN' IN LOVE Andy Williams (CBS)
5	5	5 GIMME DAT DING Pipkins (Columbia)
6	6	6 KNOCK KNOCK WHO'S THERE Mary Hopkin (Apple)
7	7	7 YOUNG GIFTED AND BLACK Bob & Marcia (Harry J)
8	8	8 NEVER HAD A DREAM COME TRUE Stevie Wonder (Tama Motown)
12	9	9 FAREWELL IS A LONELY SOUND Jimmy Ruffin (Tama Motown)
14	10	10 WHEN JULIE COMES AROUND Cuff Links (MCA)

Ten Years Ago

Last Week	This Week	Week ending April 23, 1965
1	1	1 TICKET TO RIDE Beatles (Parlophone)
2	2	2 THE MINUTE YOU'RE GONE Cliff Richard (Columbia)
3	3	3 HERE COMES THE NIGHT Them (Decca)
4	4	4 CONCRETE AND CLAY Unit 4 Plus 2 (Decca)
5	5	5 FOR YOUR LOVE Yardbirds (Columbia)
14	6	6 KING OF THE ROAD Roger Miller (Philips)
9	7	7 BRING IT ON HOME TO ME Animals (Columbia)
8	8	8 STOP! IN THE NAME OF LOVE Supremes (Tama Motown)
12	9	9 POP GO THE WORKERS Barron Knights (Columbia)
11	10	10 LITTLE THINGS Dave Berry (Decca)

15 Years Ago

Last Week	This Week	Week ending April 22, 1960
5	1	1 DO YOU MIND Anthony Newley (Decca)
2	2	2 STUCK ON YOU Elvis Presley (RCA)
1	3	3 MY OLD MAN'S A DUSTMAN Lonnie Donegan (Pye)
3	4	4 FALL IN LOVE WITH YOU Cliff Richard (Columbia)
4	5	5 HANDY MAN Jimmy Jones (MGM)
16	6	6 CATHY'S CLOWN Everly Brothers (Warne Bros.)
11	7	7 SOMEONE ELSE'S BABY Adam Faith (Parlophone)
15	8	8 SWEET NUTHIN'S Brenda Lee (Brunswick)
9	9	9 FINGERS AIN'T WOT THEY USED T'BE Max Bygraves (Decca)
7	10	10 SUMMER PLACE Percy Faith (Philips)

NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS
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SINGLES

This Last Week		Tuesday, April 22, 1975	Weeks in Chart	Highest Position
1	(1)	BYE BYE BABY Bay City Rollers (Bell)	8	1
2	(3)	LOVE ME LOVE MY DOG Peter Shelley (Magnet)	5	2
3	(2)	FOX ON THE RUN Sweet (RCA)	6	2
4	(5)	SWING YOUR DADDY Jim Gilstrap (Chelsea)	6	4
5	(9)	HONEY Bobby Goldsboro (United Artists)	3	5
6	(4)	FUNKY GIBBON/SICK MAN BLUES Goodies (Bradley)	6	4
7	(11)	LIFE IS A MINESTRONE 10 c.c. (Mercury)	3	7
8	(12)	THE TEARS I CRIED Glitter Band (Bell)	2	8
9	(26)	LOVING YOU Minnie Riperton (Epic)	2	9
10	(20)	DING-A-DONG Teach In (Polydor)	2	10
11	(23)	TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOURSELF Three Degrees (Philadelphia)	2	11
12	(6)	THERE'S A WHOLE LOT OF LOVING Guys & Dolls (Magnet)	8	2
13	(10)	THE UGLY DUCKLING Mike Reid (Pye)	5	10
14	(7)	GIRLS Moments & Whatnauts (All Platinum)	7	4
15	(27)	HURT SO GOOD Susan Cadogan (Magnet)	2	13
16	(—)	OH BOY Mud (Rak)	1	16
17	(18)	SKIING IN THE SNOW Wigan's Ovation (Spark)	5	17
18	(8)	FANCY PANTS Kenny (Rak)	7	4
19	(16)	A LITTLE LOVE AND UNDERSTANDING Gilbert Becaud (Decca)	3	16
20	(29)	GET DOWN TONIGHT K.C. & The Sunshine Band (Jayboy)	3	20
21	(14)	PLAY ME LIKE YOU PLAY YOUR GUITAR Duane Eddy & The Rebelettes (GTO)	7	9
22	(13)	I CAN DO IT Rubettes (State)	8	7
23	(21)	HOLD ON TO LOVE Peter Skellern (Decca)	3	21
24	(19)	PHILADELPHIA FREEDOM Elton John Band (DJM)	7	12
25	(17)	LET ME BE THE ONE Shadows (EMI)	5	11
26	(15)	LADY MARMALADE Labelle (Epic)	5	15
27	(25)	L-O-V-E Al Green (London)	5	20
28	(—)	HOW GLAD I AM Kiki Dee Band (Rocket)	1	28
29	(28)	WHAT AM I GONNA DO WITH YOU Barry White (20th Century)	7	6
30	(22)	REACH OUT I'LL BE THERE Gloria Gaynor (MGM)	7	15

BUBBLING UNDER

SORRY DOESN'T ALWAYS MAKE IT RIGHT — Diana Ross (Tama Motown)
TAKE YOUR MAMA FOR A RIDE — Lulu (Chelsea)
WE'LL FIND OUR DAY — Stephanie De Sykes (Bradley)
CALL ME ROUND — Pilot (EMI)
WHERE IS THE LOVE — Betty Wright (RCA)

U.S. SINGLES

This Last Week		
1	(3)	SOMEBODY DONE SOMEBODY WRONG B. J. Thomas
2	(1)	PHILADELPHIA FREEDOM Elton John
3	(10)	HE DON'T LOVE YOU Tony Orlando & Dawn
4	(14)	JACKIE BLUE Ozark Mountain Daredevils
5	(6)	CHEVY VAN Sammy Johns
6	(7)	EMMA Hot Chocolate
7	(8)	LONG TALL GLASSES Leo Sayer
8	(9)	WHAT AM I GONNA DO Barry White
9	(13)	SUPERNATURAL Ben E. King
10	(11)	L-O-V-E Al Green
11	(12)	SHININ' STAR Earth, Wind & Fire
13	(2)	LOVIN' YOU Minnie Riperton
14	(16)	WALKING IN RHYTHM Blackbyrds
15	(17)	HOW LONG Ace
16	(18)	IT'S A MIRACLE Barry Manilow
17	(20)	BEFORE THE NEXT TEARDROP Freddy Fender
18	(24)	ONLY YESTERDAY Carpenters
19	(25)	THANK GOD I'M A COUNTRY BOY John Denver
20	(22)	STAND BY ME John Lennon
21	(21)	BERTHA BUTT BOOGIE Jimmy Castor
22	(23)	KILLER QUEEN Queen
23	(5)	LADY MARMALADE Labelle
24	(28)	AUTOBAHN Kraftwerk
25	(4)	NO NO SONG Ringo Starr
26	(—)	BAD TIME Grand Funk
27	(—)	YOUNG AMERICANS David Bowie
28	(30)	SHOESHINE BOY Eddie Kendricks
29	(26)	HAVE YOU NEVER BEEN MELLOW Olivia Newton John
30	(19)	POETRY MAN Phoebe Snow

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

ALBUMS

This Last Week		Tuesday, April 22, 1975	Weeks in Chart	Highest Position
1	(—)	ONCE UPON A STAR Bay City Rollers (Bell)	1	1
2	(2)	THE MYTHS & LEGENDS OF KING ARTHUR & THE KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE Rick Wakeman & The English Rock Ensemble (A & M)	4	2
3	(6)	THE BEST OF THE STYLISTICS (Avco)	3	3
4	(4)	THE ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK 10 c.c. (Mercury)	5	4
5	(3)	SHIRLEY BASSEY SINGLES ALBUM (United Artists)	7	3
6	(7)	BLUE JAYS Justin Hayward & John Lodge (Threshold)	6	4
7	(8)	STRAIGHT SHOOTER Bad Company (Island)	4	7
8	(5)	PHYSICAL GRAFFITI Led Zeppelin (Swansong)	8	1
9	(1)	YOUNG AMERICANS David Bowie (RCA)	5	1
10	(14)	TOMMY Soundtrack (Polydor)	4	10
11	(9)	10th ANNIVERSARY ALBUM/20 GREATEST HITS Tom Jones (Decca)	8	2
12	(16)	ROLLIN' Bay City Rollers (Bell)	30	1
13	(10)	ELTON JOHN'S GREATEST HITS (DJM)	24	1
14	(12)	THE BEST YEARS OF OUR LIVES Steve Harley & Cockney Rebel (EMI)	7	5
15	(15)	CRIME OF THE CENTURY Supertramp (A&M)	16	3
16	(11)	TUBULAR BELLS Mike Oldfield (Virgin)	87	1
17	(17)	THERE'S ONE IN EVERY CROWD Eric Clapton (RSO)	4	17
18	(13)	ON THE LEVEL Status Quo (Vertigo)	10	1
19	(26)	RUBYCON Tangerine Dream (Virgin)	2	19
20	(18)	SOULED OUT Various Artists (K-Tel)	7	14
21	(19)	AVERAGE WHITE BAND (Atlantic)	9	7
22	(—)	ROCK 'N' ROLL DUDES Glitter Band (Bell)	1	22
23	(—)	MEMORIES ARE MADE OF HITS Perry Como (RCA)	1	23
24	(20)	THE SINGLES 1969-1973 Carpenters (A&M)	67	1
25	(21)	TELLY Telly Savalas (MCA)	5	19
26	(27)	ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK'S GREATEST HITS (Decca)	18	1
27	(25)	JUST ANOTHER WAY TO SAY I LOVE YOU Barry White (20th Century)	2	25
28	(—)	DARK SIDE OF THE MOON Pink Floyd (Harvest)	107	1
29	(22)	BLOOD ON THE TRACKS Bob Dylan (CBS)	12	5
30	(23)	SIMON & GARFUNKEL'S GREATEST HITS (CBS)	126	1

BUBBLING UNDER

SPECS APPEAL — Shadows (EMI)
KATY LIED — Steely Dan (ABC)
AL GREEN'S GREATEST HITS (London)
GENESIS VOL. 1 (Charisma)
DANCE, SING OR ANYTHING — Various Artists (Ronco)

U.S. ALBUMS

This Last Week		
1	(4)	CHICAGO VIII Chicago
2	(2)	PHYSICAL GRAFFITI Led Zeppelin
3	(2)	HAVE YOU NEVER BEEN MELLOW Olivia Newton John
4	(3)	AN EVENING WITH John Denver
5	(5)	THAT'S THE WAY OF THE WORLD Earth, Wind & Fire
6	(6)	FOR EARTH BELOW Robin Trower
7	(8)	CRASH LANDING Jimi Hendrix
8	(9)	YOUNG AMERICANS David Bowie
9	(10)	AUTOBAHN Kraftwerk
10	(7)	ROCK 'N' ROLL John Lennon
11	(11)	BLUE JAYS Justin Hayward & John Lodge
12	(13)	A SONG FOR YOU Temptations
13	(18)	TOMMY Soundtrack
14	(16)	FUNNY LADY Soundtrack
15	(12)	COLD ON THE SHOULDER Gordon Lightfoot
16	(14)	PERFECT ANGEL Minnie Riperton
17	(17)	WELCOME TO MY NIGHTMARE Alice Cooper
18	(19)	YESTERDAYS Yes
19	(22)	FEEL LIKE MAKIN' LOVE Roberta Flack
20	(15)	BLOOD ON THE TRACKS Bob Dylan
21	(21)	AL GREEN'S GREATEST HITS Al Green
22	(—)	STRAIGHT SHOOTER Bad Company
23	(26)	SHEER HEART ATTACK Queen
24	(20)	PHOEBE SNOW Phoebe Snow
25	(30)	HEARTS America
26	(28)	MODERN TIMES Al Stewart
27	(24)	AVERAGE WHITE BAND Average White Band
28	(—)	KATY LIED Steely Dan
29	(25)	SUN GODDESS Ramsey Lewis
30	(—)	TO BE TRUE Harold Melvin & Blue Notes

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

"Subtle as a flying mallet" is Dave Edmunds' first solo album.

It's the culmination of eight years' work.

Its roots stem from '67, the year of "Sabre Dance."

The Rockfield experiments.

Dave started experimenting in '68 at Rockfield Studios, Wales.

It's brought him further singles hits: "I hear you knocking," "Baby I love you" and "Born to be with you."

Stardust.

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He became Music Producer of "Stardust."

"Subtle as a flying mallet."

This album's a showcase of everything Dave's learnt in eight years.

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Dave Edmunds' "Subtle as a flying mallet."



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Just four hits in eight years. What's Dave Edmunds been playing at all this time?



Lookin' Back

THE PINK FAIRIES

By MICK FARREN

IT'S NOT the easiest thing in the world to be totally objective about a bunch of people who have been good friends and close associates for a number of years. Nevertheless what you lose on objectivity you gain in special information. So here, for the first time, are the rumours behind the truth.

The Pink Fairies were born somewhere between London's Ladbroke Grove and San Francisco after the breakup of The Deviants on their disastrous visit to the USA. When their illustrious lead singer (Mr. Farren is referring to himself — Ed.) departed for England, it left guitarist Paul Rudolph, drummer Russell Hunter and bass player Duncan Sanderson with the problem of what to do next.

Still calling themselves The Deviants, they gravitated towards the Family Dog community in San Francisco, where they spent the winter of 1969-70 in stoned poverty.

Back in London a loose aggregation of Steve Took, Twink, and your humble writer were hanging out, carrying on and achieving very little beyond bad habits and worse hangovers under the name of The Pink Fairies.

As the New Year came in it became obvious that there was no practical future in this set up. And Twink decided to recreate The Pink Fairies on a basis that had a little more commercial potential.

A series of transatlantic

phone calls followed and it was resolved that Rudolph, Sanderson and Hunter would link up with Twink and call themselves by the aforementioned name. The three brought themselves back to London and set about knocking the idea into a working unit.

Those early days weren't without problems. They may have had a band, but they lacked management, equipment and, above all, money. To complicate matters further, there was a tangled mess of old contracts to be resolved before they could even think about recording.

With typical haphazard flamboyance, Twink announced that the band would play totally for free for the first six months of their career. Although this policy was not strictly adhered to, it was the period when the Fairies, often in double harness with Hawkwind, became a familiar feature at benefits, street parties and free concerts.

They could always be counted on to set up in the dirt of the camp sites at most rock festivals.

This was the time in which The Pink Fairies developed their reputation as the hippies' house band, and amassed their hard core following of dopers, degenerates, mandy freaks and motorcycle hoodlums.

The peak of this phase of their career was probably their

performance at the Phun City festival. Only the MC5 doing their all time best European show outdid them in pumping out raw, undiluted rock and roll. As a climax to their act Twink and Russell fell out of their clothes and embraced naked on the front of the stage.

Not for them the subtleties of Bowie and Ronson. When the Fairies wanted to make a point

they went straight at it.

A deal with Polydor records produced first the single, "The Snake"/"Do It", an underground classic that now changes hands for four or five pounds in the golden goodie emporia, and then their first album, "Never Never Land".

"Never Never Land" showed a lot of promise but was marred by some major flaws. There seemed to be a very serious confusion about the band's real direction and a positive weakness in terms of their songwriting. Despite this, it sold in sufficient quantities to make both band and record company satisfied with the relationship.

On the road, they went from strength to strength. Through the summer of 1971 they developed a raw, powerful act that depended heavily on the unrelenting two drummer line-up, and relied very much on Twink's erratic showmanship as a visual front.

Twink, was, in many ways, a double-edged blessing. His stage presence ranged from the inspired, when he could totally involve an audience in his particular brand of lunacy, to the gross — as on the legendary night he casually took a piss from the side of the stage.

As the summer of 1971 drew to a close, Twink suddenly up and quit. He took himself away to the wilds of Morocco, and the Fairies found themselves continuing as a three-piece.

With one flailing drummer removed, the emphasis of the band's live show fell more heavily on guitarist Paul Rudolph, who began to reveal that he had the potential to be one of the great neo-psychedelic, Hendrix tradition guitar players of the 70s.

The winter of 1971/2 was a period of rapid expansion for The Pink Fairies. They began to happen in Europe and it looked, at home, as though it was only a matter of time before they moved out of the club circuit into the bigger halls. Rudolph's playing expanded its scope at an alarming rate while, unhampered by a second drummer, Russell Hunter's technique improved rapidly.

The band did not, however, simply stick to a three-piece guitar band formula. There was a lengthy flirtation between Rudolph and Trevor Burton around the concept of two guitarists. Now and again audiences would even be treated to the absurd spectacle of Miss Pamela and Miss Renee of the GTOs singing three part do-wop ballads with the statuesque figure of the Fairies' road manager and big nurse Dave (the Boss) Goodman.

For a while it seemed as though the Fairies were about



What a bunch of sweeties . . . the original Fairies (from left) Paul Rudolph, Russell Hunter, Duncan Sanderson, and Twink.

A thrilling tale of Ladbroke Grove, loose aggregations, hanging out, and falling about — recounted in loving detail by an actual participant in those glorious halcyon days of punk rock. Plus sensational news — the Fairies may re-form. . . they're hanging out, maybe planning a loose aggregation.

to step on to that magic escalator to the big time. They completed their second album, "What A Bunch Of Sweeties", which, although marred by a lack of really memorable original songs, was a considerable improvement over "Never Never Land", and looked as though it would notch up considerable sales.

It was at this point that the Fairies' unique self-destruct mechanism came into play. Shortly after the release of the second album, Paul Rudolph quit. The reasons for this abrupt break-up were complex, but the major cause seemed to be personal problems that resulted from a profound imbalance in individual narcotic consumption.

Just when the Fairies should have been reaping at least a minimum reward for all the years of scuffling and starving, they were out of business again. Rudolph retreated to the safety of his guitars and tape recorders, while Hunter and Sanderson started to experiment with various line-ups including one with Steve Took and Mick Wayne, one-time guitar player with a band called Junior's Eyes.

For a while it looked as though the combination of Hunter, Sanderson and Wayne might work. They produced a single, "Well, Well, Well." It was no earthshaker but seemed, at least competent.

The live come-back shows that followed the release of the single turned out to be a series of unqualified disasters. It was plain that the inclusion of Mick Wayne in The Pink Fairies just didn't make it. In a rapid shuffle Larry Wallis was brought in from UFO to replace him.

It seemed as though the addition of Wallis was going to be

the salvation of the Fairies. He was a tight lyrical guitarist with a strong sense of melody. The album "Kings Of Oblivion" seemed to have solved the Fairies' problem of original songs. Although Wallis's ideas leaned a little heavily on a Cooper/Ezrin influence, the new look Fairies turned in a tight, tuneful album.

Or, at least they intended to turn it in. Polydor in fact grabbed the album before it was totally finished, and, with greater concern for production schedules than art, hastily mixed the LP while the Fairies were away on tour, even leaving the vocal tracks off one cut, "Raceway".

Although the audiences who had been alienated by Wayne's affect on the line-up started to come back, it now seemed that external problems were the great stumbling block. A series of unsuitable management deals left them without capital, and with a huge weekly bill for equipment rental that meant the band's take-home pay became almost nonexistent.

The pressure of having to work all the time just to stay broke became too much. Twink was brought back into the band in an attempt to revive flagging spirits. But it didn't work. The financial problems became insurmountable. Dave Goodman, who had been the mainstay of the Fairies' organisation since their formation, gave up in disgust. The band fell apart shortly afterwards.

That might have been the end of The Pink Fairies. Up until a few weeks ago it looked as though a full stop could be put to the story, and they could be filed under British Psychedelic Wild Boys and forgotten.

Strangely enough, however, the Fairies are far from forgotten. When a Fairies revival was arranged as an added attraction at Hawkwind's London Roundhouse concert, a capacity crowd watched Rudolph, Wallis, Hunter and Sanderson prove that, after a shaky start, they could still get the audience up and rocking.

Following the show, offers and schemes began to fly around. Hawkwind's manager, Douglas Smith, and agent Paul Fenn have expressed their interest in mounting a Fairies UK tour. Polydor are releasing a Pink Fairies compilation album in their Rock Flashback series.

It still remains for either Rudolph or Wallis to commit themselves to a new Fairies project, but with Hunter and Sanderson enthusiastic about the scheme, it only needs a solution to the problem of a guitarist before something comes together.

We may yet, for our sins, see another incarnation.



"Aren't you taking the group name a bit too literally, Russell?" Twink and Russell Hunter at Phun City Festival.

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Yes reveal cognisance of funky rock'n'roll

Who said STEVE CLARKE doesn't have a sense of humour?

Yes

GLASGOW

YES'S CURRENT British tour could be compared to **The Faces'** trek around the isle late last year, when their general excellence restored the band's status as one of rock's finest performing bands.

On Friday night at Glasgow's Apollo Theatre, Yes's set culminated in a series of performances collectively and individually which made the gig one of the most impressive and enjoyable rock concerts this reporter has seen since Steely Dan gave their all at Manchester night on a year ago.

Yes, they were good, their music for the greater part of the show taking on a status approximately ten times as fine as the limp set I witnessed them play at Manchester's Free Trade Hall around the time of release of "Tales From Topographic Oceans".

For a start the presentation of the Yes show is excellent, even when you take into account the whole mirror-ball/dry ice routine which was, not surprisingly, greeted with rapturous applause by the devotees.

Jon Anderson says that the show is the final form of the act that the group inaugurated for the first screening of "Topographic Oceans" — you know, where Alan White's drums are set up underneath what people tell me is a lung fish.

The fish opens up during White's solo allowing various lights to flash on and off inside it. That's still there, but Yes have got rid of the prop through which they entered the main stage area; the one which was intended to represent their entering the topographic ocean, cosmic-travellers.

A new addition to the show is what looks like a crab and, judging from its size, it could have been lifted from the set of "Gulliver's Travels" if there were any crabs in that. The colossal thing's stage left of the lung fish and it too performs great wonders when White opens up on the drum-front, flashing lights and wagging pincers and all.

Each of the front three stage mikes are surrounded by an island of clear plastic through which light glows at various appropriate moments. Also to keep the punter happy, there's a couple of moments when pure white spots of light appear as if from nowhere and are projected all over the stage area.

In other words Yes like a bit of trickery with the old electricity, if you see what I mean.

THEY ALSO take pride in their appearance which either means they care about their audience or are latent narcissists.

Both are probably true.

In actual fact Yes's stage clothes could raise the odd smile with those of us who possess a certain sense of humour (Steve why didn't you tell us before? Ed).

especially Chris Squire's stage garb which consisted of a black outfit decorated with pom-poms, no less, mid-thigh and ankle length.

But to the music, because I reckon I'd have got off on it even if they'd performed it in a barn wearing denims.

The bad bits first, because

Yes left me with that old well-they're-playing-very-fast-but-they-ain't-getting-anywhere feeling.

Their opening number was "Sound Chaser", side two, track one of "Relayer" and it sounded as pointless live as it does on the album. For sure it's fast, but so what? Howe's extended solo seemed totally redundant in its apparent haphazard construction.

"The Gates Of Delirium", again from "Relayer", made me feel the same way apart from certain passages where melody peeped through what once again seemed like speed and complication for their own sakes — I know that's been said before, but that's the way it was for me.

Onto the good bits.

The remaining piece from "Relayer", "To Be Over", started off fine and actually seemed to have some coherent construction as a song where everything is perfectly dovetailed, but went off at various tangents allowing the group once more to demonstrate their incomprehensible speed as musicians.

"Close To The Edge" was performed with slick professionalism and demonstrated how Patrick Moraz's approach to keyboard playing within Yes is different to Wakeman's.

Moraz's playing is sparser and infinitely more tasteful, but sometimes betrays a heavy handedness which Wakeman's didn't. He also seems to have difficulty producing the right tone in that his playing on "And You And I" didn't sound as apt as the equivalent line that Wakeman used to play.

That song also displayed a few band co-ordination difficulties.

And now the really fine moments; an acoustic medley of "Your Move", "Mood For A Day", "Long Distance Runaround" and "The Clap" where Howe, Squire and Anderson play acoustic guitars, Howe using a lute for part of the time. Moraz adding just a soupçon of piano; the rendition of "Ritual", (the closing side of "Topographic Oceans") where the band's playing was immaculate while retaining a certain warmth; and the encores of "Roundabout" and "Sweet

Take these chains

Ray Charles

FESTIVAL HALL

ASK ANY of your better white blues singers — the likes of Cocker, Burdon, Winwood — who first got them into R&B and they'll tell you unequivocally, Ray Charles.

Maybe it was the inevitable pathos of a blind black performer triumphing over etc etc that had something to do with

it. It certainly wasn't anything to do with the strings-and-girlie chorus product of one of his later phases which made him big with the larger white markets, or with his not unremarkable jazz-keyboard skills when he jammed with the likes of the Modern Jazz Quartet.

Earlier fans fell away when he ceased to bop and moan and tell-it-like-it-is, but many remained faithful, like myself, to the memory.

I think, as an ex-fan, that what it came down to was that for all his sins he had That



That Voice, wearing That Jacket

ON THE TOWN



Yes at Glasgow—the final metamorphosis of their stage act.

Dreams" from the group's pre-"Yes Album" days.

Now, odd as this may sound, "Sweet Dreams" illustrated Yes playing with an understanding of funky rock 'n' roll not normally associated with the group. Howe, Squire and particularly White were exemplary, the drummer laying it down like he used to as an up-tempo rocker.

More than anything else "Sweet Dreams" indicated just how fine Yes are as players and as a band working together.

Record-wise they seemed to reach a high on "Close To The Edge", since when they have gone further into themselves, concentrating on sheer flash and ignoring their ability to

write well-wrought songs.

Glasgow proved that they can still do it on stage.

Maybe the next album'll prove they can still do it on record.

Non-Yes followers are advised to see the show. They might be surprised. I was.

Kokomo

LOS ANGELES

KOKOMO ARE a tight, solid, sometimes inspired live R&B band with a few weaknesses in personnel, an unclear idea of stage presentation, and a lot of

as yet unexploited potential.

The band's greatest assets have to be their melodic sense, their ability to sit in a groove and cook (which unfortunately does not come off on their listlessly produced CBS album) and most of all, some truly excellent singing.

Kokomo are a big band: two guitars, keyboards, bass, drums, and congas, saxophone, and three front singers — Frank Collins, Dyan Birch and Paddie McHugh — who have been together for seven years and are polished and classy.

Their former association with Arrival should not be held against them, as they sing their asses off, as a trio and as soloists.

They're the band's major strengths, and it would be nice to see them right in the middle of the stage, so that they could provide some badly needed visual focus.

But they're not the only ones who sing well. Pianist Tony O'Malley has a gritty, Cocker-influenced voice, and bass player R&B Spenner adds a good vocal on the catchy "I'm Sorry Babe".

But it is Birch, Collins and McHugh who really shine.

Ms. Birch, reed slim and elegant, has a soaring voice which cuts loose in a duet with O'Malley on "Anytime". Paddie McHugh a waif of deliberately ambiguous sexuality in makeup and glasses befitting Elton John, proves a surprisingly powerful soul shouter with fine stage presence, and Frank Collins, wide eyed and sensitive, does an oh-so-plaintive version of Aretha Franklin's "Angel".

And the three of them, singing together with arms around each other in obvious affection, are a refreshing sight.

The instrumental unit is generally capable, although they don't as yet seem capable of producing the dashing flair of, say, an Average White Band with whom comparisons are inevitable because of color, nationality and musical style.

The rhythm section is solid and plays with restraint, taste, and occasional funk.

The band's major weakness would seem to be their lack of an outstanding instrumental soloist.

The guitar playing of Jim Mullen and Neil Hubbard, although certainly adequate in the context of a rhythm section, failed to ignite any excitement during solos at the Troubadour, and almost inevitably caused a drop in intensity, a break in the musical flow.

And regular sax player Mel Collins, either ailing in the hospital or playing with Alvin Lee, depending on whose story you believe, has had to be replaced with a different musician in each city on the tour.

With a hot guitarist and someone like Arif Mardin to produce their next album and light a fire under their asses, Kokomo could well be on their way.

Elliot Cahn

from my show

Voice.

Maybe it should have been obvious to me sooner, but it is only over the last year or so that it has occurred to me that the blues is largely just another part of showbiz. At least if "B.B. King & Bobby Bland Together for The First Time..." or my latest Jimmy Witherspoon review-copy or the recent Aretha product — to name but a few recent R&B-derived "experiences" — are anything to go by.

Of course one must face up to the inevitable, and the old order changeth lest one good custom should corrupt a world. The blues train has turned into a gravy train but it would be perverse to try and change it back again just for the sake of art.

It simply means that those who still feel more like a Black Panther than Uncle Tom will have to go somewhere else to get their souls recreated.

Does anyone still feel like that? Well, if they did they wouldn't go to the Ray Charles Revue for sure.

And the saddest thing of all on Saturday night — to get back to the inspiration of this review — was the suspicion I got that even now Ray would like to do the real thing but he can't because he has compromised too much.

That is to say, at one point in the show he said he'd like to do some of his "dirty music" — this evinced a small amount of cautious laughter from the audience — and I think he really tried for the first few verses to give them straight ice cream but as the audience got increasingly restless he ended up giving them the whole maple syrup and chopped walnuts with a Cadbury's flake rammed down the middle.

Ray goes "Amen" and "Have Mercy" and the Raelets go "Amen" and "Have Mercy." Ray's interjections get increasingly complex and the Raelets try to follow. It's all tongue-in-cheek. The audience relaxes.

It's OK, he wasn't serious after all. He's one of us...

The evening had started well enough, the first part being taken up by the "Orchestra" — a stomping, brassy big-band of accomplished jazzmen in uniform blue jackets & red tartan trews — with their "Concert in Miniature", featuring various members stepping out front for solos. They all looked & sounded as if they'd be happier blowing free in a small group somewhere but that don't bring home the bacon.

Anyway it was a small treat for swing fans, the whole thing smoothly MC-ed by a Duke Ellington lookalike who would walk onstage and his hand would alight on the mike EXACTLY in time with the final note of the number, all with the cool of one who has done it a thousand times.

Then Ray came on after the interval and started off with a few of his MOR hits — "Georgia", "Till There Was You" — eventually getting into one of his boogies.

Some of the audience started clapping on the wrong beat. Ray soldiered on.

Leroy Cooper, big fat baritone man and orchestra leader grinned at the guy next to him, and fiddled with his drip-valve. Could he possibly have thought Ray was jiving?

Then they brought on the Raelets, groomed like air hostesses.

Maybe it would have been better with a different audience. It was impossible to tell whether they came for Ray Charles or whether they just had R.F.H. season tickets. Perhaps he dies it this way but I was very saddened.

The programme notes were full of the Ray Charles. Superman schtick, the man who has created this whole thing called the Ray Charles Organisation (shades of Sinatra) — but he looked to me as much like the architect of his scene as Elvis does of his.

He's still got that great voice though.

Geoff Hill

Peter Skellern had great potential until he met Pendulum Music.

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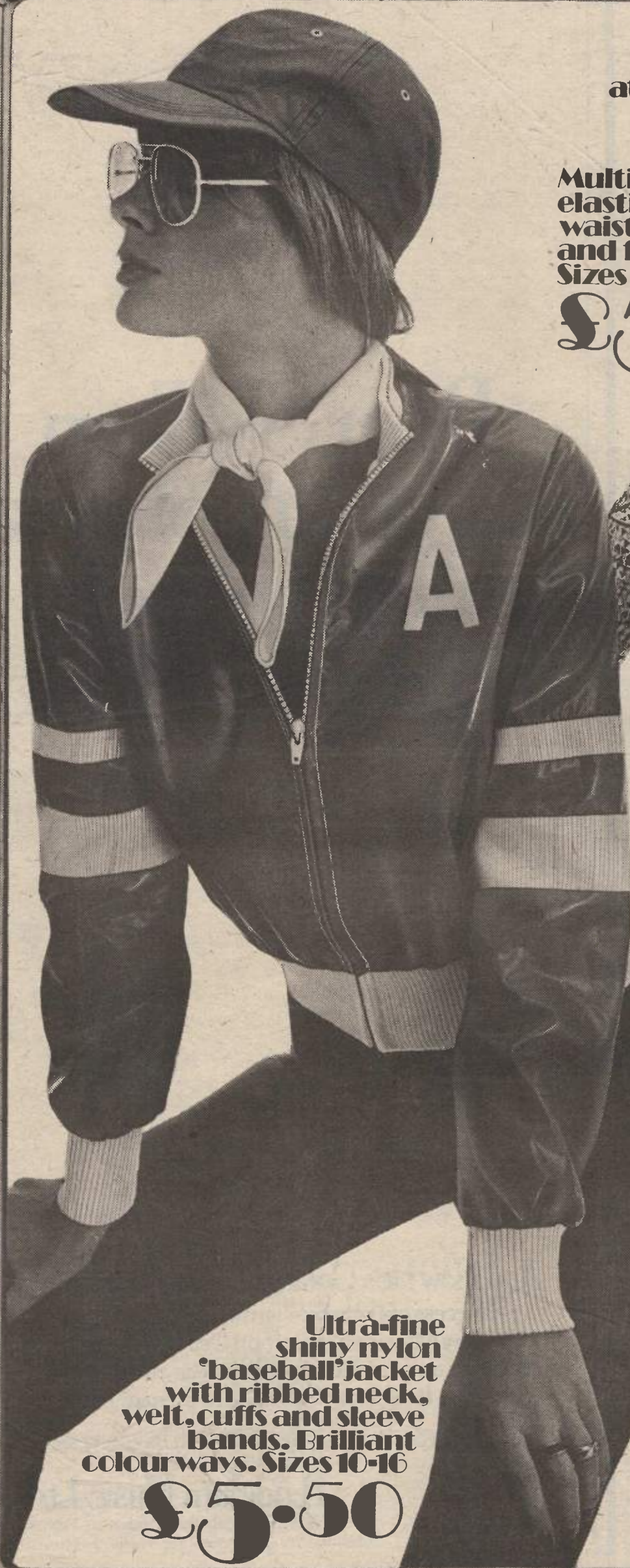
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ON THE TOWN

The band they haven't yet invented adjectives to describe

Grand Funk

WEMBLEY

LORD, LORD, why hast thou forsaken me?

To get specific. O Maker Of Universes, why have I been forsaken in the middle of a sparsely populated Wembley Stadium to listen to a triumvirate of Teutonic toadstools trading under the not inappropriate name of Triumvirat trotting out ludicrously unpleasant and inordinately loud techno-flash?

"Zis, is our first gig in Inkland," announces the bass player. "We are Cherman group, and we would like to say..." he gestures grandly, "iss great."

Howls of applause. Yep, nuffin like a bit of the ol' technokratik to liven up the troops to the main attraction.

Triumvirat, have a keyboard player who flails around all over several different pianos, clavinetts, organs and synthesisers (and maybe a quick mellotron to keep the bugs away — these guys wouldn't be seen dead without a mellotron) and generally gets athletic all over the place while most of the audience sit there and take it and the rest lurch around the bars guffawing inanely and requesting innocent passers-by to sell them drugs in various attractive local dialects.

During the interval, members of the audience howl. "We want Grand Funk", almost as if they

didn't know that they were going to get Grand Funk. After a couple of days, which I utilise by perusing "The Teachings Of Don Juan" by Carlos Castaneda, the lights go down, the audience go up and Grand Funk go on.

HERE, FRIENDS, things start getting difficult.

I've seen dreadful bands. I've seen groups of the utmost lousiness, and I've even seen acts that I would happily describe as "the worst band in the world" (nothing personal, Lol) but I've never seen anything as uniquely horrific as Grand Funk.

In fact, I'm not going to waste any more adjectives on them.

For a start, their sound mix was the most ★ I've ever heard. It's possible to salvage ★ playing by making the instruments sound good even if the playing is absolutely ★ but the cloth-car doing G. Funk's sound-mix evidently considered (and quite rightly too) that the audience neither knew nor cared about such paltry matters as the actual sound of the instruments.

The indescribably muscular Mark Farner jogged around the stage whacking away at his Gibson (and how anybody can get such a thoroughly ★ tone out of a Gibson is quite remarkable) bellowing intermittently into the nearest microphone. Don Brewer played extremely ★ and Craig

Frost and Mel Schacher quite sensibly kept out of the way as much as possible.

They played "Footstompin' Music", "I'm Your Captain", "We're An American Band" and a host of other G. Funk faves, climaxing with an unimaginably ★ version of "Inside Looking Out".

In order to elevate the proceedings, film clips were projected onto a screen above the stage, a lengthy series of shots of the band indulging in healthy outdoor pursuits such

as fishing, biking, water-skiing and running about with horses to preface "We're An American Band", a train to introduce "The Locomotion" and so forth.

It was... it was... well, look kids, everything that people said about Grand Funk is true.

All I can say, really, is "Come back, Status Quo... all is forgiven."

Charles Shaar Murray.

Dr. Feelgood

ROUNDHOUSE

DR. FEELGOOD'S first major bill-topping appearance has come comparatively quickly; dj Jerry Floyd pointed out that the band had played at the Roundhouse at the bottom of the bill only last September, so it must have been gratifying to them to have sold out Sunday's concert.

Considering that most people had gone to see Dr. Feelgood, it was much to Fumble's credit that they stirred up a lot of ge-

nuine enthusiasm with a mixture of fifties songs — "Poetry in Motion", "Book of Love" etc. — and their own material, such as "So Long Marilyn", a tribute to Marilyn Monroe (written long before it was actually fashionable).

A few years ago, Fumble suffered the indignity of being liked by everyone all at once, which meant there was a slightly condescending tendency to take them for granted. However they are still one of the most professional bands around with more onstage personality than many, and a far sultrier sound now that the new lead guitarist is fully initiated.

But now I pause, wondering how to convey the ludicrous effect of being exposed to Wilko Johnson for the first time (like something akin to gamma rays or a form of nerve gas) and fully aware that anyone capable of wielding a pen has already poured every grovelling superlative on that brilliant, if slightly misshapen head.

It must have been great to have been the first person to write about Dr. Feelgood with every adjective still at your disposal. Now you really need to invent a new vocabulary.

The level of audience excitement was unusual for one thing. It reminded me more than anything of how people reacted to the Stones about ten years ago, a feeling of being in at the start of something huge.

Wilko Johnson only needed to twitch a nostril to bring the crowd to near hysteria. He did a lot more than that however, setting off in manic forays around the stage with the rigid grace of one of those fairground contraptions, all abrupt angular turns and a uniform speed (no time wasted in accelerating).

Vocalist Lee Brilleaux is no less of a star. Wilko might be pretty weird, but he's just plain evil with a powerful voice eminently suited to the demented stutterings of the Telecaster and the equally sordid rhythm

section.

He sweats profusely and constantly dabs his face with a towel, plays some excellent slide guitar on some numbers, harmonica on others, crouches and does ruder things with the mike than anyone else.

It seemed that the set was a standard one as far as material went, although apparently the band's collective confidence has increased a lot recently.

They started with "Talkin' Bout You" and went on to do other rock standards like "My Baby, Your Baby" and some of their own material including "Roxette" and the new single "She Does It Right", which were good enough to dash the only conceivable criticism there could be of the band — that their novelty value might outweigh their lasting power.

A diamond version of "Route 66" brought the set to an end but there were encores.

W.J. came back onstage looking genuinely surprised and delighted at the reaction and completely ruined his ex-con image by blowing kisses.

He then sang "I'm a Man" while Brilleaux blasted vigorously at his harp. Johnson's voice sounds like he looks (see, my descriptive powers are exhausted) and it was really good except for the agitation he appeared to suffer at being rooted to one spot for a few minutes.

"Boney Moroney" and "Tequila" followed and that was it. Although the Feelgood's stuff is all pretty similar it is in no way repetitive, but works on you insidiously building up to a distinct peak of excitement.

I haven't mentioned bass player Sparko or drummer The Figure mainly because I couldn't see them but their combined sound was fabulous — great lunking bass lines and fast solid drumming. It may be inevitable that Brilleaux and Johnson will get more attention, but the thing about Dr. Feelgood is that they are very much a band.

Lindsey Boyd.

Stomach erupts!

Reviews go haywire!

YOU'RE NOT going to believe this.

Strange gremlins occasionally invade the NME editorial offices. One such last week laid low the Reviews Editor with a paralysing bout of gastro-enteritis. During his incapacitation, these same gremlins got to work on the beleaguered On The Town column, and introduced a review of Steeleye Span and Fairport Convention that had been written SIX MONTHS AGO.

The review had in fact been a test article submitted by Rod McShane, who will in future be employed to write reports on concerts that have taken place WITHIN THE LAST WEEK!

Our deepest apologies, natur-

ally, go to everyone concerned for any embarrassment they may have suffered as a result.

I mean, Fairport didn't come out of it so badly, but Steeleye must have found it hard indeed to be lambasted for something they did last November. They must be finding it difficult to believe that we really like them.

Fairport themselves will be touring America shortly, and will then do a series of concerts in this country in June, at which time their next album, "Rising Of The Moon" will be issued.

Meanwhile, on Saturday, Steeleye will be giving their first British concert of the year at Hammersmith Odeon, a review of which will appear anytime between next week and October 1979.

Bergen White

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PVT 14

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Roadrunners

NME's weekly nod in the direction of grass roots rock. Admission on request — write to 'Roadrunners', c/o NME, and we'll send you the forms. Send S.A.E.



SALTGRASS

SALTGRASS: Dave Taggart (18), vocal, acoustic guitar, electric mandolin, banjo; Terry Walker (27), vocal, acoustic guitar, banjo, harmonica; Gordon Close (18), vocal, bass guitar, fiddle; Mick Kirby (22), percussion, occasional vocal, roadie.

ONE HAS to admire the initiative shown by Sunderland-based contemporary folk/blues band Saltgrass — in that they've chosen to create their own work circuit by hiring pubs etc. to play in, so they can be selective about where they choose to perform.

And though Saltgrass admit that by purposely avoiding the night club/working men's club bookings they do themselves out of a lot of money, they aren't unduly concerned. By sticking to their guns they manage to secure at least three gigs each week for £20 a shot.

With low overheads, they are able to replace old equipment while at the same time still making ends meet.

With all four members contributing to their repertoire of original material, Saltgrass concede that many promoters are somewhat reticent to book them on spec, but, once they've heard them play, bookings are always forthcoming — "Although, many bookers try to underprice the band."

Fortunately for this band, bookings are on the increase and in the foreseeable future, Saltgrass intend to extend their operations to include venues around Leeds, Huddersfield and London.

"Our biggest drawback", they point out, "is trying to combine the group work with a full-time day job, so we are now making every effort to provide enough work to enable us to turn professional."

Saltgrass can be contacted through: Terry Walker, 154, Caird Street, Grange Town, Sunderland. Tel: Sunderland 77779.

MOONSHINE STEEL



MOONSHINE STEEL: Roger Draper (28), drums, percussion; Vanessa Draper (28), vocal, percussion; Jeff Horne (29), bass, organ, lead guitar; John Jasnoch (21), pedal steel, guitar, dobro, mandolin; Brian Holness (29), vocal, 12-string electric guitar, acoustic guitar, 5-string banjo, bass.

BREAD AND butter bookings are the mainstay of any band's existence, and as such, Moonshine Steel find little difficulty in scoring at least a couple of these each week around North Kent. It's the prestige gigs that are much harder to come by.

So what kind of music do these honchos play, I hear you ask. Well let's go right on over to the Steelmen (and woman) for an answer:

"Facetiousness aside, it's very difficult to describe in a few words the sound that emerges from our band. The rather diverse origins of our members mean that, for better or worse, we don't sound like any other groups we've so far encountered... if you could imagine, say, Hank Williams and the Stones performing 'Mr. Tambourine Man'."

"Better known British bands playing in our area of musical consciousness — though they neither sound like us nor each other — include The Kursaal Flyers and the late Chilli Willi. Possibly, the biggest single influence on our musical development has been California... particularly the music of The Byrds and The Dillards."

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Playing In The Band

Keyboard men unchained

Further adventures of the Stylophone.

By REX ANDERSON

SO IT'S pat meself on the back time again — something I indulge in occasionally, though I feel a bit of a twit wandering around with my arm over the back of my head.

Some months ago I praised the virtues of a thing called the Stylophone 350S — the smallest organ in the world. The essence of the article was that, although the instrument was only an improvement on the Rolf Harris toy, it seemed to have a lot of applications for pro musicians.

Well, now I have collected together information on a number of leading musical characters who are into the Stylophone 350S and in fact it has become even more of a pro musician's instrument than even I imagined.

First, let me rapidly refresh your memories: the Stylophone, in case you don't know, is a tiny machine selling for around a tenner, and is played by running a pencil-like stylus across a miniature keyboard.

Some years ago, Dubreq, who manufacture and market the thing, began to develop a more complex version which would have a wider range and would also have a number of different voicings and effects switches.

There were several delays in the development of the production line but finally, a few months ago, the thing, called a 350S was introduced to music shops and is now selling for around £50 give or take the effects of Mr. Healey's budget.

The beauty of it is that it's only the size of a portable cassette recorder, and yet if you feed it through an amp it has

several really good sounds — together with one or two completely original ones.

The effects include vibrato, reiteration, wah-wah, two decay speeds for different keyboard effects, pitch control, volume control, expression and a variety of different voicings including strings, woodwind, brass.

I saw its potential for bands which feature keyboards. The problem with a front-line keyboard man is that he's stuck behind his organ, electric piano or synthesiser and can't get out front and boogie.

This causes a lot of friction in some bands. The audience like a front man who can rivet their full attention, so inevitably the lime-light will fall on a guitarist or vocalist whereas the man who's maybe doing all the work is stuck behind the keyboards where he can't be seen.

A little portable thing like this would enable the organist to hop about on the end of a lead and still play funky sounds.

Bands like Argent and Greenslade are typical of those who would benefit.

I showed one of these little things to Greenslade and they flipped. They weren't that convinced of its potential as a stage instrument, but they saw it as the solution to another problem.

Greenslade spend a lot of time on the road, and about once every nine months they shoot into the studio and record an album. The problem is, no time for composing.

Dave Lawson immediately saw the potential of the instrument because it is quite simple to sit in the car and compose on it.

Vibrato, wah-wah and expression can be controlled by a

photo-electric cell — the hand moves over it diminishing or increasing the light. If you are playing the machine in a room with insufficient light then a foot pedal can be provided which does the same job. The machine runs off P99 trani batteries which give you around 50 hours of playing time.

Argent too have decided to use it — with Rod Argent realising that at last he can get away from posturing between his keyboards. He's having one of the machines customised so that it can be strapped to him like an ice-cream tray and he can cavort off into the audience.

The machine works perfectly well just on its own little speaker, but through a professional amplifier and speaker not only does it reveal its true professional sound but the artist is able to incorporate additional effects.

Keyboard wizard, Vangelis Papathanasiou, is using two at present, and plans to incorporate them into the phenomenal line-up of keyboards that he'll be taking on stage later this year. It has to be admitted that 'Gelly' has an amazing aptitude for obtaining sounds from keyboards that no-one else can.

The problem is that the 350S, like most synthesisers, is monophonic — that is, you can only get one note at a time. Gelly however has devised a way of playing one instrument using two styli (it is provided with an additional stylus for reiteration effects). This, in effect, gives him two notes.

Furthermore, he has sussed how to do this with one hand, so he can play both his instruments simultaneously and obtain four notes.

Not to be outdone by the keyboard geni. Les Gray of Mud is also using a 350S, at present mainly for composing because since the band split with Chinn and Chapman they've had to produce more of their own material. However, he also has plans for using the machine on stage.

Top pop writer Tony Hatch has found the machine invaluable for composing. It's extreme portability and versatility make it a boon to the busy composer, he says.

Perhaps more important than all these is the number of enquiries the manufacturers have had from small bands of amateur and semi-pro status — bands who can't afford to lay out a lot of bread on an electric piano or organ but need something to fill out the sound and don't mind parting with 50 quid.

Because it's so simple to operate, the thing has also proved invaluable to bands who don't have a keyboard player but feel that a fuller sound is needed on some numbers. Bands like Budgie for example, who consist of simply guitar, bass and drums, have now got their sound mixer filling in on the mini-synthesiser on one or two numbers.

A WORD about the incestuous music business. Listen Mick, I know you and Woody are good mates and he's a passably good axe wielder, but if we're going to have chaps playing for two bands then there's no room for chaps lower down the ladder to get a look in.

I mean, you didn't even ask me to an audition.

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2nd	David Gates
3rd	Bachman-Turner Overdrive
4th	Gong
4th	Dr. Hook
4th	Greenslade
7th	Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee
9th	Flying Burrito Brothers
11th	Andy Fraser Band/Sassafras
13th	Don McLean
14th	Nazareth
18th	Showaddywaddy
18th	Can
23rd	Rod McKuen
23rd	Alan Price
25th	Alex Harvey
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ACE

Sat. May 24th: BUDGIE
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NATIONWIDE



HELEN REDDY (above) is in Britain primarily for TV appearances, but is also playing two live dates in Southport (Friday) and London (Sunday).

DR. HOOK & the Medicine Show (right) return to this country for another tour, with opening dates in London (Monday) and Birmingham (Wednesday).

RESIDENCIES

BIRMINGHAM Barbarella's: **YAKETY YAK**
 ● Week from Sunday
BIRMINGHAM New Cresta Theatre Club:
GENE PITNEY
 ● Week from Sunday
BIRMINGHAM Night Out: **SALENA JONES**
 ● Week from Sunday
HEDON BIRKOLME Country Club: **PAPER DOLLS**
 ● Wednesday for four days
LONDON Cambridge Theatre: **"THE BLACK MIKADO"**
 ● Thursday for a season
LUTON Caesar's Palace: **DANNY LA RUE**
 ● Week from Sunday
SHEFFIELD Fiesta: **FORTUNES**
 ● Week from Sunday
STOCKTON Fiesta: **MAC & KATIE KISSOON**
 ● Week from Sunday
STOKE Bailey's: **FRANKIE LAINE**
 ● Week from Monday
WAKEFIELD Theatre Club: **"HAIR"**
 ● Week from Monday
WATFORD Bailey's: **ALVIN STARDUST**
 ● Week from Sunday



THURSDAY

ABERDEEN Palace Ballroom: **FUMBLE**
ANDOVER Country Bumpkin: **DAVE CHRISTIAN**
 ● Radio Luxembourg roadshow
ARUNDEL American New College: **CISCO**
BARROW Maxim's Disco: **GENO WASHINGTON**
BATH Pavilion: **DR. FEELGOOD**
BIRMINGHAM Barbarella's: **DRIFTERS**
BIRMINGHAM Town Hall: **RICHARD & LINDA THOMPSON**
BLACKPOOL Lobster Pot: **CAROUSEL**
BRISTOL Granary: **ROCK REBELLION**
BOURNEMOUTH Tiffany's: **ACE**
BRIDPORT Bull Hotel: **GEORGE MELLY/JOHN CHILTON'S FEETWARMERS**
DERBY Cleopatra's: **JUDAS PRIEST**
DOUGLAS (I.O.M.) Palace Lido: **PILOT**
EWELL Technical College: **FELLOWSHIP/NEW LIFE**
GLASGOW Strathclyde University: **KEVIN COYNE BAND**
HALLIFAX Victoria's: **BEANO**
HANLEY Place: **LIGHT FANTASTIC**
HARTLEPOOL Gemini Club: **MAC & KATIE KISSOON**
HASTINGS Pier Pavilion: **STEELEYE SPAN**
HIGH WYCOMBE Nags Head: **HUSTLER**
LEEDS Staging Post: **CURLY**
LEEDS University: **RORY GALLAGHER**
LEICESTER De Montfort Hall: **YES/GRY-PHON**
LINCOLN Drill Hall: **KENNY**
LONDON Cafe Royal: **LYN PAUL**
 ● World Wildlife Spring Ball
LONDON CAMDEN Dingwalls: **STEVE GIBBONS BAND**
LONDON CHALK FARM Roundhouse: **IAN CARR'S NUCLEUS**
LONDON HARROW ROAD Windsor Castle: **AGNES STRANGE**
LONDON Institute of Contemporary Arts: **SPEAR**
LONDON ISLINGTON Hope & Anchor: **WITCHES BREW**
LONDON Marquee Club: **NUTZ**
LONDON Speakeasy: **FBI**
LONDON WILLESDEN White Hart: **SLACK ALICE**
MANCHESTER Hardrock: **NICOL & MARSH'S EASY STREET**
NEWCASTLE City Hall: **GENESIS**
NORWICH St. Andrew's Hall: **JONATHAN KELLY**
PAGHAM Farm Club: **BOB STEWART**
 ● Radio Luxembourg roadshow
STRATFIELD Turgis Wellington Arms: **JET MORGAN**

TV AND RADIO

RADIO 1: 7 a.m. Noel Edmonds; 9.0 Tony Blackburn; 12 noon Johnnie Walker (incorporating "Newsbeat" at 12.30); 2 p.m. David Hamilton (shared with Radio 2); 5.0 "Newsbeat"; 5.15-7.0 John Peel presents "Top Gear" with Arthur Brown, Brinsley Schwarz; 8.0 Jack McLaughlin introduces "Folk 75" with Wesley, Park & Smith; 8.30-9.0 Tony Capstick introduces "Folkweave" with the Gaugers; 10.0-12.30 a.m. Don Durbridge with "Music Through Midnight"; **LUXEMBOURG** 7.45 p.m. Peter Powell; 8.30 "Sound Explosion"; 11.0 Top Ten Albums (incorporating NME Pop News at 11.30); 12.0 "208 At Midnight"; 1.30 a.m.-3.0 "Today's Sounds"; **TELEVISION**: Ed Stewart introduces "Top Of The Pops" (BBC-1); Repeat of "Twigg's" with Twigg/David Essex (BBC-2); Pilot/Betty Wright/Ronnie Lane/Julian Brook in "45" introduced by Kid Jensen (some ITV areas, but subject to regional variation -- other viewers see it Saturday).

FRIDAY

ABERYSTWYTH University: **DESMOND DEKKER**
BATH University: **ACE**
BIRMINGHAM Aston University: **SCREAMIN' LORD SUTCH/BLACK-FOOT SUE**
BRADFORD St. George's Hall: **GONG/GLOBAL VILLAGE TRUCKING COMPANY**
BRISTOL University: **DR. FEELGOOD**
COVENTRY Lanchester Polytechnic: **NEUTRONS/CURLY**
CROYDON Fairfield Hall: **TIM HARDIN**
DARLINGTON Incognito (doubling **STOCKTON** Incognito): **BETTY WRIGHT**
DUNS Volunteer Hall: **KENNY**
EASTLEIGH Technical College: **HECTOR EXETER** St. Luke's College: **MICHIGAN FLYERS**
EXMOUTH Samantha's: **MARMALADE**
FISHGUARD Frenchman's Motel: **WISPER**
GLOUCESTER Sharpness Hotel: **FLYING SAUCERS**
GUILDFORD Surrey University: **FRUUPP/ASYLUM**
HANLEY Place: **RAY TETTER AFFAIRE**
HULL Telstar Club: **BEANO**
IPSWICH Gaumont: **GLITTER BAND**
KEIGHLEY Speakeasy: **PETER POWELL**
 ● Radio Luxembourg roadshow
LANCASTER University: **RORY GALLAGHER**
LEEDS Pause Club: **BURGLAR BILL**
LEEDS Polytechnic: **JONATHAN KELLY**
LEICESTER De Montfort Hall: **YES/GRY-PHON**
LONDON BRITTON Raiton Youth Club: **JIMMY LONDON**
LONDON CAMDEN Dingwalls: **FUNKES**
LONDON CHELSEA College of Science: **YAKETY YAK**
LONDON City University: **MYND**
LONDON FULHAM Greyhound: **WITCHES BREW**
LONDON KING'S CROSS Cinema: **BAND CALLED 'O' ISOTOPE**
LONDON HAMMERSMITH Odeon: **THREE DEGREES**
LONDON ISLINGTON Hope & Anchor: **BIFFO**
LONDON ISLINGTON Kings Head: **CAM-DEN GOODS**
LONDON Marquee Club: **THE ONE**
LONDON NEW CROSS Goldsmiths College: **DUSTER BENNETT/HOUSESHAKERS**
LONDON New Victoria Theatre: **SLADE**
LONDON Queen Elizabeth Hall: **RICHARD & LINDA THOMPSON**
LONDON Speakeasy: **BUNNY**
LONDON WILLESDEN White Hart: **SLACK ALICE**
LONDON WIMBLEDON Southlands College: **NICOL & MARSH'S EASY STREET**
LONDON WOOLWICH Thames Polytechnic: **MEDICINE HEAD**

LONDON W.10 The Tabernacle: **GLIDER**
LUTON College of Technology: **LEFT HAND DRIVE**
MORECAMBE Bowl (doubling **BARROW** Maxim's Disco): **DRIFTERS**
NEWBURY Henwick Country Club: **TREME-LOES**
NEWCASTLE City Hall: **GENESIS**
NEWCASTLE Northern Counties College: **GENO WASHINGTON BAND**
PENARTH Paget Rooms: **QUICKSAND**
REDDITCH Cloud Nine: **BEDROCKS**
ROSS-ON-WYE Harvey's: **SWEET SENSATION**
SANDOWN (Isle of Wight) Pavilion Theatre: **LABI SIFFRE**
SCARBOROUGH Penthouse: **JUDAS PRIEST**
SHEFFIELD Polytechnic: **LINDA LEWIS**
SOUTHPORT New Theatre: **HELEN REDDY/PETER ALLEN**
SPENNYMOOR Top Hat: **MAC AND KATIE KISSOON**
STIRLING University: **KEVIN COYNE BAND**
STRETTON Stonehouse Restaurant: **DAVE CHRISTIAN**
 ● Radio Luxembourg roadshow
SUNDERLAND Zhivago's: **FREEDOM**
SUTTON Coldfield College of Education: **MIKE STOREY BAND**
TORRINGTON Drill Hall: **GEORGE MELLY/JOHN CHILTON'S FEETWARMERS**
UPMINSTER Homchurch Sports Club: **SLIPSTREAM**
UXBRIDGE Brunel University: **CHOPYN**

TV AND RADIO

RADIO 1 7 a.m.-5.15 p.m. As Thursday; 5.15-7.0 "Rosko's Round Table"; 10.0-12.30 a.m. Len Jackson with "Music Through Midnight"; **LUXEMBOURG** 7.45 p.m. Mark Wesley; 8.30 "Sound Explosion"; 10.0 Album of the Week; 11.30 NME Gig Guide; 12.0 "208 At Midnight"; 1.30 a.m.-3.0 "Dimensions"; **TELEVISION** Raymond Froggett/Judas Priest in "The Old Grey Whistle Test" (BBC-2); Vince Hill/Eve Boswell in "Songs That Stopped The Shows" (ITV lunchtime); "Roy Castle Beats Time" with Mrs. Mills/Semprini (BBC-1); Larry Grayson/Les Dawson/Linda Grant in "Shut That Door" (ITV).

SATURDAY

AMMANFORD Civic Centre: **JUDAS PRIEST**
BIRMINGHAM Barbarella's: **DRIFTERS**
BIRMINGHAM Incognito: **STEVE GIBBONS BAND**
BLACKPOOL Lobster Pot: **CAROUSEL**
BRADFORD University: **LINDA LEWIS**
BRIDGWATER District Arts Council: **GEORGE MELLY/JOHN CHILTON'S FEETWARMERS**
BRISTOL Granary: **JOHNNY MARS & THE SUNFLOWER BOOGIE BAND**
BRISTOL Polytechnic: **ACE**
BRISTOL The Dug Out: **WISPER**
BRISTOL Yale Entertainment Centre: **SWEET SENSATION**
COLCHESTER Essex University: **RICHARD & LINDA THOMPSON**
CREWE College of Education: **MIKE STOREY BAND**
DAGENHAM Roundhouse: **SNAFU**
DUNSTABLE California: **THREE DEGREES**
EASINGTON-ON-SEA Longbeach Club: **BAND CALLED CHARLIE**
EDINBURGH Usher Hall: **RORY GALLAGHER**
GRANTHAM Kesteven College: **WHEELS**
HALLIFAX Clarence's: **BURGLAR BILL**
HANLEY Heavy Steam Machine: **PILOT**
HANLEY Place: **SMIFFY**
HARLOW Technical College: **STRAY/HUSH**
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD Pavilion: **DR. FEELGOOD**
LARGS The Moorings: **KENNY**
LEICESTER Polytechnic: **CAMEL**
LEITCHWORTH Pelican: **FLYING SAUCERS**
LIVERPOOL Stadium: **GONG/GLOBAL VILLAGE TRUCKING COMPANY**
LONDON CAMDEN Dingwalls: **WIGAN'S OVATION**
LONDON CHALK FARM Roundhouse: **BATTI MAMZELLE/FUNKES/SPEAR/JOHNNY CLARK**
LONDON HACKNEY All Nations Club: **JIMMY LONDON**
LONDON HAMMERSMITH Odeon: **STEELEYE SPAN**
 ● Plus Grand Final of "Tartan Student Sounds" contest
LONDON Imperial College: **PLANXTY**
LONDON KING'S X Cinema: **FRUUPP/DRAGONFLY**
LONDON Marquee Club: **JAILBAIT**
LONDON New Victoria Theatre: **SLADE**
LONDON Royal Festival Hall: **LENA MARTELL**
LONDON School of Economics: **NEUTRONS/CURLY**
LONDON Speakeasy: **PALM BEACH EXPRESS**
LONDON S.W.1. Odyssey Club: **JIMMY POWELL & THE DIMENSIONS**
LONDON TWICKENHAM Cabbage Patch: **DOCTORS OF MADNESS**
MICKLEHAM Hall: **NEARLY INTELLIGENT PHRASE BAND**
NOTTINGHAM Boat Club: **UPP**
OXFORD Polytechnic: **YAKETY YAK**
PAIGNTON Penelope's: **SMILING HARD**
PONTYPRIDD Municipal Hall: **QUICKSAND**
READING Bulmershe College: **F.B.I.**
READING Top Rank: **PETER POWELL**
 ● Radio Luxembourg roadshow
REDCAR Coatham Bowl: **BILL MONROE & THE BLUEGRASS BOYS**
ROCHESTER Medway College of Art: **JET MORGAN**
SCUNTHORPE Baths Hall: **MAC & KATIE KISSOON**
SCUNTHORPE Priory Hotel: **ISAAC GUILLORY'S PURE CHANCE**
SOUTHAMPTON Guildhall: **GLITTER BAND**
SOUTHAMPTON Top Rank: **DAVE CHRISTIAN**
 ● Radio Luxembourg Roadshow
SOUTHPORT New Theatre: **GLEN CAMPBELL**
ST. ANDREW'S University: **KEVIN COYNE BAND**
WEST RUNTON Pavilion: **BEANO**
WIGAN Casino (doubling **MANCHESTER** Carib Club): **BETTY WRIGHT**
WREXHAM Cartrefle College: **WISPER**

TV AND RADIO

RADIO 1 8 a.m. Ed Stewart with "Junior Choice"; 10.0 Rosko; 1 p.m. Ian Hunter's Top 12, introduced by Brian Matthew; 2.0 Alan

FOLK

THURSDAY

BEDFORD Angel: **JOHN GOLDING**
BRIGHTON Richmond Hotel: **GARY BLACKMORE/SOUNDS COUNTRY**
EPPING Centrepoint: **ALEX CAMPBELL**
GLASGOW McLellan Galleries: **BOYS OF THE LOUGH**
KILMARNOCK Auld Hoose: **ROY HARRIS**
LAMBLY Robin Hood: **BOB WILSON**
LIVERPOOL Dolphin: **BERNIE DAVIS/JOE ROONEY**
LONDON BARNET Black Bull: **SWAN ARCADE**
LONDON ISLINGTON Rising Sun: **WEBBS WONDERS**
LONDON SOHO Shakespeare's Head: **JOANNA CARLIN**
MANSFIELD Brown Cow: **TANTALUS/SHEILA BRAMLEY/BEV MOORE**
NOTTINGHAM Windsor Castle: **JOHN GOODLUCK**
POYNTON Folk Centre: **DOUG PORTER**
REDCAR Royal Hotel: **TRACY AND THOM**
ROTHERHAM Masons Arms: **BILL PRICE**
SOUTHERN Railway Hotel: **SEAN CANNON**
THELWALL Pickering Arms: **MARTIN CARTHY**

FRIDAY

BATH Hat and Feathers: **BOB DAVENPORT**
BIRMINGHAM Wheatheaf: **BEGGARMEN**
BIRMINGHAM Repertory Theatre: **NIGEL MAZLIN JONES**
BISHOPS STORTFORD Triad Arts Centre:



ALEX CAMPBELL
BODMIN Garland Ox: **STAVERTON BRIDGE**
BRADFORD Star Hotel: **PETER BELLAMY**
GUILDFORD Star Inn: **DEREK AND DOROTHY ELLIOTT**
LAZENBY Social Club: **TONY CAPSTICK**
LONDON CROYDON Fairfield Halls: **CITY WAITES**
LONDON LEYTON Three Blackbirds: **MR. GLADSTONE'S BAG**
LONDON SOUTHWARK Teachers Centre: **FO'C'SLES**
LONDON STOCKWELL Surrey Hall: **CHRIS HARRISON/NICK MERCER**
LONDON WEST END Le Macabre: **DOLPHIN SMILE**
LONG CRENDON Star: **GEORGE DEACON AND MARION ROSS**
LONGTON Red Lion: **BERNARD WRIGLEY**
MANCHESTER Millstone: **TERRY WHELAN/STEVE MAYNE**
NEWARK Palace Theatre: **GRIMBLES GRANNIES**
OULTON BORAD Waveney: **WATER INTO WINE**
SHERBORNE Digby Hall: **YETTIES**
STOCKPORT HEATON MOOR Rugby Club: **TAVERNERS**
SWINDON Greyhound: **CHRIS FOSTER**
TIDESWELL First Drop Inn: **BRIAN DEWHURST/ROD WHITE**
TRIMDON Red Lion: **ROY HARRIS**
TRURO Swan: **CROWDY CRAWN**
WESTHOUGHTON Red Lion: **GARY AND VERA**
WHITTLEBURY Fox and Hounds: **VIN GARBUTT**

SATURDAY

BATH University: **CHRIS FOSTER**
BIRMINGHAM Black Pig: **VIN GARBUTT**
BURY ST. EDMUNDS St. Edmunds Head: **WATER INTO WINE**
CHORLEY Yarrow Bridge Hotel: **BRIAN DEWHURST**
COVENTRY Fletch: **TALISMAN**
EDINBURGH George Square Theatre: **BOYS OF THE LOUGH**
FALMOUTH Dock Railway Club: **BOB DAVENPORT**
LEEDS Packhorse: **SEAN CANNON**
LEWES Lewes Arms: **GRAHAM AND EILEEN PRATT**
ST. ALBANS City Hall: **CITY WAITES**
SHEFFIELD Highcliffe Hotel: **MARTIN CARTHY**
STEVENAGE Bowes Lion House: **JON BETMEAD**
TELHAM Black Horse: **WESLEY, PARK, AND SMITH**

SUNDAY

BRIGHTON Stanford Arms: **MR. GLADSTONE'S BAG**
BRISTOL Centre Hotel: **BRIAN DEWHURST**
BUXTON Royal Forester: **BRANDYWINE BRIDGE**
CHELLENHAM Crown and Cushion: **CHRIS FOSTER**
CREWE Brunswick Hotel: **THREEFOLD**
DOWNE George and Dragon: **SKINNERS RATS**
EASTBOURNE Crown: **TONY FOXWORTHY**
EPPING Blacksmiths Arms: **FROGMORTON**
GROOMBRIDGE Junction Inn: **CHRIS WHITE/CHRIS ADDISON**
HORLEY Chequers: **ALEX CAMPBELL**
HORNCastle Bull: **JOHN GOODLUCK**
HORSHAM Anchor: **DICK RICHARDSON/BRYAN BLANCHARD/SIMON FUREY**
KEELE University: **BILL CADDICK**
KENDAL Community Centre: **KELLY AND WALSH**
LONDON BOUNDS GREEN Springfield Park Tavern: **WIZZ JONES**
LONDON CHALK FARM Enterprise: **ETCHINGHAM STEAM BAND**
LONDON FOREST HILL Bird in Hand: **VIN GARBUTT**

MANCHESTER NORTHENDEN Post House: **BEGGARMEN**
MARSDEN (SOUTH SHIELDS) Marsden Inn: **SEAN CANNON**
NOTTINGHAM Crown: **BILL PRICE**
PLYMOUTH Good Companions: **BOB DAVENPORT**
POYNTON Folk Centre: **BERNARD WRIGLEY**
QUORN White Horse Inn: **JACK HUDSON**
ST. ALBANS Goat: **JOHN FAULKNER**
SOUTHAMPTON University: **YETTIES**
SOUTHWELL Admiral Nelson: **ROGER SUTCLIFFE**
SWINDON Wyvern Theatre: **CITY WAITES**

MONDAY

MONDAY
AMBERLEY Black Horse: **WALLY WHYTTON**
BARN STAPLE Golden Fleece: **BOB DAVENPORT**
EXETER University: **STEVE TILSTON**
GLASGOW Arts Centre: **EWAN MACCOLL AND PEGGY SEEGER**
LIVERPOOL Gregson Well: **SPINNERS**
LONDON BAYSWATER Marquis of Clanricarde: **PETER AND CHRIS COE**
LONDON KINGS CROSS New Merlin's Cave: **BILL CADDICK**
NEWPORT (MON) Castle: **CHRIS FOSTER**
PEMBROKE Coach House: **CROWDY CRAWN**
PRESTON Brunswick Hotel: **SEAN CANNON**
SHACKLEFORD Social Centre: **MR. GLADSTONE'S BAG**
SOLIHULL Malt Shovel: **SILLY WIZZARD**
SOUTHAMPTON SHIRLEY Blacksmith's Arms: **ALEX CAMPBELL**
TROWBRIDGE Lamb: **BRIAN DEWHURST**

TUESDAY

BENFLEET Hoy and Helmet: **VIN GARBUTT**
BOLTON Dean F/C: **SILLY WIZZARD**
BRIGHTON Buccaneer: **TAVERNERS**
CARDIFF Marchioness of Bute: **CHRIS FOSTER**
DARTFORD Railway Hotel: **MIRIAN BACKHOUSE**
DERBY Rugby Club: **STAN ARNOLD**
GUILDFORD Star Inn: **WIZZ JONES**
HASLAND New Inn: **SEAN CANNON**
LONDON CATFORD Rising Sun: **CATCH-PENNY**
LONDON ISLINGTON Florence: **PETER AND CHRIS COE**
NOTTINGHAM Fox: **LEON ROSSELSON**
RIPLEY Horse and Jockey: **TEESIDE FETTLERS**
STOCKPORT Warren Bulkeley: **MIKE HARDING**
TAUNTON Odeon: **SPINNERS**

WEDNESDAY

BUDET Tree Inn: **BOB DAVENPORT**
CANTERBURY Kent University: **ETCHINGHAM STEAM BAND/DAVE MAT-TACKS/PETER KNIGHT**
DISLEY Rams Head: **SEAN CANNON**
EDINBURGH 23 George Sq.: **DICK GAUGHAM**
EGREMONT Rugby Club: **SKINCH**
GRANTHAM Hugh Moore Club: **JACKIE AND BRIDIE**
IRVINE Eglinton Arms: **ARCHIE FISHER**
LONDON CROYDON Waddon Hotel: **PETER AND CHRISTINE COE**
LONDON KINGS CROSS Unity Theatre: **TED FRANKLIN/FRED MCKAY**
LONDON UXBRIDGE Load of Hay: **PEABODY AND NCNUTTY**
LOUGHTON Mother Hubbard: **ALEX CAMPBELL**
NEW YORK (NORTH SHIELDS) Wheat-sheaf: **ALAN BELL**
SOUTHAMPTON Arts Gallery: **CITY WAITES**
STAINDROP Kings Arms: **SAM BRACKEN**



BAY CITY ROLLERS commence their extensive itinerary with two concerts in Scotland — at Glasgow (Sunday) and Edinburgh (Monday). It's their last British tour for a year, and there's sure to be the usual stampede to see them.



PILOT commence their first major British tour this week with initial dates at Douglas I. o. M. (Thursday), Hanley (Saturday), Newcastle (Sunday), Manchester (Monday) and Southport (Tuesday). Support act is Smokey.



THREE DEGREES arrive in Britain this week for another concert and cabaret tour, hot on the heels of their new chart entry "Take Good Care Of Yourself". They open at London Hammersmith Odeon on Friday, followed by gigs at Dunstable (Saturday) and Southport (Sunday).

GIG GUIDE

Freeman; 5.0 John Peel presents "Rock Week"; 6.30-7.30 "In Concert" with Mike Heron's Reputation/Steve Tilston; 10.45-12.30 a.m. Alan Dell with "Music Through Midnight"; **LUXEMBOURG** 7.45 p.m. Mark Wesley; 9.0 Ked Jensen's Party Time; 12.0 "208 At Midnight"; 1.30 a.m.-3.0 "Dimensions".

TELEVISION Neil Sedaka is "In Concert" (BBC-2); Reflections in "Look — Mike Yarwood" (BBC-1); Lois Lane in "That's Life" (BBC-1); "New Faces" talent show (ITV); Kid Jensen introduces "45" (some ITV regions, see Thursday for details); "Saturday Scene" (London ITV); Roy Budd in "Tarback And All That" (ITV).

SUNDAY

ACCRINGTON Lakeland Lounge: **JAMES HOGG BAND**
BANGOR University: **LABI SIFFRE**
BARROW Civic Hall: "UP COUNTRY" with **BRIAN MAXINE/SUSANNE HARRIS/WILD BUNCH**
BIRMINGHAM Barbarella's: **TOMMY TUCKER/EDDIE BURNS/HOMESICK JAMES/BILLY BOY ARNOLD**
BIRMINGHAM Shantasea: **NIMROD BURTON** 76 Club: **AMERICAN GYPSY**
CHESTERFIELD Aquarius: **JACKIE TRENT & TONY HATCH**
CROYDON Greyhound: **STRAY**
DORCHESTER Tavern: **SMILING HARD**
EAST GRINSTEAD Felbridge Hotel: **DAVE CHRISTIAN**
 Radio Luxembourg roadshow
EGREMONT Towbar Inn: **BURGULAR BILL**
EXETER Quay Club: **GEORGE MELLY/JOHN CHILTON'S FEETWARMERS**
GLASGOW Apollo Centre: **BAY CITY ROLLERS**
GRAVESEND Civic Hall: **FRUUPP**
GUILDFORD Civic Hall: **CAMEL**
HARLOW Playhouse: **RICHARD & LINDA THOMPSON**
HEATHROW Airport Centre Hotel: **PLANX-TY**
HULL Humberide Theatre: **ISAAC GUIL-LORY'S PURE CHANCE**
KILMARNOCK Grand Hall: **KENNY LIVERPOOL** Empire: **YES/GRYPHON**
LONDON CATTORD Saxon Tavern: **HALF HUMAN-BAND**
LONDON CHALK FARM Roundhouse: **BETTY WRIGHT/KOKOMO/G.T. MOORE & THE REGGAE GUITARS**
LONDON CHELSEA Nose Wine Bar: **GEORGE ADAIR**
LONDON DRURY LANE Theatre Royal: **HELEN REDDY/PETER ALLEN**
LONDON FINCHLEY Torrington: **F.B.I.**
LONDON FULHAM Greyhound: **BRETT MARVIN & THE THUNDERBOLTS**
LONDON Palladium: **KAMAH**
 One-off concert by Australia's top singer
LONDON PECKHAM Newlands Tavern: **WITCHES BREW**
LONDON SOUTHALL Football Club: **JIM-MY LONDON**
LONDON TWICKENHAM Cabbage Patch: **STRIKE A LIGHT**
LONDON TWICKENHAM Winning Post: **MEDICINE HEAD**
MANCHESTER Palace Theatre: **GENESIS**
NEWCASTLE City Hall: **PILOT**
NEWMARKET Grand Ole Opry: **BILL MON-ROE & THE BLUEGRASS BOYS**
NORWICH Theatre Royal: **GLITTER BAND**
NOTTINGHAM Imperial Hotel: **CISCO**
OXFORD New Theatre: **10 c.c.**
REDCAR Lofus WMC: **BEANO**
ROMFORD Albemarle Youth Club: **NICOL & MARSH'S EASY STREET**
SHEFFIELD Renishaw Golden Ball: **WHEELS**
SHEFFIELD Woodseats WMC: **BAND CALLED CHARLIE**
SKEGNESS Variety Bar: **GENO WASH-INGTON BAND**
SOUTHPORT New Theatre: **THREE DE-GREES**
STOCKPORT Davenport Theatre: **SACHA DISTEL**
TONYREFAIL Non-Political Club: **WHITE PLAINS**
WAKEFIELD Theatre Club: **GLEN CAMP-BELL**
WOLVERHAMPTON Civic Hall: **SLADE**

TV AND RADIO

RADIO 1.8 a.m. Cliff Richard with "Gospel Road"; 9.30 Ed Stewart with "Junior Choice"; 10.0 Paul Burnett and "All There Is To Hear"; 1 p.m. Jimmy Savile with "The Double Top Ten Show" followed by "Speak Easy"; 3.0 The Dave Lee Travis Request Show; 5.0 Repeat of "The Story Of Pop" (part 17), narrated by Alan Freeman; 6.0 Tom Browne with the Top Twenty; 7.0-7.30 "Sounds On Sunday" with 10 c.c.; 11.0-12.30 a.m. "Sounds Of Jazz".

RADIO 3 10.45 p.m. Derek Jewell presents "Sounds Interesting".

LUXEMBOURG 7.15 p.m. Mark Wesley; 8.30 "Sound Explosion"; 10.30 British Top Thirty; 12.0 "208 At Midnight"; 1.30 a.m.-3.0 "Dimensions".

TELEVISION "The Glen Campbell Show" with Wayne Newton (BBC-2).

MONDAY

AYLESBURY Hazel's Club: **GLITTER BAND**
BRISTOL Colston Hall: 10 c.c.
CAMBRIDGE Lady Mitchell Hall: **RICHARD & LINDA THOMPSON**
EDINBURGH Odeon: **BAY CITY ROLLERS**
EXETER St. Luke's College: **GEORGE MEL-LY/JOHN CHILTON'S FEETWARMERS**
HATFIELD Polytechnic: **HOMESICK JAMES/TOMMY TUCKER/EDDIE BURNS/BILLY BOY ARNOLD**
KENTON Travellers Rest: **TREMELOES**
LEICESTER Scraptoft Valley WMC: **JIMMY POWELL & THE DIMENSIONS**
LIVERPOOL Empire: **YES/GRYPHON**

LIVERPOOL Philharmonic Hall: **BILL MON-ROE & THE BLUEGRASS BOYS**
LONDON CAMDEN Dingwall's: **DR. HOOK & THE MEDICINE SHOW**
LONDON Collegiate Theatre: **HATFIELD & THE NORTH**
LONDON Marquee Club: **NEUTRONS/CURLY**
LONDON Speakeasy: **ARENA**
LONDON WOOD GREEN Fishmongers Arms: **SHAKIN' STEVENS & THE SUN-SETS/BIFFO**
LOUGHBOROUGH Adam & Eve: **WHEELS**
MANCHESTER Free Trade Hall: **PILOT**
MANCHESTER Palace Theatre: **GENESIS**
NEWBURY Henwick County Club: **ACE**
OXFORD New Theatre: **SACHA DISTEL**
SHEFFIELD Black Swan: **ISAAC GUIL-LORY'S PURE CHANCE**
STAFFORD Top of the World (doubling **WOLVERHAMPTON** Lafayette): **DRIFT-ERS**
ST. ALBAN'S City Hall: **DAVE CHRISTIAN**
 Radio Luxembourg roadshow
STIRLING MacRobert Centre: **STEPHANE GRAPPELLI**
ST. IVES (Hunts) St. Ivo Centre: **KENNY WARRINGTON** Lion Hotel: **BURGULAR BILL**

TV AND RADIO

RADIO 1.7 a.m.-5.15 p.m. As Monday; 5.15-7.0 John Peel presents "Top Gear"; 7.30 Alan Dell with "The Dance Band Days" followed by "The Big Band Sound"; 9.0 Humphrey Lyttelton with jazz records; 10.0-12.30 a.m. John Dunn with "Music Through Mid-night".

LUXEMBOURG 7.45 p.m. Peter Powell; 9.0 The Sylvia Story; 9.30 "Sound Explosion"; 11.30 NME Gig Guide; 12.0 "208 At Mid-night"; 1.30 a.m.-3.0 "Today's Sounds".

TELEVISION "Opportunity Knocks" (ITV); "The Goodies" (BBC-2).

JAZZ

THURSDAY

BARNES Bulls Head: **BILL LE SAGE/ART THEMEN**
BARNET Red Lion: **STEVE LANE'S SOUTHERN STOMPERS**
BECKENHAM Three Tuns: **STEAM**
BETHNAL GREEN Rochelle School: **MIKE COLLINS REHEARSAL BIG BAND**
BRENTFORD Bricklayers Arms: **JAKE MCMAHON**
CHARLTON White Horse: **ROSEMARY SMITH TRIO**
COVENT GARDEN 7 Dials Club: **STAN TRACEY/FRANK ROBERTS**
CROYDON The Gun: **EQUILIBRIUM**
DEPTFORD Mechanics Arms: **BOB BARTER/ALAN JACKSON**
DRURY LANE White Hart: **NICKI FRAN-CIS QUINTET**
FULHAM Last Resort: **NANCY AGEE**
FLEET STREET Wolsey's Wine Bar: **TOM BRIDGESTRIE**
GLoucester Road Stanhope: **MEL HENRY**
GREENWICH Mitre: **WEST END STOMP-ERS**
HAMMERSMITH Harlequin: **PETER THORNTON'S NEW TIGER RAGAM-UFFINS**
ISLINGTON Kings Head: **STEVE PHEASANT QUINTET**
LONDON W.1. Hoop and Grapes: **TONY STRINGFELLOW BAND**
LONDON W.11. Duke of Clarence: **YELLOW DOG JAZZ BAND**
LONDON W.C.1. New Merlins Cave: **ALAN LITTLEJOHN**
MERTON Ye Olde Leather Bottle: **TONY LEE TRIO**
PUTNEY Flanagans: **KATZENJAMMER**
PUTNEY Half Moon: **MIKE DANIELS BIG BAND**
STOCKWELL The Plough: **DAVE CLIFF/RAY MANDERSON QUINTET**
ST. ALBANS The Goat: **STAN GREIG QUARTET**
THORNTON Heath Lord Napier: **TERRY WILSON JAZZ BAND**

FRIDAY

BARNES Bulls Head: **PETE KING/RONNIE ROSS/TONY LEE TRIO**
BECKENHAM Three Tuns: **WEST END STOMPERS**
CROUCH HILL Stapleton Hill Tavern: **NEW ERA JAZZ BAND**
CROYDON The Gun: **WEST LONDON LINEUP**
DEPTFORD Mechanics Arms: **BOB BARTER/ALAN JACKSON**
DRURY LANE White Hart: **JIM DVORAK JOY**
EARLS COURT Troubadour Coffee House: **ERIC LISTERS BLUE JAZZ**
FULHAM Last Resort: **SUSANNAH MCCORCKLE & KEITH INGHAM**
GREENWICH Mitre: **KEITH NICHOLLS RAGTIME BAND**
HAMPTON Court Thames Hotel: **ALEX WELSH BAND**
HARROW On the Hill Kings Head: **DOUG MURRAY SEXTET**
HAYES Brook House: **MOLES DIXIELAND JAZZ BAND**
LONDON N.W.3. Club Calabash: **RAM AND THE RAMALITES**
LONDON N.W.1. Martha's Wine Bar: **POWDER MILL**
LONDON W.C.1. New Merlins Cave: **JOHN PICARD BAND**
LONDON W.C.1. Architects Association: **ISIPINGO**
LONDON W.10. Prince of Wales: **TONY RAINE AND FRIENDS**
LONDON Southwark Cathedral: **IAN CARR/KENNY WHEELER ETC.**

TUESDAY

BIRMINGHAM Barbarella's: **HORSLIPS**
BIRMINGHAM Odeon: 10 c.c.
BRIGHTON Sussex University: **HOMESICK JAMES/EDDIE BURNS/TOMMY TUCKER/BILLY BOY ARNOLD**
BRISTOL Colston Hall: **GENESIS**
CROYDON Fairfield Hall: **RICHARD & LIN-DA THOMPSON**
DURHAM Sacston WMC: **BEANO**
EDINBURGH Lord Lintithgow's Town House: **STEPHANE GRAPPELLI**
GLoucester Leisure Centre: **GLITTER BAND**
ILFORD Room At The Top: **GENO WASH-INGTON BAND**
LONDON CAMDEN Dingwall's: **MICHIGAN FLYERS**
LONDON HARROW RD. Windsor Castle: **WITCHES BREW**
LONDON Marquee Club: **EDGAR BROUGHTON BAND**
LONDON Speakeasy: **PERCY'S BIRTH-DAY**
LONDON 100 Club: **DUSTER BENNETT**
MANCHESTER Belle Vue: **SLADE**
MANCHESTER Palace Theatre: **YES/GRY-PHON**
PAIGTON Festival Theatre: **SACHA DIS-TEL**
SOUTHEND Talk of the South: **DRIFTERS**
SOUTHPORT Floral Hall: **PILOT**
SOUTHPORT New Theatre: **DAVID GATES**
 Opening night of his tour, which will be covered more extensively in next week's Gig Guide.
ST. BLAZEY Rainbow Room: **GEORGE MELLY/JOHN CHILTON'S FEETWARMERS**

MERTON Ye Olde Leather Bottle: **STRANGE/PEERLESS SWINGTET**
PLUMSTEAD Green Man: **ROWAN SMITH QUARTET**
THORNTON Heath Lord Napier: **BILL BRUNSKILL JAZZMEN**
TUFNELL PARK Tufnell Park Tavern: **JOHN COX TRIO/PETER IND/TOM GILHOOLY**
WAPPING Prospect of Whitby: **ALVIN ROY JAZZ BAND**

SATURDAY

BARNES Bulls Head: **DON WELLER/DAVE CLIFF**
BISHOPSGATE Peanuts Club, Kings Head: **MIKE OSBORNE AND FRIENDS**
BATTERSEA Rising Sun: **GOthic JAZZ BAND**
BRENTFORD Bricklayers Arms: **BRICK SIX CHELSEA** Trafalgar: **WEST LONDON STOMPERS**
DEPTFORD Mechanics Arms: **BOB BARTER/ALAN JACKSON**
DRURY LANE White Hart: **FREE JAZZ**
FULHAM Last Resort: **NANCY AGEE**
FULHAM Fulham Volunteer: **YELLOW DOG JAZZ BAND**
GLoucester Road Stanhope: **PETER THORNTON'S NEW TIGER RAGAM-UFFINS**
LONDON E.5. Ship Aground: **GRAHAM HUMPHREYS JAZZ BAND**
LONDON N.W.3. Club Calabash: **RAM AND THE RAMALITES**
LONDON W.1. Hoop and Grapes: **TONY STRINGFELLOW BAND**
LONDON W.11. Prince of Wales: **TONY RAINE AND FRIENDS**
OXFORD Street 100 Club: **NEW OR-LEANS SPECIAL**
THORNTON Heath Lord Napier: **MAC-DUNCAN'S BAND**
TUFNELL PARK Tufnell Park Tavern: **JOHN COX TRIO/PETER IND/TOM GILHOOLY**
WAPPING Prospect of Whitby: **ALVIN ROY JAZZ BAND**

SUNDAY LUNCHTIME

BARNES Bulls Head: **HARRY KLEIN/TONY LEE TRIO**
CHELSEA Trafalgar: **WEST LONDON LINEUP**
DRURY LANE Prince of Wales: **LEN SAUNDERS JAZZ BAND**
GREENWICH Greenwich Theatre: **IAN BIRD QUINTET**
GREENWICH The Mitre: **NICHOLLS HOT SHOTS**
GLoucester Road Stanhope: **PETER THORNTON'S NEW TIGER RAGAM-UFFINS**
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PUTNEY Flanagans: **KATZENJAMMER**
PUTNEY Half Moon: **JOHN GREENS SNAP SYNCOPATERS**
ST. ALBANS The Goat: **ROGER NOBES QUARTET**
THORNTON Heath Lord Napier: **BILL BRUNSKILL JAZZMEN**
TWICKENHAM Tunks Head: **THE SUNDAY BAND**

SUNDAY EVENING

BARNES Bulls Head: **PACIFIC EARDRUM**
BECKENHAM Three Tuns: **WEST END STOMPERS**
CAMBERLEY Hot Cat Clubs: **BOB WALLIS STORYVILLE JAZZMEN**
CODICOTE Herts: Bell Inn: **MARTIN FRANKLYN QUINTET**
CROYDON The Gun: **MAJOR SURGERY**

TV AND RADIO

RADIO 1.7 a.m.-5.15 p.m. As Thursday; 5.15-7.0 Alan Freeman with "Youth Club Call"; 10.0-12.30 a.m. Jeff Cooper with "Mus-ic Through Midnight".

LUXEMBOURG 7.45 p.m. Tony Prince; 9.15 "Club 208 Show"; 9.30 British Top Thirty; 11.30 NME Pop News; 12.0 "208 At Mid-night"; 1.30 a.m.-3.0 "Today's Sounds".

TELEVISION Bay City Rollers/Big Jim Sullivan in "Shang-A-Lang" (ITV); David Cassidy in "The Partridge Family" (some ITV regions).

WEDNESDAY

BIRMINGHAM Barbarella's: **DR. HOOK & THE MEDICINE SHOW**
BIRMINGHAM Digbeth Civic Hall: **BILL MONROE & THE BLUEGRASS BOYS**
BIRMINGHAM Locarno: **GLITTER BAND**
BIRMINGHAM Town Hall: **GONG/GLO-BAL VILLAGE TRUCKING COMPANY**
BRISTOL Colston Hall: **GENESIS**
BRISTOL University: **TOMMY TUCKER/EDDIE BURNS/HOMESICK JAMES/BILLY BOY ARNOLD**
CROYDON Fairfield Hall: **SACHA DISTEL**
GUILDFORD Civic Hall: 10 c.c.
HULL University: **ACE**
LONDON CAMDEN Dingwall's: **AMERI-CAN GYPSY**
LONDON EDGWARE RD. Crown: **PADDY GREY/GEORGE ADAIR**
LONDON FULHAM Greyhound: **MICHIGAN FLYERS**
LONDON Marquee Club: **JACKIE LYN-TON'S GRANDE**

LONDON Speakeasy: **MOON**
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LONDON W.14 The Kensington: **WITCHES BREW**
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SOUTHAMPTON Top Rank: **DRIFTERS**
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WINCHESTER King Alfred College: **KEVIN COYNE BAND**

TV AND RADIO

RADIO 1.7 a.m.-5.15 p.m. As Thursday; 5.15-7.0 Anne Nightingale presents "Review"; 7.30 Ted Taylor introduces "Ring-A-Song" (telephone requests); 8.0 Wally Whyton introduces "Country Club"; 10.0-12.30 a.m. Jean Challis with "Music Through Midnight".

LUXEMBOURG 7.45 p.m. Mark Wesley; 9.30 American Top Twenty; 11.30 NME Pop News; 12.0 "208 At Midnight"; 1.30 a.m.-3.0 "Today's Sounds".

TELEVISION "The Monkees" (BBC-1).

GLoucester Road Stanhope: **THE JAZZMAKERS**
LONDON N.W.1. Unity Theatre: **THE AMAZING BAND/NIGEL COOMES**
LONDON S.W.1. The Clarence: **YELLOW DOG JAZZ BAND**
LONDON W.C.1. Pindar of Wakefield: **KEITH NICHOLL**
MAIDENHEAD The Bull: **ALLAN BERRY TRIO**
PUTNEY Flanagans: **NEW ERA JAZZ-BAND**
SOUTHEAST Blue Boar: **CHRIS WAT-FORD'S ELITE SYNCOPATERS**
THORNTON Heath Lord Napier: **ALAN ELSDON BAND**
WEMBLEY Hopbine: **GEORGE CHI-SHOLM**
WANDSWORTH Kings Arms: **JAZZ JUNC-TION**
WANDSWORTH Ship Inn: **COLIN TOZ-ERS BLUES BAND**

WEDNESDAY

BATTERSEA Rising Sun: **THE JAZZMAK-ERS**
BETHNAL GREEN Rochelle School: **MAG-GIE NICHOLS/JOHN STEVENS WORKSHOP**
BARNES Bulls Head: **PHIL BATES TRIO**
BLETHWORTH Red Lion: **DIRTY HAT BAND**
CROUCH HILL Stapleton Hall Tavern: **WEST END STOMPERS**
DRURY LANE White Hart: **CHRIS BIS-COE'S 'BROKEN BISCUITS'**
FULHAM Last Resort: **NANCY AGEE**
GLoucester Road Stanhope: **MAIDEN VOYAGE**
GROVE PARK Chinbrook Hotel: **RON RUS-SELL JAZZ BAND**
HAMPTON Court Thames Hotel: **TERRY LIGHTFOOT JAZZMEN**
HARROW South Half Moon: **MOON-SHINE 6**
HARROW South Tithe Farm House: **ED-DIE THOMPSON TRIO**
KINGSTON Kingston Hotel: **MAJOR SUR-GERY**
LONDON W.C.1. Pindar of Wakefield: **JEFF-ERSON CITY JAZZ BAND**
OXFORD Circus The Phoenix: **DAVE MACRAE'S PACIFIC EARDRUM**
PUTNEY Flanagans: **NEW ERA JAZZ BAND**
PUTNEY Derby Arms: **DAVE RUSKIN**
THORNTON Lord Napier: **BLACKBOTTOM STOMPERS**
UXBRIDGE Kings Arms: **GIN MILL 6**
WANDSWORTH Ship Inn: **JAZZ JUNC-TION**



*God, I'm so cool
I could cause
a permanent alteration
in the climatic ecosphere...*



PICS:
Joe Stevens



swallow the words before they get out of his mouth, a perfect stylistic complement to his exceedingly droll pronouncements.

Becker and Fagen, rock's odd couple, the pair of disrespectful misfits who stuck by their unconventional guns until it payed off big.

They moved to California three years ago to become staff songwriters at ABC-Dunhill.

They came at the behest of Katz, who had preceded them from New York to be a producer. ("At that time," Becker points out, "ABC was in the market for a producer with a Fu Manchu moustache to produce underground records.")

As dismal as they make their life here sound, the kitsch-tropolis culture has seeped into and enriched Steely Dan's music (in songs like "Show Biz Kids" and the unrecorded "Megashine City") emerging as one pole of the East-West odyssey which is at the core of the Steely Dan mythos.

Says Fagen: "Our heart is still on Second Avenue, and that's what we like to write about. Our lyrics are basically experience combined with a little fantasy."

"I think there's a lot of New York, urban-area type imagery and settings and so on," says Becker. "Even the language in our songs are imitations thereof."

Fagen further elucidates the charm of New York: "You can watch the weather, and there's a lot of people on the street doing funny things. You can walk."

"Or run," Becker advises. "Or run, depending on who's chasing you, and it's just more exciting and dangerous."

Is it his hairspray? Maybe it's those shades... Just what is it that makes him so different, so appealing?

Ronk techniques. They had a limited exposure to the things that we were trying to emulate.

"We were jazz fans. We were writing tunes where some of the chords were not triads, and you couldn't use your capo that much."

"Right," says Fagen, "and you had to be able to play in all eight keys, as they say. We had a jazz group. We had several versions of several rock groups."

"It was all the same band, and we just didn't bring in certain guys as it graded up towards imitation jazz."

"I used to play the saxophone quite a bit," says Fagen.

"Yes, I remember that. The Star Spangled Banner, an avant-garde rendition... It was a shocking display."

"It was a shocking display, but I really used to get my rocks off," says Fagen, deadpan. "And people would listen to it too."

"They were very bored there," says Becker, earning a hearty laugh. "The drummers kept flipping out and leaving school — you know, it was hard to get what we wanted in those days, so it didn't come out in utter magnificence."

"It was very bizarre, the bands that we came up with. It was like the Kingsmen performing Frank Zappa material."

HAVING CUT their inimitable swathe through the inimitable music community, the team hit New York City to peddle their folio of songs.

"That's essentially what we did for the next three years," says Becker, "until somebody actually believed that we were songwriters."

"Of course," Fagen points out, "a lot of people still don't believe that's true... We were very naive. We used to try to push these songs that were completely — no one wanted to hear them. The lyrics were completely unintelligible, except to us."

"They were bizarre, depressing tunes," adds Becker, "and we had to play them for people who had record companies or publishing companies and stuff, and they got very depressed, and slightly hostile..."

"They'd leave, or make some kind of excuse and turn off the tape recorder, and they never wanted to see us again... All except for Gary Katz, and Gary —"

"No," says Fagen, "he ran out of the office the first time too."

Katz, who's been sitting quietly in the background, pipes up. "No, no, no. The first time was in the studio, and I didn't run... You were doing 'Let George Do It Or No Deal' and 'Brain Tap Shuffle.' It was really strange to hear. The music was a little more bizarre than it is now."

"I was really intrigued, but it

Continues over

Yes, it's

Steely Dan versus the Fifth Ice Age

*A meteorological report
from stalagmite-encrusted
California, U.S.A.*

Gary Katz. (They only rent. Mrs. Katz insists, and are looking for something near the beach.)

Walter Becker has the round clean face of a malevolently impish 13-year-old smartass. He's sharp, quick, and flippant to the point of brusqueness. He keeps looking at his watch.

Donald Fagen's chiselled face looks as if it has permanently clamped itself in that grim expression in order to support the weight of his eyebrows. He sits crouching like a gargoyle and glares straight ahead, as if he's about to pounce on something.

When he talks he seems to

"Jaccuzi Baths I guess is a big innovation... Saunas."

"They feel compelled to keep all the black people in one part of the town so you don't have to look at them."

"Yoga lessons out in the tundra."

"We're going to have to relocate," Fagen concludes.

"I hear there's a great studio in Tanganyika."

"We follow the studios," explains Fagen, "like the guys in *The Endless Summer*."

"Searching for the perfect noise-reduction system."

"The perfect noise-reduction system is our goal. I don't know, there's not much to say about California."

NONETHELESS, here they are, right in the midst of it, on this particular afternoon at the (you guessed it) condominium apartment of their producer,

ENCINO IS A GRISLY, pre-fabricated hard-wood-and-metal sprawl, basking in the Beach Boys sun of the suburban San Fernando Valley.

A seething mob of condominiums (condominia?), gas stations, expansive shopping centres, tawdry lunch-stands and slick sandwich shops. Glistening, seductive automobile showrooms. Tracts — built before the apartment boom — of houses lined up like a smart battalion.

It's an arrogant, pathetic parody of itself.

The chaotic topography is dotted here and there off the main boulevard with broad green fields, the weary survivors of the farms and ranches that prospered here before the people came. In the lush hills to the south and west there seems to be a scent of freedom, but down on the flats it's totally desolate and dispiriting.

This, to the body, soul, heart and mind of Steely Dan, is California, and they hate it.

"Gay Fifties culture," Walter Becker calls it. "This neighbourhood — have you had a chance to peruse any of it? The Encino Spa, Vic Tanny's. Big shiny cars, condominiums."

"It's about ten or fifteen years behind," offers Donald Fagen.

"Well," Becker suggests, "they just got to the point where they liked it and they stayed there."

"It doesn't change. The weather doesn't change." Nor does Fagen's flat, arid monotone.

By
RICHARD CROMELIN

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Deep Purple—Smoke on the Water
Deep Purple—River Deep, Mountain High
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Jimi Hendrix—The Wind Cries Mary
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Anne Murray

VICTORIA PALACE

THE DIFFICULTY of categorising Anne Murray as a singer — is she pop, country, soul or strictly MOR? — was probably the main reason for the heterogeneity of the audience at the Victoria Palace on Sunday.

Fervent true fans rubbed shoulders with those who, like myself, were merely interested to see what sort of singer she was, and whether she merited our attention.

The answer to this is, I guess, that she's a very good singer, and certainly does warrant attention. Her image has of late undergone a transformation — fashionably curly hair, and a pantaloons outfit that might have been Leo Sayer performing for the Noh Theatre — and this may shortly bear fruit in the shape of a wider audience.

It's obvious that few expenses had been spared for this, her debut British concert. Her band accompanied her across the Atlantic; two guitars, bass, drums, keyboards, a brass section of two and a back-up vocalist — eight personnel in all, and the Allen Peter orchestra had been enlisted too. They numbered ten, so altogether everyone on stage seemed a mite cramped.

The opening was fine — a selection of some of her more gutsy material, "Day Tripper", "Real Emotion" and "Just One Look", and an arrangement of "Dream Lover" that owes nothing to anyone else's. The band veered crazily from moderately incompetent to the very exciting, the strings always entered on cue; the mixing, too, apart from a couple of odd moments, was impressively well-balanced.

Ms. Murray has a winning personality — a ready wit, and an ability to communicate fluently and easily; a very attractive disposition, and her extensive programme of three-minute songs, which varied from gospel to the borders of wimp/MOR territory, was well-organised and always enjoyable, and characterised, needless to say, by the strength of the vocals. I can't help feeling that her material will continue to become more soul oriented — she certainly has the voice for it. She needs very little instrumental support.

Which was just as well, because one noticeable thing was that no member of the band was ever invited to take an extended solo.

If that wasn't particularly disappointing (it did after all leave room for more songs) the fact that so little room for manoeuvre was given to the backing vocalist, Diane Brooks, was, as she gave ample evidence that she had a powerful voice. Just once or twice, as on the gospel song "Sweet Jesus", did the two voices meet in fervent combat.

If it was a case of everyone knowing their place, that was only to be expected, as was the selection of much of the material — "Snowbird", obviously, and "Destiny", "You Can't See Me", "He Thinks I Still Care".

Several numbers from the new album were inevitably included — "Highly Prized Possession" (the title-track), "Upstairs" and "Lullaby", though I was personally disappointed at the exclusion of some of the more interesting material; to wit, "Saved By The Grace Of Your Love", "When We Both Had The Time To Love" and "Please Don't Sell Nova Scotia".

It's certainly an album that should be investigated. Meanwhile I can only report that the evening proved an absorbing and worthwhile one, and wish

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ON THE TOWN



"Would you believe me if I said it was naturally curly?"

Anne Murray a speedy return.

The support band, Giggles, traded insults with the audience, which was not in the least surprising as they were hardly calculated to suit each other. Young and enthusiastic, and playing short, honest and undistinguished rock numbers, they reminded me of any one of a thousand youth club bands of ten to fifteen years ago, a feeling that was only enhanced by the singer's appearance, demeanour and snake belt. At £16 a night, they'd be well worth booking for the church hall youth evening.

Bob Woffinden

Hart & Prior The Watsons

BURY ST. EDMUNDS

ONE OF Tarby Davenport's missions in life is to bring the Best of Folk Music to Bury St. Edmunds, and her way of doing it is to hire the Corn Exchange once a year and put on a big concert.

This year's event (last weekend) had all the atmosphere of a festival, and the 1200 or so folk who crowded into the Exchange were filled with a considerable sense of anticipation. They were anticipating a couple of local acts, June Tabor, Martin Carthy, the Watsons — but above all Tim Hart and Maddy Prior of Steeleye Span, doing their folk bit for the first time in six years.

When I first heard about the line-up, I wondered if the riot police would be needed to control the crowd, and indeed at 7.30, there were about 500 hopeful but ticketless punters winding in a queue round the hall, and inside there were more people than the Exchange can cope with.

The floor of what was once a very tall building has been raised, creating an auditorium whose acoustic problems are not easy to solve. And they were solved on Saturday only for tantalising short periods: the rest was sub-standard, to put it charitably.

Such a situation is OK for pros, who at least know how to make the best of it, but it proved impossible to decipher the words of two local singers who performed (separately) at the piano.

The other local act, the Orwell String Band, are Irish, lively, very much together — with a good sense of rhythm that had everyone rocking and swaying, and, dancing as best they could.

June Tabor sang "The Fair Maid Of Wallington" in that lovely voice of hers, for which folk scene naturally envies her. But "The Band Played Waltzing Matilda", with which June conquered the recent Inverness festival, didn't quite come across.

Martin Carthy got a brief and unsatisfactory spot. He was really there to take the place of the Watsons group that is an unexpected bonus of

his marriage to Norma Waterson, but the crowd clearly wanted Carthy, and they got him — for nine minutes.

The Watsons were on cracking form.

Compere John Peel "instructed" the mixer man from the stage on the subject of microphone balance. When he had got it right, the balance seemed to give the Watsons harmonies and extra edge. The hymn "The Good Old Way" was enhanced by a touch of echo that gave the tune a resonant, churchy sound.

Most of the group's songs were familiar to Waterson fans. The quartet, always sure in performance, radiated extra confidence at Bury, turning in a well-nigh faultless set.

Tim and Maddy were not faultless. They had told me weeks ago that they were a bit apprehensive about sustaining an hour of material largely drawn from their "old" repertoire. So they made a small mistake or two, which the audience accepted in a friendly, smiling fashion.

Maddy dueted with June Tabor in several songs. I felt occasionally that they were a little too concerned with the "beautiful sound", but their well contrived harmonies were sometimes breathtaking, and their singing of "The Four-loom Weaver" was impeccable.

Tim and Maddy together showed that the magic they brought to Steeleye Span does not desert them when they perform with no backing other than Tim's guitar and dulcimer.

Finally, they brought on Carthy, and trod their way through "Please To See The King" and "Rave On", reviving for a moment an echo of the sound Steeleye made when Martin was with them.

It was 12.25 am. Tim and Maddy had been on stage for an hour and a quarter. The audience had been incredibly patient throughout, and now came to their feet for a spate of cheering and applause that sounded like Liberation Day.

The concert had gone on far too long — but it was all worth it.

Eric Winter

Atlantic Soul

HAMMERSMITH

THE FINAL show of Atlantic's package tour was triumphant proof that consummate professionalism and slickness don't necessarily have to kill all the soul in soul music.

Four acts — each representing a different facet of contemporary black music — took a very mixed audience back to what resembled a cross between a Baptist church revival meeting and a houseparty.

First on stage with a relatively short set were the Jimmy Castor Bunch. Least known of the acts in this country, they have, nevertheless, had a string of U.S. hits without ever breaking into the first rank of black performers.

Judging by both the quality of their music and the audience's response this is something of a puzzle. Though falling into the street funk/party category of bands (who've generally become only too predictable and uninspired), they possess just enough originality to set them apart; and injecting Latin influences and good humour they succeed in creating a refreshing variation of the basic funk format.

Next on was someone only too well known — Ben E. King. Though acts like King's can always rely on a certain response on merely the nostalgia level, there's no denying he still sounds fresh and has lost none of his vocal charm and force. And of course he is back in the hit-making stakes with "Supernatural Thing".

To fit all four acts into three hours there just wasn't time for an interval, and this only added to the show's fast pacing.

The element of excitement, both visual and vocal, was best exemplified by Sister Sledge. Four girls in their teens, they've been compared to the Jackson Five, but while possessing all the vitality displayed by the Motown teenies on their initial

outings, they don't appear as likely to be moulded into a machine product.

Indeed, they seem a group who, though bound to attract a very young audience, shouldn't find themselves restricted to it. While performers of their age often have to rely on sheer energy to make up for any lack of maturity in feeling, they showed with a quite credible version of Aretha's "Spirit In The Dark" that they have no problems with more adult material.

Topping the bill were The Detroit Spinners who, like King, have been around too long to leave anything to chance.

The danger with such acts is that the smoothness can easily slip into blandness and an act that would be more suitable for Las Vegas. For example, the impersonations part of their set veers dangerously close to this area, but they don't yet include any medleys of standards or show tunes, so the right balance is still being maintained.

The Philly style groups often depend a lot on studio production and their live performances can compare unfavourably to their records; but the Spinners are one such outfit who, with the help of their American band, are at least as powerful on stage. Although the essence of sweetness and sophistication, they haven't forgotten to back these qualities with a solid bone of funk.

Joni Sledge joined the group for their recent hit with Dionne Warwick, "Then Came You". While not completely recapturing the shimmering tension of the record, it was still a very acceptable version and afforded us another glimpse of one of America's more delectable 18-year-olds. It would have been nice to have been treated to some new material but their policy of sticking to the hits wasn't that disappointing.

Except for the smallest hint of trouble with Jimmy Castor's microphone, all the problems of the Liverpool debut, which were mentioned last week, had been cleared up and it's safe to say the show was an unqualified success.

Satisfied that soul music can be presented in a satisfactory manner in this country, everyone must now have their dream selection of acts for the next such package.

Pete Dalton

CARLA BLEY

●From page 33

nished long before they were allowed to go home."

Carla laughed. "We're still experimenting at JCOA. We do want to make a living and we think we've got it figured out. You'll be surprised to find out that 'No Answer' is making money. You know why? Because we used only three musicians, and because we had a one colour cover. So that's something that we, all 62 of us, are trying to learn. How not to sell the clothes off your back to make your music. How to make our music begin to support us, instead of the reverse. You don't have to change the meaning of the music if you really keep the overheads down and be realistic about how many you can sell. Like I say, we're correcting and adjusting.

"As for production, the musicians are allowed to do everything themselves and they aren't even offered any help... therefore you're going to get a lack of accumulation of knowledge in the medium. We believe this is necessary because musicians have always been told what to do in the studio, and they've got chips on their shoulders. We're letting them have their head for the first time in history.

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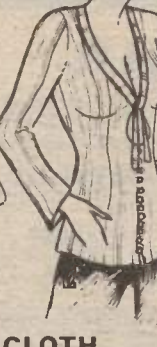
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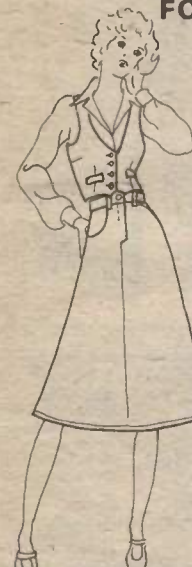


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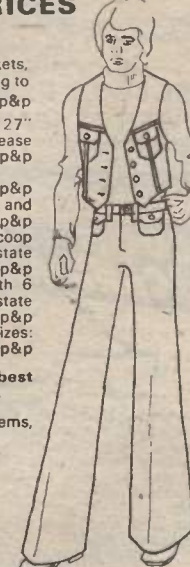
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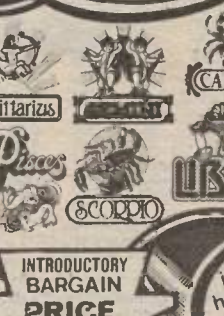
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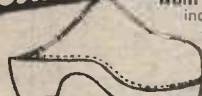
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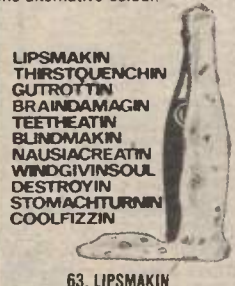
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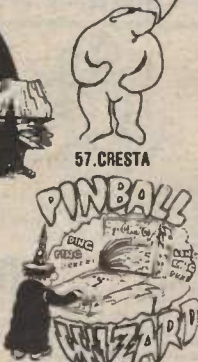


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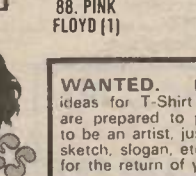
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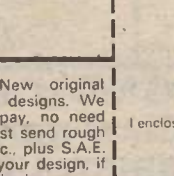
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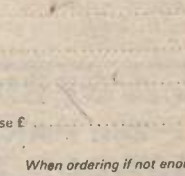
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50's WANTED — Dick Barton Them — Broadbeard Band

Poverty is the Mother of Dissension

THANKS A lot for the Bay City Rollers review by Mick Farren. I personally cannot stand them, but I was glad to see a review that looked objectively at the album, stating the pitfalls they had stumbled into, and analysing their (questionable) musical abilities, drawing comparisons with The Originals, i.e. Surf Music, Beatles etc, even though it was a low energy homage.

Farren sums up the current pop scene very accurately, and he virtually says again that they're only in it for the money. This is levelled at most of today's instant "add water and stir" stars, but weren't the original rock artists money-orientated?

Wasn't Townshend out to make a few bob when he started The High Numbers?

Circumstances obviously forced the likes of Townshend, Dylan and the Beatles to become spokesmen for their generation rather than their consciences.

Admittedly their consciences hit

back with a vengeance in the material they wrote in their earlier years, but this all happened when the metamorphosis from Mod, street poet etc. to chart topper had already taken place.

Once accepted by the public, they used the recording business as a vehicle of protest, but they certainly didn't say no to the money they earned or charged for people to see them.

Mick Farren is quite correct in his analysis of the '67 scene, but for today's pop scene, I prefer the gem from my old school report, viz: "Sets a dimly low standard which it fails to maintain".

Thanks for listening, and I wonder if you'll write a serious answer to this if you print it? — NICK REDFERN, Hatton, Derbyshire.

■ We would have done, 'cept that you've virtually said it all yourself. We'll dally in bopperland a little longer though, as we grit our collective teeth for an attack from the outraged Zelda. The amiable idiot here is Tony Stewart, who is really quite nice and meant no offence m'lud. — NL.

WOULD THE amiable idiot who wrote the review of the album

Verbally molest your favourite rock critic, outsmart your local letters ed, redefine the concepts of rock'n' roll. Write to...



Edited this week by NICK LOGAN

"Donny" please note that the "emotional sensitivities of clean-living, middle class teenage girls" are not all stimulated by the puerile drivel which pours forth daily from the Close-Up Zones of Utah.

The would-be reviewer goes on to say that a fourteen-year-old would be the best person to write a criticism of the record.

Wrong... It is impossible to categorically state the tastes of any section of the population with any degree of accuracy.

As a moderately clean-living fourteen-year-old and owner of a record collection which includes the work of Clapton, Mayall, Pink Floyd, Sieve Hillage and the like, I would very much appreciate the future exclusion from your paper of such wild generalisations.

The petty attempts at big-time journalism by cub-rate reporters fail to amuse me or anyone else.

I notice too, that the article to which I refer is left significantly unsigned. It seems that the writer is aware of the bum-quality of his own brainchild. — ZELDA, High St., Cranbrook, Kent.

RE: LONESOME Cowboy Bill's letter in *Gasbag* April 19. You hit the note, kid. Here's one the Lou Reed sycophants can ram up their asses: I saw the Velvets in '69 (or was it '70?) in concert in the Fatherland, and watched them get their goddam selves blown off the stage by none other than the then-unknown J. Geils Band.

To make matters worse for the Lou-lovers, the audience was composed of dyed-in-the-wool 1967 Velvets freaks. My trans-Atlantic time-warp memory tells me that what I saw was the quintessential Velvets line-up. Don't throw any of that 'I-was-into-so-and-so-way-back-when' shit, because it doesn't work. I got a hot-as-nails memory, and the early Velvets are better in an historical context: they sucked live, way-back-when.

Lou may have it all together now, but seven or eight years ago, he was nothing more than a pile of drug-ridden cells quivering and moaning on stage (you can cover up weaknesses on LPs).

Bragging about being an old-school Velvets freak is like saying you prefer blue cheese before the mould appears.

My old mate, Monsieur Tewhey, knows more about the Velvets than anyone alive, he worships them, and would kill for them. But even Monsieur Tewhey will tell you it's far hipper to have been a Stones fan 'from-way-back-when.' — KEN KESSLER, Castle Street, Canterbury.

I DON'T OWN a copy of "Tubular Bells." Is this a record? — S. BARNET.

■ No, it's an outrage — MIKE OLDFIELD

SO DAVE Crosby went to seed — do we really have to be submitted to this vicious type of journalism which seems to ensue from Charles Murray's pen every time he writes about any member of CSN&Y. His hatred of Stephen Stills and Graham Nash is quite obvious.

I would suggest that in a serious article taking in a whole career's work, you could at least let it be written by a member of your staff who is not so totally against the person involved as to give a very biased view of his work. — J. BAGULVY, Chorton-on-Medlock, Manchester 1.

THE TROUBLE with NME is one of style and content. As to the former you leave your rivals standing, but the trouble is your content.

Take Charles Shaar Murray's piece on David Crosby last week. The fact that the cat is one of the great white voices passes him (CSM) by completely. "If I Could Only Remember My Name" (a brilliant statement and seminal achievement) is dismissed by Charlie Boy in a few lines as "an album by a man with absolutely nothing to say".

CSM!! Why don't you ask a few musicians what they think of Crosby (try Keith Jarrett, Stevie Wonder or Terry Reid), and then re-think, re-write and get re-al. Oh truck it!! You're just wrong, period. — J. KIT STEPHENS, Keystone Cres., London N1.

■ I'd agree that Crosby is one of the Great White Voices (which is one of the reasons I wrote that "Lookin' Back" in the first place), but his post-Byrds work is sadly flawed by serious miscalculations in the taste department (such as that completely derailed vocal on "Almost Cut My Hair" and the smirking pap that he comes up with whenever he gets too close to Graham Nash). I'll stick to my tactical nuclear weapons on "If I Could Only Remember My Name", though — but if it's a

CLEVER DIX BOX

IN HIS review of the latest Steely Dan elpee, Nick Kent questioned the relevance of the insect depicted on the sleeve. Research revealed this solution:

'KATYDID: Any of various green insects of the genus *microcentrum* and related genera, related to the grasshopper and the cricket, and having specialised organs in the wings of the male that when rubbed together produce a distinctive sound'. (From an American dictionary).

Katy lied — Katy did. Geddit?

Perhaps it is Mr. Kent's unwillingness to make a slight intellectual effort which prevents him from a fuller appreciation of the world's greatest band. — STEELY DAN CORRESPONDENT, Trinity College, Oxford.

PETE ERSKINE writes in his review of America's latest album "Hearts" (NME April 19), that the said album is film music, "according to a note on the back sleeve."

Let the readers (and record buyers) be grossly misled, may I point out that the note on the back sleeve does not refer to the entire album, but to the track entitled "The Story Of A Teenager" — which was written and produced for the movie of the same name.

Before the note, there is a tiny blue heart which should also appear above the tail-end of the appropriate title on the back sleeve, but has — by some error in the printing process, I gather — been omitted from the English-made (but not the American-made) sleeves.

I wonder whether this fact makes the English sleeve a collector's item?! — AMERICAN NME READER, London SW7.

HAS ANYONE noticed the remarkable similarity between the opening chords of Bad Company's "Good Lovin' Gone Bad" and those of Yes' "Yours Is No Disgrace"? I have. — COLIN SHARP, Hartlepool, Cleveland.

P.S. Hartlepool F.C. will astonish everyone next season by winning the 4th Division Championship.

I READ in the April 12 issue of NME about Roy Harper's new band, and how Roy was looking for a name for the band. Well, how about "The Rodent Ice Band"? — RICK LANE, Royal Standard, Ramsgate.

THOUGHT YOU might be interested in the latest Dylan device for avoiding unwelcome attention. He is currently masquerading under the name of Alan Beer and playing football for Exeter City F.C., ankle injury and all (a relic of that accident?) — DAVID LEWIS, Beryl Road, London, W6.



● ALAN BEER... ankle injury.

From Exeter Express Echo

"brilliant statement and a seminal achievement", then what's it stating, what has it achieved and in what sense is it seminal? — CSM.

YOU BUMS! First you tell me that "Blue Jays" has just gone Gold in U.S.A., and then I see that it isn't even in your American chart! I trusted you guys. How can I ever read *Teasers* after this? Huh? — ANGUS VALVE, Gorbals Street, Glasgow.

■ Dumbkopf! We just lied, that's all. So whattaya doing putting your trust in NME? — NL.

HEY KIDS, it's "Spot the Baller" time again! I'm referring to Andrew Weiner, whose revealing article on the "Rock Culture" was printed in your journal the other week... revealing that he's a bloody hypocrite, that is.

It's not often that Mr. Weiner's

writings are devoted space in NME, and the last time he was given any large degree of space was November 1974, when he vigorously extolled the virtues of the then little known Bachman Turner Overdrive. "A dexterous, skilful, fluidly heavy band," said he, "the most proficient Canadian rock band I've heard, technically way ahead of their competition."

Five months later, following two hit singles and a hit album (in Britain), I can only imagine their presumed commercialisation and subsequent appeal to more than a "hip" minority has led Weiner to call the same Bachman Turner Overdrive "dreadful", "awful", and "unimaginably phoney", and I find his condescending attitude to their current fans particularly nauseating.

I am not writing this letter to defend Bachman Turner Overdrive. My opinion of them is irrelevant. What is relevant, though, is that in order to enhance the points of view put forward in his article, he can change opinions overnight to any degree he deems necessary in order to give his article more "punch".

I used to be of the opinion that the journalists on your paper wrote with more care, thought, and integrity than can be said of other writers. Now I'm beginning to think you are writing just for effect.

A small thing blown up, maybe. Yet it strikes at the core of your very integrity. Indeed, I can even recall CSM giving entirely different opinions of Alice's "Teenage Lament" and Lennon's "No. 9 Dream" to suit particular circumstances. — MIKE, Southampton, Hants.

■ Yeah, well — I can't answer for Mr. Weiner, who's still doing the multilingual boogie in Canada, but I got progressively more disenchanted with both the songs you mention — and availing myself of a privilege open equally to critics and human beings, I changed my mind, modified my opinion, etc. No defrauding of the public or Stalinist rewriting of history intended. — CSM

ANDREW WEINER — D'you wanna be the new Zarathustra? — FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE, Hollywood Road, Doncaster.

■ Piss off, Baldy. — SIGMUND FREUD.

DEAR TONY Tyler, I think you'd better get out your text book 'cos, as any first year Latin student will tell you, "ad Saxonis" doesn't mean "from the Saxons", as you attempted to inform those among your readers who are not so familiar with that great and ancient language in your article on 'Arthuriana'.

Actually, it don't mean nothing, 'cos the preposition 'ad' takes the accusative case and means 'towards' or 'at'. Now clearly "Saxonis" is an abeative plural and the required preposition is 'a', thus providing the translation "from the Saxons".

As Cicero himself wrote: "Oconditionem miseram non modo administrandae, verumetiam conservandae rei publicae!" Salve! — CAIUS SALUSTIUS CRISPUS, Cantium.

■ What can I say? Except... Crispus adsum jam forte Tyler et arat Crispus sic in omnibus Tyler sic inat.

T.T.

TO PETE Erskine! So you still don't understand Genesis...

I still don't understand how you can be a rock journalist... — JOHN GALBO, London NW1.

I DIDN'T like the Genesis write-up in NME last week, because I didn't understand it. — GENESIS FAN, Sunny N. London.

I HAVE been on a trekking holiday across Wales for some time. Have I missed anything? — ANDROID THE FRICTION-KID, S. Welling, Kent.

■ Well, where would you like to begin? Led Zeppelin announced three concerts, upped it to five. Yes toured. Rod Stewart found true bliss with Britt Ekland, lost Dee Harrington. Bob Dylan said "No" to Britain. Britain said "Oh all right, if you insist" to Chancellor Denis Healey. England beat Cyprus 5-0. Lincoln dropped point in promotion chase. Thieu dropped presidency in Vietnamese rout. Roger Daltrey dropped aitches in R. Harty interview. Ken Russell announced revolution. Thousands Slain In Feedback Massacre; Palace surrounded By Fifth International Roadie Division. Smart ass one liners continued to write to *Gasbag*. *Gasbag* editors continued to fall for trick questions. — N.L.



BOXDEATH!

"AT LAST it's over," murmured Steele, crushing out his well-gnawed Piccadilly in the up-turned kneecap that served as his own private, personal ashtray. His laser goggles glinted in the last rays of the setting sun, and his drawn cheeks seemed even more haggard than usual. "In many ways, I'll miss the Box, even after all that's gone down. But it had to happen."

"I mean, look how he screwed up on that ALEX HARVEY business last week."

"Oh, c'mon, boss," interpolated Spencer. "Were we to know the old bozo'd get flu and postpone the interview?"

"Not the point, yo-yo," snapped back Steele. "He still came out of it not smelly like roses."

Tyler shook his great head sadly. (Steele had never been the same since he'd had his head shaved.)

"How did he take it, boss?" he asked.

Steele looked him full in the eyes. "Like a soldier and a gentleman. I left him alone with the atomic typescale for five minutes — and he blew his brains out!" He sobbed, gently.

"That can't have been difficult," grunted MacDonald, looking up from his Sanskrit crossword.

"But he left us this," said Steele, recovering his manhood. He reverently placed a bloodstained scrap of paper on the desk. Painfully scrawled upon it in blood were the words: "Next week in NME — a chance to win 10 pairs of LED ZEP tickets."

There was a brief, emotional silence.

Steele rose to his feet, head bowed. "Gentlemen — we shall never know his like again."

One by one, they filed out of the darkened office. The building was silent but for an eerie chuckle borne on the wind around Long Acre...

TEAZERS

WELL, Uncle Frank's back on the road in the States with the new, improved, now-plus-added-Beefheart Mothers while, back in London the legal beat goes on. Before leaving, Zappa remarked that his new suit "should last until the end of the trial", told NME's CSM that he looked like "the missing link between Mike Bloomfield and Jeff Simmons" and, as his only comment on the legal, stated "the trial is

on 1 1/2 with too much top, but I'd like a copy of the tape".

And on to the latest activities of the Ten Little Liggers: a combined birthday party and recording session took place at Honest Ron Wood's gaff (no pun intended) in honour of bassist Willie Weeks; after scarfing up the cake (that's c-a-k-e), Ron, Weeks, Keif Richard and drummer Andy Newmark lurched into the studio to lay down some tracks

for Woody's next solo album... And talking of Woody (which, let's face it, everybody is these days), it's currently being noised about that Wings guitarist Jimmy McCullough will be depping for Woody with the Faces if any conflict of interests arises... and NME financial editor Shares Bono informs us that the Faces picked up no less than \$1,500,000 for their last US tour...

Phew! Yet more Stoodio

Shenanigans: Bryan Ferry's cutting a new single in Island's Basing Street Studios and is contemplating recording his next solo album in the States... New Yes album expected by the end of the year (whoopie!) plus solo albums by Anderson, Howe and Squire... And it seems that Big Al Alvin Lee (to you) pulled a bit of a stroke by including on his recent "In Flight" live album a studio track recorded with The Gits (Boz Burrell, Tim Hinkley, Mel Collins and Ian Wallace) beamed up with applause lifted from the "Bangla Desh" album...

Plus Procol Harum go into the studios for their new album

any minute now... Todd Rundgren playing guitar on that new Laurel Nyro album we told you about a couple of months back... Linda Ronstadt, John Hartford and Cheech and Chong weighing in on Hoyt Axton's next...

Not to mention ex-Supremes Lynda Lawrence and Jean Terrell working with superstar producer Richard Perry, Ritchie Blackmore, ELO's Hugh McDowall and two members of a group called Elfworking on Blackmore solo single (how wonderful, man)... And even an alleged new Stones album next month...

We're sure that that it's really important to you to know that the next Carpenters album is entitled "Horizon", which has absolutely nothing to do with either the fact that Karen the Cee is having her name banded about in tandem with that of Chrysalis boss Terry Ellis, or that The Sweet and S. Quo are both now on Capitol in the States... Here's a hot one: Curtis Mayfield writing some arrangements for the next Doobie Brothers album... Special note to poseurs: this summer's thing is limping...

Recent burglary victim: Ricky Monsoon — we're told that only his "good albums" have been taken, and that copies of "Slaughter On Tenth Avenue" and "Play Don't Worry" were left undisturbed... And Alvin Lee comes up for his second Teazers mention of this week because he's currently producing F.B.I. ... And musical-valet-to-the-fair-and-strong Bobby Whitlock ends up on Capricorn — where he belongs...

And back to the Ministry of Liggering: Roy Harper and B.P. Fallon causing aggro at the Savoy last week — Harper lobbing bottles about while Beep asked the Maitre D for skins (unsuccessfully) and paped bog wall with Equinox stickers; all in all, a high rating

on the twerp-o-meter... While during the Atlantic Soul Package Show at Hammersmith Odeon, Marc Bolan overhead introducing himself to anybody and everybody seated in his vicinity with cheery cries of "Hi man, I'm Marc Bolan"; audience underwhelmed... Detroit Spinners lead singer Phillipe Wynne made a strong bid to beat out Al Green for unofficial title of best male soul singer in the galaxy according to very excited Roy Carr...

Yes roadie Ray Palmer happened to be re-wiring at 2.30 a.m. in Newcastle City Hall last Wednesday, when he noticed a fire in the rafters (nothing to do with Yes — someone had left a 1,500-watt spotlight turned on to the woodwork). Prompt action by Palmer in calling the fire brigade prevented the venue burning down... even so, a fair amount of damage was caused... For their OGWT spot tomorrow (Friday), Judas Priest billed in Radio Times as Judith Priest... Haw haw... Uriah's David Byron smashed up his £4,500 E-Type Jag... Lord Stokes smashed his daughters' Heep albums...

Ex-Move, Moodies, T. Rex manager Tony Secunda strongly tipped to take over Steeleye Span's management when their contract with Jo Lustig expires next month; several v. heavy managers allegedly interested in taking over the band's affairs as well... Rags to riches to rags: ex-Natural Acoustic Band member Robin Thyne now a scooter messenger... Queen reportedly blowing out in the States because of nasty dressing rooms, unavailability of sound checks for support groups etc., etc. Darlings, we thought you knew about all that kind of stuff... Teazers compiler blowing out his brains because of lousy typewriters and inadequate toilet facilities, not to mention delayed lunch hours...

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CROYDON Greyhound.



Pic: SUZAN CARSON

SNUB-A-SNOB with rock's odd couple

Part the Second

disc jockeys, the media, most of the music that's popular these days — for the world, actually — was a bit more blatant 14 months ago than it is today.

During the mixing of "Pretzel Logic", they discussed their difficulties.

"It's all the record company," Fagen was sneering. "They felt that at that point in our career, when the album came out we should pick the single, for some reason that I couldn't understand. So naturally we would pick what we liked the best. Unfortunately, apparently, it was a little to bizarre for the single-buying public..."

"These days," he said of contemporary sounds, "there ain't much that we hear. It's especially astounding to me that standards have been lowered to the point where it's hard to impress anyone with anything that's harmonically interesting or rhythmically interesting..."

"We're basically all jazz fans, and most of the records we listen to are jazz — the people who made them are dead or they were recorded so long ago that they've been forgotten."

"We're definitely pretty cold at the moment," he continued. "We've more or less abandoned hope of being one of the big, important rock 'n' roll groups, simply because our music is somehow a little too cheesy at times and turns off the rock intelligensia for the most part, and at other times it's too bizarre to be appreciated by anybody."

"But we're hoping that we're going to make some sort of miracle sweep and just sort of worm our way into the hearts of America."

WHICH IS, of course, exactly what they did, with the resounding critical and commercial success of "Pretzel Logic" and "Rikki," and a smash US tour which garnered them further appreciation from press and fan alike.

In retrospect, Fagen's primary misgiving of last year has proven false: "I didn't think," he said, "most people wanted to hear a Jew sing."

But a couple of tribulations were to come in the midst of prosperity.

A funny thing happened to "Katy Lied", the fourth album, on its way from the studio.

"The recording went very quickly," explains Fagen, "the mixing went very quickly, and then we realised that the mixes wouldn't play back because of a defect in one of the pieces of equipment, which they were never exactly able to pin down. But we fixed it, and it took a long time to fix it."

"It was harsh," adds Becker. "It was bleak. If it weren't for that the album would have been out right around Christmas. But this little thing came up and we realised we had to go back and do a lot of the more painstaking things that you do to make a record over again — such as mixing it."

And then there was the matter of the departure of two original Steely Dan players, Hodder and Baxter.

"The only reason," Fagen says, "Jeffrey actually didn't play on the last album is he was on the road, with the Doobie Brothers. And we missed him on the dates where we could have used him, so somebody else did it."

"Talked to him just the other

day. The Doobie Brothers are doing very nicely. Going on a tour. He'll be in Oxford, Mississippi before us."

Baxter's move led to speculation that, what a shame, this must be the end of the line for the beloved Dan. Mention of their projected demise elicits incredulous smiles from Becker and Fagen, for the simple reason that Steely Dan is not structured as a conventional rock band.

"If you think of it more as a concept than a group of specific musicians," says Fagen, "there's no way it'll break up."

"We have a situation," Becker continues, "where for a particular tour we select a band. We make up a band and then rehearse it and then go out and do it..."

"You'll see two Steely Dan shows on different tours, it'll be different bands and a different kind of musical presentation. The nucleus of the band has always been the same."

"We have a bunch of satellite performers," adds Fagen, "who more or less are interchangeable from time to time... Usually we pick musicians that we think will fit the particular song. Sometimes we'll just hear somebody on a record and hire them for the date, and if it works out it's all the better..."

"You know, we grew up listening to jazz musicians, and they're always playing with different musicians, so I don't see why the same kind of thing can't happen here. It makes it much more interesting."

"I think the musicians like to play on our sessions and concerts, cause the material's a little more challenging than the fare they usually have to play."

"Like I remember Rick Derringer. 'Chain Lightning' has all the aspects of a straight blues, except the chords constantly modulate, and he was sort of freaked out by that for about three or four seconds, and then realised he had to do something a little different from what he usually does."

"On the other hand," says Becker, "there are people that don't like that."

"Right. Every once in a while we'll get somebody that'll come in and they won't know what's going on. We get somebody else."

"They leave."

Like a depressed executive confronted with "Brain Tap Shuffle" maybe.

THEY SAY it's too early yet to discuss the next configuration of Steely Dan.

"We're always meeting new musicians," says Fagen. "There are certainly some that are well qualified. Including Jeff."

But before Becker and Fagen and their musical phalanx hit the civic halls and gymnasiums (gymnasias?) one more time, they're going to cut another album.

"The idea," says Becker, "is to get an ongoing recording process going and not have to be interrupted by a tour."

"Cause what usually happens is just as you're finishing an album you have some ideas on how you'd do it differently, things that you'd like to do while it's fresh in your mind, and it's always been for us that immediately on completion of the album we were pressured by various forces, internal and external, to go back on the road. As if we're going to make some money or something."

"The 'Countdown To Ecstasy' album. We were actually

didn't hit me at all... They just kept playing it for me and said, 'Listen, just keep listening.' And one day I got it."

From previous page

BECKER AND FAGEN joined forces with Katz to write some songs for and to perform on an album (never released) by a woman singer whom Fagen refers to as "Gary's protegee."

"She had three songs that she'd written in her whole life," says Becker. "One was about her mother, one was about her boyfriend, and the other was about fall."

Some of the Becker-Fagen

titles from the period are "The Roaring Of The Lamb," "Jones" and "I Mean To Shine" (later recorded by Barbara Streisand), songs that contained glimmerings of the sound to come.

"There were," says Becker, "some proto-Steely Dan songs, and there were also what we conceived as good songs, nice pop songs for a female vocalist."

"I think there were two songs that were more or less in the present style," says Fagen, "which sounded very strange by the way, with a very naive female vocalist singing them who hadn't the faintest idea what she was singing about."

That was the last job (except sideman gigs, with such as Jay And The Americans) that they had before moving West. But first, destiny dealt them one more card in New York.

"Bass and keyboard player with jazz chops," says Walter Becker, remembering Denny Dias' advert in the *Village Voice*. "So we drove out to this house in Hicksville, Long Island, and Denny was there with his band..."

"Denny had some songs that he had written, and they did all the top 40 songs. They worked in clubs and stuff, which was something that we'd never heard of."

"In fact when we found out what the clubs were like and what it was supposed to be we refused to learn any of the songs and we never got any jobs. And everyone quit the band... That's how we met Denny, and he was the only one left in his band."

"We used to chastise them, and abuse them," Fagen recalls wistfully, "so they all quit. And so there was Denny and we'd ruined his band. So he had no place else to go."

A couple of years later they gave him a call from Los Angeles.

"He was just waiting by the

The latest Dan line-up hang out on Sunset Strip, looking to score some old Miles Davis albums. Note Don's casual sweater...

phone," says Becker, "and he hung up and drove straight out."

Denny is now the only remaining member of Becker and Fagen's original-Steely Dan.

KATZ HAD recruited drummer Jim Hodder and guitarist Jeff Baxter from Boston, and there was a lead singer, David Palmer.

They rehearsed after office hours in the ABC accounting department, and when they had their ten songs they went in to record "Can't Buy A Thrill".

"We knew," says Fagen, "if they got one song on the radio, if by chance one of them was played on the radio, we had a shot to do what we wanted to do."

"It was that simple," Katz agrees. "If we could get someone that believed in the music and forced it down some radio stations, it would happen."

"And we were lucky. We found a guy who forced it down some radio stations, and sat with them a long while until they did play it."

But it hasn't been all bonbons and dumplings and number-one singles for Steely Dan. There was a period, following the success of "Reelin In The Years", when the threat of obscurity loomed dangerously near.

The second album, "Countdown To Ecstasy", proved a bit arcane for many of the original Dan fans, and the next single, "Show Biz Kids," was, in Fagen's words, "a brutal failure." Few even know that they followed it with an edited "My Old School," which saw even less action.

BECKER and Fagen's contempt for record companies,



Producer GARY KATZ pleads insanity, sporting a jaunty *Fu Manchu*. Note "producer's head", caused by excessive use of stereo cans...



"We're definitely pretty cold at the moment." Fagen fights back with black leather and hairy fists.

doing gigs on weekends and recording during the week. And it was ridiculous, 'cause all the equipment would come back all mangled, and nothing would play in tune and everybody had the flu and so on."

AS FOR this next album: "It's in its very early stages," Becker says. "It's really too soon to comment on the general character."

"We have some warped songs already," offers Fagen.

More warped than before, we wonder?

"The same general kind of warp."

"It may be more warped than before," says Becker. "It's too soon to tell. The actual execution of the record has a lot to do with how warped it is. You can start out with a very warped song and if —"

"And if the vinyl itself is warped —"

"Then it'll be even more warped and you'll never get to hear it, cause your needle would just skip. Some dare call it vinyl."

"Yes," says Fagen, perking up a bit. "We're going on a crusade to bring back records that don't go —", he extends his bony arms and shakes an imaginary, wafer-thin platter back and forth, mouthing the appropriate "Whoop whoop" sound effect.

"That's right," says Becker. "I remember when I bought my first copy of 'Birth Of The Cool' by Miles Davis and took the record out of the jacket and found that it weighed seven pounds. I knew this was a musical landmark . . . Fewer but thicker records."

NOW WHAT about this "concept" that is Steely Dan?

Becker and Fagen can't, or won't define it:

"We've been working on it," says Fagen, "and as soon as we can articulate it properly, it'll appear on a record probably."

"See, all we can give is clues, 'cause we're too close to it. It's all on the record, you know. It's all there. There isn't much to say about it."

"Even if we could answer the question," says a smiling Becker, "you know that we would lie. We would deliberately lead you off the scent."

Fagen surrounds the matter a bit with a glimpse at the Steely Dan songwriting process:

"Because of the lack of input, experience, that's available to you in the United States of America, or the world in general these days, we more or less rely on pure imagination for song ideas. And we like to make them original, and we'll set up a framework, no matter how bizarre it may be, and proceed to write a song on that basis."

"I'll come up with an idea and he'll come up with a scenario and we'll decide what we think the song is about, and which part of the exposition of what's happening is in each verse, and get a title together, — and no matter how strange the idea may be we just go along and hope that we can finish the song and that it actually emerges as something."

"When we go into the studio it's further refined by the musicians who are playing on it . . . Both of us in concert write the music and the words. You know, it's a lot of pacing around the living room. Whenever Walter has some free time he'll drop over, show me what he's got, I'll show him what I've got and kick it around a little bit. It's very informal."

"I'll tell you, there's a lot of stuff packed into the records musically . . . There's so much junk packed into each unit. We try to make it unoboring, that's one of the main things we go for. If it's boring, that's the main indication that there's some failure."

Fagen, who once described his (and by extension Steely Dan's) personality as "venomous," continues with some cryptic words on the "Katy Lied" material.

"Each song is seen from a different viewpoint. Some, I imagine, have an idealistic tone to them, while others are someone who's obviously suicidal. Obviously the narrator, if you will, is really in the deep stages of severe depression."

"And of course I probably was when I was performing them . . . Everybody's personality is just a symptom of the times. I always seem to see both sides of things simultaneously, for which reason I never seem to have an opinion about anything."

ONE FINAL STAB at it, then, directed in Donald Fagen's direction: What kind of life do you like to live?

"I rarely step over the portals of my door to the outside world . . . I watch TV, I listen to old records, and play the piano a lot. I think we insult people unintentionally — we keep getting invited to this and that."

"Like the Grammy Awards, I got a thing that said, 'Wear beautiful clothes!'"

He suddenly becomes animated, in his own sullen way, for the first time, flashing a trace of the possessed, mad professor demeanour he exhibits when he leads the band on stage.

"I don't have any beautiful clothes!"

"You have a nice sweater, though," Katz reminds him.

"It said," Fagen responds vehemently, "'Wear beautiful —' now I know what they wanted. They wanted me to come dressed like Cher!"

"You don't have anything like that," Katz admits.

"I don't have anything like that! I don't have a little Hawaiian bra. I'd be petrified to go to something like that."

"You do look beautiful, though," says the ever-consoling Katz, "in that sweater."

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