

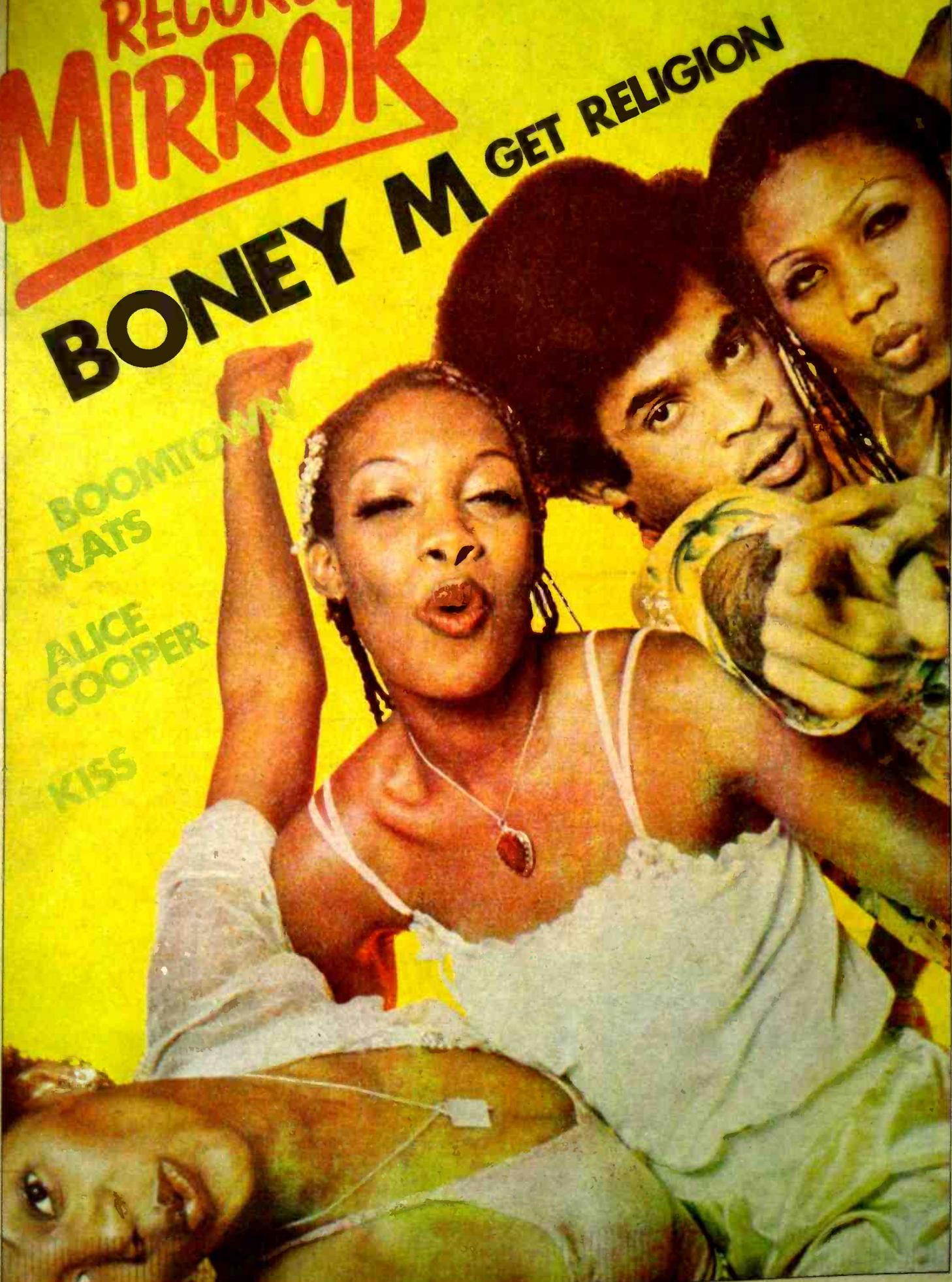
RECORD MIRROR

BONEY M GET RELIGION

BOONTOWN
RATS

ALICE COOPER

KISS



BONEY M. shot. SIMON FOWLER / LFI

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UK SINGLES

1	1	MARY'S BOY CHILD, Boney M	Atlantic
2	12	YMCA, Village People	Mercury
3	2	DO YA THINK I'M SEXY, Rod Stewart	Riva
4	4	A TASTE OF AGGRO, Barron Knights	Epic
5	3	TOO MUCH HEAVEN, Bee Gees	RSO
6	6	I LOST MY HEART TO A STARSHIP TROOPER, Sarah Brightman/Hot Gossip	Ariola
7	8	LE FREAK, Chic	Atlantic
8	25	YOU DON'T BRING ME FLOWERS, Streisand/Diamond	CBS
9	9	ALWAYS AND FOREVER, Heatwave	GTO
10	7	HANGING ON THE TELEPHONE, Blondie	Chrysalis
11	24	LAY YOUR LOVE ON ME, Racey	RAK
12	13	DON'T CRY OUT LOUD, Elkie Brooks	A&M
13	5	RAT TRAP, Boomtown Rats	Ensign
14	14	PRETTY LITTLE ANGEL EYES, Showaddywaddy	Ariola
15	20	PART TIME LOVE, Eton John	EMI
16	17	IN THE BUSH, Musique	CBS
17	23	GREASED LIGHTNING, John Travolta	RSO
18	19	DOON'T LET IT FADE AWAY, Daris	Magnet
19	26	SHOOTING STAR, Dollar	EMI
20	27	TOMMY GUN, Clash	CBS
21	18	I LOVE AMERICA, Patrick Juvet	Casablanca
22	-	SONG FOR GUY, Elton John	Rocket
23	35	PROMISES, Buzzcocks	UA
24	11	MY BEST FRIEND'S GIRL, Cars	Elektra
25	36	I'LL PUT YOU TOGETHER AGAIN, Hot Chocolate	RAK
26	10	HOPELESSLY DEVOTED TO YOU, Olivia Newton-John	RSO
27	34	DR WHO, Markink	Pinnacle
28	58	SEPTEMBER, Earth, Wind & Fire	CBS
29	15	INSTANT REPLAY, Dan Hartman	Blue Sky
30	44	HIT ME WITH YOUR RHYTHM STICK, Ian Dury	Stiff
31	32	I'M EVERY WOMAN, Chaka Khan	Atlantic
32	40	CHRISTMAS IN SMURFLAND, Smurfs	Decca
33	16	DARLIN', Frankie Miller	Chrysalis
34	50	ELO EP, Electric Light Orchestra	Jet
35	21	BICYCLE RACE/FAT BOTTOMED GIRLS, Queen	EMI
36	28	RAINING IN MY HEART, Leo Sayer	Chrysalis
37	22	GERM FREE ADOLESCENCE, X Ray Spex	EMI
38	31	DANCE (DISCO HEAT), Sylvester	Fantasy
39	60	ONE NATION UNDER A GROOVE, Funkadelic	Warner Bros
40	42	MY LIFE, Billy Joel	CBS
41	39	ACCIDENT PRONE, Status Quo	Vertigo
42	-	PLEASE COME HOME FOR CHRISTMAS, Eagles	Asylum
43	-	SIX MILLION STEPS, Rahn Harris & Flo	Mercury
44	30	SUMMER NIGHTS, John Travolta/Olivia Newton-John	RSO
45	41	ANYWAY YOU DO IT, Liquid Gold	Creole
46	43	NEW YORK NEW YORK, Gerard Kenny	RCA
47	73	BABY, Rachel Sweet	Stiff
48	51	MIRRORS, Sally Oldfield	Bronze
49	37	I LOVE THE NIGHTLIFE, Alicia Bridges	Polydor
50	67	TAKE THAT TO THE BANK, Shalamar	RCA
51	64	YOU NEEDED ME, Anne Murray	Capitol
52	71	STUMBLIN' IN, Suzi Quatro/Chris Norman	RAK
53	-	SILENT NIGHT, Dickies	A&M
54	-	A LITTLE MORE LOVE, Olivia Newton-John	EMI
55	-	RAMA LAMA DING DONG, Rocky Sharpe	Chiswick
56	94	BREAKING GLASS EP, David Bowie	RCA
57	-	NIGHT DANCING, Joe Farrell	Warner Bros
58	55	NUMBER 1 DEE JAY, Goody Goody	Atlantic
59	38	LYOIA, Dean Friedman	Lifesong
60	33	SANDY, John Travolta	RSO
61	-	JUST THE WAY YOU ARE, Barry White	20th Century
62	74	RIVERS OF BABYLON, Boney M	Atlantic
63	-	HELLO THIS IS JOANNIE, Paul Eyané	Spring
64	45	LAY LOVE ON YOU, Luisa Fernandez	Warner Bros
65	61	HAMMER HORROR, Kate Bush	EMI
66	-	JINGLE BELLS/HOKEY COKEY, Judge Dread	EMI
67	47	DESTINATION VENUS, Rezillos	Sire
68	53	DIPPETY DAY, Father Abraham	Decca
69	48	MacARTHUR PARK, Donna Summer	Casablanca
70	56	SOUVENIRS, Voyage	GTO
71	65	NO GOODBYES, Curtis Mayfield	Atlantic
72	66	TOUCH OF VELVET, Ron Grain's Orchestra	Casino Classics
73	-	LICK A SMURF FOR CHRISTMAS, Father Abriphart	Patrol
74	-	DON'T CRY FOR ME ARGENTINA, Shadows	EMI
75	62	JUST TO BE CLOSE TO YOU, Commodores	Motown

UK ALBUMS

1	1	GREASE, Original Soundtrack	RSO
2	4	SINGLES 1974-78, Carpenters	A&M
3	3	BLONDES HAVE MORE FUN, Rod Stewart	Riva
4	2	20 GOLDEN GREATS, Neil Diamond	MCA
5	6	MIDNIGHT HUSTLE, Various	K-Tel
6	9	NIGHTFLIGHT TO VENUS, Boney M	Atlantic/Hansa
7	5	JAZZ, Queen	EMI
8	11	AMAZING MORTS, Oaris	K-Tel/Magnet
9	8	LION HEART, Kate Bush	EMI
10	7	EMOTIONS, Various	K-Tel
11	20	25TH ANNIVERSARY ALBUM, Shirley Bassey	United Artists
12	10	TONIC FOR THE TROOPS, Boomtown Rats	Ensign
13	12	GIVE EM ENOUGH ROPE, The Clash	CBS
14	14	A SINGLE MAN, Elton John	Rocket
15	13	WAR OF THE WORLDS, Jeff Wayne's Musical Version	CBS
16	16	IMAGES, Don Williams	K-Tel
17	61	GREATEST HITS, Showaddywaddy	Anista
18	-	20 SONGS OF JOY, Harry Secombe	Warwick
19	19	FATHER ABRAHAM IN SMURFLAND, Father Abraham	Decca
20	18	BACKLESS, Eric Clapton	RSO
21	21	PARALLEL LINES, Blondie	Chrysalis
22	17	BOOGIE FEVER, Various	Ronco
23	15	LIVE, Manhattan Transfer	Atlantic
24	-	20 GOLDEN GREATS, Nat King Cole	Capitol
25	23	EVERGREEN, Acker Bilk	Warwick
26	44	NIGHT GALLERY, Barron Knights	Epic
27	26	SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER, Various	RSO
28	47	52nd STREET, Billy Joel	CBS
29	35	OUT OF THE BLUE, Electric Light Orchestra	Jet
30	22	CAN'T STAND THE HEAT, Status Quo	Vertigo
31	31	CLASSIC ROCK, London Symphony Orchestra	K-Tel
32	33	DON'T WALK - BODGIE, Various	EMI
33	30	GERM FREE ADOLESCENTS, X Ray Spex	EMI International
34	40	INCANTATIONS, Mike Oldfield	Virgin
34	52	TOTALLY HOT, Olivia Newton-John	EMI
36	38	GREATEST HITS, Commodores	Motown
37	42	BROTHERHOOD OF MAN, Brotherhood Of Man	K-Tel
38	34	WELL WELL, Dean Friedman	Lifesong
39	28	THE BIG WHEELS OF MOTOWN, Various	Motown
40	-	BABYD BY BUS, Bob Marley & The Wailers	Island
41	32	ALL MOD CONS, The Jam	Polydor
42	24	DOLLY PARTON, Dolly Parton	Lotus
43	43	LEO SAYER, Leo Sayer	Chrysalis
44	36	EVITA, Original London Cast	MCA
45	37	LIVE AND MORE, Donna Summer	Casablanca
46	53	CARS, Cars	Elektra
47	25	THE SCREAM, Siouxsie & The Banshees	Polydor
48	50	LOVE SONGS, Various	Warwick
49	56	JAMES GALWAY PLAYS SONGS FOR ANNIE	Red Seal
50	-	WINGS GREATEST, Wings	Parlophone

UK SOUL

1	1	INSTANT REPLAY, Dan Hartman	Blue Sky
2	2	IN THE BUSH, Musique	CBS
3	3	DANCE (DISCO HEAT), Sylvester	Fantasy
4	4	I'M EVERY WOMAN, Chaka Khan	Warner Bros
5	5	ALWAYS AND FOREVER, Heatwave	GTO
6	10	GIVING IT BACK, Phil Hurtt	Fantasy
7	17	LE FREAK, Chic	Atlantic
8	8	TAKE THAT TO THE BANK, Shalamar	RCA
9	14	DISCO DANCING, Stanley Turrentine	Fantasy
10	18	ONE NATION UNDER A GROOVE, Funkadelic	Warner Bros
11	13	CLOSE THE DOOR, Teddy Pendergrass	Phil Int
12	9	GONNA LOVE YOU FOREVER, Crown Heights Affair	Mercury
13	7	MacARTHUR PARK, Donna Summer	Casablanca
14	18	PRANCE ON, Eddie Henderson	Capitol
15	8	I LOVE AMERICA, Patrick Juvet	Casablanca
16	15	BLAME IT ON THE BOOGIE, The Jacksons	Epic
17	12	GIVIN' UP GIVIN' IN, Three Degrees	Ariola
18	-	NEEDLE IN A HAYSTACK, The Velvettes	Motown
19	20	JUST TO BE CLOSE TO YOU, Commodores	Casablanca
20	11	MARY'S BOY CHILD/OH MY LORD, Boney M	Atlantic

SUPPLIED BY: BLUES & SOUL, 42 Hanway Street, London W1
Tel: 636 2283

RECORD MIRROR

OTHER CHART

1	SILENT NIGHT, The Dickies	A&M
2	ALTERNATIVE ULSTER, Stiff Little Fingers	Rough Trade
3	SO LONELY, The Police	A&M
4	HIT ME WITH YOUR RHYTHM STICK, Ian Dury	Stiff
5	STARRY EYES, The Records	Record Company
6	WHO KILLED LITTLE TOWERS, Angelic Upstarts	Small Wonder & Rough Trade
7	DESTINATION VENUS, The Rezillos	Sire
8	BABY, Rachel Sweet	Stiff
9	AMBITION, Subway Sect	Rough Trade
10	HE LOVE LIES LAMP, ATV	Deptford Fun City
11	THE PRAG VEC EP	Spec Records
12	TOE KNEE BLACK BURN, Binky Baker	Stiff
13	NO THE UK Subs	City Records
14	I CAN'T STAND LOSING YOU, The Police	A&M
15	ACTION, TIME AND VISION, ATV	Deptford Fun City
16	MAMAGFO GOODS, Gang Of Four	Fast Records
17	URBAN KIDS, Chelsea	Step Forward
18	5000 CRAZY, Spizzoli	Rough Trade
19	SUMMERTIME BLUES, Flying Lizards	Virgin
20	EXTENDED PLAY, Cabaret Voltaire	Rough Trade

SUPPLIED BY: BRUCE'S, 37 Union Street, Glasgow
Tel: 041 221 2973

YESTERYEAR

1	MERRY XMAS EVERYBODY	Slade
2	I LOVE YOU LOVE ME LOVE	Gary Glitter
3	MY COO-CA-CHOO	Alvin Stardust
4	YOU WON'T FIND ANOTHER FOOL LIKE ME	The New Seekers
5	PAPER ROSES	Marie Osmond
6	I WISH IT COULD BE CHRISTMAS VERY DAY	Wizard
7	LAMPLIGHT	David Essex
8	ROLL AWAY THE STONE	Mott The Hoople
9	STREET LIFE	Roxy Music
10	WHY OH WHY OH WHY	Gilbert O'Sullivan

11 Years Ago (15th December, 1973)

1	LILY THE PINK	The Scaffold
2	THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY	Hugo Montenegro
3	AIN'T GOT NO - I GOT LIFE	Nina Simone
4	ONE, TWO, THREE O'LEARY	Des O'Connor
5	BUILD ME UP BUTTERCUP	The Foundations
6	THE URBAN SCAPEMAN	The Bonzo Dog Doo Dah Band
7	THIS OLD HEART OF MINE	The Isley Brothers
8	MAY I HAVE THE NEXT DREAM WITH YOU	Malcolm Roberts
9	BREAKING DOWN THE WALLS OF HEARTACHE	The Bandwagon

12 Years Ago (14th December, 1963)

1	I WANT TO HOLD YOUR HAND	The Beatles
2	SHE LOVES YOU	The Beatles
3	YOU WERE MADE FOR ME	Freddie and The Dreamers
4	SECRET LOVE	Kathy Kirby
5	MARIA ELENA	Los Indios Tapatzenos
6	DON'T TALK TO HIM	Cliff Richard
7	I ONLY WANT TO BE WITH YOU	Dusty Springfield
8	CHANGING OF THE GUARDS	Gerry and The Pacemakers
9	SIMPLE TWIST OF FATE	The Dave Clark Five
10	GLAD ALL OVER	The Singing Nun
11	DOMINIQUE	

STAR CHOICE



PETER PERRETT (Lead Vocalist, The Only Ones)

- 1 WHERE ARE YOU TONIGHT
- 2 SHELTER FROM THE STORM
- 3 SENOR
- 4 ISIS
- 5 CAN YOU PLEASE CRAWL OUT YOUR WINDOW
- 6 I WANT YOU
- 7 CHANGING OF THE GUARDS
- 8 SIMPLE TWIST OF FATE
- 9 BLACK DIAMOND BAY
- 10 SUBMISSION

US SINGLES

1	3	YOU DON'T BRING ME FLOWERS, Streisand/Diamond	Columbia
2	1	LE FREAK, Chic	Atlantic
3	12	TOO MUCH HEAVEN, Bee Gees	RSO
4	4	I JUST WANNA STOP, Gino Vannelli	A&M
5	8	MY LIFE, Billy Joel	CBS
6	6	I LOVE THE NIGHT LIFE, Alicia Bridges	Polydor
7	7	TIME PASSAGES, Al Stewart	Arista
8	9	SHARING THE NIGHT TOGETHER, Dr Hook	Capitol
9	10	OUR LOVE, DON'T THROW IT ALL AWAY, Andy Gibb	RSO
10	2	MAC ARTHUR PARK, Donna Summer	Casablanca
11	11	STRANGEWAY, Firefall	Atlantic
12	13	YMCA, Village People	Casablanca
13	15	HOLD THE LINE, Toto	Columbia
14	5	HOW MUCH I FEEL, Ambrosia	Warner Bros
15	16	STRAIGHT ON, Heart	Portrait
16	20	HOW YOU GONNA SEE ME NOW, Alice Cooper	Warner Bros
17	18	SWEET LIFE, Paul Davis	Bang
18	22	DOH BABY BABY, Linda Ronstadt	Asylum
19	26	PROMISES, Eric Clapton	RSO
20	14	ALIVE AGAIN, Chicago	Columbia
21	25	WE'VE GOT TONIGHT, Bob Seger	Capitol
22	23	PART TIME LOVE, Elton John	MCA
23	27	I'M EVERY WOMAN, Chaka Khan	Warner Bros
24	24	POWER OF GOLD, Dan Fogelberg & Tim Weisberg	Full Moon
25	30	NEW YORK GROOVE, Ace Frehley	Casablanca
26	35	A LITTLE MORE LOVE, Olivia Newton-John	MCA
27	31	BICYCLE RACE/FAT BOTTOM GIRLS, Queen	Elektra
28	32	EVERY 1'S A WINNER, Hot Chocolate	Infinity
29	17	DOUBLE VISION, Foreigner	Atlantic
30	54	SHAKE IT, Ian Matthews	Mushroom
31	49	SEPTEMBER, Earth, Wind & Fire	Fantasy
32	41	RUN, Pointer Sisters	Planet
33	33	FIRE FOR HDME, Lindisfarne	Atco
34	37	INSTANT REPLAY, Dan Hartman	Blue Sky
35	40	I WAS MADE FOR DANCING, Leif Garrett	Scotti Bros
36	36	THERE'LL NEVER BE, Switch	Gordy
37	39	MY BEST FRIENDS GIRL, Cars	Elektra
38	38	CAN YOU FOOL, Glen Campbell	Capitol
39	42	I WILL BE IN LOVE WITH YOU, Livingstone Taylor	Epic
40	45	DON'T HOLD BACK, Chanson	Ariola
41	51	LOTTA LOVE, Nicolette Larson	Warner Bros
42	46	THE GAMBLER, Kenny Rogers	United Artists
43	48	TAKE ME TO THE RIVER, Talking Heads	Sire
44	19	CHANGE OF HEART, Eric Carmen	Arista
45	-	PLEASE COME HOME FOR CHRISTMAS, Eagles	Asylum
46	52	MARY JANE, Rick James	Gordy
47	53	HOLD ME, TOUCH ME, Paul Stanley	Casablanca
48	50	A MAN I'LL NEVER BE, Boston	Epic
49	55	ONE LAST KISS, J. Geils	EMI
50	56	DON'T CRY OUT LOUD, Melissa Manchester	Arista

US ALBUMS

1	1	52nd STREET, Billy Joel	Columbia
2	2	A WILD AND CRAZY GUY, Steve Martin	Warner Bros
3	3	GREATEST HITS VOL II, Barbra Streisand	Columbia
4	4	LIVE AND MORE, Donna Summer	Casablanca
5	5	DOUBLE VISION, Foreigner	Atlantic
6	6	GREASE, Soundtrack	RSO
7	7	COMES A TIME, Neil Young	Warner Bros
8	12	C'EST CHIC, Chic	Atlantic
9	30	JAZZ, Queen	Elektra
10	11	TIME PASSAGES, Al Stewart	Arista
11	9	LIVING IN THE USA, Linda Ronstadt	Asylum
12	13	CHAKA, Chaka Kahn	Warner Bros
13	14	BROTHER TO BROTHER, Gino Vannelli	A&M
14	16	BACKLESS, Eric Clapton	RSO
15	15	A SINGLE MAN, Elton John	MCA
16	16	CRUISIN', Village People	Casablanca
17	18	LIVE BOOTLEG, Aerosmith	Columbia
18	20	GREATEST HITS, Barry Manilow	Arista
19	24	THE BEST OF EARTH, WIND & FIRE	Columbia
20	22	DOG AND BUTTERFLY, Heart	Portrait
21	10	SOME GIRLS, Rolling Stones	Atlantic
22	-	YOU DON'T BRING ME FLOWERS, Neil Diamond	Columbia
23	8	PIECES OF EIGHT, Styx	A&M
24	25	WEEKEND WARRIORS, Ted Nugent	Epic
25	21	TWIN SONS OF DIFFERENT MOTHERS, Dan Fogelberg & Tim Weisberg	Epic
26	28	GENE SIMMONS	Casablanca
27	19	LIFE BEYOND L.A., Ambrosia	Warner Bros
28	29	WAVELENGTH, Van Morrison	Warner Bros
29	23	HOT STREETS, Chicago	Columbia
30	32	ELAN, Firefall	Atlantic
31	34	THE STRANGER, Billy Joel	Columbia
32	39	TOTO	Columbia
33	37	GREATEST HITS, Steely Dañ	ABC
34	36	ACE FREHLEY, Grover Washington Jr	Casablanca
35	35	REED SEED, Grover Washington Jr	Motown
36	41	THE MAN, Barry White	20th Century
37	38	TWO FOR THE SHOW, Kansas	Kushner
38	31	BURSTING OUT, Jethro Tull	Chrysalis
39	45	ALICIA BRIDGES	Polydor
40	42	PAUL STANLEY	Casablanca
41	43	GREATEST HITS, Commodores	Motown
42	33	CITY NIGHTS, Nick Gilder	Chrysalis
43	44	SONGS ABOUT BUILDINGS AND FOOD, Talking Heads	Sire
44	46	CHANSOON	Ariola
45	50	SHAKE DOWN STREET, Grateful Dead	Arista
46	47	PETER CRISS	Casablanca
47	48	CHILDREN OF SANCHEZ, Chuck Mangione	A&M
48	54	SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER, Soundtrack	RSO
49	51	HEMISPHERES, Rush	Mercury
50	60	GREATEST HITS, Steve Miller Band	Capitol

US DISCO

1	1	LE FREAK, Chic	Atlantic
2	2	GOT TO BE REAL, Cheryl Lynn	Columbia
3	3	SHAKE YOUR GROOVE THING, Peaches & Herb	Polydor
4	10	SEPTEMBER, Earth, Wind & Fire	Columbia

JUICY LUCY

CLOSE TO THE EDGE

JUST BETWEEN you and me, I'm very worried about young Mike Oldfield. Of course we should have recognised the signs when he had his hair cut. But his desperate efforts to get back into the swing of things are leading to more and more bizarre events. Maybe it was the release of his dreadful double album that sent him over the edge. I know that's where it sent me.

Any way, he's just been over to New York (enough to drive anyone mad) and I hear he was totally overwhelmed by Studio 54 — he loved it. In fact, he was so taken with the music there, he rushed straight into the studio and recorded his very own disco single.

He came back to Britain, clutching an acetate of his song and whisked a female member of the Virgin staff (my lips are sealed as to the lady's identity) off to Roddy Llewellyn's little club (you'll all know it as Bennett's, I'm sure). There, he made the unfortunate DJ play the record all night to test audience reaction (pity he never thought about that with regard to his album) and danced the night away. I'm told the single will be released in the New Year, if you can stand the suspense.

Not only that, but he then turned up on the doorstep of RM reporter Barry Cain, at his penthouse apartment which he shares with his mum and dad. "I've got the

Bentley outside if you want to go for tea," said Oldfield, apparently unaware that Barry hadn't even been expecting him. "But I'd rather stay here if it's all the same to you." Barry's mum hurried to make him coffee, worrying in case her attractive housecoat was suitable attire for receiving guests. When Barry's dad came home sometime later and exclaimed "I know your face!" Oldfield claimed to be Johnny Rotten. As I said, I'm quite worried about him.



DIGGLE

Diggle, he rang up to find out why. It transpires that Diggle and his mum had had a blazing row and she'd refused to let him use the phone. "I'm fed up with this," fumed Diggle. "My mum's always having a go. I've only got a small room and she's always on about it being untidy. It's driving me insane." Diggle is waiting for a deal to go through so that he can have his very own home. But doesn't it make you feel better to know that even stars (well, only a slight exaggeration my dears) have these little domestic tiffs?

MEANWHILE, Buzzcocks' guitarist Steve Diggle is desperate to get away from his mum, whose house he's presently living in.

When our reporter had not received an expected phone call from Diggle, he rang up to find out why. It transpires that Diggle and his mum had had a blazing row and she'd refused to let him use the phone. "I'm fed up with this," fumed Diggle. "My mum's always having a go. I've only got a small room and she's always on about it being untidy. It's driving me insane." Diggle is waiting for a deal to go through so that he can have his very own home. But doesn't it make you feel better to know that even stars (well, only a slight exaggeration my dears) have these little domestic tiffs?



FEELING FLIGHTY? Then go glam this cool Yule! Our model, Shrink — seen at the Hammersmith Couture Show — is wearing an ultra ultra orange jump suit (Baco Foll 83p) with Cardin buttons and using a 'Tesco's Flying V Guitar. Hair is by Piers at Wilkinson Sword.

AND HAVE you heard about Hot Gossip's Sarah Brightman? So much for her losing her heart to a starship trooper. I can reveal that her heart belongs to someone a lot nearer to terra firma: to Magazine's manager Andrew Graham-Stewart, in fact. Not only has the poor dear to struggle through life with this cumbersome double barreled name, but I believe he thinks he's related to Bonnie Prince Charlie. I'll bet Dame Flora was never like Sarah.

TSK, TSK, the spirit of Christmas has not reached everyone it appears. Someone made off with Pat Travers' coach and equipment last week (you MUST remember Pat Travers... no? Well, take my word for it) and hurtled off down the motorway with it. After a wild chase, the driver was caught and was later identified by the vibrant Travers.



No, Paul Cook isn't joining Devo. It's just one of photographer Chalkie Davies' plots to get one of his pictures into the paper.

STILL WORKING on their grand plan to take over the world before the Japanese, Boney M are preparing for their concerts in Russia — where I hear tickets are changing hands for £150 a time. I wonder if they included the four that were stolen from the American ambassador? The lissome four are being billed as "a vocal instrumental ensemble from the countries of the Caribbean sea," but I believe they've been instructed not to make their show too sexy. Can't think why — the Russians could probably do with a rise in temperature at this time of year. I know I could.

THE MEMBERS would like to apologise to their fans (not for their music, funnily enough) in Maidstone. They were due to play there on Friday, but had to cancel when their van broke down. They threaten to reschedule the gig sometime in the future. Can you wait? I certainly can.

• Spare a thought this Christmas for John Travolta, whose mother died last week in Los Angeles. It was her who pushed him into films in the first place. When he went to her funeral, bodyguards had to hold back thousands of fans who tried to mob him.

POOR, POOR dear Wreckless Eric, such a dinky little chap I always think. He's terribly upset about "being stereotyped as an alcoholic" by RM (where DID he get that idea from?) and at the Nashville this week threatened to sort out the person he thought was responsible. His threats might have carried more weight if he had been perfectly sober at the time.



PARKINSON and a real dancer

DON'T YOU find the rivalry between Eli and Rod rather boring now? Specially when we know they're really terribly good friends. Cheeky Rod sent Eli a telegram when 'Do Ya Think I'm Sexy' went into the charts higher than 'Part Time Love'. It read: "Do Ya Think I'm Sexy 14, Part Time Love 26. And I haven't even been to hospital." Always quick with an answer, Eli replied: "My doctor warned me not to get too excited. So I will definitely be coming to one of your concerts." Bitchy boy.

FOR A moment I thought I'd stepped back in time... or had one cocktail too many. But you don't expect, while wandering down Islington Green, after midnight (on my way home, you filthy minded degenerates) to come across pavement to pavement Lambrettas. However, my inquiries led to me to the information that they were taking part in the Who's 'Quadrophenia' film. None of the band could be found in Alfredo's caff, which was packed with young men preoccupied with combing their hair.

COMPLETELY RECOVERED from his sensational "collapse", Elton is making more news. I hear he's put his Hollywood home (once owned by Greta Garbo) up for sale at a cool million pounds. I'm told that every room has a bath, even the billiard room (how quaint). Not that he needs the money I'm sure. He's just splashed out £13,000 on fur coats and hats which he bought in Sweden. I'm sure it's very wise to protect his head, especially. Frostbite can be awfully unsightly.



WATTS

Charlie Watts (well known recluse) and Alexis Korner. The stage was obscured from view by a bunch of tired old liggers... I mean, who thinks about Chris Farlowe these days, except perhaps his mother. Among those rumoured to turn up were Eric Clapton and Rod Stewart — now I might be a bit gullible now and then, but not that gullible. Tuesday Rod Stewart steps inside Dingwalls, I'll dance a fandango on the table.

THE PRICE of fame has finally hit home to former pop star Dave Dee (now an executive of WEA). After starring in the gossip columns the week before, his house was broken into and he had £1,000 worth of cameras and jewellery nicked. Quite an embarrassment for the former policeman, I should think (by the way he was a policeman BEFORE he was a pop star). Dee is living with the new woman in his life, Joan Bessell, but has no immediate plans for divorce from his wife Carol (former entertainer on the Sale Of The Century TV show).

ISN'T IT thrilling to know that Cliff isn't a hasbeen? Such is his pulling power that people started queuing up at three in the morning outside Capital Radio where tickets for his show were being exchanged for cuddly toys. The toys will all go to underprivileged children.

WHO AM I, you may think, to infer that Michael Parkinson has two left feet? Of course I don't claim to be the doyenne of the disco floor myself, but I do think I could have done better than the stiff legged Parky when he ventured out at the Hammersmith Palais last Sunday (see page 10 for full report). I still haven't worked out what qualifications he has to be a judge at a disco dance competition: it's certainly not his command of the light fantastic. Mind you, some of the other judges couldn't have done much better. I daresay, being a little old to disport themselves in this wild, abandoned way.

But there's bound to be more people (old enough to know better) making fools of themselves at this year's Christmas parties, so I'll keep you posted. Until then, bye.



A PINUP for the ladies (and those among you not so ladylike), the Rich Kids (you remember, the group with the baby faced manager) posing with their hero Stan Bowles. I don't expect he'll get into too much trouble with this pose.

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Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office. Published by Spotlight Publications, Ltd, 40 King's Cross, London, WC2E 8JF and printed by South Eastern Newspapers Ltd, Larkfield, Maidstone, Kent, ME20 6SG

NEWS

News Editor **JOHN SHEARLAW**

Elton plans return



ELTON JOHN, apparently fully recovered from his recent illness, returns to the stage next year . . . for the first time since his retirement in November 1977.

He won't form a band, but intends to go it alone with percussionist Ray Cooper. The singer is to take on a gruelling European tour over three months starting in February which includes dates all over Britain and a series of London venues.

But Elton has stipulated that none of the venues will be the likes of Wembley arena, and he will stick to halls of around 2,000 capacity.

Promoted by Harvey Goldsmith, the dates have yet to be finalised, but they are expected to be announced shortly.

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10cc TO PLAY WEMBLEY

10cc **PLAY** a special Christmas concert at the Wembley Conference Centre on December 22.

The concert will be filmed by the BBC for a Christmas TV special on BBC 2 on December 24 at 10.50pm.

Tickets priced at £4 only are available from the Wembley Box Office (tel 01 902 1234) or by mail from Wembley Conference Centre, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 0DW. Cheques should be made payable to Wembley Stadium Limited and don't forget to en-

close a SAE.

The Wembley concert will be 10cc's first British appearance since their sell out tour of the US and Canada in October. A track from their 'Bloody Tourists' album 'For You And I' will be included in the soundtrack of the new John Travolta film of the same name.

Early next year 10cc will be doing their second tour of Australia and Japan but there are no details of another British tour.

More Christmas dates

LINDISFARNE play Newcastle City Hall on December 19 bringing their gigs there to five.

Celebrating their first year together the Smirks play the London Nashville on December 15.

They're hoping Bob Geldof will be making a special guest appearance and there will be a disco run by celebrated Beserkley press officer Eugene Manzi. Support band will be Gaffa and admission is free to anybody wearing a 'Smirks Against Travolta' badge or 50p for those unfortunate enough not to possess one.

Adam and the Ants, the Members and four other support bands will be playing the Rainbow on December 20. All tickets will be £1.50.



ALAN HULL and Ray Jackson of Lindisfarne

Geldof pulls out of Greedy Bastards gig



BOB GELDOLF

BOOMTOWN RATS singer Bob Geldof has pulled out of the Greedy Bastards gig scheduled for December 16 at the Electric Ballroom.

But the gig, featuring Thin Lizzy, Paul Cook and Steve Jones will go on as planned.

The Boomtown Rats play an extra date at the Rainbow on December 14 as well as their original concert on the 15. The extra concert means that Geldof won't have time to rehearse for the Greedy Bastards gig, according to a spokesman.

Stiff's offer

STIFF Records continue their publicity drive by offering a free deleted album with any two current Stiff albums bought. The same offer applies to singles.

Albums offered include the Damned, Wreckless Eric and Mickey Jupp while singles from Larry Wallis, the Yachts and Nick Lowe are included on the freebie list.

RELEASES

THE CHI-LITES release a greatest hits album this month, entitled 'Chi-LiteTime'. It includes 'Oh Girl', 'Have You Seen Her?' and 'Homely Girl'. And their 'Half A Love' album will also be re-released at the same time.

PHILLY VETERANS the Tymes have a compilation album released on Decca this month called the 'Cameo - Parkway Sessions'.

TROJAN Records re-release six of their famous hits on maxi-singles this week. They include 'Young Gifted and Black' by Bob and Marcla, 'Black and White' by Greyhound, 'Crying Over You' and 'Everything I Own' by Ken Boothe and 'The Israelites' by Desmond Dekker.

PETER Sarstedt has a new single released this week entitled 'You'll Never Be Alone Again'.

BRITISH LIONS' member Morgan Fisher releases a solo album 'The Sleeper Wakes' on Cherry Red records this week.

SYMPHONIC rockers Barclay James Harvest release a new single 'Loving Is Easy' on December 29. American pop band the Rubinoos released their new single 'Falling In Love' next week.

AMERICAN singer Valerie Carter has her second album released on January 19 by CBS. Called 'Wild Child', it is produced by ex-Elton John keyboard player James Newton-Howard.

RECENT Capitol signing John 'Moon' Martin is due to release his debut album 'Shots From A Cold, Nightmare' in mid-January. Martin wrote the 'Cadiillac Walk' hit for Mink De Ville.

A **COMPILATION** album of northern soul hits is released this week by Capitol. 'Capitol Soul Casino' features more than 12 tracks and amongst the artists featured are Nancy Wilson with 'End Of Our Love' and Bobby Paris with 'Love And Desire'.

THE SOFTIES who recently signed a three year contract with Charley Records, release a three track single 'Killing Time In Soho', 'Whisky Man' and 'Something Gonna Change' on December 28. Their debut album 'Nice 'n' Nasty' will be released on January 12.

ROW PUTS SID BACK IN JAIL

SID VICIOUS was back in jail last week after a fight in a New York disco.

The ex Pistol is accused of slashing a man in the face with a beer bottle. The trouble came after a row between Vicious and Patti Smith's brother, Todd at the Broadway night spot, Hurrah's.

After a row over Todd's girlfriend who was playing guitar in the disco band, Vicious was said to have hit him above the eye with the bottle.

Vicious was arrested when he reported to police the next day as a condition of his £25,000 release on bail.

He has been taken to Riker's Island, the city jail. And it looks as if he will lose his freedom until he goes on trial. If he is convicted of murder he may face a 15-year prison sentence.

His manager, Malcolm McLaren commented: "I expect Sid was provoked. But bratwurst in New York nightclub are part of the punk scene he wants.

"He is hell - bent on living up to his image. No one can talk to him seriously. We're all a bit sad because Steve Jones and Paul Cook were going to go to New York to record an album with him - that would have secured the money we need for the trial.

"We will try to get Sid five days release from prison under police guard to record it. But it will be difficult."

Meanwhile, a Nancy Spungen benefit will be held at the Bedford Corner Hotel WC1 on December 19 as a reaction to the Clash / Sid Vicious benefit concert.

It is being promoted by Judy and Fred Velmoral, who wrote the paperback 'The Sex Pistols - The Inside Story', and will feature a band called Cash Pussies. The group includes Alex Ferguson, ex Alternative TV who has written songs about the Clash's record company and a number called 'Beisen Was A Glittergas'.

As well as another band and guest appearances, there will be a tape of Sid and Nancy talking - about blood stains among other things.

Judy Velmoral said: "We felt that the Clash's Vicious benefit was hypocritical when they talk about Sten guns in Knightsbridge - we want to call their bluff. Surely it is Nancy who matters."

Cash Pussies have been working on the Velmorals' new film on the Sex Pistols entitled 'Millions Like Us'. They will be finalising the outdoor shots next February, but no release date has been given.



PETER GABRIEL (left) and Tom Robinson

GABRIEL/ROBINSON CHARITY GIG

SEASONED CAMPAIGNER Tom Robinson joins Peter Gabriel for a special charity party on Christmas Eve at the London Hammersmith Odeon.

The concert immediately follows Gabriel's own dates, and support will come from guest musicians, rather than their own bands.

All proceeds will be split equally between two charities: One Parent Families and the Northern Ireland Gay Rights Association.

Tickets are available now by personal application only from the Harvey Goldsmith box offices at Chapells, 50 New Bond Street, London, W1 and the Great Gear Market, 85 Kings Road, SW5. They will be limited to two per person.

+ Dolphin Taylor, drummer with the Tom Robinson Band, has quit the group.

His decision to leave came only hours after the band played a headlining spot at an Amnesty International Rally at Hyde Park last Sunday. He says he left because he's become musically dissatisfied with the band and he wants to pursue session work and songwriting.

Commenting on the split Tom Robinson said, "Dolphin is irreplaceable really. His playing and personality have been such an integral part of TRB it's going to be a whole different venture with Danny, Ian and me. We're going to miss him but I wish him well."

TRB will be auditioning new drummers and hope to make a choice by Christmas so that they can have a stable line up in time for tours of Japan and Norway in January. The band are also due to start work shortly on a new and as yet untitled album produced by Todd Rundgren and scheduled for March release.

RADIO ONE PACKS IN THE MUSIC FOR XMAS

A HOST of special Christmas programmes has been lined up by Radio One.

In response to overwhelming public demand they'll be broadcasting four one hour programmes originally recorded by Keith Moon for 'Sounds Of The Seventies' in 1973. The programme features Moon playing his favourite tracks and clowning around. The first show will be broadcast on Boxing Day between 6.30 and 7.30, whilst the other shows will be broadcast on Wednesday Thursday and Friday at the same time.

The day before Christmas Eve, the Boomtown Rats will be heard 'In Concert' between 6.30 and 7.30 while on December 24 at 10pm 10cc will be featured in a recorded hour long concert from the Wembley Conference Centre, which will also be featured on BBC2.

Christmas Day opens with a special edition of 'Junior Choice' between 7.10am broadcast from the Hospital For Sick Children in London's

Great Ormond Street. Tony Blackburn will be appearing between 10am and 1pm with Dave Lee Travis following until 2.30pm. Peter Powell has a slot between 2.30 and 5pm followed by Andy Peebles between 5 - 7. They'll then team up to present disco music between 10pm and 2am.

Boxing Day 'Playground' between 7 and 8am will be followed by 'Junior Choice'. At 10am Simon Bates plays Christmas Hits from years gone by and at 12.30 the winners of the last three 'Quiz Kid' contests will pit their wits against disc jockeys Paul Gambaccini, Mike Read and Andy Peebles. Adrian Juste can be heard between 1.30 and 2.30 followed by the 'Stevie and Morris Wonder Show' a two hour programme featuring Stevie Wonder as a disc jockey playing his favourite music. Kid Jensen will broadcast from 4.30 to 6.30.

And on December 29 there's another chance to hear Genesis in concert at Knebworth Festival on the 'Friday Rock Show' at 10pm hosted by Tommy Vance.

TOURS

CHINA STREET: London Acklam Hall December 15, Darlington Art College 16, London Hope and Anchor 24, London Rock Garden 27, York Revolution 29, Hebden Bridge 30.

HAREM SCAREM: Stevenage Swan December 15, Liverpool Sportsman 17, Bradford Princeville 28, York Revolution 29.

JOE JACKSON: Britain's first 'Spiv Rock' artist kicks off a small tour starting at East Retford Porterhouse Club on December 15, then: Gosport John Peel Club 16, London Hope and Anchor 20, High Wycombe Nags Head 21, Norwich Boogie House 22, London Nashville 23, London Rock Garden 29.

THE VALVES: London Rock Garden December 14, London West Hampstead Railway Hotel 18, London Bridgehouse 20, Leeds Fforde Green Hotel 21, Dudley JB's 22.

THE TRENDIES: Perth City Hall December 26, Inverness Muirtown Hotel January 6, Elgin Eight Acres Hotel 7, Glasgow Strathclyde University (lunchtime) 12, St Andrew's University (evening) 12, Hamilton Bell College 26, Wishaw Crown Hotel (lunchtime) 27, Glasgow Amphora 27.

NOISE LEVEL BLOWS OUT GIG

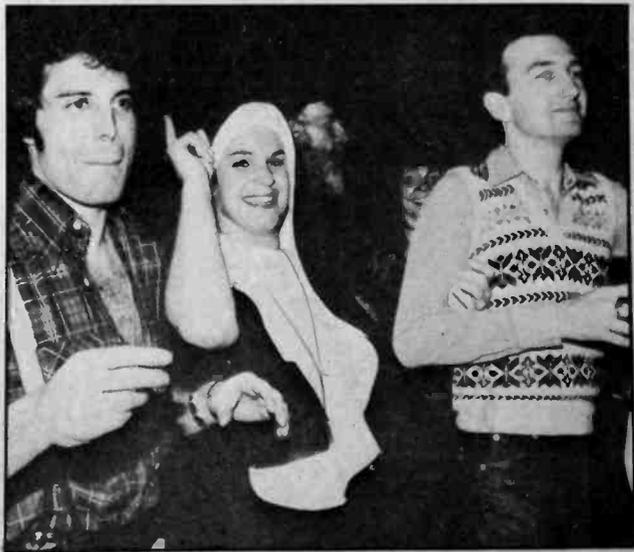
LONDON'S ELECTRIC Ballroom had to cancel a gig by Irish band the Undertones last week because of a threatened injunction by the Greater London Council. Two local residents have already complained about excessive noise, but the Ballroom is reportedly still undertaking sound proofing work.

Meanwhile The Fall, Subway Sect and the Monochrome Set will play there on December 28.

And Squeeze, The Transmitters and a band led by former Damned and Tanz der youth member Brian James are billed for December 29. Included in the Brian James Band are Stewart Copeland of the Police on drums, and Val Haller of the Electric Chairs on bass.

HERE'S HELL

NEW YORK punk artist Richard Hell arrives in Britain this month to support Elvis Costello on his London and provincial dates. A new single entitled 'The Kid With The Replaceable Head', and produced by Nick Lowe will be released on Radar records early next year.



FREDDIE MERCURY and John Deacon at the American reception for 'Jazz'

QUEEN PLAN GIG AT WIMBLEDON

ANYONE FOR Queen at Wimbledon Centre Court?

The world's mecca of tennis could be the venue for Queen's only British concert next year in the summer. Nothing definite has yet been arranged as the band are making enquiries about the availability and suitability of the venue.

The band would like to play there because it's

very good acoustically - it forms a natural bowl," says a spokesman for the band. "It's a very relaxed venue and ideal for the summer."

Queen have recently completed a massive American tour and will be touring in Europe with dates in Germany, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Yugoslavia, Spain and France.

Queen's double A-sided single 'Bicycle Race' has made the American 'Top Ten' but many Southern States have objected to the poster depicting a selection of naked girls riding bicycles included with the album 'Jazz'. They insisted that the posters are withdrawn so buyers are having to send off to a New York address for them.

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BABYLON ON A THIN WIRE

TIM LOTT meets the lead voice of Boney M, Liz Mitchell. Pic by PAUL CANTY

RELIGION, according to Karl Marx, is the opium of the people. What the venerable kraut — one of the few German superstars to equal Boney M for international fame — failed to anticipate was the eventual method of absorbing that drug in Europe 1978.

Then I suppose he had better things to philosophise about than God Pop.

Religion is big business for Boney M. 'Rivers Of Babylon' and now 'Mary's Boy Child' make that an unquestionable fact. According to Liz Mitchell — who sang lead on both records — it's a success that was divinely predetermined.

"The Spirit himself has helped us to have our hits," she says with the conviction of all God's faithful chillun.

On the bedside table in her very opulent hotel room is a bible open at Psalms 6-7. The Bible, says Liz, is her favourite book. She doesn't read it from just interest, but genuine faith.

"I believe in Christ," she states. "I believe in Mary's Boy Child".

About five feet away from the bed, strewn across a chair, is a fox stole, pure white. A couple of stuffed paws hang ridiculously off of the skin.

Liz smiles almost continuously, even when I find myself wondering whether JC didn't at some point mention that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom Of Heaven. And Liz, it appears to me, is not quite the thin-soled teenager that played truant in Kensal Rise any more. Not after six European smash hits.

"But you are wrong to say that I am rich. I might become rich. Ask me that next year after I've seen my royalties. I can say that I am not wealthy because I have not collected all that I should have."

The phone rings and she glides across the room, clean black skin, perfect brown and cream dress, gold chain loose round her neck.

"Wha's happenin' . . . yes . . . ok . . . yeh . . . yeh . . . workin' hard . . . ha . . . yes? . . . oh . . . oh CEE . . ."

I was on tour and it was so difficult like during the hours I could call I would be on the road. Y'unnerstan . . . you get up at about nine o'clock and by the time you get onstage you . . . you're just racked out or whatever . . . so wha's happenin' now . . . well y'know I gonna tell you I got some people here . . . what I'll tell you to do is come backstage tonight at about 7.30 . . . I assure you there is absolutely not one seat I can get you . . . aright sweetie . . . NAH JESUS . . . I have press from 11 o'clock until the show's on . . . I



don't even have time to breathe maybe the last day before we leave for Russia. If not . . . you'll have to wait till Christmas . . . I'll see you at the show anyway, right? . . . OK . . . GoodBAH."

Liz frames herself in the window for some photographs. She closes the wooden doors on the TV, blocking out 'The Cedar Tree' but does not turn it off. She is a self-confessed TV addict.

"Let me just pretty up ma mouth," she begs, and returns, lips reddened and teeth showing, leans against the clean hotel glass. She looks at the dull London street outside affectionately, because London is her home. "It is grey, it goes with me, with my mood."

Her parents still live five miles away in the house in Harlesden she grew up in.

"I went home last night. It was a bit weird. My little cousins seemed frightened of me, y'know, they were going, 'who's this', an' it took me a while to get to know them again."

"I still have lots of friends in London, but the ones I knew at school, when I see them they freak out completely, because they used to laugh at me, say I was just a dreamer, y'know."

Liz does not look at her roots with rose coloured spectacles. She has no desire to be a struggling teenager again, a teenager who had the courage to uproot herself from her family at the age of 17 to go to Germany and appear in 'Hair', a move that ultimately led to her fateful meeting with Frank Farian, the creator of Boney M.

"When I get my royalties, I . . . intend to make sure I do not get poor again. I will not just throw it away. This is where the bible helps me again to stop me . . . to stop me becoming too vain. I will not starve myself like some stupid rich people and put it all away, though."

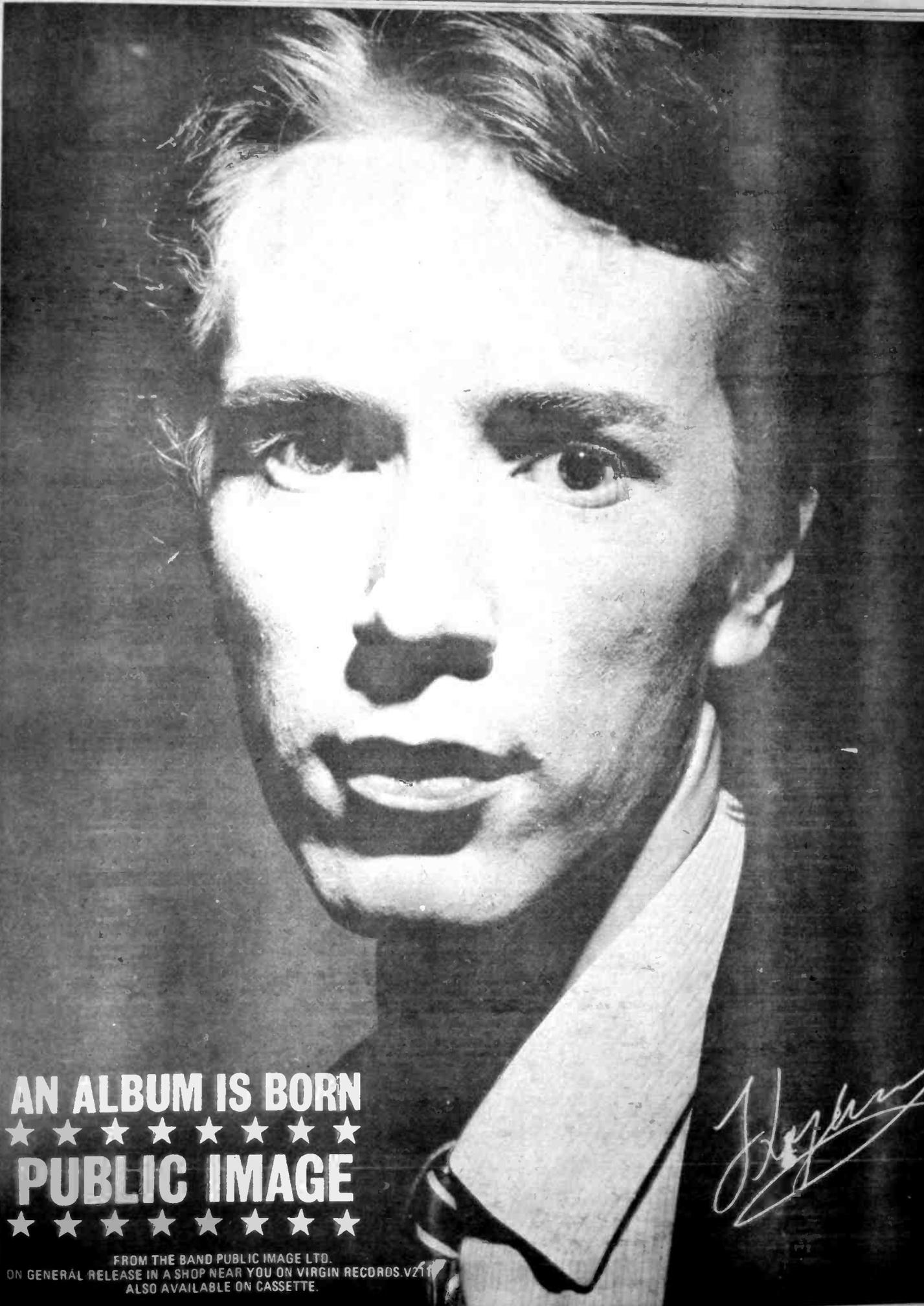
"And if I see any of my friends that need it, then I would help them."

But the paradox of wealth and religion remains. The music industry is a very unchristian institution, to put it mildly.

"What I'm doing at the moment," she explains, tentatively . . . the way the church is . . . my pop singing career could prove dangerous. If I were a member of a proper Christian church they would have banned me a long time ago.

"But I am a Christian within myself. I go to church and give my soul to God. I do not believe that God thinks one should not live." She points to the bible. "In there, there are a lot of good words, words of wisdom. I need it to keep myself together, to stop me from getting vain. If I didn't get that

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



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white fox, I wouldn't die. The bible keeps me human, y'see."

Liz takes other steps to retain her individuality. She takes her sister on the road with her and keeps close to her family. It was a step she took after almost turning into "an object" after her spell with the Les Humphries Singers immediately after the German run of 'Hair'.

She left Les Humphries to participate in Frank Farian's dream group, Boney M, and achieved immediate success with 'Daddy Cool' in 1976.

Farian, a failed pop singer, employs Boney M as tools for his inspiration. None of them have any say in their material or presentation. Boney M are Frank Farian's highly lucrative Frankenstein monster.

"I am an instrument. You have to face up to it I suppose," says Liz, without resignation. "What you are is what you are, and don't try and fight it because you can only be yourself."

"Sometimes I wish I could put forward some ideas."

"And sometimes I do, but they Mr Farian does not find it good."

She giggles, almost defensively.

"But I do not think I'm being used in any sense, because I am not too disposable. It's me on tape in the studio. It's me onstage that the critics write about."

"However much Frank Farian created the whole thing, I still feel 100 per cent involved. He created us, but he wouldn't destroy us, obviously, for his own good. He's letting everyone know what a superhero he is now but I don't mind, because he really invested something in the band."

Of course Liz is protected to a certain extent by the fact that, apart from Farian, she is the most important aspect of Boney M's success. Their superhits have all featured her on lead vocals.

She doesn't burst her brains out figuring how she's going to get a solo career together, because, she says, she's earning.

But if Boney M should cease to exist for any reason Liz believes very strongly in her own personality and capability.

And having Farian as a controller has its advantages. As Liz points out, there is no ego jockeying in the band, because what Farian says, goes. Any ego problems have to be sorted out.

Although Liz didn't originally like what Boney M were doing — she admits to disliking the first album ("I coped") — she now feels very strongly about the songs she reproduces, particularly the ones with any religious content. She didn't, however, have any say in the selection of 'Mary's Boy Child' and 'Rivers Of Babylon'.

She is aware that she is being used to make a lot of people a lot of money, but it doesn't worry her as long as she gets a chance to use them in return.

Stripped of her science fiction public image paraphernalia, she is fragile looking and has a naturally pretty face with big, nearly round eyes.

"I have very innocent eyes," she says, conspiratorially. "Very far away look about me sometimes."

"Maybe that's why I very rarely get definite approaches from men. Because I'm in another world. I don't realise sometimes that people are trying to proposition me. So they feel silly and go away and it's dead, y'know?"

"Men don't get to see very much of me. We do the work, we do the show, we come offstage, the fans are going crazy for autographs, you sign the autographs. When you get back to the hotel, you're beat, so you say goodnight as quick as you can."

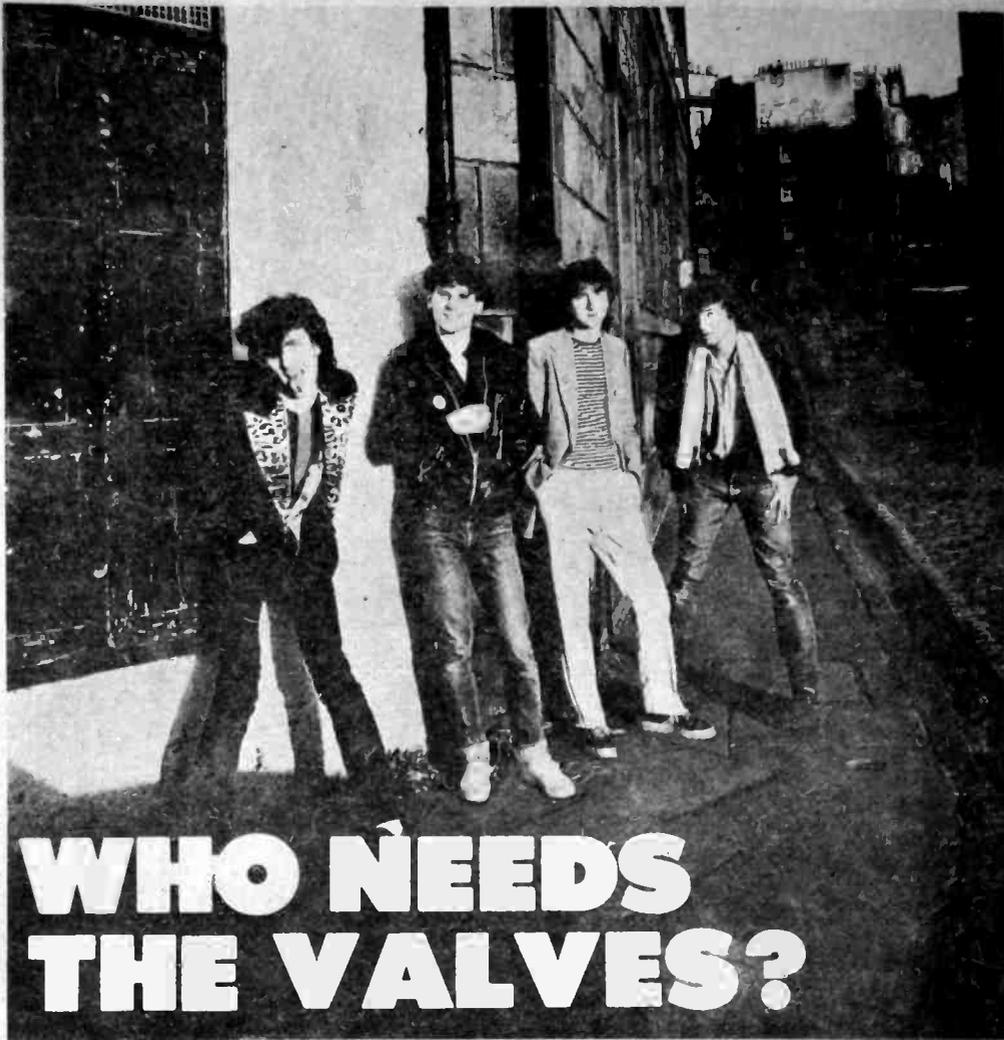
And despite the emotional buffer of her sister, her nonadic existence has told on her somewhere. She spends much of her conversation reminiscing about time at school and years in dingy Hariesden, things she has left behind in favour of white furs and long tours.

She is a likeable woman, and makes her money honestly enough. It doesn't change the fact that Boney M make some of the most irritating noises this side of the Volga but Liz has obviously learned to live with that.

To quote Psalm 7:12 "God is a righteous judge, strong and patient, and God is provoked every day." — (Psalm chap 7:12)

Or to put it another way: "Moab is my wash pot; Over Edom will I cast out my shoe" I'll drink to that.

in a transistorised world



WHO NEEDS THE VALVES?

THE VALVES (L To R) Dee Robot (legs and Gene Simmons tongue), Gordon 'Teddy' Dair (Vivien Leigh lookalike), Ronnie Mackinnon (slouch), Pada Scott (poised) ponder the impenetrable problems of life amidst the historical backstreets of Edinburgh and ask 'when can we go to the pub?'

FIRST IMPRESSIONS are lasting impressions, so they say. That said and done, we should now delve into the seamy realms of semantics.

On stating the magical word — Edinburgh — the automatic connection is one of quintessential reservation and placidity.

The initial impression you, dear reader, will have of, ahem, The Valves is one of piss-artisty embodied. Illusions then are shattered and cast to the wind when one discovers that Edinburgh's foremost rock — a boogie citizens are indeed The Valves.

I stumble across Dee Robot, lead singer, sitting sipping orange juice in a local pub. So what is this about, yer drinking Dee m'boy?

"I suppose we do like the occasional drink, but only offstage. Onstage we have this really tight professional attitude, eh, man," chuckles the mighty Robot. At this point Ronnie Mackinnon, Valves lead guitarist and King of the Meadowbank Delta Blues Players puts the final nail in the Valves alky coffin.

"We've only collapsed in two gigs out of about three hundred." So you see The Valves aren't the legless wonders you've got them written down or off as.

Quite simply The Valves are Scotland's hottest eh (cue de cliche) what... eh how would ya describe your music?

"I don't know really," states Mackinnon in deadly earnest. "I really can't think of another band doing the same kind of thing as us."

If you have witnessed the humorous debacle that is a Valves gig you will know that. Basically the band play straight rhythm rock with zlich serious lyrical content. Example of the latter: "When I try to cop some star formations / All I get is tonsorial vibrations / Little men on my screen / I don't know what it means / Dan Dare and The Treens / am I turning green?"

This stunning example of metaphysical poetry is extracted from the Valves' magnum opus 'Haircuts From Mars', a song inspired by pap sci-fi movies.

"It disnae mean anything but it's awfy catchy," offers Pada Scott the band's hefty bassist in his broad Fife patois. Which is a succinct summary of all things Valves-esque.

The current set consists of all manner of off-the-wall love songs like 'Fab Front Loader', a ditty about an 'automatic enigmatic, laundromatic girl of my dreams, 'Robot Love', a romantic piece inspired by the Rezillos' 'Fay Fife and a love song to an android 'So Stuck Up', another frustrated love song about becoming romantically entangled with a girl on an advertising hoarding and of course the straight

almost resistible boy-meets-girl, boy-screws-girl story of 'Anytime, — a hit.

All possess an uncanny amount of sellability, largely due to some of the most irresistible hooks ever written. At the highest level the Valves' pop consciousness manifests itself on the irresistible teenerama of 'Sister - Radoo'. All ingredients are there; the loo-sided drumming, the skittering bass runs, soaring and blinding guitar solos and an oft-repeated hook which I defy anyone to shirk off.

Ronnie Mackinnon explains: "with that one I wrote the music and Dee wrote the words. I deliberately went out to write a Top 30 song." He succeeded pop pickers.

Unfortunately at present The Valves have no outlet for their potent celtic pop, being unsigned. A situation which, clearly, any self-respecting music lover should protest heartily against.

I questioned the band as to why, in their 18 months together, they have only brought forth two singles. Between snatches of history Pada, Ronnie and Dee explain.

"Well," offers Pada as a hefty barmaid informs me that there is a call for me. "Sorry ah couldnae make it," whispers Teddy Dair, the band's drummer and

Vivien Leigh lookalike from some distant call-box. A nice gesture, any thoughts you'd like to convey to the world Teddy?

"Well, all the illnesses I picked up on the Irish tour have gone and my psoriasis is clearing up. So apart from my blocked up nose I'm disease free."

Great news, eh girls? But back to the story. The Valves emerged from the incestuous rock 'n' roll family tree that exists up north. I remember seeing the band's second gig, some 14 months back and second on the bill to The Saints, and was immediately struck by the fact that they had the magical something.

Whilst other local bands were usually honed but boring funk outfits, The Valves got up and, musically speaking, washed their dirty linen on stage. Sloppy and fun, they were spotted by local luminary Bruce Findlay who snapped them up for a singles deal on the newly formed Zoom label.

"At the time we were over the moon about being given the chance to record a single, but the contract ran out recently, and I think we need the push of a major company," muses Mackinnon over his first of the day.

How, I wondered did they feel about the two records in retrospect?

"The first was a classic that shook the world," roars Dee modestly. The meisterwerk was 'Robot Love' and 'For Adults Only', two songs which now sound dated considering the band's writing progress, but a great 'then' record nonetheless.

"They tore New York apart," lied Pada. The second single was 'No Surf In Portobello', a hilarious ditty in the style of the Beach Boys, it's a gem.

They tell me that while appearing in a record shop in Aberdeen, where Valve-mania is rife, a heavy political gent approached Ronnie M. hell bent on discussing the philosophies which lay behind 'For Adults Only' a song which lambasts Nazi chic. "Are you a Socialist?" enquired the politico, Ronnie M. paused, stroked his chin sagaciously and replied: "Oh aye, I'll talk to anybody."

I for one can't wait for the lads' first album which is tentatively titled, wait for it 'Can't Stand The Rezillos Either' Groan.

Up for grabs business-wise, and yours for the taking when they start London for the third time next month. A good time is guaranteed. As Dee howls mid-way through their set "Would I lie to you?"

STEPPIN' OUT

SIX DYNAMITE DISCO ALBUMS



OLYMPIC RUNNERS
PUTTIN' IT ON YA



BIONIC BOOGIE
HOT BUTTERFLY



ISAAC HAYES
FOR THE SAKE OF LOVE



KIKROKOS
JUNGLE DJ



ROY AYERS AND WAYNE HENDERSON
STEP INTO OUR LIFE



NON STOP DISCO SEGUE CUTS

FEATURING

ROY AYERS, GREGG DIAMONDS BIONIC BOOGIE,
CAROL DOUGLAS, IDRIS MUHAMMED,
FATBACK BAND, ISAAC HAYES.

OFF CENTRE

Edited by TIM LOTT

A year after 'Saturday Night Fever' was released here's the

AFTERMATH

The World Disco Dancing Championship

WELCOME TO schmuck land. This is the Empire Ballroom, Leicester Square. Not exactly the dainty dance card world of 'Do you come here often' but that of safari suited, medallioned, macho, moustachioed philanderers madly gyrating in a way intended to attract the feline fancy.

No 'arms that are bracelet and bare' but more 'fingers that are ringed and chunky'.

No, hang on, in that case we must have got the wrong place, the invitation says 'Gentlemen Lounge Suit please', because this is the World's Disco Dancing Championship, organised by no less than Sir Bernard Delfont Mecca and EMI Leisure.

Now it's not that I've got anything personal against Mecca, although last year I must have spent so much money in their bookies that I probably paid for the Miss World Contest, but some things here haven't been that well organised.

For a start I came here to write about it and there isn't anywhere to sit. I mean, I was here on time and all that, but the seats where you can see the dancing from are all reserved for all that

ironically named body, the VIPS, and the only other thing to do is stand up for three hours. I'm not too proud to stand but there is no standing place from where you can see anything, so in the face of human hardship we continue.

Disco is loud music played in rooms where loud people abound. There's Alphonse Falcon up from Australia who must get the Mr Tasteless prize with his deep V-necked sequined shiny jumpsuit, that looks as if it was ditched by 'Come Dancing' in '68 (Cardin wouldn't have been amused) and there's the bloke from Peru parading Lionel Blair chic and New Zealand's entrant sporting an Aladdin Sane type flash stretching diagonally from head to toe. Andrew Logan would have had a field day.

However, I suppose it all goes with the beating pastelled lights of this simulated Mecca discotheque where the band plays the same songs over three times because there're so many entrants - 35 in all. The remarkable thing about it is that while disco dancing is designed to attract the opposite sex this lot are so inelegant, oh so repellent that my personal fave is the little secretary girl from Sweden, simply because she is wearing a dress

and has something of what they used to call GRACE - darling.

This is not like a 'World Conker Contest' or a 'World Pea Shooting Contest' - this is for real. The first prize amounts to £15,000 of goodies including a bright red sports car.

Oh look, here comes old Taka - Aki - Dan from gay Japan who's busy doing a bit of mime in his bit (oh Marcel you've no need to worry) and here's a chap, name of Dr Dance, who seems to be taking the whole thing a little too light - heartedly and is cleaning his teeth on the dancefloor whilst moving around, not unlike Goofy (two-shoes?).

For some strange reason your rock elite and hip awares do not exactly approve of disco (it poses too great a threat to their boring music) believing it to be uncreative and not exactly live entertainment, though these are the same people who supposedly support mainly working class views but always fail to realise that disco is the proletariat sport. Every other mother's working class son is down at the disco in the top room of the pub at least one night of the working week. Where else is he gonna get the girls?

Oh no, there's this chap from Turkey on now, Mustapha somebody, and



JOHN TRAVOLTA: the man who started it all

he looks as if the seventies or the sixties for that matter never hit him. They all dance the same, they look the same, they are the same. There're just lusty exhibitionists out for a lucky break or buck. I'm off home.

I would have stayed to relay the result of this thrilling competition but in true English tradition there has been a bit of a mix up with an industrial dispute between the TV clans and they won't be releasing the names of

the winners for three days. Incidentally, my evening was entirely spoilt by my stretching over the balcony to stare constantly at a woman I had thought was Joan Collins only to discover that it wasn't her.

It's a cruel world to be sure, so please don't bother to save the last dance for me. JAMES PARADE

NAYC Grand Final
SO, THE bigger event, the World Championship, was taking place at the

same time up the road, amongst the bright lights of the West End. This one - the Grand Final of the Saturday Night Fever Dancing Competition, in aid of the National Association of Youth Clubs, was relegated to Hammersmith. The Palais actually, Britain's best known dance hall.

The whole thing was organised for the NAYC by Polydor, CIC and RSO Records. The star names of the day were presenter Alan Freeman, judges Michael Parkinson - such a lovely mover on the floor afterwards or was he just trying to get closer to the girls? Kid Jensen, Ed Stewart, BBC's Robin Nash and the Sun's pop writer, Nina Myskow.

The place resembled a scene from the TV programme, 'Crackerjack'. Screams, whistles, cries. No cabbages as booby prizes, but the atmosphere was the same.

Mums, dads, supporters and dancers crammed the joint. You could hardly move, let alone dance. But bless their cotton socks, the floor was cleared and the young hopefuls did dance.

Some good, some... not so. Clever how one guy trod on his partner's dress and ripped it off. Oh we laughed. They didn't. As individuals, some of them were great but in a team, most of them fluffed it. Liverpool broke Nottingham Forest's run in the football league at the weekend. They also sent a nifty footed team to take away the prize here. The Liverpool Youth Centre were three girls and one ultra cool guy. All dressed in virgin white. Worthy winners, but the guy definitely danced better after he'd guzzled half a bottle of champagne that was presented to him.

Maybe they'll try for the World Championships

next year. I hope they don't, they should carry on dancing for themselves and their friends.

ALF MARTIN

Music Machine

JUMPING ON bandwagons is dangerous fun, because those transports of delight move fast.

Britain's answer to 'Saturday Night Fever' - yes, of course it had to happen - 'Music Machine' may find itself piroouetting gracefully into a giant prat fall simply because trends are so slippery. By Easter, when the movie is released, it may be stamp collecting or tapir - breeding that has captured the imagination of the great British youth instead.

Still, as Ian Sharp, director of the £250,000 disco droog non-epic points out, there is still a gap in the market to be filled since 'Saturday Night Fever' was an X certificate and thus excluded a large portion of the potential market.

'The Music Machine' - centred round Camden's venue of the same name, 'London's most famous disco' for the purpose of the film - is a contrast in that it has few pretensions towards realism.

It claims to be a gentle send up of the Travolta epic, at the same time remaining strictly in the Children Hour bracket on the shock horror graph.

Satirical or not, it would be putting it mildly to say that it leans heavily on the Travolta / 'Thank God It's Friday' formula. Apart from having a JT clone (David Easter), there's the mandatory dance contest at which hero and heroine (Gerry Sundquist and Pattle Boulaye) are naturally victorious.

The black DJ who runs the contest from a garish plynth is a lift from 'Thank God It's Friday' (the best disco movie).

'We deliberately chose a guy who looked like Travolta' says Sharp, a Lancastrian whose main fillicring in the past has been of the TV documentary variety. 'It's slight piss-take really. If you do a disco movie, comparisons with 'Saturday Night Fever' are a bit inevitable.'

Sharp doesn't pretend that the film is anything other than an excuse for some flashy muscle flexing, and with the peanuts budget he's got, there isn't really a great deal of scope for it to be anything else.

But he's immensely pleased about the quality of the dancers he's got, for which he scoured discos all over London.

The only 'name' appearing in the film is Patti Boulaye, whose dubious claim to fame is winning the 'New Faces' all-winners show. She is either 'lithe' or 'stiff' depending on whose account you want to listen to. She 'lives in West London' and designs her 'own clothes'.

Perhaps the one unusual aspect of 'Music Machine' - apart from the fact that it's a 100 per cent British made and financed movie - is that the soundtrack is totally original, and played by a band put together especially for the movie, the rather unoriginally named Music Machine Band.

It's obviously too early to make any judgements about the merits or demerits of 'Music Machine'. All I can hope is that the prejudice against British films displayed by the movie industry is justified by the reaction of the teenage public.



Mayhem is coming

AT A Rock Against Racism conference last weekend, chairman Red Saunders said the London Carnivals last year that featured the Clash and Elvis Costello were a failure although they attracted thousands of fans.

Saunders claimed they had 'eaten shit' from some of the bands' management and they wanted to make their concerts available all over the country.

So they will set up a roadshow that's intended to be a 'cultural extravaganza' to create

'multi-racial mayhem' wherever it goes. Several bands have been contacted, including the Clash, Steel Pulse, the Cimarrons and Aswad - so they say.

No dates have been finalised, but it will be split into four areas - Scotland and Northern Ireland, the North, the South West and London - with different bands playing in each.

Aswad and Misty came along to give a few of their own ideas and Aswad explained why they left the mighty Island to join the not so mighty Grove Records.

They want to be 'the way we want to be' they said. A small independent label lets them do it, while they say companies like Island restrict their choice of producer, tour times and even musical direction.

Representatives were there from Fast, Step Forward and Rough Trade records, and there was some interest in RAR using them for their own favourite bands.

Meanwhile RAR are intending to branch out into soul and funk and cause mayhem in various one-off gigs across the country.

SIMON HILLS



Buzzards and Leo Sayer

The late Leyton show

THE LEYTON Buzzards are an East London band whose current situation seems, at first sight anyway, like the answer to a young group's prayer. Out of the 1000 entrants, they're just come first in the BBC's national 'Band Of Hope And Glory' talent contest - and won the apparently generous prize of a £1000 PA and a contract with a major company.

A dream come true? Well, not necessarily. Though the band are, naturally, pleased about the bonus publicity (which included a full page feature in the Sun, who co-ran the contest with the Beeb) they point out that the situation has some considerable snags.

The prizes, for example. True, they've got themselves a PA. Trouble is, like any other working band, they've already got one - and they reckon, a better one than they're being offered. (Still, I suppose they can always flog it...)

Then there's a contract - an automatic deal with Chrysalis. However, the band say they sense a definite lack of interest on their part, and since they've already got several other companies genuinely interested in them, they may well decide not to accept that offer.

The other snag is simply that contests of this sort are not good for a band's street credibility. I mean,

the finals were held in the Palladium, along with Leo Sayer - as the band say themselves, "not our sort of audience."

How many competition winners go on to greater things? Apart from the occasional 'New Faces' of 'Opportunity Knocks' throw-up, the obvious answer is very, very few.

"Yes, most of the bands who win competitions like these go on to fade into oblivion," agrees the band's spokesman and lead vocalist, Geoff Deane.

Geoff however, is confident that they'll prove an exception to the rule.

"Considering we've only been together a year, we've still got no proper management, and we've had absolutely no help from the music press (cough), we've already come quite far," says Geoff.

When I spoke to them, the band being lined up to do a gig at the Rainbow - one of their biggest ambitions.

Their ambitions now? "Simple," says Geoff. "Blanca Jagger and Top Of The Pops - we've got no principles on that score."

Will they do it? They think they will. The Sun's 'Queen of Pop' Nina Myskow thinks they will. Me? I dunno. Watch this space. SHEILA PROPHET



IT'S ANOTHER Abba first! After Abba, 'The Album', Abba 'The Movie' and Abba 'The Book'... we have the ultimate accolade. Abba 'The Soap'. You too can be as clean as the Scandinavian sauna freaks... and all for only 49p. This neat little stocking filler is on sale now from all leading chemists who don't mind flogging this strong smelling soap in its special presentation box. The soap itself has the immortal legend ABBA carved on one side, and as the liner notes tell you, features "a clever copy of a cassette on the other".

Yes chums, your very own soap opera. Just what you always wanted.



Derek and Clive in more civilised days with Alan Bennett (left) and Jonathan Miller

Cook drops 'em

"HAVE ALL the clients for this lesson in self-revelation collected here?" asked a freshly-permed Peter Cook. "Here" meaning a press conference at the Cinema International Corporation in Wardour Street, designed both to plug Derek and Clive's forthcoming home movie and to inexpensively promote their third obscenity-soaked album, 'Ad Nauseum' Drum-sticks and plonk are cheaper than a music paper ad.

The self-revelation crack proved closer to the bone than he probably anticipated since Cook went on to show himself in his true, obnoxious colours. He is just as sarcastic, arrogant and distasteful as he is frequently portrayed by the media. He is also a self-centred, misanthropic hypocrite. This could explain why despite having built up a reputation as a comedian, he is also admirably suited to infiltrating the music business.

And such a name dropper! Yes, he thinks (surprise, surprise) that the new album is the best of the terrible trilogy - and so does Barry Humphries, of course, while Paul McCartney gave him sound financial advice. The name of Keith Moon, the victim of a joke in very poor taste on the record, also managed to crop up.

But in fairness the fellow did keep us amused, not least with one or two interesting snippets of gossip. Did you know, for example, that Pete and Dud have been together several times longer than they have with their respective wives, and that they have already amassed three divorces between them? Or that Dudley Moore is presently filming in Hollywood (which explained his

absence) with Julie Andrews????

Cook also informed the giggling guests that his partner drives round Los Angeles playing 'Come Again' to suitably impressed psychiatrist friends. And that in New York the coke-brained klutzes actually dance to the bloody thing.

So what, I ventured, did Derek and Clive hope to achieve with the new platter? "World peace," deadpanned the former Mackeson commercial supremo. "If everyone did what we did (ie carry on like pre-pubescent schoolboys vying to see who can come out with the most naughty words) there would be world peace," he elaborated.

Hmmm. Not with an agent provocateur like Cook around.

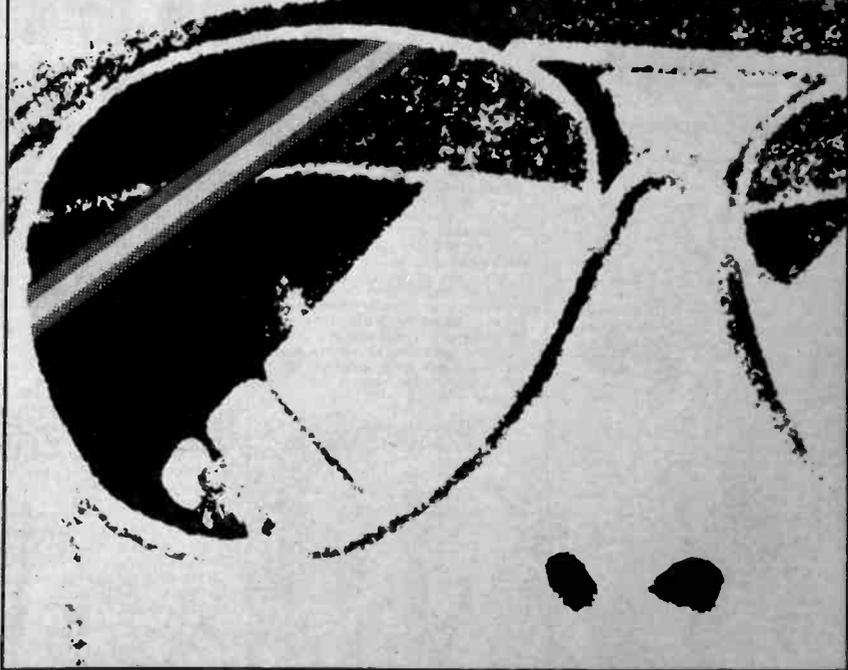
During the film, which will eventually run to about 90 minutes and be shown at cinema clubs, it was apparent that it is the po-faced one who is responsible for the Freudian outpourings of the hapless Dudley.

Derek's (Cook) perverted promptings are a catalyst for Clive's (Moore) detailed accounts of all his hang-ups. And after 18 years of training he pulls this off with unparalleled honesty and self-degradation. Cook himself admits that the cameraman's golden rule is "when in doubt, cut to Dudley."

On his debut album John Cooper Clarke uses a rather well known Anglo-Saxon expletive just once, and with devastating effect. If Peter Cook and Dudley Moore are incapable of doing the same, they ought to quit making records and stick to straight comedy - they can't be so hard-up that they have to resort to the most mundane form of shock value to earn a living.

MIKE NICHOLLS

NOT ALL ALBUMS ARE CREATED EQUAL ...



SEE FOREVER EYES



neither are rock bands. "See Forever Eyes" is the second album by Canadian rock band Prism, a bitter-sweet blend of harmonies and hard-driving rock. Ten songs which all qualify for the much abused description 'masterpiece'. Ten good reasons to stop, look and listen to "See Forever Eyes".



SINGLES

Reviewed by MIKE GARDNER

JANGLE ALL THE WAY

DISGUISE: 'Hey Baby' (Chiswick). Nice tangled jangle of early Merseybeat with the cutest 'Oh Yeah's' this side of Joey Ramone. It recalls the slightly less cynical era of the early Kinks, Tony Macauley and the Beatles. This compact and fresh sounding piece of pop is built along the same blueprints that created those classic sounds of the sixties. Catchy, melodic, simple, uncluttered and pleasant (in the nicest of senses). Hopefully a hit. **CHRIS STAMEY AND THE dB's:** '(I Thought) You Wanted To Know' (Cars). Written by ex-Television guitarist Richard Lloyd in the rich Byrds/pop vein that the likes of Dwight Twilley and Tom Petty are now mining with considerable musical success. It's based even more than 'Disguise' on the English Merseybeat but having a nice streak of warmth running through it. Again the jangle wins through to this boy's heart, must be something to do with the oncoming sleigh bells.

CHRIS STAMEY AND THE dB'S



PERVERSITIES OF THE BEST KIND

TELEVISION PERSONALITIES: 'Part Time Punks' (Kings Road Records). Inept and trashy, but it's so irresistibly charming I'm tempted to make it single of the week. The TV Personalities N. Parsons and R. Hartly (H. Greene and B. Forsyth didn't turn up for the session) bemoan the trendy types inhabiting their Kings Road terrain with a nice line in cynicism. It's part of an EP containing tracks such as 'Where's Bill Grundy Now?', 'Happy Families' and 'Posing At The Roundhouse' all containing the same naive magic. It puts so many others to shame. Available for £1 plus p+p from TV Personalities, Flat 2b, 356 Kings Road, Chelsea, SW3.

THE DICKIES: 'Silent Night' (A&M). Yes, THE 'Silent Night', done in traditional 100 mph ramalama style with corrosive guitars, Spectorish sleigh bells washing over the pumping bass. Depending on your perversion, the Dickies could become to punk what Gary Glitter was to glitter rock. They seem to have captured the cartoon quality of the Ramones with shameful ease. I just hope they're not serious. As a Christmas record it's preferable to 'Mull Of Kintyre' or 'Mary's Boy Child' (If only Boney M had done 'Little Drummer Boy' instead). **THE YOBBS:** 'Silent Night' (LTS). Popular song huh? An angelic organ gives way to a limping buzzsaw guitar and the most



DICKIES: hope they're not serious

YULETIDE PARANOIA

neanderthal vocalising I've had to suffer in years. It's absolutely the most hysterical performance I've heard in ages. It searches for the right key and doesn't find it, it strains and brutalises and it's fun. The talk part has the embarrassing charm of Stan and Hilda Ogden at Buckingham Palace with the three flying ducks on the wall and taking their shoes off to massage their corns in front of the Queen. The B side is a version in the original German. Nothing like a bit of culture is there, know what I mean, guv? (sniff).

TV Personalities



WHERE'S BILL GRUNDY NOW?

W-TRACK EP Kals RD Records

JUST JOGGING ALONG

ELO: 'The ELO EP' (Jet). Features 'Can't Get It Out Of My Head', 'Strange Magic', 'Ma-Ma-Ma Belle' and 'Evil Woman'. Again shows that Jeff Lynne has the magic formula to make vinyl money with not so well disguised borrowings from others. It's very hard to complain about such well-constructed music. **CURTIS MAYFIELD:** 'No Goodbyes' (Curton). Mr Mayfield seems to have borrowed those swooping strings of Barry Whites masterworks but allied to those breathy mellow tones it makes for a fine outing. Actually my 12 inch copy has 'No Goodbyes' printed on both sides (but different songs), but it sort of brings a new meaning to the term 'Special Limited Edition'.

IT GETS ROUGH FROM NOW ON

JOE FARRELL: 'Night Dancing' (Warner Bros). Starts well with



MORODERISH: hope they're not serious

Moroderish flair before it bursts into an infectious riff that descends into random honks from Mr Farrell's sax. Without a meaty melody to hang the improvisations on it quickly fades from the memory. **GOODY GOODY:** 'Number One Dee Jay' (Atlantic). Ms Goody Goody sings about a dee jay with the commitment that tells me she's never stepped into a disco in her life and if she has then she must have left very quickly.

STEPPIN' OUT: 'Who's To Know' (Charly). The Press release describes them as a "colourful white reggae band" but despite such unfortunate phrasing they clearly haven't much empathy with the genre. Some very unsure vocals and all the superficial trappings of reggae without the feeling make for a fairly uninteresting disc. Pressed in blue vinyl.

KENNY ROGERS: 'Sail Away' (United Artists). I can't seem to switch on my radio without hearing this innocuous little ditty. For once he actually sounds happy and hopeful after all those tortured relationships with Ruby and Lucille and I'm not nasty enough to deflate the only piece of luck he seems to have had in his singing career. Well, it is Christmas.

JERKS: 'Cool' (Lightning). How can jerks be cool? I asked myself before putting on the record. Having played it I'm still no nearer the answer with this uninspired slice of tedium.

GOODTIME BAND: 'Baad Goodtime Band' (Umbrella). The

Goodtime Band are made up of that incestuous British funk/goodtime rock family that spawned the likes of Kokomo, Retainers, Moon, FBI and various other good solid combinations. Trouble is this 'goodtime' slice of funkrock lacks the hunger and zip in the production to make the magic that will get these particular tallfeathers swaying in unison.

ED BANGER: 'Kinnel Tommy' (EMI International). A real waste of vinyl and a useful backing track as Ed yells abusive advice to his favourite (?) footballer. But there again he's from Manchester, an area deprived of attractive football. Now if he supported Spurs...

RAHNI HARRIS AND FLO: 'Six Million Steps' (Mercury). This is supposed to inspire some chap who's running 2,000 miles along the western seaboard of the USA. Being a public spirited sort of fellow I'm all in favour of helping to relieve the burden's of fellow persons but this limp disco drivle wouldn't inspire me to walk to my front door and back.

BEAUTIFUL BEND: 'Boogie Motion' (TK). It's really sad to watch Miami's useful label follow the Europeans, particularly Giorgio Moroder's work, like a stray dog on a leash and not really coming up to scratch.

SUSI HENDRIX: 'Hey Joe' (Radio). "Susi Hendrix singing 'Hey Joe'? Oh come on," cried the shocked reviewer. But the worst was yet to come. This version has



a lame disco beat, an appalling brass section, her voice has the passionless quality of a taxidermised animal and her guitar playing is similarly anaesthetised. **MANHATTAN TRANSFER:** 'Who, What, When, Where, Why' (Atlantic). Man Tran wrap their pleasant tonsils around a pleasant mid-tempo smoocher that's designed for the pleasanter parts of radio programming. **MARIE PIERRE:** 'Walk Away' (Horse). It always amazes me how reggae turns up more good female voices than their meagre success indicates. Ms Pierre's double tracked tones of seduction melt every milligram of resistance to what is a fairly mundane reggae tune.

THE MIRRORS: 'Dark Glasses' (Lightning). A ponderous dirge with the life of a cheap wine induced hangover. In a word, horrible. **HOLLYWOOD KILLERS:** 'Goodbye Suckie' (Rollerball). After many plays it has yet to register any reaction on my crapometer. It's a totally unmemorable and mundane rocker that just trundles along without tickling my senses either way.



TEACH IN: 'Dear John' (Carrere). A record that tries to cover all bases by copying Abba, Boney M and mentions John Travolta. The bass drum thuds and the hi-hat flashes while the girls plead for a dancing lesson with big John. But it's got such a cheap veneer that it's positively painful on the ears and stomach. **MR WALKIE TALKIE:** 'Be My Boogie Woogie Baby' (Polydor). The sort of Smurf type nonsense that seems to navigate its way up the charts every Christmas. It was released two years ago and they're hoping we're a little bit more senile this time around. I should be paid danger money to listen to it as I'm sure it's going to spin around my head for the next two days. Crilkey, I'm still humming it. HELP.

ALBUMS

+++++ Unbeatable
 ++++ Buy it
 +++ Give it a spin
 ++ Give it a miss
 + Unbearable

SLANG BANG

CHAS AND DAVE: 'Rockney' (EMI EMC 3285)

GORDON BENNET: what a carry on. I s'pose it must have just been the weather, or the year of the novelty. We had Jilted John, Toast, Smurfs (all double-Dutch to me), Star Wars and Strummin', and three of 'em sung in Cockney accents me ol' cock, and though I've never seen anything funny meself in cockneys or their slang, they did make a right carry-on out of them 'Carry On' films so I'm probably wrong.

It's been a fair year for cockers innit eh? Ol mean though 'e's an arty-farty old sparrow, Ian Dury had a fair outing at 'ammersmith Odeon and ol' Fletch is always on telly int 'e, and 'e comes from 'round our way don't 'e? Anyway (I fink I've cleared me froat now). Charles and David are pictured here in pleasant repose before a jellied eels shop probably round the corner from West Ham tube and they look as if they're sharing

a joke about Norman and Jeremy (that other comic duo) Charles and David, known around Bow as Chas and Dave are pretty lucky. They've been knockin' around a bit and they're both knockin' on a bit, and they've 'ad a bit of a hit wiv 'Strummin'' on the Capital Hitline and been on TOTP wiv them there Fans People showing their belly-buttons and that were awright weren't it?

Cha cha Chas and Da da Dave know three chords and they play them all on their record 'Rockney'. I mean, that's probably awright for two cocksparrers but not for me mate. The would-be barrow-boys reckon they can turn their hand to a fair lyric and the best and worst of it is "She could draw the crowds like she crowds her draws" — the best, and "Oh boy, I'm in trouble, that was her on the telephone, she said I'd better get back on the double, she's on the moan an' groan" — the worst. And what the metre and rhythm of that lot would



CHAS AND DAVE: knockin' on a bit

be I don't know. Anyway, I'm slinging me 'ook, as it were (and still is) 'cos I don't like the record and they're biggish blokes an' I'm only a little fella. I'm off to have a decko at 'Confessions Of A Whatsit' down Edmonton Regal like. I'll probably see 'em down there. ++ + **JAMES PARADE** (Skeddadling quick).



EMMYLOU HARRIS: 'Profile / Best Of Emmylou Harris' (Warner Bros. K56570)

WHEN AN artist has only

ever had one hit record, it's not unreasonable to expect it to show up on a 'Best Of' album. 'Here There And Everywhere', Emmylou Harris' only British chart single to date, is excluded here, but then she's always been album - orientated. All the same it's a shame her sensitive treatment of that lovely Beatles' song has been left out, and I must admit I thought I would be more familiar with the tracks on this compilation than I am.

There's 'To Daddy', of course, the Dolly Parton song, and it can't be coincidence that so many of these numbers are in the same melancholy mood — 'Making Believe' and 'Sweet Dreams' are both pretty self-ptying. It could be Emmylou's voice because even when she's supposed to be happy, as on 'Together Again', where she sings "My tears have stopped

falling", it sounds as though they could be starting any minute.

She cheers up for 'If I Could Only Win Your Love' and although she never really rocks, she at least canters with Chuck Berry's 'You Never Can Tell' 'C'est La Vie' and 'Two More Bottles Of Wine'. She's never been a straight country singer, much as Dolly Parton has avoided that tag, and comparisons with the very much upfront Ms Parton and Linda Ronstadt are unoriginal but tempting. She has some of Dolly's oblique countryness and some of Linda's interpretative skill.

I get the feeling, though, that Emmylou could have been polished to shine a little brighter on this collection, even though the cover photo of her is really blindingly beautiful. +++ **PAUL SEXTON**



MANZANERA: 'K-Scope' (Polydor POLD5011)

PHIL Manzanera is a talented, sensitive and imaginative musician. In Roxy Music he played an interesting and essential part. On this solo album he does everything right, but fails to excite.

This is a famous friends album. Manzanera calls on a host of excellent musicians including Lol Creme, Kevin Godley and John Wetton. Every track is played with taste and subtlety making for an album of great depth, for those willing to explore it. But no amount of technical skill can hide the fact that the album is severely lacking in distinctive songs. It is only when the Finn brothers, from Split Enz, take the lead vocals, that the album acquires any character. Even on these tracks it reminds me of an early Genesis, with touches of 10cc's sterility thrown in. The only track that really appealed to me was 'Cuban Crisis' with its sophisticated reggae beat and atmospheric vocals. The instrumentals, apart from the superior title track, tend to sound like serious contenders for the next James Bond theme tune.

Manzanera will obviously go down well among serious rock fans. He has produced an album full of intricate arrangements which will

satisfy musical connoisseurs. It is a fine album for people who are more interested in instrumental perfection than in quality songs. ++ + **PHILIP HALL**



RONNIE LAWS: 'Flame' (United Artists UAG 30204)

IF YOU want an album to put things right, this is it. Ronnie Laws, sax and flute man extraordinary, has a pedigree to be reckoned with, starting with a hometown of Houston, Texas, which he shared with the Crusaders. He then took in the formative years of EW&F, with Larry Dunn and Phillip Bailey still on the sidelines. By the time, in 1975, he formed his own quintet and cut his first solo album for Blue Note, 'Pressure Sensitive', he was in a position to really make records.

Enough of that 'Flame' is an enticing LP first time around, a commanding one two days later. Rather less rocky than its immediate predecessors, it goes for warm, glowing musical colours, strong melody lines, a few tasty vocals, and a shimmering production. Above all, most of the tracks — the mellow 'Joy' and 'These Days' with its athletic sax line over the sipping rhythm — give the sense of real contact, real flame. Not just another record session. +++ + **SUSAN KLUTH**

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 + Unhearable

Wings' winter break

WINGS: 'Wings Greatest' (EMI PCTC 256)

RIP - OFF or not The argument about greatest hits albums will go on forever, but this is a bit of a curiosity. Obviously it's the Paul McCartney Show 1971 - 1978, but as it's being aimed so blatantly at the insane Christmas market, it's very strange that EMI didn't go the whole way and make this a double. These are, in their terms, the greatest of their greatest hits, but a hell of a lot of stuff's been left out. Good stuff, too.

Most of the Wings' anthems you'd expect are here: 'Mull Of Kintyre', 'Band On The Run', for many people their creative peak, and 'Silly Love Songs' which like so many of McCartney's songs is annoyingly catchy so that you like it when you really had no intention of

doing so. 'Jet' is there too - probably their most successful fusion of rock and pop, commercial in a very respectable way. They couldn't leave out the starchy-eyed 'My Love', which in 1973 was an update of the lovely-dovey melodies Macca used to write with the Fab's. Sappy but irresistible.

'Let 'Em In' is, I reckon, their most annoying hit, and the one which I find is played the quickest. Three years of that and it doesn't have anything left. Not so with 'Live And Let Die', again a good rock / melody balance with parts of it as 'action-packed' (ugh!) as the Jimmy Bond films themselves. With a Little Luck' - well, pleasant, and certainly a welcome follow-up to 'Mull'. Then, going back, the excellent 'Another Day' and even more pleasingly 'Uncle Albert / Admiral Halsey', never released here but a



PAUL & LINDA McCARTNEY: Sappy but Irresistible

US number one in '71 from the 'Ram' album. Even if the only line in it was 'We're so sorry Uncle Albert, but we haven't done a bloody thing all day!' it'd still be immortal.

BUT... a couple of surprise inclusions 'Hi Hi Hi', to the exclusion of its other side 'C Moon', and 'Junior's Farm'. And where are 'Listen To What The Man Said', & 'Maybe I'm Amazed', 'Helen Wheels', 'Letting Go?' - the answer is you just can't fit it all on one album. I'm not advocating a '20 Golden Greats' collection, God forbid. But I think we deserved more.

All the same what we do have is more often than not superb and it'll be top three by Christ-mas. +++++ 1/2 PAUL SEXTON



DONNY AND MARIE: 'Goin' Coconuts' (Polydor Super 2391 371)

DURING the regressive year of pop 1974 the Osmonds usually figured in the horrible dilapidated chart. Gary Glitter was 'young' and Dave Bowie was 'outrageous'. Sparks sounded like comic opera and David Cassidy was John Travolta. The Osmonds Court introduced their

little brothers and sisters to the world. Little Jimmy was Mickey Rooney and Fatty Arbuckle in one and after one glance was destined for the scrapheap. Sister Marie was vaguely better crooning 'Paper Roses' with reasonable conviction but appeared to be slightly plump. More Puppy Fat than 'Puppy Love'.

Well I'm a bit worried about Marie. A couple of years back she'd thinned out a bit and the reassuring smile was still looking pretty genuine but on the cover of 'Goin' Coconuts' she resembles a rake. Doll Donny looks OK in his schmuck disco chic but Marie's dress is loose around the shoulders and those arms so thin. Remember Judy? Anyway, I'm quite fond of them both and they sing, dance and sell themselves better than a lot of people I know. Their vocal chords work well without too much oil and the Wizard of Osmond whoever he is has instructed them well. They do Steve Voice's 'On The Shelf' better than he did and good versions of 'You Don't Have To Say You Love Me' and the Foundations' 'Baby Now That I've Found You' and I'm sorry but they don't get on my nerves at all and I can't see anything wrong with people who smile a lot. The Brothers 'Love Me For A Reason' and Don and Marie are a lot more special than punk.

If you enjoyed their TV show you'll be pleased to know that the lovely schmaltzy theme tune is included too although those arrangements on side two do get a bit much after the third listen. If Helen Reddy can be hip, ha, ha, why can't the Ozzies, they don't need Kim Fowley.

All this pair need is a real epic song to be world conquerors. They're still the best thing on telly since the old Sooty Show. Lenny the Lion and Torchy, the Battery Boy Goin' coconuts? +++++ JAMES PARADE



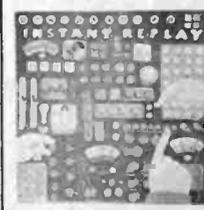
GROVER WASHINGTON JR: 'Reed Seed' (Motown STML 12099)

A NEW recruit to Motown, although Grover

Washington's been in the business for a while. He's above all else a sax man - soprano, alto, tenor and baritone - with a little bit of flute thrown in here and there. In fact he speaks saxophone so fluently that if you're not a native you might have trouble in understanding this album. I hesitate to call it modern, laid back jazz but that's roughly what it is.

But why it doesn't interest me more is hard to determine. All I can do is compare it with recent jazz albums in this vein which I have liked, like Eddie Henderson's 'Mahal', for example, and say that Grover's newie, although it flows nicely, doesn't really create much interest. More often than not it's the sort of music that radio stations play up to the news late at night; it doesn't require you to think very hard. At least that's the true of slow numbers like 'Reed Seed' ('Trio Tune') and 'Maracas Beach', and even his attempt at Billy Joel's 'Just The Way You Are' (a song which everybody seems to be covering and which is emerging as one of the real TUNES of 1978). Washington is not just a straight instrumental cover but on the other hand it has nothing very new to add to the song.

He's more interesting on the pieces that move a little, like 'Do Dat' and 'Santa Cruzin'', which have an abundance of instrumental activity. They could even be disco warm up material, although Grover might not be pleased about that. The record has the seed of a good album but it never quite makes it. +++ PAUL SEXTON



DAN HARTMAN: 'Instant Replay' (Blue Sky SKY 83265)

HATS OFF to Hartman for one of the most accessible, irresistible disco tunes of the year, but weren't you surprised to find that he used to be in the Edgar Winter Group? Yeah, so was I, because judging by the single he seemed a million miles from that style.

Now get this further revelation: Edgar Winter himself actually plays the sax solos on 'Instant Replay'! But when you listen to more of the album, some of his influences come through. Song like 'Double O Love' and 'Chocolate Box' are a sort of funky heavy metal (true headbangers will cringe but it's the closest description I can find). Dan's never far away from the discos in his style but in this case I don't think that's bad news at all.

This is the sort of writing which can give a face and a mind to the discos, because of its wide appeal. There's a 15 minute piece called 'Countdown / This Is It' - I wouldn't be surprised if they made something of this for his next single - which is really more where 'Instant Replay' came from. The poppy 'This Is It' weaves in and out of the boppy 'Countdown' and he even sneaks in a bit of 'Replay' at the end.

There it is - bop and pop. He keeps right on dancing with 'Love Is A Natural' and only stops

for the slower but still appealing 'Time And Space'. So if you wanted an instant replay of the single, you've got it on the album, but it's hard to get tired of it. +++++ PAUL SEXTON



GLADYS KNIGHT AND THE PIPS: 'Bless This House' (Buddah BDLP 4050)

THERE'S something perversely funny about the cover of 'Bless This House', showing Ms Knight and the boys readying themselves for the season of goodwill towards all men, especially when one considers that she's allegedly suing them and the record company for X millions for "hindering her career".

But Christmas albums, apart from Phil Spector, have never managed to be anything but sickly sweet affairs that never capture the right balance between rejoicing and solemnity. The rejoicing is always muted and the solemnity laid on with a trowel.

Ms Knight's album does little to change that reputation and, apart from 'Do You Hear What I Hear' showing what might have been, proves to be one of the worst offenders. There's an embarrassing 'Away In A Manger' and a version of 'Silent Night' that nearly beats the Dickles 100 mph version for hilarity. There's a hamfisted 'gospel' medley and both Bach's and Schubert's 'Ave Maria' are mutilated.

It's uniformly repulsive and gets a big fat + MIKE GARDNER

THE BARRON KNIGHTS: 'Night Gallery' (Epic 83221)

EVERY CHRISTMAS, regular as All Bran we get another collection of these absurd 'Call Up The Band' tunes from this geriatric bunch of chicken and chip cabaret clowns.

Needless to say this yuletide is no exception. Titled 'Night Gallery' the reworkings this year include (authentic titles in brackets): 'Boogie Nights', 'Boy Scouts Out Camping', 'Uptown Top Ranking', 'My Will (I Will)' and 'The Chapel Lead is Missing' ('The Three Bells').

All without exception are totally unfunny although to give the BK's some credit they do at least have the vocal and musical reproductions off pat.

The best of a bad bunch is 'Get Down Shep' which is not as the title suggests a tall (geddit?) of bestial perversions, but a fairly comical little number about John Noakes (a Blue Peter fame) and his dog Shep (also of Blue Peter fame).

The single 'A Taste Of Aggro' (also included here) is already high in the charts which bodes well for the album.

Although I personally found them highly embarrassing when they appeared on TOTP's the other week, I concede they do provide (fairly amusing fodder for the over forties. ++ MARY ANN ELLIS

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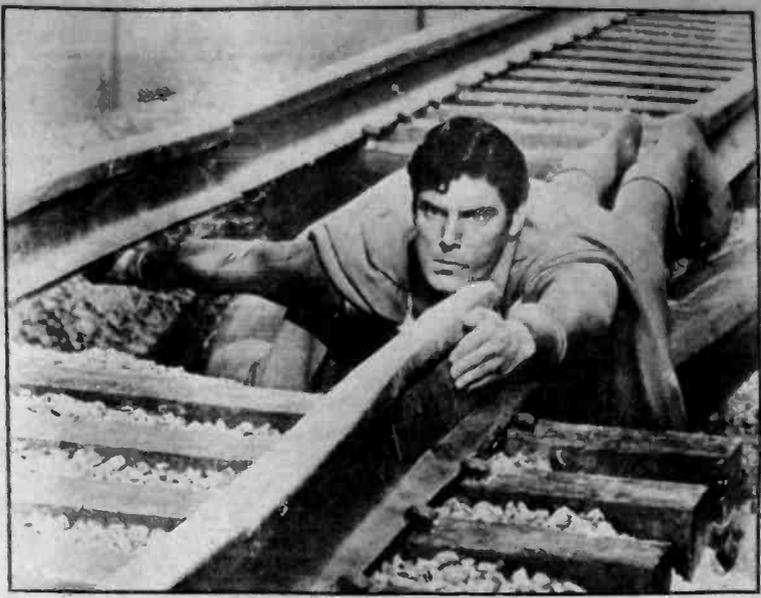
Letter from an American

BEING AN American (we all have problems - MM) I can understand your not liking much of American rock'n'roll, but shit, some of your views are ridiculous. For example Angel's 'Winter Song' is a hell of a lot better than Boney M's 'Mary's Boy Child'. (letter then drones on then states: "Hey all you Englanders - Rush, Queen, Lizzy, Cheap Trick, UFO, Foghat are where music's at! Kevin Heilbronner, Chevely, Newmarket. ● I don't know, you Yankee brain damage cases come over here

saying WE'RE ridiculous, now piss off back to Uncle Sam land and quit bugging me.

An innerlectchool writes

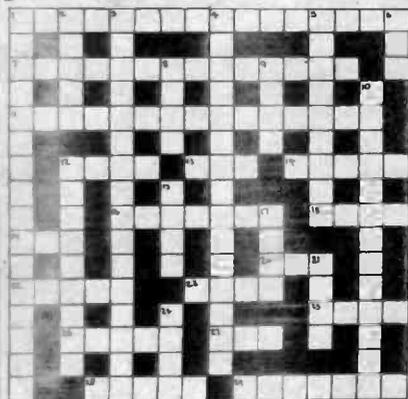
ROCK'N'ROLL is a sign of the depersonalization of the individual, of ecstatic veneration, of mental decline and passivity. If we cannot stem the tide, with its waves of rhythmic narcosis and of future waves of vicarious craze, we are preparing our own downfall in the midst of pandemic funeral dances. Dr Joast A.M. Meerlo, Columbia University.



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XWORD



- ACROSS**
- 1 The Rezillos on their travels (11,5)
 - 2 What Renaissance saw in the sky (6,5)
 - 3 1976 Chicago No 1 (3,3,2)
 - 4 1976 'Harvey's' Stories (4)
 - 5 The Doors final song (6,6)
 - 6 1976 Band (5)
 - 7 1976 Lennon's biggest hit success (7)
 - 8 1976 that used to feature Jimi Hendrix and Lee Jackson (4)
 - 9 1976 Agnès, wanted to be your Mother Down (3)
 - 10 1976 Down, Former member of Brinsley Schwartz (3,4)
 - 11 1976 Elaine Page (5)
 - 12 Le Franchers (4)
 - 13 1976 Seagulls degrees (4)
 - 14 1976 Hand's Finest (5)
 - 15 1976 Leonard's old outfit (7)
 - 16 1976 'C' Riders (5)
 - 17 1976 Giza didn't want to (6,4)
- DOWN**
- 1 Marshall, Hair hit (7,2,3,4)
 - 2 It was the hardest word for 5 Down to say (5)
 - 3 Mistaken Herbie Hancock (1,7,2,3,3)
 - 4 1976 Donna Ross and the Supremes hit (2,6,2,5)
 - 5 1976 Quot a Part Time Love (5,4)
 - 6 1976 Olivia Newton John hit (3)
 - 7 He took a walk on the wild side (4)
 - 8 See 20 Across
 - 9 One of Neil Diamonds golden greats (5,8)
 - 10 1976 Stones L.P. (4,5)
 - 11 1976 just told us about their Best Friends girl (4)
 - 12 1976 or Carmen (4)
 - 13 He can see clearly now (4)
 - 14 Down sample (4)

- LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION**
1. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.

More of same

DO I exist, am I here, does the basic existentialist theme pervade, indeed is this endemic, - What's for tea mummy? Gunter Grass opined similar rantings in his recent letter to MM Future shock / Shick (GaGa - /G0000)

Gurr on Clash (1)

JUST WHO the hell does this bullshitter, alias Ronnie Gurr, think he is? How the hell can RM employ someone who writes nothing more than derogatory crap? I write in reference to his outing with the Clash. Gurr opens his item with astonishing style and flair (for a moron), and then launches his one-man attack cum I.Q. assessment 'cos they're giving him some stick and he gets upset with' smart ass comments and the way Strummer takes the piss outa my accent "I for one don't want to know how he rates the combined I.Q. of the Clash, especially when they've turned out two master masterpieces in the shape of a debut album and 'Give 'em Enough Rope'. Dous all a favour and give him a job sweeping up all the editorial waste - not contributing towards RM, or else NME gets priority. Wayne, annoyed Clash freak, Prestwich, Manchester. ● Ronnie does, in fact sweep up the editorial waste as well as making the coffee and going on errands to the sandwich shop. He also paints and decorates the office and licks the office typewriters clean. The reason he questioned the Clash's collective I.Q.'s was purely out of his interest in sociology.

Gurr on Clash (2)

TO RONNIE Gurr: this is just a short letter to

tell you that I thought your Clash article was really f + + + ing great. The number of writers who would have called them out the way you did can be counted on three fingers. When Strummer took the piss out of your accent you should have reminded him that you were born talking like that; his voice has taken him 27 years to "perfect". Great article, me son. What can I say? I'm proud of ya.

Tony Parsons, NME, Carnaby Street London. ● We here at RM receive letters from NME types

all the time. Something about wanting to reach a mass audience I believe.

Russell's Sweet payolla's shock

DID Rosalind Russell really believe all the crud she wrote about Rachel Sweet, or was it just another case of the good ol' American brainwashing? Personally, I found Ohio's answer to Lena Zavaroni utterly unostentatious. Still Rosie, we all have our price, don't we? Jane Blanchard, Horsham, Sussex

● Ooh you bitch. God knows what you're implying. Price? Payolla? Here at Record Mirror we say no free lunches and no free trips to America. O.K. If truth be known Rachel gave Ros. a whole quarter of jelly babies. (Trips to Europe, Middle East and Australasia are welcomed. Oh yes and Japan too).

Slade landslide

WELL, well, well, what d'ya know? First of all we have Sheila Prophet giving Slade's new album a fantastic review



IAN DURY fan Patrick Moore, TV's starman and fastest talker, has a Christmas message for RM readers: "No matter how far and to what ends wise men are prepared to follow blazing stars at this time of year, I advise you to stick to beating rock stars with rhythm sticks or any available weapons (in the interests of noise abatement). Thank you and goodnight. PS. Cancer Minor' is breaking out in my western hemisphere."

and now we have Rosalind Russell saying that Slade are gonna have a hit all over again with their 1973 Christmas classic Ya wanna know something we just fink ya? strange jargon eh? MM) great (oh yeh) Merry Christmas girls Mike and Linda, Longmorn, Eigin, Morayshire

● The ps on this letter was rather strange. It said, "please excuse us writing in wax crayon as they don't allow sharp things in here" Hmm

Praise overdue

WELL, at last you have finally given praise to the brilliant Lindisfarne. For years the lads have been ignored by bullshitting writers whose only interest in life was Floyd, Genesis and other boring farts. Well you overpaid journalists (chance would be a fine thing - MM) go and stuff yourselves on the dark side of Hackney Heath (eh?) Lindisfarne didn't need you then and they won't want you now. G. Thorpe, Oxford.

● Not... no it couldn't be. He spells his name with a J.

Some mothers...

WHO the hell do all these people who start letters "Who does so - and - so think he / she is" think they are? A neglected schmuck, Derby.

Johnny rots on

I'VE just heard tracks from the Public Image album and all I can say is... Christ, Mr Lydon is well and truly finito and the album is a true indication of his lack of talent. Mafcoim McLaren was punk J. Rotten was his talentless toy. Lydon I hate you and all you stand for. Gerald Manley, Darlington. ● Quite.

Rod's still fab, man

I HAVE seen the light. Me and my friend (Standard of grammar here is atrocious - MM) went to see Rod Stewart in Manchester and he has still got the magic. It's about time the papers realised that he is as good as he ever was and stopped slaughtering him for his personal life. Deirdre, Ardwick, Manchester.

● This is an actual letter. Rod still has fans. Well at least three. Along with Deirdre there's Rosalind Russell and Ronnie Gurr.

Cartland's Army speaks out

AFTER much consideration I am forced to the conclusion that Barbara Cartland is the real future of rock'n'roll as we know it. The new album is a real tour de force with full glossy production, a hyper-earthly male voice choir, a tightly rehearsed orchestra, and Babs' soulful gutsy voice thrashing out the sentiments. Forget White Bush, Barbara Cartland is the real thing. Dennis Raffagot, Gloucester. ● You just might have something there. Your doctor may be able to help you get rid of it, with luck.

PLUS FOURS

Solo albums. Is it Kiss and make-up or Kiss and break up?

"THE WORST thing is that the kids think we are breaking up," frets bassist and Kiss spokesman Gene Simmons about the recent joint release of the four members' solo albums.

While not in the running for album of the year, each is miles beyond the recording standards applied to any one Kiss LP. But the group is worried that its audience will consider the move a betrayal.

In fact the albums by Simmons and guitarists Ace Frehley and Paul Stanley won't seem too foreign to kids raised on the Kiss brand of recycled heavy metal. But drummer Peter Criss' solo album has absolutely nothing to do with Kiss, a fact which makes Criss very proud.

"I've always been different," he explains, "because Gene, Paul and Ace are more into Zeppelin, Humble Pie and Hendrix, while I was always into the Stones, Beatles and R&B performers like Sam Cooke. When I'm home I listen to the Eagles, old Beatles, Sinatra, Tony Bennett, Dionne Warwick. If I'm really feeling down I just can't put on Humble Pie."

The drummer chose Vini Poncia (Nilsson, Ringo) to produce his album, and Poncia's star-maker production provided Criss with the slickest support of any of the solo efforts. There are several pleasant surprises, notably an energetic remake of 'Tossin' And Turnin' and an autobiographical tune called 'Hooked On Rock And Roll'.

Criss feels his album is the first step toward separating his career from Kiss.

"I see myself eventually on my own without the make-up and the bombs, without theatrics. I could dig getting up there with a white suit and three chick singers. I don't know if this is it for the band — nothing lasts forever. We made it. At least now it's a stepping stone for each of us. If the band split up, I really wouldn't mind."

The other members of the group had strong ideas about how their solo albums should sound and sought help only during the engineering and mixing stages. As a result the three albums have marked similarities to Kiss' music.

"I've never had more fun doing an album," says Ace Frehley. "It was more exciting than Kiss



because I had more freedom. I didn't have to listen to these other guys telling me what to do. If Paul or Gene write a song and I want to put an effect on it, I have to get their approval."

It's no surprise to find that Kiss mastermind Gene Simmons' solo album is a roughly conceptual treatise on stardom which features a celebrity line-up including Cher, Helen Reddy, Bob Seger and Cheap Trick's Rick Nielson.

"Paul McCartney wanted to sing on those songs," he says with a straight face. "but he wasn't available so I got the guys from the stage show 'Beaulemania' (Mitch Weissman and Joe Pecorino)."

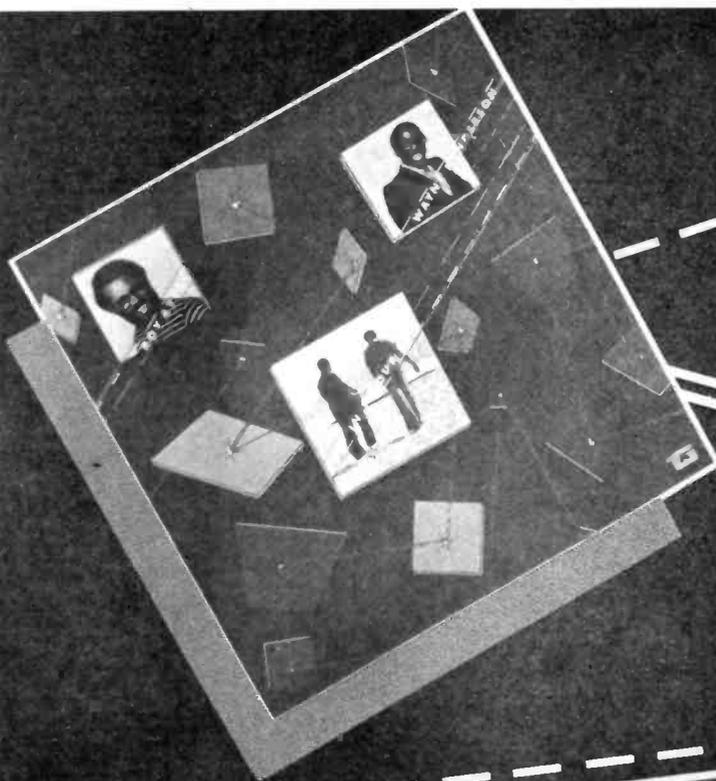
It is somewhat surprising that the record comes across with the macabre humour more characteristic of Who bassist John Entwistle. But it's downright astonishing to hear Simmons do softly lyrical, Beatles-influenced pop songs like 'See You Tonight' and 'Mr Make Believe'. "Simmons is proud of the shock value. Many of the songs on the album were written before his involvement with Kiss, which explains many of the stylistic differences. However, Simmons maintains that Kiss will be able to assimilate this material into future stage shows.

"We're breaking down every preconceived notion people have about us," he says, "and showing everybody we can be the biggest and not be dictated to by our own confines. It's Kiss just because we play it."

Paul Stanley's album comes the closest to sounding like Kiss, except that his songs have more dynamic range than the group's work. So it's his album that provides a blue print of how Kiss might expand its scope without retreating too much from the band's old image.

"I tried not to contradict what I did before," he explains. "There's nothing wrong with progressing. I never said anything in Kiss that I didn't believe. If you want to do something different it shouldn't be mislabelled."

"These albums are an introduction to another Kiss, another level," he concludes. "The next Kiss album will sound a lot closer to the solo albums than the last Kiss album. People forget how uncompromising we are. They see the chrome and not the engine." JOHN SWENSON



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HELP

UPFRONT

THE information here was correct at the time of going to press, but it may be subject to change so we advise you to check with the venue concerned before travelling to a gig. Telephone numbers are given where possible.

What about the little kids?

LOOKING through some cupboards at home the other day, I noticed books and toys which my younger brothers and myself outgrew years ago. As Christmas is coming, I wondered if there's anywhere I can send them where they'd be used?
John, London

Like many local radio stations, BBC Radio London is running an annual Christmas Toy Appeal in conjunction with the London Taxidriver's Fund for Underprivileged Children. Toys collected will be distributed to handicapped and underprivileged children at Christmas time. Send or take 'em to: Toy Collection Point, BBC Radio London, PO Box 4LG, 35A Marylebone High Street, London W1A 4LG. BRMB Radio, based in Birmingham and the Midlands is also running a mobile charity toy appeal, every Saturday from December 4th - 16th. For details of locations and times write to BRMB Radio, Publicity, PO Box 555, Radio House, Aston Road North, Birmingham B6 4BX. Also see local press.

Do all virgins bleed? Mike, Clwyd

While some girls feel pain and bleed on first intercourse when the minute blood vessels in the hymen (the thin membrane covering the entrance to the vagina) is broken, others experience no discomfort at all. Some girls are born without a hymen, others break it without ever knowing, before having had sexual intercourse. Some virgins bleed, some don't.

Your girlfriend may have experienced pain because you penetrated her deeply. Either way, it doesn't matter. What you have going together is more important than a thin strip of membrane. She's being honest with you. Why the boover?

VD fears

I THINK I may have VD, as about four or five weeks ago I noticed a number of red spots on the helmet of my penis. My girlfriend and I broke up in early October and that's when I noticed the spots, which are painless. I have not had sex since. Dave, Melton Mowbray

Growth on the penis surface, including warts, sores, spots and ulcers may be symptoms of sexually transmitted infections, but are not always. Your doctor is best qualified to analyse the cause of any genital skin disorder and if necessary, refer you to a further source of treatment. Make an appointment now.

FEEDBACK

FEEDBACK answers your questions. Send your letters to: Record Mirror, 40 Long Acce, London WC2E 9JT. Please don't send a stamped addressed envelope as we can't answer your letters individually.

Those signs of thrush

I HAVE had a yellowish discharge from my vagina for several months now, and it's getting more noticeable. No matter how much I wash or take baths it feels very itchy there and also hurts when I pee. I have only ever slept with one boy. Have I got VD? I'm frightened as I'm only 14. What can I do?

From what you say, it sounds as if you have a vaginal infection known as Thrush or Monilia Yeast Infection. Thrush, which erupts in discharge and pain, is essentially caused when your system is thrown out of balance for one reason or another. Even babies can pick up thrush, which generally effects their eyes. Although yeast infection is a sex-related problem, it isn't a venereal disease, but if you leave it the condition will only get worse. You MUST see your doctor for a general check-up - he'll supply you with vaginal tablets and cream for a sure-fire cure.

Rachel's vinyl history

STIFF gig-gor John Hudson of Bury has the same ambitions as many another fine strapping lad, namely to find out more about noble Rachel Sweet (and she's only 16!). Release-wise, of course. Before signing to Stiff in 1978, Rachel released a handful of candy C&W numbers on Derrick Records, an American label. These are 'Any Port In A Storm' (DRC 117), 'We Live In A Different World' (DRC 1000), 'Overnight Success' (DRC 115), and 'I Believe What I Believe' (DRC 111), available from your friendly neighbourhood Stateside Importer - if you're suffering from the corporate Lolita Syndrome, that is. Meanwhile, back on the corporate Lolita Syndrome, that is 'Fool Around' (Seez 12), October 1978, and one single 'Baby' (Buy 39), October 1978. Two Sweet tracks can also be found on the Stiff 'Akron Compilation' album (GET 3).

Records by Wreckless E.

AND scores of Wreckless Eric fans, tongues lolling at the prospect of completing their vinyl collections, request all available recording fax too. Eric recorded nothing before signing to Stiff back in 1977, since then he's released four singles and two albums.

Singles: 'Whole Wide World' (BUY 16), Summer 1977, which is currently deleted but can be found on yet another compilation album 'Bunch of Stiffs' (Seez 2), also deleted. A few copies of 'Bunch of...' are on offer from Stiff Records, 32 Alexander Street, London W2. Send s.a.e. for details. 'Reconnex Cherie' (Buy 26), February 1978. 'Take the Cash (K.A.S.H.)' (Buy 34), October 1978. 'Crying, Waiting, Hoping' (Buy 40), November 1978, a cover version of the vintage Buddy Holly number.

Albums: 'Wreckless Eric' (Seez 8), February 1978, was originally available in a 12" black version and a 10" brown version (Seez B6). The coloured release includes 'Whole Wide World' too. His latest is 'Wonderful World of Wreckless Eric' (Seez 9).

Our father which art Abraham

A SEASONAL ery of rage and rancour comes from Bob Green of Darlington who demands to know the true identity and precise location of that arch perpetrator of the plague of Smurdom, Father Abraham. The sweetly insidious FA is, in fact middle-aged (40-ish) Dutch songwriter Pierre Kartner, who's written MOR smasherooties for Nana Mouskouri to name a few and has numerous gold discs to his credit in Edam-land and Europe as a whole. (Hoie?). Kartner first took-on this sinister identity, modelled on a kindly Dutch folk hero of the same name, with a penchant for helping children, some two years ago. He hasn't looked back. Irate, abusive or even fan-style letters should be addressed to FA c/o Decca Records, 18 Great Marlborough Street, London W1.

Credit where credit's due though. The Smurfs are not the brainchild of Father A/Pierre. They were originally created by a team of Dutch cartoonists Sepp & Payo and have been a household word in Holland for many years.

THURSDAY

DECEMBER 14

- BASILDON, Double Six (20140), Spud
- BELFAST, The Pound, The Undertones
- BELFAST, Whitta Hall (45123), Ralph McTell
- BIRMINGHAM, Barbarella's (021 643 9113), Wilko Johnson's Solid Senders
- BIRMINGHAM, Westhill College, Marbles
- BLACKPOOL, Norbreck Castle (52341), Lord Sutch & The Savages
- BOLTON, Galety (23488), John Cooper Clarke / Ed Base
- BOURNEMOUTH, Tiffany's (36238), Matchbox
- BRIGHTON, Alhambra (27874), Nightrider
- BRIGHTON, Buccaneer (60998)
- BRIGHTON, Hungry Years (29234), The Tinsels
- BRISTOL, Brunel Technical College (471788), Frankie Miller
- BRISTOL, Granary (28272), Streetband
- BRISTOL, Trinity Community Centre (551544), The X-Certs / Spics / The Munders / Art Objects
- CANTERBURY, College of Art (68371), 90 degrees Inclusive
- COLTSHALL, RAF Station, No One Club, Feverpitch
- CORSY, Sports Club (69513), Gafra
- CREDITON, Old Market House, Brainiac Five
- DUNDEE, Art College, The Doomed / The Tools
- FIFE, St. Andrew's University (38251), Supercharge
- GLASGOW, Amphora (041 332 2760), Underhand Jones
- GLASGOW, Apollo (041 332 6055), Rory Gallagher / Bram Tchakovsky
- GLASGOW, Art School, Haldane Building, Simple Minds
- GLOUCESTER, Leisure Centre (36498), Jasper Carrot
- HALESOWEN, Tiffany's (021 422 0781), Quartz
- HIGH WYCOMBE, Nags Head, London Road (21758), Sore Throat
- HORNCHURCH, The Bull (42145), Rednite
- KENDAL, Bowman, Anniversary
- LEEDS, Fan Club, Brannigans (683252), The Jerks / The Toys
- LEEDS, Ffiorde Green (62340), Here Are Now / Zero Gong / Patrick Fitzgerald
- LEEDS, The Polytechnic (30171), The Rubinoos
- LEEDS, The University (39071), Rokotto
- LEEDS, Victoria Hotel, Incredible Kidda Band
- LEICESTER, TUC Club, Freddie Fingers Lee
- LIVERPOOL, Cleveland, Accelerators
- LIVERPOOL, Empire (051 701 1555), Stephane Grappelli
- LONDON, Acklam Hall, Portbello Road (01 960 4590), The Members / Raaw / London Zoo
- LONDON, Brecknock, Camden (01 485 3073), Gerry
- LONDON, Central London Polytechnic, New Cavendish Street (01 636 6271), Chase & Dave
- LONDON, Chelsea Druggists, Kings Road, Cheap Flights
- LONDON, Dingwalls, Camden Lock (01 267 4967), Matumbi
- LONDON, Duke of Lancaster, New Barnet (01 449 0467), Jerry The Ferret
- LONDON, Golden Lion, Fulham (01 385 3942), Samson
- LONDON, Greyhound, Fulham (01 385 0526), The Trage
- LONDON, Hammersmith Odeon (01 746 4081),

- Parliament / Funkadelic / Brides of Funkenstein / Parlet
- LONDON, Hope & Anchor, Islington (01 359 4510), Essential Logic
- LONDON, 100 Club, Oxford St (01 536 0933), Merger
- LONDON, Marquee, War-dour Street (01 437 8603), Bert Jansch
- LONDON, Music Machine, Camden (01 387 0428), The Adverts / The Innocents
- LONDON, Nashville, Kensington (01 601 6071), Sniff 'N' The Tears
- LONDON, North East London Polytechnic, Walthamstow (01 527 7317), The Monos / The Crooks / Santa Claus
- LONDON, Old Swan, Notting Hill Gate, The Crack
- LONDON, Pegasus, Stoke Newington (01 226 6930), Barry Richardson Band
- LONDON, Piccadilly Theatre (01 437 4506), Dame Edna Everage (show)
- LONDON, Rainbow, Finsbury Park (01 283 3140), Boomtown Rats
- LONDON, Rock Garden, Covent Garden (01 240 3861), The Valves
- LONDON, Royalty, Southgate (01 888 4112), Cadillac / Riot Rockers
- LONDON, Scala Cinema, Tottenham Court Road (01 637 9307), Mike Westbrook's Braas Band
- LONDON, Swan, Hammersmith, The Piranhas
- LUTON, The Cottars, The Scratch
- MANCHESTER, Kellys, The Reducers (RAR)
- NEWCASTLE - UPON TYNE, University (28402), Sabrejets / American Echoes / Rowoff
- NEWPORT, Kings Road Hotel, Crazy Cavan and the Rhythm Rockers
- PLYMOUTH, Polytechnic (28617), Lindisfarne / Chris Rea
- PORTSMOUTH, Cumberland Tavern (730445), Last Straw
- PORTSMOUTH, Polytechnic (81914), Swift
- SCARBOROUGH, Penthouse (63204) Robin Williamson

Oi, Oi! Vintage modern music hits the road again with a vengeance this week. ELVIS COSTELLO AND THE ATTRAXIONS launch rock at London's Dominion Theatre, Tottenham Court Road, playing seven consecutive nights, starting Monday.

EDDIE AND THE ROCK RODS have a one-off gig at London's Electric Ballroom, Camden (Sunday). IAN DURY AND THE BLOCKHEADS set off on a brief tour of the Smoke and environs, opening at Lewisham Odeon (Sunday and Monday), followed by more dates at Hammersmith Odeon (Tuesday), and Streatham Odeon (Wednesday). GENERATION X climax a series of provincial dates at the Electric Ballroom, Camden (Wednesday).

More dates from THE CLASH too, who headline at London's Music Machine (Sunday), in a special benefit concert for Sid Vicious, following an approach from Sid's mum, Mrs Anne Beverley. THE SLITS and THE INNOCENTS support on the benefit gig and at Portsmouth Locarno (Sunday), Purley Tiffany's (Monday) and Wolverhampton Civic Hall (Wednesday). SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES also play Purley Tiffany's (Tuesday).

Extra London action from TODD RUNDGREN featuring a week at The Venue, Victoria (starting Friday), TAPPER ZUKIE at the Rainbow, Finsbury Park (Saturday), AL STEWART at Hammersmith Odeon (Friday and Saturday) and THIN LIZZY, also at Hammersmith (Sunday), THE DARTS (Monday) and PETER GABRIEL (Tuesday).

In the provinces, ROD STEWART has more fun at Birmingham National Exhibition Centre (Saturday and Sunday), before his Olympia stretch next week. And ALEX HARVEY celebrates the imminent arrival of the season of reindeer and mistletoe in a special Xmas showcase performance at Glasgow Apollo (Saturday), with his new band. Check out the listings for the best of the rest around the circuit, but don't forget to ring before you go. Bands, even the best of 'em, can get blown-out at short notice.

- SHEFFIELD, Limit (730940), Girlschool
- SHEFFIELD, The University, Main Hall (24078), Next Band
- SWANSEA, Nuts Club (86109), Wild Heroes
- TANDERAGEE, White Swan, Scene Stealer
- TAVANTON, Sarnersset College of Art (83408), The Bishops
- WAKEFIELD, Theatre Club (75021), Mud
- WANTAGE, The Swan, Double Exposure
- YORK, Revolution (26224), Neon Hearts

FRIDAY

DECEMBER 15



ELVIS COSTELLO: Seven nights at the Dominion, from Monday

- Funkadelic / Brides of Funkenstein / Parlet
- BLACKPOOL, Winter Gardens (25257), The Rubettes
- BLACKPOOL, Norbreck Castle (52341), Zorro
- BRACKNELL, Winter Gardens (27272), Cousin Stan from New Orleans
- BRISTOL, All Saints Church, The X-Certs
- BURNHAM, Night Out, Robert and the Remoulds
- BURNWOOD, Troubadour, Bullata
- CAMBRIDGE, The Alma (68718), Scratch
- CAMBRIDGE, Corn Exchange (88767), Penetration
- COLECHESTER, University of Essex (72462), Nuts
- COVENTRY, College of Further Education, Fashion
- COVENTRY, Hand and Heart (84294), Neon Hearts
- CRAWLEY, Appletree, Nightrider
- CREDITON, Queen Elizabeth School, The Fans
- CREWE, College of Higher Education, Hot Water
- DERBY, Clarendale College, Tiger Ashby
- DUDLEY, JB's (535697), Streetband
- DUNDEE, College of Technology (27476), Simple Minds / Medium Wave Band
- EDINBURGH, Clouds (031 224 5353), The Doomed
- EDINBURGH, Napier College, The Monos
- FALKIRK, Magpie, Necromancer
- GUILDFORD, Star Club (32887), Crazy Cavan and the Rhythm Rockers
- HAMILTON, College of Education, BBC
- HARROGATE, Qui 3, Bel, Agony Column
- HERNE BAY, Stan's, The Ignorants / The Volume
- HORNCHURCH, The Bull (42122), Jerry The Ferret
- KETTERING, Windmill Club (2117), The Bearshank Band
- KINGHORN, Cuznie Neuk, Brody
- KIRKALDY, Dutch Mill, Charley Browne
- KIRKLEVINGTON, Country Club (Englescliffe 790063), Jab Jab
- LANCASTER, Catholic Club, Anniversary
- LEEDS, Ffiorde Green (623470), Fischer-Z
- LEEDS, Victoria Hotel, New Mania
- LINCOLN, Welton School, The Press
- LONDON, Acklam Hall, Portbello Road (01 989 629), China Street / Pearly Spencer / Berlin
- LONDON, Acton Space, Chelsea Street, Metabolist
- LONDON, Bobbysox Club, Willesden, Matchbox
- LONDON, Brecknock, Camden (01 485 3073), Bravado
- LONDON, Bridgehouse, Canning Town (01 478 2860), Grand Hotel
- LONDON, Chippenham, Maida Vale, Barracuda
- LONDON, City University (01 253 4899), The Secret
- LONDON, College of Furniture (01 247 1451), UK Subs
- LONDON, Corner House, Stone Grove, Southern Cross

LONDON. Dingwalls, Camden Lock (01 267 4967), Ramrod / Basil's Balls Up Band

LONDON. Dominion Theatre, Tottenham Court Road (01 580 9822), Dean Friedman

LONDON. Golden Lion, Fulham (01 385 3943), Little Axe

LONDON. Greyhound, Fulham (01 385 0526), The Troggs

LONDON. Hammersmith Odeon (01 748 4081), Al Stewart

LONDON. Hope & Anchor, Islington (01 359 4510), Matt Stagger Band

LONDON. Hounslow College, Chiswick (01 570 2439), Straight 8

LONDON. Marquee, Wardour Street (01 352 3075), After The Fire / Spare Parts

LONDON. Music Machine, Camden (01 387 0428), No Dice / The Business

LONDON. Nashville, Kensington (01 603 6071), The Rug

LONDON. Pegasus, Stoke Newington (01 226 5830), The Monos / Secret 7

LONDON. Piccadilly Theatre (01 437 4506), Dame Edna Everage (show)

LONDON. Rainbow, Finsbury Park (01 263 3140), Boomtown Rats

LONDON. Rock Garden, King Street, Dead Ringer

LONDON. Ruskin Arms, East Ham (01 472 0377), Dog Watch

LONDON. Scala Cinema (01 637 9307), Tottenham Court Road, Mike Westbrook's Brass Band

LONDON. Sidney Webb College, Barrel Street (01 457 2977), Substitute

LONDON. University Hall Hospital, The Fabulous Poodles

LONDON. The Venue, Victoria (01 834 4673), Todd Rundgren

LONDON. White Lion, Putney (01 788 1540), The Vye

LONDON. Young Vic, The Cut, Waterloo (01 633 0133), Fran Landesman

MANCHESTER. Technical College (677677), Gillan

MANCHESTER. Apollo, Ardwick (061 273 1112), Rory Gallagher / Bram Tchalokvay

MANCHESTER. Factory, Russells (061 226 8221), Generation X

MANCHESTER. The Venue, New Electric Circus (061 265 5114), Brent Ford & The Nivons

NEWCASTLE - UPON - TYNE. Polytechnic (28761), The Rubinoos

NEWCASTLE - UPON - TYNE. University (28402), Spud

NEWTON ABBOT. Seale Hayne College, The Young Bucks

NOTTINGHAM. College of Education, Tiger Ashby

NOTTINGHAM. Sandpiper (54381), Freddie Fingers Lee

PRESTON. Guildhall (21721), Showaddywaddy

REDDITCH. Abbey Stadium, Close Rivals / The Cravats

RYDE (IOW). Prince Consort, Last Straw

SCARBOROUGH. Penthouse (83204), Cafe Jacques

SHEFFIELD. Hallamshire, West Street, Southern Cross

SHEFFIELD. Limit (730940), The Straits

ST ALBANS. City Hall (64511), Wilko Johnson's Solid Senders

STEVENAGE. Swan, Harem Scarem

STOCKPORT. College of Technology, Killer / The Things

SWINDON. College of Technology, Stadium Dogs

WARRINGTON. Padgate College (821336), Muscles / Paradox

WEST RUNTON. Pavilion (205), Tapper Zukie / Cygnus

WOLVERHAMPTON. Tube Investment Social Club, Rokoto

YORK. Revolution (26224), Strangeways

YORK. Winning Post (25228), Red Eye

BIRMINGHAM. National Exhibition Centre 1021 780 (414), Rod Stewart

BISHOPS STORTFORD. The Trogs, The Tranna

BLACKPOOL. Norbreck Castle (52341), Streetband

BRIDPORT. Bull Hotel, Brianac Flave

BRISTOL. Granary (28272), Write

BUDE. Headland Club (2355), The Young Bucks

CARSHALTON. St Heller's, Matchbox

CHESTERFIELD. Brimington Tavern, Wit chynde

CHIDDINGLEY. Six Bells, The Bats

CORBRY. Nags Head (63174), Paradox

DERBY. St Columbus, The Undertones

DODDINGHURST. Village Hall, The Vipers

GLASGOW. Apollo (041 332 8058), Alex Harvey

GLASGOW. College of Technology (041 332 7080), The Monos (Scots band)

HALIFAX. Civic Theatre (51158), Showaddywaddy

HALIFAX. Good Mood Club, The Bishops

IPSWICH. Tracey's (214991), Delegation

KINGHORN. Cuznie Neuk, Mowgli & The Donuts

LEEDS. Florde Green (623470), Fischer-Z

LEEDS. Haddon Hall College (751115), Arony Colum

LEEDS. Ralph Thoresby Community Centre (67911), Ruff Sedd / The Gimmicks / The Mess

LEEDS. Vivas (456249), Alwoodley Jets

LIVERPOOL. Empire (051 709 1555), Jasper Carrot

LIVERPOOL. Eric's (051 236 7881), Generation X

LONDON. Aetlon Space, Chimes Street, Metabolist

LONDON. Brecknock, Camden (01 485 3073), Portraits

LONDON. Bridge House, Canning Town, (01 478 2889), Salt Rival

LONDON. Dingwalls, Camden Lock (01 267 4967), Whirlwind / The Screemers

LONDON. Dominion, Tottenham Court Road (01 580 9862), Chris Rea

LONDON. Duke of Lancaster, New Barnet (01 449 0467), Cheap Flightz

LONDON. Global Village, Villiers St (01 859 2803), Wildlife

LONDON. Greyhound, Fulham (01 385 0528), The Trogs

LONDON. Groves Centre, Fenge, Tennis Shoes

LONDON. Hammersmith Odeon (01 748 4081), Al Stewart

LONDON. Hope & Anchor, Islington, (01 359 4510), The inmates

LONDON. Jackson's Rock Club, Archway, Ear-thbound

LONDON. Kidnapped Arab, Battersea, Tronics / Vold

LONDON. La / European

LONDON. Marquee, Wardour Street (01 352 3075), David Kubinec's Necess

LONDON. Moonlight, Railway Hotel, West Hampstead (01 677 1473), The VIP's / Little Bo Bitch

LONDON. Music Machine, Camden (01 387 0428), Gonzalez / John Potter's Clay

LONDON. Nashville, Kensington (01 603 6071), The Smirks

LONDON. Pegasus, Stoke Newington (01 226 5830), Big Chief

LONDON. Piccadilly Theatre (01 437 4506), Dame Edna Everage (show)

LONDON. Rainbow, Finsbury Park (01 263 3140), Tapper Zukie / Cygnus

LONDON. Rock Garden, Covent Garden, (01 240 3904), Chas and Dave

LONDON. Scala Cinema, Tottenham Court Road (01 637 9307), Mike Westbrook's Brass Band

LONDON. Stapleton, Crouch Hill (01 272 2108), Quasar

LONDON. Swan, Hammersmith (01 748 1043), London Zoo

LONDON. The M e s Polytechnic, Woolwich (01 854 2050), Penetration / Neon and the Pack

LONDON. The Venue, Victoria (01 834 4673), Todd Rundgren

LONDON. Windsor Castle, Harrow Road (01 286 6403), Robert and the Remoulds

LOUGHBOROUGH. Town Hall (63181), Crazy Cavan and the Rhythm Rockers

MANCHESTER. Russells (061 226 8221), The Vye

MANCHESTER. The Venue, New Electric Circus (061 206 5114), Blazer Blazer

NORTHAMPTON. County Cricket Ground (32917), The Adverts

NORWICH. Boogie House, The Flvs

NOTTINGHAM. Boat Club (869032), Spud

NOTTINGHAM. Sandpiper (54381), Tiger Ashby

READING. Target (565887), Little Jimmies

REDRUTH. London Hotel, The Fans

SCAMPTON. RAF Station, The Enid

SEAFORD. RAF Station, Strange Days

SHEFFIELD. Limit (730940), Freddie Fingers Lee

SHEFFIELD. Polytechnic (73894), Here And Now / Zero Gang / Patrick Fitzgerald

SLOUGH. Langley College, No Dice

ST ALBANS. City Hall (64511), Wilko Johnson's Solid Senders / Steppin' Out / Mary Jane Staffs

STOKES. North Street, Polytechnic (59483), Alberto Y Lost Trios Paranoias / The Police

THATCHAM. Hamilton's (62098), Muscles

TOTNES. Dartington College of Art, China Street

TWICKENHAM. College of Technology (01 892 4466), Wild Angels

WAKEFIELD. Polytechnic, Strangeways

LONDON. Stoke Newington Town Hall (01 988 3123), Revelation / 15 / 16 / 17

WAKEFIELD. Theatre Club (75621), Mud

WEST RUNTON. Pavilion (205), Frankie Miller

YORK. Revolution (26224), Those Four / Ambitions



CONTINUED ON PAGE 22 IAN DURY: Lewisham Odeon, Sunday and Monday

SUNDAY
DECEMBER 17

What are you getting for Christmas?



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SATURDAY
DECEMBER 16

ABERTILLERY. Arrael Club, Bullets

BATLEY. Crumpets, Pressure Shocks

BELFAST. Pound (30990), Scene Stealer

BIRMINGHAM. Barbarellas (021 643 9413), David Johansen

UPFRONT

FROM PAGE 21

MONDAY

DECEMBER 18

AYLESBURY, Grammar School, Blast Furnace and

BIRMINGHAM, Barrel Organ (021 622 1355), Fashion

BIRMINGHAM, Odeon (021 643 6101), Showaddywaddy

BLACKPOOL, Polytechnic, Supercharge

BRISTOL, Crookers, Stargazer

CANVEY ISLAND, Goldmine (62353), Delegation

DROGHEDA, The Gem, 90 Degrees Inclusive

EDINBURGH, Tiffany's (031 556 6292), Tapper Zakkie / Cygnus

EXETER, University (77811), Alberto Y Lost Trios Paranoias / The Police

LEEDS, Florde Green (623470), Girlschool

LIVERPOOL, Kirklands, Ded Byrds

LONDON, Brecknock, Camden (01-485 3073), The Vipers

LONDON, Dingwails, Camden Lock (01-287 4967), Sniff 'N' The Tears / Again Again

LONDON, Greyhound, Fulham (01-385 0526), The Troggs

LONDON, Hammersmith Odeon (01-746 4061), The Darts

LONDON, Hope & Anchor, Islington (01-485 4510), Flamingo

LONDON, 100 Club, Oxford Street (01-636 0933), Dick Heckstall-Smith / Georgie Fame and the Blue Flames

LONDON, Lewisham Odeon (01-832 1331), Ian Dury and the Blockheads

LONDON, Marquee, Wardour Street (01-437 6603), Racing Cars

LONDON, Moonlight, Railway Hotel, West Hampstead (01-677 1473), Surprise

LONDON, Music Machine, Camden (01-387 0428), Straight 8 / Daylight Robbery

LONDON, Nashville, Kensington (01-603 6071), The Undertones / The Squares (Sire Xmas Party)

LONDON, Pegasus, Stoke Newington (01-226 5930), Crooks

LONDON, Piccadilly Theatre (01-437 4506), Dame Edna Everage (show)

LONDON, The Venue, Victoria (01-434 5500), Todd Rundgren

LONDON, Windsor Castle,

Harrow Road (01-286 8403), David Kubinec's Xcess

MILTON KEYNES, Crawford, Double Xposure

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE, City Hall (20007), Penetration

NORWICH, University of East Anglia (52068), Here And Now / Zero Goetig / Patrick Fitzgerald

PURLEY, Tiffany's (01-660 1174), The Clash / The Slits / The Innocents / Chris Res

RAYLEIGH, Crocks, Matchbox

SHEFFIELD, City Hall (22885), Lindisfarne / Chris Res

SHEFFIELD, Limit (730940), Strife / Next Band

SOLIHULL, Boggerly Folk Club, Mechanical Horsetrough / Cocky

WARRINGTON, Carlton Club, The Dogs

WORKINGTON, Down Under, Fischer-Z

TUESDAY

DECEMBER 19

BASILDON, Sweeney's Disco (27035), The Troggs

BATH, Brillig (64364), Wild Horses

BIRMINGHAM, Barbarellas (021 643 9415), The Doomed

BIRMINGHAM, Mercat Cross, Digbeth, Cartoons

BISHOPS STORTFORD, Triad (56533), Scratch

BLAKE HILL, Mecca (50101), Autographs

BRENTWOOD, Hermit Club (217084), Albert and the Grobbles

BRISTOL, Crookers, Sargezer

BRISTOL, University Union (24161), Glaxo Babies / Joe Public / Maelstrom / Driving Cats

BRIZENORTON, RAF Base, Mechanical Horsetrough / Cocky

CARDIFF, RAF St Athan, Rokotto

DUBLIN, McConnaghs (84606), 90 Degrees Inclusive

LEEDS, Fan Club, Brannigans (663252), The Bliphs

LEICESTER, De Montford (27612), Showaddywaddy

LONDON, Brecknock, Camden (01-485 3073), Urchin

LONDON, Dingwails, Camden Lock (01-267 4967), Wayne County and the Electric Chairs

LONDON, Dominion Theatre (01-580 9562), Elvis Costello & The Attractions / Richard Hell & The Voidoids / John Cooper - Clarke

LONDON, Electric Ballroom, Camden (01-485 9006), The Big Gong Show

with David Allen / Mother Gene / The Heartbeat Band

LONDON, Golden Lion, Fulham (01-385 3942), The Jags

LONDON, Hammersmith Odeon (01-746 4081), Ian Dury and the Blockheads

LONDON, Hope & Anchor, Islington (01-359 4510), The Cure

LONDON, Kensington, Russell Gardens (01-603 3248), Beaver

LONDON, Hampstead Town Hall, Live Wire / Navahyo / Blue Steel

LONDON, Marquee, Wardour Street (01-352 3075), Blast Furnace And... / John Potter's Clay

LONDON, Moonlight, Railway Hotel (01-677 1473), Hampstead, The Members / Local Operator

LONDON, Music Machine, Camden (01-387 0428), The Clash / The Slits / The Innocents (Sid Vicious Benefit)

LONDON, Nashville, Kensington (01-603 6071), The Undertones / The Squares (Sire Xmas Party)

LONDON, Pegasus, Stoke Newington (01-226 5930), Tennis Shoes

LONDON, Piccadilly Theatre (01-437 4506), Dame Edna Everage (show)

LONDON, Rock Garden, Covent Garden (01-240 3961), Nicky Shy / Chris Hamburger

LONDON, Tramshed, Woolwich (01-855 3371), Samson

LONDON, The Venue, Victoria (01-434 4673), Todd Rundgren

LONDON, Windsor Castle, Harrow Road (01-286 8403), Steve Linton Band

MANCHESTER, Band on the Wall (061-832 6625), Spherical Objects / Grow Up / Not Sensibles

NEWPORT, Stowaway (5090), Steel Pulse

NORWICH, Cromwells (612909), Kangaroo Alley

NOTTINGHAM, Imperial Hotel (42884), Gaffa

PLYMOUTH, Woods Leisure Centre (26118), Alberto Y Lost Trios Paranoias / The Police

PORTSMOUTH, HMS Whaley, Delegation

PURLEY, Tiffany's (01-660 1174), Slouze and the Banshees

READING, Bones, Robert and the Remouids

SHEFFIELD, City Hall (22885), Jasper Carrot

SHEFFIELD, Limit (730940), Panties / The Vye

SLOUGH, Langley College (49222), Spud

STAFFORD, North Staffs Polytechnic (52331), Fischer-Z

WOLVERHAMPTON, Lord Raglan, Neon Hearts

WREXHAM, Yale College, Hot Water

WEDNESDAY

DECEMBER 20

BIRKENHEAD, Hamilton Club, Rokotto

BIRMINGHAM, Haden Hill Centre, Cradley Heath, Stargazer

BRISTOL, Crookers, Stargazer

CHESTERFIELD, Grosvenor Rooms, Thompson Twins

COLCHESTER, University of Essex (72462), Here And Now / Zero Gang / Patrick Fitzgerald

CORBLY, Civic Hall (3482), Scene Stealer

EDINBURGH, Abercorn, Ignatz

HIGH WYCOMBE, Town Hall (26100), 990 / Visage

KINGSBURY, Bandwagon, Samson

LEEDS, F Club, Brannigans (663252), Streetband

LONDON, Brecknock, Camden (01-485 3073), Grand Hotel

LONDON, Bridgehouse, Canning Town (01-476 2889), The Valves

LONDON, Dingwails, Camden Lock (01-287 4967), Merger

LONDON, Dominion Theatre (01-580 8562), Elvis Costello & The Attractions / Richard Hell & The Voidoids / John Cooper - Clarke

LONDON, Electric Ballroom, Camden (01-485 9006), Generation X

LONDON, Greyhound, Chadwell Heath (01-559 1333), Dog Watch

LONDON, Greyhound, Fulham (01-385 0326), Mud

LONDON, Hammersmith Odeon (01-746 4081), Peter Gabriel

LONDON, Hope & Anchor, Islington (01-359 4510), The Members

LONDON, Marquee, Wardour Street (01-352 3075), Steve Gibbons Band

LONDON, Moonlight, Railway Hotel (01-677 1473), Vest Hampstead, Addix / Luqueur

LONDON, Music Machine, Camden (01-387 0428), Fabulous Poodles

LONDON, Pegasus, Stoke Newington (01-226 5930), David Blossie Band

LONDON, Piccadilly Theatre (01-437 4506), Dame Edna Everage (show)

LONDON, Rainbow, Finbury Park (01-263 3140), Adam & The Ants

LONDON, Streatham Odeon (01-769 3346), Ian Dury and the Blockheads

LONDON, The Venue, Victoria (01-834 4673), Todd Rundgren

LONDON, Windsor Castle, Harrow Road (01-286 8403), The Monos (London band)

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE, City Hall (20007), Lindisfarne / Chris Res

NEWPORT, Stowaway Club (50978), The Jolt / The X - Certs

NORTHOLT, White Hart, Crazy Cavan & The Rhythmic Rockers

NOTTINGHAM, Imperial Hotel (42884), Witchynde

PLYMOUTH, Metro (51326), Supercharge

PORTLAND, HMS Osprey, Mechanical Horsetrough / Cocky

PORTRUSH, Arcadia (23786), 90 Degrees Inclusive

SALISBURY, Technical College (23893), The Bishops

SHEFFIELD, City Hall (22885), Jasper Carrot

SHEFFIELD, Limit (73094), Jab Jab

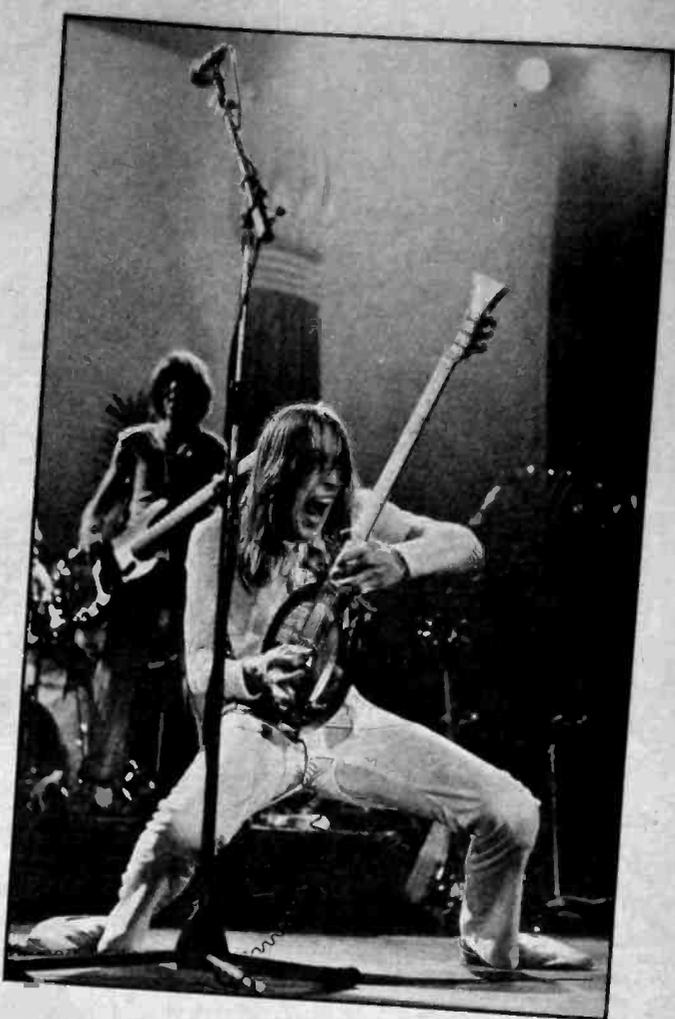
STEVENAGE, The Swan, Straight 8

TONBRIDGE, Tonbridge College of Education, Cheap Flights

WOLVERHAMPTON, Civic Hall (21359), The Clash / The Slits / The Innocents

YEOVIL, Rugby Club, The Trogs

YORK, Revolution Club (26224), Fischer-Z



TODD RUNDGREN: a week at the Venue, starting Friday

HOLIDAY DATES

CALLING all bands, promoters, agents! To be sure of inclusion in our Christmas and New Year issues, get your gigs for December 21 to 27 to us by December 13; for December 28 to January 3 by Monday, December 18; and for January 4 to January 10 by December 25. Xmas gifts, banana Pavlovas, sprigs of mistletoe optional.

THE JAM

The Jam Fan Club
c/o Nicky Weller
44 Balmoral Drive
Woking

The Jam wish all our fans a Merry Christmas and want to thank you all for the solid support during our Winter tour. See you all in the New Year.

Celebrate Christmas with the Jam at the Music Machine on 21 December.

PORTERHOUSE CLUB
20 CAROLGATE, RETFORD, NOTTS

Fri 15th **JOE JACKSON BAND**

Sat 16th **THE SWEET**



THE CLASH: London's Music Machine, Monday

BOB'S THE WORD

BILL GRAHAM learns about the intrigue behind the birth and success of 'Rat Trap' from Master Geldof himself



ROADSHOWS Come home to Geldof country

BOOMTOWN RATS
Hammersmith Odeon

I'LL KILL that bleedin' red nosed reindeer. There's a long wait for the Rats to appear and so they're playing tapes of old Christmas numbers just to get you into the festive spirit. There are a few half filled balloons being kicked around and a few bits of rusty tinsel hanging from the balcony. The place looks like a morbid warehouse.

For the past few weeks I seem to have been waking up with 'Rat Trap' bawling out of the radio and I've been following every Pled Piper twist and turn in my brain. So I thought I'd take a look at these lads from the Emerald Isle. Since London does seem to be rather full of foreigners these days, I half expected the audience to full of gent's wearing wellies and donkey jackets. But the place is filled with smart boys and girls.

Big Ben booms and the crowd breathes a collective sigh of relief and anticipation. The Rats pause like dummies in the darkness for a brief moment, before 'Mary Of The Fourth Form'. As obviously seductive as a suspender clad thigh under a black dress.

Geldof's looking very chic himself tonight, attired in baggy trousers and tatty jumper. He sallies across the stage like a potato-headed Jagger, while Melinda and Carol two seats down my row tell each other how sexy he is. (Can't see it myself.) They bounce up and down on their seats with beetroot orgasmic faces and a selection of coupe savaged blondes behind are gazing lustily.

Actually, the Rats seem to be very Surrey New Wave. Mum wouldn't be too offended if you put their poster on your bedroom wall.

This year's hard work has paid its dividends. The band are spontaneously dynamic, moved along by the powerful keyboard trinklings of Fingers and the slaps round the face of bass from a fellow who looks not unlike a dwarf version of Chris Squire (the bass player with a yers you dummies).

"Good evening London howarryou," booms Geldof, skipping to the front of the stage. All flash, Harry arrogant as he wipes rivers of sweat from his sticky nose and leans into the darkness. But the band get sloppy on 'Me And Howard Hughes', the spark falls to ignite on what should be a stick of dynamite.

But 'Like Clockwork' is a kick in the guts. I never really liked this song on record, considering it to be too disjointed, but it responds well to Geldof's stage theatrics as he moves his arms like a giant clock.

'Joey' builds into a semi shambles of bass and keyboards but the song still maintains its power as it proceeds rag tag and bobtail.

"I can play saxophone, but I just happened to leave it at home," explains Geldof as he introduces the saxophonist who played on 'Rat Trap'. Tonight he's reputedly wearing a fifties Irish showband jacket.

'Rat Trap' is perhaps the Rats' most elaborate song to date and out of the studios it could fall flat on its face. But it comes over strong and healthy - moving with ease from Fingers' lightning fast intro - into the richness of 'The Six and the local newspaper strike.

'Don't Believe What You Read' is dedicated to the demise of 'The Times' and the local newspaper strike. Geldof's worried that the audience aren't enjoying themselves... so he orders them to. "When you're looking at a dance band you're supposed to dance."

They do so with 'She's So Modern' as Geldof fondles an embarrassed bouncer's head at the front before turning his back on the audience and flitting away. He starts floundering around like a tatty spider, lost in a bedraggled mass of arms and legs. I'm beginning to think that the rest of the band should establish themselves a little more. Geldof seems to be left flogging himself into the ground.

Hello, what's all this? Oh, I nearly forgot that it's almost Christmas, and so the audience is sprayed with white confetti. But the shower is pretty unimpressive and I'm waiting for a really big treat since this is the Rat's 'Turkey Trot' tour. But no.

It doesn't really matter though as by now the crowd acts as if it's down with bubonic plague, jumping up and down and calling for Geldof as he stretches out his arms like St Patrick. Somebody's dozing at the mixing desk and the sound becomes a distorted mess as Geldof bellows through the musical maelstrom.

Foot stamping and cheering but for the Rats fans there's no more. At last, they scurry off home. Oh yes, I've been caught. ROBIN SMITH

'RAT TRAP' was no sudden inspiration.

The melody came late but the words had been written long before The Rats left Ireland. Back then, when the band's set was still Feelgood-based, local sceptics, including this one, would respond "Yes Bob, really Bob" while the singer pronounced that he had a singular of material ready for the off.

But as Bob proclaims, the writing went apace from the band's genesis, as Geldof scribbled out songs and verses. He still has a full notebook from those days.

Some became songs, others remain for translation. 'Rat Trap' was one set of lyrics that remained in virginal form when the band left Ireland. But it was one he had a feeling for. In England he gave it to both Johnny Fingers and Pete Briquette to work rough melodies. Each time he was dissatisfied so he took over the chore himself. He was still anxious about the result.

Enter Da Phil.

Over at the Lynott menage one evening, Bob strummed out the song to Lizzy's leader and Brian Robertson's sidekick, bassist Jimmy Bain. They followed on by tinkering about with Lynott's in-house recording equipment and string-machine.

And? Well, according to Bob, Phil said that if The Rats didn't record it, he'd take it for Lizzy to muchly. So, thus encouraged and indeed threatened, Geldof was only provoked to work harder on the song.

Come the trip to Holland to record 'Tonic' and the song had progressed beyond outline form but he still hadn't finally foisted it on the others. Sifting through material for the album, he played it to producer Mutt Lange whose response was so positive that 'Rat Trap' was immediately routed by the band for recording. Sez Bob, it was the fastest take of them all.

Its story-line may have been a key to its success. Mail, says Bob, is still arriving from fans who've taken 'Rat Trap' to their experiences. It's a Dublin song, albeit sufficiently unspecific in its references to catch a fire in England. Geldof gives a geography lesson. The gasworks are those in Ringsend, the meat worked, the Five Lamps gang derive from a character who once laboured alongside him there, this dude being in the habit of wandering into work toting a hatchet, with the excuse that a Northside crowd from that district were after him.

Other references he's less sure of. The high-rise flats could be Ballymun, the cafe any Catolins or Fortes in O'Connell Street, the girl any Judy who left home and school for a 'Piss Factory' job, wishing and hoping for that extra money but finding her fantasies reveried and starved.

It must have caught a nerve. 'God Save The Queen' may well have been the first New Wave chart-topper on sales but official confirmation could have been denied

by the compiling team discovering sufficient loopholes in the figures so as not to disturb the Royals at the climax of the Jubilee. Such is industry lore but Bob calculates that 'Rat Trap' has sold over 750,000 copies, a feat that easily lords it over the New Wave in '78.

Yet its release was no foregone conclusion. Bob names only one man, Clive Banks, their record-plugger, as championing it. When the time came to follow 'Like Clockwork', there were two other candidates: 'Me And Howard Hughes' and 'Living On An Island', the second ditched because its lyrics might deny it airspace.

The purpose of any such single is to revive album sales. 'Tonic' had been charting solidly since its first boost but a successful single could maintain or even boost momentum. One consideration for going with 'Rat Trap' was that its release might defeat those attitudes that saw The Rats as unequivocally a pop singles band, therefore refusing to place them alongside such as Dury and Costello. Thus 'Rat Trap' was the choice, despite - or even because of - its unwieldy length for Top 40 radio.

Geldof claims still to have had reservations about its chances, saying that he even placed a £10 bet with an Ensign employee that it wouldn't pass 15.

The single exploded in at 22 but even such a high-rise entry could be put down to the loyalty of their fans, 'aggressive marketing' or the response from the tour the band were concluding.

After all 'Rat Trap' was the show's finale and the lighting routine to correspond with the 'Talk, Don't Talk' and 'Walk, Don't Walk' motifs pinpointed it as a special song. But surely not a number 1.

The first indication of the building wave came after a video shown on the Kenny Everett Show, which had dealers clamouring for the record. The same video, not the sequence on Top of the Pops, subsequently went the rounds of the regional shows. I haven't seen it but Bob thinks it an important part of the campaign.

Next 'Rat Trap' jumped to 9, but before any hopes could be inflated, it only crawled two places to 7, the following week, an anti-climax that resigned the band to the belief that the record had passed its peak.

Then the unpredictable happened as 'Rat Trap' suddenly took on a second wind and leapt four places to 3. Geldof's only explanation is that shops may have under-ordered and since they didn't have the supply to meet demand, the record under-charted (till the next week when the newly available copies gave it the necessary boost. (Travolta - fever had distorted the market).

Now he freely admits The Rats plagued Phonogram, dropping in to check computer sales, ringing up every hour for figures, but it only snarled up a further place. Again, the chance looked gone. Travolta and Newton John's 'Summer Night's' might fall from favour but Olivia's 'Hopefully Devoted To You' had climbed from 24 to 4, a jump that made it the strong favourite for the pillar position.

In retrospect, it too was an over-stocked and over-shipped record. It didn't have the stamina to mount the final hurdle. Over the weekend, Bob noted that both The People

and The Sunday Mirror who use the MM and NME charts respectively had placed 'Rat Trap' at 1. But neither were the official British Market Research Bureau chart used by the BBC.

On Tuesday morning came the imprimatur. Manager Fachtina O'Kelly burst in to his bedroom with the tidings of joy.

"I was crazy, I was speechless, Fachtina was screaming. For the next two hours, we were all totally freaking."

Why the success? Whereas so many singles sicken after repetition, 'Rat Trap' didn't. A recent comment of Geldof's was he wanted The Rats to achieve the chart dominance of Abba, and the multiple mix of elements in the song gives 'Rat Trap' the same immunity to repeated play as the Swedes' finest.

One wonders also at the influence the success of 'Rat Trap' will wield. Bob speaks of various London names enviously congratulating him on the band's feat, words which, if sincere, could find 'Rat Trap' determining and crystallizing stances for '79. It's close and too soon to know. Besides, it's the canny independents, not the camp-followers who count. Yet 'Rat Trap' may just alert musicians overly absorbed in the London scene, that there are provincial realities beyond their current ken. They might just learn that street-credibility doesn't start and end in Camden Town.

For The Rats, the record is an international bonus. Slow to break on the Continent, 'Rat Trap' may enthrone the other arms of Phonogram to work on it through the EEC. Geldof himself is cautious, remembering their recording sojourn in Holland. Then, Graham Parker's 'Don't Ask Me Questions' was being played three times to the hour. It still didn't happen for the Dutch.

More pertinently, the record peaked just after The Rats had signed with CBS for America, stirring its executives to that type of excitement which assures The Rats of the benevolent, involved promotion they need when they finally make their US expedition in need when they finally make their US expedition in the New Year. 'Rat Trap' will be released for America delectation then.

Bob confessed to worries that it might be too long for the stringent and orthodox American airwaves, but his fears have been assuaged by the comment of the Beeb's Transatlantic jock, Paul Gambacini, who believes its extended intro will give sufficiently lengthy talkover time for American DJs to stretch out to.

Follow-ups haven't been considered as yet. They won't be releasing another single till early spring but the inkling from Bob is that it is unlikely to be another track from 'Tonic'. Three singles is sufficient return from one album.

As for The Rats, they prepare battleplans for their US invasion in the certain knowledge that their British base is secured. The Rats trapped back, spiders from Dublin not Mars playing the same reverse and rule play as D Bowie but with a raunch that secured the hip, not the suburban.

A Rat Trap - and the victims love it.

ROADSHOWS

WHAT A DRAG

SYLVESTER
Hammersmith Odeon

KNOW SOMETHING Sylv? You Make Me Feel (Mighty III).

Oh it's not just the stupid silver bangles that adorn your sugar plum fairy body. And it's not the utter mediocrity of your songs. It ain't even the fact that your voice sounds like Gerry Monroe after an unfortunate accident with a double decker bus.

No. It's just that after all that immodest spiel about how great you are and how you've got it all sussed I expected a lot lot more than a disco queen who can't even dance.

The operative word is demi. Demi - show, demi-ability, demi-enthusiasm, demi-sincerity.

Oh sure, the surrogate Arthur Murrays in the audience were appreciative enough simply because they could get it on in the aisles (in unison) concentrating more on meticulous movement than Sylv's contemptible demi-terpsichorean tantrums.

Two Tons of Fun, heralded as the freakiest girl back up unit ever to emerge were little more than fat women in ridiculous Shirley Bassey gimmick gowns. They made no impact and their contributions were minimal. Baroque bookends with Satchmo sweat rags to wipe off the perspiration of the years/pounds.

And the white - suited Caucasian band played on, oops, sorry, demi - played on.

For me, there were but two high spots.

Number One.

Of Sylv moseyed on down to the front of the stage and sat down. Well, he said in those tinkerbell tones to a hushed audience, 'Y'all look so rested out there ah thought ah'd have a little sit down mahself.

'Now, the song ah'm gonna sing for y'all has a very special meaning to me because it tells y'all a lot about mahself.

'Queer!' yelled someone from the back. Isn't British humour wonderful.

'A lot of people ask me 'Hey Sylvester, where do you come from?' Why do you do the things you do?' Well, ah tell them ah'm comfortable with mahself. Y'all know somthin' - ah like mahself.

'And you can all be just like me, y'all know that? First you've gotta like yourself, then y'all will see how things come around. Hey, just take a look at where ah am today - and it's all because of you wonderful people. Ah thank you people. And y'all know sumthin' else? Ah love y'all very, very much. With all mah heart in fact.'

The geezer seated behind me turned to his mate: 'Oh God! Fancy a drink Ted?'

Disco, demi - disco darlings are notoriously fey, especially those of the novelty variety. Sylvester's plan is clinical - flaunt what you got, get 'em while you can, rake in the dough and get out.

Trouble is, he ain't got nothing to flaunt.

BARRY CAIN

NIGHTSHIFT
Bridge House,
London

Dave Williams, Ian Thomson, and Neil Gammack collectively as Nightshift produced one of the pop singles of the past year. Said record was 'Love Is Blind' backed with a near perfect, and to my mind infinitely more commercial B - side entitled 'She Makes Me Love Her (but she don't make it easy)'

Now people are going to accuse this Adler typewriter of extreme racism as I know it appears I have this thing about bands from my particular neck of the woods. The said fact is, I just can't get excited about the vast majority of London acts and yes, sorry, Nightshift are Scottish and, yes, again sorry, they are good.

Nightshift's first London tour - only two gigs - was very nearly a non event due to the fact that the band's van was involved in a motorway pile - up and stranded for eight hours outside Brum.

Troupers to the end, however, the band took the stage at ten o'clock in Futham's Golden Lion pub and played a fine little set.

The following evening the band hit Canning Town and played another distinguished hour or so. Their sound impresses even more when one learns that the band have actually been gigging for around a fortnight.

Basically the band sound is electrified twin vocal harmony 12 bar tunes which on the first night were reminiscent of Stealers Wheel then, on the second night, I had it. Nightshift were, musically, the little brothers of one of my favourite cultist bands, the magnificent Blue. Both Stealers Wheel and Blue and the songwriters and vocalists involved with these bands - Gerry Rafferty and Joe Egan, and Hughie Nicholson respectively - played an amalgam of their country blues and folk roots. Ditto with Nightshift who add a little rock blues to the recipe. Universally excellent,



SYLVESTER with Two Tons of Fun: Diet is a four letter word

the set's highlight for me was their treatment of one of the greatest story-book songs ever sung, the magnificent 'Frankie and Johnny' which begins with 'Williams crooning the traditional version before launching into their own riotous version.

'Regular Guy' is pure Everly's given the uniquely celtic dual nasal vocal treatment and is just fine. 'Love Is Blind' features the same spiralling bass and guitar figure that made the single, and it's at this point that one realises the lightness and musical ability of this three piece. The wall of sound they produce really is enormous and splendid.

'Career Girls', a song on the same subject is a single, as is 'Constant Crisis' a tongue - in cheek look at tele - its with a great little twist, although the contender for the next one is 'Dancing In The Moonlight', a hell for leather choogie (such a nice word that) about fading hopes of gaining love.

As the guy in the crowd shouted after the latter song, 'Good stuff'. Yes, indeed it was. Nightshift are good and deserve your attention because they're going to get better and bigger.

RONNIE GURR
AL STEWART
Bristol Hippodrome

POTTED HISTORY: for many years Al Stewart was one of a number of British folk musicians with a cult following and a few good albums. Then he crossed the Atlantic and within two years has become a major artist and returns home for a tour to promote the latest album.

Does the story sound familiar? Well, he's hardly a Peter Frampton, yet in many ways he still represents the peak of UK folk rock, being neither one or the other. Indeed, his appeal lies in the way they're mixed, and the almost formulated manner of majestic music overlaid with wistful lyrics. Though it doesn't move one to tears, it does make for very pleasant listening.

He's currently with a seven piece backing band, which means added frills like sax and keyboard, and allows a greater strength to show. The danger for Al is that it is very tempting to dismiss him as having fallen into the American trap, which means for the most part MOR band-

ness. That point hasn't been reached yet, but watch it Al, or we'll all fall asleep.

Meanwhile, if you like the old Al Stewart, you won't be disappointed, but you won't have your heart melted either. It's a trifle too slick for that.

FRED WILLIAMS
WAYNE COUNTY AND THE ELECTRIC CHAIRS
Electric Ballroom,
London

WHAT A woman.

Wayne was looking wonderful on her return to the wacky world of showbiz, tasteful little black number off - setting those glistening blonde locks.

Actually, the funny thing about Ms County now is that, while offstage she/he manages to look quite slinkily feminine, onstage she's still a man (which makes it very confusing to review). It's nothing to do with actual appearance, it's just his manner. And that singing voice.

Still, maybe it'll come right in time - after all, Saturday was his debut in a dress. Practice will no doubt make perfect.

Apart from their glamorous lead singer, the best word for the band was workmanlike. Efficient, but not stunning. The songs, too, are pretty average work - outs (with a few exceptions) and you're left with the overwhelming impression that, without the sex - change gimmick, they'd be just another rock group. But so what? In this business, a good gimmick will always be worth a hundred musical maestros.

How this gimmick will affect their career is open to doubt. At the moment, it probably attracts crowds of curious onlookers, whose attention could be just what's needed to boost them to stardom. Or it could make Wayne just a bit too weird, ensuring his continued status as long - term cult item.

Whatever, he's worth a look. This gig fell short of being the electrifying event you might expect with all that power flying about (Electric Chairs at Electric Ballroom?) but it was an entertaining way to spend Saturday night.

SHEILA PROPHET
WILKO JOHNSON
The Venue, London

WHEREIN ONE is obliged to report another

classic mismatch between band and venue. Wilko Johnson's Solid Senders are a hot 'n' heavy bar band who should ideally peddle their wares in a low-ceilinged dive packed well beyond perspiration point and with steady streams of condensation saturating the walls.

Needless to say, the recently converted New Victoria Theatre is not like that at all. I mean it does make a change to be pilled with waitress-service drinks instead of growling quietly homicidal at an overcrowded bar, but it's not rock 'n' roll, is it?

Neither, for that matter, is Wilko Johnson's band whose standard fare are anachronistically consists of ageing rhythm 'n' blues retreats. This might have explained the mediocre attendance, and hence atmosphere, although at three quid a head only the usual contingent of die-hard Feelgood fans along with other odd survivors could be expected to spend a wet night like this in the wild West End.

By playing his beloved brand of R 'n' B, Johnson is very much out on his own, swimming against the tide for the sake of his own musical satisfaction. Yes, it's good foot-tappin' stuff and Johnson has considerable stage presence, sliding about the place, jerking his head around like a demented tadpole and so on. But the potential audience for this type of sound must be severely limited.

To make matters worse, selling records will be even more of a problem since it works better live. This explains why for many the Solid Senders' debut was such a disappointment, it being surpassed by the live limited edition freebie.

It was hardly surprising, then, that the tracks from the latter came over best. The staccato 'Doctor Dupree' was outstanding as was Dylan's 'Highway '61'. But this only underlined another problem: Johnson appears to be heavily dependant on non-original material with old chestnuts like 'Hoochie Coochie Man' and 'Love Potion No 9' finding their way into the set.

So whether the future of the Solid Senders? Certainly Wilko is a fine blues guitarist with a tight, disciplined band behind him. But what the world needs now is

patently not another axehero churning out regurgitated riffs from a bygone era.

Somewhat I reckon Lee Brilleaux and Co are not the only ones who have ever regretted the separation from their Mainman. The ex-Feelgood must sometimes wonder why he sacked himself, too.

MIKE NICHOLLS
CHARLIE DORE'S BACK POCKET
Dingwalls, London

CHARLIE DORE (pronounced with an acute e as in doh ray me fah etc) is to be admired. Why? Simply because she has taken the whole Nashville mafia shebang by the horns, swung the darned thing skyward and emerged triumphant as justifiable competition to a Tennessee's, and for that matter California's, best song birds.

The little young lass has just completed her first album in the sink or swim city of Nashville and this appearance was an assertion to her following that she is back and still on the right tracks.

An English rose by any other name, Charlie Dore had been described to me as 'like Emmylou Harris'. Which seemed apt when I first espied the lean long-haired lady with the classic Red Indian facial bone structure. Yes she had the required, excuse the sexist remark, lovely buttocks, tight cords, boots and satin waistcoats. For goodness sake, she even had the tambourine hang on the mike stand. A real live English country queen. A country queen of our own. When Charlie opened her gob though, she brought to mind the late great Sandie Denny and the always magnificent Jonie Mitchell.

Charlie Dore's new band - a six piece - are all new men, with the exception of the retained ex-Gerry Rafferty sideman Julian Littman. A bystander leant over the Gurr notebook and informed it that it should make a point of telling you that the lady's last band were better than this new set. Never having seen them I can merely say well that's as maybe. However, these six men performed with a competent degree of pizzazz and impressed.

Ms Dore writes light-weight country tunes which sound like nearly any US country gal after undergoing a process of Anglification. A Dolly

Parton from Dagenham, a Stella Parton from Scunthorpe, a Rachel Sweet from Romford, a Linda Ronstadt from Leicester. You get the picture? Her impeccable voice flippers over her songs, leaving a tarnish of folksy old England.

Those same songs run from the gamut of laid-back emotions through songs about songs about the Hall of Fame Motel in Nashville, about Karl Wallender the tight rope walker and about a strange pre-occupation of the lady's, falling No hard core country or western, more drawing from cajun roots than songs, most notably 'Floah Valley Moan', 'Stop Fooling Me' and 'Body And Soul' feature excellent mandolin, accordion and slide work as does 'Fooling Me' which has a blue beat feel, which again infiltrates from time to time. I found it the most satisfying moment of the night.

Charlie Dore and her Back Pocket offer as good a night out as you'll find anywhere. They may not be unique, but they are excellent. Will she bring the coveted crown of country music back to this green and pleasant land? Probably not, but for now she is still, forgive me the pun, Hunky Dore. **RONNIE GURR**

ULTRAVOX:
Lyceum, London.

THE STROBE. The black, the white, the opposite extremes. Very apt. Ultravox use strobe lights - to very good effect - frequently in their stage act. I suppose if you were a dedicated pseud, it could be called symbolic.

Because Ultravox present music in stark contrasts. They create and degenerate. Now they are the sophisticats of 1984; now they are the berserk young malleeters of 1976.

They should really make up their mind which year they want to exist in or suffer the consequences. They may have already suffered one; Island Records have despatched with their services.

A shame, because when they're good, they're very good, for all their pretensions and Kraftwerk borrowings and Bowie posturing. If they seem occasionally uneasy in their modern stance - 'Slow Motion', for instance, sounds too much like Genesis for comfort - it's a forgivable slip in discipline, because it is one of the least worrying facets of their personality crisis.

They are their own worst enemy. Mixing in the run - of - the - mill head bruising 'Young Savage' and 'Rockwork' with the miles away post-Bowie romantics of 'Just For A Moment' or 'Quiet Men' can only lead to alienation of some of the audience.

John Foxx is an elegant frontman in the blue light, unsmiling and rigid. And his voice, white lipped, terse, is essential to the Ultravox atmosphere.

Connie Plank, the Kraftwerk mentor, has apparently offered to finance their next album record company. It may prove. But only if his prodigies put the things of their childhood behind them and look into the mekkanik future with all of their metal heart.

TIM LOTT

ROADSHOWS MAGIC!

ERIC CLAPTON
Hammersmith
Odeon

"NICE TO play to an educated audience!" chuckled Eric Clapton acknowledging the roars of approval greeting his band's rendition of 'Cocaine'. Educated? Some of these punters were positively elderly, making yours truly feel once again like the barmy schoolkid who scribbled an essay about EC for being the world's most wonderful human being. Continuing to be a dreamophile long after the demise of one of rock & roll's most influential artists, this gig was to be approached with caution. After all, with the exception of '461 Ocean Boulevard', Clapton's solo career has hardly been illustrious. Indeed, for a time it seemed that the once brilliant blues guitarist was either suffering incredible frustration in trying to

realise his enormous potential, or had simply run out of steam.

However, if last week's performances were anything to go by, this phase appears over. Because, in a word, he was magic.

Sure, a lot of the material was either old or non-original, but Clapton's guitar-work is as sharp as ever while his vocals are improving all the time. And although the band played safe by opening with the seemingly irrelevant 'Loving You (Has Made My Life Sweeter Than Ever)', from then on it was a heads-down, no nonsense belly-full of blues.

Whereas 'Crossroads' was slowed down, 'Badge' was speeded up to almost reggae proportions, the obvious comparison being the way Dylan reworked some of his material earlier this year.

But while the Zim unnecessarily cluttered up his shows with



ERIC CLAPTON

superfluous musicians and caterwauling chick singers. Eric's trumpet card was pairing his band down to an unobtrusive workmanlike unit comprising Dick Sims (keyboards), Carl Radle (bass) and Jamie Oldaker (drums).

This allowed Clapton greater scope for his own mastery playing which reached a peak on 'So Many Roads', an eminent survivor from his days with John Mayall's Bluesbreakers.

Other stand-out cuts included the down-tempo 'Wonderful Tonight' and 'If I Don't Be There By Morning' before things

speeded up with 'Tulsa Time', another track from the latest 'Backless' waxing.

The evening climaxed with the obligatory 'Layla' which had all the geriatrics leaping out of their seats for a spot of idiot dancing, as I recall it used to be known in those days.

Nice one, Eric. Good to have yer back(less).
MIKE NICHOLS

DEVO
Edinburgh Odeon

I HAVE just been devolved, my mind has been ripped out and

thrown away and all that's left is 'space junk'. I'm confused and think I've been mentally raped, but then again that could just be the symptoms of Devo - itus. What can one say? They came, they played, they conquered.

The lights went down and we were treated to three films 'Come Back Johnny', 'Satisfaction' and 'Jocko Homo'. Then they came on and took Edinburgh by storm.

Predictably they were dressed in those awful yellow boiler suits. It is hard to try to explain Devo, they really have to be seen to be believed. It's like being in some macabre movie, you stand there and they do funny things to your mind with music. Is it a dream or reality?

I was completely wiped out. When you're getting lulled into a sense of security they rip off their suits to reveal boxer shorts and baseball padding. What is the meaning of this? I'm sure it's symbolic of something, but what? A few more songs and exit Devo. Two encores and appearance of Boji Boy who loved us so much, very cute.

Devo should be shown on all TV stations for an hour each evening till the whole world is convinced about de-evolution. Devoites unite. SANDY ASHE

THE BOYFRIENDS
Leeds Fan Club

IT WAS with some reluctance that I dragged myself out of Leeds Polytechnic where Wilko was bayonet - charging about the stage. The Boyfriends didn't look a

better prospect, not having got rave reviews exactly, so I was subsequently surprised to find myself cheering up. I can understand the lack of enthusiasm for their singles which sounded like outtakes from Costello's 'This Year's Model' sessions. However it's this very lack of depth that makes them such a good live band, playing easily assimilated pop songs you can whistle on the way home. Who cares if the lyrics are all romance, yeah yeahs and girls' names, that doesn't stop you dancing.

Mention should be made of the first group the Backbeats, because they are in fact the Boyfriends in disguise doing faithful versions of Sixties standards such as 'All Or Nothing', 'See Emily Play' and 'Paint It Black'. Their own description of this self-support as a "throwaway fun idea" says it all really. They were received quite well and must have felt confident when they returned later as the main attraction.

If only the usual Fan Club crowd had turned out this could have been an interesting triumph for Pat Collier and his band as only a few days ago his old job The Vibrators played their last ever date here. As it was, of the 100 or so who braved the freezing fog to get to the place most of them only came for the late bar.

The handful who bothered to listen were rewarded with a strong set from which the new single 'Don't Ask Me To Explain' and the real kicker 'Rocket To The Moon' stood out.

STEVE FLANAGAN

ALBERTOS Y LOST TRIOS
PARANAIOS/
POLICE
Bath University

THUMBS DOWN for the Albertos - they've blown it on this tour, for two reasons.

Firstly, the basic problem with any music comedy routine is that it has to be carefully planned to get the optimum response from both music and humour, which is no easy balance to achieve.

Sure, the Albertos were funny, if you prefer chuckles to hysteria, and sure the musical content was of a high standard, but what makes a gig is what you do with the material you've got and they didn't do much more than repeat it.

Throw in a surrealist video show as a gimmick and it begins to look as if the band are relying on it.

The second reason they blew it was the one that made it worth going. The support band, they're called the Police, they're a three piece outfit whose credentials range from Curved Air to Kevin Ayres and what they play is so fresh it was almost picked yesterday.

It's a simplistic sharp rock - reggae sound labeled new wave only because of its pace. The stillborn classic 'Roxanne' is their best-known number and even that is only a measure of the quality of their songs.

By all means go and see the Albertos and get there early and the force will be with you. FRED WILLIAMS

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SLADE, IT'S Christmas so get on up and let's hear yer Noize! - Love Juliet. SLADE'S DON POWELL Special Christmas greetings, and to your parents have a fantastic time in Wolverhampton. See you soon. - Dave Kemp, W. Hampstead. SLADE CHRISTMAS greetings. Best wishes for 1979, good luck Jimmy and Louise with the baby. "Born To Be Wild"!! - Dave Kemp, Sladist forever!

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I'M BILLY Bolan, and I'd love to hear from all of you who love Marc. Send S.A.E. for newsletter. - 11 St Joan's House, Phoenix Road, London, NW1 1SY. Marc Bolan is the greatest!! T. Rex rule! THANKS OLIVIA for a great concert at the Rainbow, I really enjoyed every minute of it. Come over and do another one soon, because Britain loves you and your music. - Alan, Hemel Hempstead.

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SLADE, MERRY Christmas. Still craze. Slade rock punx. - Ross Gary.

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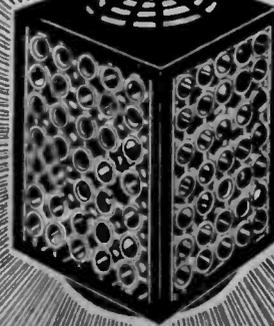
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HAZY, LAZY, DAZE

Alice Cooper and Bernie Taupin talk about it to ROBIN SMITH

THAT DEMONIC, black suited pervert of the stage.

The cruel swine who bites off chickens' heads and spits them into the audience. The man who corrupted a whole generation by subverting pure young minds with filth and perversion. The masochist who lives in a dark Beverly Hills mansion — where he beats his wife and grandmother twice nightly with a 12 foot bull hide whip.

Actually, Alice Cooper is a nice chap really. He enjoys nothing more than a round of golf (his handicap is six) and being kind to stray animals.

"It's funny but people still lock up their doors when I'm around," he says. "Parents shield their kids' eyes and airport lounges clear when I walk in. They say 'Get out fast you guys, Alice the dark demon from hell is coming'."

"All I did on stage was to create a fantasy to bring people out of themselves and enjoy harmless, imaginative horror. All I've ever wanted to do was entertain. I've always believed that a rock band shouldn't play on an empty stage, you've got to give the public a spectacular package. I didn't want my act to be just another rock 'n' roll band with long hair and a collection of coloured lights — that was so boring.

"So I set out to gather the audience together and plug them into my brain. I wanted to bombard them with ideas, like in a surrealist painting. I've been gathering up whole generations of kids and sending them home happy.

"Look, they said I was responsible for kids running amok with hatchets, but anybody who does that is naturally unbalanced. I believe that everybody's mad anyway. Every person on this earth should spend part of their time talking to a psychiatrist. The garbage you can assimilate from television alone is enormous. But I'm a television addict, with one in every room."

Alice has been spending a lot of

time talking to a psychiatrist and drying out after being an alcoholic. Life on the road certainly took its toll. At every hotel he'd leave a pile of whisky bottles. It was not unknown for him to consume a pint of bourbon a day.

"I was spending 500 dollars a week on alcohol," he says. "If I'd continued like that, I might now be dead. I've never been able to adjust to life on the road. While other bands used to smash up their rooms, I just used to drink. I started off as being one of the boys, sitting down and having a few drinks before losing control and downing so many more. But although the booze was flowing like a river, creatively I was drying up.



ALICE: normal?

"The bottle becomes the best friend you ever had. Your wife and your family and friends don't matter just as long as you've got that sweet juice flowing down your throat. You inhabit your own world when you're an alcoholic, seeing life through a wonderful red haze. But eventually I had the strength to realise that I had to give up.

"I was really no different to any bum down in the Bowery in New York. I was a human being who had been abusing himself for so long — the only difference was that I wasn't searching through garbage cans for my next meal. Some people develop an attitude that because they get up on stage and perform, that somehow makes you special and means you shouldn't be conscious of what you're doing to yourself. But in the end I had to look up and down at myself and be honest."

Despite his drunken orgies, Alice didn't go home to beat his wife up

and wreck the furniture.

"I really can't give out any scandals about laying into my wife because it never happened," he says. "I've always regarded my home as a haven away from the pressures of working.

"My wife had complete faith in me, she said 'Well you're going to give it up someday and I'll stick by you'. Every alcoholic has a psychological reason for drinking but I've never been able to fully discover mine.

"Maybe it's because I have difficulty in showing my emotions that I started to drink. Because I am so cold I can be dispassionate about what I'm telling you. I don't get emotional about the treatment I've been through."

Alice says he has no craving for alcohol, having now set his mind firmly against it. He doesn't want to turn into a bible thumping teetotal preacher, as he believes alcohol is bad only if people abuse it.

Alice's new album is 'From The Inside' based on his experiences when undergoing treatment at a New York Hospital. It was co-written with Bernie Taupin. They met many years ago when Bern and Elton John were on a talk show with Alice.

"We were spouting off about theatrics in rock, and found that we had a lot in common," says Bern.

"I haven't split with Elton, it's just that after years of working with him I felt that I needed a fresh challenge."

Bernie has been consuming a fair amount of alcohol as well, but he's decided to cut down.

"I used to discuss ideas with Alice then we'd have a drink and then another — we got so drunk we couldn't put anything down on paper."

The first song they wrote for the album was 'How You Gonna See Me Now' in which a dried out Alice goes home to see his wife. The other tracks are peopled by sexy nurses, mad vicars and the sad Jackknife Johnny — a Vietnam veteran who believes that he's still a prisoner of the Vietcong.

"We could have turned the album into a very heavy production," says Alice. "We could have become obsessed with being morbid, but on some parts we've tried to create moments of romance and fun. A nurse is a very sexy creature.

"There's always an air of mystery about those white uniforms they wear and what lurks beneath. When you're shut away in a ward they become sex substitutes. The characters in the songs are pieces of a human jigsaw, they're not based on any specific person."

Alice is making a touring show out of the album. The stage will be dressed up like a hospital ward and he hopes that if there are any fellow artists in town, they'll make



BERNIE: fresh challenge

special guest appearances. Alice is lashing out 500,000 dollars on special effects and employing a selection of dancers. But he won't be having laser beams.

"The effects are costing me one hell of a lot," he says, "but I have no real conception of money. I just phone up my accountant and say send me some cash and down it comes. Sometimes I feel like a kid getting his pocket money."

Alice's new show should be touring the States around February but we're going to have to wait for quite a time. However, he hopes to show a promotional film in Britain where he's trussed up in a straight jacket but apparently some stations are a bit dubious about showing it.

"It seems you're allowed to show as many tits as you like on British television," says Alice. "American TV is so clean by comparison. What we do have is endless clones of 'Charlie's Angels', where the girls are dressed in tight sweaters

so that they show every curve. The plots are non-existent. 'Charlie's Angels' is a masterpiece by comparison.

"You also show programmes like 'Crossroads' at a peak time when we would treat them as afternoon soap operas for bored housewives. Some of your British documentaries are very boring. I mean, who really wants to sit in front of a screen watching a two hour programme on the history of furniture?"

Alice pauses for another slurp of Coke. Frankly, I reckon he's extremely normal. But in the eyes of the middle aged, he's been an evil, corrupting influence. It's always been my ambition to check if he did really bite chickens' heads off on stage.

"No, I never did that. Sure I've used chickens in my act but I'd never put a live one in my mouth, I much prefer ham sandwiches. I'm sure people really believe that I live in a dark mansion where I create evil monsters. They used to think the same about an old Hollywood character called Bela Lugosi, who played Dracula. People thought he flew around in a black cape all day.

"But Alice is my Mr Hyde, a person I turn into when I'm on stage. Usually I'm just little of me. I really don't mind if people make up stories about me. I'm glad that I've stimulated their fantasies so that they can express themselves.

"The 'Louisiana Star' said that I'd shot down a balloon filled with earth worms over an audience down there. At that time I'd never even played Louisiana."

Alice was also supposed to have shot down a balloon filled with maggots — when all the balloon contained was harmless confetti.

"Really, I'm okay," he concludes. "I'd be obliged if you'd tell the people out there that we hope to make 'From The Inside' into a film. I hope it will be an independent production with a plot along the lines of Bambi meets Godzilla."

Hmm. Well maybe he's not that normal after all.

JILTED JOHN

Bag's party is in full swing...



GOSH, BAZ! I THINK THAT BELINDA CLOUGH IS WONDERFUL! IF ONLY WE COULD BE ALONE TOGETHER. BUT HOW?

WHY DON'T WE GET A GAME OF POSTMAN'S KNOCK GOING? THOUGH PERSONALLY, I'D RATHER HAVE ANOTHER PINT OF CIDER THAN GET STUCK WITH THAT MARIE!



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John's plan is successful!

I'M SURE THAT YOU CHEATED IN THAT GAME - BUT I WON'T TELL IF YOU WON'T!



OH, BELINDA! IF ONLY YOU KNEW HOW LONG I'VE WAITED FOR THIS MOMENT!

I'M SORRY, JOHN - BUT I JUST DON'T WANT TO GET INVOLVED WITH YOU. YOU SEE, THERE'S SOMEONE ELSE THAT I CARE FOR! I THINK IT'S TIME I WAS LEAVING. I'LL GO AND GET MARIE - GOODBYE, JOHN!



NEVER MIND, JOHN! AT LEAST THERE'S PLENTY OF CIDER LEFT!

YES, YOU'RE RIGHT! ANYWAY, I NEVER DID FANCY BELINDA - SHE'S GOT BIG EARS!

continued inside...

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