

zigzag 23

THIRTEEN PENCE





BIRTHS

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MIGHTY BABY—On October 6th at Blue Horizon to Ian, Roger, Alan, Martin and Mike—an album A Jug of Love.

MOORE—On October 6th at Surbitor Maternity Hospital—a son to Marti and Barbara a brother for Sam.

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a potted history of ODD-SOCKS KNOX ...alias John Sebastian

On learning that John Sebastian was in London for a quiet week's holiday, we decided to try for an hour of his time. Sure enough he greeted us, and he and his highly pleasant wife Catherine chatted to us, answering all our questions about his musical history. Now, in our opinion, John Sebastian is one of rock's greatest figures... without a doubt, but he was anxious that we didn't dwell on his past for too long because he was worried that readers would get the impression that he's a has-been. So, off we went...

CHAPTER ONE FOLK MUSIC... 1963-1965

John: I tell you, I've run through this story so many times that it's begun to get a bit erroneous in places - I've lost trace of dates and such-like... and at this point, my memory is pretty well shattered about my early days - I can just about remember specific incidents though, so you may be able to piece it all together.

ZZ: Well, we'll try to fill it out a bit when we come to write it out. Can we start off with The Even Dozen Jug Band... that was your first venture wasn't it?

John: Yeah - Paul Rothchild (who had just joined Elektra from Prestige Records) got that together and was going to produce it as long as it stayed together, which didn't look like being for very long because most of the members were going to college and were very conscientiously going back after the holidays. So the future didn't look too good - but I was on the street at the time (having dropped out), and so Paul picked on me to help edit the tapes and so on. So Paul was in there very early, and it was through him that I subsequently got a lot of studio work. Before that, I'd done nothing really (except one incidental recording), but in the next few months, following the death of the Jug Band, I got one hell of a lot of sessions.

ZZ: I've rather lost trace of time sequences here; was the Even Dozen one of the pioneer jug bands in that commercial revival, or was it formed to cash in on the fad created by Jim Kweskin's Jug Band and people like that? (In fact, the Even Dozen

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was going in Summer 1963, and the album (on Elektra EKS 7426 - long deleted) was released in January 1964).

John: Well, our band sort of started in Washington Square, because around there was a social and musical accumulation of people who were into jug band tunes. The core of it was very organic - it'd happened by itself, but Paul came in and saw the possibilities; he'd come in from Cambridge (Massachusetts) and he'd seen the success that the Kweskin Band was enjoying. Paul put the band together and it did a few weeks of gigging - there were 6 to 13 members at any one time, depending on the sun, the moon and all sorts of other things.

ZZ: You're referred to as John Benson on the sleeve - why was that? (and you'd never recognize him in the sleeve photo - complete with 1963 folkie haircut and beard stubble).

John: Well, that was my first ever recording on the harmonica and that was a very funny period of my life. I wasn't too sure of myself and in view of the fact that my father was a well known harmonica player... I was scared, I suppose, because up until then, that was my first claim to fame. It's funny in retrospect, but it was a weird and slightly worrying situation... I didn't want to blow it.

ZZ: What did the other members go on to do?

John: Pete Siegal is a producer now (he did Paxton's 'Things I notice now'), Maria d'Amato married Geoff Muldaur (and both played in the Kweskin Band, and recently released 'Pottery Pie' on Reprise (import)) - they were meant for each other, those two... it was so nice seeing them get together. Then there was Danny Lauffer - I have no idea where he is now, Bob Gurland - now I saw him recently; he's playing trumpet in a small orchestra - but he hasn't got a trumpet... he just uses his hands. He's got this incredible ear-splitting fat-setto which sounds just like a trumpet... he was recently hired as a horn section on a record session too. Josh Rifkin went on to become an arranger (Judy Collins albums, for instance), Stefan Grossman -

you know all about him, and Steve Katz joined the Blues Project (see ZZ 21 & 22).

ZZ: Why did it collapse? Because all the members went back to college?

John: Oh, it was just like a dinosaur, man... it was just too unwellly and after the one album it broke up - but it gave me the chance to get my foot in the door, and from it I got a lot of sessions and back-up gigs.

During 1964 and the first half of 1965, John was a harmonica/guitar session man for Elektra (mainly) and Mercury - doing sessions for Tom Rush, Fred Neil, Judy Collins, Jesse Colin Young (later a Youngblood), and was a back-up player for acts like Fred Neil, Lightnin Hopkins, and Mississippi John Hurt (among many others) in the Greenwich Village coffee house folk scene.

CHAPTER TWO ROCK & FOLK ROCK 1964-1965

The proclamation in Billboard magazine (summer 1965) that "Folk + Rock = Profits", together with the success of Barry McGuire's 'Eve of Destruction' (march 65), preceded a deluge of bad taste folk rock, mainly precipitated by talentless bandwagon jumpers. (In Sept 1965, at least 48 Dylan songs were recorded by folk rockers, fast buck addicts, and one or two thoughtful people).

Meanwhile, other ex-folkies had been looking a little harder, experimenting a little deeper, attempting to create music with a little more of that nebulous thing called taste. The Byrds, Bob Dylan and others were among the first folkies to get off to rock, but Sebastian took a little longer.

ZZ: I remember reading (in 'Sing Out!') in late 1964 that "John Sebastian is making some wild rock'n'roll cuts with Eric Jakobson". Are those the tracks which eventually came out on that Elektra 'Whats shakin' album, or did those sessions pre-date the Spoonful?

John: My god, you guys have really done some digging! Wait a minute now... yeah, I remember those sessions I did with Jake; we were just at the beginning stages as far



as rock was concerned, and we were sort of experimenting with material and writing. I remember I cut 'Rooty Toot!' (which later appeared on the Cheapo Cheapo album), but it was a straight faced song then... in fact, it was a matter of life and death! We did 'Rooty Toot!' and 'Warm Baby!' (which later became a Spoonful tune), but I can't remember any others.

ZZ: Was Felix Pappalardi (who was his session partner - see ZZ 20) on any of them?

John: Yeah, that's right - he was on a song called 'Lady Godiva', which had lyrics like this:

'Lady Godiva, got a 38 Ford now,
Powered by a Chrysler that's stroked
and bored now.
She and her brother put it together,
It's Omaha orange, and done in red
leather!'

Those were the days - we were trying to be surf types at the time. We were trying to be anything and everything in fact.

ZZ: Someone said you were actually a member of The Mugwumps (the first New York rock group - consisting of Denny Doherty, Mama Cass, Zal Yanovsky and James Hendricks); is that right? (They lasted for a few weeks in the late summer of 1964 - album on WB 1697).

John: I was in the Mugwumps for about a week. I was their harmonica player, but they fired me because they said I was having a bad influence on Zalman.

CHAPTER THREE THE LOVIN SPOONFUL 1965-1968

The story of the Spoonful's origins is told by Zigzag mate Peter Stampfel on the sleeve of their first album, and their name comes from Mississippi John Hurt's 'Coffee Blues'. Whilst the Byrds were the supreme West coast folk-rockers, the Spoonful had the East coast sewn up with Sebastian's 'good-time' material and their adaptations of traditional and contemporary folk songs. After a false start - four bum (relatively bum, anyway) tracks on Elektra - they made number one with their first Kama Sutra single 'Do you believe

in magic?' (July 1965), and stayed on top for two years (their first three albums are among our favourites of all time), playing the part of New York's very own Beatles.

John: Hey man, let's trudge through the history as quickly as possible because people tend to regard me as a relic - as if my career is over...

ZZ: Right, let's rip into the Spoonful at top speed then. In the sleeve notes and biographies, there's this romantic story of how you just sort of all bumped into each other and how it all fell into place naturally. Was it really like that, or was it a very calculated thing, the forming of the group?

John: As a matter of fact, it was exactly as the sleeve note says - it was one of the fastest things that ever happened to me. The Spoonful was two glorious years, and a tedious year after that, but it all ended up at the right time... it didn't die the death of some of these bands that you see coming back in their 14th reincarnation.

ZZ: Can you tell us about the Albert Hotel? It seems that every rock musician of the 65-68 era had to go through a 'paying-your-dues-period' of living and rehearsing at the Albert Hotel.

John: Well, the Albert was a very ordinary, low rent hotel and it had none of the mysterious that you seem to ascribe to it, except that a few musicians and pot-heads stayed there occasionally, which made it a place that you might just end up at of an evening. When we became faced with the prospect of rehearsing, we picked on the Albert because we vaguely knew the lady at the counter - so we used to play in the basement. We got a few gigs, like at the Bizarre, which was a really funky scene - 35 dollars a week plus as many tuna fish sandwiches as we could get through, but we were pretty awful. We'd played a gig at the Night Owl once before, but the guy who owned it threw us out... "no chance", so we rehearsed every afternoon at the Albert... just like the sleeve-note says.

After that, several other groups picked up on it and more and more people used to stay there... like the Mamas & Papas, and the Butterfield Band for instance. The first real rock'n'roll band to use the Albert had been the Mugwumps, but they only stayed there when they weren't working, which was when I used to hang out with them.

ZZ: At that time, when you got slung out by the owner, was the Night Owl still concentrating on folk acts?

John: Yeah, pretty much, and the fact was that after I'd finished rehearsing with the Spoonful all afternoon, I could pick up my harmonica and go down to the Night Owl and back up Freddie Neil who was playing there, but a bit later we convinced the manager to turn it into a rock'n'roll type of place. They were really primitive days when you look back... those little amps we used to have... whew! And even then people used to get horrified by the volume.

ZZ: Tell us about those managers you used to have - Koppelman and Rubin.

John: Koppelthief and Robber? You don't want to know about them! Get those guys out of here...

ZZ: Towards the end, was the Spoonful just getting like a jukebox, churning out the same stuff at every performance?

John: Well, we were putting out singles that sounded different all the time - they were all total non sequiters, and we were always amused by the way that people used to talk about 'the Spoonful sound'. But at gigs, the band was pretty energetic for a while, though it did pall towards the end, yeah.

ZZ: A friend of mine who toured Scandinavia in a support band to the Spoonful told me that you just used to sing to pre-recorded backing tracks...

John: (Stands up and assumes patriotic stance, hand over heart) Never! No, sir. Lies, pack of lies.

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ZZ: How were those sound-tracks done, for 'You're a big boy now' and 'What's up Tiger Lily'?

John: Very slowly. They showed us the film and played current chart hits in certain places to convey the feel they were after - like they played 'Monday Monday' in the love scene and wanted our music to come out similarly... so I had a definite feel to work on - but some of that stuff came out very rickety.

ZZ: To my everlasting regret, the Lovin Spoonful's only tour of England was cancelled just before it started, so the only chance we got to see you was on Ready, Steady, Go.

John: Oh, man, that visit was a bit of a vacuum packed trip, but it was one of the most amazing days I've ever had. It's a good two hour story, but to condense it, I had been eating hash all day; I spent the whole morning walking around London with this large lump of hash, which I was just breaking off in pea-sized bits and leaving them in my mouth to dissolve and get swallowed with my coffee and so on. By the afternoon, I had sorta reached the opiate stage of hashish, when you can't see any more, and I finally fell asleep in the dressing room. Next thing I remember was Zally shaking me and shouting 'hey man, you've got to sing 'Daydream'!'. Well, I felt ok when I woke up, and I managed to sing it alright.

ZZ: I remember you took the piss out of Cathy McGowan, and then you did 'You didn't have to be so nice', where you played electric autoharp and Zal had two guitars on - he played the intro on one, then strummed through the song on the other... that really fucking impressed me at the time.

John: I can't remember that, but like I said, I wasn't seeing too clearly at the time.

ZZ: Were you into psychedelics at that time?

John: No, I didn't really get into psychedelics until after the Spoonful.

In September 1967, Zal Yanovsky left and was replaced by Jerry Yester. Then it transpired that Zal and Steve Boone (bass) had been busted a year previously in San Francisco. Pressures were exerted and they escaped free after making a deal with the police and fingering their source. Rumour spread like wildfire through the SF underground where (to quote Lillian Roxon's 'Rock Encyclopaedia') 'the Spoonful's name became mud; their albums were used as door mats and groupies were urged not to ball with them'. Someone took out a full page ad in the Los Angeles Free Press to publicise the matter, and the details leaked out across the nation. Zal's departure coincided with the start of the Spoonful's decline and in 1968, John left (to be replaced by the returning Zal, who's solo career had collapsed). Later, all but Joe Butler, the original drummer, left, and he carried on for a while with three others.

ZZ: Who was in the Lovin Spoonful when it recorded that last album?

John: Oh, I always refer to that as the Joe Butler album. There was Joe, Gary Bonner (who wrote 'She'd rather be with you' etc for the Turtles), and John Stewart (who had been in the Kingston Trio, and who has recently made two excellent solo albums).

We didn't manage to discover the name of the fourth member because it was obvious that John didn't really want to dwell on the Spoonful so we decided to skip on to his page six



The Lovin' Spoonful in 1966: Zal Yanovsky, John Sebastian, Steve Boone & Joe Butler.

solo career. Maybe next time we'll be able to ask all the questions we missed - like what the others are doing now, how they got sued over 'On the road again' and 'Blues in the bottle' (among others), in what circumstances they recorded those Elektra tracks, about specific songs like 'Summer in the city' and 'Good Time Music!' etc, etc.....

Spoonful albums: Do you believe in magic (Dec 65), Daydream (May 66), What's up Tiger Lily? (July 66), Hums (Jan 67), You A big boy now (Jan 67), Best of Vol 1 (Mar 67), Everything Playing (Nov 67), Best of Vol 1 (Mar 68), Revelation: Revolution 69 (Nov 68). All the above are now deleted in England, but there are 3 albums of selected tracks still available on English Kama Sutra and Buddah: The John Sebastian Songbook, Best of the Lovin' Spoonful and Once upon a time.

CHAPTER FOUR SOLO 1968-now

ZZ: When you left the Spoonful, you moved to California - why was that? The reason I ask is that it seemed that all the creative forces of the early sixties were on the East coast, but most of them moved west.

John: Well, I can only speak for myself. New York just got so dirty and so very depressing that I felt I just couldn't make it a base of operations any more... and I was born there and had an inclination to endure it when others couldn't. I had all that going for me, but I still couldn't stay. I think what settled it was one particular evening when I just went out to get some milk and I saw three junkies puking, two cats hit me for money, a stoned hooker tagged on to me... and it hit me - I only wanted some milk, but I had to go through all this grimness. It just sapped my energy and patience in the end.



ZZ: Isn't Los Angeles just as bad?

John: It's a very polluted town, yes, but there are still a few places that the pavement people haven't reached yet - you can still be near to the facilities and at the same time find a little corner where you don't feel New Yorked.

ZZ: Ostensibly, your main reason for leaving the Spoonful was to write music for an unsuccessful Broadway play called 'Jimmy Shine'; tell us about that.

John: Oh, that one... they didn't leave me much room in that - I had to do songs like 'There's a future in fish, Mr Shine!', which I had to tailor for a 60 year old actor. I originally did 'She's a Lady' for that, but they only used the intro and the last verse, and the guy who did it wasn't a singer... so it didn't come off. It was just a situation where they wanted the effect of music without putting in any cash or giving any leeway... like the band was only 3 people, when they'd previously led me to believe it'd be a regular rock band.

ZZ: When you went solo, it took about a year for the first album to come out, but the single of 'She's a Lady' came out very quickly. (December 1968)

John: Yeah; now that track was a little too hasty. To this day, Paul Rothchild and I regret the mix on that and on the album track too... most of the other things we've done have stood the test of time to my mind, but that is a particular bane of ours.

ZZ: Boo! I disagree - that's one of your best ever tracks...

John: No, man, it's just that little bit too greasy... we could do it better now.

ZZ: Was the album (John B Sebastian on Reprise 6379) all cut around the same time or was it spread out?

John: No, it was lots and lots of short sessions; it was going in one song at a time, but it came out, I think, as a very clean album. There are some good songs on it; 'The room nobody lives in' and one or two of the others, I feel, really stand up... but in the long run, I think it was a little too clean - it didn't really have the spark of life as an album.

ZZ: 'The Four Of Us' was recorded much faster and with less musicians?

John: Right, the cast was much smaller; one side of the album is seven fairly short songs, which I did with Dallas Taylor, Paul Harris and Kenny Altman - he's a great bass player - played with the Strangers and the Fifth Avenue Band, and now he's on the road with Paul and me. The other side, which is one long piece but split up into sections, has Dr John on piano, John Barbata on drums and Kenny on bass once more. It's a story about a trip that four of us made across the States, but we took a strange route, going from New York, down to Florida, then across in a sort of smile shape to Los Angeles.

ZZ: Who were the four of you?

John: Catherine and me, and two friends of ours called Bart and Carolina Carpinelli, who were just the right people to do it with. The journey took six weeks, and we just waddled along at 35 miles an hour in our old GMC truck. Along the way, we made several stop-overs and they're described in sections of the song, which altogether lasts 17 minutes.

ZZ: Was it designed as just a luesure thing, or was it loosely tied around a lot of scheduled gigs?

John: No, it was just a vacation - we just took the day off every morning when we

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The Zombies in 1968



COLIN BLUNSTONE:
"There seems to be an understanding in this business; that I never get any money"

Never before, in an up-and-down career which spans seven years, has Colin Blunstone been given such encouragement as CBS are currently handing out. Adverts and interviews in every paper you can pick up, TV appearances lined up... why, they even had him chauffer-driven 50 odd miles to see us out here in the wilds of nowhere.

Overshadowed by the achievements of other ex-Zombies, he quietly slid away from the sleazy tin pan alley world of sharks and hustlers for a couple of years, but CBS, who put up a large slice of bread to finance his comeback, are leaving no stone unturned in getting his name about... and they're succeeding; his album 'One Year' is attracting nice reviews and the occasional track gets played on the radio.

With press officer Mike pouring out large tumblers of wine, we got chatting, and started by dragging the depths of his past.

The Zombies, to Colin's subsequent regret, started off at the wrong end of the scale. Five schoolkids with a million seller on their hands the week they turned professional. This was no Alexis Korner trip, slaving and starving for years to gain some sort of recognition... the only dues they paid were a few college gigs in the area of St Albans. From then on, it was Top of the Pops, Ready Steady Go, tours of the States, as much work as they could handle, and... but I'm jumping the gun.

Rod Argent (piano), Colin Blunstone (vocals), Paul Atkinson (guitar), Hugh Grundy (drums) and Paul Arnold (bass), like so many other groups, got together during Merseymania in Spring 1964. The group however, the prototype Zombies, lasted only 6 weeks and Paul Arnold, who dropped out (or dropped back in) to concentrate on his homework (he subsequently became a doctor), was replaced by Chris White.

In those early days, they used to practise in Markyate, in a room over Chris's dad's general stores, which fronted onto the A5 before they built the by-pass, and their gigs were usually at colleges and rugby clubs around the Hatfield/St Albans area where they lived and went to school.

When they decided to forsake academic pursuits in favour of taking to the road to earn their crust, no parents shed hair and no headmasters handed out sermons about tragic waste of potential; it was "amazingly enough" as Colin says, "taken for granted that we'd turn professional... everyone seemed to accept it without undue worry". So they signed up with Tito Burns (who no doubt could provide ample justification as to why they never had any bread to speak of), and their first manager, who had been at school with them, became their roadie. They went from amateur to Top 10 chartbusters - their first single, 'She's not there', released in August 1964, became a world wide hit.

How did they get the contract with Decca in the first place? "Well, Ken Jones, who became our producer, was some distant relation of Chris's, and we went to seek his advice about going into show business. Right at the end of the evening, he suggested that we record with him, which we did, and he approached Decca... it was an independent production deal".

So there they were, international idols - they only had to walk on stage to provoke a wall of screaming and a sea of clammy pants. Those were the days - not a dry seat in the house, and the shrieking never subsided enough to let the music through. "They never came to listen - they came to scream and throw things... it was the way to behave in those days. I remember the police in New York had to rescue Paul from a mob of girls who had squashed him up against a plate glass door. The pressure

was so great that if the cops hadn't waded in, the glass would have shattered. As it was, by the time they got to him, he'd had his jacket and shirt ripped right off... it seems funny looking back, but it was often pretty terrifying at the time".

Ten days of gigs had been arranged at the Brooklyn Fox to capitalise on their American success - the second British group to get a number one hit with their own composition - and they couldn't even leave their hotel without guards, police and limousines. 'England Swings'... and the Zombies were right there, pioneering the Union Jack revival, touring the States three times.

Their first (and last) Decca album was rushed out in December 1964 ("Never mind the mediocrity of the material" the record company bosses must've thought, "as long as we can rush out some product to meet the demand"), and though deleted now, much of it has been re-mixed and re-released on 'The World of The Zombies' (SPA 85). It's worth getting if only for the sleeve photo, a right period piece; what a dozy looking bunch of berks, with their funeral-attendant expressions, bright pink faces, and matching suits, which look as if they were cut at Sainsbury's. But that was the trip then - every group from the Stones to Herman's Hermits had to have matching gear and even if your suit did fit as snugly as a prick in a shirtsleeve, no-one minded as long as there was uniformity. "To be fair to the tailor, it was a bit of a rush job" says Colin, "but I had to be careful not to breathe in too deeply or my trousers fell down... and we had to wear matching pointed boots too - they just about crippled me".

So off they used to go, packing their Vox equipment and polythene wrapped suits into their van, careering round England in a never ending succession of one-night gigs.

"Our van was painted red and white, like an ice cream van, and it used to get up to 54 miles an hour downhill (with a tail wind). The doors were sliding doors which had bloody great draughty gaps, so whenever we went to gigs we used to sit there in sleeping bags because it was so cold". Ah, the romance of group life! And the average dressing room, far too murky and cold to offer any solace to their freezing bodies, was never commodious to facilitate mass orgies with the abundant teenybop groupies. . . . not that they minded too much - they came out of it all retaining their nice youthful innocence, unscathed by News of the World investigations.

Their second single, 'Leave me be', died on its feet, but the next one, 'tell her no', was another top-tenner. After that, however, the hits started trailing off, and though they usually had a minor hit in some part of the globe, there were no more chart busters. They'd started the long downhill cruise to oblivion and they never recovered: "it was very disheartening, but we did a lot of work abroad, where there was always an audience eager to see us. . . . Scandinavia, France, Germany, America and the Far East. It was good in as much as we didn't have to slog round England doing tattier and tattier gigs, but we were all aware that the sparkle had gone".

All their subsequent singles met with little more than minor success; although they were developing musically, their producer seemed reluctant to acknowledge the fact and insisted on following the precedent set on 'She's not there' - hence all their later efforts suffered from a contrived attempt to recreate that thin, breathy sort of sound. In those days it was into-the-studio-cut-the-songs-and-go-home, and the group never participated on the mix. . . that's the way it was done, and the system was never questioned.

Colin could have gone on all night about specific incidents that all added up to the fact that the Zombies could have been a lot more successful if they'd been handled differently, but, as he says, it's all water under the bridge now and it serves no point to get bitter and resentful. The fact remains that they inevitably decided in 1968 to pack up. Rod, Chris and possibly Hugh would have gone on, but Colin and Paul had had enough, and the very first time that the group openly discussed breaking up, they split.

It's a bit late to conduct a post mortem on The Zombies - without a shadow of doubt, one of the best groups to come out of the 1963-5 boom - but I'm sure that examination would reveal that they (like most of the rest) got taken for a ride. You can just imagine five fresh-faced, trusting, naive, provincial schoolboys thinking that Denmark Street was paved with gold, and that the rows of mohair men were telling the truth when they said things like "why should we lie to you?" The Zombies were more like a charitable organisation and their income was cut up like a cake - everyone was on a percentage, and the actual group just got the crumbs. Suffice it to say that for the group, the financial set-up was rather less than perfect, but for the flesh-peddlars who vindicated themselves with remarks like "if I hadn't done it, someone else would". . . well, you get the picture.

A while before they split, they signed up with CBS; their initial 3 year contract with Decca had expired and, as far as Colin remembers, Decca weren't too interested. . . .

rested in renewing it. CBS gave them a thousand quid, Rod and Chris (from song-writing royalties) contributed a further five hundred, and with that, they made 'Odyssey and Oracle', their second (and last) album. "We did the whole thing all by ourselves and I think it was bloody good for £1500. We economised by using mellotron instead of strings and we only employed session men on one track". A great album (now deleted, but look out for it in second hand racks), but they had to fight for its release, particularly in the States, where Al Kooper was instrumental in getting it put out - he wrote the sleeve notes for the American copy. By the time it did get released over there (on a Columbia subsidiary label, Date), the Zombies were no more, but, just as an afterthought, Columbia released one of the tracks, 'Time of the season' as a single. . . . and it became one of the biggest hits of the year, selling over two million.

(Argent still do that song on stage and Rod Argent's voice sounds exactly like the record; I wondered if he had done the vocal on that track rather than Colin. "No, I did the vocal. . . . but I almost didn't. We were all pretty irritated at that session for some reason - probably because it was just about the last we ever did - and when I started to put down the vocal track, Rod called out that he didn't want it like that. So I said "if you're so fucking good, why don't you come and fucking sing it yourself?", but in the end, I did sing it, and I'm pretty glad I did"). Well, a hit like that, and no group to capitalise on it? That was more than some of the less scrupulous factions of showbiz could bear, and as a result various groups calling themselves the Zombies suddenly zoomed in out of nowhere to cash in.

"They made more money than the real Zombies ever did - I think they were going out for 7000 dollars a night - and this was at the same time that Argent were doing their first American tour, which lost a lot of money. Chris White was sitting with the guy from Rolling Stone when he phoned up the so-called Zombies' management, and their manager said "I'll tell you exactly what happened - the Zombies were touring down south and their singer got killed in a road accident. Well, the rest of the group felt that they owed it to him to keep playing the music". So there I was, dead! Then there was an English group called Johnny Carr and the Cadillac - it cost us £150 to sue them to prevent them using our name. . . . I think that's really bad - a straight-down fiddle like that and we still have to pay half the costs".

In May 1969, a single called 'Imagine the swan' / 'Conversation on Floral Street', purporting to be by the Zombies was released in the States. I asked what that was all about. "By the time 'Time of the season' had become a hit, Rod had got his new group together and those tracks were made by them - it was the direct predecessor of Argent, with Rod, Jimmy Rodford on bass, Hugh Grundy on drums still, and a guitarist called Rick - I don't remember his other name. They never did a public gig because Hugh and this Rick guy both dropped out and were replaced by Bob Henfitt and Russ Ballard, and they then became Argent. What happened was that CBS wanted another Zombies album after the success of 'Time of the season', but although there were several unreleased tracks that we'd done as a group, there wasn't enough to fill an album - so Rod and that group did another six or so,

including those two you mentioned".

As it happened the album never got further than acetate stage, which, according to Colin was just as well because some of the stuff was doctored up tracks that they'd made as early as 1964.

By this time, the ex-Zombies had totally dispersed, basically because fears of insecurity and the future had caught up with them. Colin: "it was a combination of the general slide down, we hadn't got any money to speak of, and I just got a little bit panic stricken - so I left pop music altogether. . . . with about £500 in the bank".

It wasn't that Rod felt the need to assemble a group of technically better musicians? "Well, looking back, it might seem like that, but that's not what happened. Rod was the one who wanted to keep the group going. . . . he was quite content with the line-up at the time".

So, anyway, Paul went into computer engineering (but has since returned to record production), Hugh worked as a car salesman (but is now Singles Co-ordinator for CBS), Chris White became a partner in a production company (and writes songs with Rod), Rod formed Argent, and Colin became an insurance clerk in the West End office of Sun Alliance.

What? How the hell could you do that? After 4 years of being on the road, doing and wearing just what you liked, you went and sat behind a desk from 9-5 every day? "Yes - exactly. It was very relaxing in some ways, but the first few weeks were very difficult. I was doing the filing and things like that, and I was often near to tears. . . . but after that, I actually began to enjoy it".

But then, a strange reversal set in; he'd left pop because he feared the prospect of ending up as a 40 year old rock singer, but now he started to doubt the security of life as a 40 year old insurance clerk. "I suppose I could have progressed, but there were blokes there who'd been sitting at the same desk for 30 odd years".

So, he made a demo recording of Tim Hardin's 'Misty Roses' and as a result, got 3 or 4 offers from various people, eventually signing a three year contract with Deram and a contract with Mike Hurst. Under the name Neil MacArthur, he re-recorded 'She's not there', which got to number 28 and he split from his job again. Why Neil MacArthur? "That was a Mike Hurst suggestion, and I was prepared to go along with it". Well, he recorded 'Hung upside down' (Springfield song), 'Don't try to explain' and 'It's not easy', but the whole Neil MacArthur thing just fizzled out without a great deal of excitement having been generated.

Did he think of forming a group and calling them the Zombies? "Yes, but I spoke to a few people and they weren't that interested. What I should have done was go to the States and do it there". Instead, what he did do was get back with Rod and Chris and start work on an album, which, having taken over a year to complete, came out last month. "It's strange, it's gone the whole circle and I'm back with Rod and Chris, yet during the time I was away from them, our American publisher was offered over a quarter of a million dollars worth of work - just for a short American tour".

Well, it just might work out financially for Colin even now - he's entirely free of agents, publishers or managers and is going to the States for a promotional

continued on page 29



SAVOY BROWN

In the early days of British blues groups none could top the raw, dirty Chicago blues style of Savoy Brown. That was well over five years ago. The Savoy Brown of today is virtually a new band. They've had a few problems, some personnel changes, but the quality of that special brand of sound that has become a trademark for Savoy Brown has not been marred. Now there's a new LP. . . . "STREET CORNER TALKING". On it, Kim Simmonds, who got it all together and has remained the one constant Savoy Brown member, receives able assistance from one of the most explosive rhythm sections around. As you will hear, bassist Andy Silvester, drummer Dave Bidwell, keyboard man Paul Raymond and vocalist Dave Walker together with Simmonds on guitar have laid down some pretty strong tracks. It's not difficult to understand how they can produce such a together sound for they are five talented young musicians with similar musical backgrounds—rhythm and blues, the blues, and good ole 1955 rock 'n' roll. 9 sell-out U.S. tours, 100,000 advanced sales for the new L.P.—that's where Savoy Brown are at in the States today. Five years is a long time. Perhaps you've forgotten, never bothered to listen, or maybe just can't get excited 'cause it's not a new band. Maybe that's why they hang out in the states these days where they are accepted. All we ask now is to listen and see if you don't get into "STREET CORNER TALKING"



TXS 104 Stereo LP



RECORDED SOUL MONO & STEREO RECORDS - MONO/STEREO MUSICASSETTES - STEREO 8 CARTRIDGES
The Decca Record Company Limited, Decca House, Albert Embankment, London SE1 7SW

CONCLUDING OUR MAMMOTH KOOPER SAGA - SUPERSESSIONS, OTHER SESSIONS, & BITS AND PIECES

ZZ: Tell us about the first 'Supersession' album.

AI: Well, the concept came from that 'Grape Jam' album (given free with 'Wow' in the States but not released here), which was the right idea but didn't really get it the way it should be - with enough variety and everything to make it tasteful to the audience... but that was a significant album because it was the first of its kind. You see, what happened next was that I was given a job as a producer at Columbia, but I didn't have anything to produce. Well, Mike Bloomfield had just quit the Electric Flag, so I thought we should make a record together - our careers had been fairly similar in that we'd both backed Dylan, both were in early blues bands, both had brass bands, and both quit 'em. So I got on the phone to him and said "Let's just go into the studios and jam... it'll be fun and Columbia'll pay all the bills". He wanted to wait for a while, because he was having a lot of hassles with the other people in the Flag, but I sorta persuaded him and we went in and did it. There's not much to say about it really - we did it, and then he snuck away again the next morning because he didn't want to do it anymore. Well, I was left with half of an album completed, studio and musicians booked, and no Mike - so I called up just about every guitarist I knew in LA, and Steve Stills was able to make it. Everything we did was done first time (we all knew the songs and the changes), and it all went on the album - there was nothing at all left in the can... but it was really made out of selfishness; we weren't at all interested in commerciality, marketing, sales or any shit like that.

ZZ: Why didn't Bloomfield turn up the next day?

AI: Because he's crazy... right out there... but humourously crazy. He woke up and said "I don't want to do it today" and split for San Francisco.

ZZ: How did Barry Goldberg get involved, because he was never a star like Bloomfield, but always well down the bill.

AI: I like Barry, but he's a sad little guy really. Mike got him into the session, but he didn't play on much of it. He plays alright... not too special, but he made the mistake of telling people he was the greatest keyboard player in rock'n'roll. He's had a lot of personal problems too... but I like old Barry.

ZZ: And Eddie Hoh - he was with Charley Musselwhite's Band wasn't he?

AI: Yeah - and he was with the Mamas & Papas too. His background was kind of weird - he'd be worth investigating. He was originally a folkie I think, and he did some stuff with Harvey Mandel, but he made his name, and became a legend as 'Fast Eddie', with The Mamas & Papas. He's a really great drummer, but that's the only time I played with him.

ZZ: That first 'Supersession' was such a good album - it knocked me out when I first heard it.

AI: Yeah, but it could never happen again; none of us had anything to lose and we just indulged ourselves - didn't give a fuck about anything except playing just what we wanted. I didn't like the title too much, but I couldn't think of a better one at the time. We even ran out of songs to do - we hadn't got enough, and we were going to do 'For what it's worth', but then Harvey Brooks came up with that song of page fourteen



THE (ALMOST) COMPLETE HISTORY OF AL KOOPER

his and we did that instead - he was going to sing on it, but his voice was so diabolical that we thought better of it.

ZZ: Did you make the 'Live Adventures' album because of the success of the other?

AI: Yeah - that was the old bandwagon bullshit that I fell victim to. We put the first one out thinking "Fuck it - a few cats'll buy it anyway", but it sold thousands and thousands... it was the biggest album of our careers and no-one had counted on that. So we did that double album as a follow up.

ZZ: The mixing is much better than on usual live recordings.

AI: I spent a lot of time mixing that, because it was pretty rough as a straight recording and I wanted to make it as pleasing as possible. All my records are mixed by stereophones, for stereo-phones.

ZZ: Now also on that album, Roosevelt Gook rears his ugly head again. After the name appeared on that second Tom Rush Elektra album, people started to spread the rumour that it was a pseudonym for Dylan - but it was really you, yeah?

AI: Yeah, it was me alright. I can't remember why I used the name on Tom's album - some union rule I think - but I used it on the Live Adventures album because I overdubbed the piano and, because it was a live album, I didn't want people questioning its integrity as a live record.

ZZ: That record was also the first recorded appearance of Carlos Santana...

AI: Right - that was the first appearance of Carlos Santana anywhere - nobody outside of Frisco knew who the fuck he was. He was big in Frisco though - just

about everybody talked about him. That album captured the energy thing, but, like the sleeve says, it's pretty rough in some spots. The sleeve, I thought, was a gas - much better than the original idea we had, which was a photograph of me and Bloomfield jumping off the Golden Gate Bridge clutching our instruments. Yeah - Skip Prokop on drums - I met him when he was with the Paupers; the first thing I did after leaving BS&T was to play on their 'Ellis Island' album, and I really dug Skip's drumming... they were a good band, the Paupers.

ZZ: Can we just talk a bit about some of the session work you've done? What's the story behind that Stones track, 'You can't always get what you want'?

AI: Well, I was in England and Nicky Hopkins was in the States - and they found out I was here, called me up, and that was that. I put the organ and piano on in London, then they sent me the tape and I put horns on it in New York - but they only kept the French horn and left out the rest... don't blame them; I had a bad night and the other horns didn't come out too well. I did another song with them too - I played guitar on it, but they didn't include it on the album.

ZZ: How about Taj Mahal? How did you get onto 'The Natch'l Blues'?

AI: Oh, now he's a nice cat. I remember how I got that gig; the sound engineers in the CBS studios in LA take a break every three hours - it's a union rule - and there is nothing you can do except wait for them to come back. So I usually go out and sit in my car, for want of something better to do. Well, one day, Taj Mahal came across me sitting out there in the car park and got me to play on his session - so I did, and they had great stuff to play as well. 'You don't miss your water' was especially good because he sang it live, right along with us, and my god, he sang the shit out of that song. The only trouble was that it was in a hard key... D or F# or something like that, or else I could've played a lot better.

ZZ: Going back further, how did you get involved with Elektra... your track on 'Whats shakin' and that Tom Rush album?

AI: Well, they called me up because they were all folkies and they wanted to get into rock - they knew I was the rock'n'roll kid. I was pleased to do that Tom Rush record ('take a closer walk') because I had the chance to play lead guitar... I liked the album, but it was the Dylan influence coming on all the folkies, you know. Jac Holzman and Paul Rothchild were really nice people and they genuinely wanted to get into that rock side, so I showed them as much as I could. Fuzz Tones had just come out, so I really cut loose... wow!

ZZ: Since you mention Dylan again, did you learn much from him?

AI: Sure. A whole style of playing the piano, a whole concept of chords and bass lines relative to those chords, a whole way of looking at life... hundreds of things.

ZZ: Do you find his influence active even now?

AI: To some extent, yeah. You see, he's such a strong personality that if you don't watch yourself you'll walk around just like him. I was lucky enough to see that I was headed that way and just yanked myself out in time. I got a lot of good out of him, yet I don't feel I'm mirroring him.

John
Photo by Crazy Man Michael

JOHN LEE AND HIS OLD MOTHER.



John Lee and his 76 year old mother photographed at their cottage at Abbotskerswell the day after he came home from Portland Prison.



John 'Babbacombe' Lee was taken to the gallows three times and three times survived the attempts to hang him.

The story that surrounds this fact was written as an autobiography in Lloyd's Weekly News, 1907.

Dave Swarbrick found a curled, yellowing bundle of these papers buried in a Ware antique shop; they were bound and signed by John Lee himself.

Now the story of 'The Man They Could Not Hang' has been brought to life again by FAIRPORT CONVENTION on their new album 'Babbacombe Lee'. A photograph of John Lee and his mother has been used for the front cover.

Songs on Side 1 cover John's reflections on his boyhood; his introduction to Miss

Keyse and The Glen; his life in the Navy, by far his happiest period; and his illness, which finally resulted in his return to the service of Miss Keyse. This side ends with the beginning of tragedy: the brutal senselessness of the apparent criminal who slays his kind old mistress.



Side 2 continues the tragedy. John was hardly more than a bewildered observer at his own trial. He waits three sad weeks in the condemned cell for his last night on earth. When it arrives, a strange, prophetic dream comes to him, helping him to bear the strain of the next day's ordeal, as scaffold and its crew try in vain three times to take his life.

FAIRPORT CONVENTION:
'BABBACOMBE LEE'

OUT NOW ON ISLAND. ILPS 9176
Island records Ltd
basin street london w11



Chart: Fire/Mac Nov 1971

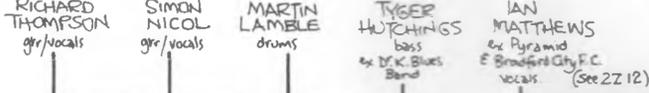
NOT TO ANY TIME SCALE

FAIRPORT CONVENTION 1

NOV 1967 - MAY 1968. Formerly called TIM TURNER'S NARRATION, and various combinations of a folk, blues & jug band. Played Contemporary folk at UFO, happening 44, Middle Earth and all the other hairy establishments.

Album: FAIRPORT CONVENTION Polydor 583 035 (early 1968)
Single: IF I HAD A RIBBON BOW

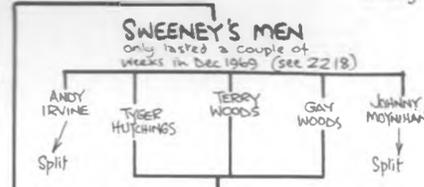
Joined Giles Gals & Hipp, but left when they became King Crimson. Was secretary of the Revolution Club. Founded Trader Home with Jackie McAuley (Jan 1969 - May 1970), married Simon Stable. Involved in various hassles with Red Bus & Pye, but formed DIBLE, CORNELL & THE MILLER BROTHERS for a while.



DAVE SWARBRICK & MARTIN CARTHY folk club duo

MATTHEWS SOUTHERN COMFORT

late 1969 - 1970, when Ian Matthews left to go solo, and the group carried on. MSC made 3 albums on MCA, then, after Ian left, Southern Comfort made an album on Harvest - Frog City.

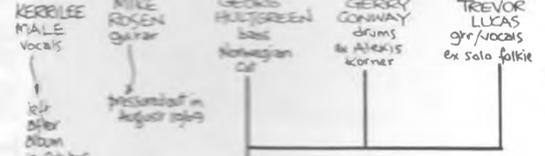


ELECTION 1

album: ELECTION summer 1968

AUG 1967 - OCT 1968

Much-wanted Elektra band which never got off the ground



FAIRPORT CONVENTION 2

MAY 1968 - SUMMER 1969. Playing a sort of Spontfully/Country/American folk rock load of stuff, with lumps of traditional British folk starting to trickle in. Swarbrick guested on 'Unhalfbricking'.

Album: WHAT WE DO ON OUR HOLIDAYS LPs 9092 (Jan 69)
UNHALFBRICKING LPs 9102 (July 69)

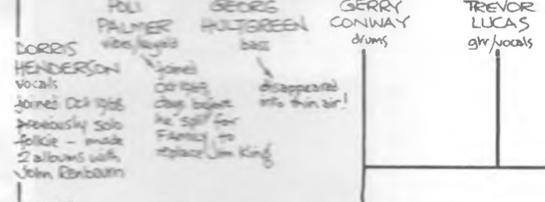


ELECTION 2

album: ELECTION summer 1968

OCT 1968 - OCT 1969

Made only singles - started just before recording album



FAIRPORT CONVENTION 3

SEPT 1969 - NOV 1969. Reorganized and reformed after road accident. Swarbrick comes in bringing New trad repertoire & influence. New band is playing 90% trad British + 'Ballad of Easy Rider' & 'White Horse' etc.

Album: LIEGE & LIEF LPs 9115 (Dec 69)



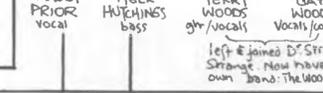
SWEENEY'S MEN

only lasted a couple of weeks in Dec 1969 (see 22 18)



STEELEYE SPAN 1

JAN 69 - APRIL 70 (see 22 18)
Album: HARK! THE VILLAGE WAIT RCA SF8113

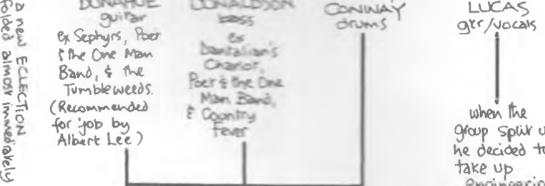


FOTHERINGAY

album: FOTHERINGAY LPs 9125 (June 1970)

MAR 1970 - JAN 1971

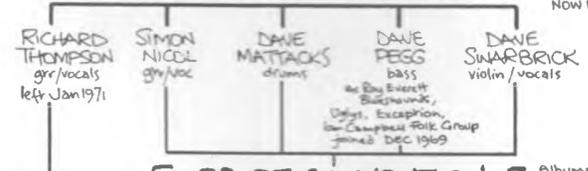
They decide to continue without replacing Sandy Denny. & continue playing electric traditional British rock + own material.



FAIRPORT CONVENTION 4

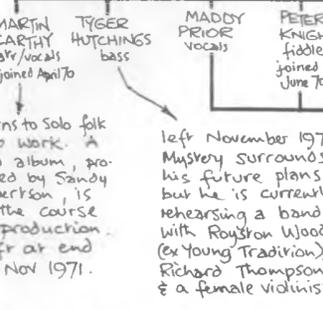
DEC 1969 - JAN 1971. They decide to continue without replacing Sandy Denny. & continue playing electric traditional British rock + own material.

Album: FULL HOUSE LPs 9130 July 1970
Single: NOW BE THANKFUL



STEELEYE SPAN 2

APRIL 70 - NOV 1971 (see 22 18)
Albums: PLEASE TO SEE THE KING CAS 1029
TEN MAN MOP - Released on B&C next month



MICK GREENWOOD BAND

OCTOBER 1971 ONWARDS



FAIRPORT CONVENTION 5

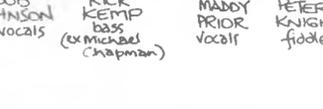
JAN 1971 - NOW. Having been together and grown together as a unit, they decide not to replace Richard Thompson. Simon Nicol takes over lead guitar & all 4 now sing.

Albums: ANGEL DELIGHT LPs 9162 (June 1971)
BABBACOMBE LEE LPs 9176 (Nov 1971)



STEELEYE SPAN 3

DECEMBER 1971 ONWARDS



Fairport Convention/Volume 5 - the 'Babbacombe Lee' gang. Left to right: Dave Mattacks (having one of his turns?), Simon Nicol, Dave Swarbrick & Dave Pegg.

"BABBACOMBE LEE: THE STORY BEHIND THE ALBUM"

An interview is, I always think, a bit like an exam; if you don't do enough preparation, you fudge it up. Well, I'd done enough preparation, in fact loads of it, but I was working on the assumption that I'd be interviewing Simon Nicol. As it turned out, when I arrived at the appointed place, there was Dave Swarbrick - Simon, unbeknown to me had handed in his notice with Fairport and consequently felt he was no longer a spokesman for them. So there I was with a load of inappropriate questions and, to add to my discomfort, Dave Mattacks was hovering nearby with anguished hunger pains distorting his face, begging (silently, that is) Dave S to get a move on so that they could go and eat. In the circumstances, I decided to limit the chat to 'Babbacombe Lee' and cram all the rest of my notes onto that chart up there. Right? Then let us begin.

Everyone by now, presumably, knows the actual story line of the album - the ads (like the one in this issue) give all the details, but how and why did it come to be written?

"I was shuffling around this sort of antique-cum-junk shop in Ware, and I came across this bundle of newspapers; they were copies of Lloyds Weekly News dating back to 1907 and John Lee's story, which was presumably ghost written for him, was in them. They were all in this folder, and John Lee himself had bound and signed the bundle, then he'd handed it down to his grandson, who repaired it and signed it too".

So he bought it, became engrossed in the story and set to writing a song about it. The task got out of hand - the subject was too complicated to be encompassed in one song...

"Originally I'd planned a retrospective song, but there were so many facets of the story worth illuminating that it developed into a whole I.p."

Was it done like a screenplay to a musical play - highlights of the story were chosen as themes for separate songs?

"Sort of, yes. By the time I presented the idea to the others, I'd already got the rough ideas for 3 songs and I had a chronological list of the main events which we used as a basis - everybody read the story, spent some time on it, and then we decided who'd take which parts. We kept pretty close to the story and even used Lee's words where possible".

Was it a lengthy business, I wondered. "The recording was done in a couple of weeks, though the mixing took a lot longer. As for the actual writing and preparation, that took several months; it was at the conception stage before we did 'Angel Delight' - in fact 'Angel Delight' didn't really start off as an album... we wanted a single, recorded a couple of songs, then thought we'd make it a maxi-single... and then we decided to record a few more and release the collection as an album instead".

A silly question, but how and why did you choose certain keys for certain songs, and did the words precede the music?

"Well, primarily, the singer's voice determines the key that the song is played in - supposing I'm writing a song which is going to be sung by Simon, then we have to perform it in a suitable key for his vocal range, though I usually write it in a key that comes naturally to me and then we transpose it later. In some of the songs, the words came first, but in others it was

the music... like I often have an idea for a tune running round my head and it comes out when I need it - I have to chop it about a bit to make the lines scan, of course... but there's no set pattern really. Then, when the song's done, you think how it would sound best - with an acoustic guitar or a mandolin or whatever, and you arrange it accordingly".

Considering how deeply Dave has been involved in traditional music for the last 13 years or so, how consciously did he try to mould the songs in a traditional vein - did he try to conform to folk conventions?

"Some of the rhyme patterns and the meters fit in with traditional convention, but other songs are very far removed and well into rock forms. One song is almost like a broadsheet... but the opera, if you want to call it that, wasn't done with posterity in mind, because I don't believe in posterity. Obviously there's a lot of folk influence because I've been working in that field for so long, but we didn't set

out to make it deliberately traditional... the 'Sailor's Alphabet' is the only song with real traditional roots, and we used that because it fitted the story and, more importantly, the mood - and it came from around 1860, which was the time when John Lee was in the navy... it fitted perfectly".

To pick a character like John Lee in the first place is a very 'folkie' move, because he's the ideal folk hero...

"That's right, he's got all the attributes in the same way that, say, the big ever had - he's a larger than life, almost immortal hero... and what's more, the story is sensational. One of the songs makes a point of that aspect - that the papers of the time made a big sensation of it all; it was a sensational murder, very grisly and not the sort of thing that took place every day in Babbacombe, it was a sensational trial, and then a sensational escape from the gallows".

Anything that Dave had gleaned and concluded from his extensive studies of the case was necessarily based on second hand information, but had he any opinions as to Lee's guilt... was the divine intervention, which is what it must have been, really justified?

"I don't think it's possible to say categorically that he did or didn't do it, but no jury today could have possibly convicted him on the evidence that was presented... any decent barrister would have made mincemeat out of the prosecution's case, which was little more than an amazing array of circumstantial evidence. But he was guilty even before he got to the court; the murdered woman was very aristocratic (Queen Victoria used to visit her), and a poor man like Lee didn't stand a chance... the whole of the legal profession and the whole of the country was against him from the start".

"If you want conjecture, I think a more likely murderer would have been someone who was having an affair with Lee's sister, who was a maid in the house - she had a private entrance and so the murderer could have escaped undetected... but Lee was more or less convicted because he was allegedly the only man in the house at the time. Lee's sister was excused from the trial because she was pregnant, which was a pretty heavy thing in 1880 - but she could even have done it herself... she reportedly to have confessed to the murder in a lunatic asylum some years later. I really don't know... it's interesting though".

Pete

At midnight, Rory Gallagher came off the stage at Wycombe Town Hall, streaming with perspiration and no doubt rippling with pleasure at having sent an over-capacity audience into a riotous frenzy. . . . and he found me there, waiting to poke a microphone at his face. But he was charming. . . . nice as pie, and startlingly different from the impression I had of him from the papers - it's easy to see that he's only interested in playing his music just as he wants to, and you can sense a strong mutual loyalty between him and his audience. His integrity and ideals aren't about to be eroded by the lure and sparkle of hit singledom, and he manages to keep the showbiz bullshit that inevitably surrounds a successful 'star' to a minimum.

ZZ: As far as I can discover, you got into music through showbands in Cork - is that right?

Rory: Well, if you want to go right back, I actually got my first guitar when I was only 9. . . . but even at that age, I used to sing at parties. And around that time I used to hear stuff by Tennessee Ernie Ford, Guy Mitchell and so on, but I was never really struck by music until I first heard Bill Haley and Lonnie Donegan, who was my first real hero because he used to play with such guts. From there I got into Buddy Holly and Eddie Cochran, then into Chuck Berry and that whole R&B thing. People tend to underestimate old Lonnie. . . . he wasn't just doing things like 'Does your chewing gum lose its flavour' - he used to do some really nice blues. . . . Leadbelly songs and Woody Guthrie songs - yeah, he was alright.

Anyway, when I was about 10, I was in a few skiffle groups and I also sang at concerts on my own, and, like I say, I was always being asked to play at parties. Then when I was twelve I got an electric guitar and started a group, but all we ever did was practise, and I think we only ever played one gig - we were just doing rock and roll. Well, I tried to get several bands going over the next three years, but there were all sorts of problems; for instance, at that time, you just couldn't get a bass guitar in Ireland for love or money, and the only guitars you could get were Rosetti Solid Sevens and Hofners and things like that.

So, as you said, I joined a showband. I answered an ad, and joined the Impact, or the Fantana as it was called then, and I stayed with that for about 2½ years. We did all the Irish dancehalls, all the Irish dancehalls in England, played bases in Europe and generally got around quite a bit.

ZZ: What sort of stuff were you playing in that band?

Rory: Well, the top twenty, some Jim Reeves, and a couple of Clancy Brothers songs - that was the staple repertoire of most of the showbands. . . . but we weren't so tied down. . . . we were only masquerading as a showband really, and that's the reason I was able to stick it for so long. I used to sing 'Nadine', 'A shot of rhythm & blues', 'Brown eyed handsome man' and a couple of my own songs, and the rest of the band would do Georgia Fame type stuff - so we were just about as far out as a showband could be, though our drummer used to insist on sticking in the odd Jim Reeves song. . . . it was a good compromise, and I was able to get out and play rather than sitting around at home.

ZZ: So at that time, the group scene in Ireland was pretty non-existent?

Rory: Well there was a bit of a scene page eighteen

THE RORY STORY

starting in Dublin, and Van Morrison was getting some things together up in Belfast, but when I eventually did leave the Impact, I was doing nothing for six months because there was nothing happening in Cork. I formed a trio with the bassplayer and drummer from the showband, which had split up, and we went to Hamburg for a couple of weeks in Summer 1965. The promoter over there had asked for a four piece group with an organ, so when we turned up each night, we had to give an excuse - like, "our organist's got flu" or "he's got appendicitis", when we didn't even have an organist. . . . but we got by, playing Chuck Berry, rock and roll and the usual German club music.

ZZ: How did the first Taste start up?

Rory: When I got back to Cork, the trio that I just told you about split up, and at the same time Norman Damery and Eric Kittingham left a group called the Axels, which was Cork's big group at the time. So there was a chance to get together with two really good musicians, and I took it. We played all over the place - moved to Belfast for a while, came over to England, went to Hamburg - and we stayed together from around August 66 to Summer 1968. It was very much a case of sleeping in the van, and long hard grinds around the various clubs, but it was pretty enjoyable even so. . . . and then we just broke up - Eric wanted to start his own band and Norman wanted to get off the road for a while, and so we packed it in.

ZZ: By this time, you'd got more into Blues as opposed to Chuck Berry style R&B. . . . how did you become influenced in that direction?

Rory: I began to hear people like Buddy Guy, and some of the older acoustic players. . . . it was just a gradual move;

for instance I found out about Willie Dixon from Chuck Berry records, and then discovered he also wrote songs that were recorded by Muddy Waters. . . . and so I got into his music. You know how you get interested in something and try to find out more. . . . it was like that really.

ZZ: Tell us a bit about Hamburg. . . was it the usual 5 sets a night scene?

Rory: Yes, we'd play 45 minutes in each hour, and we'd go on stage about four or five times a night - that's weekdays. . . . on Saturdays we had to do seven sets. I was never there for months on end, like the Beatles, but it was good hard labour all the same. I wasn't complaining though, because in the showband it wasn't unusual to do five hours on your feet without a break. . . . you'd get off the stage and your fingers would be mashed to pieces. I enjoyed every minute of Hamburg though. . . . it was fun unlimited really, because you often shared the bill with another band, and we used to have a lot of good times.

ZZ: Do you remember which other groups were over there when you were?

Rory: Well, you had people who were big heroes in Germany but unheard of over here. . . . like Lee Curtis, the Bats, a Scottish group called the Live Wires, and a bloke called Johnny Law. . . . and then there were bands like The VIPs, who later became Spooky Tooth, and the Remo 4, who developed into Ashton Gardner & Dyke. It was good fun over there.

ZZ: So when that first Taste split up, you formed the next Taste and came to seek fame and fortune in London - is that right?

Rory: The first Taste had come over in



May and split in August. . . then John and Richard joined and we got the recording contract with Polydor, who'd had their eye on Taste for some time.

ZZ: I read somewhere that you almost signed with Major Minor. . .

Rory: That's another story. . . a Belfast incident with the first Taste. When we were living there, someone suggested that we do some demos in a certain studio. I don't really know the full story, but it looks as if they're going to be released soon. . . .

ZZ: So when Taste 2 came over here, did you have a London base, or were you still living out of a suitcase?

Rory: No - the first time we were over, it was guest houses, sleeping in the van and that sort of caper, but this time we had a flat in Earl's Court. . . . and by this time we had a record company, and were also looked after by Stigwoods.

ZZ: Did you have all the gear you needed?

Rory: Well, we had a 100 watt p.a., my Vox AC 30, a kit of drums, a 100 watt Marshall bass amp and speakers, and a couple of guitars. . . . we'd accumulated them over the years, and we haven't really changed too much since - except for a better p.a.

ZZ: Had you come over thinking that the streets of London were paved with gold?

Rory: Oh no, I knew what it was like. . . I'd been over with the showband, played the dancehalls and on my nights off I'd go to places like the Marquee - so I was fairly familiar with what was going on and knew what to expect. I knew there would be no sudden rise to fame, as it were, and, sure enough, we'd go to a gig hoping to impress so that they book-

ed us back. We'd go out for ten quid or fifteen quid and hope to get booked back for more and our diary was always quite full because we didn't mind going up to Inverness one night and Plymouth the next, both for low money. . . . it was the only way to establish ourselves as far as we were concerned, because people soon forget what they read in a paper but they rarely forget a gig. . . . so we just gradually worked our way up.

ZZ: Looking back, how do you feel about the three Taste albums?

Rory: In what respects?

ZZ: Well, for instance, a lot of people thought the first one was a bit raw. . .

Rory: Well, around that time, everyone was using reverb echoes on their guitar, and we just wanted to go in a cut an album direct and, as you say, raw. . . . we didn't want all that gimmicky sound of guitars floating in the wilderness. We've learnt a lot since then, of course - like you can't just go in and record it as flat as a pancake, or there won't be any depth or dimension. . . . you've got to put a bit of echo on it. Anyway, that first album was a bit raw, yes, but I'm quite happy with it. We'd been playing a lot longer when we came to make 'On the boards', but the approach was still the same - we didn't want to gimmick it up too much. Obviously we learnt how to enhance the sound a little, but we still steered clear of the multi-multi gimmick thing.

ZZ: I won't ask about the Taste split up because you must have gone over that enough times already, but I'd be interested to know how you found your present band. . . . like, is there a pool of musicians over in Ireland, or did you go through a big audition number?

Rory: Oh I'd known them for some time - I'd known Wilgar from way, way back. . . we used to share gigs with his band, the Method - later to become Andwella's Dream. . . . and the old Taste also used to play gigs with a group called Deep Joy, who Gerry used to be in. They were the first people I auditioned.

ZZ: And with this band, you're still doing clubs and things most nights, rather than concerts. Is this by choice, or did you feel you had to start from scratch again?

Rory: No, that's what I like doing. . . I couldn't imagine anything more boring than playing, say, 8 concerts a year or something. The time may come when I want to lay off for a while, but at the moment I want to keep going as I am - it's good fun apart from anything else. . . some of the clubs are really fiery, like up in Scotland, or Newcastle, but they don't really differ much over the country; they're mostly great. We're not the sort of band that lock ourselves away for a few months working on an album. . . . we want to be out there.

ZZ: Talking of albums, I see that you produced the last two as opposed to Tony Colton who did the Taste ones. Was it just because you feel you learned enough to have a go yourself?

Rory: Well, Tony was a mediator as much as a producer. . . . he'd make suggestions to the engineer and the band. . . like "hey, let's try it this way" or "that sounds a bit weird, maybe we should do this". . . . but, let's put it this way, I almost had as much freedom production-wise with Taste anyway. Like you say, I've picked up a bit about recording and production and I want to give it a go, though there are always engineers and other people around and they give me lots of help and advice. So, at present, the sort of deal I have with Polydor is just to give them the finished tapes - they don't interfere with the actual recording, but they could come back at me and say "hey, what the hell have you recorded here?" Fortunately, though, we've been very lucky - they haven't complained yet.

ZZ: How long did it take to record and mix 'Deuce'?

Rory: The recording took 4 or 5 days, from eleven in the morning to twelve at night. . . . it was a pretty relaxing time though, because we'd rehearsed all the material and we did most of it in one take. The mixing took about a day. . . . I mean, a lot of people think that recording is a big deal; it isn't really. What happens is that you arrive at the studio and set up, the guy puts some mikes up, and you try out the sound until you get what you want, and off you go. . . . it's as simple as that really.

ZZ: That album sounds very live - was it done live as opposed to adding the vocal to a finished backing track?

Rory: Oh no, some of the early Taste things had the vocals put on afterwards, but ever since we've done it live for the most part. . . . I don't like the other way, though sometimes it's necessary, like when you mess up the vocal but you like the backing track and want to hang on to it. . . . but I think that the best tracks are the ones done straight, live. We put a second guitar on in places, or the odd maracas or tambourine, but I always like to keep it as simple and un-gimmicky as possible.

ZZ: Why do you never release singles? I mean, Canned Heat are very sincere



bluesers, but they're not averse to a bit of bending to make a commercial single...

Rory: Yes, we've often thought "that'd make a nice single", and there are gaps when a single would be very handy... not to mention the fact that it could make you overnight - but somehow I just don't want to get into the singles field. I'm not saying that it's selling out or anything, because the quality of singles is often very high, but once you have a hit, then the follow-up is the big con... and you're on Top of the Pops - it's just a little too Max Factor for me... I'll stick to albums.

ZZ: You don't fancy being on Top of the Pops then?

Rory: No.

ZZ: Let's talk about songwriting a bit; how do you do it?

Rory: Well, sometimes I don't write anything for quite a while, but I still seem to store up little bits and pieces, the odd lines, in my head... sort of like little bubbles. And then you suddenly write one... it may be just plucked out of the air, as you might say, and you write the words down in the bus, or you may be tuning your guitar and accidentally hit on something you like. It's very hard to sit down and write a song mechanically - you can try, but it never happens... but you can often put yourself into a writing frame of mind by playing around on the guitar for a while, so I can't really say that I write in any particular way. The page twenty

amount of time you have at hotels and things isn't really enough to write, so you have to make time, because it's very often a slogging affair... writing, then rewriting, changing things around... you often spend a very long time before you're satisfied.

ZZ: Now you're still doing 4, 5 and even 7 gigs a week, but how have things changed? Like have you got more roadies, and better amps and so on?

Rory: We've got a better p.a. system - it's a German firm called Stramp, and the equipment is very powerful and very robust, but it's compact... you don't need great walls of speakers. But I still use a Vox AC 30, same as I always have. I got my old one stolen, but I got another second hand for £40.

ZZ: Why do you still use that, when most other guitarists have about a million watts and a couple of dozen speakers?

Rory: Well, it just suits me - but a lot of Americans like Muddy Waters and Mike Bloomfield, they only use small Fender amps. I don't know why these people have such a lot of gear - a sense of power maybe, or else they argue that you can't get real volume using the p.a. (because I mike up the Vox and put it through the pa). But most of the time I was in Taste, I just used the Vox unmiked - it still had sufficient power... it's only recently that I've put it through the p.a., just to spread it over the speakers and get a rounder sound.

ZZ: Is that Stratocaster the same one you've always had?

Rory: Yes, I sunk everything I had into that when I was 15, and I had some very weird weeks paying for it... but I figured it was worth it. I went straight from a Solid Seven to that, and it's proved to be a very nice one. The Telecaster is a 1953 Esquire - a guy phoned me up and told me he had one, so I tried it out, and sure enough it's one of the real McCoy's. I had to have new machines on it, and it needs a new scratch plate, but it's a good one - you know that a guy sat there and put a lot of work and craftsmanship into it. You plug in a new Telecaster and you would appreciate the difference - the newer ones are mass produced and they don't feel the same as far as the neck and the balance are concerned, they don't sound the same, the paint's a bit thicker and more synthetic, and so on. I mean, I'm not a fanatical guitar collector or anything, but I'm pleased with the two I've got.

ZZ: Don't you collect guitars at all - not even for amusement?

Rory: Well, I don't make it a pursuit or a hobby, but I always look around the second hand shops and pawn shops. I got an old Kay in a New York pawn shop - that cost me about £14 - a real gritty old guitar it is, a white one, like J.B. Hutto uses, and Elmore James used to play.

(To be continued in the next issue) Pete Cover and other photographs taken by Barrie Wentzell



A regular (as regular as Zigzag ever can be, anyway) column by disc-jockey Bob Harris.

It's a difficult thing to try and rationalise what my Monday programme has come to mean to me over the past two months. For as long as I can remember, it's what I've always wanted to do... the realisation of a dream. I suppose it rather ages me when I say that the record which really got me involved in all this, was 'Diana' by Paul Anka - way back in 1957. I just missed the very beginning of the rock'n'roll thing, and consequently I was more involved with Ricky Nelson, Buddy Holly, Duane Eddy and the Everly Brothers than Little Richard and Jerry Lee Lewis. My early teens were spent listening to Del Shannon and Bobby Vee, and I still look back with great fondness to the feel and excitement of the middle and late fifties. I can still remember too, so vividly, spending three and four hours each evening listening to, tape-recording, cataloguing and re-cataloguing records and titles, when I should have been doing my homework. As Marc Bolan said recently: "The good pop single is always the one that gives you an up", whether it be as it was then, with the Buddy Hollies and Eddie Cochrans, later, with Phil Spector's, the Beatles' and the Stones', or more recently, the Who, Jimi Hendrix and T Rex themselves.

It's that feeling of excitement which makes top twenty pop music so important to young people, and I felt that excitement so very strongly. I really knew, somehow, that however much of a fantasy it seemed at the time, I would at some stage make my way into rock'n'roll radio. The way it actually happened is still the source of wonder.

Until about five years ago, I was living with my mum and dad in Northampton, and I came to London, primarily, to start a magazine (writing and vague attempts at graphic design being the only things I'd shown the slightest interest in at school). After two years of working and writing for some of the university magazines - like Circuit and Unit, for instance - I

began 'Time Out' with Tony Elliot. The idea for the magazine was Tony's, and it became apparent in the early stages that the dynamism behind the magazine was his also. I liked 'Time Out' greatly at that time, and wanted to keep it much as it was, or as I saw it anyway; a small and very communicative community magazine. (Isn't it amazing how fashion de-values things? Words such as love, peace and community hardly have any meaning nowadays in a general context). I often feared that I should hold up the natural growth of the magazine, and after about a year I left with very strong feelings of disenchantment and unhappiness.

I moved into the country then, for a short time, returning to London once or twice to present rigidly pre-determined programmes of music at the Royal College of Art. Soon afterwards, Friends phoned and asked me to do some writing for them and, after careful thought, I put together as subjective a piece as possible (never published) on Radio One. It was while writing this that I met Jeff Griffin, who was producing John Peel's 'concert' programme, and we did a pilot programme together, which the BBC enjoyed. The rest you know.

Surf's up! HERE COME THE BEACH BOYS NO. 1 SURFIN' GROUP IN THE COUNTRY!

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Next to Sue and our lady baby Mirelle, the Monday programme is now the most important thing in my life. The BBC is continually being criticised for being over-cautious, narrow minded or merely because it's a monopolistic corporation, but I shall always be grateful to them, and to Jeff Griffin and John Muir particularly, for the total freedom of expression that I've been allowed. The enjoyment and feeling of sheer happiness that I get from records like 'Surf's Up' by the Beach Boys, Van Morrison's 'Tupelo Honey', Shirley Collins' new album, Procol Harum's 'Broken Barricades', 'Who's Next' and many others is something I could never begin to describe. Being able to communicate that music and, hopefully, that feeling to you each week makes me feel astonishingly lucky and very privileged.



'Surf's Up' is a masterpiece - if you've not heard it, then you really must. Beg, steal or buy a copy, get it home, put on your headphones and be amazed. Everything about it is exactly right, and it really is an album that feels so good and so fresh. Each time you listen, you find something new. (The inadequacies of the English language). It's an album I love anyway, and I hope you do. It's a great pity, in many ways, that so many people seem to build up a strong resistance to some things, and be governed by preconceptions in others; many dismiss the Beach Boys as being little more than a mid-sixties 'surf' group. Meanwhile, it worries me to see the new Santana, Led Zeppelin, James Taylor, etc. albums all selling a million copies on their day of release... I sometimes wonder if we listen carefully enough.



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This interview with Big Brother & the Holding Company is the first interview they ever gave, and was reprinted from San Francisco's first rock paper 'The Mojo Navigator Rock 'n' Roll News'. It's pretty interesting in as much as it was done before the San Francisco sound had gripped the nation and the world, and Big Brother had just recorded their first tracks for that Mainstream album, which has been released here twice and is about to come out yet again on CBS.

THE GROUP: (left to right in the photos opposite) PETER ALBIN...bass
JAMES GURLEY...lead
JANIS JOPLIN...vocals
SAM ANDREW...guitar
DAVID GETZ...drums

THE INTERVIEWER: GREG SHAW (ZZ)
THE DATE (remember it): September 66.

ZZ: Can you tell us about your recent visit to Chicago?
Peter: Alright; after arriving at the airport, we drove down this immense freeway, which seemed to be just smokestacks and smog...
Janis: It's a dirty town.
Peter: ...and all that kind of crap.
Janis: A very dirty town.
Peter: OK, yeah, it was filthy.
Janis: There's no air there.
Peter: You know, you walk down the street and you can hardly see the sides of the buildings. Anyway, we drove to this place called Mother Blues, where we were going to play; it's a kind of high class folk place... they used to have people like Judy Henske and Chad Mitchell...
Janis: ...and Bob Gibson - you know, it used to have a real adult folk music type audience, but they were losing money, so they decided to go folk-rock.

(Right: the folk boom of the early sixties had just about subsided, and the Byrds, Barry McGuire, plugged-in Dylans, and Mamas & Papas had taken over... and don't forget that all the San Francisco groups had their roots in folk music).

ZZ: Were you the first group they had?
Peter: No, they had the Jefferson Airplane before us, and they got a good response, so they booked us - for four weeks. For about the first two weeks it was fairly good... some of the audience didn't know who we were; they were just regulars who always used to go there. After ten o'clock, all the teenagers had to leave, because from eight until ten was for teenagers, and they didn't serve drinks. At ten o'clock they started to serve drinks and the older crowd would come in, and like they're white-collar drunks and all... a bad scene.
Janis: Yeah, but we finally unearthed some hippies in Chicago, and they started coming... they were there for about the last week and a half.
Peter: When they first heard us they didn't understand the music, couldn't dig it at all... hated it, in fact. Then, after a couple of times, they started to dig it. You see, what's happening in Chicago is this; they have all the teenage nightclubs, the ones that open from about 7 til 11, in the suburbs. In the city itself, there's a curfew, so teenage nightclubs aren't too profitable... there are only about three on Wells Street, which is like a Broadway scene, and the rest of the places are like jazz, dixieland, rock and roll, and a couple of semi-topless things. The rock'n'roll bands that were playing in these places were just like mimic bands - didn't do any original material, though we heard about some groups, like The

Shadows of Knight, the Little Boy Blues, and Saturday's Children, who did play their own stuff.
Janis: They're really blues oriented in Chicago, you know - even the young bands don't do any folk rock... none at all.
ZZ: So the white kids go to hear groups like the Shadows of Knight, and then move towards the blues... they start going to see the bluesmen?
Peter: They're too young... and there isn't anywhere for them to go now. The place to go to used to be Big John's on North Wells Street, where they used to have Muddy Waters, Otis Rush, Jimmy Cotton, Howlin' Wolf, and so on, but they closed it down. You had to be over 21 to get in, but it was about the only blues club in the Old Town area. The only other blues clubs are in the South Side, and like you just don't go down there unless you have a spade friend with you. So the teenagers stick mostly to the clubs in the suburbs - I didn't get to any, but my cousin was in a Chicago group and he used to play at some of them... like the Pit and the Cellar, and they have good music for a low price.
ZZ: Has anyone tried to take Howlin' Wolf and Otis Rush and put them into the teenage clubs yet?
Janis: Not that I know of.
ZZ: How were you promoted?
Janis: Ugh.
Peter: We weren't... they just had one notice in the window. There were some reviews in the papers, but the reporters mainly talked about the night life of the place. The only review of the music wasn't the most beautiful that I've seen...
Janis: They said we were ugly.
Peter: They said we were an ugly group; exciting but very ugly, and that the drummer had corny legs.
David: Can't argue with that.
Janis: They said we weren't as ugly as the Grateful Dead, but that we were still pretty ugly.
ZZ: Have the Dead been out there yet?
Peter: No, they've only heard about them - but they're going there soon. We were trying to discourage them... Pigpen was horrified - he doesn't want to go.
Janis: I don't think they'll go.
Peter: Oh, they're going - they've got the contracts.
Janis: No shit? They are? I can't see it coming off.
ZZ: Didn't anybody there really listen to your music?
Peter: Well, like I said, it was mostly white collar people who came because they always used to go there... we got lots of the "is it a boy or a girl?" sort of crap.
Janis: Some people were pretty appreciative and kept coming back, and the last week was really surprising. One guy, called Darnell, came in every single night.
Peter: Yeah, and at the end, he told us he'd come in to steal our material...
Janis: Yeah, a lot of people from local rock bands came in because we were doing original stuff and no-one in the area had heard material like it before.
Peter: There was a dancefloor there, but the teenagers wouldn't dance or hoot or holler or cheer or anything... they just sat back and clapped.
James: Nobody gets stoned - it was like they were watching television or something thing.
Janis: Yeah - they don't get stoned. Nobody was having any fun, man, they were all just drunk. Strange town... it's really the Mid West.
ZZ: What about the recording you did for Mainstream?

Peter: Yes, we recorded four tracks at this session, two of which are going to come out as a single on October 10th. We don't know which'll be the A side, but the songs are 'All is Loneliness', a Moondog song, and 'Blind man', which is folk-rock.
ZZ: How did Big Brother start? What's the history behind the group?
Peter: Well, let's see; we started at 1090 Page Street (a club in San Francisco) during one of their jam-session kind of evenings. We started out with a guy called Paul Beck, who's now in Chicago, who got the group together with Sam, a guy called Dave, Chuck Jones, and me. Paul played harmonica and he was ok, but his songs weren't very good. Anyway, he went when we got our new manager, Chet Helms, and we got rid of Dave what-dyamacallim - I can't even remember his last name - on lead guitar because he was too young, and the drummer, Chuck Jones. David: Jim started in November (1965), I started in March, and Janis came in June.
Janis: I was a blues singer before that, a folk-singer, folk blues singer... and Jim hadn't played an electric guitar until last December.

ZZ: What do you think of the local scene? Do you prefer the Avalon or Fillmore, or the clubs?
Janis: I like the Avalon for its acoustics.
Peter: Yeah, I like the acoustics there, and the audiences too. We played the Fillmore about two months ago and the audience was pretty poor - there were a lot of people, but they weren't very receptive...
Janis: They weren't really into the music too much - they just walked around trying to pick each other up.
ZZ: I saw you at the Avalon on Friday, and that was good.
Janis: Yeah, I enjoyed it a lot... it was really good to play there again. No shit, it was fun.

ZZ: What if the single doesn't click, and the scene more or less stays static in San Francisco? Will you just continue playing and see what happens or what?
Janis: Something's gonna happen... it isn't just going to carry on like this. Something's gonna happen... either we are all going to go broke and split up, or else we'll get rich and famous.
Peter: If the record makes it, then the people'll start digging what we're doing, and then we'll lay it on them thick, with some freak rock things. I dunno, it's always good to drop new things on people.
David: There are a lot of rock bands coming up all over the country, and they're really good - and at the same time, the audience is getting bigger and bigger. If it keeps going at this rate, there's no limit to how big it could become in this country.
ZZ: I read somewhere that there are about 2000 bands in the Bay area... which of the bands round here do you find interesting?
David: Let me think for a second... the Dead are good; they're really very good. And Quicksilver too, for certain reasons - they turn me on really heavy sometimes... their songs are so nice.
ZZ: Sam, what's your comment for the interview - you haven't spoken yet? In last month's with the Dead, Pigpen only made one remark throughout.
Sam: What was that?
ZZ: He said "fuck it".
Janis: He's a good blues singer, but he has a terrible taste in wine.



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When I was younger, and could actually afford to buy records, a new single from Them was sufficient reason to add to the profits of the Decca Record Company. Along with the Kinks and the Troggs, they were my favourite band of the period. Subsequently, when they split, Van Morrison evolved slowly into a major cult figure, and Jackie McAuley, apart from a brief interlude with Trader Horne, into something closer to obscurity.

Then, in July, to a fanfare of silence, Dawn released 'Jackie McAuley'. The music can best be described as eclectic; after hearing it twice, it sounds familiar - not in the sense of it being nothing more than a series of rip-offs, but a comfortable feeling that normally comes only after living with an album for a long time. Anyway, better that you should listen to it and make up your own mind.

Jackie now lives in a flat in Notting Hill Gate, next to the 31 bus stop, with his girlfriend and two dogs. This conversation started with Belfast.

"Playing was the only way of expressing yourself, apart from beating up a protestant or a catholic, but most of the ones who got their heads together musically then - like Henry McCullough and John Wilson - are over here now. The group scene was mostly R&B, but even then, you were very restricted in what you could do; to start with, there were only about three clubs where you could play - one of which was started by members of Them. It was at the Maritime Home for Old Sailors, and we used to hire the hall. I don't know just what they thought of us - I never saw any old sailors, but they must've been there somewhere - but they got a lot of bread from us, because the place was always packed out. It just couldn't have taken anymore, and the crowd was unbelievable... all hairies. I didn't even know that people like them existed in Belfast around that time".

My brother was one of the guys who started the hall - he played drums and a little bit of organ, and I was playing harp and organ at the time. I got to know Van through him; I went along to a gig with John, and there were about three people in the audience - and they had all been invited. Neither Van or I were even in the group at the time - he'd only ever done five or six numbers with them before - but it was a pretty good band. The guitarist was playing a bottleneck, which was almost unknown, doing a lot of Chuck Berry stuff - 'Maybelline' and things like that. Then Van came on, and I said to John 'Who's that?' 'Wait till you hear him sing,' he replied. I was really knocked out; just a little guy with a really powerful voice, and the whole thing was going like this, you know? And John said 'I want to do that kind of stuff.' I agreed. He completely blew my mind. He'd play maraccas and jump up and down onstage - I knew I had to know him".

"About a week later I got into playing blues with a friend of mine. We went out and bought this Howlin Wolf import - you could get them easily, funnily enough, because this guy called Artie Faulkner, who was a friend of Van's, had a record shop and used to import all the American blues albums for himself".

"While I was doing that, Them went England for a couple of months and nearly starved to death. They lived in a Morris 1000 van, which was possible because they had virtually no equipment. When I joined and went back to England with the band it was a little better, because 'Baby Please Don't Go' was getting played on the radio. I just wanted to go anywhere in England; I felt I would get a little bit of freedom over there, although that feeling soon disappeared. London was like a stage in the

Jackie McAuley



sky - it was where everybody felt they had to be. So we came over and we did 'Here comes the night', which became a hit. I thought that was a terrible record. . . . absolutely horrible".

"There we were, in the charts, and we still had to fight to get twenty quid a week each out of our manager - and we were sometimes doing four gigs a night, seven nights a week. Can you imagine? We had one roadie, and half our time was spent humping the gear about. Once we had made it, the group only lasted six months. We held together that long simply because people kept telling us we still owed this and this and this. As soon as our debts were almost paid off we just fell apart from overwork. We couldn't keep up with the scene. Musically, it became disastrous. We never died a death, or anything like that, but we were so tired we practically fell asleep on stage."

"We had to do our special numbers like 'Here comes the night', which we didn't really dig. And then Van started writing. I don't want to criticise him, but I didn't think it was very good. But then, everybody at some time or other, does something which, though it's not bad, you know they're capable of doing better. But, considering the pressure and circumstances, it was hardly surprising".

"After the group split up we tried to reform, minus Van, but it didn't really

work out that well. We went to Scandinavia for a year in '67 or '68, and I started playing guitar and writing the infinite twelve bar blues type thing beginning in B; it's the basis of all blues music. I packed up organ because I was the world's worst organist, and it was easier to bluff on guitar."

"I was back in Dublin in '69, living in a soup kitchen, playing guitar, and hanging around with these beatniks, and one day I happened to see Van down at St. Stephens Green, shouting at me from the other side. When he came over, he told me that he was trying to start another band, but I didn't want to communicate; I just wasn't into that kind of thing. So he just disappeared down a side alley."

"I'm glad it worked out the way it did for Van; I've no regrets. We were in this club once. I hardly knew him, we hardly spoke at all. He played guitar, just sat and sang, blew my mind. It was fantastic. He had only to play three chords and you could swear he was black. I find myself there's a similarity in what we do now; I was only waiting for people to say that my new album was like a minor take-off of Astral Weeks - but nobody's mentioned it."

"Judy Dyble and I started Trader Horne later that year. I was tripping a lot then, and going into all sorts of fantasy things. I felt that the name was fabulous, you know. . . . really right for that band. It started off really good on stage - just the two of us - but if I'd known various things at the beginning, I would never have done it."

"The guy who brought us together, introduced us to Barry Murray at Dawn Records, who thought that the group and our music were fantastic. . . . and he wanted us to make an album, straight away - which meant I had to start writing. So I did, but most of the songs came to me as ideas - I don't think I could just sit down and try to write a song from scratch. . . . though I'm trying to at the moment - I'm trying desperately to write a pop-song, because I'm so broke".

"The direction I have now is that I want to make a living, and the only way in which I can do that is by writing - consciously writing. I'm losing the essence of my fantasy, which may or may not be a good thing, I don't know. I mean, last year I would have done anything - all kinds of music, all combined; but I've found that I can't do everything. . . . I have to concentrate on one thing. It's financial in so far as I'm trying to perfect it to the point where I can make a living from it."

"I think the new album is now past tense. It was an idea, perhaps more true to life and easier to understand than 'Trader Horne,' which I never thought anybody could understand anything about. This one is just meant for listening."

"The only thing I can write about without being contrived is the past. I think it's because the happiest time in my life was when I was a kid - I wish I could be as happy now as I was then. I look back on it with terrible pains of nostalgia. It's just that when I was unhappy then, the misery was over when I stopped crying. Crying was wonderful. You can't do it when you get older - you can't. So everything builds up inside you. I used to think about the time when I was allowed to be miserable and how great it was. Where I am now, and the direction I'm going in, is it getting worse, or what? What's happening? So I go back into it, and the only way I can do that is by thinking about it and then writing about it. It's a form of escapism. You get nothing out of it, you merely go deeper back into it. I think that essentially, a writer should be able to write about any-

thing - now, tomorrow and the past, but I don't think I can".

"My songs are stories of yesterday, but yesterday is having to go right back. I regret this thing in between. Music makes me feel better, because I can write and listen to it, though it still remains an escape. It's nothing positive as far as I'm concerned. You can't go on writing about the same thing all the time, can you?"

"I've no idea what's going to happen to me, and it's worrying; I'm trying to make a living. I was thinking very seriously of packing it all up and just writing poetry - I could do that, but I'm having one last effort. Since this new album I've written fifteen songs or so; they're all about the same kind of things, so I've scrubbed them, thrown them out of the window. But I think it might be getting better; I've written this song about a medicine show where they sell magic potions - all that kind of thing. It's a story about something else, although I'm still involved in it myself."

"The point is I don't really know myself, and that brings me down. It doesn't really matter whether this L.P. happens. After Trader Horne broke up I thought there was no point staying with Dawn, it would be better if I went and tried to join a group. But they wanted me to stay and make a single, which I didn't want to do at that point. If anything I wanted to make an album. So I put down 'Turning Green, Country Joe, and It's Alright,' on the first of January this year. All the musicians were jazzeros, friends of Mike McNaught's. I just told him to get anyone he wanted. I played the numbers and Mike wrote out the arrangements for everybody. We did two takes on most, and there it was. I never dreamed of it in that way, but it's the way it turned out and it's nice. The musicians practically changed the whole thing. I'm sort of pleased and displeased at the same time. You have to give other people a chance, even though it was my album. I have to leave some things to other people's discretion. If a guy's hired as an arranger or whatever, I let him do it. I mean, I've got pretty much the last word on everything. If I didn't like it, it wouldn't come out."

"When I finished recording the album, I did a couple of sessions on guitar with a group called 'Wand.' They had some fantastic songs; we went to Germany and did a few gigs which went down very well, but the group was never together. So it fell apart when we got back. Then Rosko, who was the bass player, came round one night. We started talking about a few things. He was saying how much he liked some of the things that Trader Horne had done, and I thought it would be nice to try and get the best parts out of that. So we did a couple of songs and went down to Pye studios to try them out on the P.A. Then a guy called Owen, who also has an incredible vocal range, asked if he could play congas. We rehearsed eight hours a day for a week, and I just dug it. So we did a demo - four tracks in six hours - and now we've got twenty numbers. We do a couple of my songs, a couple of their songs, and some by people like Leonard Cohen."

"It's Owen Marshall and Rosko Jay with me on guitar. We're going to start gigging soon. We want to do it. The bread is unimportant. We just want to find out if it's worthwhile. I think it's going to be good."

With that, we switched off the tape and played a game of chess. Jackie plays a good game. He also makes good music. It would be a shame if he stopped doing so through other people's indifference.

Richard Howell

A IS FOR AUDIENCE

Howard Werth talks to John Tobler about Audience:

EARLY DAYS

"Before I got into music, I worked in sort of artistic jobs - I designed record sleeves for Pye, for instance, although I don't recall any masterpieces... I worked on album covers for people like Donovan, the Kinks and Sandie Shaw. I did several of the Kinks' eps too, but they were all very standard things - they didn't allow a lot of expenditure or latitude. I also worked on a magazine called 'Intro'. It was a young magazine, dealing with music and fashion, and I worked on it in 1967. I also did some work for 'Woman's Realm,' but I don't like to talk about that. Keith (Gemmell) worked for a band called Beau Brummel and the Gentlemen, who dressed up poncily. They had a minor hit, but Beau Brummel was most famous because he did a thing in the 'News of the World', an expose of pop. Of course, they weren't the American Beau Brummels. My first group was Jason and the Jesters, but I don't like to talk about that either; the first real group was the Lloyd Alexander Blues Band. My middle name is Alexander, and the other guy's middle name was Lloyd. That was in 1963, and Keith and Trevor (Williams) were also in the band at a later date. We started off doing James Brown numbers, Howlin' Wolf and all that sort of thing. Gigs were few and far between, and the only person of note we played with was Jimmy Reed. We didn't ask Tony (Connor) to join, because we had a more suitable drummer for the style of music which we were playing at the time, which was a Blood Sweat and Tears style line-up, with two saxes. Our material was also reminiscent of early BS&T, like 'I can't Quit Her!', although there were a few original numbers."

We formed Audience primarily because of our different line-up idea, with classical guitar and flute, and certain ideas for songs which were different from what we had done previously done. Probably the first time anyone saw the name Audience was on the bill at Ronnie Scott's, which was a thing our management organised. That was when Tony Hodges was our manager, and we really needed somewhere to get the band together with a residency, and Ronnie's was the obvious place. We met Tony indirectly through John Dummer, in that we saw an ad. for John with Tony's name on it, and we were

phoning everybody at that time; Tony was the only one interested. He used to be seen in adverts for his company wearing white T-shirts and dark glasses, looking moody, but I don't think he's in the music business any longer, but works in an advertising agency. We split with him because of problems with agencies and things, when Rondo Promotions (his company) split from its larger parent agency, and we remained with the larger bit. Now we're managed by Keith Grey and Oliver Foreman, who was the financier of the original Rondo, and we're the only act they handle."

RECORDS

"We started off record-wise with Polydor. The deal was set-up by a friend of the band, a drummer with an earlier group, who just happened to be working with the producer of that album, Chris Brough. We signed with Polydor before we even had a manager, and the problem was that the album didn't come out until 9 or 10 months after we'd made it. We wanted to do a lot of re-mixing on it, but they wouldn't let us; they'd spent a certain amount on a new, untried band, and they felt that they didn't want to put any more bread into it - not even on publicity. In fact, they weren't really prepared to do anything for us until we got our management problems sorted out, and it became a vicious circle in which we were really the losers."

Then Tony Stratton-Smith came into the picture. Keith let him know that we were coming onto the market, negotiated with him, and he took up the offer. He had to buy out our Polydor contract, and as soon as that was complete, we went straight into the studio. It's been working very well since then; Tony only works with bands that he personally likes and he's often carried on with a band that he has believed in, when everybody else was criticising him."

'Friends Friends Friends' didn't get released in the States, nor did the first album. Elektra took 'Friends', but didn't release it, because they didn't like all of it. I think they're going to take a couple of tracks and add them to 'House On The Hill', or maybe at a later date, they might release it, but purely for marketing reasons. Apparently, in the States, as soon as an unavailable album is seen to be selling in England, importers bring it in in vast quantities, thereby knocking the sales potential, and Elektra would rather they imported 'Friends



'Friends Friends Friends'. Elektra seem to be becoming the American label for quite a few Charisma acts, as there are now three of us on the label; us, Lindisfarne, and Atomic Rooster. We had a bit of success over there with our single 'Indian Summer' which isn't on any of the albums released here, but which they will probably add to 'House on the Hill'. Elektra are very good, because they only release about one single a fortnight, and the whole of the company works on it... much better than putting out loads and spending a bit of time publicising each one."

We produced 'Friends Friends Friends' ourselves. We had Shel Talmy lined up to do it, but at the very last minute, when we were in the studios, he decided he didn't like some of the material. He wanted us to do some more things of the type that comprised half the album, but we didn't particularly agree with him. It got to the point where we had to produce it ourselves. Shel Talmy was after a massive seller, a big commercial album, which wasn't altogether what we wanted. We wanted to put out the material that we'd written and arranged, and, that being the case, we obviously couldn't work together. We enjoyed doing it ourselves, and I think we got good results, although it took a lot of hard work. We used the echo unit on 'Raid!', and that was the sort of thing Shel objected to. He liked 'Belladonna Moonshine' and 'It Brings A Tear', and wanted all the tracks to be like that, which is really only one part of us. 'Ebony Variations' on that album may sound like a joke, but it isn't a joke to play. It's based on Mozart's Clarinet Concerto, and messed about with to an extent - the ebony bit comes from a clarinet."

'House on the Hill' is the first album where we've used someone else's song - 'I put a spell on you', and the title track was also on the first (Polydor) album, though it sounds totally different... It could've been Tony Bennett singing it the first time. I suppose the only other person using the vocal effect I get on that track is Donovan on 'Hurdy Gurdy Man'; I didn't really try for that, but luckily it came out like it did. 'You're not smiling' is one where Keith wrote the lyrics first, and I followed with the music, which is why it might sound a little disjointed, although I think it came out very well. There's a bit of R&B in 'Jackdaw', and that's because we weren't quite sure

what to do, and it just turned out like that. Going back to 'House On The Hill' for a moment, we got the channel switching effect on the sax by having two mikes, one which Keith played straight into, and the other one going through an echo unit, although the whole thing was recorded live. It's a strong track, but there again, we're still not totally satisfied with the way it happened in the studio. 'I Had A Dream' is a fairly gentle track - my personal favourite, although I don't think that goes for the rest of the band. 'Raviolo' is a thing which we've been doing on stage since before the second album, but we couldn't really use it on record then, as 'Ebony Variations' was included at that time, and that was also a purely instrumental track; we put the strings on directly after the guitar track. You may notice that several of our songs are limited lyrically, with plenty of room left for improvisation, although we want very much to avoid the extended jams that many bands enjoy at the expense of their audience's interest."

As for singles, we haven't done many. 'Belladonna Moonshine' was the first, and at the time we weren't sure whether we would damage our reputation with the public. Subsequently, we put out 'Indian Summer,' and more recently 'You're Not Smiling' and 'Eye To Eye'."

INSTRUMENTS

Keith has a very sophisticated doctored echo unit, with a very slow repeat, so that there's quite a long time before the sound comes out, and he can then play in unison with it; he can sound like a whole horn section. He used to use a bug, but now he plays straight into the P.A. and the roadie operates the echo. My guitar is pretty unique, if one can use such an expression; I don't know of any others in this country, although Charlie Byrd uses one in the States, and I think his was the very first. It's an electric, nylon-strung Spanish one, and of course, pick-ups previously wouldn't work with nylon strings, but this one had power coming to it from the amp. I was looking for one for a long time, and I finally found a shop which said they were developing one. It's fortunate that I don't break too many strings, as I haven't got a spare guitar, and I'd just have to stop the performance to change them."

GUS DUDGEON

By the time we were more or less ready

to do 'House On The Hill', we went through all the different producers that we thought we'd really like, and it all boiled down to Gus Dudgeon, whom we really went out of our way to get. Initially, we didn't have too much trouble getting him, because he works for our music publishers, Essex Music, and he'd known of us for a long time. In fact, he'd wanted to produce our Polydor album, but we didn't know about that until recently. We got him to do the 'Indian Summer' single, but he had no spare time, what with doing Reg and the rest of the boys. We just kept on at him and eventually he came round to it, and it worked out very well. He's a great producer, because not only does he know everything in the studio from a technical angle, but he also has an excellent ear for music. Something may sound all right to us, but he can still tell us what's wrong. We really do want to stay with Gus in future, even though we've heard that Bob Johnson is supposed to want to produce us."

INFLUENCES

In other interviews, I've been quoted as being influenced by people like Joe Turner and Fats Domino, and though I'm a little young to be into that sort of thing, I had an elder brother whose records I used to listen to avidly. He used to get fairly obscure American jukebox records like Jimmy McCracklin's 'The Walk', and hundreds of others of that type, mixed R&B and country, like early Hank Snow, and the pre-surfing vocal groups like the Monotones, Dion & The Belmonts, that sort of thing. Be that as it may, these sort of influences very rarely show through in the sort of music that Audience play, because we really make what I consider is an original sound."

Influences must also include favourites, and my personal favourite is Screamin' Jay Hawkins. Jack Jackson used to have a radio show in about 1956, and he played about half of 'I Put A Spell On You', which I remembered very well, until Screamin' Jay came over around 1964 or 5, when I went to see him. He was absolutely fantastic, particularly visually. If he'd come over at the beginning of the new era, three years later, he would have been incredibly big. Seeing him at that time completely changed my outlook. People here were just starting to think about more outrageous and unusual ways of presentation; his act six or seven years ago included things that are now considered commonplace - mysticism, Indian influences and the whole mixed media entertainment thing."

OTHER THINGS

We did the music for a film called 'Bronco Bullfrog', although you may have seen it called 'Angel Lane'. They changed the title, but eventually it did come out as 'Bronco Bullfrog'. It's a film shot in the East End involved with Joan Littlewood and a team of kids from her theatre; none of them were professional actors. We saw the film about twelve times before we wrote the music - I could quote the script from beginning to end. It's very hard work writing for films, but quite enjoyable, as well as being reasonably rewarding financially; we only had to write about forty minutes of music altogether, although it had to be timed to a split second. We were supposed to be doing the music for two other films, but we've never found the necessary time."

Available Albums:
Friends Friends Friends CAS 1012
House on the Hill CAS 1032

Deleted: Audience 583 065

ROCK EDGE ZIGZAG ROCK EDGE ZIGZAG ROCK EDGE ZIGZAG ROCK

Due to space restrictions (and the fact that we haven't had time to collate all the categories) we've only printed a selection of the poll results this month... the rest will appear in the next issue together with a few remarks and observations. Many thanks to everyone who sent in an entry.

musician world

- FRANK ZAPPA
- JERRY GARCIA
- JIMI HENDRIX
- Leon Russell
- Pete Townshend
- Terry Riley
- Neil Young
- Bob Dylan
- Keith Emerson
- John Cale
- Ian Underwood
- Jack Bruce
- Roger McGuinn
- Stephen Stills
- John Mayall
- Captain Beefheart
- David Crosby
- Bob Fripp
- Eric Clapton
- Jorma Kaukonen
- Paul Kantner
- John Lennon
- Stevie Winwood
- Mike Ratledge
- Arthur Lee
- Terry Reid
- Van Morrison
- Clarence White
- Richard Thompson
- Terry Kath

KEYBOARD britain

- KEITH EMERSON
- RICK WAKEMAN
- STEVIE WINWOOD
- Nicky Hopkins
- Rick Wright
- Mike Ratledge
- Elton John
- Gary Brooker
- Rod Argent
- Graham Bond
- Ian Hunter
- Dave Sinclair
- Dave Greenstade
- Ian McLagen
- Tony Kaye
- Jon Lord
- Verden Allen
- John Mayall
- Keith Tippett
- Brian Auger
- Vincent Crane
- Tim Hinkley
- Pete Wingfield
- Peter Bardens
- Manfred Mann
- John Hawken
- Dave Stewart
- Ian Whiteman
- Chris Stainton
- Mike Pinder

page twenty-eight

GUITARIST world

- JIMI HENDRIX
- JERRY GARCIA
- FRANK ZAPPA
- Jorma Kaukonen
- John Cipollina
- Eric Clapton
- Carlos Santana
- Duane Allman
- Neil Young
- Clarence White
- Leslie West
- Johnny Winter
- Pete Townshend
- Robbie Robertson
- Randy California
- Roger McGuinn
- BB King
- Terry Kath
- Mike Bloomfield
- Richard Thompson
- Stephen Stills
- John McLaughlin
- Arthur Lee
- Chris Spedding
- Robbie Kreiger
- Paul Kantner
- George Harrison
- Ry Cooder
- Jay Donellan
- Gary Duncan

BASS britain

- JACK BRUCE
- JOHN ENTWISTLE
- ROGER WATERS
- Hugh Hopper
- Paul McCartney
- Ashley Hutchings
- Chris Squires
- Greg Lake
- Andy Fraser
- Bill Wyman
- Ric Grech
- Ronnie Lane
- Overend Watts
- Kevin Ayers
- Lee Jackson
- Louis Cennamo
- John Paul Jones
- Roy Babbington
- Dave Pegg
- Leo Lyons
- Gary Thain
- Klaus Voorman
- Jim Rodford
- Glen Cornick
- Danny Thompson
- Willy Weider
- Ron Wood
- Tony Reeves
- Bruce Thomas
- Mont Campbell

BEST MUSICAL PUBLICATION

- ZIGZAG
- ROLLING STONE
- MELODY MAKER
- Sounds

Drummer world

- MIKE SHRIEVE
- SPENCER DRYDEN
- JIM GORDON
- George Suranovitch
- Levon Helm
- Bill Kreutzman
- Gene Parsons
- Ed Cassidy
- Tony Williams
- Danny Seraphine
- Corky Laing
- Jimmy Carl Black
- Russ Kunkel
- Artie Tripp III
- John Densmore
- Dallas Taylor
- Joey Covington
- Maureen Tucker
- Aynsley Dunbar
- Jon Hiseman
- Mickey Hart
- Carl Palmer
- Drumbo
- Elvin Jones
- Greg Elmore
- Kenny Buttrey
- Keith Moon
- Buddy Rich
- Jay Donellan
- John Barbata

ACE CAT OF THE CENTURY

- JOHN CLEESE
- J. R. TOLKIEN
- RICHARD NEVILLE
- Muhammed Ali
- Jack Kerouac
- Ken Kesey
- Tim Leary
- Salvador Dali
- Owsley
- Spike Milligan
- Ghandi
- Monty Python
- George Jackson
- Wavy Gravy
- Caroline Coon
- President Kennedy
- Herman Hesse
- Aldous Huxley
- Meher Baba
- Marx Brothers
- Bertrand Russell
- Bernadette Devlin
- Che Guevara
- George Orwell
- Mick Farren
- Terry Gilliam
- Stan Lee
- Andy Warhol
- Felix Dennis
- Abbie Hoffman

DISC JOCKEY (on radio)

- JOHN PEEL
- BOB HARRIS
- PETE DRUMMOND
- Alan Black
- Mike Harding
- Viv Stanshall
- Mike Raven
- Kid Jensen
- Kenny Everett
- Johnnie Walker
- Rosko
- Stuart Henry

DEFUNCT GROUP world

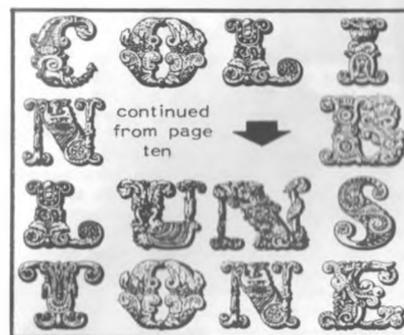
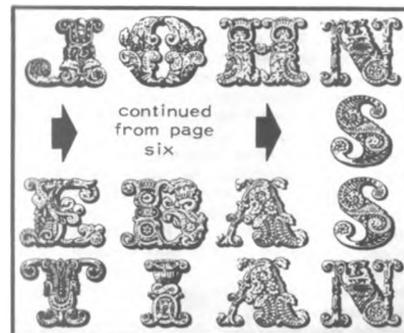
- CREAM
- BEATLES
- BUFFALO SPRINGFIELD
- Nice
- Hendrix Experience
- 'Forever Changes' Love
- Free
- Old Velvet Underground
- Lovin Spoonful
- Country Joe & the Fish
- Spirit
- Yardbirds
- Bonzos
- Animals
- 'Happy Trails' Quicksilver
- Spooky Tooth
- Early Mothers of Invention
- 'Liege & Lief' Fairport
- Zombies
- Old Jeff Beck Group
- Doors
- Old Tyrannosaurus Rex
- Small Faces
- Early Steve Miller Band
- Fotheringay
- Taste
- High Tide
- Blossom Toes
- Big Brother & the Holding Co
- Blind Faith

best album ever

- FOREVER CHANGES
- SGT PEPPER
- BLONDE ON BLONDE
- Notorious Byrd Brothers
- Highway 61 Revisited
- Hot Rats
- Happy Trails
- Doors first
- Electric Ladyland
- Live Dead
- Liege and Lief
- Sailor
- After Bathing at Baxter's
- Abbey Road
- Astral Weeks
- The Band
- Every Picture tells a story
- American Beauty
- After the goldrush
- The Velvets and Nico
- Tommy
- White Light white heat
- Electric music for the mind
- Ummagamma and body
- Court of the Crimson King
- Are you experienced
- What we did on our holidays
- Hangman's beautiful daughter
- Wheels of fire
- Deja Vu

DISC JOCKEY (not on radio)

- JEFF DEXTER
 - ANDY DUNKLEY*
- *This was before Andy got his radio programme. No one else got a substantial enough vote to be included in this category.
- More results next issue, folks.



visit in the new year... it just might happen. As well as that, he's considering the formation of a new band, but everything's fluid at this stage - he's still very much in a quandary about his exact course. Time will sort his mind out.

Back to the album: In April 1970 he signed with CBS and obtained a release from Deram. (He refused to offer any information about his release, but I suspect that Decca, a real outdated dinosaur, would go bust if it wasn't for the vast sums they extricate from artistes they've got locked under contract). Anyway, he started work with Rod and Chris, but because of their commitments and Colin's long search for suitable material, the record was made in fits and starts and with different arrangers and backing musicians. For all that, it's a very flowing album. Some of the tracks feature Argent, and some (She loves the way they love her! for instance) are from the old Zombies! repertoire, and altogether it's a very pleasing programme, though (my only real criticism) just a little too much syrup has been poured over some of the arrangements and detracted from Colin's voice - one of the best in rock.

How, I wondered, did he plan to follow the album up? And on what scale? Was he really going to form a group and go on the road, or was he just going to take it easy and hope to live off record royalties? What exactly did he envisage?

"Well... that's the problem. I've got to find a manager first - but he's got to be the right person: there seems to be an understanding in this business that I don't make any money out of anything I'm involved in and I don't want that sort of feeling to continue. What I've really got to do, I suppose, is find a manager who can help me get a group together, get me some small gigs, then get me onto the bottom of bigger concert bills and let me work my way up. It'll take a long time, but it'll be worth it in the long run. As regards the immediate future, I need good advice more than anything". Pete

Albums: The World of the Zombies
Decca SPA 85
Odyssey & Oracle CBS 63280
One Year Epic 64557

woke up. It was during a time that I very definitely needed to take a re-assessment of my life, and Catherine and I had just met and fallen in love, and so the trip was serving a real purpose for us... it was a good way of getting to know each other. There was no radio and we were driving eight hours a day, talking to each other all the time... It was a peculiar type of therapy. But the GMC truck was just about dead by the time we wheeled into Los Angeles.

ZZ: How does that journey fit in timewise - was it made before or after the Cheapo Cheapo live album?

John: Well, after that journey, Catherine and I were on the road for about a year doing gigs at colleges and so on, then Paul Harris joined us towards the end of that period, and we cut the Cheapo Cheapo album around that time.

ZZ: So when you gig now, you always have Paul and Kenny with you?

John: Well, Kenny's always with me, but Paul and Dallas went off to do the Stephen Stills tour... they're coming back though.

ZZ: There was no question of your getting back with Zal after your Isle of Wight triumph last year?

John: No, man, not really. I'll tell you what though; one day Zally came by to see me in New York - "I got it, man" he said, and this was only the second time I'd seen him in two years, "we put the Spoonful back together for a big bang-up tour... 30 cities in 20 days - I mean, you wouldn't mind playing with Joe Eutler again for just a few weeks... we could teach him to play drums again". I told him to get lost, or words to that effect... but he wasn't really being serious, he just wanted to see how far I'd go along.

ZZ: That engineer you use, Fritz Richmond; is he the same cat from the Kweskin Jug Band?

John: The very same... he's now converted into a fantastic engineer, one of the best. I did a gig with him playing jug quite recently - that was a gas - and now I've got a tune that I want him to play tub-bass on. In fact, one or two people have been after his services as a tub-bass player, so he's working his chops up on tub now, which takes some doing. He hasn't played for a while, but he used to have a callous on his finger as big as any string bassist.

ZZ: Another name; Henry Diltz took some of the sleeve photos on the John B album, and he also played clarinet on 'Hums of the Lovin Spoonful'...

John: Right. Now Henry goes back to the Modern Folk Quartet - he was in that when we first met him. The MFQ was him, Jerry Yester (who later replaced Zal in the Lovin Spoonful), Cyrus Faryar (who accompanied Fred Neil on some of his records and is now the head man at the Farm in LA where John used to live in a tent), and Eddie Hoh (who later backed the Mamas & Papas).

ZZ: What about Peter Stampfel? Zigzag would never have started without his influence, and he influenced the Spoonful a lot too (and the Youngbloods and many others) - I see you still sing his songs... like those two on the Cheapo Cheapo album.

John: Well, those songs originally came from older sources. You see, Peter is a great discoverer and enhancer of old songs - his versions of 'Blues in the bottle', 'Fishing Blues' and 'Mobile Line' are all favourites of mine. I haven't seen him in a long time, but I always reckoned he was a really nice, funny dude. You see, he was a folkie in a scene where I wasn't a

fully fledged folkie myself - I was sort of partly on the outside looking in. Yeah - he was ok... used to write some far out articles on music in Broadside magazine, and he was one of the first people I know who had various psychedelics growing in his basement.

ZZ: Tell us about that live album that was rushed out by MGM (not released here).

John: You don't want to talk about that... they recorded me, without my knowledge, on a night when I'd been awake for three days, flew into a place with no equipment, ad-libbed with a Fender Champ amplifier, and... well, it goes on and on. It really annoyed us and sort of forced our hand into releasing the Cheapo Cheapo album, whereas we hadn't planned to put out a live album til later.

In fact, it was contract problems with MGM which had held up the release of his first album; the Spoonful had been on Kama Sutra, which was an MGM subsidiary, and his first solo single was on Kama Sutra. Shortly after, however, MGM bought his contract from Kama Sutra just before the label was taken over by Buddah. The first solo album was held up because of MGM's dithering policy makers and in the meantime, his contract expired and he signed with Warner Brothers.

ZZ: You made a guest appearance on the Ohio Knox album; what's the story behind that?

John: Oh, the Knox family! This is another two hour story that I'll have to condense. The Knox family is a very extensive family - the only requirement you need to become a part of it is to think of an original Christian name beginning with C... then you can join. Peter Galloway, who was also with the Strangers and the Fifth Avenue Band (with Kenny Altman) is Ohio Knox, I am Orville and Catherine is Orlisha (under which names they did the 'Four of us' trip - the other two were Oscar and Olive Knox). Keith Moon is Orchester Knox, Jon Entwistle is Ox Knox and Pete Townshend is Over-all Knox... but the list goes on and on.

ZZ: You should be called Odd-socks Knox! (because he was wearing one red sock and one white sock throughout the interview). But how did this Knox thing start?

John: Well, Peter Galloway's first solo album was conceived in Cyrus Faryar's living room at the Farm, which he has converted into a studio. I played a bit on that album, Catherine played tambourine and there were a lot of other Knox's on it too. Peter is a great writer and singer - I've known him ever since the Bizarre days, when he was with the Strangers, who played out and out R&B. Zal used to drag me to see them, saying "look at this, man... third generation R&B. Muddy Waters inspired the Stones, the Stones inspired these cats". It was true too; it was still the Muddy song or the Howling Wolf song, but done a la Stones. We thought they were out of sight, and we took them on as our little brother band, though they were much better than us musically. They went back to college though and finished their studies before leaping back into the world of music, drugs and other pleasures.

ZZ: So to round it all off neatly, what are your plans for the immediate future?

John: To make people aware of 'The Four of us' (PLUG), which is an album I'm really excited about. Then I'm going back on the road until the baby's born (Catherine is due to produce in January... "around two in the afternoon, on January the sixth" she says), then I'm going to take a few days off to stay at home and stare at it.

Orpheus and Octavius Knox
(Pete and John)
page twenty-nine

Yes, here it is - the 120 page technical colour, Christmas issue. Well, use your imagination a bit (please), and be thankful that it even came out, what with ex-printers suing, bailiffs arriving to distract chattels, motoring offences fines to pay, etc, etc. So, if you know any millionaires.....well, a nod's as good as a wink.

Which brings us to good records: let's see now - plenty to fill the Christmas stocking - New Riders of the Purple Sage, the Doors, Mott the Hoople, Faces, Alice Cooper, Mountain, Van Morrison, a nice laid-back, restfulset from the Youngbloods, and the best yet album from Poco. Jim Messina has been replaced by Paul Cotton, who used to be lead guitarist in the Illinois Speed Press (great group - got their albums?), and he's brought all the Springfield sparkle back to Poco. Whoopee.

Periodicals we've received: *Fapto*, which costs 18p (including post) from 441, Northdown Road, Margate, Kent, has interviews with King Crimson, Caravan, and Yes. Then there's *Dodo*, which is 15p (inc. post) from 23, Lausanne Road, Withington, Manchester 20, which is a nicely illustrated poetry magazine.

As our own full-time staff gets fewer and fewer, some people may have bother getting us on the phone. The number in the front there is a 24 hour one, so don't give up - try again later..... we're usually there.

What do you think of the present state of affairs in rock? I must admit that I fear that we've passed right through the age of excitement and creativity, and we're now right in the middle of the age of mediocrity and excess. Look at all the good stuff that came out of 1962-68, and now compare it with today's watered down garbage. As far as I'm concerned, Quicksilver, Steve Miller, John Sebastian, Love, etc, etc, are all over the hill and on the way down.....spent forces. (Or maybe I'm on the way down). But what new records can you honestly say are brilliant? And there are these new groups that suddenly boom onto the scene, thrust forward by reams of advertising and hype, only to get out on stage and pump out the same over-voluminous rubbish with not so much as a grain of originality.

Is hype dead? No, certainly not. There's a new album out by two cats called Parrish and Gurvitz, which has the most hype-ridden campaign behind it that I've seen this year. George Martin produced the album, and he has been the subject of about thirty articles in the straight press - all of which begin "Lots of groups claim to take over where the Beatles left off, but I just smile. But when George Martin tells me that he's found a replacement for them, I sit up and take notice", or words to that effect. And the record? Well, it's just the same old stuff..... same as a million others. Come back Steve Darbishire - all is forgiven..... we need you, mate.

Masters of their subject department: a quote from *Hi-Fi News'* record reviewer talking about the "Jefferson Airplane takes off" album; "a young lady called Jorma Kaukonen sang lead at that period." That's right, mate - that must have been around the time that Janis Joplin was playing lead guitar for the Dead. Keep it up - we like to see someone who can write authoritatively on rock. Meanwhile, RCA don't even bother to send us records - dead as a dinosaur. And EMI don't bother to send us any either - which is why we hardly ever have articles on their people - we can't afford to buy the records. Never mind - they can have the satisfaction of seeing nice reviews in the *Hi-Fi News*... I'm sure all the heads read that. (Thanks page thirty

ZIGZAG WANDERINGS

to Bob of Airdrie for the cutting).

Cigarettes caused over 30,000 deaths from cancer in England and Wales in 1970, yet cannabis, far from ever killing anybody, "has no harmful effects and the problems of marijuana have been created by an ill-informed society rather than by the drug itself." (from *Guy's Hospital Gazette*) Because the Government is so controlled and tied up by those who make a fortune killing people with tobacco, they won't bother to legislate against it - yet anyone caught with dope is treated like a criminal. A good friend of ours, John Curd, who used to be the manager of Quiver and Mighty Baby, was locked away for several years, purely for making cannabis available to a wider audience. How about writing to him, or sending him a Christmas card? Do it now - it'd cheer him up.....his address is John Curd, 4002, HM Prison, Camp Hill, Newport, IOW.

The Zigzag Poll; well, thanks to everyone who sent in a poll entry for the first and last Zigzag poll. We're not going through that again - it took about three-quarters of an hour to collate each entry. (Serves us right). For that reason we've only printed part of the results in this issue - the rest next time, when we'll also publish the competition results. (By the way, we've decided to forgive Martin Davis now - not because of anything he's done, but because of the good vibes which emanate from Andrew Lauder and Hawkwind.) Also, please be patient those of you who haven't yet received your "Snoopy" things or "Love" T-shirts, we ran out of both and are getting more together soon..... very sorry, but please bear with us.

It looks as if CREAM (not to be confused with CREAM) is to be distributed here in the new year. Great magazine - always full of grist, facts and info, and goodies. Indispensable to Zigzag readers.

Yes, Captain Beefheart is alive and well and has finished recording "The Spotlight Kid", which will hopefully be a monster. Ben Edmonds, our mate in Hollywood, says "the good Cap sends along his warmest regards and a hearty howdy. His new album is much more accessible than anything he's done before, rooted deep in Don's affection for the Blues, but it displays that conception which can be described as nothing but Captain Beefheart. The people who have maintained that he is capable of producing the ultimate white blues album may have gotten it finally, but the Captain's blues is sitting on a meteorite howling to the farthest reaches of the cosmos. Forthcoming in the (hopefully) not too distant future will be the product of an artistic collaboration involving yours truly and Don Van Vliet. More details as the project takes form. In the meantime, I'll try and send you a copy of an interview I'm in the process of doing with Captain Beefheart. It will be lengthy, as he promises to tell the entire story."

Coming next month: Pete Townshend, Hawkwind, Humble Pie, Mighty Baby, the Mothers and tons and tons more - all crammed into 32 pages, I suppose.

Well, that's all for now - see you again in February (late as usual).

Meanwhile, lots of love and a very happy Christmas and New Year from Pete, Carole, John, Ian, Mac, Mike, Pippin, Jeff - and Fotheringay, McGuinn, and Fido (dogs), and Twinkle (donkey).xxxxx

And now over to John. It seems like a long time since the last issue, and it probably is, judging from the incredible number of albums worthy of note. So let's quickly make a start. "Imagine" is possibly the best album of the century, and even if that's some sort of exaggeration, it certainly takes over from "All Things Must Pass" as the best post-Beatles thing yet. Other obvious goodies include Aretha's Greatest Hits, Van Morrison (very tasty), Yes (no improvement, but still excellent), Led Zeppelin, Lindisfarne (best new group - forget Wishbone Ash), Elton John, Steve Miller (but nowhere near "Sailor"), Richie Havens Best of (compiled by Mike Clifford, friend of Zigzag), Youngbloods live album, Hawkwind (for all of you freaks and many more like me who previously didn't rate them, but who now have become firm favourites), the Judy Collins album which was withdrawn due to the lack of beauty in the sleeve, but which is the best album yet from that lady, and an excellent Sun record by Jerry Lee called "Monster".

After a deep breath, some less obvious albums. Bell and Arc have fulfilled their promise, Humble Pie (featured in the next ZZ) doing a nice live double, a Marsha Hunt album after all this time, the return of Gene Clark with a solo album, the Albert Lee part of the Gemini Suite (although not the rest), a most interesting LP by Noir, whom Jerry Floyd used to rabbit about, the predictably excellent Gus Dudgeon production of John Kongos, an unexpectedly pleasant album by Heron, two recent albums by "friend of the stars", Buzzy Linhart, an album by ex-Blues Projecter Tommy Flanders, Connie Francis's Greatest Hits (fabulous) Solid Gold Old Town Vol. 1 (containing such as the Fiestas, Billy Bland and the Earls), a first album (I think) by Gorgoni Martin and Taylor, who boast many great songwriting credits like "Wild Thing", and finally in this section, congratulations to Pye on "Golden Hours" of Donovan and the Kinks with 20 tracks for £1.49.

To anticipate: a trio of albums from the Alabama State Troupers, who include Lonnie Mack, Don Nix, and Jeanie Greene. Unfortunately, one of these artists (Lonnie Mack) is lost to us, at least temporarily, because he's gone, to quote Jac Holzman, "to drive a truck for Jesus". Some amazing "Legendary Masters" art in the pipeline from UA, and I've seen the American sleeves, which are superb. Featured on a double album each are Ricky Nelson, Fats Domino, Eddie Cochran, and Jan and Dean.

Congratulations: to the Rainbow, the theatre we all need (but please get the groups on as early as possible, because taxis are not cheap); to Zappa for "200 Motels", which has bare tits, Jimmy Carl Black and the Turtles; to the Who, for "Meaty, Beaty, Big and Bouncy", a great record (and watch out for the marathon Pete Townshend interview in the next Zigzag).

Sorrow: that Duane Allman has died, which is tragic. It's been a pretty bad year really, hasn't it? Dear musicians, please take it easy - memorial albums are a bummer.

Finally: let's make next year even better than this, with less superstar records, much more love, and Kevin Coyne and Stackwaddy at the top of the charts. Hello - and thanks to anyone who reads this, and keep listening to the music, because that's the important thing. John



Teenage Licks

The third album from Stone the Crows on



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