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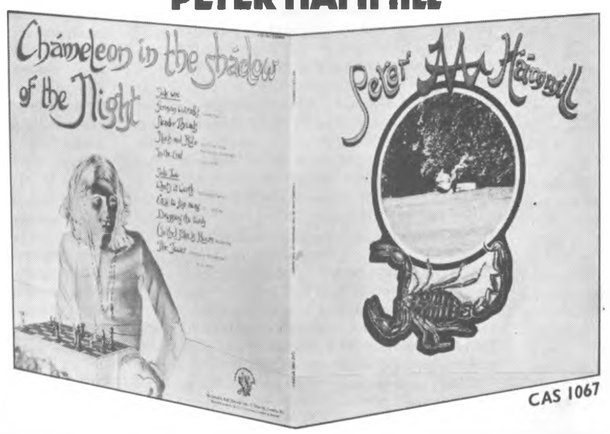

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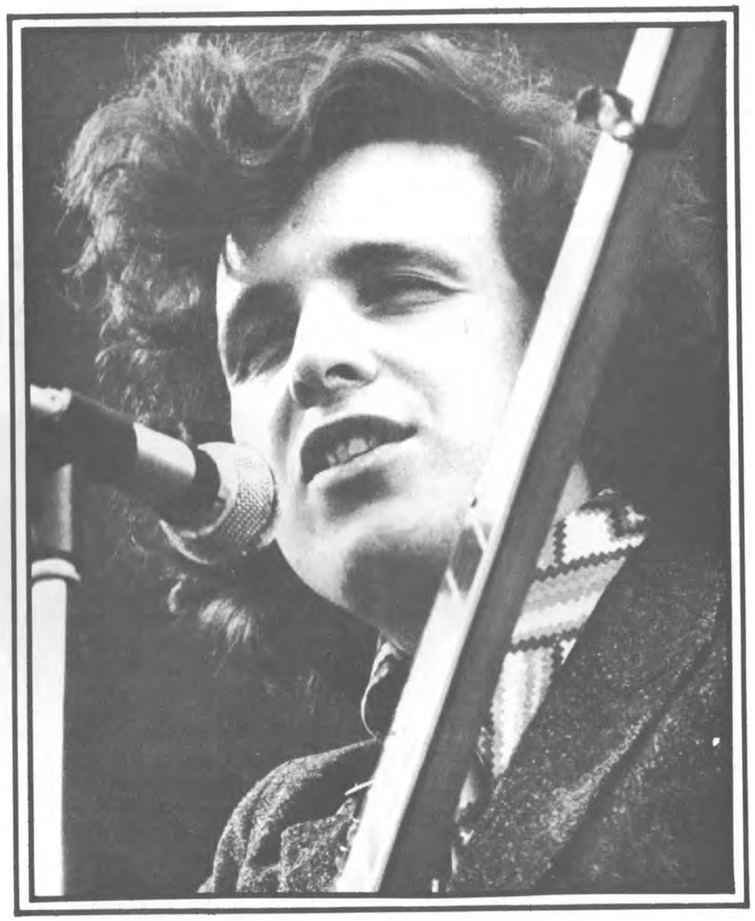
DON MCLEAN

SONG LOVER FROM NEW ROCHELLE

ZZ: I talked to Gerry Allison when he was over here, and he really liked the album, although he hadn't realised that it was about Buddy Holly. Can you tell us about your early influences?
DM: It wasn't all about Buddy Holly, but it was dedicated to him. He was from the country. He was born in Texas and raised in Texas which gave us Roy Orbinson, Gerry Lee Lewis, Johnnie Cash, Buddy Holly and others - it's root music. It's responsible for Johnny Winter who is probably the latest model for that music. He has that same incredible energy. His facility on guitar and his fiery, almost self-destructive, performance that sort of chews up his life in concert. I think he is a part of that tradition too. It's a country trait, a soul trait - to give your life on the line at a concert; actually give up some of your flesh to the audience. Youplay hard enough and you get into it deep enough, and your life force is there.
ZZ: When did you first get interested in Buddy Holly?
DM: When I was about 14 I think. I went through a short period of really digging Elvis and lately I have come back to him too. That didn't really last longer than a couple of months. I got a bunch of 78s when I was about 12 and then I really went crazy over a couple of things, like Bo Diddley's 'Who do you love', I was singing that for about a month and a half. Songs like 'Sea Cruise' I would get interested in because I was listening to the radio quite a bit. I remember the electric guitar really used to knock me out and I often wondered why I hadn't played it. Pretty soon after that it seems, the radio was taken over by the whole folk thing that started to happen in the States, but it was kind of a lull. I guess I wasn't really aware of any sense of the values of different types of music. I just sort of gravitated toward whatever I thought was interesting at that time and I still do that. I was listening to whatever was around and not really very discriminating although I tended to get involved with Buddy Holly continually. I would save up my money and buy his albums since I didn't have the money to just buy records. I really did like him, especially 'Buddy Holly and the Crickets', which was my favourite record, it really did seem as though it was done in one day - really fantastic. I was astonished to find out that the Crickets weren't singing the backing vocals, it was just a group that no one ever used. Gerry Allison told me that. The other thing about Buddy Holly that was fascinating, was that he could do this all through the 60's --all through the Beatles thing. I felt that I would rather listen to him than to the Beatles. To me his sound was almost the same as theirs but his was just something that was much dearer to me than 'She Loves You yeah yeah yeah'
ZZ: The day the music died, is always said to be the day that Buddy Holly died.
DM: That's the way it is in the first verse, but each verse the parable takes on different dimensions, and in each case, the characters describedin each situation are also destroyed some how. But, I would rather not talk about that song actually, I have talked about it enough times.
ZZ: Can I ask you one last question about it? There are a cult of people in England who believe that the music didn't go on, rock and roll didn't go on hasn't been in existence since those days of Holly and people. Is this how you feel?
DM: Those are purists I guess; I suppose they have their place. I tend to think that without purists it wouldn't be a very healthy place. There has got to be somebody to make everybody toe a certain line. Otherwise the commercial people would just totally take over. Just make music sound like anything they felt like. But I don't agree with that view - there is definitely rock and roll and it has been of as good a calibre as any which has been made over the last 15 years. Right now though there is probably less of it around than ever.
ZZ: The sense of the past is obviously very important in your music, so can I ask what your parents were like and what your childhood was like?
DM: My mother and father were pretty old. When I was born my mother was 42 and she is in her 60s now. My father died when I was 15. He was a salesman.
ZZ: Did that effect you - having old parents?
DM: I suppose so, I guess they were more restrictive, and as I was by nature even more freedom-loving than kids who were bought up by younger parents, I ended up being at odds with my parents quite regularly. That was tough shit, because they were, in a sense, too repressive. They were wrong. Eventually that came to be apparent. What can you do, parents are parents? You have to do the best you can, and make them happy and on the other hand try and do your thing. If a person is not actually trying to harm you it is very difficult to try and harm them. By way of contrast if you have a mother who is always getting drunk and beating you up then you have a reason to leave the house and say 'fuck you'. My mother and father were probably too good to me, that was their flaw. They tried too hard and I probably meant too much to them. I had to break away from that. It was a suffocating struggle. The breakaway happened when I was fairly young, so it has been long since gone. As soon as my father died I did precisely what I wanted to do.
ZZ: What did you do between that time, and beginning to get the first album together?
DM: 6 years. When I quit school, the first thing I did was take the train home, and the conductor told me I should go back and re-enlist. I said, 'No thanks.' I was sitting in one seat with my banjo and my guitar so I started trying to find a way to make my living through music. Up till then I had just been any other local kid, playing the guitar and stuff. I was a natural singer, I was able to sing when I was very young, and by being able to sing, and learning to play my instruments, I freed myself. I could perform since I could sing and play. I started to do solo gigs. I played at parties anything - I would play at parties rather than go to them. Instead of going to my senior prom, I went to see a Weavers concer. I really couldn't get involved in the social concert. I was totally outside of it, and I desired to remain outside of it too. The social side of where I was born, New Rochelle was a hideous hypocritical, suburban type attitude - and you have never experienced anything quite as disgusting as...
ZZ: Main Street?
DM: I guess so, did you ever see the Dick Van Dyke show? Well that is New Rochelle. Dick Van Dyke in his little house with his lovely wife and kids, that's New Rochelle. That's Jewish New Rochelle actually, what they call Bayberry, which is the north end. Where I came from is sort of the wasp end of New Rochelle, off a place called East Avenue, and I lived in a place called Mulberry Lane. A wonderful fantasy. It's marvellous when you are a kid. You think it's marvellous, so secure. As you go on, the pressures get more and more apparent and it becomes clearer that you are being groomed for something. Your course has been charted. As soon as I saw that I said, 'Fuck you man you won't chart one inch of my course.' So the guitar and the banjo became my symbols of what was more important than making money and being successful. Yet one of the big rotten tricks that was played on me in the last year when I became successful, was that all these fucking people were so happy that they remembered me as a little boy who used to sing. It is an incredible irony. I was so fucking mad, man.
ZZ: So they got you in the end.
DM: They got me and it really depressed me. I finally came to realise that success on my terms is always the same as it was, if I can write a good song, if I can do the things that I want to - that's success. For example, 'Everyday' isn't part of my professional work, but I'm glad its out. It's different, it's different in approach; but I doubt if anyone will have the nerve to put a record out like that. That to me, is success, to be able to do things like that, like being able to make a record that I did last time, because the record expresses acurately how I felt. It took all the frustration and irony that I could give. If you listen to 'Pride Parade' you can hear a whole lot of cross-referencing that happened entirely out of my control but that's my life story in that song. From a period when I felt that I had wasted my life --that it was really senseless to try and fight - they were going to get me anyway.
ZZ: How long did it take to get the first album together? (The first lp recorded was 'Tapestry' but because his albums were only released in this country after he had become successful with the single, 'Tapestry' was released here after the 'American Pie' Album).
DM: It took 24 years, it's the first 24 years of my life on that record and it took another year to get it out. But I had been writing off and on for more than three years.
ZZ: Were you aiming towards an album all that time?
DM: I was collecting songs all that time and I would make a list of all the songs - some of them began to become uninteresting to me, and I would sort of get rid of them, and not sing them anymore. I figure this process of selection is obviously going to happen all my life. The point is that nothing will ever be of any use to me if I don't put it on a record, because eventually I would have to weed it out.
ZZ: So you have a high self-critical barrier as it were. You reject your own songs?
DM: I don't hold on to much, I try and keep what I think is really fresh, I don't like to do stuff that I have heard done before. For example every time I heard someone sing 'I have been to Spain' I go to the nearest trash can and throw up. It's not a bad song, but that is the whole pop scene; I have a song called 'And I Love You So' which has fallen into this category. In fact I kind of wrote it for a pop singer. For example, I think Sinatra is the best pop singer that ever was. His phrasing his breath control and a lot of things that he did with music, which I don't think were particularly good, made the performance very exciting. You can't deny that kind of power even if that person is politically ugly to you. So I figured I would experiement with any influence that hit me. I tried to write songs that would satisfy me and my particular need to make that kind of music. It wouldn't be a copy- it would just be a pop ballad. I had heard thousands of them, I had never written one and it just came out one day. But to get back to Tapestry, 'Orphans of Wealth' is very Dylanesque. There is something definitely of that feel to it. The album contains a lot of influences, but there are a lot of things on that record which I will never repeat, because they are to my mind totally unique. Things like 'Castles in the Air' is a fairly neat pop song; 'And I Love You So' is a unique pop song. I also like 'Three Flights Up' which I still sing every night. It's the best on the album in terms of something I really built from scratch. That album has endured, at least in part, for quite a while, even though there are songs on there that sound dated to me now, and that I don't sing, like 'Orphans of Wealth'.
ZZ: Carole King had had 'Tapestry' out in England so everybody's minds....
DM: Well, I chose that title for my album long before that came out. The year 'Tapestry' came out, I did a few interviews and they would ask me 'Why did you take Carole King's title?' I had to go through that, and they wouldn't believe me of course. 'Yeah OK Kid I know you think that.' Then the next year it was all that other nostalgia stuff Buddy Holly took over in 1972 and this year, it's been questions about the 'Don McLean' album. What's a draddle? and so on. So it's always something new.
ZZ: Your next album, have you thought about that?
DM: Don't know yet. I don't know yet what is going to come, I don't want to know. That way it becomes a surprise for me too, and I am as enthusiastic as they are, or as unenthusiastic as they are. However it turns out. I will just go into the studio and let it happen, like I always do.
ZZ: Have you got any songs that you will use?
DM: No. I'm just kidding around, thinking about stuff, but it is all inside my mind. I don't write all the time, I just write a bunch of songs all in a row.
ZZ: How do you go about writing?
DM: Well, I wait, wait till the time comes.
ZZ: 'Vincent' came from reading - do you get all your ideas like this?
DM: Yes, sometimes it's an experience sometimes two words I hear while passing people in the street. There's no way to tell. Sometimes it comes from places that I am just not aware of. Most of the time, in fact, the things that I am doing, I'm not aware of, I'm too deeply involved, in it. I'm not cunning, I am as deeply into the essence of my existence and my being as I am humanly capable given my emotional and intellectual limitations. And I believe that in being so, I will somehow strike a unifying chord with everybody; so I satisfy an introspective need which is a need to be true unto myself and an extraspective need, which is a need to relate to others.
ZZ: Do you build the song around the lyric?
DM: It depends, really there is no way I can reduce it to the formula. Every song I have ever written has happened in a different way.
ZZ: Can you give me, say, three examples?
DM: It's difficult for me. 'Circus' just happened, I can't even recall that I had anything to do with it. I just started feeling, getting that feeling one day. Things come to me, I believe that if it comes to you, it will come to you in its most intense form, if you are a vehicle worthy of accepting it. By that, I mean the more you bring yourself and your senses and your body, and your mind, into focus then the more you are able to burn through the outer layers of superficiallity to the core of the essential. If you dull your senses with other things, other highs, you take away from it.
ZZ: And then you went on and were able to do stuff for yourself?
DM: Right. It happened really quickly; before I knew it, the next record was on me. 'American Pie' had been an idea that I had had quite a while, although I hadn't really known how to say it. I had tried to think of a lot of ways to say it; that my country was starting to die, that it had peaked. And the spirit that had been around for so long, and was so much a part of my early life-the spirit that sort of just wafted me along, ten years of

adolescence had seemed to just vanish, like it was never there.
ZZ: A lot of English people, myself included, go to America, and enjoy it immensely - we find it is more super-charged.
DM: I'm probably being more of a nit picker than you might be. But you could tell the similar kind of change if it happened here. Maybe it's the Government. If Nixon were running England, you would feel the difference. The last two albums are me entirely. There is very little on there that is remotely like anything else I have ever heard, not particularly a criterion for my song writing, but my particular path has not been where everyone else is going. I am confined myself, to a path that is my own.
ZZ: I am able to think of two contrasting songs - one that is very successful 'Vincent' --very low-key.
DM: Yeah, accoustical, except for a little string part and some vibes.
ZZ: Do you have a thing about art and things like this? 'Vincent' how did that come about?
DM: As you said earlier - from sporadic reading that I had done. It doesn't take much. Just because I write a song about somebody like that doesn't mean I am an authority on him. I finished with that idea a year and a half ago and people are still talking about it.
ZZ: It's easy to pick up on, and I suppose to the man in the street Vincent Van Gogh is one of the few artists...
DM: I suppose that song will be around for quite a while, I love it. I sing it every night, or as often as I can, but I don't think that that should imply that I am deeply involved in art. My lack of involvement shouldn't take away creedence from the song, because scholars can't write music. Most scholars end up being curators. I'm not a scholar. In fact, I never did very well in school, and I don't particularly like scholars. They are people who consider themselves intellectuals primarily because of the master race elitism that does tend to flow from it all. They end up having a kind of condescending attitude because they can't bear to be around the common people. It's a certain weird quirky, kinda twist, because the people who thought they knew about rock and roll have gravitated toward a kind of high class rock and roll in the US that ain't funk to me. To me thats just wimp rock.
ZZ: I was going to contrast it with 'Narcissisma' which is sort of harder.
DM: 'Narcissisma' is--well--I got off into some very strange tangents on the last record, because I was under a lot of strain. There is, on the record, a combination of very black periods that have been coming together in my life, and they really exploded, and I decided all the songs would be about me. It's a very personal record - the implicit narcissism in solo performing is obvious and all that it generates is obvious too.
The narcissism is having someone's trip, such as I talked about in 'American Pie ' - becoming the subject of most of my conversation, because I was being interviewed a lot. I was talking about myself and discussing myself and being involved with myself to such a degree that some narcissism just had to come out. Everything began to swirl into a hodge podge of mirrors. I also, musically, had fun with it, it was almost impossible to play that song and I wanted it to be almost impossible to play, so there would be a feeling coming through of total unsatisfaction, a really unsatisfied feeling - like "God, will you stop stopping and cook'. I loved it, but it was very unsatisfying to play. It's not something you can get off on. It's meant to create some sort of an atmosphere and transmit an emotion which was one of unsatisfied narcissism.
ZZ: What had caused that then, the success of...
DM: The whole record, in a sense tells all about that.
ZZ: There is a title that I am trying to think of just now.
DM: 'Pride Parade'
ZZ: Probably, but there is another on side two, a longish tune, which has a side title under it.
DM: 'The More You Pay, The More It's Worth.'
ZZ: Right.
DM: That's my favourite song on the record. I think it's one of the best on the record as well. It comes from a scene taken from a horse auction that I saw a long time ago, which really upset me because of the way the animals were being treated and because of the attitude of the people toward the animals. It was only when I had felt like that horse myself, that I wrote the song.
ZZ: Do you feel that people were trying to buy you up?
DM: They were trying to and that really hit close to me. I just used to travel by myself and just do things very simply. I don't like other people speaking for me, and I don't like anyone but my friends knowing about my private life - about my needs. And all of a sudden, the entire world was aware of things about me that really were none of their business. When that happens you begin to find that you have a tremendous amount of stuff to sort out before you can resume your peaceful activities. It took me a year and a half to do it - sort out my sex life, my drug life, to sort out my creative life. In the process, I was becoming rich and famous, which in itself is enough to take one and a half years to sort out if you are into making music. Maybe, I'm being stupid. Maybe the people who say 'Get all you can, while you can' are right - I don't know. All I know is that when I do something for the money, I don't feel as good about it as when I am doing it at a reasonable price. Or for nothing. It seems to me that all that shit can really get in your way after a while. Simply because if you are being paid a certain amount of money then a whole lot of other stuff has got to go with it. You don't get something for nothing. If you get a fortune for doing a gig, you can be sure that all the press from around the world is going to be there, and it's going to be a major event. So I haven't played Madison Square Gardens, although I could. I played Carnegie Hall because I like it there. This year, actually, I doubt if I could play Madison - I doubt if I could sell it out. Big concerts worry me, because you can become, the less people see of you, the more they dream about it, and I figure 'Fuck I'm gonna smash that idea to bits; I don't want to be a myth or a legend - I don't want to have people dreaming about me. The first few fan letters that I got really freaked me as they said all the usual stuff, but I'm not there trying to create a mystery for anyone - I'm trying to tell them in the best way I know everything that has happened to me.
ZZ: What instruments do you take on the road with you?
DM: The same as I had on the train when the conductor told me to re-enlist.
ZZ: Guitar and banjo?
DM: Yeah.
ZZ: Obviously later models.
DM: The banjo is the same banjo. I've had it 10 or 15 years. Isn't that ridiculous--quite a fetishist.
ZZ: Where did you get it originally?
DM: The rim is the only part that is 15 years old. The neck is only 5 years old, I gave the original neck to somebody else, because it wasn't wide enough for my fingers. I like to feel the distance between the strings. My approach on banjo is basically derived from the guitar. It took a long time to set up the banjo to get the sound that I wanted.
ZZ: Where did you get it in the beginning?
DM: A friend of mine bought it for me. He went to New York City I would never go to New York City, I hated that place when I was a teenager. It made me really nervous to see all those people around. I like trees and fields and distance. It's from my father I think, who was born and brought up in up-state New York and spent his whole life as a farm boy. He was a good gardener and he used to work on this little plot that he had and he just filled me with love of language and love of land. It was so strong I could deny neither. So this guy went there and got it for me - it was really something I had always wanted. He taught me how to set up a little bit and I had it all through high school all those years...1960 ...13 years old.
Also around that time, I had about 6 or 7 guitars, I've had lots of guitars and this is the most recent one. The reason I have had that banjo so long, is that banjos are very nearly indestructable instruments. They are heavy duty and there is just no way to destroy it, so why bother to get another one. You get one for life, but a guitar takes a beating, especially the way that I travel. Now, I can afford to buy a seat for them, no matter where I go. If there are thousands and thousands of people coming up to see you and all you have is a guitar then it seems ridiculous not to spend the extra expense to ensure that you have it in perfect playing order. I wouldn't risk putting this instrument in the hands of the baggage handlers.
ZZ: Where did you get it?
DM: This is my baby, this is a 1927 model, Martin 00028 guitar. The shape is so classical - its bigger, and so strong. All I demand from a guitar is everything. All I want is all you got.
When you are playing to 5,000 people you have got to be heard. Also when I am playing with picks and playing near the bridge I play very hard. I play hard all the time in fact - even when I'm playing softly, because I like to project the tones, and this guitar is perfectly suited to both styles. I can wham the shit out of it with a flat pick or play it soft.
ZZ: Do you get much commercial pressure?
DM: Not really, I have managed to insulate myself from that pretty effectively. I just give the record company the album, they don't give me orders or anything. I don't have lots of people around me telling me how wonderful I am - that's another kind of pressure that is difficult to avoid. I basically try to keep my life as simple as it has always been. That way I can sort out the truth from the false.
ZZ: Presumably someone like you must get pressured to do things like television commercials?
DM: Yeah, if you hang around with these poeple, but I don't.
ZZ: I wonder what sort of demands you got and whether people wanted you to do another 'American Pie'.
DM: There probably was this kind of demand, but it didn't mean much to me. In the sense that I heard it a lot and it maybe prevented me from writing for a while - because there was so much going on. On top of that they are all asking me where the next 'American Pie' is coming from. How the fuck do I know man? I don't even know where 'American Pie' came from. Those sort of people are just not creative, they just don't know what it means to do anything like that. They are too busy checking up on what the next trend is, whether I should buy this kind of shoe or hat, oh, fuck, it's dumb bullshit. Trends and fashion to me are just the most stupid waste of time I could ever think of.
I purposely go on stage as low key as possible. I wear what I wear on the street when I go on stage. I don't even bother thinking about it, that's horseshit. What is important is that I don't get bogged down with anything, other than the essentials. The essentials are plenty. If you are concentrating on trying to sing, and perform and communicate and get the fierce concentration that is necessary for an hour and half performance - then that's enough.
ZZ: Did you at any point in that period give anything to success?
DM: No, I would die first.
ZZ: ....Another question....
DM: There is one thing I did, I just remembered it. I did a television show (and this is one thing that I loathe and regret, and I don't know if you should print this) - but because my bit was recorded a week late, they were going to take my segment and insert it in the week's previous performance. After I had played, I had to announce the group that were following me, which happened to be Rare Earth and I had to read off a card which said"AND NOW IT'S RARE EARTH AND I THINK THEY ARE FINE!" and I read it before I realised what I had done. I don't think Rare Earth are fine at all, I think they suck!
ZZ: The last time you were here, your image was of a very shadowy person fleeing from success.
DM: That's probably accurate, but what I didn't like was when people started reading into me a lot of this cultist stuff. I'll tell you---what I say during every interview that I do is very little of what I am. That is reserved for my performances. And even when I am talking about the histories of people or what I thought of this or that, when I start to babble about all the interesting stuff that I did - it's still not going to tell you much about me.



Michael Wale. 1973

JONATHAN KELLY

SONG LOVER FROM IRELAND

ZZ: When did you leave Ireland?
JK: It was in 1968, around July. I remember because I wrote two things—one was a song called 'Julia' and I also wrote a poem to my niece for her birthday, which went:
Oh pretty flower growing free
What is it to them or me
If I should pluck you for my own
So full of life yet still half-grown
If I could now steal you away
Into my world of night and day
And have you teach me all you know
Of Purity like fire and snow
But where in this world can I find a vase
Wherein nature can abide
Your petals soon would fall like tears
From eyes that once shone bright and clear
Oh pretty flower growing free
You cannot bloom for them or me
But for the garden where you grow
And mysteries no man shall know
. . . and I sent it to her written in red biro, isn't that amazing. 'Julia' was written about this chick I was living with. She was going with another guy, and she kept having traumas on the phone with him. I suppose that's what I was there for. I was 20 at the time. I came over on a phony contract with Van Morrison's old manager, Phil Solomon, who had a brother who was a talent scout in Ireland. I was signed to this company but I don't think I fitted in there, so they bargained me off with this Bill Solomon, to present me with a potentially starry future in England. So they made up this contract which I signed, and he paid me for three weeks, £15 per week retainer. At the end of three weeks, never having heard my music, he sent me a note saying 'we are terminating our agreement with you,' so for no reason at all I found myself living here with nothing and so I had to think of bread and surviving. I lived in Kingston-upon-Thames, and had a very strange manager there who did nothing for me. I even went to the Social Security which was a heavy thing to do, because I had absolutely no bread, not even to go home to Ireland. Then I got this job in a restaurant, The Hotel International in Lancaster Gate, singing in the evenings, which is just opposite the big US air force hostel. I would appear there every evening at about seven and sometimes sing till 2 in the morning. There was one really heavy American air force guy there who was a real fascist—he had really strong opinions about the American advance around the world. And he thought that their struggle for domination of the world was O.K., because they were the most technologically advanced nation in the world, and yet he used to drop me fivers and things to play for him and his parties. And I'd be singing like Dylan and those sort of things. Everyone was in fur coats and there were all kinds of richies—yet I sang all kinds of ridiculous songs to these people. The guy who owned the restaurant, called Mr. Romeo, was Italian and had an in with all the boys in Soho, because he used to take me down to the Boulogne Club, and all those sort of places. But he kept me on there for some reason. I wasn't popular with anyone on the staff, because they were used to someone who would sing sort of Hawaiian, esplanade, beach music . . . or whatever you call it. But I was able to sing totally different songs just because I got on well with Mr. Romeo.
ZZ: What had you been doing in Dublin?
JK: Oh just singing around any of the venues. You see—at that time there was what they called the 'ballad boom,' so there were a lot of ballad singers—although they weren't traditional singers. They had a Dominic Behan type of surface popularity. They were all into grabbing hit records. They weren't really adaptations, they were more punched-up, hicked-up versions—it wasn't very creative, not like it has been recently, since I've been away.
ZZ: Did you ever have to sing that kind of stuff?
JK: Sort of. I was singing 'Mr Tambourine Man,' that was one way that a singer singing new songs could still get people to listen. I sang all that American stuff. Dylan, Tim Hardin, Judy Collins. You could almost kid people that you were singing ballads.
ZZ: What were you doing before you

went to Dublin?
JK: I came from Drogheda, but I had been to school in Dublin from the age of twelve—a very wierd school, very strange. Then when that had finished I went to a grammar school in Drogheda, as a day pupil. And when that had finished, I instantly took off. In fact the first place that I went to was the Isle of Wight, as a photographer in a holiday camp. It involved photographing campers at all times, and in all places and in all positions, and doing all kinds of camp things. Warners Holiday Camp, Ryde . . . whew.
ZZ: What was the first kind of music that you played?
JK: I played in a group which did Shadows and Cliff Richard type stuff. That was when I was 13, in 1963. Then we formed a group called The Saracens at school, in the carpentry workshop—because nobody at the school was ever into workshops, they all played cricket, and tried to be stars around the school. So it was empty and we used to use it to practice in. There was a guy who had an electric guitar (he had some bread as well because he lived in Sligo), he got us some guitars, and a bass which was played by Ivan Hill from Skipton in Yorkshire, and a guy called Ian played the drums, who wasn't very good at all. We went on a tour of Sligo, after we had sent off these letters. We'd had this paper printed up with our names on them, so it looked pretty impressive, and we got a few replies. In Irish villages we'd play in Marquees, because in the summer they have dances, and they would put up this big tent. They had minerals and beer. Everyone comes. Old people, middle-aged people, a few groovers. But there weren't any real looners around, or at least in those days they weren't so easily identifiable. There were a few bad cases who tried to pull down the tent or get up and sing just when you're trying to tune your guitar, they'd jump up and try and sing 'Mother MaCree.' Anyway—at the first gig when the guy who was running it saw us . . . because he'd booked us because of our fancy letterheading with dances, parties, socials written on it . . . he probably thought 'it's cheap, only £17, they must be able to play for a night! But he obviously didn't give a shit, so we managed to get two gigs. The first was in Ballysedare in Mayo which is just south of Sligo, and that died a death . . . what a death . . . it was a really sad venture . . . my guitar started to bust up, literally blow up on stage . . . it was a home made type of thing and the pick-up broke off and was hanging on the floor. And there was the classic drunk promoter. I mean he was cast by John Ford, the entire casting was perfect. He stumbled up the hall. I mean the dancers had given up. People were leaving in droves because we were terrible, we weren't even good at even giving them a straight rhythm. I was keeping a rhythm, and so was the other guitar player, but the drummer wasn't really all that good. Anyway this drunk promoter kept coming up and leaning on the stage and looking up at us. I suppose he really wanted to kick the shit out of us, but he couldn't . . . what could he do with four thirteen year old guys? We were ruining his night for him. After that I played with some showbands.
ZZ: What are these showbands?
JK: They play every conceivable music that means anything to Irish people. Something that would be on the radio, or remembered from way back. Pops, things like 'Little Red Robin.' We used to get the sheet music for these songs and they were the simplest songs imaginable. But sometimes we had some brass if we could find some brass guys, who would come with us for the night. The band changed from night to night. There was a tinker camp—what are known here as gypsies—but they're really just itinerants who had an encampment, and they had guitars and they sang a lot of country and western stuff. They were always willing to play with us. If we called in there we'd always get guitar players and singers. We played in dance halls, and ballrooms. The shabbier the better.
ZZ: If some guy got up and asked for 'Happy Birthday' for his wife, would you do it?
JK: Oh yeah. And also spot prizes we did a lot. Songs where you would stop, and the guy without his hand up the chick's skirt would win, or something like that. You had to be completely adaptable. I did that for a couple of years, and a group came out of that which wasn't too bad. I was drumming in that group. If we had a drummer I would go up and play guitar and sing whatever songs I knew. We didn't follow the chords too much, but it would all be rounded off. We always wore suits, or something like red jackets, the gaudier the better. But the lead singer would wear something different to stand out or we'd occasionally have a chick who would wear a proper dance frock. So when she came out, it was like 'Come Dancing.' She would sing a lot of country things and a lot of Irish things.
ZZ: So you left for Dublin after you left school. Why?
JK: Dublin was where there was most of a congregation of young people. I had a lot of mates in Trinity College, they were guys I had known for some time. Trinity and University College Dublin were the big colleges, so obviously there was more young people there and more music there. So the reason was just the music. I never had any idea in my mind to do anything else. When I got there I had a guitar, and I immediately started to sing wherever I could. But there were lots of boring things that happened—for instance, I joined a group called The Boomerangs . . . I've no idea why they were called that. I wrote a song called 'Dream World' which was fairly good, and we recorded it but it didn't sell a thing. We all wore special striped suits. I was only 18 and had absolutely no idea about music, or, more importantly, the feeling of being at the disposal of music rather than using music. That change around only comes after endless trials of doing pastiches of other things that you dig. It sounds corny, but that is the way it happened to me. It's only recently—just before recording the last album—that I've got into that feeling about the music. It's like a test really. You ask yourself—'Are you going to be lazy, and terribly human, and not get this down now, because you have the time and I'm playing it to you?' It is precisely that. You actually hear things. For example, I once did a song with a bird image in it, and I could actually hear the bird calling and I just copied the notes. A sweet phrase, or the mood of the thing just comes around to you, and it seems that automatically the thing is written. And when I've written a song, I get the feeling that all I've done is just take it down, someone else wrote it. It was like that medium Mrs Brown, writing down her Chopin and her Schubert. So now all I look for is that feeling, and in the old days I didn't appreciate anything like that at all. That all sounds terribly phoney, and I have no idea if anyone else ever gets that feeling, but they must, because when I listen to songs, I can tell a song that has come in the air to someone. Dylan must have been blowing his brain to pieces.
ZZ: Did you know Van Morrison in Ireland?
JK: No, that's bullshit. I had coffee with Dave Robinson (now the manager of Brinsley Schwarz) and Van Morrison was trucking around the town with him, but I had maybe a 10 minute conversation with him. I didn't even know who he was.
ZZ: What other bands were in Dublin then?
JK: The Chosen Few, and Peter Adler's Band, when I first came to Dublin in 1966. Then there was the flower power thing . . . I'll tell you a band that was happening—Dr. Strangely Strange. There is a place they all called the Orphanage, which was just a house on Lower Mount Street, just up the street from Toner's pub, where a small community built up. And Phillip Linnett from Thin Lizzie was there and Tim Booth and Ivan Paul and Tim Goudling and Brian Trenchant. That scene was happening, there was dope, and a real kind of life coming out of the music. People actually living the music, but the mainstream was still just music as entertainment. It was an excuse to dress up and become famous, and drive a Mercedes up and down Grafton St. And everyone would say 'there's a good lad—he's made his bread, what a nice guy.' The best of the bands were the ones I mentioned, and there was also a group called the King Bees, with a guy who's going to do good things, called
They were doing stuff that was coming over from America on a few singles. Temptations, Otis, Wilson Pickett. But it still hadn't got into peoples' lives except for Dr. Strangely Strange, and The Incredible String Band were enormous. They came over and did a big gig and Strangely Strange were on with them; they did an amazing gig—great songs, very peaceful.
ZZ: So there was this whole phoney contract thing and Mr. Romeo's place. What else was going on for you?
JK: I was living in the Madason Hotel, where everyone used to live. Joe Cocker used to live there, but I only snuck in on things because I knew Dave Robinson who was managing Heir Apparent, (The People) and they were one of the really good Irish bands. Henry McCulloch was with them then and a singer called Ernie. Henry has always been one fuck of a guitar player, and always a very far out guy. Dave, I met because I was living on the sofa of a flat in Waterloo Road, which was a doorway away from Peter Adler. He had bec ome a big star—he wore dark glasses—and did totally outrageous things, like his 'Dinner With Dracula' and Dave was always around with him. He took some amazing photos of me, when he was a photographer, but I think he had to give it up because he got dermatitis from the chemicals. Anyway at the Madason—oh yeah, Chris Stainton was there too. They used to play some really wild music which was a revelation to me. I was still playing Dylan and Simon and Garfunkel. And that would never have made it with other musicians. Maybe it was something I had to go through, because to learn how to write songs (not that I know) you have to go through all that. I know now, that I've always loved songs. A guy that gets a song written has actually heard the song in his head and when he's finished it, he asks around all his friends, in case it's already been written, and he's forgotten where he heard it. I mean Randy Newman—that song 'Cowboy'—that must have blown his head off when he heard that in his head. And that feeling about songs is what has always made it different when I go to play with people. This tour I'm doing now will be like that. Playing with other people is very different when you've always played on your own. Suddenly you are left in a situation where you can space the song out, let it roll, spread out among more people, and do more harmonious things. That is where I'm changing, translating that thing of digging songs into a thing with, and for, other people. That's why Ry Cooder is so fantastic. He's a song worshipper too. He couldn't sing 'Rally Round the Flag Boys' unless he loves songs. And yet, on something like Claudia Linnear's album, he can stand back and drive the whole thing. Anything can happen when he does that, so he's managed to make that translation. He's got it completely sussed. So I have to let my songs have the space, go right back and take an equal stance, even maybe hide away, and let the songs develop with the musicians, and when that works, it is far out on stage. That's why The Grateful Dead have that incredible effect, because they're harmonious and they love each other, they dig each other's music and they're friends. It's that corny.
ZZ: What happened when Colin Peterson (ex-drummer with the Bee Gees) found you playing in the hotel?
JK: He came up and asked if I'd like a glass of wine and so on. Well he was in the Bee Gees and I was singing in a hotel, and living in the Madason and thinking that somewhere I was going to get a chance to sing more, and he seemed to offer it, so I just went along with everything, most of which was wrong—except that it was teaching me that it was wrong.
ZZ: What sort of thing were you doing?
JK: I was wearing . . . costumes, and getting my hair cut, and looking like 'a boy next door,' smiling sweetly in every direction.
ZZ: Like the cover of that album on Parlophone.
JK: That is the one . . . purple cashmere sweaters . . . that records tells it all. After I was with him for about six months we made that record.
ZZ: Can you tell us about some of the songs on it?
JK: Well 'Denver,' I was obviously thinking of Jim Webb, who fucking blew my mind. In a whole different way from the others, but still fucking good. That album with the Fifth Dimension, 'Magic Garden' was unbelievable. Staggering arrangements and excellent songs. The words are just right for his music, they are natural words, because the music is charged with simple emotion. 'Macarthur Park' is great. If you go through that album you can trace the things that I was digging at the time, all of them very light things, all the influences came from people who were doing nice, subtle music. 'Mrs. Gilbert' had a bit of the old protest song thing on it. I wrote that in a flat in Dublin. I was singing in clubs where all the people were singing songs about the 1916 rising fifty years back, but watery, so I suppose I wanted to cover present day problems.
ZZ: Who was on it?
JK: Mainly Ashton, Gardner and Dyke, but the fixer got us Billy Bell to play banjo, who was great. Eric Clapton played slide on 'Don't You Believe It.' Colin used to work for Stigwood, and I guess he met the Cream guys when he was in the office, and he asked him if he'd come and play on a twelve bar, and he just turned up, which blew my mind. He listened to the backing tracks and bang, just played it, but that song was all the wrong tempo.
ZZ: Some of the songs, like 'Don't You Be Too Long' really lack the vitality that you give them onstage.
JK: Well I didn't play on stage in those days. I was always too busy at the hairdressers. I had no idea, man what anything was. I was nervous all the time. So I just went along with the whole scene. I used to go and ask 'Can I go and perform somewhere?' and they'd say, 'no, just get a hit single,' and that didn't sound odd to me. It sounded a gas to appear on TV, and make records, compared to singing in a hotel. Until I woke up and saw that it was all candy floss. The Speakeasy . . . I have never liked that scene, but I kidded myself that I should be trying to get into that scene, because that was what I thought it was to get into music. I was really stupid during that period.
ZZ: What woke you up?
JK: Not having hit singles I think (laughter), having singles that really dive-bombed absoltuely nowhere in the charts. But I think that even if I'd had hit singles I would have seen the absence of love in the music. But since I wasn't having hits I was thinking 'Oh Christ I can't write songs.' I kept writing songs only because I had a sense of responsibility to the people who were backing me. But it was really fucking depressing.
ZZ: So you threw all that in and started to play in folk clubs. Whose idea was that?
JK: Mine. Totally. I just went off and did audition gigs. In those clubs, you ask the guy that is running it if you can get up during the floor spot, and if he likes you he might book you for a few quid or give you half a night for the first time. It was a good scene—it involved singing a lot of nights, getting my voice together, getting my guitar together, and there is so much that can happen to you when you start to feel the force of music and I'd never felt

the force until that stage.

ZZ: You used to generate extraordinary enthusiasm in the clubs. What do you put that down to?

JK: I don't know. Everybody who gets onto a stage, everybody in music, everybody who plays the guitar, has their own sweat, and smell, and personality, coming out of it. And I suppose that when you dig a guy on stage it's because you can feel his personality, his feeling, his vibe, coming out in the music. And for a performer to see an audience experiencing that, is fantastic. I always have some of the lights on so I can see the faces. And I don't think that the size of the gig makes too much difference.

ZZ: One of your first big successes was the Cambridge Festival in 1971.

JK: I've never really understood why. I only did a 20 minute spot. How can you judge an artist in a 20 minute spot. I shouldn't really say it but they did sensationalise it. Maybe what I did was different from anyone else . . . I just got up and played. I played a good spot, sure, and they called me back, so I played in all about 35 minutes . . . but I mean, The Reverend Gary Davis was on, so how could I have been the star of the thing. But it did me a lot of good, I got plenty of work from that, because everyone from the folk scene comes to it.

ZZ: You did a tour with the Strawbs in 1972 as your first move into larger gigs.

At this point the conversation turned to current matters and we turned to a few stimulants to revive ourselves. The nett result was the loss of the rest of the conversation, but one day we can do it again. Don't believe what old Tobler says about him live. I saw him at the Roundhouse last Sunday, and he was great, ably assisted by Peter Woods and Tim Renwick from The Sutherland Brothers and Quiver. They were fabulous.
Connor

jac holz then

If ever I've identified with a record company, the nearest thing in my mind to an ideal would be Elektra records, for many reasons, not least the fact that Jac Holzman, the president of the company considers Zigzag to be the best magazine of its kind in the world. Also, it's my impression that the acts which appear on Elektra (past and present) have a certain charisma about them which makes for a good deal of interest in their activities. When Jac was here in April, I took the opportunity to talk to him on a number of subjects, the most interesting of which you will find below.

LOVE

"I met John Echols in Max's Kansas City about six months ago, where I had been to see one of those frequent group re-incarnations, this time the remains of Rhinoceros, who are calling themselves Blackstone. While there that evening, up popped John Echols with a lovely bossomy new wife, and he said that he was going to call me. In typical laid back L.A. fashion, John called me six months later. He came by the office, and we talked awhile, and he wants to get back to recording. We're going to make some tapes with him to see if there is anything there. During his visit, I asked him about all the rumours that he had been found guilty of manslaughter, had murdered the roadie and had been in jail. He said that was nonsense, and that several of the people had been in custody for a matter of an hour or so, while the police sorted it out, but then he had been immediately released, and that the rumour had been sped on its way by another member of the group, who shall, for the purposes of libel, remain nameless. He didn't hear anything about Ken Forssi or any of the other guys, and I never hear anything of Michael Stuart. I don't know where Snoopy is either, but Brian MacLean has been up to Elektra several times, trying to get together a solo album, but there wasn't enough submission of good material. From what we could tell, listening to tapes, the best things he had written were the old things like 'Orange Skies', 'Alone Again Or' and 'Old Man'. I do know that Arthur is putting together a new band which will be recording, not necessarily with Rothchild producing, but under Rothchild's A&R supervision for the Buffalo label, financed by the guy who financed "Hair" and was the producer of it . . . Michael something or other. There are several ex-Elektrons working at that label, including Billy James, who is Director of Publicity. I wish them luck.

NUGGETS

Volume II is being prepared, but preparing a "Nuggets" album takes an incredible amount of time. After you make an idealised list of the selections you would like to have, you then have to proceed through the incredibly cumbersome and quite tedious process of getting the various legal permissions, all of which are slightly different and require slightly different negotiations and paper work. Usually what happens is that you call the Company up and speak to somebody and they say "Yeh, sure". Then you send them an agreement, and then you don't hear from them. Then you send them their second notice and their third notice, and their fourth notice and eventually you go and stand with a sabre to their throats and you might get a document. It took us about two months to assemble the list of what we wanted for "Nuggets" Volume I, and close to a year and a half to get the permissions and the tapes. You can get the contract, and then nobody can find the tape. In terms of man hours spent, we will break even on "Nuggets" on about a quarter of a million sets. It's a slight hyperbole, but a tremendous amount of work is spent on "Nuggets" out of all proportion to the number of albums sold, but I think that it is a very important series, and both Lenny Kaye and I get a kick out of doing it. We will keep doing them as long as we meet with some kind of positive reaction from the public—we sold a fair number, and the press have been great. The thing that is particularly appealing to me about "Nuggets" is that a lot of the material is the kind of thing which is actually contrary to what Elektra has been known for over the years. So to be able to incorporate them as part of our catalogue by proxy is kind of appealing to me. I've started a list for the second volume, but I don't have it with me and I can't remember half the tracks.

DELIVERANCE

"Deliverance" is one of those typical record stories that will be told around the camp fires. I guess those who have seen the movie know that there is a sequence between one of the men who is going to go down the river in a canoe and a very strange eerie looking youth, I guess, and he can't make contact with him with words, so he tries to do it with his musical instrument. The song was scheduled by the studio, and they wanted someone to release the single, but Warner Bros. turned it down. It was sent over to me because I was supposed to know about such folk things, and I listened to it and said that I didn't think it was a single, and Atlantic turned it down. So everyone in the WEA group turned it down. Then the picture was

doing very well, and I thought that just having the single out would be useful, so Mo Ostin, who is chairman of Warner/Reprise, agreed to release it as a single. In one area, Minnesota, the record got a lot of air play and a lot of calls from the public, and started to sell. When Warner/Reprise found that they had a selling single, but no album, they contacted Elektra, the folk experts, and we dug out of our archives an album called "New Dimensions in Banjo and Bluegrass" (EK 7238), and we gave the tapes to our brother label—"Here, you can add this to the 'Deliverance' track, and you will have a Deliverance-type album". It was like freezedried bluegrass, to fill a need, and the album has sold over a million copies. There are a million more people listening to banjo music than I ever expected, but I haven't heard the

man and now

LP recently, and I don't think I want to listen to it.

Carly (Simon) is working on her next album. She writes as any good writer will, I guess—you see things, you get ideas, you jot them down right away. She told me the other day on the phone that she'd got fifteen first verses that were great, but no complete songs. Carly works well when you give her a deadline—say, we're going to go into the studio in June, suddenly, the stuff gets written. The "No Secrets" album is a platinum record in the States alone, which is a million units. The biggest Elektra seller up to now has been the Doors' first album, but Carly's catching up.

Judy Collins has decided that she wishes to take more control over her career and its direction, and that she has insulated herself far too long from people who she should be close to in terms of making her own decisions. She decided that she would just do it herself, and I think it's a very good decision, because she has had the energy to follow it through. She's getting out and performing a lot more, and she has been directing a film which has to do with her music teacher in Denver when she was growing up, and this is her first film directorial experience, about which she is very excited. She is in very good spirit, very positive, energies all focussed in a very good way. She took more control over the production of the "True Stories and Other Dreams" album herself, but she's been in the studio for thirteen years now, and she's bound to have learned enough. I trust that you can expect her in England before too long, but don't ask me for a date. Incidentally, I don't know about Carly in that respect, but I'd be happy to see her performing anywhere.

As regards Veronique Sanson, the people who listened to her album, and were not put off by the fact that much of it was in French, like it very much, but some people, I think, didn't bother to listen to it at all, simply because it was a French album. Maybe now that she is married to Stephen Stills, more people will pay attention to it, but certainly she deserves to be an artist in her own right. I don't know whether she intends to record in French or English the next time, because I don't put too much pressure on an artist in terms of finding out everything they're going to do. I usually get the chance to talk to the artist and the producer before the album is made, but I don't try to draw them out too much before they're ready to talk to me on the subject. Too much record company pressure is not a good thing.

EX ELEKTRONS

Crabby Appleton broke up, so they won't be making any more records with us. It's very difficult for an American group to get sufficient work to financially keep them together. It's a losing proposition from the standpoint of the record company to give them an allowance which will enable them to keep going. You have to figure that you can't keep an act going for less than five hundred dollars a week minimum support money, which doesn't include getting them to and from dates. So you've got to figure that it's a fifty to seventy-five thousand dollars a year proposition, and you just can't afford to do that if they don't sell any records. We supported a lot of the dates in terms of getting them from point A to point B, not only from the standpoint of transport, but also the kind of aggressive promotional things that have to be done to assist the marketing at that date. You just can't keep them going for ever, and at some point, you have to say "I quit". In this case, the group said it for us. I understand that Michael Fennelly is now signed as a solo artist with Columbia, where he was, of course, before, as part of the Millennium.

Turning to David Ackles, I think that he's a splendid person. We made three David Ackles albums, and tried real hard on two of them. One had incredible press and everything going for it, including a major effort on Elektra's part, but nothing happened. There is a limit, even when you believe in an artist, and when you have three shots and you don't get some kind of solid positive reaction from people, then it's time to let him try with a different chemistry, and put that time and effort into a new artist. I wish him well on CBS, where I understand he is going.

PLAINSONG, IAN MATTHEWS, ANDY ROBERTS AND MIKE NESMITH

I guess that Ian Matthews will never be satisfied being in a group that he doesn't totally control. As you may know, he is in the States now, planning to work as a solo, and is working on an album which is half done, being produced by himself and Michael Nesmith. I think Ian has always had the desire to be a cowboy, and I would say that the record will have some strong country influences, as there always have been in Ian's music. Andy Roberts has also done an album, which is being released by us in England, although I don't know whether it will be released in the States. The Matthews album is being recorded at the Countryside label studios, which is Nesmith's label. There is nobody that you'll have heard of on the label, because it's straight shit kickin' country music. The only success we've had so far is with Garland Fratey, whose album was what is euphemistically referred to as a turntable hit—it sold a few records. Country records to establish country artists are notoriously slow to get going, but conversely, when they're established, they last a lot longer. The music on the label is strictly country or country and western, which are two different categories of music—it's not country rock or Poco-ish, and I think Nesmith intends to keep it pretty pure.

Nesmith has a contractual commitment to RCA, which both he and I are anxious he continue to honour. Besides which, Nesmith, unless he were doing straight country, would not appear on the Countryside label, but probably on Elektra.

The arrangement came about when I was talking to him about a concept I had. I was wondering out loud one day as to where tomorrow's record company presidents were going to come from, the ones who had learned how to do it all by themselves, who were not specialists like lawyers or accountants taking over record companies and then trying to learn other areas, but people who were experienced by virtue of having had to put it together themselves, and Michael just happened to be around. He said that he had always wanted to put together a country label, and I said that sounded interesting and certainly the kind of thing that Elektra would want to do, and we hammered together a deal over a reasonably short period of time. The label is distributed by the WEA group throughout the world. Because it needed a separate identity, he found a ranch out in the San Fernando Valley, just north of Hollywood, and built a studio on the premises, and it's an entirely self contained scene. They do a lot of their own marketing, their own cover work, and they come to Elektra when they need help. They're reasonably self reliant, and it's what we call a satellite label, the first that we have. There may be more in the future, but his is the test crucible.

NEW ARTISTS

Curt Boettcher, Being a solo artist, doesn't require the same sort of support as a group to keep him going. There's just him and his partner Web, and it's a different kind of situation. Curt, fortunately, eats very carefully, a lot of brown rice, and we send bags of brown rice to his door. Obviously, it's a less expensive proposition. As you may know, he used to be a producer, but he's so busy doing his own things, that he isn't doing any outside work in the production line that I know of.

Billy Mernit is still at college, at Antioch. Antioch is an unusual school, in that it has a combination academic and work program, and his involvement with the record is part of the work program. Also, from the financial standpoint, he wrote one of the songs on Carly's album, so he's got college paid for. Shortly, he'll be putting a band together to do live performances, although I don't know who it will comprise. I think he's marvellous. Another new name is Don Agrati. His was one of the tapes that came in through one of our staff producers, Marlin Greene. Don Agrati is the real name for Don Grady, a very famous young American actor who was in a hit TV series that ran for years, called "My Three Sons" with Fred MacMurray. The album is called "Home Grown", and most of it was done in Don's basement, with himself playing a lot of the instruments. Sailcat make a hit single and a hit album, but the group split up, and John Wyker left, but Courtland Pickett remains, still produced by Pete Carr, and it looks as if he has a hit single in the United States now. We'll have to see what happens, but it's a nice tight clean single.

BREAD

At the moment, all I can tell you is that the group are in a state of flux, to use an official term, which either means that they will continue to make records or they won't. In the latter case, we will make records with David Gates and probably Jimmy Griffin separately. Larry Knechtel is not an Elektra artist—he is involved in the group for recording and live performances, but is not a signatory to the original Bread contract. The original three signatories were David Gates, Jimmy Griffin and Robb Royer. Robb left, leaving Jimmy and David as the original two signatories, and our claim is to those two artists only. In fact, we have asked Larry to make an album for us, indicating what we think he might find it interesting to do. Larry feels very close to Elektra, and he is a great musician and craftsman, one of the rare ones.

He is the guitar man on the "Guitar Man" track. We couldn't get that thing right, and he just picked up the guitar and played it. Also he is a great bass player, as well as a formidable keyboard player and the arranger of "Bridge Over Troubled Water", which is not a bad claim to fame. He's a much in demand session musician in Los Angeles.

THE DELETION PROCESS

At this time, we are not thinking of cheap label repackaging of any old material which has been deleted. When an Elektra record is deleted, space is reserved in the warehouse to store four or five hundred copies. We keep this number or less, depending on the nature of the record and its popularity, on reserve for anybody who is sufficiently interested to write in, and then we send the record out. We then sell up our deletions at a low price, and these end up in the bargain bins, which is in effect a new low price record line, with the original version, the original sleeve, but at a price probably less than half the original cost. So we don't think about putting them on a budget line, and when we have spoken to people who are specialists in budget, they continually advise us, and I think they are correct, that there aren't that many people interested in an old Love album to support a budget release, but making it available via deletion to low cost record bins is our way of providing the public with a budget line.

Every once in a while, somebody will write for a record that we just don't have a copy of anymore, in which case, for the same regular cost of the record, we will make a cassette copy from our tapes and supply them with that at cost. We also Xerox the back liner, so at least everything is in print if you're willing to go out and buy a cassette machine.

As far as the material by Love and the Doors goes, "Love Revisited" is not deleted, but there are still copies of all their other records available. "Absolutely Live" by the Doors deleted itself, but most of the other material by the group is still available, and if anybody wants it, we can still get it. I consider an out of print record as one that you cannot get from the record company. I don't know what other companies do, but I have the feeling that if we spent the time making a record, we made it for a reason, and then if anybody is willing to be patient with us, we can get them a cassette copy at no extra cost, which will be custom made.

THE SCENE

There is a great deal of new material about, not much of it very good. As far as Elektra goes, well over half our roster are male singer/songwriters, and I would say that we're out of balance. However, the putting together of old bands does not strike me as a particularly good or successful idea. I'll give you two examples of it on the same label, one which works and one which doesn't work. I am not knocked out personally with the new Byrds album, which was David Geffen's effort, but what David did in terms of piecing together various people and putting together the Eagles was absolutely brilliant, and it worked astonishingly well. David happens to have a great deal of patience, an incredible amount of taste, and is an excellent father confessor to his artists. The credit for the Eagles has got to go 60% to David, who put that thing together exactly the way he saw it. By the way, there was an Eagles record, which David thought was terrible and threw out, which takes a lot of guts when you consider that he was in for seventy-five to eighty thousand dollars. There's another thing that I've said frequently of late, but I believe it quite definitely to be true, that there's a very high level of musical professionalism and confidence, but a very low level of magic in things that are fresh. It's almost exactly like it was ten years ago in 1963, when Dylan was just beginning to emerge, but I don't see anybody coming along yet. It's

certainly not Bruce Springsteen, and the most exciting thing I see emerging now for a non Elektra standpoint is the Mahavishnu, which I think is very important, although it's not music that it's easy to get close to. I think that music in the 70s is going to demand more of the audience, who have been encouraged to be lazy and not as eclectic as they should be. I think if I can fault Elektra in any way, our music has been all too easy to listen to, and I intend to make it tougher on my audience as we go into the seventies. You can't do it with every release, but you can certainly do it with some.

MORE ARTISTS

Harry Chapin is doing so many things that some of his recording presence is probably diffused. Currently, he's completing a screen play, preparing a story outline which is in first draft now, and is committed to do a soundtrack for a motion picture. He provides his brother Tom with 25/30 new songs a year for Tom's Network TV show "Make A Wish", and in between time, Harry plays a mean game of pool, tennis and softball, which he plays to win, and thus he has had very little time to write new songs, although he has produced a few recently, but nothing worthy of recording. History indicates that, of the artists who left Elektra because one side or the other didn't want to renew their option, none have done as well off the label as when they were on Elektra. Of them all, I still have a warm spot in my heart for Tom Rush, and he can come home anytime. Then there's Hamilton Camp, who made a record for Elektra and then was off the label, then made another one for Elektra, one for Warner Bros., one for RCA, and then spent a lot of time as an actor. Now he's back with Elektra again, and he's getting ready to prepare another album shortly. He's a great singer, great writer, extremely intelligent man, and one of the best singers I've ever heard. I'm hoping for something from him by the end of the year.

As far as English acts go, we've signed Dennis Coulson, who used to be with McGuinness Flint and who made a very promising audition tape, and also Queen, who are being produced by John Anthony, who produced the first and best Lindisfarne album. The Queen deal comes through Trident Audio Productions, which is Trident Studios in London. Both Queen and Dennis have a very high level of positive energy, by which I don't necessarily mean sound level or sound intensity, but rather a kind of spirit, and that is one of the things I'm looking for in artists and all too rarely find. John

A rather terrifying press photograph of THE MISUNDERSTOOD, taken in early 1967, which hardly conveyed their image at all. Starting at the top and going clockwise: GLENN CAMPBELL (steel guitar), RICK MOE (drums), TONY HILL (guitar), STEVE WHITING (bass) and RICK BROWN (vocals). They made 2 singles: "I can take you to the sun"/"Who do you love?" on Fontana TF 777 and "Children of the sun"/"I unseen" ("I come and stand at every door") on Fontana TF 998. See the following pages for their history.

THE COLOSSAL COLOSSEUM JUICY LUCY JOE COCKER STRAWBS YES KING CRIMSON ROXY MUSIC FAMILY FAMILY TREE

INCORPORATING THE STORY OF THE MISUNDERSTOOD

THE MISUNDERSTOOD #1 1966-67. One of the most amazing (but unfortunately also one of the most short-lived) underground bands. Many people contend that their first single was the greatest single ever! They made 2: 'I CAN TAKE YOU TO THE SUN' TF777 & 'CHILDREN OF THE SUN' TF 998

- TONY HILL replaced GREG TREADWAY — gtr/vocals
- GREG TREADWAY — guitar/vocals
- RICK BROWN — vocals
- STEVE WHITING — bass
- RICK MOE — drums
- GLENN CAMPBELL — steel guitar

Tony Hill, the only member of the Misunderstood who hasn't vanished from the face of the , has no idea where any of the others are. "They could be at the ends of the earth" he says,".... in fact, knowing them, they probably are."

HIGH TIDE Developed during odd hours at Apple Studios - See Zigzag 4 - in summer 1969. Broke up after making two albums: 'SEA SHANTIES' (Sept 1969) LBS 83264 & 'HIGH TIDE' (Sept 1970) LBS 83294

- ROGER HADDEN — drums
- SIMON HOUSE — violin
- PETER PAVLI — bass
- TONY HILL — gtr/vocals

3 members of High Tide (Simon, Peter & Tony) together with a new drummer are currently rehearsing a new group.

If you should happen across any albums by THE DIRTY BLUES BAND, leave them alone.

THE DIRTY BLUES BAND 1967-8. Made 2 albums on Bluesway: 'DIRTY BLUES BAND' * (Sept 67) BLS 6010, 'STONE DIRT' + (Sept 68) BLS 6020

- LES MORRISON* replaced by GREG ANDERSON+ — bass
- ROBERT* SANDELL — guitar
- JOHN MILLICAN* (ex Mystics) drums replaced by DAVE MITER+ — drums
- PAT** MALONE — organ and piano
- ROD** 'GINGERMAN' PIAZZA — vocals/harp (ex Mystics..... later formed Bacon Fat)
- RICK LUNETTE replaced GLENN 'T' CAMPBELL — steel guitar

GRAHAM BOND ORGANISATION

Started in 1962 as the GRAHAM BOND TRIO, became the GRAHAM BOND QUINTET in Feb 1963 when John McLaughlin joined. Heckstall-Smith replaced McLaughlin and it became the GRAHAM BOND ORGANISATION. Album on Columbia, plus tracks on 'SOLID BOND' K 60004

- GRAHAM BOND — organ/saxes/vocals — (ex Alexis Korner) Disbanded his Organisation and went to America. Now in BOND AND BROWN
- JACK BRUCE — bass/harp/vocals — (ex Alexis Korner) Left Oct 65 to join Mayall, thence to Manfred Mann & then CREAM. See Zigzag 22
- GINGER BAKER — drums — (ex Alexis Korner) Left in July 1966 to form CREAM
- JON HISEMAN replaced by DICK HECKSTALL SMITH — drums — ex 1933 groups. Joined in July 1966. Left in August 67 to join GEORGIE FAME
- DICK HECKSTALL SMITH — saxes — (ex Alexis Korner's Blues Inc) Joined in September 1963, left in August 1967 when the group disbanded.

THE MISUNDERSTOOD #2 Re... little resemblance to original group..... had none of the origin... its predecessor. Recorded 2 singles on Fontana: 'TUFF ENOU... TF 1078 and 'NEVER HAD A GIRL LIKE YOU BEFORE'/'GOLDEN GLA...

- DAVID O'LIST — guitar — (ex Nice) Just played for a while.
- GUY EVANS — drums — During a lull in the life of VAN DER GRAAF GENERATOR, which he rejoined in late 1969
- STEVE HOWARD — vocals — (ex the Bush, ex Cock Robin - see Zigzag 23 - Stoneground chart.)
- NICK POTTER — bass — now with RARE BIRD
- GLENN CAMPBELL — steel guitar

JOHN MAYALL'S BLUESBREAKERS #509

For fuller details of Mayall's long and varied career, consult Zigzag 17. This, I thought, was one of his less impressive line-ups - and he must have thought so too because he fired them all except Mick Taylor and reverted to a quartet. Recorded one album with this lot: 'BARE WIRES' (July 1968) Decca SKL 4945

- JOHN MAYALL — guitar/organ/vocals/harp/piano — goes on forever (see Zigzag 17)
- MICK TAYLOR — guitar — June 1967 to May 1969. Left for ROLLING STONES
- TONY REEVES — bass — (ex producer, arranger and session man) Joined April 1968 & left in Sept 1968
- DICK HECKSTALL SMITH — saxes — Joined August 1967, left July 1968
- JON HISEMAN — drums — Joined April 1968 & left in August 1968
- HENRY LOUTHER — trumpet/violin — Left Sept 1968 to join Keef Hartley
- CHRIS MERCER — saxes — left in Sept 1968 - went to Misunderstood, to Juicy Lucy (see over there →)

JUICY LUCY #1 Evolved out of... late 1969. Album: 'JUICY LUCY' (Jan 1970) Vertigo 84... Juicy Lucy was too contrived - trying very hard but lacking any real feeling. Their album...

- RAY OWEN — vocals — formed his own group 'MOON' (album on Polydor)
- PETE DOBSON — drums
- KEITH ELLIS — bass — ex Koobas and Van Der Graaf Generator. Went to America
- GLENN 'FERNANDO' CAMPBELL — steel guitar

COLOSSEUM #1 September 1968 to May 1970

See Zigzag 8 for more background. This Line-up made 2 albums: 'THOSE WHO ARE ABOUT TO DIE SALUTE YOU' (March 1969) Fontana STL 5510 and 'VALENTYNE SUITE' (November 1969) Vertigo VO1

- TONY REEVES — bass — Left in May 1970 to return to producing & session work, then headed the Greenwich Gramophone label.
- JAMES LITHERLAND — guitar/vocals — (ex local Manchester groups). Left in Sept 1969 to form MOGUL THRASH
- DAVE GREENSLADE — keyboards — (ex Wes Minster 5, Chris Farlowe's Thunderbirds, Geno Washington, etc.
- DICK HECKSTALL SMITH — saxes
- JON HISEMAN — drums

JUICY LUCY #2 Paul Williams arrived to replace Ray Owen. Albums... AND ENJOY IT' (Nov 1970) Vertigo 6360 014 and 'GET A WHIFF A THIS' (July 1971) Bu... By this time it was evident that Juicy Lucy would get nowhere fast, and mem... look elsewhere for a big. Paul Williams tried to pull it back together, but their ...

- JAMES LEVERTON — bass — (ex Fat Mattress) now with Ellis
- MICK MOODY — guitar — (ex Tramline)
- PAUL WILLIAMS — vocals — (ex Zoot Money's Big Roll Band, Mayall's Bluesbreakers, Alan Price Set, Paul Williams Set, Agnitey Dombart Blue Whale etc.)
- CHRIS MERCER — saxes — to Keef Hartley & Chris Mercer's Maverick Band
- ROD COOMBES — drums — (ex Luvvers, Jeff Beck, Trifle, Paul Williams Set). Went to Roy Young and then
- DE LISLE HARPER — bass — (replaced Leverton)

COLOSSEUM #2 May 1970 until October 1971. After James Litherland went off to form his own group, they co-opted Clem Clempson and, later, Chris Farlowe. Made 3 albums: 'DAUGHTER OF TIME' (November 1970) Vertigo 6360017, 'LIVE' (June 1971) Bronze ICD1 and 'COLLECTORS COLOSSEUM' (Nov 1971) ILPS 9173

- DAVE GREENSLADE — keyboards — (ex Bakerloo) Joined Tony Hazzard, then IF, very briefly.
- DAVE CLEMPSON — guitar/vocals — (ex Bakerloo) Joined Sept 1969. Went to HUMBLE PIE in October 1971 (see Zigzag 24)
- DICK HECKSTALL SMITH — saxes — Made solo album, & formed own band.
- JON HISEMAN — drums — Rested, produced & planned.
- MARK CLARKE — bass/vocals — (ex St. James Infirmary) Joined May 1970. Was in URIAH DINGHEAP for a while!
- CHRIS FARLOWE — vocals — (ex own bands) Joined Sept 1970. Went to ATOMIC ROOSTER in Nov 1971

JUICY LUCY #3 An unsuccessful attempt to pick up the pieces of a doomed band, which finally collapsed in November 1972. Album: 'PIECES' Polydor 2310 160

- PAUL WILLIAMS — vocals
- MICK MOODY — guitar
- ANDY PYLE — bass — (ex Blind Faith Pig)
- JEAN ROUSSEL — piano
- RON BERG — drums — (ex Blodwyn Pig)

GREENSLADE Formed in October 1972 and still going strong, they feature very unusual instrumental line up. Have so far recorded one album: 'GREENSLADE' (February 1973) Warner Bros K 46207

- TONY REEVES — bass & producer
- DAVE GREENSLADE — piano/mellotron/vibes/organ
- DAVE LAWSON — vocals/organ/piano/vibes — (ex Alan Bown)
- ANDY McCULLOCH — drums — (ex King Crimson & Fields)

TEMPEST The idea for this band was born in Jon Hiseman's mind in June 1972, but the full line-up wasn't confirmed until December 1972. So far, one album: 'TEMPEST' (Jan 1973) ILPS 9220

- JON HISEMAN — drums
- MARK CLARKE — bass/vocals
- ALLAN HOLDSWORTH — guitar/violin/vocals — (no previous groups)
- PAUL WILLIAMS — vocals

STEALERS WHEEL

Rab Noakes. Rafferty left (but later r... NOAKES - Sept 72 - Amis 68119). Consid... very tortuous history (see Zigzag 28).

- JOE EGAN — piano/vocals — (ex Scottish groups)
- PAUL PILNIK — guitar/vocals — (ex the Big Three)
- PETE CL... replaced by ROD COOMBES — drums

Whiting, the bass player, was doing things like playing his bass with a bottleneck. They were quite fantastic.

"After that, I started hanging out with them excessively, trying to get them gigs. At that time, gigs were relatively few and far between but they had a residency lasting for several weeks at a topless club in Watts, the Spade part of LA, which was quite frightening at first but once they started playing was alright.

"After a while, they went in and cut an album, which I may have financed (I can't remember now), at Gold Star Studios in Hollywood. The tapes have long since disappeared, which is a terrible shame because they were amazing.... totally eclipsing anything else recorded in 1966, I'm sure..... oh, how I wish I could get my hands on them now. They did 'I'm not talking' and other Yardbirds numbers, 'you don't have to go', 'Smokestack Lightning' and all sorts of things. It was basically done as a demo, to try to hustle some gigs and a recording contract, and I was the producer - which meant that I just sat there and kept out of the way.

"Well, they used to do the odd gig, but most of the time we'd just sit around and talk about the possibilities of the future, because they were so good compared with any other band I'd heard up til then - much better, and certainly more inventive. And this, don't forget, was at a time when you could drive into LA and see The Byrds or Love almost anytime you wanted.... and I'd also been at some of the recording sessions which produced the Airplane's 'Surrealistic Pillow'. Of course, it's only in retrospect that you realise what an exciting time it was; I mean, it has you all of a sudden sometimes. I lived through all that!"

"We used to sit around and smoke a lot, but it wasn't in any way sinister. We had these mates who used to go into LA every so often and literally cram the boot of their car full of grass; that's all there was, grass.... nothing else until Rick discovered acid, which was much later - in London, in fact. In California, we just used to smoke grass and giggle a lot - thinking how daring we were. It was by no means a druggy group - not like the Grateful Dead, say, who appear to have been stoned ever since they sprang from their mothers' wombs....."is it a drug? Great, I'll have some!" You see, this was 1966 - just around the start of the hippie thing.

"Nobody, however, was interested in giving them a recording contract, so I suggested that they go to London, because there was this big charisma attached to being from America and also London was probably more receptive to new ideas. So off they went. I helped them to get off, and my brother Alan, who was a mate of Nigel Thomas at the time and was somehow or another mixed up in the management or agency of Alexis Korner, put them up and helped them get a contract with Fontana.

"Their first single, Fontana TF 777, 'I can take you to the Sun', subsequently arrived in my letterbox and I used to play it hourly on the station until it wore out. Then they recorded their other single, 'Children of the Sun', and that was it. In actual fact, though Fontana seem to deny it strenuously, they recorded another track called 'My Mind', which is probably the best of all the things they did. I know it exists because I've got a tape of it..... you must hear it - towards the end of it, Glenn Campbell appears to have some kind of fit and goes completely beserk on his guitar, leaving everybody else miles behind. In those days, he was such an exciting player, playing infinitely better than he ever did in Juicy Lucy, where his whole personality seemed to change. Before, he'd been a total freak, but very withdrawn and quiet, and he'd tended to express everything through his guitar.

* * * * * * * * * * *

"The original five had come over to England, but Greg didn't stay long and they picked up Tony Hill, and the records were produced by Dick Leahy, who was a Fontana producer. A couple of months or so ago, it was suggested that I go through the Phillips labels archives looking out tracks for possible re-release, and I'd really like to find 'My Mind' - and anything else that they've got hidden away. I mean, those singles they made don't sound dated even today, six years later; for their time they were exceptional. They had so much going for them as a band; potentially they were honestly the best band I'd ever seen..... if it hadn't been for the American Army - well, who knows?

"As it was Rick Brown, the singer, was drafted into the Army - but then a strange situation developed; Rick returned to California (this was before I went back home to England, under a slight cloud), and we got hold of a crooked psychiatrist up in San Francisco, to whom we sent Rick with about 300 dollars, in search of a certificate declaring him unfit for military service. But that didn't work, for one reason and another, and he was sent off for Army training - prior to being shipped off to Vietnam, presumably.

"Within weeks, he'd deserted..... after having - to hear him tell it - turned on the whole of the American Army, including giving acid to all the officers..... he'd done more to corrupt the US Army than any other individual in the history of the world - according to him anyway. Then he came back to England under a false passport and..... I don't know how much of this I should repeat, so I'll just say that after this point it becomes a little bit shadowy - but he ended up in India. In the interim, he'd become very spiritual and interested in Eastern religions; he was very much the typical 1967 butterfly - one minute it was acid which paved the way to peace and love, and the next minute it was off to India to meditate. Pat Rich was one of nature's innocents really, and he was a very good singer..... Even sure that if he'd had a couple of years on the road, he'd have become fantastic. If only they'd been able to stay together, the Misunderstood could've been astonishingly influencial - just basically because everything they did was innovative; they predated both Hendrix and the Floyd with various ideas, for instance. There's no telling what they would have done.

"I remember writing all about them in a Californian paper, while I was going through a great deal of stoned-ness too, about how The Misunderstood opened the doors of perception - but I'm sure they had it in them to become as big as any band there had ever been. It was simply the draft that did them in, because Rick was the central figure; he didn't hold the band together as such, because I think Steve the bassplayer did that, but without Rick they were headless and just seemed to break up in disorder. They tried to replace him, but no-one else would have been able to fill his place; he was the dope freak of the band, and was the one who continually led them into new ideas and things..... like 'I can take you to the Sun', for instance, which was such a change from the Yardbirds stuff they'd been doing in California.

"The most incredible gig I ever saw them do was at a club called Pandora's Box, which was subsequently closed down - the act that sparked off the Sunset Strip riots about which the Buffalo Springfield sang in 'For what it's worth'. The predominant feel in LA at that time, Summer 1966, was the "ultra cool" thing; I'd met the Byrds a while earlier and none of them had so much as spoken! I was compering a gig of their's and went in to say "hello" - but they just stood there and didn't say a word ....."what a bunch of twats", I thought. But that was the basic attitude you had to adopt in Los Angeles — so when the Misunderstood went down there to play at Pandora's Box, they were the subject of much ridicule simply because they were from Riverside, which was approximately equivalent to coming from, say, Stowe Market in England. There was a lot of "ho ho ho, a band from Riverside - they'll be a bunch of hicks, ho ho ho" - that sort of thing, you know. Anyway, the first band went on and were fairly ordinary, and then the Misunderstood went on..... and it was just like one of those silly scenes in a Cliff Richard film, where everybody in the place gradually stopped talking and drifted towards the stage..... even the bar closed temporarily because the barman wanted to watch! They used to do this thing where they'd get a cyclical feedback noise repeating every few seconds and they'd leave the stage with their instruments all feeding back and then go back on again a minute or so later. That sort of thing became commonplace a few years later, of course, but in mid 66 it just freaked everybody out completely - when they finished their set there was just total silence; people had never seen anything like it in their lives.

"If I'd been a hustler or had a lot of money, I could have bought Rick out of the draft; I mean, this is one of the reasons why I'd like to win the pools - money does give you power. If I had money, I could put it behind Kevin Coyne, for instance, and make him popular - because that's what counts; money. It's sad, but true..... and talent comes about tenth down the list - as I'm sure you know. But the Misunderstood were just too weird for Los Angeles at the time — and by the time they were sorting things out here in England, they had to break up.

"In California, they were just too naive about the business, as well as being pretty directionless and pretty stoned, and all I could do was try to administer some paternal advice. They were just confused and I was working in the dark too, so as a combination we weren't too wonderful - and I didn't have any influence over the scene; I was the top DJ in San Bernadino/Riverside but that was just about the same as being the top DJ in Leicester..... it meant nothing in LA, where everything was supposed to happen.

"So after the Misunderstood broke up, Glenn went back to California and joined The Dirty Blues Band, led by Rod Piazza from the old Mystics, but they were a pretty undistinguished bunch.... and his steel playing, even then, was nowhere near as good as his work with the Misunderstood. He was never all that good at keeping time, and on that first Dirty Blues Band album it's very noticeable - he's all over the place. The band made a couple of albums (with Glenn on the first one only) but neither of them was very remarkable.

"The re-formed Misunderstood was really a sad move - just an attempt to capitalise on the old name I think, and Glenn was certainly a changed person by then. We had one rather nervous meeting, I remember, but it was just sort of "hi Glenn" "hi John" and that was it..... I didn't see anymore of him. Tony Hill was in High Tide, of course, but where the other guys are now, I really don't know."

As small as I may write, I've inevitably run out of space..... I was going to ramble on at length about what the Misunderstood meant to me — so you've been spared a boring couple of hours. Suffice it to say that to many people, the two singles they made represented, almost summed up in fact, that first half of 1967; the psychedelic pioneers, all that enthusiasm and innocence, and above all, the Perfumed Garden on Radio London. Gor blimey, that was a time, wasn't it?

Family tree concocted, researched & drawn by Pete Frame, May 73

CUT ALONG THIS DOTTED LINE, MATCH IT TO THE OTHER HALF & STICK IT!

TWO PAGE CENTREFOLD: CAREFULLY REMOVE THIS PAGES: PRECEDING TO THIS FAMILY TREE TO THAT TO JOIN THIS HALF OF THE FAMILY

TOMORROW (Mar 67 until it lived)

Formerly a soulful band called The In Crowd, turned to flower-power and became legendary favourites of Underground/UFO. Album: 'TOMORROW' (Mar 68) PCS 7042

- STEVE HOWE — guitar
- KEITH WEST — vocals. Went off to pursue 'Teenage Opera' idea with Mark Wirtz
- 'JUNIOR' JOHN WOOD — bass. sessions
- TWINK — drums. Joined the Pretty Things then the Fink Fairies (see forthcoming chart)

In early 1965, I personally hired the Strawberry Hill Boys to play at our folk club in Luton. They charged £12 plus £3 expenses, which included humping a double bass on the train! (They were great too).

The STRAWBERRY HILL BOYS, later to evolve into THE STRAWBS

Started around 1964, playing blue-grass & American traditional (folk). Albums: STRAWBS (May 1969) and DRAGONFLY (March 1970) AMLS 970 AMLS 936

- JOHN CHESTERMAN — bass. Left in early 1969
- TONY HOOPER — guitar/vocals
- DAVE COUSINS — gtr/banjo vocals
- CLAIRE DENIZ — cello for a while (was on DRAGONFLY). Left in Spring 1970
- SANDY DENNY — guitar/vocals for a while during pre-Fairport days. Was on an unreleased album, recorded in Denmark.

YES #1

Proclaimed 'Best new group of 1969' - after which they went through a period racked with various troubles - all of which were resolved by changes in administration, production & personnel. Albums: 'YES' (July 1969) K40034 and 'TIME AND A WORD' (July 1970) K40085

- TONY KAYE — keyboards (ex Bitter Sweet). Formed Bodast during 1969
- JON ANDERSON — vocals (ex local Accrington groups, ex Mabel Green's Toy Shop)
- CHRIS SQUIRE — bass (ex Syn, ex Mabel Green's Toy Shop)
- BILL BRUFORD — drums, no previous groups
- PETE BANKS — guitar (ex Syn). Left in January 1970 & joined BLODWYN PIG for 4 months. Then formed FLASH who've made two albums: 'FLASH' (Mar 1972), 'IN THE CAN' (Jan 1973). Line up: PETE BANKS guitar; MICHAEL HOUGH drums; RAY BENNETT bass/vocals; COLIN CARTER vocals

The STRAWBS #2

April 1970 to Aug 1971

Rick Wakeman's arrival caused a flood of publicity and interest and they moved into the rock/pop fraud, recording two albums: JUST A COLLECTION OF ANTIQUES AND CURIOS (December 1970) AMLS 994 & FROM THE WITCHWOOD (1971) AMLH 64304

- RICK WAKEMAN — keyboards (ex Session man (had played on DRAGONFLY for instance). Left in August 1971
- TONY HOOPER — guitar/vocals
- DAVE COUSINS — guitar/vocals
- JOHN FORD — bass. Both ex-Elmer Gantry's Velvet Opera — a fact they no doubt wish to forget! (you should see the photographs!)
- RICHARD HUDSON — drums

YES #2

Feb 1970 to August 1971. With all their troubles seemingly smoothed out, Yes became the darlings of the Melody Maker and achieved great popularity. This line-up recorded one album: THE YES ALBUM (Feb 1971) K40106

- TONY KAYE — keyboards
- STEVE HOWE — guitars. Joined in Feb 1970
- JON ANDERSON — vocals
- CHRIS SQUIRE — bass
- BILL BRUFORD — drums

The STRAWBS #3

August 1971 to the present. The 1972 hit LAY DOWN rocketed the Strawbs to superstardom! Albums: GRAVE NEW WORLD (Jan 1972) AMLH 68078, TWO WEEKS LAST SUMMER (Cousins solo X'Nov 1972) AMLS 6818, BURSTING AT THE SEAMS (Jan 1973) AMLH 68184

- BLUE WEAVER — keyboards ex Amen Corner
- TONY HOOPER — gtr/vocals. Replaced by to sessions and producing
- DAVE LAMBERT — gtr/vocals ex King Earl Boogie Band. Joined in Sept 1972
- DAVE COUSINS — gtr/vocals
- JOHN FORD — bass vocals
- RICHARD HUDSON — drums vocals

YES #3

August 1971 until August 1972 — a period during which they gained great acclaim in America. Two big selling albums: 'FRAGILE' (November 1971) K50009 and 'CLOSE TO THE EDGE' (September 1972) K50012.

- STEVE HOWE — guitar
- JON ANDERSON — vocals
- CHRIS SQUIRE — bass
- RICK WAKEMAN — keyboards. Joined in August 1971
- BILL BRUFORD — drums. Left in August 1972

ROXY MUSIC

July 1971 — still going strong despite several changes. One of 1972's biggest success stories — brazenly achieved by the "live now, pay later" method, whereby a band mortgages itself to the hilt and prays for fame and fortune. The Bryan Ferry Show has released two albums: 'ROXY MUSIC' (June 1972) ILPS 9200, 'FOR YOUR PLEASURE' (Mar 73) ILPS 9232

- PAUL THOMPSON — drums (ex Smokestack)
- ANDY MACKAY — saxes
- DAVID O'LIST (ex Nice, etc) replaced by PHIL MANZANERA — guitar (ex Quiet Sun) (see 22 78)
- ENO — VCS 3 tape things etc
- GRAHAM SIMPSON replaced by RIK KENTON (ex Mouse) replaced by JOHN PORTER — bass (ex Gas Board) (ex Uncle Dog, etc)
- BRYAN FERRY — vocals/piano/guitar ex Gas Board

YES #4

September 1972 — still going strong. Bill Bruford left the security of Yes to play more adventurous music in King Crimson but still appears on the triple album 'YESSONGS' (May 1973) K60045.

- ALAN WHITE — drums
- STEVE HOWE — guitar
- JON ANDERSON — vocals
- CHRIS SQUIRE — bass
- RICK WAKEMAN — keyboards

Rick Wakeman also made solo album ('SIX WIVES OF HENRY VIII' AMLH 68361 · Feb 1973)

KING CRIMSON #4

August 1972 to the present. Has the earmarks of being the most stable unit — despite the departure of Muir. After doing extensive British and European tours, are currently in America. Album: 'LARKS' TONGUES IN ASPIC' (March 1973) ILPS 9230

- BILL BRUFORD — drums
- DAVID CROSS — violin/flute. Left mellotron (no previous groups)
- BOB FRIPP — guitar and mellotron & devices
- JOHN WETTON — bass/vocals
- JAMIE MUIR — percussion (ex Boris, ex Assagai). Left Mar 1973
- PETER THORUP — guitar/vocals ex CCS

GILES GILES & FRIPP

Potentially great group which never got off the ground (see Zigzag 11). Also included Judy Dyble, Ian McDonald and various others. Album: 'THE CHEERFUL INSANITY OF GILES GILES & FRIPP' (Deram)

- MIKE GILES — drums
- BOB FRIPP — guitar
- PETE GILES — bass

After our chat about the Misunderstood, I asked John to give his opinion of all the groups on this chart, but unfortunately there's no room left for his comments. Sorry about that!

KING CRIMSON #1

Line-up as below: Jan 69 — Dec 1969. Arrived with amazing freshness and impact and made one album 'IN THE COURT OF THE CRIMSON KING' (Sept 69) ILPS 9111. Broke up, and 2nd album recorded by a session group led by Fripp: 'IN THE WAKE OF POSEIDON' (April 1970) ILPS 9127. The Session group included Mike Giles/drums, Pete Giles/bass, Greg Lake/vocals, Mel Collins & Keith Tippett.

- PETE SINFIELD — lyrics/lights
- BOB FRIPP — gtr/mellotron
- IAN McDONALD — reeds/flute. Recorded an album together: 'McDONALD & GILES' ILPS 9126
- MIKE GILES — drums
- GREG LAKE — bass/vocals (ex Gods). Formed Emerson, Lake and Palmer see forthcoming chart

KING CRIMSON #2

August 1970 — January 1971. The second road band tossed an even shorter time than the first, and Bob Fripp began to earn notoriety as perfectionist demanding miraculous performances from his sidemen. One album recorded during this period 'LIZARD' (Nov 1970) ILPS 9141

- PETE SINFIELD — lyrics/lights/VCS 3
- BOB FRIPP — guitar & mellotron
- MEL COLLINS — saxes/flute mellotron (ex Circus, and Sessions)
- GORDON HASKELL — bass/vocals (ex 'Fleur De Lys'). Went solo
- ANDY McCULLOCH — drums (ex Shy Limbs). to Kingdom Come, then to Fields, and is now in Greenslade (see over there)

KING CRIMSON #3

Feb 1971 — July 1972. A relatively solid band but apparently not without internal strife for much of its existence. Completed 2 American tours and 2 albums: 'ISLANDS' (November 1971) ILPS 9175 and 'EARTHBOUND' (June 1972) HELP 6

- PETE SINFIELD — Crimson lyrics, now producer (1 album). Made solo album (May 1973)
- BOB FRIPP — guitar & mellotron
- MEL COLLINS — saxes/flute/mellotron
- BOZ — bass vocals
- IAN WALLACE — drums

SNAPE

Summer 1972 to early 1973. Mel/Boz/Ian broke away from Fripp on completion of a US tour and united (in New Orleans) with Alexis Korner & Peter Thorup, then with Rumble Pie. Album: 'ACCIDENTALLY BORN IN NEW ORLEANS' (import only).

- ALEXIS KORNER — guitar/vocals (Blues Incorporated, CCS, etc)
- GASPAR LAWALL — Congas ex sessions
- MEL COLLINS — saxes. Also worked with Graham Bell, Alvin Lee, Mike Patto, etc
- BOZ — bass
- IAN WALLACE — drums

FAMILY #1

1966 — April 1969. Leicester group previously known as the ROARING SIXTIES. Evolved from the Farinas, formed in 1962 by Whitney. Family became a very voguish group, partly due to Beatles patronage. Albums: 'MUSIC IN A DOLLS HOUSE' (July 1968) K44057 (produced-or overproduced-by Dave Mason) and 'FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT' (July 1969) K44069

- RIC GRECH — bass/violin/vocals (ex Farinas). Left in April 1969, during their first American tour, to join BLIND FAITH
- JIM KING — saxes/flutes (ex Farinas)
- CHARLIE WHITNEY — guitar (ex Farinas)
- ROB TOWNSEND — drums (ex Le Gay — later Gyspy)
- ROGER CHAPMAN — vocals (ex Exciters, Danny Storm & the Strollers etc)

FAMILY #2

April 1969 to October 1969, when Jim King left — pity in a way because King was a very hard looking guy — gave the group a lot of visual impact. Made no albums during this period, but consolidated their popularity in England after a best forgotten tour of America.

- JIM KING — saxes. Left in October 1969 to form RING OF TRUTH with Victor Brox
- CHARLIE WHITNEY — guitar
- ROB TOWNSEND — drums
- ROGER CHAPMAN — vocals
- JOHN WEIDER — bass/violin (ex Eric Burdon & the Animals)

FAMILY #3

October 1969 to June 1971. A period of great success during which three albums were released: 'A SONG FOR ME' (January 1970) K44104, 'ANYWAY' (November 1970) K54002, and the compilation of remixed oldies 'OLD SONGS NEW SONGS' (March 1971) K34001

- POLI PALMER — Keyboards/vibes (ex Deep Feeling, Bakerloo, Blossom Toes, etc)
- CHARLIE WHITNEY — guitar
- ROB TOWNSEND — drums
- ROGER CHAPMAN — vocals
- JOHN WEIDER — bass/violin. Left to join STUD June 1971

FAMILY #4

June 1971 to September 1972. Family really took off in the States after a long tour in Autumn 72, after which Poli Palmer left. Prior to the tour, Jim Cregan had replaced Wetton. Albums: 'FEARLESS' (Oct 71) K54003, 'BANDSTAND' (Oct 72) K54006

- JOHN WETTON — bass (ex Mogul Thrash). Joined June 1971. Left Sept 1972
- POLI PALMER — vibes
- CHARLIE WHITNEY — guitar
- ROB TOWNSEND — drums
- ROGER CHAPMAN — vocals

Due to my lac of interest i some of the groups on thi chart, plus tin pressures, ther are bound to b errors. If yo know of any please let m know so the can be correc ed when (an if) a book o family trees is published Many thanks

FAMILY #5

September 1972 to the present. Currently working on a new album, having released a fine single 'Boom Bang'. Family, I think, are one of the few bands on this chart who are constantly seeking to come up with something fresh. A fuller investigation should be conducted immediately!

- TONY (replaced ASHTON — keyboards (ex Remo Four, Ashton Gardner & Dyke) joined Dec 1972
- POLI PALMER — vibes. left Nov 1972
- CHARLIE WHITNEY — guitar
- ROB TOWNSEND — drums
- ROGER CHAPMAN — vocals
- JIM CREGAN — bass/guitar (ex Blossom Toes, Stud, etc). Joined 9?

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OUT NOW

In the first half of 1967, the music of the Misunderstood burned fast and furiously in the minds of anyone who happened to hear it, and for a very short time it seemed as if they really would take us to the sun.

Their progress was nipped in the bud by Uncle Sam, however, and we can only daydream about what might have happened (.....and judging by the letters we get, a lot of people do just that). I went along to see John Peel, who was what you could probably call the Misunderstood's first "mentor and guide" (if that title doesn't sound too pretentious and pompous), and John explained as much of their history as he knew.

"I started out in Dallas, Texas, as a part time DJ and 'Beatles expert', but at that time I wasn't really involved with any local bands - probably because none of them was very interesting..... it was all groups like the 5 Americans, who later made 'I see the light' and 'The 5.30 Guided Tour' - their answer to the Beatles 'Magical Mystery Tour'

"From there I went to Oklahoma, working as a full time DJ in Oklahoma City. The bands there were much better: Dewayne & the Bedettas, Jay Walker & the Pedestrians, and Dann Yankee & the Carpetbaggers, for instance..... and there, though I was a DJ first and foremost, I also used to get a few gigs sorted out - mostly at weird places like Indian reservations, because there were a lot of Indians living in the hills of South Oklahoma. All these bands recorded at one time or another, by the way, but only on small obscure labels and they never meant anything other than locally really.

"Anyway, the radio station wasn't doing too well, and since I was the last guy they'd taken on, I was the first they got rid of when the going got rough - so I applied for jobs in San Diego and San Bernadino, and much to my surprise, got offers from both of them. I took the one in San Bernadino (about fifty miles from Los Angeles) and went of to work in California, where I started taking 'drugs' and leading a generally depraved sort of life ..... this was early 1966.

"I started hanging out with a local band called the Mystics, which included Rod Piazza (see the chart), and they, like a number of bands around that time, were greatly influenced by the Paul Butterfield Blues Band, which used to play quite a lot on the Coast. So I was hanging around and going to gigs with them (and for a while, the notorious Seeds - one of the worst bands I've ever seen ..... no, not really; they were very very freaky and interesting for the time - they had a keyboard player, for instance, who used to be encased in a square of pianos and organs..... very weird band. There were a lot of bands around the area actually (San Bernadino/Riverside), of whom The Bush was probably the most popular, they were doing a Byrds-meets-the Beatles thing which was fairly safe, and then there was one called The North Side Moss and another called The South Side Blues Band - which subsequently evolved into that Blue Horizon group Bacon Fat.

"So, as I say, I used to go to the local gigs and one day the Mystics and the North Side Moss had a gig playing the opening of a new shopping centre in Riverside. Well, the Mystics did their set but before the North Side Moss were due to go on, there was this band nobody had heard of who had also been booked - so I was planning to go and have a wander around the shopping centre while they were playing..... but as I was about to drift off, I saw this group taking the stage and starting to tune up - and they looked very weird and freaky, so I decided to hang around to see if they were any good. They called themselves, it transpired, The MISUNDERSTOOD.

"Well, it was like one of your St Paul on the road to Damascus experiences.....it was stunning! Rivetting! They cut both the North Side Moss and the Mystics to pieces, they really did. Glenn Campbell looked incredibly thin and ill, with exceptionally long hair for those days, and he was hunched right over this steel guitar - an instrument you never saw in a rock band - playing the most unbelievable stuff you ever heard.... and Steve

CONTINUED ON CENTRE PAGES — SEE INSTRUCTIONS FOR FIXING!

WYNDER K. FROG Soul-cum-progressive band which broke up in late 1968. (Line-up also included Reg Presley - now in Traffic). Made a number of singles and 2 albums on Island 'SUNSHINE SUPERFROG' ILP 944 & 'OUT OF THE FRYING PAN' ILPS 9082

- CHRIS MERCER saxes
- NEIL HUBBARD guitar
- MICK WEAVER organ & vocals — Went on to various groups including MASON CAPALDI WOOD & FROG (See Zigzag 27) and PAT MATTHEWS
- BRUCE ROWLANDS drums
- ALAN SPENNER bass

...d in 1969 but bore very ...y, panache or charisma of 'LITTLE RED ROOSTER' ...F 1041, then disbanded.

...lics of Misunderstood #2 in ... I always thought that ...e "progressive/heavy" ...re certainly very mediocre.

- CHRIS MERCER saxes
- NEIL HUBBARD guitar

...LIE BACK ...y ILPS 9157. ... began to ...ously numbered.

- GLENN CAMPBELL steel guitar
- NEIL HUBBARD guitar
- MICK WEAVER keyboards/vocals — Joined later, towards the end of the band, and is now in THE DOORS
- BRUCE ROWLANDS drums — replaced by PUGWASH WEATHERS drums — went to GENTLE GIANT (See Man chart in ZZ 26)
- ALAN SPENNER bass/vocals — now in Spare Rib
- HENRY McCULLOUGH guitar/vocals — Joined WINGS
- CHRIS STAINTON keyboards/producer — Only played for a while

JOE COCKER & the GREASE BAND #1
After years of plodding round Sheffield area clubs, Joe Cocker came down to London and had hits with 'Marjorine' and 'With a little help' both produced by Denny Cordell. Album: 'WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM MY FRIENDS' SLRZ 1006 May 1969

- CHRIS MERCER saxes
- NEIL HUBBARD guitar
- MICK WEAVER organ & vocals
- BRUCE ROWLANDS drums
- ALAN SPENNER bass
- HENRY McCULLOUGH guitar — ex Eire Apparent, ex Sweeney's Men
- CHRIS STAINTON bass
- JOE COCKER Vocals — formerly VANCE ARNOLD of Vance Arnold & the Avengers
- TOMMY EYRE keyboards — to Aynsley Dunbar, then Mark Almond, now has his own band RIFF RAFF
- KENNY SLADE drums — to various Jazz groups

JOE COCKER & the GREASE BAND #2
Early 1969 to Feb 1970. Best ever Cocker Band. Very successful in America - including at Woodstock - and made one album: 'JOE COCKER' A&M SP 4224 (Dec 1969). Fly Records have re-issued all his old tracks.

- CHRIS MERCER saxes
- NEIL HUBBARD guitar
- BRUCE ROWLANDS drums — to TERRY REID for a while, then to HEAVY JELLY with Jackie Lomax in early 1970, then returned to his old mates in the GREASE BAND
- ALAN SPENNER bass/vocals
- HENRY McCULLOUGH gtr/vocals
- CHRIS STAINTON keyboards/vocals
- JOE COCKER vocals

Many thanks to:
John Peel
John Tobler
Steve Peacock
Jenny Peahen
Musa of Finland
Neil
Ian Canterdine
Bob Shaw, Glen Ryan
& Misunderstood maniacs around the globe

SPOOKY TOOTH #2
The original group lost all its impetus after Greg Ridley and Gary Wright left. This band recorded 'THE LAST PUFF' (July 1970) ILPS 9117

- CHRIS MERCER saxes
- NEIL HUBBARD guitar
- MIKE HARRISON piano/vocals — Went solo, but now back in re-formed SPOOKY TOOTH
- LUTHER GROSVENOR guitar/vocals — Were Solo now in Stealers Wheel
- ALAN SPENNER bass — see below
- HENRY McCULLOCH Guitar
- MIKE KELLIE drums — Went to various bands, now back in SPOOKY TOOTH
- CHRIS STAINTON Keyboards

MAD DOGS & ENGLISHMEN
March 1970 - May 1970 (see Zigzag 15). Did one tour, from which came a film and a double album (July 1970) AMLS 6002. Formed basically to honour contractual obligations.

- JOE COCKER vocals — Decided to quit the rock business (who can blame him?) Retired to LA May-Dec 1970 then to Sheffield & London from Dec 1970 to Jan 1972, when he re-emerged.
- A WHOLE HOST OF SUPERSTARS INCLUDING: LEON RUSSELL, CARL RADLE, JIM KELTNER, JIM PRICE, BOBBY KEYES, CHUCK BLACKWELL, SANDY KONIKOFF, JIM GORDON, DON PRESTON, RITA COOLIDGE, CLAUDIA LENNEAR, ETC ETC

THE GREASE BAND was originally to be called BROWN BREAD and was to include Davy Lutton (ex Eire Apparent) on drums. Came together to work on 'Jesus Christ Superstar' album in mid 1970, and went on from there. Album: THE GREASE BAND (April 1971) SHVL 790. A second album was cut but never released.

- GLENN CAMPBELL steel guitar
- NEIL HUBBARD guitar
- MICK WEAVER keyboards/vocals — Joined later, towards the end of the band, and is now in THE DOORS
- BRUCE ROWLANDS drums — replaced by PUGWASH WEATHERS drums — went to GENTLE GIANT (See Man chart in ZZ 26)
- ALAN SPENNER bass/vocals — now in Spare Rib
- HENRY McCULLOUGH guitar/vocals — Joined WINGS
- CHRIS STAINTON keyboards/producer — Only played for a while

Kaye left Yes in July 1971 and eventually formed ANGEL DUST, later to become **BADGER** Formed Mid 1972, still going strong. Album 'ONE LINE BADGER' (March 1973)

- ROY DYKE drums — ex Elmo Four, ex Ashton Gardner & Dyke
- DAVE FOSTER bass/vocals
- TONY KAYE Keyboards
- BRIAN PARRISH guitar/vocals (ex Parrish & Gurvitz)

CHRIS STAINTON BAND, WITH JOE COCKER Jan 1972 - Jan 1973.
...ally formed without Cocker, who joined in Feb. Made disastrous debut in New York, March 73 and never managed to ... one disaster followed another; bum gigs, a drug bust and deportation in Australia, and a very ordinary ...OMETHING TO SAY' (Feb 1973) HiFly 13. Finally they just fell apart at the seams, having achieved very little.

- GLENN CAMPBELL steel guitar — Sacked during first US tour..... don't know where he is now.
- NEIL HUBBARD guitar
- FELIX FALCON Congas — Joined March 72
- Various horn players who came and went
- ALAN SPENNER bass/vocals
- Various backing singers who came and went
- CHRIS STAINTON Keyboards — Left in January 1973 to produce.
- JOE COCKER vocals
- CONRAD ISADORE drums — ex Stephen Stills etc — now with Terry Reid
- ALAN WHITE drums (ex Bass, Terry Reid, Sessions, etc)

JOE COCKER & the tattered remnants Jan 73 - now.
Originally the idea of Gerry Rafferty and ...ed) and Noakes left to go solo (Album: RAB ... short life, Stealers Wheel have had a ... 'STEALERS WHEEL' (Nov 1972) AMLS 68121

- RAB NOAKES — replaced by LUTHER GROSVENOR guitar/vocals
- ROGER BROWN — replaced by NICK SOUTH — replaced by TONY WILLIAMS — replaced by DE LISLE HARPER bass
- GERRY RAFFERTY bass/gtr/vocals (ex Humble Pies) — left, but rejoined in May 1973
- NEIL HUBBARD guitar — doing sessions
- ALAN SPENNER bass
- JIMMY KARSTEIN drums (ex Taj Mahal ee) — (replaced Conrad Isadore) went on to do sessions but has now returned to USA.
- All 3 are apparently lurking, hoping that Joe will require their services again soon!
- JOE COCKER vocals

THE TWO HALVES SHOULD MATCH WITH A BIT OF LUCK

Hello again, definitely from an upright position. Stuff and Nonsense is a far more respectable title, and I wouldn't like you to think that anyone with such a hungry look as the bloke on the gravestone in the last issue could possibly resemble my overfed gut, which is designed to attract ladies with big wellingtons and things. Anyway, Michael Wale says my writing is idiosyncratic, and it's well known that such genius is only produced in those unable to pose for Oxfam posters.

Right, enough of that crap, and on with the goodies. Let's start with the recommendations which should be pretty obvious and wind down to the bits which may be considered as odd. First on the list of anyone who reads this paper should be "History of the Byrds", a double LP at about £2.80 or something, compiled by Pete, and featuring an as yet unpublished chart of the progress of Roger/Jim and his friends of now and then. If you don't have too much Byrds material in your collection, put it at the top of your list, and if you do, it has "Lady Friend", which isn't on an LP elsewhere.

The new Manassas album is pretty much like the first one, but that's OK and Roy Buchanan's second is, I think, the ultimate in guitar playing. Try and catch him while he's touring. Also well up to previous high standards are the Doobie Brothers, Dr. John, Donovan,(good to see you back) Procol Harum, (it's about time Britain recognised this very fine group) and Argent, the first side of whose album is just one long succession of great, great music. Taj Mahal is back on the right track, and Bowie seems to be, although I can't profess to be an expert in that field, and the title track of his new album struck me as a little odd.

On the re-issue front, more of those great double albums from Vanguard, this time, a Buffy Sainte Marie and a Joan Baez, which are excellent collection fillers, and also the pleasantly packaged but rather expensive individual and collective Clapton/Bruce/Baker doubles on the new RSO label. Somebody has apparently told the Phonogram group that they have some great back catalogue material on other than Chess, and they've started with really great things from the Platters, Fats Domino, (live) and a Red Bird/Blue Cat compilation featuring rather more than the obvious. Also, Zigzag's favourite British lady singer, Dusty Springfield, has some nice oldies reissued. It's a shame, but a double re-issue of mid period Rick Nelson is not going to be put out, due to its not apparently fitting with the man's current image. For fans the albums spliced together are 'Country Fever' and 'Bright Lights and Country Music'. James Burton and Ricky Nelson at their splendid best.

Right, now you've spent something over fifty quid on those, let's move to the darker corners, as yet unexplored by many, but frequently offering greater inspiration.

Firstly hello to a new label BASF as in magnetic tape, who do their own records, with teutonic efficiency in pressing, but British speaking imagination in the selection of artists. I've only heard two so far, one of which is a Sugar Cane Harris lp on which the old Mayall team of Harvey Mandel, Larry Taylor and Paul Lagos do the backing. A smart record, and somewhat better than Mayall's current direction, to my mind. The other one is by a new name Paul Trainer, a contemporary of Jim Morrison at UCLA and writer and singer of a song called "Beautiful Jim" which I recommend unreservedly. Good second albums by artists who didn't sell many the first time are presented by Steve Goodman, who I find so much more appealing than his mate John Prine, Pure Prairie League, (actually, their first album, as they were released the wrong way round here) and Clifford T. Ward, whose album "Home Thoughts" is my favourite of 1973, and likely to remain so. If you're too chicken to play it to death in your record shop, you could listen to Noel Edmonds, who plays it almost as often as I do, but the answer is to buy it, and by the time you read this, it should be well into the charts where it belongs. Interesting that now an unprecedented two Dandelion artists seem to be making it, Clifford and Medicine Head, and it's a shame in many ways that it didn't happen while the company was still functioning. Watch out soon, by the way, for Bridget St. John, Tractor and even my man Kevin on new labels.

First time likes for me this month? Frankie Miller, Dobie Greay, (the In Crowd man, but on a different label), and a fabulous piss-taking album by National Lampoon on the Island HELP label, which is good value. Interestingly, my initial reluctance to accept the much-hyped Wailers album was to a certain extent unjustified, as their version of "Stir It Up" is positively perfect, although much of the rest of the record is not up to the admittedly superhigh standard of this track. Zigzag isn't ready for reggae, I think, but it's a good start.

Since I have moved near to Guildford, I've been able to take in quite a few gigs, with a fifty per cent success rate, in terms of good music so far. Good were Riff Raff, which is half of the original Mark Almond, Nazareth, who have a good chance of taking over in England from Slade, and once again, Camel, who are doing an as yet unrecorded masterpiece called "Lady Fantasy", which is musically exquisite.

Andy Latimer may prove to be the next guitar hero - he's certainly on the right track. Less rewarding were Jonathan Kelly, who was just a bore, I'm afraid, and Robin Trower, whose record I liked, but who thinks so little of his audience that he only introduced one number. I'm afraid that not everyone in the audience will be familiar with a support group's first album. Apart from that his playing was good, but the band's material seems to be a bit ordinary. Perhaps one for the future.

A few quickies - good to see Johnny Winter back on record, ditto for Robert Thomas Velline (alias Bobby Vee), Iggy, as unspeakable as ever, Jerry Jeff Walker, (Now on MCA) and a bright welcome back to the mysterious Andy Pratt, now on CBS, who has made a track called "Avenging Annie" which is impressive in the extreme. Andy was on Polydor before, and his album on that label is worth picking up if you see it cheaply.

Which brings us to the second hand cheapies. A bad one to get is a disgusting Kim Fowley thing on Dot called "Extremely Heavy" by the Underground All Stars. Fowley's sleeve note is quite amusing though. Recommended are 'Sometimes Good Guys Don't Wear White' by the Standells, which features yet another version of "My Little Red Book" and "Back Door Men" by the Shadows of Knight, which dittoes "Hey Joe". I got them for about seven bob each. A little more expensive, but worth a bit of effort are the many albums around by the Surfaris. My current favourite is "It Ain't Me Babe". It's always worth checking out cheap racks.

last week, I got the Wild Man Fischer double for 99p.

That's it for another exciting fun packed month. See you at the Guildford Civic, or at Surrey University for the Happy Days tour, featuring those superstars of the 1850's, Help Yourself, currently adorning the wastes of East Finchley. And don't forget rock lives, even though sometimes it appears to be limping, and it relies on you for support, just like we merry millionaires at Zigzag. By for now.

JOHN

Here's a quick postscript. It had been my intention for some time to interview John Denver for the magazine, and I was rather distressed to see the first of his BBC2 series, which appears to have the intention of making him homogenous, sterile and a prime candidate for a role in films opposite Julie Andrews. It came as no surprise when I heard that a gentleman who is not a million miles away from owning this paper was heard to remark when watching Denver's first programme "I may not be Lord Beaverbrook, but he is not going to be featured in Zigzag." There's no answer to that really.

MICHAEL MURPHEY

SONG LOVER FROM TEXAS

Life in a Screen Gems cubicle

ZZ: (Unknown Question)

MM: I lived in L.A. for seven years – that's where I met my present wife Diana, she's a British immigrant to America, and we were married, and we lived there for about five or six years after we got married, and all this time I was writing songs trying to make a living, and I did pretty well, I had a lot of album cuts, like Bobby Gentry did some of my tunes, and Mike Nesmith who is a friend of mine recorded a lot of my stuff even after he left the Monkees . . . .

ZZ: Did you write stuff for the Monkees?

MM: Just two songs, one called 'What Am I Doing Hanging Round?' which was a Nesmith deal, and 'The Oklahoma Backroom Dancer' which was again a Nesmith song. Really, my connection with the Monkees was with Mike, he was a friend of mine, and I had known him back in Texas, I liked his material and he had always liked mine, and we were good friends before he got into the Monkees.

ZZ: What is the process of being a writer for Screen Gems?

MM: Well, unfortunately it's very much more like Tin Pan Alley than people imagine still. They do give you an office, and they give you a piano, and they've got all these little cubicles and you go in and you sit down, and they assign you all these different projects and you can either accept or reject them, but sooner or later if you reject too many you lose your job.

ZZ: What sort of projects?

MM: For example, they'd have a television series like 'The Partridge Family', and they'd say 'O.K. we want a theme, and we want this or that song for this or that performer.' But the catch was that they might say that to thirty writers, and then they would take the songs of thirty writers and from that they would glean a few tunes, so you were competing with all these other writers, and there was a definite hierarchy, for example Carole King was on the top of the heap at the time – this was before she started recording.

ZZ: What year would that be?

MM: This was 1965 to 1970, but during this period of time of course it was the Monkees. The Monkees was the big TV hype pop group that was engineered by Screen-Gems, just as they're engineering The Partridge Family at the moment, and these things are all the result of a tremendous organisation – it's very much like putting a man on the moon. I mean they'd got this tableful of writers, they'd got all these promotion men, they'd got publicists, it's like an army, and they decide O.K., they have an audition and, just like they did with the Monkees, they bring in people off the street and they say 'this guy's good-looking, he can sing and he can act, now we'll have somebody write songs for him.' They go in and they tell you to do it, and you do it, and so do thirty other writers, but it's likely that the people who are in the hierarchy like the Carole Kings and the people that've already made the money will get first crack with their material, regardless of its quality. So I got pretty fed up with all this after a while, I mean it was like in the Uncle Scrooge story, you sort of imagine all these accountants sitting at desks slaving away, and it was pretty much that way for songwriters. The wages are tremendously low, I think it's one of the worst injustices in the music industry today, what songwriters are paid when they start off, because songwriters do not have a strong union, they have no organisation to protect them, so consequently a good salary is about fifty dollars a week, seventy-five dollars a week is pretty good, and I was getting excellent pay at a hundred dollars a week.

ZZ: Was that an advance against royalties?

MM: Yes.

ZZ: So if you wrote a winner, you wouldn't make any money really, because you'd have to pay your salary back.

MM: That's right.

ZZ: So they're on a good thing, Screen Gems.

MM: Well, all the publishing companies do it. Screen Gems is an excellent company and very honest, but I think the system itself is very unfair and very corrupt, when you think about the fact that the songwriter, who creates the material, is paid less than any other cut off a record. We're probably getting off into business too much, but this is one of my personal peeves. A songwriter's share out of a hit record, say if it makes a million dollars, is only ten thousand dollars. So you can see that if you write for two or three years it's hard to get a million seller, even if you get a million seller that's still only ten thousand dollars, and the airplay, which in the States is very high, may still only be three or four times that amount, so in three or four years you might, if you're lucky, luck out and make thirty or forty thousand dollars, providing you can get a number one million selling record. So it's really damn hard for a songwriter to get off the ground, it takes years and years of sweat, but I'm not sorry I did it, I'd probably have to go back to it now rather than get a job doing something else, but when you think that only a penny a record is the rate, that is really pretty bad, that's really pretty sick. I mean, when you consider that the artist gets more than the songwriter, the musicians that play on the record get more than the songwriter, the publisher gets a tremendous share, and the songwriter gets no share of

the publishing, at all unless he owns his own publishing company as I do now.

It's only through constantly being treated unfairly and getting hurt on different royalty clips and things like that, that you finally wake up and say 'Man, I'm gonna have my own publishing company if I can put out my own records.' You don't do that out of some desire to be a business magnate, but to get what's coming to you really, to protect your family and protect your own interests.

ZZ: When did you decide to rebel, as it were, at Screen Gems?

MM: Well, it wasn't just Screen Gems, I want to keep pointing that out, there were several other companies after I left Screen Gems, I started another publishing company with some other people, as kind of a co-op situation. But I rebelled against the basic system of 'put 'em in a cubicle, let 'em write, see what happens' about two and a half years ago. I got very fed up with the Hollywood scene, and that kind of thinking, because there was nothing to do with creativity at all. But then everybody talks about creativity, and in a sense that's jive, because everybody's got to learn his trade, and I'm glad I was an apprentice for a while at my trade; I'm glad I had to work and learn these different things, but there was not really any real artistic freedom in any sense of the word, and everyone would just sort of laugh at you if you brought that up. So I finally got fed up with that, and I said 'I'm gonna go back to Texas even if there's no music business there, I'm gonna go back and play gigs, I'm gonna sing my songs for audiences who will appreciate the songs for what they are and not because they're for sale by some other artist.' I had some connections with a few little clubs in Texas, so to clear my head I went back there. And while I was playing (in the first club that I ever played a song in), Bob Johnston walked in.

ZZ: What was he doing in Texas?

MM: His family lived in Fort Worth. His mother, as a matter of fact, wrote songs for Gene Autry. They were all in the country & western songwriting business then. Johnston likes songwriters, writing is his first real love I think. I think that's really his secret as a producer, he tends to seek out people who write, often actually people who can't sing very well, but can write. I think I fall under that category probably. Leonard Cohen falls under that category. People who aren't emphasising the showbiz quality of their voice or anything, just writing songs. These kind of people tend to have a rough time in the commercial songwriting business, but if you ever get them off the ground as artists there tends to be a little more longevity. Almost all of Johnston's artists have been those people, and he gets around, he keeps his ears open. He found out about me from a house-painter that was doing some chores for him in Nashville, some guy that I'd met on the streets there. So then Johnston said 'Look, I like what you're doing, I want you to come to Nashville and record.' Actually he wanted me to come to London first, and I wouldn't come because I felt since I'd spent all my life in America I should make my first album in the States.

ZZ: I don't think you did wrong to record in Nashville, there are so many very good musicians there, and for your type of music it might even be better.

MM: Oh yeah, when it comes to acoustic guitars there's no place in the world that can get the sound like a Nashville studio. But Johnston imported Bob Potter, who has done a lot of engineering work on English albums, to Nashville to do my last album. So actually I feel like I'm benefiting from both sides of the Atlantic as far as the technical side of things goes, and Johnston has a lot of respect for recording in London. I think, probably, we will record some tracks here. I've also written some songs since I've been here. I like to record them where I write them.

ZZ: It always struck me before that Johnston was very good at changing quite well-known people's careers, as he did with Dylan, as he did with Cash, as he did with Leonard Cohen, but he never really found originals, because even over here Lindisfarne were handed to him after their first album, and he made a success with them, but the material was there. So you really are the first original that he's found.

MM: He's getting into that more and more now though. You see, for years he was a staff producer, and when you're a staff producer, no matter how good you are, it's inevitable that someone's gonna hand you this and that and the other, especially if they think it needs a change. And he was never really known as a talent scout. What people found out, I think, about Johnston is that he's very good at letting an artist have his freedom, and still maintains discipline – but in a very light, subtle way. So I'm sure that a lot of artists who became strong-headed with one producer were handed over to Johnston, who knows who to let the artist sort of be free, and at the same time he seems to get things out of them faster. He works very fast, it's just amazing how fast he can do an album, like 'Nashville Skyline' was done in a day and a half, I guess everybody knows that by now. But I guess I am one of the first originals that he's found and tried to get off the ground.

ZZ: He told me that you came into the studio, and you had twenty-seven songs, and you played every instrument yourself

MM:Well, I just described the situation I was in, in L.A. and in Texas, and when you're in that situation it's pretty much – you better learn how to play whatever you can when the time comes, you better be ready to make a buck whenever the opportunity presents itself, or you might starve to death. So like, one day a guy called me up and said, and I had no money, I was pretty much down, he said 'would you like to play bass in a country-western nightclub?' I said sure, so I got out some Jerry Lee Lewis records and learned how to play the bass on that stuff, and went and played. And I learned how to play most of the instruments I play just because I had to, you know, to stay alive. And then the songs I'd written, I had quite a backlog of material from all that time – as a matter of fact that's still our problem really, our main problem has been deciding what we're gonna use out of all my old stuff, and the first album was about 75% material that's almost vie years old.

ZZ: I thought one side in particular was strong, that opens with 'Geronimo's Cadillac', goes on with 'Natchez Trace', – that was an incredibly strong side. Were most of those on that side five years old?

MM: 'Geronimo' is, of course, very recent, but 'Calico Silver' is about four or five years old, 'Natchez Trace' is about five years old, 'Rainbow Man' is two or three years old; 'Waking Up' is pretty recent. But I've never been too freaked out about using an old song, especially if I've performed it a lot, because I've had a chance to really work with that song, and live with it, and if it doesn't stand the test of time, of course you throw it away. So now I feel that old songs of mine that get on the albums are probably likely to be stronger than new ones, because I like to live with a song for a long time before I record it. I don't like to write it and jump in and do it. And Johnston's not that kind of producer either.

A totally different culture

ZZ: Now 'Geronimo's Cadillac' was about the Indian problem, wasn't it?

MM: Yeah, it was about that, but it was more just an attempt to try to establish – it wasn't a political statement. The story behind it was when Geronimo was imprisoned in 1911 in Oklahoma, they did not want him to appear to be a hero. So they said we want an official archive photograph of Geronimo, we don't want him in full Indian dress, we want him to look like he's been subdued and turned into a white man. So they had him put on a top hat and tails and tie and sit in a Cadillac, and they took his picture, even though he was a prisoner at this time, and of course his braves sat around with him in the car, and that drawing on the back of the album is from a photograph that was taken in 1911. And when I saw that photograph, it completely blew me away. I thought, even in this humiliating situation of being made to look a part of a totally different culture, you can look in his eyes and you can see this incredible pride. And it's just sort of saying, if you're gonna ride in a Cadillac it should be Geronimo's Cadillac because he was able to do it with pride.

ZZ: What was he imprisoned for?

MM: He was imprisoned for being sort of like the Viet Cong really, he was a guerilla warfare Indian that they almost never caught, and they probably wouldn't have caught him had the Mexican government not helped them out. They got the Apaches caught in a pincer movement and closed in on them, and then finally they caught them. I could tell you a lot about it, but I'll tell you there's a book called 'Geronimo, His Own Story' which is Geronimo's own story of his own life. It was translated by a government archives translator and has been suppressed until very recently. It just came out in paperback, and I recommend it to anyone who really wants to find out how an Indian really thinks. But it's not just sympathising with the Indian problem, it's the general idea which I believe in, that people have a right to their own space. Whether it be psychological or physical or musical or anything else, they have a right to their own certain little territory, and in a sense I think modern man is very much like the Indians in America. In these cities that we live in, it's like being on a reservation really, the government really does control our lives, society controls our lives, and instead of creating our own culture we become like robots. But more than that, we become wards of the state, like the Indians were, and that's what the song's talking about – imposing one culture on another. You see, the Indians didn't understand the concept and did not want progress as such. They couldn't understand why you had to progress. They felt that if you lived in one place, and had a happy life, and you were relating well to your environment, you had all the food you needed and your spiritual life was set, and your children were in good health, why progress? There was no need to progress, except in the spiritual sense, in the sense of making your life more fulfilled. So they weren't materialists, except in a very very spiritual way, in that everything they made had a spiritual meaning to their lives, every action that they did was related to their feeling about the cosmos. They had no idea of 'well we have to get so much gold out of the ground before somebody else does', and when these two cultures clashed, the concept of white man's progress versus this pretty much static feeling of life, of relating well to the world, then there's no understanding. Indians had no idea that it was possible for someone to own a piece of land, and that's why they signed all those treaties. The people came along and said 'we want to buy this land' and the Indians said 'sure, you idiot, if you think you can buy God's land, go ahead and try, but your paper money doesn't mean a thing.' They just couldn't understand people owning – they had territories but they didn't own land, they didn't believe it was theirs, they believed it belonged to the earth and to God. They just used it and then passed on. All of that is pretty much wrapped up in the song, as much as I could in a short space, and I wanted to write a commercial song that stated this. I wanted it to get exposure on the media, I wanted it to be played on commercial radio, I wanted someone to hear about the problem. Of course, in America it's been heard about a grea deal more than here, and for that reason it was banned in several cities as an inflammatory song, even though I don't consider it a political song, I consider it just a statement of human rights.

ZZ: Which cities was it banned in?

MM: Houston for one. I think it ran into some trouble in the mid-west somewhere too, but I can't think of the exact city. Actually, in L.A. too, they were kicking a fuss up about it. A friend of mine who works at Wounded Knee, he's an attorney there, said that in that particular part of the country they kept it off the air too. But I didn't want it to be the kind of song that's just a political protest song, I wanted it to be a human statement – something that would be very simple that anyone could understand, that just stated my basic feeling about the Indian. But not just 'save the Indians' but 'save ourselves', you know, we're in exactly the same position.

ZZ: Now, 'Natchez Trace', that's a place outside Nashville isn't it?

MM: Natchez Trace was originally a road that went from New Orleans to Nashville. It was a munitions road during the Civil War, but as time went by it wasn't used and it began to fill up with water, and now it's one of the most beautiful areas in the States, in the South in particular. I've always sort of felt that roads should turn into rivers instead of the other way round. So it's really just a nature song, it's just saying 'isn't it nice to be where it's wild.' A lot of my songs say that really.

ZZ: Where do you live now?

MM: I live about thirty miles outside Austin, Texas, on a lake called Lake Travis. It's in Austin hill country, sort of like the Cotswolds, very much that kind of country, rocky but with grass planted over it, and you see a lot of native stone. We live right on the water. 'Natchez Trace' is really a mystical statement about nature, it just deals with the feeling that good and evil all exist at once in the forest and in the wild, for you to sort of feel and not try to extract for yourself but just leave it there and feel it.

ZZ: Now what about 'Calico Silver', which is a beautiful song.

MM: Thank you. 'Calico Silver' is a song about a town called Calico that existed on the Mojave Desert round the turn of the century, and again, I guess as you're beginning to see, I have a tendency to take a situation that I feel is a microcosmic statement about our lives, to try to extract a moral lesson.

ZZ: You use the past as a parable of the present?

MM: Right, which is nothing new really but it hasn't been done a lot in songs. It was in the beginning – the balladeers did that. Then of course it all went into a different situation, so I'm trying to get back to that situation. But I don't talk about the past unless it's got a definite relationship to now. Anyway, Calico is a ghost town now. It started off as nothing and in and in twenty years grew to a town of about the size of fifteen thousand, and then in ten more years was completely dead again. The reason for that was because they had this silver rush – everybody came and tried to get as much money out of the ground as they could, there were no restrictions at all. What wound up happening is that the rich guys were able to control the situation and had the money to buy the mines and everything got all the money, and the people that came out west to make money wound up starving to death or dying on the desert or moving on to some other place. That's how you get this situation with ghost towns in America, places that only lasted for ten years – you know, boom. Which is kind of a unique American situation, you have it too in South Africa and a few other places, but to me that's exactly like our planet. I think we have a boom-town planet right now. But we need to watch out that it doesn't become a ghost planet very quickly. That was the point of 'Calico', but through talking to people I discovered that people didn't read that into it at all.

ZZ: So how do you find these situations that you write about, in the past? I mean, do you read a lot and find them from reading, or do you suddenly see somewhere like Calico, or Natchez Trace?

MM: Well, I think reading is fine, and I often get ideas for places to visit, but I wouldn't write about a place just because I read about it. I'd rather go and personally experience it myself, and I feel that there's some kind of a bond between me and the place, if I grow to love the place, then I can't help but write a song about it. There's no question about creativity at that point, one just does it because it comes out of yourself, you can't stop yourself.

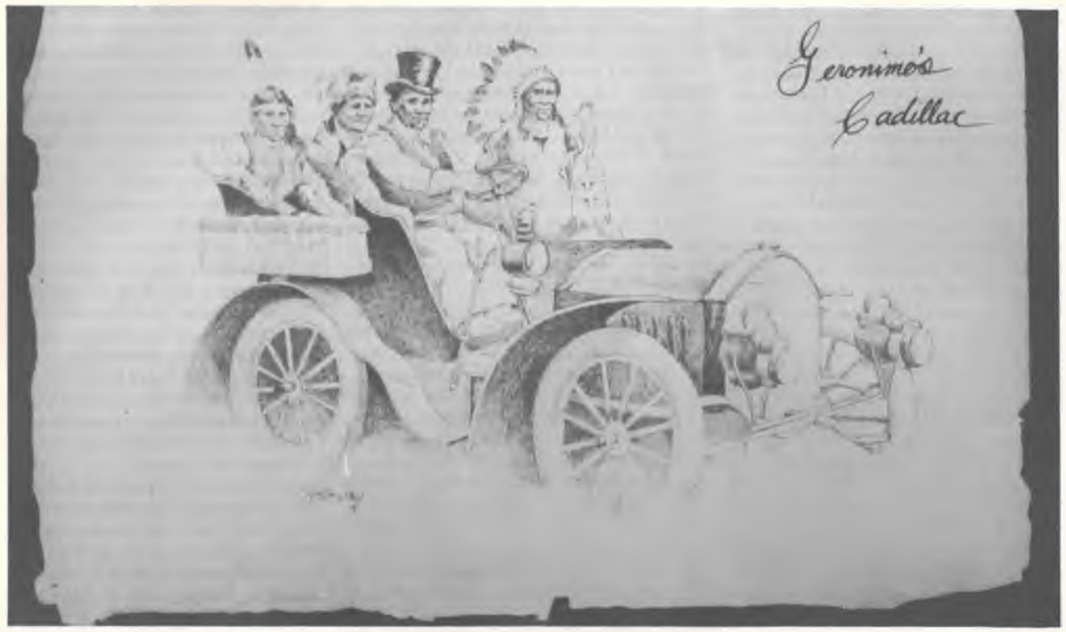
ZZ: So we can expect a song about the British Museum, I suppose.

MM: Yes. You know, I think we're rapidly coming to a situation in music where people are going to have to start writing songs more about experiencing art, and the situation – almost like a play within a play – music about music, art about art . . .

ZZ: Wel, Don McLean's done this, hasn't he, in 'American Pie'?

MM: Right, and James Taylor did it in 'Hey Mister That's Me Up On The Jukebox', it's kind of a song about a songwriter. And I write songs about situations that come out meaning something to me; it's just like a giant sign on the desert, you know, HEY MANKIND, IF YOU CAN DIG IT, LOOK, HERE IT IS. So then I write a song about it. To me, it's a little bit different from the protest song, because it's something real that happened, and you can say, 'this really happened, it's real', and you try to create it in music, and of course pathos is a very real part of music, and I think the pathos that you get from loving a place that has to do with past times makes for good music.

Going back to 'Calico'. My visit to Calico was the first occasion when I began to question what I was doing in Hollywood as a songwriter. You know they come along and they tell you 'write a song about this, write a song about that, or this or that's on the charts, try to write something in that vein', and here I was standing in front of something that was a cosmic experience for me. And I was asking myself, why can't I write about this, because this is what I can portray more vividly than some made-up situation that I don't want to write about. And so I just made myself a promise then, and I have tried to keep it, that I would never, ever, write a song again that didn't write itself out of my own life, that didn't present itself in such a vivid way that it had to be put down on paper, that I'd never again sit



down and concoct a song.
ZZ: How long did the album take to make?
MM: The first album took about three days to record the basic tracks, and there were some voices and strings added in London – I was not present for that, I put that in Bob's hands and he sent me a tape, I think that took about a week. I liked what he did, so that was it. But I had been doing these songs on stage for three or four years at different times, touring around doing little funky tours of my own, so I was very familiar with them and we only did one or two takes on each song.
ZZ: What sort of places did you play?
MM: Oh God! I guess sort of the equivalent of your folk clubs that you have around London, not well-known places, in Colorado and New Mexico and Arizona and Texas and down in Florida I was in a few, down throughout the South, I never ranged as far as New England, but pretty much all the Southwest and South. A few in the midwest, not very many. They were only folk clubs.
ZZ: The second album, that took how long?
MM: The second album took four days from start to finish, and there was one track that we used strings on which were added in L.A. – again I was not present, though I picked the arranger. Once I'm through with it, I don't like to go back and start adding stuff on to it. I like to hear a song when I feel fresh for it? I can't stand to sit in the studio and listen to it a thousand times, it drives me completely crazy. It's just not natural to hear a song a thousand times in a row.
ZZ: The second album 'Cosmic Cowboy Souvenir', can you tell us some of the tracks you like on it?
MM: It's primarily an album that deals with the same issues as the song 'Geronimo's Cadillac' did, but I used a cowboy motif instead. The character on the front ot the album, and on the back, is sort of this anonymous cowboy character that's carrying around a suitcase – you never see his face, sort of a symbol of the transient. My favourite track on the album is a song called 'I Just Wanna Be A Cosmic Cowboy'.

Austin, Texas

ZZ: What is a cosmic cowboy?
MM: Well, it started off as a symbol of a kind of music that's beginning to pop up a lot in the U.S., which is a combination of country-western music, with more of the western emphasised, combined with rock 'n' roll.
ZZ: Country rock?
MM: It's country rock, but it's a little bit different in Texas, and in the southwestern states. A lot of people over here just think I'm a country-western artist, they don't even see that it's not really country-western. But the distinction is that there's one strain that goes pretty much into country, bluegrass. It's a kind of mountain, hill song type sound combined with rock 'n' roll rhythm tracks whereas in Texas there's a tremendous mixing-in with this of blues, really funky, down-home country blues, and what you might call cowboy folk music which is a very open balladeer kind of a music. The town that I live in, Austin, we have a lot of people living down there – I don't know if you've ever heard of them or not, but I think they'll become well-known as time goes on – like Jerry Jeff Walker, who wrote 'Mr. Bojangles', and he's in that sort of bag, and B.W. Stevenson on R.C.A., Willis Alan Ramsey on Shelter, they've all got a very bluesy influence in their music. It's more a combination of blues and country-western and cowboy music, than it is hill music and bluegrass music and that sort of real fast banjo picking and mandolin and that type of stuff. Of course, Texas is one of the places where traditionally other kinds of music have gotten mixed in with country music, like Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys back in the forties and fifties were the first band to mix in jazz with country music. Texas is a very interesting and exciting place musically right now. I don't know how long it's gonna last, depends on how fas the carpet-baggers come in I guess.
ZZ: The guy that was at Muscle Shoals, he's moved to Atlanta, hasn't he? Chips Moman moved lock stock and barrel to Atlanta, which caused quite a controversy down in the Memphis/Muscle Shoals area.
MM: Yeah it did. Well I think probably he got tired of dealing with constant racial prejudice against his artists. Of course, it might be as bad in Atlanta but at least it's a bigger city and there's a little bit more elbow room. You see, you're getting a tremendous decentralisation of the recording industry in the States now. Studios are popping up all over the country, and it's a big country. I've read in a lot of your papers, the feeling over here seems to be that HOllywood has been taken over by rock 'n' roll, it's sort of like the movie industry was. But I don't really agree with that, I don't think L.A. or Hollywood is going to become an important centre of recording over the next ten or fifteen years. Studios are going under every day, people are beginning to move out of the big cities and into smaller towns and set up, because recording equipment's getting cheaper and people are learning how to use it. We even have some little studios popping up in Austin now – most people probably never even heard of Austin, which is actually probably good. It's a great place to live, and the University of Texas is there, so it brings in young people from all over the world. There are probably more lead guitar players per square inch than in any other small town in the world. There's some really fine musicians and players and lots of groups down there – it's a real goldmine for music, at the moment. Exactly how long that's gonna happen, I don't know.
ZZ: Do you play a lot there, to the local audiences?
MM: A great deal, they're very, very avid followers of music, and they spend a lot of money going to concerts and buying records. In these small towns, you might find symphonies and lots of different kinds of music; all kinds of culture. This has created a situation where people are very avid followers of music and stuff like that. We have a place – in fact I think it may be one of the last places in the country that's like the old Fillmore was – it's called the Armadillo World Headquarters, and it's a huge concert-hall that holds about 2,500, and it's pretty much the musical centre of that part of the country. Everybody's played there, Leon Russell and Jerry Garcia and all those people have come down to jam there and everything. I think there's beginning to be a south-western-southern kind of a rock 'n' roll pop scene, it's really beginning to amalgamate now with Leon Russell having moved back to Oklahoma.

A minor original songwriter

ZZ: Do you write songs and give them to other people?
MM: Yes, I do, but not as much as I used to. What I'm doing now is just sort of letting Johnston have first crack at cutting any of my songs with other artists of his, before I actually release them out to other people – it's a kind of reciprocal thing between me and Bob, he helps to make good records and I try to make my material available to him first. So I think that he's been talking about doing a song called 'Waking Up' with B.B. King, who he's producing now. And he may use a few tracks off 'Geronimo's Cadillac' with Joe Cocker but I don't know which ones. But I'm really trying that end of things a little bit more now than an overall assault on any artist that'll record a song. You see, in the States, there aren't very many people recording other people's songs right now. In England, this is still going on a great deal, and over here my company is administrated by Carlin Music, and I think they're doing more stuff along those lines than they are in the States, but I don't have anyone actively out hustling songs in the States at all: I just figure that the best way to go right now is by osmosis, just whatever seems to sink in, people will record. Like if somebody hears a song and he completely flips out, and he's got to do it, let him do it. But why bring around stacks and stacks of demos, and add this or that hype, and say I'm gonna buy this ad in that trade magazine and that ad in that trade magazine if you'll record this song, and we'll put all of our promotion staff behind you if you'll do this tune. A hell of a lot of the time, people record songs more for those reasons than they do simply because it's a good song. Do I sound terribly bitter about this? I'm not really.
ZZ: I think that the first album should have had far more success, but it didn't seem to get pushed at all here. Was it pushed in America?
MM: It did very well in the States for a first album. You see, we're suffering from a Pandora's Box of singer-songwriters in the States at the moment, and I freely admit that I'm probably just a part of that wave. Probably five years ago, or three years ago, you had a hard time getting a record contract – no-one was signing singer-songwriters. Now everybody wants one, everybody's got to have five or six or ten of them on their label. So consequently you've got all these singer-songwriters running around, so for a first album my sales were really excellent, very surprisingly good. Usually you don't expect to do anything on your first, even on your first three or four albums in the States, but we did get into the charts with the album, and we had a top forty hit with 'Geronimo's Cadillac'. 'G.C.' frankly deals with an issue that is very hard for an English person to understand, unless he just happens to be inclined to read about the American Indians. Of course, the world is getting smaller and people are beginning to be interested in everybody else's problems. So there were a lot of people over here, especially people in the Press who had been more exposed to American artists and American issues and music. But over here, because it is an American song, the BBC and probably the fans themselves didn't really understand what I was getting at, so I'm not surprised that it didn't get a lot of airplay. Larry McMurtry, who wrote 'The Last Picture Show', (he's from Austin too) used to wear a T-shirt that said 'minor original writer'. So that's probably the T-shirt I should be wearing: 'minor original songwriter'. But I try to write what I know, and not what I don't know, and hopefully now that I've been to England my experiences will become somewhat more continental, and maybe my songs will become very much more in touch with people in England and in Europe, because there's an awful lot to experience here. We've got really a little history that we make a lot of in the States, whereas there's no way you could fathom all the stuff that's happened here.
ZZ: How did you feel about the appearance for the Press at Ronnie Scott's?
MM: I felt like I had to subdue my feelings a little bit because of the sound system. But I know that at these press parties both here and in New York and every place else, that the press sees the same thing over and over again: they see people getting up, scared to death, they don't know what to do, it's a very uptight situation – and I've never met anyone that liked an uptight situation, not even people in the upper class. And I wanted it to be as informal as possible, and unfortunately the sound system I'm afraid maybe made more formality out of it, because anytime you have sound system trouble it makes you aware that something is being presented to you. If there's no sound system problem then it's man-to-man, you accept the sound as it is. But I feel very good about it as far as – you know, I had a good time. I was determined I was gonna enjoy myself regardless of the sound, and I'm so used to bad sound systems everywhere all over the world that one bad sound system's not gonna worry me. I hadn't played in front of any people since I got here, so I was just grateful to do that.
ZZ: And who did you use in the backing group that night?
MM: Those guys were friends of mine that I met back home in Texas. J.D.'s from Amarillo. That's J.D. Souther, he's by himself, he's got albums out on his own, he's not well-known over here. He was recently on the Old Grey Whistle Test I think (and supported the Eagles). But he and I sort of have a bond because we do pretty much the same thing, and we like each other a lot, so he came and played a little guitar, and Don Henley sat in on drums, he's from the Eagles. And then J.D. Souther's bass player, who's an old friend of mine, Dave Jackson, used to back me up in a group ten years ago, so he played bass, and Gary Nurm the only guy who's played with me regularly. And I brought him because I write songs with him. I wouldn't be allowed to use him as a musician in a session or anything else, but I brought him because I like to have people around that I write with. It's very important if you happen to want to write a song and you want to collaborate on that tune – if you don't know anyone, it's bad. What I tried to do that day, I make no pretence that I was putting on a show in that situation, I wasn't trying to give a concert. I tried to make it as loose as I possibly could, because I think that's what's wrong right now, everybody is not loose enough, people are not just getting up and picking anymore. I'm amazed at how militaristic presentation of music is getting, at how choreographed everything is. And there's a subtle choreography of the stage gimmick, that it goes beyond just stage steps, or you can almost predict what's gonna happen in a rock concert. So my feeling is, even if you take a chance on something being bad or going wrong, it's better to have the magic of knowing that something unpredictable might happen. And everything did that day, everything unpredictable happened! But I felt very good about it, and I had a good time, and I was playing with my friends – what more can one ask?

Michael Wale

✲THE BYRDS' GREATEST HITS AND OTHERS✲

✲BY PAUL SHEHAN✲

From CRAWDADDY 11 (September 1967 issue)

Sadness is perhaps a word for it, walking down the street with familiar sounds of "Light My Fire" barely audible from an apartment somewhere high above. Timelessness abounds. The song began somewhere centuries back and goes on, in the back of my mind, almost forever. I heard only a few notes, peripheral hearing, an uncertainty that blends the music into all the other background, like the vague smell of a bakery somewhere.

The Doors are good Muzak. Like the Byrds, they are perfect on a highly complex, imperceptible level. Nothing is obvious, nothing protrudes. Everywhere is here, now, current, with no sense of actual immediacy (which would imply consciousness of time) and no knowledge of the definite.

Any greatest hits album is insignificant. By definition it contains nothing unfamiliar; and yet this very fact offers great potential beauty, for a well-made greatest hits lp might then unleash the emotion of familiarity in an artistic context. The Byrds have achieved that goal: always masters of the form, they have now taken the concept of a great hits anthology and created from it an essay into rediscovery.

The opening is masterful. The listener, knowing this is a big hits album, knows he can only expect crass repetition of earlier-recorded material; and yet, staring at the cover whose beauty has only just begun to work its magic on him, cannot help but feel that somehow something miraculous is going to take place. Never has there been a Byrds album without a stunning cover, and never has the record itself proved to be anything less than infinitely greater than its jacket. So you can't quite believe this will be an exception, and then you hear those beautiful notes that begin the Tambourine Man album and the Byrds' careers, and you know that this album too is wonderful, for there is that same joy, that same perfection, but opening a different lp...and no matter how many times you've played the Tambourine Man lp over again, this is the first time since the first time that you have heard that opening as new, as a surprise. Only by somehow recording a new album that again started with "Tambourine Man" could the Byrds restore the listener's virginity, make it possible for you to hear the same thing without ever having heard it before. This is the rediscovery of the world that so many are experiencing through drugs, and never before has music captured it so well.

Aretha's "Respect" has got to be played so loud you worry about the neighbors. And twice, like "Tambourine Man." The second time through you begin to notice anticipation, motion as an aspect of vocal stylizing the temporal nature of music. The song continually catches up and jumps ahead, crescendoes, subsides, and then waits to be played again. The second time through you've already been torn apart, and damned if it doesn't put you back together! "Tambourine Man" rises, and eventually subsides, but with no sense of peak, forcing you to play it over and over again with the curious feeling you've missed something. The song never resolves, never even asks a question, although you think it might, and hence its implications are infinite. The only song I know that is structurally similar to "Tambourine Man," with its peak before it begins and after its end, and nothing in the middle, is "Light My Fire" (which simulates a peak, but a false one, as the singles version of the song proves. Everything really happens off the record.)

NEWARK, Aug. 17 (AP) -- Four representatives of the South Vietnamese Ministry of Labor visited the Youth Opportunity Center here today to get ideas for manpower training services in their country.

The relationships within any series of well-expressed concepts may be so complex in their implications as to multiply endlessly the concepts involved; which is to say that as you read and reread this sentence in order to make it make sense, you will constantly discover new and different ideas it might contain. Which doesn't mean it does contain them, but rather that it generates them; without the sentence you would never have created those ideas. Any confusion as to which sentence I'm referring to is one of the ambiguities that makes this statement valid.

The impact of "Tambourine Man" opening the lp is increased and further complicated by the fact that the next song is "I'll Feel A Whole Lot Better," which was also the second song on the Tambourine Man album! The effect is somewhat like hearing one very pleasing note for four minutes and fifty seconds. Anticipation of change, of proof that this is not the first album but something very different, becomes almost unbearable, until finally the Byrds break into "The Bells of Rhymney," which is likewise on the first side of the first album, but isn't the third song. Such subtlety! Comparable is Aretha Franklin's "You Are My Sunshine" which opens with a brilliant almost accapella vocal that goes on and on unbearably while you clench your teeth and sweat it out waiting for the drums and the melody to interrupt. Long after you've decided the damn thing is one long introduction, the real song does begin, and the sense of relief is almost intolerable.

This album is not The Byrds Greatest Hits ("It Won't Be Wrong," not included, was a Top 40 hit, whereas "The Chimes of Freedom" was never even released as a single). Nor is it The Best of the Byrds, (such a collection would certainly not include "Mr. Spaceman"). It is the Byrds Revisited, and they actually make the listener experience what Dylan only hinted at in the titles of his fifth and sixth lps (Why would you name a three-year-old documentary after ("She's an artist she) don't look back"?).

An aspect of rock creativity often overlooked is programming: the art of transition. Dicken Acraman, legendary discotheque programmer who waited four months for Salvation to open and disappeared a week afterwards, once followed the Four Tops' "Walk Away Renee" with "Turn, Turn, Turn," in open recognition of the fact that the Byrds are capable of almost any transition at almost any time. On the album "Trun, Turn, Turn" is preceded by "The Bells of Rhymney," as if daring you to think of Pete Seeger. Hearing "Turn, Turn" on an lp with a Byrds song before it and after it is quite an experience; resolving it into "just a song" instead of "their big number one hit" is difficult and extremely satisfying.

An obvious question is, how are you reading this article? Assuming it is written with certain rhythms and concepts of structure, how are you contributing to it? Are you absorbing it all at once? Are you reading it in snatches, and if so, what sort of activity are you mixing into it? (I've watched girls with copies of Crawdaddy! bent back in one hand, reading as they crossed against the lights. Other people fall asleep in the middle of a word.) Are you reading this part for the second time?

"The Chimes of Freedom" always wanted to be the last song on a side, so that's all right too.

Greatest Hits albums are always regarded as suspect. It's part of the American guilt syndome: packaging is not considered work (c.f. Oedipa Maas and Maxwell's Demon) and art without work is invisible. This is crap, of course; the Puritan Ethic; but it is still so strong in this country that it was necessary to invent (and invalidate as art) the concept "put-on" in order to make Andy Warhol famous and yet be able to ignore his genius at the same time. Confronted with this album (and probably this review) the average American scoffs. "It's all done with mirrors!" Yes, it is, and look at that cover again.

Rock criticism is also extremely suspect, as was pointed out to me by none other than David Crosby (he stood up on his hind legs in the Tin Angel and proclaimed, me listening, that "the one thing you absolutely cannot do in this field is intellectualize!"). I think it is understandable and even reasonable for a rock star to want to play God; it was a pretty good Don't Look Back parody, and I don't begrudge it. Sandy Pearlman later brought up an interesting point: we write articles about music and art and what's in our minds and stuff, and these performers somehow get the idea we're writing about them! This article obviously isn't about the Byrds, and I don't think anybody really thinks it should be.

"Eight Miles High," viewed historically (and a greatest hits album certainly invokes concern with history), was the object of an early confrontation in the War of Generations; the Adults banned the record ("You're not allowed to have Strange Experiences, and if you write songs about your Strange Experiences, we're not going to let you hear them!"). It opens the second side, and these last five songs all reflect the modern version of sadder-but-wiser, which is happier-but-not-so-smart ("I'm younger than that now").

Once again, because of a pun in programming, you are back in an earlier album, and it really is a surprise to hear "Mr. Spaceman" instead of "Hey, Joe." Poignant, too, because of the disappointment; and the silly as poignant is a nice achievement.

Go into the bathroom and listen to the Doors. Or listen to the Byrds beside Grand Canyons, stuff like that. The point is to escape space and time: make environment obvious and therefore insignificant. I wrote this paragraph on toilet paper.

But you gotta come back. Listen and look separately, to get the idea, and then integrate them again; beauty is generated by interaction. Closing your eyes and listening to music is primitive, like only being able to hear one instrument at a time. Not that primitive is bad, just that complexity is the life we lead and the more we let go to it the more we appreciate it. Surrender, absorption, boring from within, is the only real way to possess things. That's what the Manchurians learned from the Mongols. That's what Haight-Ashbury is proving to the world (but beware Madison Avenue bearing gifts...).

"Eight Miles High": awe. "Mr. Spaceman": acceptance. "5D": insight. But any other choices might have been just as enlightening, for every Byrds song relates to every possible sequence of Byrds songs, owing to the amount and extent of implication in each one, and the formal approach that puts them all in the same approximate plane. I would welcome--although I don't anticipate--indefinite further permutations of already existent Byrds material. Perhaps if Columbia would release every track as a stereo single, this could be achieved.

One of the tortures devised for the "rock critic" is that he is penalized for not obviously stating the obvious, a torture in itself. The Byrds are one of the three or four best rock groups, and everything on this album is--in a rock context--great.

The transition from "5D" to "Rock 'n' Roll Star" is very clean and warm, a recognition of the long period of silence after the release of the former song and the successful resolution of all the problems that arose before the Byrds were able to record the latter. And the Byrds' acceptance and appreciation of themselves as rock 'n' roll stars is historically fascinating in that it preceded--by just a month or two--the Beatles' discovery that they really are the Beatles and that's all right. The Byrds have never doubted they were the Byrds, but who the Byrds are may still be a mystery.

Which makes "My Back Pages" inevitable. Even Bob Dylan knew that. Especially Bob Dylan.

Significantly, because what's important on this lp is the transitions, this may be the first album where the little silences between the songs are more important than the songs themselves. Consider all the silence between the times you hear "Light My Fire" or "We Love You" in a week. What kind of music is that silence? Signals? Noise? But definitely created by the songs themselves, beings that define all the nothingness. "And if he left off dreaming about you, where do you suppose you'd be?"

For a last sentence, anything with "context" in it is okay.

--PAUL WILLIAMS

CHAPTER FIVE
TURBULENCE, CHANGES.....& 3 NOTORIOUS BYRD BROS.
August 1967 - February 1968

On 7th August, 'The Byrds Greatest Hits' - supposedly their sole gold album - on CBS 63107. The sleeve reveals that McGuinn has sprouted a goatee since his visit, but since all the tracks have been released before, I'll leave its review, without further comment, in the hands of Paul Williams of Crawdaddy (see opposite page).[1]

A few weeks later, CBS put out a single which was destined to pair the two rarest Byrds tracks: 'Lady Friend'/'Don't make waves' (CBS 2924 - but long since deleted). The a-side, written by Crosby and a pokier song than his usual, could have been amazing but for the muzzy mix. God alone knows what Gary Usher must have been playing at - one can only assume that he either dropped the finished tape down a toilet or else recorded the entire thing in his garden shed. There's little liklihood of a re-mixed version appearing on any forthcoming album either, so I suppose we'll just have to lump it. The b-side wasn't up to much - it was the title music for a cruddy Tony Curtis/Claudia Cardinale film.

Then....in October....bombshell! David Crosby is asked to pack his bags and leave. The others can tolerate his idiosyncracies no longer, and Gene Clark is brought back to replace him. He too is fired, however, because of his recurring inability to come to terms with flying. "He only stayed for three weeks....just couldn't hack it" says Hillman - and CBS once more start worrying about how to hush the matter over so that sales figures won't be affected. (See their memo).

Crosby asks for his sacking to be made public and agrees to leave willingly ....with a large cash settlement. Rumoured reasons for his dismissal usually centred on his public bluntness on subjects ranging from Kennedy's assassination and the subsequent Warren Report, to the beneficial properties of lysergic acid, to Vietnam, etc - though the actual reasons ran a little deeper than that. (See later chapter on McGuinn as hirer and firer, and note 2 in the appendix).

The Monterey Pop Festival, held over the weekend of June 16 1967, had been one of the stepping stones leading to the final crunch; here's a review of the Byrds' performance there by Mike Daley of San Francisco's first rock newspaper, Mojo Navigator Rock'n'roll News: "The Byrds I have heard much better before, and David Crosby's comments and little sermons about acid and the fact that Paul McCartney now takes it, and Kennedy's assassination, came off sounding very sophomoric. And the STP sticker on his guitar didn't make it either".

So, exit Crosby in disgrace. He buys a 25 thousand dollar yacht and sails off, later to surface as producer of Joni Mitchell's first album and thence to combine with Stills & Nash.

The Byrds, after some discussion, decide to go on as a trio and see if they can manage, but then, in November, as they are putting together their next album, another bombshell....Michael Clarke decides to call it a day and returns to the shores of Hawaii (where the Byrds had just been) to lie around (before returning a few months later to join the emerging Burritos). Kevin Kelley, ex of Taj Mahal & the Rising Sons and also Hillman's cousin, is brought in to replace Clarke. Kelley has apparently studied music at a couple of Southern Californian colleges, but enlisted in the US Marines for 3 years to overcome his "boredom with music". The cure must have worked - he got into meditation, Bach, Bartok, Hindemuth, electronic and Indian music..."I love the dissonance in Indian music" he says. They continue doing the odd gig as a trio.

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On January 15th 1968, 'The Notorious Byrd Brothers', their best album (no doubt about it) was released (on April 12 in England, on CBS 63169). The production, again by Gary Usher,[3] was just superb, the engineering by Roy Halee, later to produce Simon & Garfunkel, was magnificent, and the songs and arrangements much more thoughtful and complex than previous albums.

Brief notes and comments on the album (are you aware, by the way, that the horse on the front cover is supposed to be symbolic of Crosby?).

When questioned in 1970, McGuinn[4]

expressed indifference when discussing the album: "When Crosby left, there was an interim period where we were just sort of in a daze... we didn't know what was going on. You see, the Byrds had got very intellectual for a time, and I think that David was the driving force behind it - like if you look at his subsequent career, he's done things like 'Deja Vu', which is an intellectual interpretation of the reincarnation phenomenon. David wasn't exactly resistant to the muse, just sort of apathetic at the time, as I recall. Anyway, after he'd gone, we recorded 'Notorious', which had the last traces of David on two vocals - the rest we did ourselves....just to show David that we could do without him, I guess. A lot of people like that album the best.... I don't particularly, because of what went on during the course of it, but if some guy was making it with a girl for the first time when he heard it, it becomes a great album".

By the time he spoke to me in May 71, McGuinn had modified his opinion: "I've been listening to it again, and I agree it's one of the best albums we ever did..... parts of it, anyway. Parts are gimmick for the sake of gimmick, but other parts are really valid".

Crosby is featured on 'Tribal gathering' and 'Dolphins smile', but the rest is supposedly the remaining Byrds trio of McGuinn/Hillman/Clarke, augmented by various session men that Usher called up. Apart from Clarence White on guitar and Red Rhodes on pedal steel, McGuinn was unable to recollect the names of any others, and Clarence White, although he remembers being on 'Wasn't born to follow', thinks he was on another track (he can't remember which) but feels that his contribution was subsequently mixed out. Chris Hillman, confronted by the sleeve, was a little more explicit.[5]

ZZ: Crosby left during the early stages of recording this album....

CH: Yeah, but it came down to McGuinn and me doing most of it with a studio cat on drums.

ZZ: Why was that? I thought Michael Clarke stayed on until it had been made.

CH: No....you see Michael was becoming more and more disenchanted at the time, and he wasn't really cutting it on some of the songs. He got depressed because he couldn't do it and decided to leave - so the two of us did most of it.

ZZ: And you filled it out with session men like Clarence and Red Rhodes - who was the drummer?

CH: Jim Gordon. (So it ties up with that quote from Gordon a while back).

ZZ: On some of the composer credits, it says McGuinn/Hillman and on others it's

CBS MEMORANDUM

FROM: Bunny Freidus
TO: RODNEY BURBECK
DATE: December 7, 1967

RE: The Tearful Parting of The Ways

Here's the inside scoop (by now pretty outside) on The Byrds:

1. The Byrds: Things are, to say the least, up in the air for the group right now. For your personal enlightenment, David Crosby left to be replaced by Gene Clark. Now, however, Gene has left as well, leaving The Byrds up a tree (excuse bad pun) as a three member group. They haven't decided whether they will add a member or not. As for "Going Back," for the press' ears, however, I think the best way to handle the group's present status is to say David Crosby has left The Byrds, period. As for "Going Back," Chris Hillman, Roger McGuinn, Mike Clark get credit for that. David Crosby is going on his own as a solo act.

Within the next few days, I'll be sending you new pix and bios of your favorites.

Love,
Bunny

BF:pd

got Hillman/McGuinn; does this indicate who wrote the words and who the music?

CH: No, it just means that the guy who got the details together for the label, happened to write them down that way... but we collaborated on most of them rather than one contributing the words and the other supplying the music.

'Artificial Energy' - one of the greatest Byrds tracks; a song doubting the validity of amphetamine. Wind instruments (!), fabulous bass, pedal steel, and those lyrics....I'd love to learn more about them: "powerful things are brewing inside .....and I'm in jail 'cause I killed a queen".

ZZ: Can you tell me about some of the tracks - what about 'Artificial Energy' for instance?

CH: That's about taking speed - uppers, but I don't remember the words enough to be able to explain them; in fact I don't even remember half of these damned songs. I haven't heard any of these albums for years - in fact I don't even have copies of them.

ZZ: Look, take these (pushes entire Byrds recorded works towards him).... I can get some more - you can't deprive yourself of this music!

CH: No, that's ok. I'd love to have them, but I'd lose them before I got back home. I'm going to get a whole set when I get back to the States - then I'll listen to 'em all properly.

ZZ: How much were you and McGuinn in on the production and arrangements?

CH: Oh, quite a bit. The three of us; Usher, McGuinn and I, just got together and worked it all out.

'Going Back'. A beautiful Jerry Goffin/Carole King song that Dusty Springfield recorded. Released as a single....lots of backing - pedal steel, vibes, piano, strings...and some great drumming (from Jim Gordon).

ZZ: Is it right that Crosby got pissed off because you wanted to record 'Going back', which he considered too commercial and poppy for the Byrds? So he refused to attend the session?

CH: Yeah - but his leaving was the result of a more general dissention between him and us, not based on any one specific incident. We just got to the point where we couldn't work together - he just kept going off on a tangent.

'Natural Harmony'. More pedal steel.... Red Rhodes must've thought he was in the Byrds, working so much on this album. Hillman's singing and songwriting are now as important to the Byrds as his bassplaying. Paul Beaver (of Beaver & Krause) is operating the Moog Synthesiser.

'Draft Morning'. Unparalleled excellence ....a candidate for the best Byrds track ever. Trumpet/gunfire/atmosphere - one of the finest anti-Vietnam war songs and some of the greatest bass work in the history of music. I'd always thought that Crosby was singing on this, and that it was the peak of his career - a level he's got nowhere near since he left - but this is not so.

ZZ: Wasn't crosby on 'Draft Morning'?

CH: No - McGuinn and I did the vocals on that one.

ZZ: ....and I always thought that was the last significant thing he ever did....

CH: No, it was us. He had written the basic song, but we had to re-write some of the words because he left right after introducing the song to us, and we could hardly remember the lyrics. We first got that and 'Dolphin's Smile' together in Hawaii, I remember; we were working there and had this house on the other side of the island of Oahu - we worked those songs up there, ready to record when we got back.

'Wasn't born to follow'. Another Goffin and King song, and the loveliest part of the film 'Easy Rider'. Clarence White on guitar somewhere in the midst of it all.

'Get to you'. Looking at the Pacific and wishing he were in London....then gets over here and it's raining. (What is he ...nuts?) All these songs must have stories behind them....

ZZ: Was 'Get to you' one of your songs?

CH: No, Roger wrote most of that one... again, I barely remember how that song goes.

'Change is now'. "Change" - one of the most important words of that hippie/67 era. Clarence is hidden in there on the right speaker - you can hear him under the interlude verses. Pedal steel, and nice guitar solo. My god, they went to town on this one...I wonder if they were thinking "this is going to be our 'Sgt Pepper'!"?

'Old John Robertson'. Isn't it nice how the songs flow into one another,...and listen to that - a fiddle, a phased string quartet and some nice rippling, ringing twelve string jangle too!

ZZ: Was John Robertson a real person?

CH: Yeah - he was an old man who lived in the town I grew up in...Racel Santa Fe (?) in California. He was one of the town's characters because he'd been a movie director in the silent era, and had retired to live there. He was real old, and he had a long white handlebar mustache, and he wore a stetson hat. He was friendly with all the kids....it was just a bit of my childhood that I remembered - this nice old man. I did most of the words, and Roger helped me to pull them together.

'Tribal Gathering'. Where, when and why did this event take place? Monterey Pop Festival? A be-in at Griffith Park? Ah, American mysterioso, chronicled by the Byrds. Crosby, we're going to miss you, boy.

ZZ: Which gathering does this refer to?

CH: I don't know - Crosby wrote that.... maybe it was Monterey.

ZZ: You're credited with co-authorship.

CH: I am? I must've helped on part of it, but I don't remember. You see, when one of us originated a song, we would maybe chip in with some ideas - re-arrange a part of it, change the chord structure, and so on - and then we'd share the credit - that's how most groups work. (Without having access to Crosby, I'd be inclined to think that this song refers to an event actually called The Gathering of the Tribes, which attracted 20,000 to Golden Gate Park in San Francisco on January 14, 1967. This was a sort of prototype of the be-ins and love-ins which subsequently became fashionable during that year, and if you want to find out more about it, Ralph Gleason describes it in great detail in his Jefferson Airplane book - page 38 onwards. The Airplane also did a song about it - 'Saturday Afternoon').

'Dolphin's smile'. A Fred Neil type song about the gentle longhairs of the sea. This and 'Tribal Gathering' are the only tracks Crosby sings on.

'Space Odyssey' An adaption of part of the story of '2001', changed about a bit by McGuinn and Hippard (of 'CTA 102' fame). More science fiction rock.

ZZ: That's about '2001', right?

Roger: Yes - that was a sort of hello message to Stanley Kubrick - you know,

Crosby, a few weeks before his dismissal

"hi Stanley...we appreciate you". 'We'll meet again' was another hello to him.

ZZ: Have you ever met him?

Roger: No, but I'd like to....he seems to be very busy though - and not too interested in rock and roll.

ZZ: Do you remember which tracks had Michael Clarke on them?

CH: No, I'd have to listen again - it seems like ten years ago.

ZZ: Did he leave in bitterness?

CH: No, he just got to the point where he didn't care anymore and said "See you later". So we said "Ok...see you" and off he went to Hawaii.

ZZ: Did you audition lots of potential replacements, or did you bring Kevin Kelley in because he was ready and willing?

CH: Yes - he was around, so we got him in and it worked out....for a while.

Whew! What an album....one you can't tire of. An album of peace, exploration, conclusions, and truth. And no need to take my word....it was voted, in late 71 by that discerning body of Zigzag readers, the fourth best album ever recorded (the only ones to beat it were 'Forever changes' by Love, the Beatles' 'Sgt Pepper', and Blonde on Blonde' by Bob Dylan).

Ok, Usher....step up and receive your medal.

** ** ** ** **

And now, for your further enjoyment, the eloquent Crawdaddy appraisal of the album by Sandy Pearlman (pinched from Crawdaddy 15, May 68).

> Trying to tell you how enchantingly beautiful the new Byrds' album is and, right away, we gotta turn to their sonic preoccupation. Suffice to say, the Byrds have this unique preoccupation with a constant (although simultaneously evolving) primal sound. Certainly this sound has been some kind of major enchantment. It really puts a spell on you. 'cause it really puts a spell on its materials. And that's a function of the Byrds' form.* Which form structures the materials into enchantment. So the Byrds' sound is enchanted (and enchanting) in its absolute *otherness* toward rock sound and even the random noise about us. It's peaceful, dependent not upon the ever-implicit (sometimes explicit) internal differential and violence of sound organized as contrast, but rather upon constantly given resolutions. (The Byrds are at some different order of sound, deeply *musical* in the most archaic sense. Think of the music of the spheres. Just think.) And this preternatural resolution makes it a magical analogue. The world works one way. Naturally. But in magic the spell's efficacy is supernaturally derived. (At an absolute, perfect distance from the natural.) Not depending on normal, familiar powers the spell takes on absolute qualities. It's other. And the Byrds' sound draws its strength and enchantment from this same distant power (i.e *formal or schematic relationship*) of otherhood.
>
> The first time I saw the Byrds there were all five old ones, golden boys (literally with golden hair), style setters the primal groupie acquisition, elegant as could be, so far into enchantment that even at the big perfected white heat moment ("Eight Miles High"), their aura of detachment summoned up real Appolonian dreams. They were playing remarkably well and all the people danced or stood as if simultaneously fascinated by the music. (At its best the Byrds' patterned music doesn't allow much freedom in audience response. Literally fascinating. Once they were the super dance band. Very peculiar dancing to them, led by their own dance troupe. Now those days are gone. Too bad.) Ineffable lines mutually bound the audience and the music, and the audience through the music. And despite all their detachment, the Byrds did some number on that audience. A rapport, not out of stage presence, but (rather) via the universal fascination *pro-*

voked in everyone by the music's formal pattern. It was one of those (you know) mystic moments, enchanting, a really science-fiction scene.

And the Byrds have always (somehow) been into such dependable science-fiction attitudes, making coherent all things about them. While others (Donovan, Stones, Beatles, Dylan) went through a lotta poses and forms ("They've gone through some changes," said a few girls), the Byrds started out copping themselves a fixation, a fixation surpassing (perhaps) even the primacy of their formal perfection. I mean they've really been fixed on supreme science-fiction sensibility. Once they had this fantastic vision, reading out the current scene (and a lotta the past) as a bundle of nostalgic technologies, science, magic, religion, a bundle of perfected realms, beyond all normal cause and effect, absolutely distant and absolutely *other*. (All aglow with enchantment.) Finally the Byrds became one of the few magic bands (from different angles sometimes the Who, sometimes the Doors make it to magic) by virtue of their having both that sensibility for the enchanted, and the techniques necessary to express it. (Expression's communication. Sure.) Transforming that vision into forms. Bucking the whole nouveau trend toward all art (doesn't matter what kind) as both constant innovation and the irresponsible manipulation of cliches. (Irresponsible because not a man would want to, or even be able to, take responsibility for the creation of cliches. Nobody *makes* cliches.) Which trend enforces a constant formal renovation, not through the creation of new forms, but through the appropriation of readymade ones (cliches) found afloat in the culture. (Forms for which no one *in particular* is responsible.) *Vis-a-vis* this art scene, the Byrds are really out of it, with their currently special act of creative responsibility, i.e. the invention of and persistence within their very own forms. (This is the "courage" of the Byrds.) Having lingered long enough in their form to be called "played out," they've also stayed long enough to perfect and become absolutely adequate within it. Either they've resisted or were unable to respond to pressure to *just* change. ("Change Is Now.") And that's why all the Byrds' music's got the awesomeness of the world seen new, through a new and strange form.

Certainly Byrds' history gives continuous intimations of their mystery trend. But it's the *Fifth Dimension* album that first explicitly fuses their visionary themes and forms: "Eight Miles High" (technological raga), "2-4-2 Fox Trot" (nostalgic technology—"The Lear Jet Song"), "John Riley" and "Wild Mountain Thyme" (simple English and American country enchantment in the Child ballad tradition). While *Younger Than Yesterday* is the first to lay down the Byrds' form fully realized in all the perfection and strength—cyclical, influenced by raga ("the mysterious East") with its dronelike melodic, rhythmic and tonic ground from which all variations seem to rise ("as if to the surface of a pool")—a form preternaturally strong enough to enchant (here an act of subordination) an entire eclectic range. Including even the fabulous c&w riff ("Time Between," "Have You Seen Her Face," "The Girl With No Name")! For the Byrds, *vis-a-vis* their form, all materials, all other musical forms and styles were reduced to modular status, musical components to be "plugged" right into the formal structure. (Why on *Younger Than Yesterday* alone, besides the c&w, there was Beatles' stuff, "Thoughts And Words," raga rock, "Why," Dylan, "My Back Pages," classical variations, "CTA-102.") With this album (although who could have known it at the time) the Byrds finished all preparation necessary for their impending penetration into the hitherto little known "molecular sound organization" bag.

Previously, such penetration has only been made by a few geniuses. Viz., the truly primal molecular sound person, Phil Spector (the *Bronx* Genius, called by *Cheetah* the "Gray Eminence"). Primal, for his work with these all-time greats: (early) Righteous Brothers, Ronettes, Crystals, Ike and Tina Turner, etc. And (only a few short months ago) Van Dyke Parks (called by *Cheetah* "a genius") for his *Song Cycle*. These guys' big move is this: Silence Denial. They treat sound as "molecular" to be organized into dense networks for denial of a silence always implied by its absolute absence ("present through absence"). Spector's approach had a ground theory orientation. His structural analogue was oceanic. Relying upon the seemingly wavelike rise of distinct (more or less obviously identifiable) sounds out of the fundamental ground. Students of the mysterious East will, no doubt, be more than impressed by the obvious affinity of Spector's "ground" for the raga drone. As for Van Dyke, while he does mine the ground vein, his orientation's more toward the cognitive synthesis of readymades. (He started with cynicism. Proceeded to postcynicism.) His cognitively directed *American* fantasy is synthesized out of modular (readymade) components. Knowing good things, the Byrds partake of both approaches. (After all, they're self-consciously eclectic.) But their special twist comes right outta a cumulatively developed absolute adequacy, on the part of the band and the production job. Secure in their mastery over all sounds in their repertoire and their perfected form, they can so organize sound molecules as to do away with any "spaces" between them.

Absolute adequacy itself describes a band when its sound gets so economical (not merely tight) that excess and inordinancy just disappear. An absolutely adequate band shows no accidental interference amidst its sonic components because all the sound is under such precise control and definition that even seemingly minor clues (like the harp bits or Keith's guitar on the Stone's "Going Home") make the big difference. It could take a long time to get this way, but once done a band's sound, whether simple or intricate, thin or dense, bears nothing superfluous. (I mean it should really wear well.) A final note, absolutely adequate bands are sorta a-virtuoso. Not that they don't turn out spectacularly good playing, but merely that such playing is only *as good as it has to be* to fulfill the (implicit or explicit) sonic and cognitive conceptions. Along these lines, the Byrds are now economical enough to be absolutely adequate. As are the Kinks on their new album *(Something Else)*. While Love's *Forever Changes* (on the other hand) features a synthetic combination of absolute inordinancy (Arthur Lee's voice) and adequacy (especially Michael Stuart's drumming, Ken Forssi's bass). And the Doors, although tight, heavily rely on absolute inordinancy (Morrison is particularly excessive). Of course the umbrella model for absolute adequacy are all those traditional blues titans (here the steel guitar guys do truly shine).

The programmatic structure of the first side makes it typical enough to do for the whole album. So opening up on the first side (a real spectacular) of the Byrds' new one are some horns, the drums and bass. Closing this way too. (That's an omen?) Between we've got not only molecular sound organization, not only cyclical form, but the most extensive heaven rock survey ever. First song's "Artificial Energy." With a lotta energy, in many directions. (This album's got the Byrds more on top of the energy scene than ever.) The arrangement, which assigns distinct energy roles and levels to the instruments, is so important that it wouldn't at all belittle the Byrds to say that maybe now their greatness lies in arrangement. "Absolute adequacy"—and they know exactly what sorta energy instruments can imply or pipeline. Arrange accordingly. "Molecular sound organization"—and they make arrangements filling up the very interstices between sounds. (No holes. No more holes.) In comparison, what we once regarded as the densest sound of all *(Younger Than Yesterday)* now sounds so very, very thin. (Proving only the Byrds can date the Byrds.) On one channel (listen, stereo) drums, brass, bass, traditional Byrds chorale and some electronic noise maker (phase reversal? Moog Synthesizer? Tape loops?). Other channel drums (John Phillip Sousa bass drum), brass, Byrds chorale, piano (acoustical), chimes. That's, channel-wise, the catalog of materials. Since sonic density's never mere accumulation, the materials aren't stacked (which would spell weight) atop each other. Rather they're woven, interwoven, interfering to finally coalesce, not disintegrate. (Coalescence through opposition. But not violent opposition. Opposition as in love. Yes.) Rhythms against counterrhythms: John Phillip Sousa's mechanical bass drum repetition (oom-pah, oom-pah, etc.) against Hillman's bass playing (so great and flexible) with its liquid (a beautiful tone) wavelike variable cycle bass patterns. Energy type against counter-energy. Linear brass (directionally moving at diagonals) against the flowing wave motion of the Byrds' chorale which is a specialization in ad hoc vocal phrasing (note the distending of "ride" in this phrase, "My ticket to ri-i-de"). The mix is with great delicacy, and the piano's appearance (at a barely audible level) as the vehicle for an instrumental resolution after the voices stop singing "Do you think it's really the truth you see?" is quite outasight. Another nice one is the electronic noise maker's fade into audibility at the fadeout. (Incidentally this album's electronics really do in all previous electronic rock stuff. Makes "She's A Rainbow," even "CTA-102," sound *intentionally* bad. But listen especially to the too, too sweet Moog on "Natural Harmony." Absolute delicacy, which is a species of absolute adequacy. Real taste.) All in all the only intimations of the possibility of silence (noise absence) come from its inevitable suggestion through absence. That's how tight these sound molecules are.

But ecstatic programming's insured the banishment of silence not only on all the cuts, but between the cuts too via unprecedented Turkey Tonguing by which means *six* songs are organized into a mammoth system.

There are no fadeouts to silence, but rather directly onto the next cut. (Maintaining the Byrds' tradition of clever fadeout manipulation. It was they who invented the Turkey Tongue, a type of Unknown Tongue wherein the *next* cut completes the preceding one. So "My Back Pages" acted to resolve "Mind Garden" which was the *turkey* for "My Back Pages." Together they constitute the primal Turkey Tongue system.) As with Van Dyke Parks, album programming has gone to the service of silence denial. Some of these Turkey Tongues are real spectaculars. "Artificial Energy" ends with "I'm coming down off amphetamine/And I'm in jail 'cause I killed a queen," trailed by horns and an electronic noise maker to fadeout, at which point in comes "Goin' Back," its deliberately paced kineticism slowly wound and all by the traditional Byrds' windup intro (think of "Mr. Tambourine Man," think of "Turn! Turn! Turn!") repeated, quick-cycled, but stately, syncopated patterns. "Artificial Energy" was as violent as the Byrds ever got (only a multipart chorale preserved an aura of resolution). All aswirl as it was with brass and counterpatterns, what not, and then this archaeological find, "Goin' Back," the self-conscious Byrds' song par excellence (music of the spheres) cuts right across all its implications turning seeming violence to cosmic resolution: that's a Turkey Tongue. Actually the whole first side's programmed with (what amounts to) energy level considerations uppermost. It's got constant kinetic variations all given in surges, ebb and flow, resolution and energy falloff accumulating into not only silence denial but anti-entropy. The "Draft Morning"/"Wasn't Born To Follow" Turkey Tongue exemplifies what the Byrds know about energy flow. "Draft Morning" mechanically unwinds (via "Taps" played on a guitar, heavy in the treble, with a lotta duration to the notes, joined by Beatlesesque la, la, la) until intro a double c&w lead line (unaccompanied guitar) with its own special sort of a-mechanical energy, aborting the preceding weary mechanics, starting up "Wasn't Born To Follow," distorting the whole energy flow chart. And a surge's born.

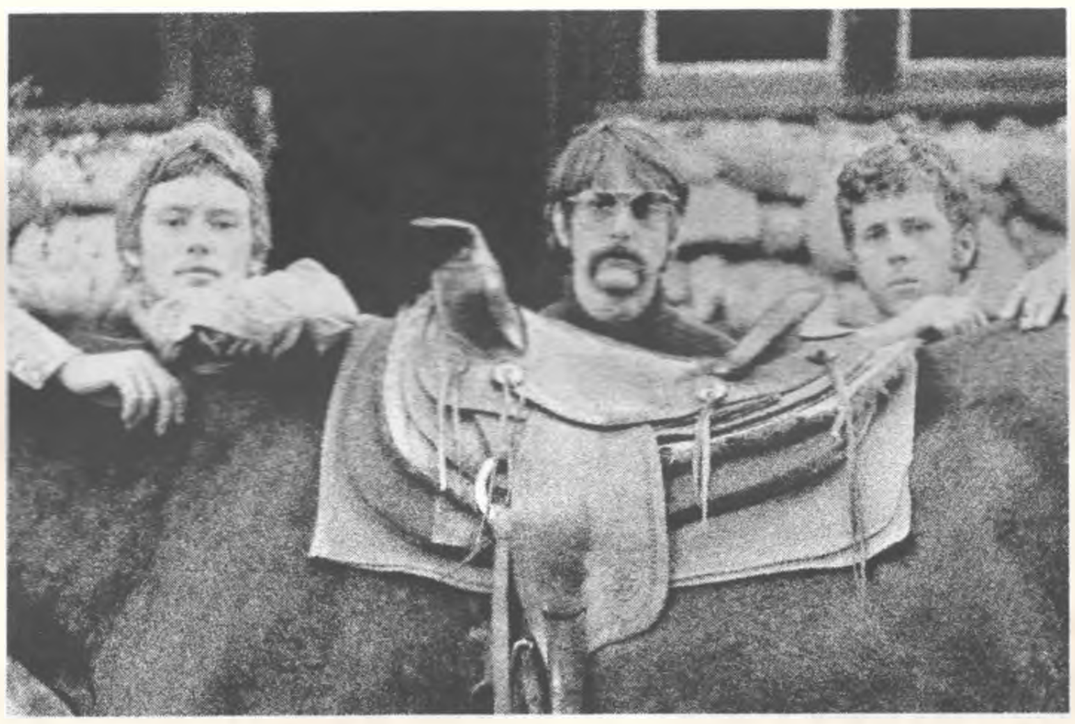
McGuinn (top) and Hillman in November 67

One thing: since the last album, Jim McGuinn has become Roger McGuinn as a result of his involvement with Subud. "They offer an optional name change in correspondence to the verbal sound your soul has, as a vibration. My sound is Ra...R.... it begins with an R and goes somewhere from there. Roger is the name closest to it". (See also the 'drugs' chapter). At the time, the only clue to the name change was in the composer's credit on the label; they'd changed from J. McGuinn had become R. McGuinn.... we couldn't work that out at all.

SUMMARY: The 'Greatest Hits' album is released on Aug 7 (Oct 20 in England), and a single 'Lady Friend'/'Don't make waves' follows. Crosby is fired in October and replaced by Gene Clark, for 3 weeks only, until he too is fired. Then Michael Clarke leaves in November, and Kevin Kelley replaces him in January 68. 'The Notorious Byrd Brothers' album is released on Jan 15 (April 12 in England), and the Byrds continue to gig as a trio.[7]

The photograph (from the back of the album sleeve) shows the Byrds who supposedly recorded 'The Notorious Byrd Brothers': left to right; Clarke/McGuinn/Hillman.

THE BYRDS of this era end up as:
Roger McGuinn - guitar and vocals
Chris Hillman - bass and vocals
Kevin Kelley - drums



CONTEMPORARY EVENTS:
1967
August... first Procol Harum lp released.
Aug 1... J Edgar Hoover concludes that "outside agitators" were responsible for the Black rioting during the summer.
Aug 3... LBJ announces that another fifty thousand troops will go to Vietnam in 68 (as Crosby is writing 'Draft Morning')
Aug 9... Rebel troops seize control of Biafra.
Aug 14... Radio London, finest of the British pirate fleet, closes down.
Aug 15... The Marine Broadcasting Offences Act comes into effect.
Aug 17... Stokeley Carmichael, in a radio broadcast from Cuba, calls for blacks in USA to arm for "violent revolution".
Aug 18... 'We love you' by the Rolling Stones released.
Aug 19... 'All you need is love' by the Beatles tops US singles chart.
Aug 25... George Lincoln Rockwell, the head of the US Nazi party, shot to death by a former aide.
Aug 27... The Duke of Bedford holds a hippie rock festival at Woburn Park.
Aug 27... Beatles manager Brian Epstein found dead at age 32.
September... Jimi Hendrix's first album released, but nothing much else happened this month.
October 3... Woody Guthrie dies at 55.
Oct 3... The Psychedelic Shop in San Francisco closes down, 6000 dollars in debt. This occasion is taken as the official death of 'flower-power' as exploited by the press and business entrepreneurs.
Oct 8... Che Guevara murdered in cold blood by the CIA.
Oct 21... Over 50,000 gather at the Pentagon in Washington to demonstrate against the war in Vietnam. A piss-in is held on the steps, and Norman Mailer is arrested.
Oct 31... Brian Jones sentenced to nine months on cannabis charge. Out on bail.
November... Love's 'Forever Changes' and Scott McKenzie's first lp released.
Rolling Stone magazine launched in USA.
Nov 3... 50th anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution and communist rule in USSR.
Nov 4... White mercenaries end their revolt against the Congo government.
Nov 17... French journalist Regis Debrey sentenced to 30 years in prison by Bolivian justice for his role in Guevara's guerrilla movement.
Nov 18... Wilson devalues the pound by 14.3%.
Nov 22... US Army captures hill 875 in Vietnam after a 19 day battle.... one of the bloodiest in the whole war.
December... 'Buffalo Springfield Again' released. Monkees top the US singles chart all month with 'Daydream believer'.
Dec 3... Christian Barnard performs the world's first human heart transplant.
Dec 5... Dr Spock and Allen Ginsberg among 264 people arrested in the 'Stop the Draft Week' demonstration in NY.
Dec 10... Otis Redding killed in a plane crash.
Dec 14... King Constantine flees from Greece after failing to overthrow fascist/military government.
Dec 16... Australian Prime Minister Holt attempts to swim to Hawaii - never seen again.
Dec 22... Pope Paul 6, in his latest pre-Christmas publicity stunt, urges peace without victory in Vietnam, and offers his services.
Dec 25... The Beatles' film 'Magical Mystery Tour' is premiered on BBC TV.

1968
January... 'John Wesley Hardin' by Bob Dylan released.
Jan 5... US plane losses in Vietnam now total over one thousand.
Jan 12... US Attorney General gleefully announces conviction of 952 men who violated Selective Service laws in 1967.
Jan 23... US Navy spy ship Pueblo captured by North Koreans.
Feb 10... 9 day dustman strike in NY ends.

THE BYRDS' GREATEST HITS
(CS 9516, CL 2716)
SIDE ONE: "Mr. Tambourine Man," "I'll Feel A Whole Lot Better," "The Bells of Rhymney," "Turn! Turn! Turn!," "All I Really Want to Do," "Chimes of Freedom;" SIDE TWO: "Eight Miles High," "Mr. Spaceman," "Fifth Dimension," "So You Want to Be a Rock and Roll Star," "My Back Pages."
PERSONNEL: Gene Clark, tambourine; Mike Clarke, drums; David Crosby, rhythm guitar; Chris Hillman, bass; Jim McGuinn, 12-string guitar. PRODUCERS: Terry Melcher (Side One); Gary Usher ("My Back Pages" and "So You Want to Be a Rock and Roll Star."); Allen Stanton. ENGINEERS: Ray Gerhardt (Side One); Roy Halee and Don Thompson ("My Back Pages" and "So You Want to Be a Rock and Roll Star"); Tom May.
RELEASED: August 7, 1967.

THE NOTORIOUS BYRD BROTHERS
(CS 9575, CL 2775)
SIDE ONE: "Artificial Energy," "Goin' Back," "Natural Harmony," "Draft Morning," "Wasn't Born to Follow," "Get To You;" SIDE TWO: "Change Is Now," "Old John Robertson," "Tribal Gathering," "Dolphins Smile," "Space Odyssey."
PERSONNEL: Mike Clarke, drums; Chris Hillman, bass; Jim McGuinn, 12-string guitar. PRODUCER: Gary Usher. ENGINEERS: Roy Halee and Don Thompson.
RELEASED: January 15, 1968.

Roger McGuinn
Chris Hillman
Kevin Kelley
~~David Crosby~~
~~Gene Clark~~
~~Michael Clarke~~

BYRDS

SPOT ON

I suppose that there couldn't be a better welcome for a new editor of ZZ than for him to preside over the traumatic experience of having to skip an issue. I'm almost tempted to describe it as part of a great and continuing tradition. Anyway . . . profound apologies and I don't suppose it's any consolation that it wasn't our fault. We have enough material and enough ads ready to enable us to put the mag out every week, but it is, alas, dependent on so many other people that if any of them even sneeze, Zigzag suffers. I'll make a vow now that if we ever interrupt the normal processes that produce our magazine in the shops on the first of every month, then I'll eat my copy of Boz Scaggs' Atlantic Album.

Everyone associated with ZZ is so associated because they love the music that ZZ covers and they love the totally unique way in which it covers it. In 1968 or 1969 I was a computer programmer working with John Tobler in his infamous bank. Every now and again he would quote, in argument with me about the various merits of some musician—'Well, Pete thinks it's good'. After about six months of lunch hours punctuated by this remark, I ventured to enquire (or words to that effect) 'Well fuck you cock, who is this prick Pete?' I was invariably greeted by a rolling of the eyes and a remark like 'He's the bloke who has just started this fantastic magazine called ZigZag'. Somehow Tobler thought that this would silence me. And he was right, especially after I had read a few copies of this famous magazine. Time passed and John and I went our separate ways, but I still kept trying the magazine. Eventually (to cut an inordinately long story short), one mad Friday evening, after smoking about half an ounce of really good dope, I rang this famous geezer up. I don't, as you can understand, remember too much about the conversation, except that I hung up with the feeling that John had been right—Pete Frame did constitute a source of knowledge and appreciation of music that existed in no other publication in the world. Not only did I feel that ZZ's eminence in music made it unique—I felt, and still, fuck me, feel that no other art form benefits from the quality of writing that ZZ has always offered.

ZZ is, as a friend of mine said at one of the festivals a few years ago, a 'scholarly magazine'. At the time I was a bit affronted by that description, since it conjured up images of dry pedantic types, furiously scrutinising every album sleeve in existence. But it had an element of truth in it. ZZ writers and, one hopes, readers thrive on knowing exactly what was in a particular musician's head when he recorded a particular track. The first bit of music journalism that I ever attempted—an interview with Pete Townshend—yielded an explanation of why he had yelled out 'I saw ya' at the end of 'Happy Jack'. His explanation, briefly resulting from Moon's total insanity, somehow added to my understanding of The Who, and my appreciation of their music—and it is that kind of addition to your appreciation of the music that we feel we've got to achieve. If you think that we should be doing something else, write and let us know—and the fact that every commercial enterprise in existence has uttered that sentiment shouldn't deter you—we really do care what our readers think.

Even though ZZ's coverage is meaningful, it is possible to ask whether our 'heroes' still are. I liked Arthur Lee's new album 'Vindicator', but many people, like Pete and John, didn't. And the latest reincarnation of the Byrds is positively alarming, judging from the album they have put out. So a good editor will get frightened by Beefheart's appearance in these isles. Is another idol about to bite the dust? Well, on the evidence of the gigs that I have seen, it just ain't happening.

I was lucky enough to see him in Manchester and both his gigs in London. And I shared the audience's enjoyment of his performance. In an odd way, the most pungent comment about his gigs at the Rainbow came from Ted Way, who runs the place. After the Tuesday gig, he told me, without the normal bullshit that accompanies superlatives—'I've never seen anything like the way that audience behaved. Not The Who, not the Faces, not Clapton's concert a few months ago—it was totally extraordinary. Ten minutes after the House lights went on, after the cleaners had come out, they were still clapping.' And if you were there, you won't need me to tell you that he was right. They—Beefheart and his men—produced an evening of musical and visual exhillaration.

One of the comics that masquerade as the music press in this country—you know the ones that have a picture of Brinsley Schwarz and a caption about the Grateful Dead—had printed an item about Beefheart's band, and to my horror, I saw that the members listed didn't include Rockette Morton or Zoot Horn Rollo; so my first question when I saw the Captain was what had happened to them. When he had got over his fit of apoplexy at the story, he told me: 'I could never play without them. If they left, I'd follow them', and the loyalty that Beefheart displayed with that reflection was another of the heartening aspects of his visit—that musicians can still dig each other so much that they deny their own ego. Very gratifying indeed.

The Family Tree that we are publishing this month was intended to be a four page double fold-out, but due to the expense (over £300) we have had to ask you to do a bit of home repair work yourselves. We are hoping to have an interview with that well-known drinking man Roger Chapman fairly soon.

There are three records that I would like to recommend this month. I don't listen to every new release that comes out, because when I had to, at Time Out, I found it a grotesquely unrewarding task, and I suspect that it often leads to totally wrong assessments. The first record is 'Previous Convictions' by John Keen, who used to be the drummer and composer with Thunderclap Newman, and has now resigned himself to being general electrics man about Track Records' office and making an incredible record. The second is 'Bobby Charles' on Bearsville, an absolute, sone cold treat. I'm tempted to say that if you only buy one record this month then make it that one—there, I've succombed to the temptation. Finally 'Dixie Chicken' by Lowell George's Little Feat, who, if Warner Brothers do another of their ultra-discriminating promotional efforts, we could see over here this year, and that, as they say, would be something.

Some friends of mine are starting a magazine and they would like to get in touch with young people who would write for them, especially on music. They are looking for people who have not been exposed to the rigours of the music business, like tired old hacks like me. If you are interested, send me a sample of your stuff and I'll pass it on.

Next month we hope to have ready the definitive interview with Roger Waters of Pink Floyd, plus an interview with John Dummer, and plenty of other gripping grist.

Connor

ZIGZAG

Connor McKnight/John Tobler/Michael Wale/Julian Stapleton/Pete Frame/Claire Weltman (Advertising)

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Canned Heat

THE NEW AGE UAS 29455

Half a new band heralds Canned Heat's new age. Bob Hite, Henry Vestine and Fito De La Parra, the nucleus of the old band, have received a considerable shot-in-the-arm from the three new members, Richard Hite, Bob's younger brother, James Shane, a second lead guitar player and Ed Beyer adding keyboards to the line-up. It's still the same old Boogie and Blues that made them famous, but with a whole new vigour and energy that even they would admit has been missing since their very early days.
THE New Age could just-be Canned Heat's most productive period.

Asleep At The Wheel

COMIN' RIGHT AT YA UAS 29454

Country music gets hip! Commander Cody found these people in their home base of Paw-Paw, West Virginia and persuaded them to move to California. Soon after the move the Wheel became San Francisco's favourite new band. The reputation soon spread to L.A. and this first album was recorded at the end of last year. Musically they awaken memories of Bob Willis and His Texas Playboys, Moon Mullican and yesterday's Western swing heroes. If you ever thought for a moment that you and country music would never hit it off together The Wheel will cause you to have a severe re-think.
P.S. They'll be here soon! Don't miss 'em!