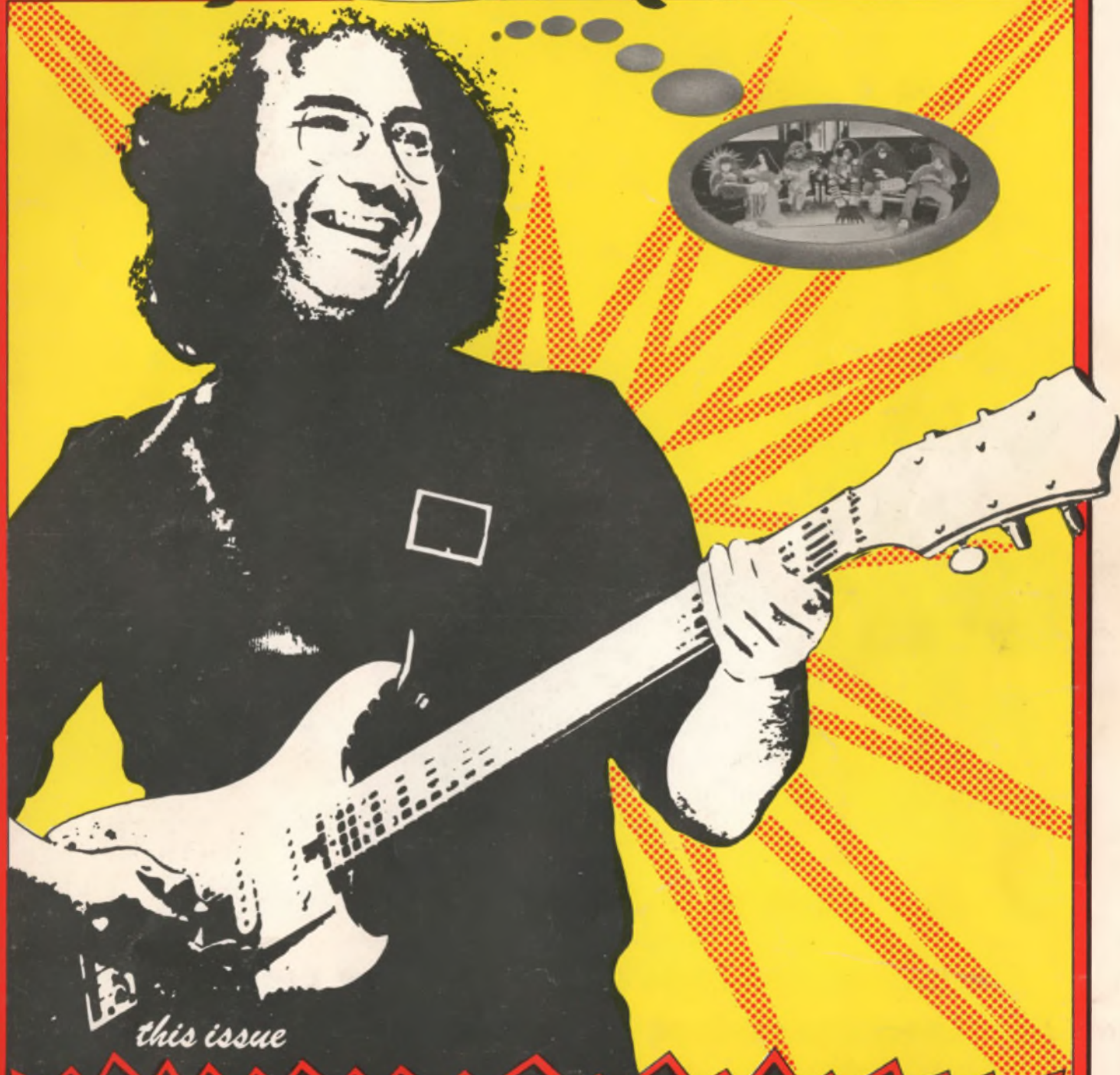


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THE ROCK MAGAZINE



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MICK JAGGER...

The script for a radio review of 'Mick Jagger' by Anthony Scaduto, broadcast on August 19th 1974 on Andy Finney's 'Breakthrough' programme on Radio London.

When reviewing a book of this nature, I find myself torn between two totally opposite points of view. As a rock 'n' roll maniac, I'm obviously delighted to be able to read a book on my favourite subject, but as a writer, it's equally obviously depressing to have to admit that the book is designed less as a text book, a kind of unauthorised history of the Stones, and much more as a sensational, slightly dubious money-making effort for the author. Before that remark is taken out of control, let me add that I enjoyed reading it all a great deal, and certain passages, for example, Michael Cooper's account of the famous drug bust at Keith Richard's house in Sussex, and the description of the events leading up to Meredith Hunter's death at Altamont, are absolutely captivating reading. Point one—good, interesting reading, occasionally of the type that you can't put down.

The second thing to mention is the fact that certain things are quite definitely incorrect. This may be the author's fault, or it could be the result of slovenly proofreading. Examples are 1) the attachment of a bass guitar to Mick Taylor in his pre-Stones career, 2) the categorisation of Eric Clapton and Eric Burdon as coming from further north than the Stones, when in fact Clapton came from further south, 3) the mention of Helen Reddy, presumably in mistake for Helen Shapiro. These are the most obvious things, and the ones which I know are wrong. Learning more towards the author, there are a number of items which are so strange that I tend to doubt their veracity. Scaduto's description of the Hyde Park concert, and more precisely his interpretation of the eulogy to Brian Jones and the release of the butterflies, seems to be hopelessly biased against Jagger. The sources from which the author acquired his information, Marianne Faithfull, Richard Neville, Alexis Korner and Shirley, the Stones secretary, shouldn't be particularly anti-Jagger, and having been present in the front enclosure at that concert, I didn't get any of the vibes described in the book, which are strongly against its central figure. Also it says that the Stones only played eight or ten numbers—I can't be sure, but that certainly isn't my impression. Then there's a suggestion that Cyril Davies hated Jagger because the latter was corrupting his pet blues forms and transmuting them into Chuck Berry, which I doubt. Isn't it more

likely that Cyril's incurable disease was causing him pain and depression? Without wishing to labour the point, there's a bit of highly dubious coincidence, in that Jagger once suggested that the group be called the Silver Rolling Stones, just as the Beatles were called the Silver Beatles, and the suggested but unconfirmed homosexual relationship between Oldham and Jagger doesn't ring true to me. From those down type items, let's consider some of the more interesting facts that come out. Whether or not they're true, I find them fascinating. Jagger is portrayed as a bad driver. Well, OK, but didn't he normally use a chauffeur, and wouldn't he therefore be a bit out of practice? The invitation to Eric Clapton to join the Stones to replace the fired Brian Jones also provides a lot of food for thought, as does the passage about Jimi Hendrix trying to pull Marianne Faithfull after Jagger had turned him down for the Stones production company. The famous Mars Bar story is denied, although the mention of it obviously provides some 'contact magazine' type colour, and in a similar way, the mention of the fact that Jagger actually did make love to Anita Pallenberg before the cameras of 'Performance' could help in the sale of the serialisation rights to the Sunday newspapers. Also, it might be interesting to chew on the suggestion that Marianne Faithfull suggested the recording of a Robert Johnson song, and therefore was partially the motivation behind 'Love In Vain', and that Jerry Garcia of the Grateful Dead suggested the Hells Angels as security at Altamont. Of lesser note, but still of interest, can be Marianne Faithfull saying that Jagger failed her sexually, the placing in perspective of the positions of Dick Taylor and Paul Jones, Allen Klein smashing Marianne Faithfull's hash pipe after bailing Jagger out of prison, the Marsha Hunt paternity story, the suicide attempts by Jagger's various ladies, and the bad vibes apparently existing between Mick and Bianca.

I was also pleased to confirm my suspicions about a couple of things. It was always my impression that Mick Jagger didn't really speak quite as badly as he made out. In fact, I spoke to him once (back, girls) and he was just very average, none of that stylised rubbish that's a caricature of Petticoat Lane. Scaduto confirms that suspicion, and I'm inclined to agree. Then there's the closed shop aspect of Stones songwriting. Bill Wyman, in interviews around his recent solo album, gave the impression that Jagger and Richard insisted on writing everything, and the book, while confirming that, attributes a good deal of Brian Jones' unhappiness to that attitude.

Inevitably, there are omissions. 'Ned Kelly' is mentioned a couple of times, but no reason is given for it being made, or for Jagger's inclusion in it. Recording at Chess Studios is not mentioned either, and this was a very big deal at the time, as at another time was using Dave Hassinger as

engineer. There is no qualitative analysis of the records, nothing about urinating on garage walls, and so on, and one asks if that's because they were not sufficiently sensational, and might deaden the feeling of outrage that permeates the book, and that's really the main criticism—was the book written just because it would attract a huge advance, the "News of the World" and massive sales, or was it done as a labour of love? If the latter, I reckon that Scaduto was ill-prepared, but on the other hand, the book's readability certainly makes up for much of the omission.

—John Tobler

FROM GENESIS TO..

William Friedkin is a wildish, youngish man and just now probably Hollywood's favourite 'hairy' (he directed 'The Exorcist', 'The French Connection', and so brought in a dollar gusher such as studio heads have rarely known in these lean times). Given a blank cheque for new projects by Universal, Friedkin has set about the old Hollywood game of 'Originals'—i.e., working up a dozen ideas at once, then discarding all but *The One. Because Time is the Enemy, it usually means scattering a lot of seed in a lot of directions, and the consequent disruption and disappointment can be destructive. Genesis and Charisma Records came close to finding this out recently. Inflamed by a Genesis performance in Los Angeles, Friedkin approached Peter Gabriel to join him as a writer and visualiser on a new film. Trouble was, Gabriel's contribution had to be done now, at a time when the group is writing and recording its first double album (title: "Lamb Lies Down On Broadway", out late October—there's a ZigZag scoop for you!); not to mention preparations for their autumn British and USA tours. Equally inflamed, however, Gabriel seriously considered giving up music for the film world, and a couple of days' rehearsal were lost while he considered (and while an equally inflamed Charisma people consulted on its legal position). Both Tony Stratton Smith and manager Tony Smith (no relation) begged Gabriel to put off film aspirations until next year. Then Friedkin, to the relief of probably everybody, said he would not like to see the group split up, and the transatlantic calls to Gabriel's Wiltshire home eased off. It's still likely that Friedkin and Gabriel will work together, but it will be during a Genesis lay-off. Meanwhile, harmony is restored between Gabriel and Genesis and their record company, and the group has completed the recording of 'Lamb Lies Down On Broadway' at an improbable location near Llanelli, Wales. It's reported to be their best thing so far.*

CANVEY ISLAND ROCK

Ever noticed how most musicians forming from the Melody Maker classified columns call themselves "bands" and friends who get together call themselves "groups". Handy, isn't it? Doctor Feelgood are a group in the real tradition; all mates, all from the same area: Canvey Island; Called Oil city by the inhabitants in the same way that Detroit is called Motor City. Both have bred classic punk rock bands. They started out playing only Rock standards, backed Heinz for a while, then moved into the Pub Circuit. Wilco, their guitarist started writing and is now producing material of an exceptionally high standard. He's already had heavy offers from "talent conscious" bands, but there's nothing doing; like I said, this is a group.

Chris Fenwick, their manager, has placed them in the capable hands of Andrew Lauder and UA, and instead of blowing their advances on a 3-ton van and a prestige 'limo' they've bought a coach and had it fitted out with bunks, tables, and an enlarged boot for equipment, as well as recruiting A1, a demon driver from Canvey bus station.

Great gigs are often ones where the audience have no prior knowledge of the band and are unaffected by press (like this) or publicity. This is what happened at the Paradiso in Amsterdam. The boys, funky as hell from living in the coach, steam on stage, and straight into the first number. The stunned audience really don't know what to make of these guys who mostly look like androids on amphetamine, and the applause is minimal, as the realisation spread that The Fellgoods want them to get up and dance (not something that happens often in the Paradiso you understand).

Straight into an original "She Does It Right". This is rock 'n' roll for real, as Wilco skitters about the stage playing the best telecaster guitar since the Pirates. The applause builds, the bar empties, even a dope dealer packs up his table and wipes his black board—the electricity is tremendous.

By the time bassist John Sparks, drummer Figure Smith and Wilco hammer out the riff to "Riot in Cell Block No 9" everyone is up and stomping. Singer Lee Brilleaux has chain smoked his way into his second pack and the promoter is eagerly asking about return dates. If you've forgotten what a shot of rhythm and blues feels like, catch 'em.

NEW RIDERS NEW ALBUM

The New Riders Of The Purple Sage, those slick but earthy purveyors of American

country-rock music, are currently making an album that could possibly see them branching out 'chordally and modally, but keeping within a country framework'. Anyway that's what drummer Spencer Dryden told me during a telephone conversation we had the other week. Spencer, who you'll be glad to know is enjoying the best of health, was very definite about the idea of the Riders extending the assumed limited boundaries of country rock, and he also sounded very enthusiastic about the band's newest recruit, Skip Battin. Skip has apparently settled in as smoothly as could be hoped and has surprisingly written almost half the material for the new album, which if all goes well should be a considerable improvement over the slightly disappointing 'live' LP... a record that Spencer freely admits hardly represented the band at their most inspired. Those who saw their gigs on the Grateful Dead tour a couple of years ago will know how good they can be, and if, to be diplomatically critical, their albums are hardly the stuff of which legends are made, they're nevertheless good fun to have around. The last two in particular seem to indicate a period of 'marking time' as they say, so now is probably the right moment for them to take the great leap, realise their potential, and re-continue their stunted development. I've promised to phone Spencer again soon to see how the album's going, so if you're really interested (and I can sense that you most definitely are), watch these pages.

NEW SKIN FOR THE OLD CEREMONY

New departures for Leonard Cohen, Poet. Our man in New York took time out from the Algonquin Bar to stop by Sound Ideas, off Times Square, where Cohen is recording a new album. Lowered lights and cocktail-bar decor, after the new fashion for New York studios. Does the ambience make it seem less like work? John Lissauer in charge, Cohen's new producer, replacing the indefatigable Nashville man, Bob Johnston. An interesting newcomer, Lissauer. A Greenwich Village 'face', he's made the beginnings of a name as a musician and arranger. Tall, thin, lank-haired, wears spectacles; rather earnest. Cohen hired him to get a new sound and, says Our Man, that's what he's got. Leonard rocks! He really does. Brilliant songs (of course), intriguing arrangements (Lissauer; especially listen out for his near-percussive use of strings). Some tracks still in the old, stripped-down Cohen style, but most have a big, movealong sound. Cohen clearly very pleased with it all. He's bringing Lissauer along on his European tour, to accompany him on keyboards. Lissauer was deeply involved with the People's Victory Chorus and Orchestra, a recent Village phenomenon whose albums in the States are only available by mail-order. But if you're interested, hang on to those International Money Orders. The albums will be available in Britain early next year.

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Russ Ballard

At 28 Russ Ballard is one of the more respected songwriters and musicians of our time. Known notably for his work with Argent he has also written numerous songs for, amongst others, Colin Blunstone, Three Dog Night, and many years ago, The Shadows (remember 'Lost City?'), and done sessions for such notables as Roger Daltrey and Leo Sayer. And now after over five years of recording and touring as a member of Argent, a period of time which has seen them rise from comparative obscurity to being one of Britain's top working bands, Russ has become the first to leave and is now planning his future as a solo artist. After returning from the States having played his last gigs with Argent, Russ took a short break before returning to the studios to finish work on his solo album to look back over his career which started many years before the formation of Argent.

Russ' family had a number of connections with the music and show-business world so he was brought up in an atmosphere where music was a part of everyday life, and from the age of about four or five he would have a knock about on his dad's drums.

"I first got into music through my family; my dad had been a drummer for about thirty years and he played in a band, so the first instrument I took up was the drums—just following in his footsteps really. But my parents wanted me to learn to read music, so between the ages of eight and thirteen I had piano lessons and at twelve I took up guitar. At this stage I was learning classical music which was a drag because I wasn't really into it at the time—I just

wanted to stick at the guitar. I continued the piano lessons for another year though."

It was at about this time that Russ had his first experience of playing in a band. Various skiffle groups were around at the time, and inspired by the arrival on the scene of such people as Lonnie Donegan, he formed a skiffle group with a few friends. "We had about eight guitars in the band—it was quite fun. Then when I was about thirteen I got into rock'n'roll and the first real band I joined was called Norman Eddy and the Imperials."

NORMAN EDDY AND THE IMPERIALS

"Norman Eddy was the lead singer, although his real name was Norman Jago. Duane Eddy was around at the time and we thought it

would be a great name for Norman so he changed his second name to Eddy—it seemed a really good name at the time! My dad's band were called The Imperials because they used to play at the Imperial Hall, Waltham Cross, and we started playing there too, so that's where the name came from. So I started playing rock'n'roll with them and it was at this time that Robert Henrit and I first joined up. He was a year older than me and playing in another local band. He was the best drummer around so we got him in the Imperials too, and we've been playing in various bands together ever since. After Norman Eddy and the Imperials we both joined a band called Buster Meikle and the Daybreakers."

Once again this was another local band named



BUSTER MEIKLE AND THE DAYBREAKERS

Left to right: Bernie Benson, Russ Ballard, Robert Henrit, Buster Meikle, Roy Ballard, Billy Kye.

after its lead singer, a former sales clerk, David "Buster" Meikle.

"The first thing I ever wrote was at the age of fourteen when I was with Buster Meikle and the Daybreakers. I went down to Regent Sound with the band to do a demo—it was just an instrumental. The Shadows were very big at the time and I sent the demo up to them, but I didn't hear anything until five years later—they recorded it when I was nineteen.

"I should have been still at school at this time, but when I was twelve I was hit in the eye and for the next year I was in and out of hospital all the time. In the end I got so far behind that I left school when I was thirteen, so there was nothing to really distract me from what I was doing. My folks had also given me a lot of encouragement. They'd bought me a Gibson amplifier, which was very expensive at that time, about £150—they couldn't really afford it. They also bought me a Binson echo and a Stratocaster. The Strat I've got now is years old but it's the second one I've had, not the original one."

Russ stayed with Buster Meikle and the Daybreakers until he was sixteen when the first real break of his career came. Up until now he had not been playing professionally but on leaving the Daybreakers both he and Robert Henrit joined up with Adam Faith, and the future began to look much rosier. Buster Meikle also went on to better things—he became part of Unit 4 + 2 who were destined for a good deal of success.

ADAM FAITH AND UNIT 4 PLUS 2

"It started off being just Adam Faith and his backing band, but when the Liverpool

thing started we became Adam Faith and the Roulettes. Bob and I played with the Roulettes for about three years, and at the same time we were also doing sessions for other people, which we got good money for. One of the bands we did sessions for was Unit 4 + 2 and I played guitar on their 'Concrete And Clay' single. It was while I was playing with Adam Faith that I first met Rod Argent. He was playing with the Zombies then and we did a few gigs together and a couple of sessions on Ready Steady Go, sharing the same dressingroom, that sort of thing.

"Anyway, as I was saying, we played with the Roulettes for about three years and we gradually became a bit bored with what we were doing, until in the end it seemed like it wasn't worth carrying on, so we packed it in. Bob and I continued doing just sessions for a while and then Unit 4 + 2 said, 'Well, why don't you come and join us?' so we both went and played for them on stage for about nine months."

Rod Argent had now disbanded the Zombies, even though they were enjoying an increasing amount of success, and was in the process of getting a new group of musicians together with common musical ideals. His cousin, Jim Rodford, had already joined him on bass, and after rejecting two other musicians after months of rehearsing, Rod contacted Russ and Rob. This was the beginning of Argent.

ARGENT

"Bob and I both joined Argent at the same time, this was in 1969, and we made the first album for CBS at Sound Techniques before

we'd even played a note on stage. That was just called 'Argent' [CBS 63781] and was produced by Rod and Chris White who also used to be in the Zombies. They've produced all our albums. So we were just sort of feeling each other out on the first album. There were some nice songs on that album though; I've listened to it recently and the songs stand up, even now they still sound quite good. The production could have been a bit better though—it was a bit soft."

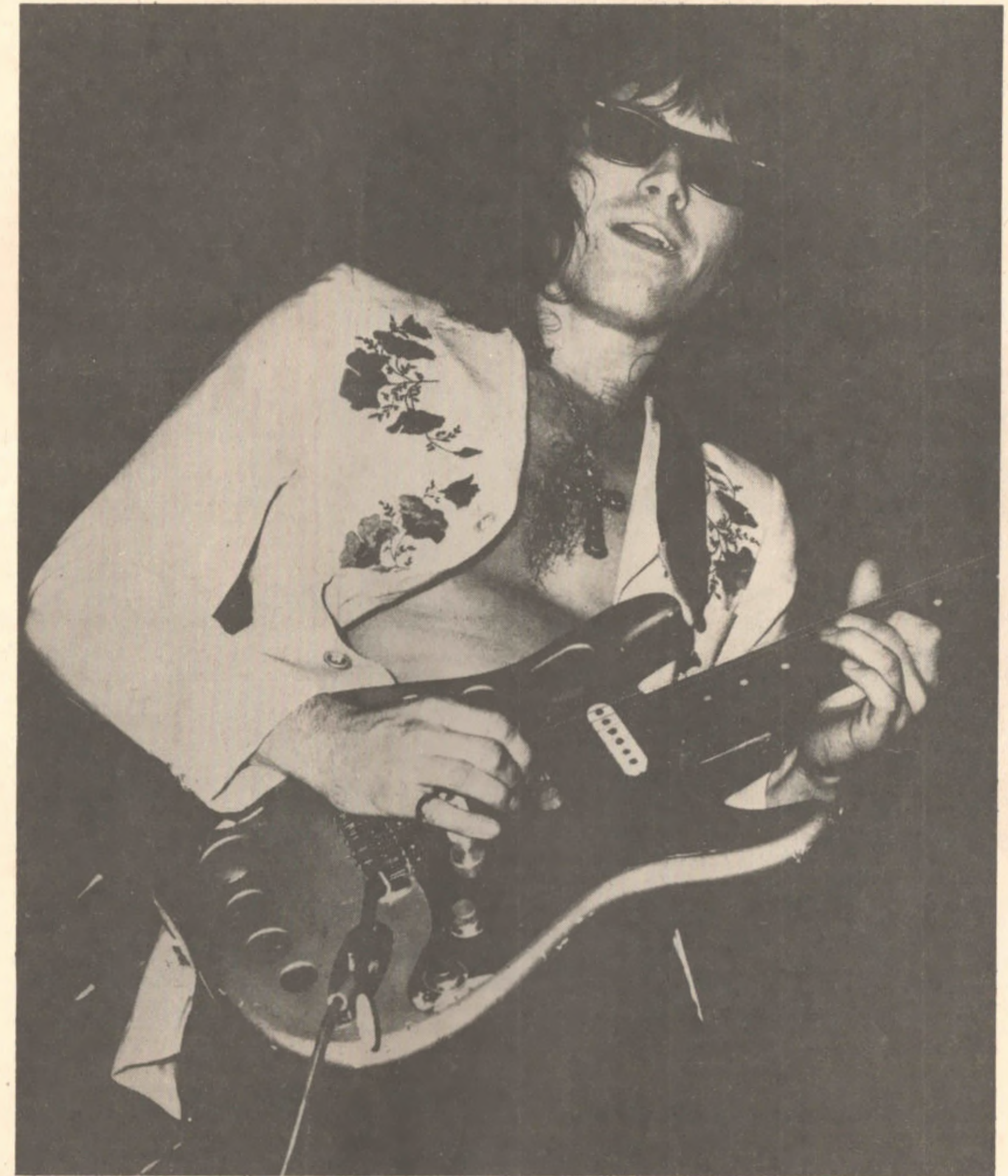
It was this first album which contained 'Liar', a song written by Russ and recorded by, amongst others, Capability Brown and, more successfully, Three Dog Night, who had a chart success with it. Traces of the Zombies (who were now, ironically, much more popular than they had ever been when they were still together) are evident on the album, but Argent were developing their own style which was more adequately displayed on their next album, 'Ring Of Hands' (Epic EPC 64190).

"After making the first album we went straight to the States and did a ten-week tour before working in England, which was ridiculous. We just weren't ready for that at all, but it was good experience. We weren't too well known at that time. Rod was known from being pianist with the Zombies, and I was known for being the flash guy with the dark glasses who used to back Adam Faith all that time ago—that was me! Also, Robert was respected by a lot of other drummers, really big drummers like John Bonham, and Jim Rodford had previously been playing with the Mike Cotton Sound.

"When we came back from the States we made 'Ring Of Hands'. By that time we'd



THE ROULETTES: Left to right John Rogan, Russ Ballard, Peter Thorpe, Robert Henrit.



got to know each other musically and it was much more funky than the first album. I think that was probably the best album we ever made. The production still seemed a bit soft but I think it was a lot to do with the studio we were recording at. They record a lot of folk stuff there and not many rock bands, which probably accounted for it."

"Ring Of Hands" certainly was a great improvement on the first album, and was hailed by *Rolling Stone* as a "masterpiece". The material, as on all of their albums, was by either Russ, or Rod and Chris White, and on the whole contains much of the power and unity which was at times lacking in the first album. 'Celebration', an Argent/White composition, was released as a single, but never really did anything, largely because of insufficient airplay. Ballard's 'Chained', like 'Liar', was recorded by Three Dog Night and is another strong point of the album, as is the unforgettable 'Sweet Mary', another Argent/White composition. With 'Ring Of Hands' Argent seemed to be becoming more objective in their outlook, and

the playing of Russ and Rod especially, had become much more purposeful and confident. Listen to Ballard's earthy guitar on 'Chained', or Argent's lively keyboards on 'Lothlorien'.

"After that we worked for two years solidly, like five or six nights a week all over the country, and I think it helped, doing all these gigs, because at the time it was only through gigging that we got 'Hold Your Head Up' away. It was selling solidly, about four hundred a day, for months and months before it was ever a hit. We changed studios for the third album, 'All Together Now' [Epic EPC 64962], and went to EMI's Abbey Road studios. The album had 'Hold Your Head Up' on it, but I think it was the worst album we ever made, it was going in so many different directions. We've always had that trouble, and I listen to it now and I'm a little disappointed. Even at the time, while we were making it, I could see I was going to be disappointed with it. I liked 'Hold Your Head Up' though, although it went on a bit too long, especially on the album. But Rod played a very good

solo on the album version, a really inspired solo. The songs I was writing then though seemed to clash with the way the band was going. I think my songs have always been more basic, that is, if I can write in four or five chords I would prefer to, rather than a dozen or whatever."

That album though, however disjointed, did provide Argent with a hit single which changed them from being what Richard Dunkley, on the sleeve-notes to 'All Together Now' described as "essentially an underground band with their own faithful following," to one of Britain's best known and respected outfits. The following album, 'In Deep' (Epic EPC 65475), provided two more singles, 'It's Only Money' and 'God Gave Rock And Roll To You', both Russ Ballard compositions, the latter once again entering the charts and helping to reinforce Argent's, by now, strong position. Much of the energy which was missing from 'All Together Now' had now been reinjected into their music and, on the whole, the album is much looser and less inhibited than anything they had



done before. 'Losing Hold' has a dynamic quality about it, due largely to Rod Argent's use of mellotron, which he developed more fully on their next album, while Ballard's 'Rosie' is a much less formal, looser number. 'Be Glad' and 'Candles On The River' also add strength to the album, with some fine playing from both Russ and Rod.

"I thought that 'In Deep' was much better than 'All Together Now', it was more of a rock'n'roll album. In fact I think that if 'Hold Your Head Up' had been on it, it would have been a really great album. It was at this time that Adam Faith phoned us up. He said that he was going into management, and was producing this 'young guy' called Leo Sayer, so Bob and I went down and played on his album 'Silverbird' (Chrysalis CHR 1050). I played guitar on the album, and on the single, 'The Show Must Go On', I played banjo. Then he produced the Roger Daltrey solo album, 'Daltrey' (Track 2406107) and we played on that too."

The fifth and last album Russ made with Argent was 'Nexus' (Epic EPC 65924). By now Rod Argent was using both mellotron and synthesizer fairly extensively and the differences in approach between the song-writing of Ballard and the Argent/White combination were becoming more apparent. 'Nexus' contains four songs by Russ, one of which, 'A Man For All Reasons', has been released as a single. Of the other three, 'Love' is a fairly light song, unlike 'Thunder

And Lightning' and 'Gonna Meet My Maker' which are heavier in both their lyrical and musical content. The most noticeable change in the style of Argent's music however, becomes immediately apparent with the first three tracks, 'The Coming Of Kohoutek', 'Once Around The Sun' and 'Infinite Wanderer'. Basically they are one long instrumental split into three parts, and the music has a mystic quality about it which has never before been so prominent in Argent's music.

"'Nexus' was, I think probably the best produced of any of the albums we've made, but to me it was very uninspired considering the sort of music we could have produced. I'm sure we were capable of making something incredible but it just never happened. I think that the people in the band were very good. Even before I joined the band I thought that Jim Rodford was the best bass-player I had ever seen in England. I've always respected Rod too, and Bob's a great drummer. It never happened like it should have done though, I don't know why, there's something definitely wrong there somewhere. We only drifted apart really after 'Nexus'. But we've always been great friends, I mean we've been around for a long while and I still think a lot of them. I told them I was leaving about five months ago but we had a lot of commitments, like an English tour, and a live album to make, which is coming out in about October I think, and the American

tour was the last thing. Since I've left I think Argent will be better off and so will I. Rod can probably have most of the say in the arrangements and do most of the writing from now on. I think that I'll have more continuity too, because I'll be able to do the same thing for myself.

"I think that bands stay together for a very long time really. There must be people in a band who are just willing to float along and let somebody else do all the work, because if a band really all care together about which way they are going, I don't see how it can last more than a short while. Frankly, I'm surprised that we stayed together for five years."

Now Russ has left Argent, his main concern is getting his debut solo album completed and finding the right musicians to play with him on the road.

"The solo album will probably simply be called 'Russ Ballard' and will have about ten or twelve songs on it. They're quite short, three or four minute songs, but that's how I'm writing at the moment. The material will be quite varied, and this has worried me a bit actually because I want to keep continuity—I don't want to sound like too many different people. I was speaking to Dan Loggins from CBS the other day, he's helping produce the album, and I mentioned that I was a bit worried about continuity and he said that it would be no problem as my voice on the album will keep the continuity, which is true really. One of the tracks on the album will be a rocker called 'Loose Women', and there's another one called 'You Can Count On Me' which I haven't decided whether to use or not yet, it might go on the B side of a single. Most of the rhythm stuff, like drums, I'll be doing myself, and I know some people think I'm on an ego trip, doing it all myself, but I can play well enough for the kind of thing I'm putting down because it's not going to need anything too intricate.

Actually, if it works out, my dad might be playing drums on one of the tracks! It really surprised me that he agreed to do it because he hasn't played drums for about twenty years, but he plays the right sort of style for what I want to do, really old fashioned ragtime on the snare drum. I might get my brother to play piano on it too, he's quite a good pianist.

"When I eventually get on the road I'll probably be solo, but I'll get a good band to play with me. The only hassle is finding the right musicians. I'd like to get some young kids of about seventeen or twenty that are really enthusiastic and show a lot of promise, rather than guys that have been around for years, because they all seem to be so cynical. Younger musicians seem to have much more enthusiasm, and that's why I'd like to get three or four young guys, even if they only want to stay for six months and then move on to something else."

So now it remains to be seen what sort of an album Russ will produce. His song-writing ability has already been firmly established with, besides his valuable contributions to Argent, songs such as 'I Don't Believe In Miracles' from Colin Blunstone's 'Ennismore' album, and his ability as a musician can be heard on any one of Argent's five albums. With qualifications such as these the odds are pretty high that the album will be something well worth waiting for.

□ TREVOR GARDINER

A LOT OF MUSIC

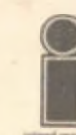


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IT'S HARD TO BE A SAINT IN THE CITY: BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

ALL DRESSED UP AND NO PLACE TO GO

"When his two-hour set ended I could only think, can anyone really be this good: can anyone say this much to me, can rock'n'roll still speak with this kind of power and glory?"

These questions, which he then went on to answer, were posed by Jon Landau in a May issue of *Rolling Stone*. His five hundred word eulogy provided a head and shoulders vignette of a New Jersey street poet called Bruce Springsteen. "I racked my brains but simply can't think of a white artist who does so many things so superbly," went on Landau, stretching out in uncanny fashion. "There is no one I would rather watch onstage today..." Jeez.

Announcing the second coming of the man who first appeared from the pens of the scribes as the brother Messiah of Bob Dylan. One way and another American critics have laid a heavy onus on Springsteen but I guess it's easier to live up to a placing in just about every US writer's 1974 Playlist than to efface the charlatan connotations which accolades pertaining to Dylan invariably conjure up in the eyes of the beholder.

It just so happens that I agree with all Mr Landau's comments and I'm glad that

he, too, can detect the power of Springsteen's band ringing in his tired old bones just as I'm glad that Mr Springsteen can quote dismissively that "Dylan influenced me as much as anyone I guess... when I was fourteen maybe... but I don't think about the comparison too much."

A couple of years after it started, CBS's attitude in building Springsteen into the star the critics say he already is remains bewildering. He's never been to England and currently waits for his new single to be completed with the desperation of a man who's flat broke, pinning his final hopes on the record, wondering whether his band will survive and seeking fit to qualify only that he doesn't feel he's written AM station lyrics. When did he ever?

I've travelled 18,000 miles to see Springsteen twice, courtesy of CBS London and shared my enthusiasm with other foreign journalists as the Springsteen band have disseminated waves of ecstasy across theatre auditoriums and yet he maintains that Columbia have been constantly cool in dealing with their wonder talent.

Peter Jay Philbin, a friend of Springsteen's long before joining CBS International press department in New York, claims that it isn't until sales really start to look good that CBS throw the full weight of the heavy artillery into the game and right now

Springsteen may be the critics' fave but he ain't selling albums. All dressed up and no place to go.

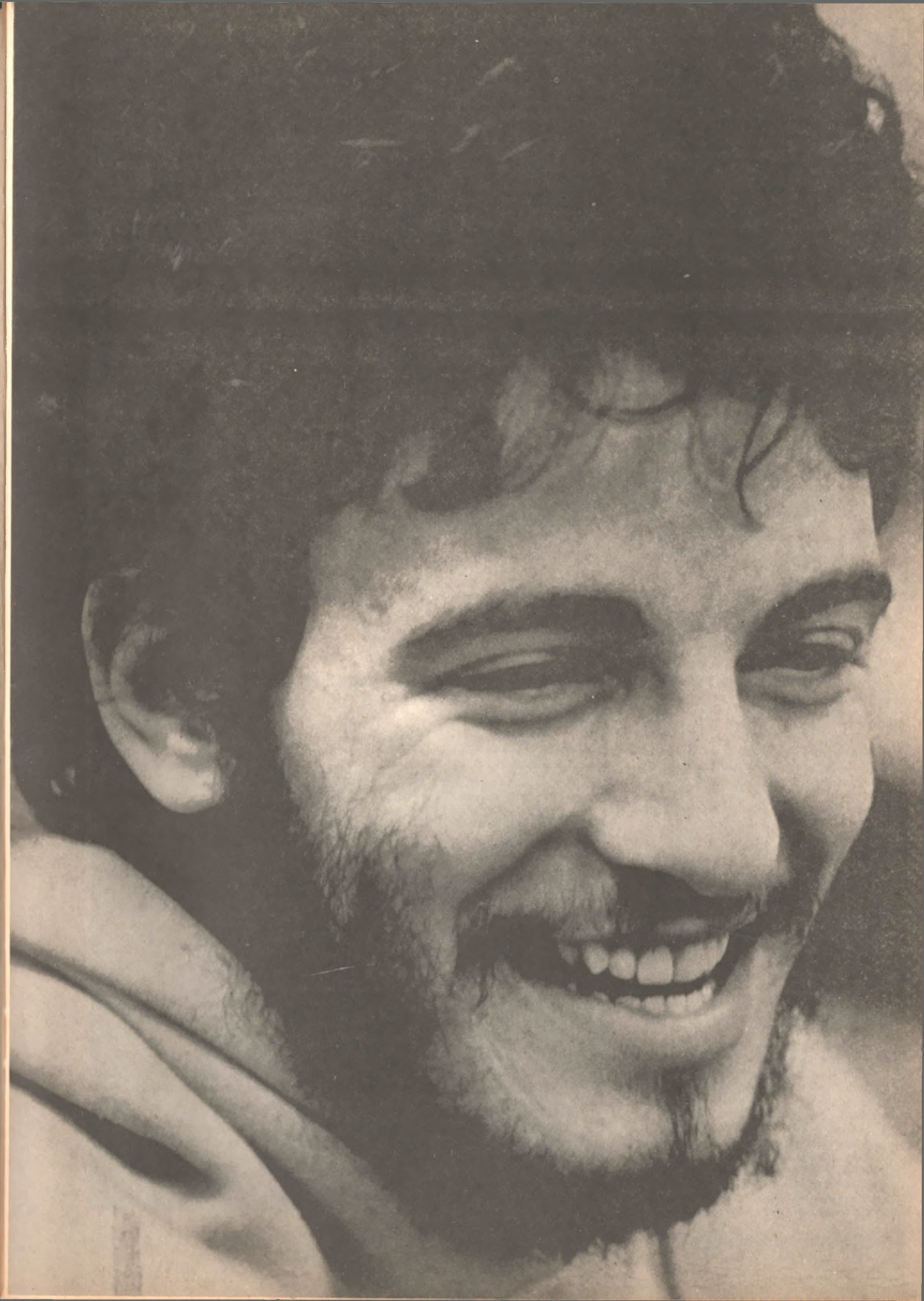
"We're at the lowest we've ever been right now," he told me last month. "It means that if we don't play every week of the year then we don't have money. Right now we've just come off the road and the guys are getting thrown out of their houses."

"Hopefully I'll be getting some money from Columbia and maybe with David Bowie doing some of the songs that'll be good."

"But that's the only problem right now... it's sort of a shame... I'd just like to be a little more secure that's all," he said in a vain attempt to make light of the problem.

Physically, Bruce Springsteen has all the hallmarks of a guy who's spent his life being dragged through the gutter. He's of frail build, sports a scrubby beard and matted, tousled hair, has an uneven gait (stumbles) and an uneven speech (mumbles). Shirt tails hang beneath an old leather jacket that's followed him around 1,000 gigs and religiously been thrown from his shoulders at some point during the 120 minutes' worth of music that his band are guaranteed to pound out whether the contract says so or not.

Such was the case at Georgetown University, Washington in March 1974—a Jesuit college who's only claim to fame is the cen-



trepiece of Blatty's 'Exorcist'. My second visit to a Springsteen show.

The first show opens, and to my delight it belongs to John Hall's band Orleans. Springsteen does his coupla hours. They take a break. Orleans open the second show and the audience bitch for an encore. Springsteen wanders onstage . . . the city orphan who had just cancelled two gigs because he'd been throwing up blood. Homes in on his regular showstoppers, and with all that out the way starts pulling up these old r&b classics like 'Walking The Dog' and 'Let The Four Winds Blow' with total disdain of the fact that we're living in the seventies. The show takes on a strange atmosphere that only nocturnal energy can generate and when this spirit in the night staggers off stage, beads of sweat dripping from the huge black frame of number one sideman Clarence Clemmons, it's way past three. In the dressing room a grand piano awaits his call and he starts to re-work a theme that he's been trying to mould into a song.

"MANY FALSE IMPRESSIONS WERE DRAWN"

He has this knack of being able to make himself totally unobtrusive, quietly waiting for the band to wander out into the approaching dawn before settling down to an interview with more commitment than you'd dare expect at 4.30am.

Springsteen emerged out of rhythm and blues and rock and roll and the whole legacy of Chuck Berry and people like Gary U.S. Bonds. "All those old r&b type people—Bonds had a great feeling on all his records, a feeling that everyone was singing, you know, thirty guys all playing and singing in the studio at the same time on things like 'Quarter To Three' and 'School Is Out'.

It explains his obsession for a loose back-up band with a honking sax, and the same confusion, the same party chaos that he carries through so well in 'E Street Shuffle' and more especially, 'Rosalita'. As a bar musician he had little use for lyrics that delved beyond the accepted demarcation lines of rhythm'n'blues sentiment. "I used to write straight rock stuff because the situation was such that whether we were playing in a bar or in a club the general conditions and PA were so bad you had to communicate on the most basic level you could and I was just never in a position to do more.

"But after that, the ten-piece band went down to seven-piece and then five-piece and then just me, so that's when I really started to write some different types of lyric. The thing is I'd been fronting a band for nine years but when I walked into the record companies there was just me by myself with a guitar, and from that many false impressions were drawn."

It's an important point and this fact, plus Columbia's dilatory behaviour in getting 'Greetings From Asbury Park, N.J.' onto their schedules that resulted in Springsteen's debut being about half as auspicious as it might have been. "The album was so old by the time it got released and I write songs fast so that I was doing all kinds of different material by the time it got released.

"I mean I like to be doing new material but that record reflects the mood I was in at that particular time . . . you know the fact of having to come into the city from where I was living, and I didn't have a band so it all contributed to that kind of down feel. But towards the end of the record I started

pulling out of it with songs like 'Spirit In The Night' which started to get into a whole different feel."

'Asbury Park' was recorded at 914 Sound Studios, Blauvelt, New York, co-produced by Mike Appel (Springsteen's manager) and Jim Cretecos, featuring the collective talents of Vini Lopez, Clarence Clemmons, Gary Tallent, David Sancious, Harold Wheeler and Richard Davis, of which the first four became regular members of the band and all but Lopez remain. That's the bare facts. The album, fronted by a picture postcard of Asbury Park, painted a sombre picture of city life and its victims—characters portrayed in the shadow of death. The production and some of the playing often leave room for improvement but it is impossible to deny the power and feeling which Springsteen's words and song structures exude just as it's impossible to deny the presence and strength of his imagery even when it threatens to dictate or obscure a song rather than carry it along.

Of such paranoia Springsteen chooses to remain on the periphery and merely record it journalistically. "I can rise to an occasion . . . like with that album. The rest of the time I'm kind of laid back because there's too much going on to get excited about, too many people running around crazy. I just prefer to let it go."

In New Jersey he prefers the incongruous . . . like water sports. He left the boardwalk life portrayed so vividly by Jack Nicholson in 'The King Of Marvin Gardens' and misses the rundown environment of his adolescent period, living over a drugstore or whatever it was. The road is no place to write your new album, back in Asbury Park things were different.



"I see these situations happening when I sing them and I know the characters well. I use them in different songs and see them in shadows—they're probably based on people I know or else they're flashes, that just appear there. There's a lot of activity, a whole mess of people . . . it's like if you're walking down the street, my songs are what you see, only distorted. A lot of songs were written without any music at all, it's just that I do like to sing the words."

Springsteen's picture-book of city, street-life is a nightmare vision. "My songs are supposed to be bigger than life," he claims, but he insists he has not been blessed with any greater powers of insight than the next person.

"Jersey was so intense you couldn't even walk down the street so I used to go to New York and hang out in the Village mostly, but also uptown a little bit.

GREENWICH VILLAGE FOLK URCHIN

"I was mostly by myself with no particular place to go, but sometimes I'd hang out with this other guy."

So paradoxically when Springsteen made it with Columbia it was, as a Greenwich Village folk urchin. Totally out of context. "I'd written my first batch of songs and if nothing had come of it I'd probably have been back in the bars by now," he quipped at the time.

CBS went with 'Blinded By The Light' for the single, Springsteen twisting as much distorted lyric into the metre as possible and hanging a catchy chorus at the end of each verse. A good ensemble legacy from his rock'n'roll days.

Yeah he was blinded by the light.



Cut loose like a deuce, another runner in the night.

*Blinded by the light,
He got down but he never got tight
But he's gonna make it tonight . . .*

The best songs on that album, says Bruce, were those written over a short period of time. Like the incredible suicide ballad 'For You' which remains one of Springsteen's greatest achievements as he recounts the final minutes of life drawing back to the final chorus with its emotive cry.

*I came for you, for you, I came for you,
But you did not need my urgency.
I came for you, for you, I came for you,
But your life was one long emergency.
And your cloud line urges me
And my electric surges free.*

'The Angel', says Springsteen is one of his great favourites—conceived, constructed and completed inside fifteen minutes. "It's the most sophisticated thing I've done," he said referring to the sex-power-death trip of the Angel astride his chopper. He starts the song thus:

*The angel rides with hunchbacked children,
Poison oozing from his engine,
Wieldin' love as a lethal weapon,
On his way to hubcap heaven . . .*

and concludes:
*Off in the distance the marble dome
Reflects across the flatlands with a naked feel
off into parts unknown,*

*The Woman strokes his polished chrome
And lies beside the angel's bones . . .*

He hipped up the same theme in his trilogy of death in 'Lost In The Flood' where he portrays death as a sort of macabre disappearing point.

*He rides her low on the hip, on the side he's got 'Bound For Glory'
in red white and blue flash paint,
He leans on the hood telling racing stories,
The kids call him Jimmy the Saint.
Well that blaze and noise boy,
He's gunning that bitch to blasting point*

He rides head first into a hurricane and disappears into a point

*And there's nothin' left where the body fell,
And there's nothin' left that you could sell,
Just junk all across the horizon,
A real highwayman's farewell . . .*

More recently David Bowie pulled 'Growin' Up' and 'It's Hard To Be A Saint In The City' from the same album to record, one a pop song, the other perhaps a little too ambitious and expansive, but both pre-ordained for Bowie; in any event by the time Springsteen was set to record his second album, 'The Wild, The Innocent And The 'E' Street Shuffle', he'd ironed out all his problems. Same studio, same producers but this time a band who had been knocked into shape on the road, largely through the experience of veteran horn player Clarence Clemmons, who once worked with James Brown.

"The mistake," Springsteen reflected, "is in thinking that you are those songs," in an obvious allusion to the self-destructive influence the presence of his ego in those songs was having. "To me a song is a vision, a flash, and what I see is characters in situations.

"I mean I've stood around carnivals at nights when they're clearing up and I was scared ['Wild Billy's Circus Story', still one of the highlights of the show with Garry Tallent playing tuba and Danny Federici accordion, just that.] As for Spanish Johnny's situation ['Incident On 57th Street'], well I'd never get into that kind of situation but I know people who have lived that life."

You have to remember that it ain't easy to commute between Asbury Park and the Cafe Wha down in the Village and hang onto your sanity. And it takes a lot of guts to blow your record advance on putting together a band—a band that Bruce calls "a really spacey bunch of guys . . . but a pretty regular band". There's been only one personnel change in two years, Ernest Boon Carter having replaced Vini Lopez on drums. "Vini'd been around four years," Bruce

qualified vaguely. "There'd been various pressures . . . it was a difficult decision to make."

In truth, Asbury Park had a lot to do with the feel of the first album. "Jersey's a dumpy joint," Springsteen had said. "I mean it's OK, it's home, but every place is a dump."

"EVERY SYLLABLE ADDS SOMETHING TO HIS ULTIMATE GOAL"

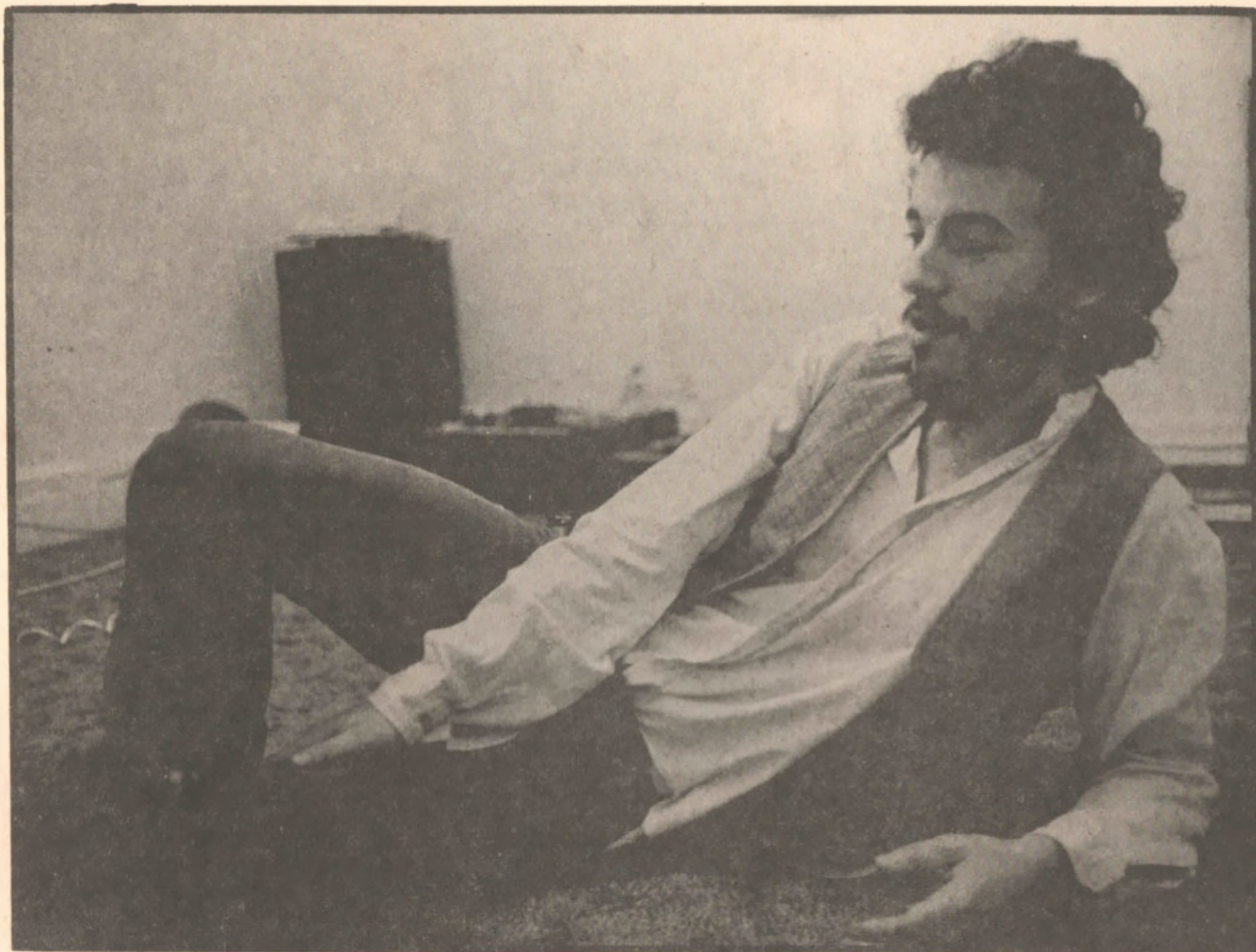
"Springsteen does it all. He is a rock'n'roll punk, a Latin street poet, a ballet dancer, an actor, a poet joker, a bar band leader, hot-shit rhythm guitar player, extraordinary singer and a truly great rock'n'roll composer. He leads a band like he's been doing it forever . . . Bruce Springsteen is a wonder to look at. Skinny, dressed like a reject from Sha Na Na, he parades in front of his all star rhythm band like a cross between Chuck Berry, early Bob Dylan and Marlon Brando. Every gesture, every syllable adds something to his ultimate goal—to liberate our spirit while he liberates his by baring his soul through his music." Another sizeable chunk from Jon Landau's *Rolling Stone* review that pretty much sums up the impact of a Springsteen show. But having looked at the lyrics some qualifications of the musician in the band.

Bruce looks like he's appeared out of thin air but he's a regular old timer and he was just a straightforward rhythm guitarist in a band before coming out as a front man. He led a ten piece in the bars and rough houses of New Jersey, and it was an experience that ultimately brought him down. But in the last and best bar band he had built up quite a following in the Southern States. "Over about four years I played mostly down South—for some reason I got popular around Virginia, Tennessee and Carolina and I played in a lotta different towns with the ten-piece band."

His band today may lack the sophistication of Van Morrison or Tim Buckley but the versatility is indisputable. A long time admirer of Bruce's, watching the Georgetown gig and taking note of the amorphous nature of his songs, was moved to comment that he'd never heard Springsteen play or sing a song the same way twice. 'New York City Serenade' has changed beyond belief whilst 'Kitty's Back' (one of the best kinetic compositions) was stretched across a super-long embellished piano solo from David Sancious. "There was more of the band in the second album and the songs were written more in the way I wanted to write but I change the arrangements all the time in order to present the material best and to suit the style of the band. I just try to update the arrangements a bit to keep everyone interested. 'Sandy', for instance, I like the way it is on the record but it was entirely different right up until the night I recorded it and then I changed it."

For his next album Bruce plans to incorporate chick singers and horns. He would do the same onstage but for the economics of it all.

The road has really taken its toll on Springsteen's health. When I'd seen him in Washington he'd been bemoaning the lack of good food and swigging cough mixture from a bottle. Some months later, talking to him on the phone to New Jersey he could find little cause for optimism. 'The Wild, The Innocent And The E Street Shuffle', far more of an energy, band participation album, he said, had generally been better received and sold in larger quantities than the first album



although Peter Philbin reckons the composition already shows signs of him being sucked away from his native environment. Technically it's a far better album, the tracks are longer and go through more mood changes and yet it doesn't reveal the same highs that the first had, though on reflection I think it would have been impossible to paint as vivid a picture that Springsteen had managed on first time around. In the light of this, the lyrics on the second album lack the same monolithic grace as the first; no further qualification necessary—just cop a listen to the finished product.

"I'm still fooling with the words for the new single but I think it'll be good," said Springsteen, taking up the story once again. "I've written a lot of stuff for the new album but when I get into the studio I'll have a clearer picture—but it's a different assortment of material and most of it relates pretty much not to touring or playing in a band because we haven't played much at all this summer—but lately I've been getting a rush to write new songs and I've got quite a few on, some short and some long."

Mike Appel will again be producing. "I haven't met anyone else who understands the situation any better and he's very involved; besides I don't like too many outside people involved, it just gets too impersonal, that's why I never pick session musicians."

He believes his band are improving and tightening all the time but as to whether his next album will outsell the previous two he's reluctant to say. "I do sell records... but real slow and not many... about 500 or

1,000 each week. I don't think too many people listen to reviews and articles with regard to spending the bucks."

He is particularly anxious to tour his current band in Britain before the line-up changes—and changes are very much on the cards. "It's a very open situation right now. I'm definitely going to add people, possibly a horn section and people who can double on instruments like a violin and trumpet maybe."

"RENTS ARE DUE AND ALIMONY AND WE JUST DON'T HAVE THE MONEY"

At last Bruce Springsteen realises he is on the verge of a breakthrough and by constant touring he has managed to "erase false images that people have".

But on a serious note he underlines his financial problem. "I'd like to get out of this situation where I haven't gotten paid in three weeks and so I haven't paid the band for three weeks. Rents are due and alimony and we just don't have the money. At this stage of the game it's really a shame and I'd just like to get some income because in the last two years we've just managed to make ends meet and sometimes we don't; so we're at the lowest we've ever been right now and if we don't play every week we don't have money... it's as easy as that."

But he clearly visualises the theme of his third album in the light of the first and second. "Those were two very different albums," he appraised. "The second is more popular and it's sold more—I guess it's more musical, but the first one has a certain some-

thing for me. I tended to do two totally different things—the first album was a very radical album whereas the second wasn't quite so much. I'm surprised it didn't do better than it did because it sounded very commercial to me."

"This new album will possibly be something of a balance between the two—I'll try and hit somewhere between."

There we have it then. Bruce Springsteen, the city punk with a disparate bunch of bar boys he calls his band. Just a bunch of lost souls striving to recover and release theirs through the music, or as Jimmy Spheeris once likened his own urban paranoia to a "surfer boy stranded with city sand in my shoes".

But for all his shambolic appearance, weird stage drawl that makes him relatively unintelligible, Bruce Springsteen has used the legacy of the fifties more comprehensively than anyone, from his rough, tough r&b approach to the vivid documentation of his experiences. Maybe he is Bob Dylan, Jack Kerouac and James Dean all rolled into one, but if that's true then there's also a lotta James Brown and Gary Bonds tucked in there too.

□ JERRY GILBERT

'GREETINGS FROM ASBURY PARK, N.J.' (CBS 65480—1972)

'THE WILD, THE INNOCENT & THE E STREET SHUFFLE' (CBS 65780—1973)

Lyrics copyright Intersong Music Ltd.

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A DIARY OF TWO BANDS

I've always felt that one of the nice things about ZigZag is its concern and interest for worthwhile bands who find it difficult, and in some cases impossible, to break through to a larger audience, either because of a non-existent record contract or because they haven't got a booking agency or because their equipment's falling to bits, or as so often

happens, a combination of all three. The last time that 'A Diary Of Two Bands' appeared in ZigZag, Ducks Deluxe and Stardust were featured. Well you all know of the Ducks' rise to fame and fortune, and Stardust eventually crumbled into oblivion, so this time we're going to start afresh and follow the story of two new bands both of whom sound more than

interesting. Pete Flanagan, West Coast freak and an ace bloke t'boot, approached me with the idea, compiled all the info, and generally convinced me with his enthusiasm and knowledge that both Stroll On and Over The Hill were capable of great things if given half the chance. So here's the first chapter in their leap to stardom and we'll try and bring things up to date every two months or so.

STROLL ON

OVER THE HILL

MEMBERS AND HISTORIES

Bill Giles, piano and vocals: His first band was a threepiece jamming mechanism, 'Amazing Lorn', in 1970. Spent three years at Oxford during which he played a lot of crazy jazz, intermittently racing back to Bristol for unrehearsed gigs with the Lorn and Flash Gordon. Returned to Bristol last summer looking for music and entertaining packed public houses with impromptus. Professes to be 'a jazz musician with a passion for dancing'.

Nick Howell, drums: Began playing when little and first gig was the local village hall for 7/6d with Huw. Since then he's played in several bands including Flash Gordon, Amazing Lorn, Magic Muscle Mk II and then a short spell with Over the Hill only to leave when it got too cold at the rehearsal room. Spent a few minutes doing nothing until asked to join.

James 'Fisher' Burris, bass: Retired in 1970. Made comeback in 1970. In 1971 he formed Escalade 'the best band in Wick (Glos)' including Rambling 'Sid' Sweet. Later on played in Saraswati with Allan Mostert (ex Quintessence). Was at school with Huw until the age of 11 and claims to be 'the obvious choice for Stroll On'.

Huw Gower, guitar and vocals: Early musical misadventures with Nick led to joining Magic Muscle in 1971 — 'a nefarious

Roy Sundholm: Astonishingly versatile Nordic Bass-Player and Vocalist. Played with several notable Mersey Groups during the mid-60's, but refined his distinctive style doing time in various European jails, where he was detained for spitting at policemen.

Can sing a quarter-beat behind or ahead of the band despite all efforts to stop him.

Plays a Fender Bass.

Peter Roe: The Dark Horse of English Rock. A long and checkered career in music has brought him via Classical trumpet and folk singing to his current position as second guitarist, vocalist, and principal song-writer with Over The Hill. Doubles as a Novelist, and has lived for many years in California.

John Perry: Plays Lead Guitar. Has always played Lead Guitar. Sings.

Alan Platt: Jovial Northern Percussionist and Intellectual Giant. New Boy of the Band, having joined this April. Prior to joining he spent his time doing sessions and

household of musicians, roadies and friends" including Rod Goodway (ex White Rabbit, Pack) and Adrian Shaw (ex Arthur Brown) ('Hello Adrian'). Stayed together until 1973, touring extensively with Hawkwind amongst other things. Revitalised the band briefly with the embryonic Over the Hill but became disgusted with their unkempt appearances and bad table manners.

pursuing unspeakable activities in Tooting. Picks things up quickly.

WHEN AND HOW FORMED

Stroll On began rehearsing in March '74 with a different drummer, Neil Russell, a friend of Jim's; so in a sense it was a fusion of two partnerships. Huw and Bill had both been writing material and playing together for eight months searching for that golden outlet. Remembering a small boy he'd been to school with, Huw phoned Jim ('he hadn't changed a bit except for the length of his trousers') and one thing led to another, though things didn't work with Neil so in June Nick joined and learnt all the material in three days (A true pro).

Formed initially in Bristol (1972) to perform original, melodic material, as an alternative to the years of 'heavy' music the individual members had played. At this point the Band was a trio consisting of John, Roy and Nick Howell, (now with Stroll On).

This trio joined Magic Muscle (Jan 73) to perform 'heavy' music as an alternative to doing nothing, and left (July '72) to reform Over The Hill, this time as a Quartet, including Pete Roe.

This line up rehearsed till Christmas, and played its first gig in Cambridge during January 1974.

Drummer Nick Howell left the band in March to concentrate on watching TV and was replaced by Alan Platt.

WHERE BASED

Members of the band are conveniently spread out between Bristol, London and Cambridge, with Agency facilities partially in Brighton, and rehearsal and recording space in Somerset. This is being looked into.

EQUIPMENT

Bill—Hohner Pianet & Marshall 50 (Where's that Fender Rhodes?)
Nick—Premier drums, Paiste cymbals
Jim—Gibson EB Jetstream bass & Marshall 100 with Orange reflex bassbin
Huw—Fender Stratocaster & Marshall 100.
P.A. is currently hired but shortly expecting to obtain speakers by home-grown genius Alan Osbaldeston, 12 channel mixer by Bob Dawson, Microphones by Shure. Amplifiers: two 125 watt TUACs & 100 watt Plessey monitor.

Roy:— Fender Jazz Bass, & Marshall Bass Amp with Custom Reflex Cab.
Pete:— Fender Telecaster & Fender Stratocaster, Fender Twin Reverb Amp.
Alan:— Hayman Drum Kit, Paiste Cymbals etc.

500 watt PA system designed and built by Alan Osbaldeston comprising:—

- 2 (2 x 15 Bass Bins,
- 4 Electrovoice Mid-range Horns,
- 4 J.B.L. Supertweeters,
- 6 Channel Alice Mixer,
- Electrovoice and A.K.G. Microphones
- 2 Millbank Power Amplifiers
- and an Independent Monitoring System.

Other equipment includes a Revox A77 tape machine and a red 6-wheel transit known as The Airplane.

MANAGEMENT, AGENCY, ROAD CREW

Managed by Peter 'Dan' Flanagan of Virgin in Bristol with the help of Roger Charles. Short of a permanent road crew until recently, though frequently assisted by the omniscient John Spinks. Now featuring Bob Dawson on P.A. mix.

Business is currently being taken care of by Alan Trist and John Coleman of Bozo Bookings and Panama Red. Promo material and Artwork are done by Maureen Leopard and Peter Biles. Road crew and general tour managers are John Spinks and Nick Mead. Sound mixing and recording are dealt with by Alan Osbaldeston.

HOW MANY GIGS GROUP EARNINGS, ETC	First appearance was Oxford Mayday 1974. Promoted their own gigs at pubs in Bristol and Bath. Undertook a tour in July entertaining exiled foreign students. Earnings range from minus £10 and 4 wing mirrors to plus £55 and a day in the Isle of Wight. No agency representation (Pete's negotiating); all gigs so far have come through friends and Pete's efforts.	The band has performed approx 30 gigs since its formation, including residencies at The Kensington and The Lord Nelson, college dates, and many free outdoor concerts. It has done several recording sessions, most recently backing Grateful Dead songwriter Robert Hunter on some of his un-recorded work. Earnings per gig vary between £35-50, pub gigs paying considerably less. A tour of Holland has been arranged for October supporting Tim Hardin, followed by 3 days at the Zoom Club, Frankfurt.
POLICY	To fuse as many forms of underwater music as possible to create the new Jablo Rock, thereby confusing no-one and astounding the biz. They like to keep the band as loose/tight as necessary to get a field or a hall full of people heady and dancing. Contemplating finding a singer/guitarist (Are you there?) to boost vocals and allow for more liberties on the side	Original material, Blatant Opportunism and Moral Fibre.
THE RAT BITES FROM HELL		
Formed in June 1974 as an outlet for unchannelled aggression and second-rate material, The Rat Bites From Hell have aroused considerable bewilderment and caused a sensation at a recent Bristol outdoor Rockfest by failing to appear. The Rats are an inevitable extension of the incestuous relations between Over The Hill and Stroll-On, and feature all		members of the two bands plus local heroes Big Pete (vocals) and Underwater Bruce Biles (congas). Recent appearances by The Rats have included such notable events as on-stage scuffles for microphones and several members collapsing simultaneously. The Rats are likely to bare their teeth any time the two bands appear on the same bill.



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Jack Bruce tree, Matt the Hoople, Allman Brothers, Alice Cooper, Link Wray, Dorian, Terry Riley.

John Sebastian, Colin Blunstone, Roy Gallagher, Big Brother, Fairport & Steeleye and trees.

Eton John, Lou Reed, Flamin' Groovies, Zappa, Mothers trees Love tree, Floyd's Earliest days.

Hawkwind, Joe Dicker, Dave Van Ronk, Greenwich Village, Brewster's Drop, Dan Hicks/SF tree.

Jimmy Page, Bridget St. John, Procu/traffic tree, Ducks deluxe, kinks, Steve Stills, Byrds part 1.

Led Zeppelin, The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, Kim Fowley, Stealers wheel, Kevin Ayers tree, Byrds part 2.

21 John Sebastian, Colin Blunstone, Roy Gallagher, Big Brother, Fairport & Steeleye and trees.

22 Jack Bruce tree, Matt the Hoople, Allman Brothers, Alice Cooper, Link Wray, Dorian, Terry Riley.

23 John Sebastian, Colin Blunstone, Roy Gallagher, Big Brother, Fairport & Steeleye and trees.

24 Eton John, Lou Reed, Flamin' Groovies, Zappa, Mothers trees Love tree, Floyd's Earliest days.

25 Hawkwind, Joe Dicker, Dave Van Ronk, Greenwich Village, Brewster's Drop, Dan Hicks/SF tree.

26 Jimmy Page, Bridget St. John, Procu/traffic tree, Ducks deluxe, kinks, Steve Stills, Byrds part 1.

27 Led Zeppelin, The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, Kim Fowley, Stealers wheel, Kevin Ayers tree, Byrds part 2.

28 Led Zeppelin, The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, Kim Fowley, Stealers wheel, Kevin Ayers tree, Byrds part 2.

29 Genesis, Every Bros, Eagles, Burritos, Family tree, Silverhead, Johnny speight, Beethart, Byrds 3

30 Procu Hartum, Neil Sedaka, Eton John, Rock Field, Ry Cooper, Byrds Part 4, Pin Up or Peter Pan Home.

31 SOLD OUT COMPLETELY

32 Pink Floyd, Steve Ellis, The Story of Spirit, Clifford T. Ward, John Cale Roy Buchanan, Byrds part 6.

33 McKendree spring, Rater Flint, Boz Scaggs, Clarence White, Steve Miller, Sir Douglas quilltree.

34 Family, Lou Reed, Asleep at the wheel, Captain Beethart, The dillards.

35 Grateful Dead part 1, Grain, Parsons Don Nix, Commander Cody, Free Genesis record.

36 Van Morrison, Stan Tracey, Kevin Come, Grateful Dead part 2, Byron Berline.

37 Charlie Watts, Mighty Baby, Nils Lofgren, Grateful Dead part 3, Country Joe McDonald.

38 Quicksilver Messenger Service, Richard Greene tree, Ben sidrah, Logans & Messing, John Stewart.

39 Michael Nesmith interview, Steve Miller Zigzag Roll, Ralph McTell, Ewan Parker.

40 Dave Mason, Michael Nesmith: Post-Monkees, Peter Hamill, Macon Georgia.

41 Quicksilver, John Martyn, David Blue, Free, Moby Grape, Michael Revelli, Byrds story part 7 (111).

42 Nick Drake, Albert Hammond, Moby Grape, Dr. Hook, Free, Lovin' Spoonful, John Weider, John Stewart.

43 Tim Hardin, Jackie Lomax, Bees, Moby Grape, Moby Grape, Love, Squ with came, Townsend, Steely Dan.

44 Tim Buckley, 100s, Marc Benno Townsend, Captain Tree, Beethart, Tengerne Dream, Blue Oyster Cult.

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NEW RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE

An abbreviated history of that group of illustrious pickers known collectively as THE NEW RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE.

The Willowood (Black Mountain) Boys, based in Palo Alto, California, were a folk-cabaret act playing at the Jabberwock in Berkeley, the Tanager in Palo Alto, and coffee houses in San Francisco's North Beach. Also did several bluegrass/folk festivals.

The Wildwood Boys, later the BLACK MT BOYS Around 1963
ERIC THOMPSON gtr/vocals
PETER ALBIN bass/guitar
DAVID NELSON gtr/vocals
JERRY GARCIA banjo/vocals
BOB HUNTER gtr/vocals

In 1959, Jerry Garcia was thrown out of the Army and, together with friend Hunter, began to discover the joys of bluegrass and folk music - particularly old-timey country and jug band music. He helped to found several groups; the Willowood Boys (later the Black Mountain Boys), then the Thunder Mountain Tub Thumpers, then (in 1963) The Hart Valley Drifters, the Asphalt Jungle Mountain Boys, and his last acoustic group - Mother McCrees Uptown Jug Champions.

NEW YORK RAMBLERS Spring '64 to late '65
DAVID GRISMAN mandolin
GENE LOWMYER fiddle
FRED WEISS bass
WINNIE WINSTON banjo
ERIC THOMPSON guitar

Initially formed for fun - to compete in the Union Grove Fiddle Contest... they won! Presented with cup declaring them World Champion String Band! David Gisman later founded EARTH OPERA and is now in OLD & IN THE WAY (also on the new "MULESKIN" album with Richard Greene & Clarence White).

The Asphalt Jungle Mountain Boys, later MOTHER MC CREES UPTOWN JUG CHAMPIONS

This group, formed in 1963 (they changed their name in late 1964) had a very fluid line-up:
JERRY GARCIA banjo/guitar/vocals
BOB WEIR jug/guitar/vocals
RON MCKERNAN (PICKEN) harmonica/piano/vocals
BOB MATTHEWS guitar/vocals
Left the field of performing (but later played in the New Riders), and now runs Alembic Studios & Electronics.

BIG BROTHER AND THE HOLDING COMPANY 1965
JANIS JOPLIN vocals
JAMES GURLEY lead guitar
SAM ANDREW guitar
DAVID GETZ drums
PETER ALBIN bass

David Nelson was in the emerging Big Brother for only the first few weeks. It wasn't until after he'd left and Janis Joplin had joined that they began to get any national acclaim. (Listen to the group's, and Janis's solo, albums on CBS.)

The WARTLOCKS - later THE GRATEFUL DEAD (changed name in Feb 1964)

JERRY GARCIA
BOB WEIR
PICKEN
PHIL LESH
BILL SOMMERS

THE NEW DELHI RIVER BAND, which included all sorts of itinerant musicians at various times in its relatively short lifespan, played mostly at a club called The Barn - "out on Route 17". Dawson left after a while ("it didn't work out") but Torbert, formerly in various blues and R&B bands, stayed till the end.

The NEW DELHI RIVER BAND 1966
DAVID NELSON guitar/vocals
JOHN DAWSON guitar/vocals
DAVE TORBERT bass/gtr/voc
CHRIS HERALD guitar

THE GRATEFUL DEAD went their merry way and, until Garcia got a pedal steel guitar, had no connection with the New Riders - except that Dawson played a few gigs with Weir's occasional group BOBBY ACE AND THE CARDS FROM THE BOTTOM.

The JEFFERSON AIRPLANE formed in August 1965 after founder Marty Balin had seen the Beatles. One of the earliest rock groups in San Francisco - only the Mystery Trend & Charlatans pre-date them.

SIGNE TOLY ANDERSEN replaced in Autumn '66 by GRACE SLICK vocals
JORMA KAUKONEN guitar
PAUL KANTNER guitar/vocals
SKIP SPENCE drums replaced by SPENCER DRYDEN drums (previously in The Ashes - later The Peanut Butter Conspiracy). Left the Airplane in March 1970.
Left in Sept 1966 to join MOBY GRAPE (who made 4 albums for CBS)

The MESCALINE ROMPERS (1966) was a very short-lived group; their only gig appears to have been at Pinnacles National Monument. Following its demise, Dawson did solo gigs at "The Underground Cafe" in Menlo Park, and Torbert retired to Oahu Hawaii to live in the sun.

JOHN DAWSON guitar/vocals
DAVE TORBERT bass/gtr/voc
MATTHEW KELLY gtr/banjo/vocals/harmonica

THE NEW RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE #1 Spring 1970 to Spring 1971. The first New Riders (including 3 members of the Dead) played as guests on Grateful Dead gigs & remained very much under their wing. The personnel changed largely by accident and at convenience. According to the rumor, David Nelson and Bob Hunter (now the Grateful Dead's lyricist) named the group "by nomenclological transposition" from their old name (the New Delhi River Band)! Hardly likely, considering the Zane Grey novel and Gene Autrey's song.

DAVID NELSON vocals/acoustic & electric guitars
JOHN DAWSON acoustic guitar/vocals
JERRY GARCIA pedal steel and banjo
MICKEY HART drums/percussion
PHIL LESH or BOB MATTHEWS bass

THE GREAT SPECKLED BIRD A Canadian based group which (with different line-ups) also worked as Ian & Sylvia's backing band. Recorded with Ian & Sylvia and made solo album on Ampex.

KEN KALMUSKY bass
AMOS GARRETT guitar
N.D. SMART drums
BUDDY CAGE pedal steel guitar
Joined Paul Butler Days and does sessions - he's a fabulous guitarist... amazing.

THE NEW RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE #2 Spring 1971 until November 1971. In June 1971, the group signed with CBS and subsequently released their first album 'NEW RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE' (CBS 64657) on 3-12-71 (England). Still toured with the Dead, doing support and intermission spots - and Jerry Garcia continued to play in both groups.

SPENCER DRYDEN drums/percussion
DAVID NELSON lead guitar/vocals
DAVE TORBERT bass/guitar
JOHN DAWSON vocals/rhythm guitar
JERRY GARCIA pedal steel guitar

Having launched and nurtured their off-spring, Jerry Garcia and the rest of his cohorts were able to concentrate fully on THE GRATEFUL DEAD once more. After various changes of personnel and some dozen or so albums, the current line-up is as follows:

THE BYRDS #7 Skip was in the most stable Byrds line-up, and flew with them from Oct 69 to Feb 73. Also made solo album (Signpost).

CLARENCE WHITE guitar
SKIP BATTIN bass
ROGER M'GUINN guitar/vocals
GENE PARSONS drums

THE NEW RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE #3 November 1971 to February 1974. With Garcia's commitments restricting their activities, they decide to separate from the Dead and survive independently, having met Buddy Cage during the notorious Trans-Canada Festival Express of 1970, they invite him to join on pedal steel.

BUDDY CAGE pedal steel guitar
SPENCER DRYDEN drums/percussion
DAVID NELSON lead guitar/vocals
JOHN DAWSON vocals/guitar
DAVE TORBERT bass/vocals

This line-up (New Riders #3) cut 4 albums: 'POWERGLIDE' CBS 64843, released 19-5-72; 'GYPSY COWBOY' CBS 65008, released 16-2-73; 'PANAMA RED' CBS 65687, released 16-11-73; and their new one, released here on 21-6-74, 'HOME HOME ON THE ROAD' CBS 80060.

THE NEW RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE #4 February 1974 to the present. With the arrival of Skip Balin we see the beginning of a new era for the New Riders - look out for them when they tour here later this year.

SKIP BATTIN bass/vocals
BUDDY CAGE pedal steel guitar
SPENCER DRYDEN drums/percussion
DAVID NELSON guitar/vocals
JOHN DAWSON guitar

"Once upon a time, when things had fallen apart but not quite everyone knew it, some few hundred entities who lived and moved upon the San Francisco peninsula did there establish between themselves obscure bands of understanding, decision and hope. Within this particular stream of life, events came to pass and phenomena flowered... and much music was played. From this age, the 1960's, came forth THE NEW RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE."



alone

K59301

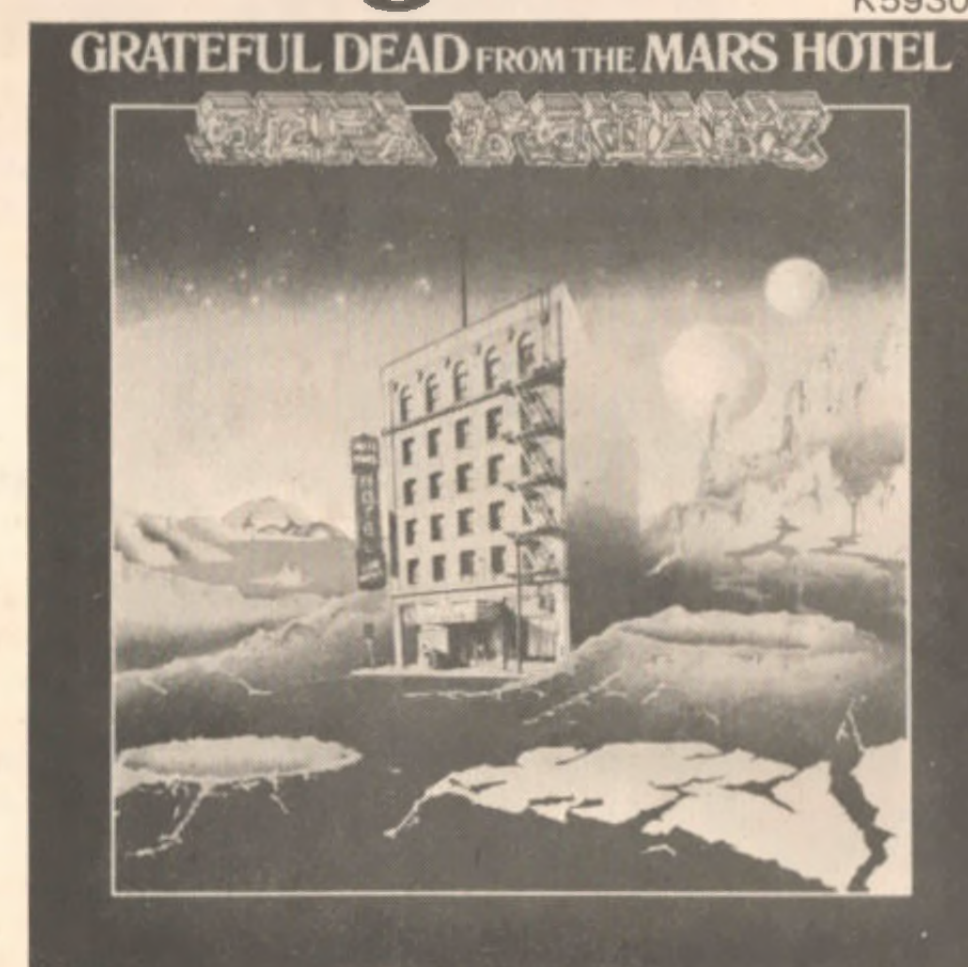


The new album from Jerry Garcia on Round Records.



together

K59302



The new album from The Grateful Dead on Grateful Dead Records.

Distributed by Atlantic.



The Grateful Dead in concert at Alexandra Palace 9, 10, 11 September

THE GRATEFUL DEAD'S SOUND SYSTEM

Warning! This is not the sort of feature you've come to expect from ZigZag by now. The technological aspects of the music business aren't usually our cup of tea, but for once we're going to delve into the world of speakers, equalisers, frequency ranges, and angles of dispersion and present the workings of what is universally considered to be the biggest, most sophisticated and advanced sound system used by any electric band. The technical details, I think you'll agree, are staggering, and when Alan Trist, the Dead's copyright and publishing manager gave me all the grist that's printed below, I thought it would make an eye-opening and unusual spread in the mag. I hope you'll agree, so here it is.

Recently there have been major changes made in the Dead's sound system, bringing it a big step closer to the ancient ideal of the perfect sound system. This is a technical report; from the standpoint of the ideas on sound reproduction incorporated into its design, and with a description of its sub-systems.

The system is unusual in that all the speakers are arrayed behind the musicians. Conventionally, vocal systems occupy the front corners of the stage. There are two disadvantages to this. It creates a blind spot for people sitting in potentially good seats, and the musicians themselves don't really know how they sound. They have monitors, but these are not very effective, nor are the echoes which ricochet around the hall. With the speakers behind them, in integral array with the instrument speakers, the band is in a much better position to hear what the audience hears, and to adjust accordingly.

With the new set-up there is no need for a mixing console to adjust the various sound levels. Each microphone has a volume control on it, enabling the band to mix the vocal sound from the stage. Each musician has control of his own local sound environment, being able to adjust his stage monitors or other instruments as well as his own instrument.

The sound system is actually a combination of six individual systems, each being electronically separate and having a specific purpose and function. No two musical "voices" go through the same system. Thus the vocals, piano, drums, lead guitar, rhythm guitar and bass each have their own channel(s) of amplification (see Table). This separation is designed to produce an undistorted sound, a clean sound in which qualities like "transparency", "brilliance", "presence", and "clarity

are substantially musical dimensions.

The whole system operates on 26,400 Watts of continuous (RMS) power, producing in the open air an acceptable sound at a quarter of a mile and a fine sound up to five or six hundred feet, where it begins to be distorted by wind. A sound system could get the same volume from half as much power, but it wouldn't have the quality.

THE VOCAL SYSTEM. The signals from each of the vocal microphones are brought together by a Differential Summing Amp, where phase purity can be regulated and hence the transparency of the sound maintained. From there the combined signal goes to a Crossover which divides the frequency range into four bands (High, Upper, Mid, Lower Mid, Low). The signal in each band is then separately amplified by MacIntosh 2300 amps fed to JBL 15 inch, 12 inch or 5 inch speakers or Electrovoice tweeters.

The centre cluster of the vocal system, consisting of high and midrange speakers, is curved so as to disperse sound cylindrically; there is not much vertical dispersion, and horizontal dispersion is ideally between 140 and 180 degrees. The vocal low range speakers are arranged in a col-

umn. Each type of speaker is designed to have the same horizontal and vertical angle of dispersion so that all frequencies are heard equally well.

The speaker cones are arranged together as close as possible so that the whole surface of the cluster acts as one working surface. In this way a large mass of air is moved at once which doesn't require very high pressures from any individual speaker.

A major improvement in the quality of the vocal sound is due to the use of differential microphones. Each singer has a perfectly matched pair of Bruel and Kjaer microphones hooked up out of phase, only one of which he sings into. Any sound which goes equally into both microphones is cancelled out when the two signals are added together. Therefore leakage of instruments and background noise into the vocal channel is minimised.

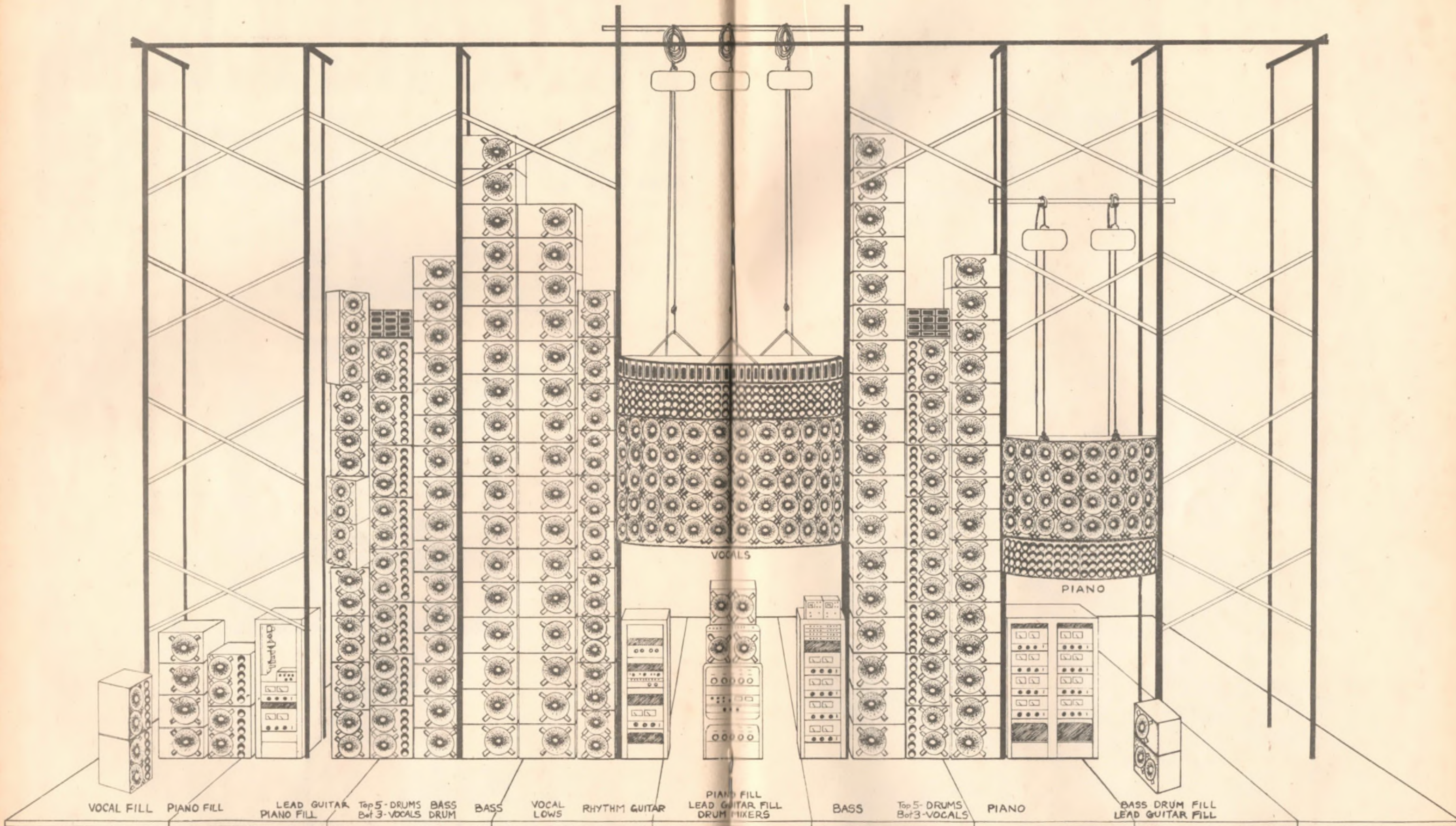
THE PIANO SYSTEM This is a small version of the vocal system. In this case a crossover divides the frequency range into three parts. The Highs and Mids go through a cluster of 5 inch and 12 inch speakers built in the same fashion as the vocal's centre cluster. The Lows go through a column of 15 inch speakers. There is a separate volume control for each of the five Countryman custom pickups (one for each division of the frame) so that Godchaux can balance the sound. Garcia and Kreutzmann both have piano monitors or fills in their areas of the stage, which can be independently adjusted by them.

THE DRUM SYSTEM The drum system has two independent parts. The bass drum uses one amplification channel and sixteen 15 inch speakers in a column. The other drums and cymbals are miked through a three-way crossover which separates the signal into Highs, Upper Mids and Lower Mids and feeds them to Tweeters, 5 inch and 12 inch speakers. This second part of the drum system uses two channels as it is stereo with identical speaker columns on both sides.

THE GUITARS Both guitars use columns of twenty 12 inch speakers: Garcia's guitar has extensions beside Godchaux and behind Kreutzmann.

Garcia is using a Doug Irwin/Alembic custom guitar. It has a Gibson/Les Paul type body with a Fender Stratocaster





GRATEFUL DEAD

SCALE: $\frac{1}{4}" = 1'$

Mary Ann Meyer

pickup.

Weir currently plays a Gibson 335 guitar. He uses such special instruments as an Eventide Clockwork Digital Delay unit for repeating notes and creating an echo-like delay of different sound colorations and textures. Another accessory is an Alembic Parametric Equaliser (a flexible tone circuit) which gives him complete control of frequency response by enabling boost or cut adjustments at any or all of three band-widths. The sharpness of the boost or cut can also be controlled.

THE ELECTRIC BASS Phil Lesh is using a new quadrophonic bass, the electronics of which were designed and built by George Mundy and the body and pickups by Rick Turner. The new bass has the same versatile qualities as the old bass: three pickups (bass and treble low-impedance pickups covering all the strings, and a quad pickup which has a separate signal for each string); on each of the bass and treble pickups there are five controls which enable him to select 1) the band width of the filter, 2) the centre frequency of the filter, 3) the kind of filter being used, 4) how much of the filtered sound reaches the speakers and 5) mix the unequalised unfiltered direct sound. The variety of sounds which can be achieved on the bass is to do with the many different combinations of these variables which can be used. The new bass has a higher frequency response with a crisper tone. Lesh can get a different tone for each of the bass and treble pickups. The new bass has two quad pickups instead of one, the new one being a frequency-detector pickup. The main addition to the new bass is a Digital



Decoding Circuit such as that ten push buttons on the bass allow Lesh to select any one of sixteen quad spacial arrangements of his speakers, and eight in the stereo mode.

DESIGNERS AND WORKSHOPS The Grateful Dead's sound system has evolved over the last eight years as a technical and group enterprise, a sort of logical accumulation of speakers and people. Changes have been made continuously in all directions which aid in improving the quality of the sound, both which the audience hears and which the band has to work with on stage. The concept and design of the current system/level was worked out by Bear, Dan Healy and Mark Razine of the Dead's sound & equipment crew, and by Ron Wickersham

and Rick Turner of the Alembic sound company. The construction and regular maintenance is done at the Dead's technical workshops by the people responsible for managing and transporting the system on the road. The design and construction of some special electronic components was done at Alembic, where John Curl is a consultant to the project.

The number of people going on the road to handle all the sound equipment, lights, scaffolding and staging varies, but a typical configuration is: band—6, sound—10, lights—4, staging and trucking—7, road management—3. The sound system travels in a 40 foot semi, and staging and scaffolding on two flatbed semis and the lights in a twenty-four foot van. All of this weighs about 75 tons.

Mill Valley Jam Sessions



Golden State Recording Studios is the favourite recording studio of many of San Francisco's Mill Valley musicians. This album is a miniature of their sounds and ideas. With Mike Bloomfield as 'official' co-ordinator, personnel was as follows.

Drums: Spencer Dryden (Jefferson Airplane)
Rick Jagger, Mike Shrieves (Santana)
Guitar: Fred Burton
Bass: Mark Ryan (Quicksilver Messenger Service), Rick Dey ('Fish')
Congas: Dino Cuba
Vocals: Chicken Billy Thornton, Ray Stallings (Southern Comfort)
Rhythm guitar: Rick Dey ('Fish')



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A SHORT HISTORY OF POCO

Well, actually, it all started back in the Spring of 1966 - with the birth of a group called **THE BUFFALO SPRINGFIELD** (March 1966 - May 68). In the pre-Haight/Ashbury days of the mid sixties, folk-rock and good-time music (in the fields of which the Byrds and the Lovin' Spoonful were pioneers) were the American fusions of folk music and the Beatles. The Springfield's eclecticism spanned and encompassed both fields with unprecedented taste and invention. Unfortunately individual egos were too strong to be satisfactorily contained in one well-disciplined unit - and after two years of squabbles and three brilliant albums, they went their own ways.

NEIL YOUNG lead guitar and vocals replaced by **DOUG HASTINGS** replaced by the returning **NEIL YOUNG** guitar and vocals. Young went solo, playing folk clubs - until he decided to join his old mate in **CROSBY STILLS NASH & YOUNG**.

BRUCE PALMER replaced by **JIM FIELDER** replaced by the returning **BRUCE PALMER** replaced by **JIM MESSINA** bass and vocals.

DEWEY MARTIN drums and vocals (formerly the Dilards' drummer) made a couple of albums, but seems to have disappeared.

RICHEL FURAY rhythm guitar and vocals.

RICHEL FURAY arrived in Greenwich Village with a folk trio from Ohio called The Monks. They played whatever gigs they could get - mostly basket houses - until they broke up, whereupon he joined Stephen Stills and seven others in a New Christy Minstrels-styled group called The Au Go Go Singers. When this monster inevitably folded, Furay joined Stills in LA and set about forming The Buffalo Springfield.

JIM MESSINA, previously a studio engineer (he worked on the Springfield's second album), was invited to join the group for their last few months. When they broke up, he and Richie put the third (posthumous) album together.

RUSTY YOUNG played with "a big deal Colorado rock and roll band" called Boersyue Creque during the mid-sixties, they came to LA to strike gold, but struck poverty instead. They broke up, but not before Rusty had met Furay and Messina, and added a pedal steel part to 'Kind Woman' on the aforementioned Springfield album. He was invited to join the emerging Burrito Brothers, but plumped for Poco.

GEORGE GRANTHAM was also in Boersyue Creque, and was roped into Poco on Rusty's recommendation.

RANDY MEISNER was in the rival Colorado group, The Prior - who also came to LA and split up.

POGO had to become POCO #1

The original line-up lasted from August 1968, when Richie Furay and Jim Messina's nebulous idea to form a group solidified into reality (Walt Kelly, creator of a syndicated cartoon strip called "Pogo", was not amused by their adoption of the name and instigated legal proceedings - but the group chose to become POCO before the case reached court in March 1969), until April 1969 when Randy Meisner quit. Their first gig was at the Troubadour in Los Angeles in November 1968 - after which, many record companies (particularly A&M) were anxious to sign them. Richie's existing (Buffalo Springfield) contract with Atlantic hampered negotiations, but a deal was done with Epic, who released Graham Nash to Atlantic in exchange for Poco (they may have lost out financially, but not aesthetically!).

JIM MESSINA 6 string guitar and vocals.

RICHEL FURAY 12 string guitar and vocals.

RUSTY YOUNG pedal steel guitar.

GEORGE GRANTHAM drums and vocals.

RANDY MEISNER bass and vocals.

POCO #2

April 1969 to February 1970. Deciding to continue as a quartet necessitated Jim Messina switching back to bass - a role he disliked but grudgingly accepted while they sought a suitable fifth member. They gigged a lot during this period but delayed recording a second album.

JIM MESSINA bass and vocals.

RICHEL FURAY guitar and vocals.

RUSTY YOUNG pedal steel guitar.

GEORGE GRANTHAM drums and vocals.

Randy Meisner quits in April 1969. Richie: "People have head problems; he couldn't get along with either Messina or our old manager, and he just couldn't talk about it. So he quit." After joining, leaving, re-joining and re-leaving Rick Nelson's Stone Canyon Band, he joins the Eagles - with whom he still flies today.

POCO #3

February 1970 to November 1970. Timothy B. Schmit arrived in the nick of time to participate on 'Poco' (CBS 64082), released here in July 1970, and this line-up also recorded a live album 'DELIVERIN' (on Epic 64204), released February 1971... but then, Messina, who'd just got married, decided to call it a day and leave.

JIM MESSINA lead guitar and vocals.

RICHEL FURAY rhythm guitar and vocals.

RUSTY YOUNG pedal steel guitar.

GEORGE GRANTHAM drums and vocals.

TIM B. SCHMIT bass and vocals.

TIMOTHY B. SCHMIT, after being in a folk group (Tim, Tom & Ron), followed by a surf group called The Contenders, gained a local reputation playing bass with a Sacramento, California, Beatles-inspired rock band called The New Breed. Four years later (1968) they signed with producer Terry Melcher and cut an album for ABC Records. Melcher changed their name to Never Mind, and then to Glad - and he covered their recorded tracks with overdubs - much to the group's annoyance. They split up not long after the release of the album and Tim accepted Poco's invitation.

POCO #4

November 1970 to September 1973. The most stable line-up (so far), and the one which a few thousand fortunate saw play some remarkable sets at the Rainbow in February 1972. Three albums recorded during this period: 'FROM THE INSIDE' (Epic 64543, Dec 71), 'A GOOD FEELING TO KNOW' (Epic 65126, Jan 73), 'CRAZY EYES' (Epic 65631, Nov 73).

RICHEL FURAY rhythm guitar and vocals.

RUSTY YOUNG pedal steel and dobro.

GEORGE GRANTHAM drums, vocals, percussion.

TIM B. SCHMIT bass and vocals.

PAUL COTTON lead guitar and vocals.

PAUL COTTON, who was recommended to Poco by Pete Cetera (of Chicago), had been lead guitarist in a Buffalo Springfield styled group based in Chicago... The Illinois Speed Press, who's two albums, 'ILLINOIS SPEED PRESS' (April 1969) and 'DUET' (March 1970) (both on CBS, and both produced by James William Guercio) were never released here.

POCO #5

September 1973. "When Richie left, it didn't take us ten minutes to decide that we'd forgo on as a quartet... and it's really been fun - almost like a complete rebirth." The results of their rejuvenation can be heard in the latest of Poco's consistently fine albums, called 'SEVEN' (on Epic 80082, released June 1974).

RUSTY YOUNG pedal steel and dobro.

GEORGE GRANTHAM drums and vocals.

TIM B. SCHMIT bass and vocals.

PAUL COTTON lead guitar and vocals.

THESE TWO CHARTS WERE DRAWN BY PETE 'FREEHAND' FRAME... THE MAN WHO COULDN'T AFFORD TO USE A RULER...

Researched & drawn by Pete Frame / June 1974



THE RICK NELSON STORY PART ONE: The Imperial Years

CHLOE - BLUE-GREEN FOOTPRINTS THAT GLOW IN THE DARK PRODUCTIONS

To write a fully comprehensive article on the life and music of Rick(y) Nelson would take a book, and if this has got to be ready for the next ZigZag, a book is out of the question. What's more, no one has ever asked me to write a book. (Cries of "Shame!" from relieved onlookers.) Another problem affecting the fullness of this work is that I don't have all his records by any means. In most other cases, such an admission would preclude me from writing on the chosen subject, but when you consider that he has made, according to my reckoning, twenty-nine albums so far, spanning seventeen years from June 1957 when 'I'm Walkin'/'Teenager's Romance' was the first Nelson top ten single, when the man himself was three years and one day older than me, as he always was and always will be, but was probably less sensitive than I about his advancing age, it's not quite as bad as it sounds. What a dreadful sentence!

Anyway, it's time, as they say, to start at the start, so here's Rick talking about

EARLY DAYS

"My mother's name is Harriet Hilliard, and she was in a Fred Astaire film called 'Follow The Fleet', which made her a fairly big film star in the thirties. In fact, she started out singing with my dad's band [Ozzie Nelson], and that's where they met. As far as I'm aware, my father's band was a big band dance thing, maybe Glenn Millerish, and he and my mother started doing a lot of radio shows, like the Red Skelton Show, where my mother would play Red's mother in a skit, and my dad would get involved.

"That gave dad the idea for a family show, involving himself and my mother, but with other children playing the radio children's parts, which is how it went on for about the first six years, until a Christmas show, which

also featured Bing Crosby, whose kids were going to be on it. When Dave and I heard about it, 'If their kids are going to be on it . . .', and we went on that show. I was about seven and a half at the time, but it went pretty well, because I was kind of uninhibited about the whole thing—it was live, I couldn't care less, I didn't know what was going on, but I was having a good time.

"It was a nationally networked radio show, so it was a kind of natural progression to move into television, and for about a year, we did both radio and television shows, which meant a lot of work. The TV show ran from 1952 right through to 1966, and I was in it the whole time."

OVERTURE

"When I was sixteen, I was taking a girl on a date, and she said she was in love with a singer, so I decided to try to make a record. I did the song on the TV show, and that was before anyone knew the power that television has as far as exposure goes. I sang it on the show, and within that week it had sold a million, which was really incredible. I didn't have to start at the bottom of the music business—quite the reverse, for after one week, I had a million selling record, and I was playing to thousands of people right away."

Not a great deal of dues-paying there, I reckon, but only those who spent half their lives paying dues would insist on the necessity of same. Now the year, as we've said, is 1957, and Ricky was at Hollywood High School, and he was approaching his seventeenth birthday. Making a record seemed a reasonable thing to do, although why Verve should have been chosen is something which has been seemingly lost in the mists of time. Into the studio with Barney Kessel, a jazz

guitarist of the very highest class, who also made, a couple of years before, one of the most blisteringly brilliant records I've heard in any field, anytime, titled 'Julie Is Her Name' by Julie London, which deserves a re-issue—n.b. Alan Warner! Ricky and Barney put down three tracks—'Teenager's Romance', written by one David Gilliam, 'I'm Walkin'', which was peaking in the charts right at that time in the Fats Domino version, and 'You're My One And Only Love', a co-composition by Barney Kessel and someone called Marshall. The first record is a double A side of 'Teenager's Romance' and 'I'm Walkin' and gets to number 10 on June 24, and sells a million. If you doubt that a record which only made number 10 could sell a million, you should know that in 1957, there were no less than eighty-six million sellers.

"Verve didn't pay me, so we went through a lawsuit, and they eventually had to pay, but in the meantime, I'd signed with Imperial, and Verve sued me because of that. But they had that third side 'You're My One And Only Love', which they put out with some dumb instrumental on the back. It was recorded as a throwaway, because we had some more time left."

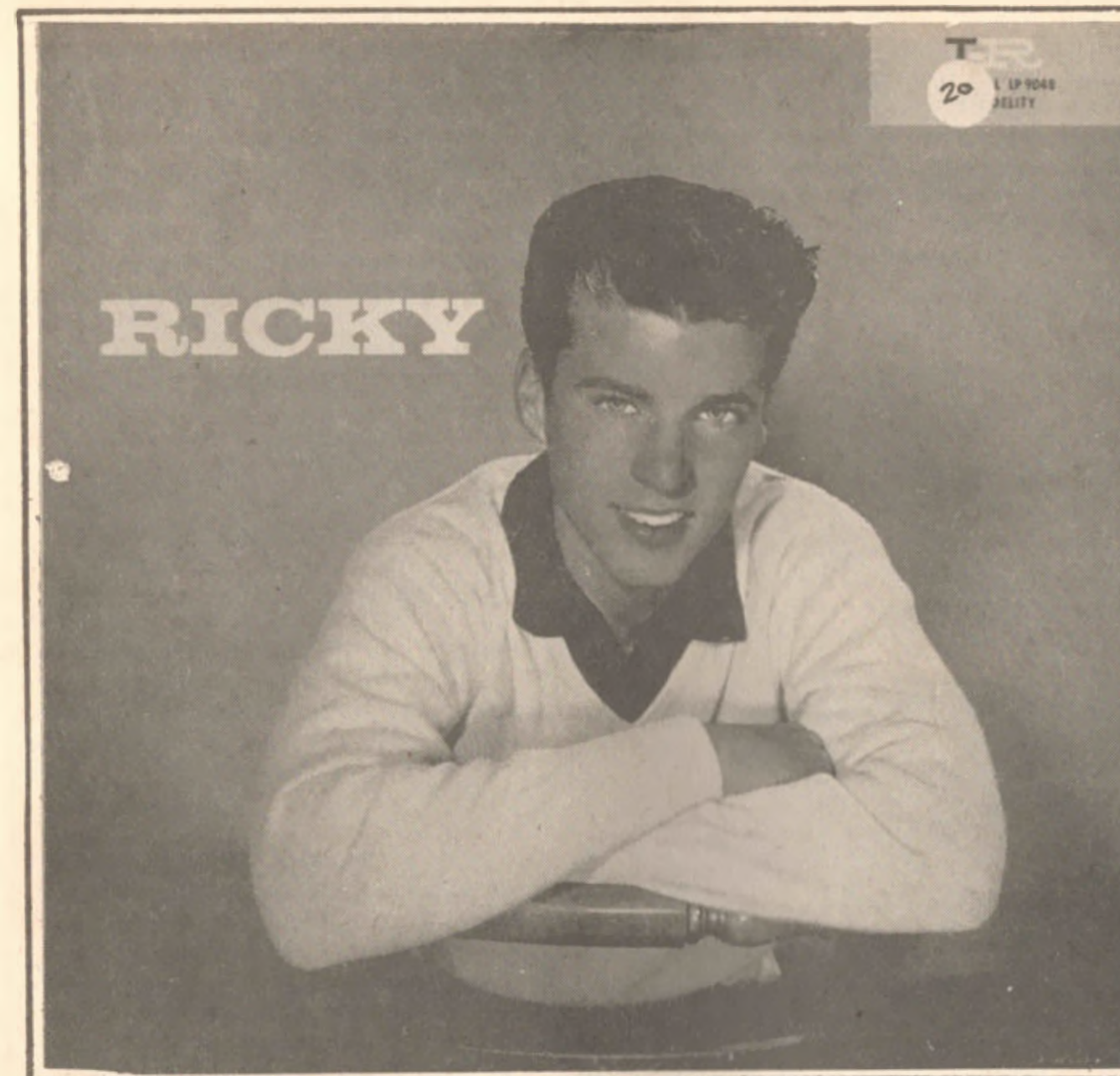
Verve and Imperial put out Ricky Nelson records at just about the same time, it would seem. Certainly, when 'Be Bop Baby', the first Imperial record, was zipping up the charts to number eight at the end of October '57. 'You're My One And Only Love' was reaching its own peak or number sixteen, and not making gold disc status like its Imperial rival. Maybe that was due to the dumb instrumental, a description I'm unable to improve on. The title was 'Honey Rock', and I don't believe you can buy it anywhere, which is probably just as well. 'You're My One And Only Love' can be

found on 'Carats Volume 3—MGM Smash Hits' which is still available through Polydor. I had a hand in compiling that album, and had I been invited to continue with the rest of the series, I would have been able to plug a subsequent volume in the 'Carats' series, which would have contained the two titles from that first Verve single. However, 'twas not to be—perhaps Malcolm Jones will oblige on some later golden epic.

A large part of the Nelson myth is the fact that his guitarist for the most successful part of his rock'n'roll time was James Burton. Of course, more about him later, but it wasn't always Burton on whom Ricky relied . . . "When I started to sing on the TV show, there was no James Kirkland, James Burton, Gene Garth or Richie Frost. On the first album, the lead guitarist was a guy called Joe Maphis, but James Burton was playing rhythm guitar. I also played rhythm guitar on those early albums—with four and a half chords!"

Just to amplify a little, Kirkland played bass, and was later replaced (on records anyway), by the ubiquitous Joe Osborn, Gene Garth (sometimes known as Gene Garf, but I think my spelling's right) was on piano, and Richie Frost played drums. "I first met those guys, who were with me for ten years on the road, just after my very first gig at the Ohio State Fair, which was a very big occasion. The organisers of the Fair said that they would provide me with a band, so I went out there, and literally, it was a Salvation Army band, who weren't at all into what I was doing. This guy was playing his drum marching style, so I thought I'd better get a band together."

"One day, I was up at Imperial, and I heard this music coming from the outer office, backing Bob Luman, and it was James Burton and James Kirkland. When I heard that, I wanted them, because it was exactly what I had in mind, and it worked very well—they went on salary, so that they were always available for recording and going on the road."



THE FIRST ALBUM

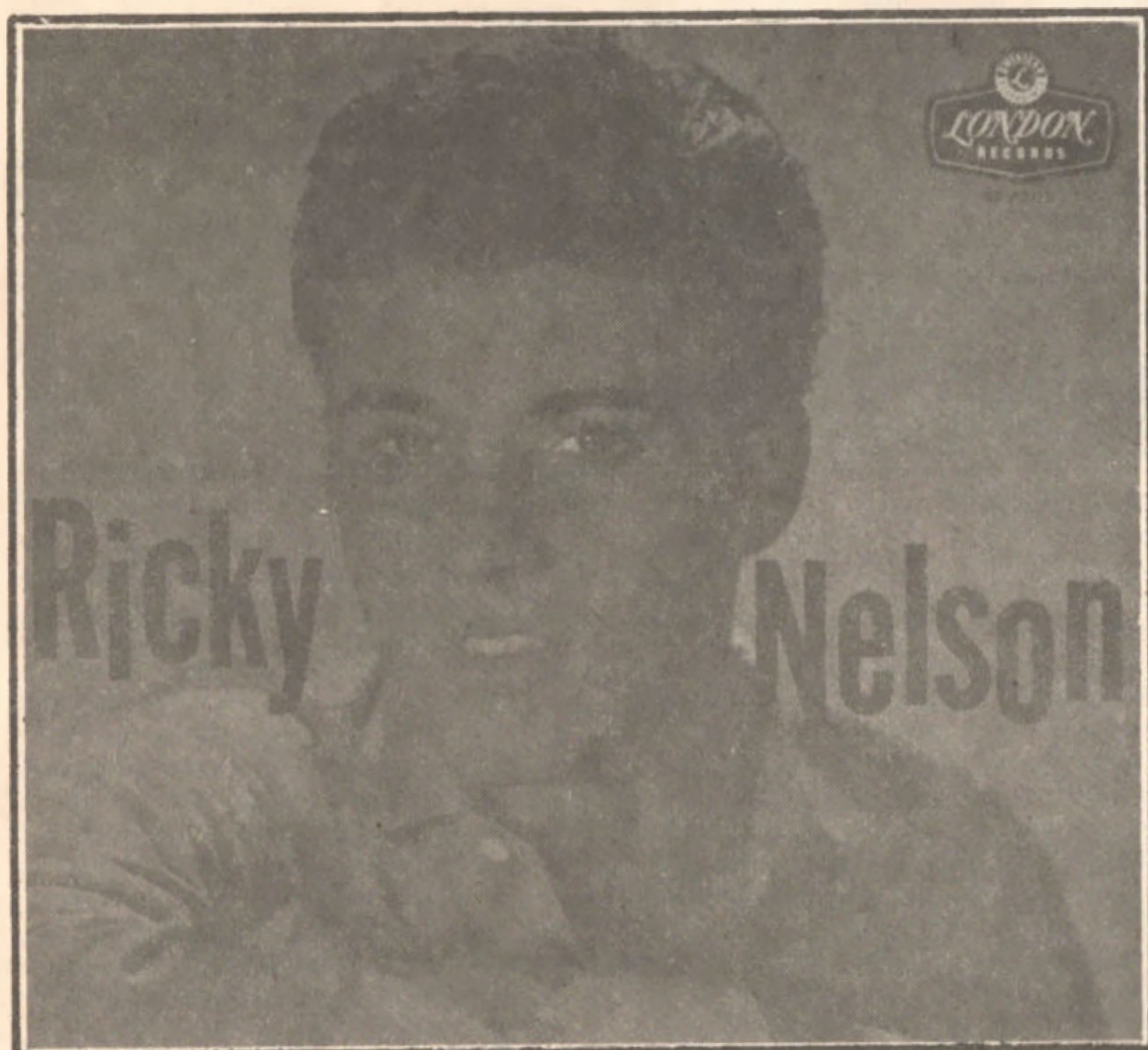
Now with the first LP of a bloke like Ricky Nelson, there's almost bound to be a good deal of plagiarism, both in the selection of material and the nicking of arrangements, but in listening to it, I can find a good many points of interest and reference, with which it is my intention to plague you at this point. Actually, I think it helps to put the early career of our man in some kind of perspective, and additionally, it's a good place to show off the album cover, which I hope will be reproduced somewhere around here. The round sticker which says "20" refers to that many cents, and that's how much the record, in less than good condition, cost me in LA last year. As you can see, it's called 'Ricky', and it was released in 1957. The first track is 'Honeycomb', and it's taken at an easy pace, somewhat slower than either the American hit by Jimmie Rodgers, or the English near-hit cover version by Marty Wilde. Mention of those two names leads me to inform you that Rodgers wasn't his real name. In fact, it was Jimmie Rodgers Snow, and he's the son of the famous Hank Snow, who I recently read had been with RCA for fifty years or something. Jimmie was actually a very good singer, purveying some good rock'n'roll as well as some more straightforward stuff like 'English Country Garden', and I'm pleased to have a 'Best Of Jimmie Rodgers' album, which came out a couple of years ago on Polydor/Roulette, although it's now deleted since Roulette went to Pye in Britain. Marty Wilde, on the other hand, seems to have been with Philips or Phonogram or whatever you like for almost as long as Hank Snow was with RCA, and I've got his version of 'Honeycomb' on a fantastically good value thing called 'Wilde About Marty', which cost 49p, and has a lot of his hits on. Just to completely confuse you, that's not the same album as the original (1958) 'Wilde About Marty', but anyway, I'm sure both are long deleted. If you're interested in Marty Wilde, the cohorts of the amazing

Nigel Grainge at Phonogram have just put out a good twenty-track album called 'Good Rockin'—Then And Now', which also contains most of Marty's hit, although unaccountably it misses out 'Honeycomb'. Reverting to the subject, Ricky's version isn't as good as either Jimmie's or Marty's, although the dreadful guitar solo on Marty's is run close by the equally nauseous male backing vocals on Ricky's. Finally, to save the inevitable correspondence, Marty Wilde is now on the Magnet label, of Alvin Stardust notoriety.

Second track is 'Boppin' The Blues', of Carl Perkins fame. Ricky's version is very much an early white rock'n'roll track with classically obvious backing, enlivened by a neat guitar solo, presumably by the aforementioned Mr Maphis, who is, I believe, a well known Hollywood session guitarist. That's where you pause to check out your album sleeves, and then we get on to 'Be Bop Baby', which was the hit off this album. According to Joseph Murrell's 'Daily Mail Book of Golden Discs' (a kind of equally essential early relative of Lillian Roxon's book), 'Be Bop Baby' didn't go gold till 1960. Perhaps it's because of the woefully bad ending . . . 'Have I Told You Lately That I Love You' is of course a blatant rip-off of the Elvis version, and more fuel for the fire that says that Nelson was a pale clean Presley (a camp to which I don't subscribe, by the way). It's probably worth saying that the Elvis version comes from what I would imagine to be a very rare EP, which also has the alternate take of 'Don't Leave Me Now' (different from the 'Jailhouse Rock' version), and also Elvis ripping off Fats Domino on 'Blueberry Hill' (they were all doing it, weren't they?). 'Teenage Doll' is the sort of song which comes last in the Eurovision Song Contest, and deserves nothing better, but fortunately 'If You Can't Rock Me', written by Little Walter, is pretty good. The words seem a little bit heavy for a seventeen year old to be singing, but perhaps we should be charitable, and say that maybe the double-entendres were only single, and he took it at face value. More to the point, the song boasts a guitar solo which must have formed the basis for literally thousands of subsequent guitarists' efforts, both recorded and amateur. Nice.

The second side kicks off with 'Whole Lotta Shakin'', and it would be churlish to expect other than a pale Jerry Lee imitation. Again, though, you get a great guitar solo, and very useful bass fills, and I suppose that when you consider the raunchiness and general attitude of J.L.L., maybe Ricky was a cleaner, pleasanter rocker who might appeal much more to the ladies whose fellas were adoring Lewis. 'Baby I'm Sorry' is a routine song, with a Jordanaires backing vocal sound, and should be categorised as an Elvis reject, while 'Am I Blue' is brilliant in its instrumental beginning, but as soon as the vocal enters, they turn the guitar down. An early piece of overkill production, almost rescued by some nice handclaps, up to Fats Domino standard. 'I'm Confessin' was later recorded by Frank Ifield, and maybe he listened to this version, because Ricky comes on like a fifties Val Doonican. The good version of this is by Nino Tempo and April Stevens (whatever happened? etc), and Ricky goes into a very nasty talking bit. At one point the track nearly stops, then unluckily, it restarts. No way. Nino Tempo, while we're mentioning him, is one of the more forgettable artists in 'Rock Around The Clock', but had several very worthwhile hits around the early sixties. 'Your True

Love' isn't the Jack Scott song (oh no, that was 'My True Love'), but a Carl Perkins thing with a jumping introduction, and then what I think is a terrible guitar solo, although conceivably it might be in the "so bad it's good" class. Afficionados of 'A Child's Garden Of Grass' will know what I mean if I mention 'Myron Floren' music. Still, this track has a good guitar outro, so maybe we'll let it pass. The final crowning glory/insult (delete inapplicable) is Ricky doing Bing and Grace on 'True Love', initially backed by simple (very) acoustic guitar, and sound alike to the Cliff Adams singers of 'Sing Something Simple' fame. Oh, Light Programme, where are you now? In all honesty, not a record to rush out and buy, not that you can, because it's age alone should guarantee it obscurity, but an interesting curiosity, and a yardstick by which to judge some of the glories which followed shortly afterwards.



TWO THROUGH SIX

Which refers to the next five albums Ricky made for Imperial. Around this time, I re-read the two transcripts I have of Rick Nelson interviews, and it seems that what he had to say about his early albums was more in general terms than anything specific, so I've borrowed several albums from the Nelson museum run by Rocky Prior, an old mate, and we'll skip through them. After 'Ricky', you get 'Ricky Nelson', some kind of progress, I suppose. By this time, the famous band was with our man, yet the album still sounds as if it could have been a Marty Wilde record. From the first album, a single of 'Be Bop Baby' and 'Have I Told You Lately That I Love You' was released, and then came two singles, in England at least, which weren't featured on albums at the time, a very strange state of affairs. These were 'Stood Up'/'Waitin' In School' and 'Believe What You Say'/'My Bucket's Got A Hole In It', all but the last of which are available on the 'Legendary Masters' album, which we'll no doubt get around to later. It was only the fourth single which came from this second album, and in fact that was one of the things for which Ricky is still highly thought of even now, 'Poor Little Fool'. As far as I'm concerned, that

track is by far the best thing on the album, and it's still a classic in my book. Everything works, from Burton and Kirkland being correctly balanced, right through to the Jordanaires impersonators, who just for once are unintrusive. Interesting to note, then, that it was written by Eddie Cochran's girlfriend, Sharon Sheeley, who nearly got hers when Eddie went to play lead with Buddy Holly. Anyway, rushing through the other tracks, we start with Bobby Lee Trammell's 'Shirley Lee', a wild type song with primitive backing and an almost Stan Freberg like echo on the voice. Burton takes the first of several good solos, although the track is somewhat trebley, but the most interesting thing is Bobby Lee, who I believe to have been a kind of mild Screamin' Jay Hawkins type, and a bit freaky. The only thing of his I have is a Sue single called 'New Dance In France', and although that's not terribly wild, I'd be interested to

does infinitely better.

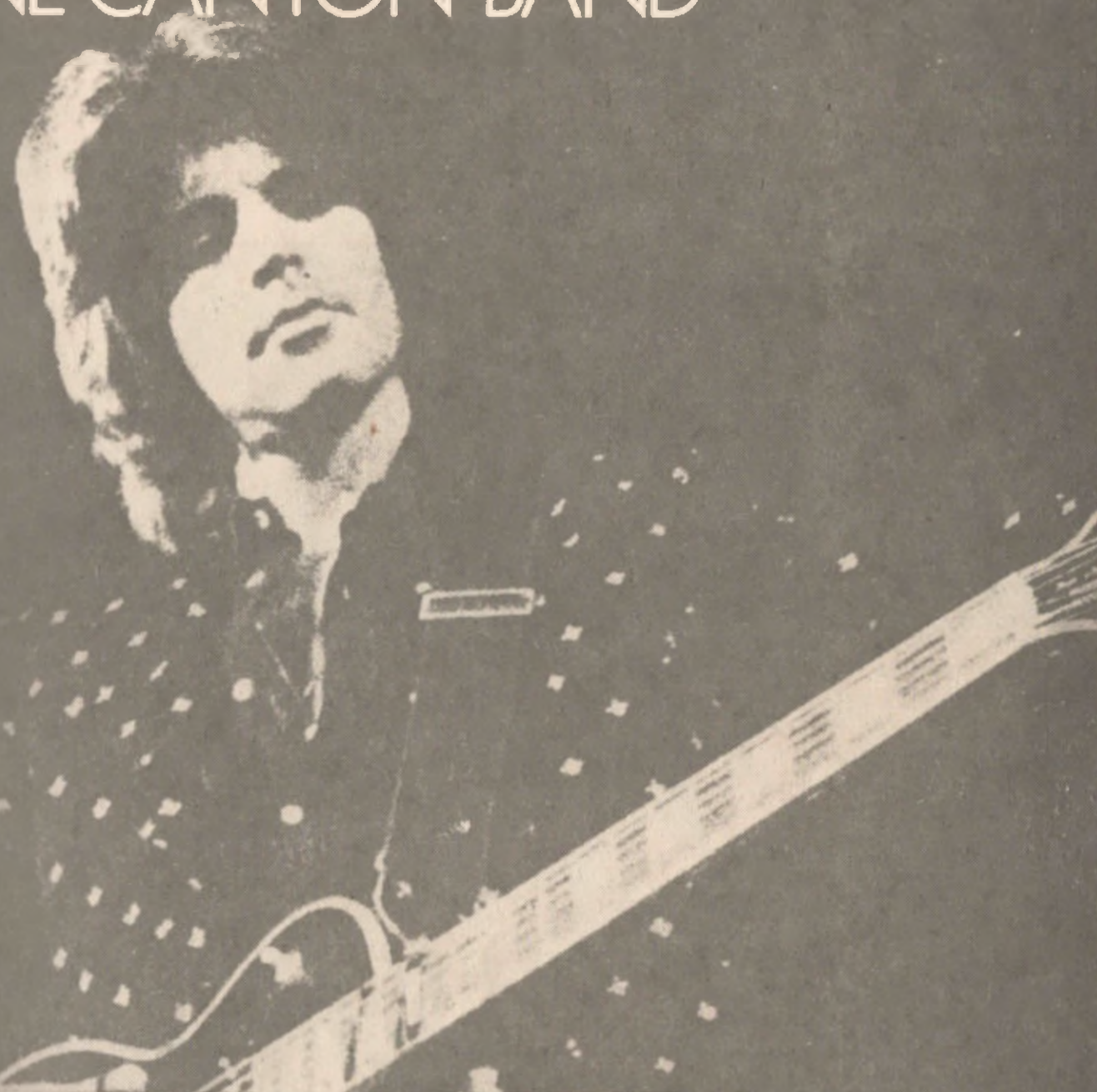
Better by far is 'Don't Leave Me This Way', which was the flip of 'Poor Little Fool' and is one of the few distinctive songs on the album. It was written by Ricky, probably the earliest of his compositions to be recorded, and it's still good now. Of course, the guitar solo is wonderful, very typical of the sort of stuff on which the legend is based. From this point, the record generally improves, with 'My Babe', later the B side of the 'Lonesome Town' single, and in my opinion, one of the better versions of an overused song. I'll pass over 'I'll Walk Alone', a Val Doonican-y try at the Elvis ballad technique which fails, and get on to 'There Goes My Baby' (not the Drifters' song), written by Kirkland and Burton. Although derivative, it's a good rocker, with the writers doing well, and worth investigating. Then it's 'Poor Little Fool', and that's the end. A typical fifties album by a single hit-maker—two hit singles, two B sides, and a lot of filler. Also, you can detect the mascara on Ricky's cover photo. Move over, Bowie, and let Ricky take over . . .

Before we get to 'Ricky Sings Again!' (and can you believe those titles?), a swift word about the non-album singles. Both are double-sided classics, so why aren't they on this LP? Both 'Believe What You Say' and 'Waitin' In School' were written by the Burnette Bros., Dorsey and Johnny. They are dynamite, and so is 'Stood Up' particularly. The inclusion of these four tracks could have made the album a solid gem.

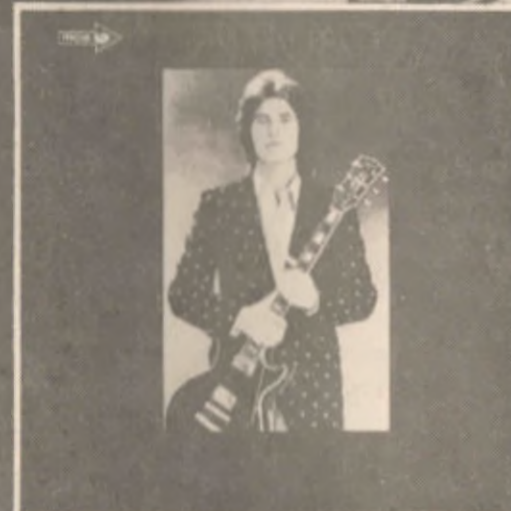
Maybe something like that occurred to somebody, because 'Believe What You Say' does make it to the third album. It's joined by another B side, 'Never Be Anyone Else But You', and the next two A sides, 'Lonesome Town' and 'It's Late', but they missed another one off which should have been on there, 'I Got A Feeling', which was the B side of 'Someday'. Really weird, the way his albums were programmed, and very annoying to find such tracks unavailable now. There will now be a short intermission while I explain a couple of things that have come up since I wrote the above a couple of days ago. First thing was that I rang up the teenage rave of North Marston, Pete 'Crazy Legs' Frame, and expressed the opinion that it was pretty poor that 'Stood Up' and 'Waitin' In School' had been missed off the first album. He muttered the usual Swahili curse, and assured me that they were, where-upon we locked verbal antlers, and like a bad B movie, with half a screen each, shouted the titles at each other, his sleeve in his hand, mine in mine. We were both right—the English version has those two extra tracks, which are missing on the American version. The next bit of information came from Ray McCarthy, the Wandsworth Warrior, and also President, Chairman and members of the British Curt Boetcher Appreciation Society. Ray keeps showing me super obscure records, and one of these was an EP titled 'Ricky Part 4', which consists of 'Stood Up', 'Waitin' In School', 'Believe What You Say' and 'My Bucket's Got A Hole In It'. The sleeve, identical to the 'Ricky' album, and the 'Part 4' seem to indicate something or other, but it's so confusing. Not improving on the situation is the fact that on 'Ricky Sings Again' is an advert for 'Ricky' and 'Ricky Nelson', and the former doesn't mention the two extra tracks, even though the copy of 'Sings Again' is an English one. So the man at Decca took the trouble to change the numbers on the American artwork, but it didn't occur to him to check the titles. Oh, this is going on far too long—let's hope it prevents a few letters anyway.

RICK NELSON

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Now, the third album, and about time too. It's significantly improved—much better recording level, a chunkier sound, a great record, which is certainly the best so far. 'It's Late', a good song by Dorsey Burnette, should be familiar, and it has a magnificent instrumental sound which makes it a classic. Get it now, if you don't have it. Also by Dorsey B. is 'One Of These Mornings', which starts off with a great Sun/ Lincoln Carr bass sound, and seemed as if it might have been written for the Burnette Rock'n'Roll Trio. Having checked it out, it wasn't on either of the two excellent albums which I have of that group, but admirers of that genre should listen to this Nelson track. 'Believe What You Say' is also ace, and another bit of info from Rocky Prior was that the single version was a different take from that on the album in the manner of being with/ without the backing vocals. Both versions have a superb solo. One of the best, in fact, magnificent in its simplicity, and you can really hear the piano, which is nice. 'Lonesome Town', written by Baker Knight, and the first of his many song-writing credits through the Nelson career, is just beautiful. Of this album, Rick said, "I was happy with the tracks I put down for Imperial, but you can't say they hold up now, because of the improvement in recording techniques. I still like 'Believe What You Say' a lot, because it had a certain sound about it, and 'Lonesome Town' has never ashamed me. It was one of the first songs that just had an acoustic guitar, which I played myself, which was amazing! That's a good example of trying out a song many different ways, but coming back to the simplest."

I can still remember the great thrill I had when I discovered the chord sequence to 'Lonesome Town'. It meant that my Lonnie Donegan repertoire could finally be expanded. I also recall a very good version of the song by Josh White and his son on the TV several hundred years ago. 'Trying To Get To You' is a good indi-

cation of the way things had changed by the time of this album. Not a straight Elvis copy, but a fairly individual version, with

solo and the better recording quality. 'Old Enough To Love', which starts off side two, is also a little below the high standard set by this LP, but it could certainly have been an Everly Bros album track. Then comes 'Never Be Anyone Else But You', the other side of 'It's Late', with Burton's chunka-chunka guitar, which is another classic, and part of every party troubadour's singalong set, until the middle eight, that is. 'I Can't Help It' is OK too, with more Western Swing rhythms, and an interesting solo, to say the least, unconventional, from J.B. 'You Tear Me Up' is a very Presley-like rocker with a sizzling intro, and is recommended to Elvis people, while 'It's All In The Game' is a straight cover of Tommy Edwards' million seller, which was probably a hit when this album was being recorded.

A sideways step here, to talk about the final track, a Johnny Cash song titled 'Restless Kid'. There was a theory about it—"The story about 'Restless Kid' being cut out of 'Rio Bravo' isn't really correct, because it was never really in the film. I remember going over to Dimitri Tiomkin's house, and he had a song that he'd written for the film, that I really didn't care for at all, and I had this song that Johnny Cash had written that I wanted in. The song just came about from talking to Johnny one night. I used to live near him in California, and saw him quite a lot, and when I told him about the story of the film, and that I was having trouble getting a song together, he wrote the song." In fact 'Rio Bravo' is an ace film, and the stars are John Wayne, Dean Martin and Ricky. See it if you can—a classic western. Going back to the song, it's pretty good, although obviously a Cash song, mostly due to the Tennessee Two back-



a somewhat Commander Codyish rhythm. Oh yeah, I've seen Cody twice now, and I didn't think they were that good. Still, I'll keep trying. The final and least good track on the first side is 'Be True To Me', which is fairly silly, but rescued by the Burton

ing sound, and finishes off a very fine album which I would wholeheartedly recommend. It's taken a long time to get to the fourth album, but I reckon it gets a bit quicker now. This one, 'Songs By Ricky', isn't as good as its immediate

predecessor. One single, 'Just A Little Too Much'/'Sweeter Than You', which is, as usual with the singles, excellent, with five other reasonable tracks and five duffers. Of interest are the fact that there are five Dorsey Burnette songs, three of which ('Just A Little Too Much', 'Don't Leave Me', and 'I've Been Thinkin'') are good, three Baker Knight songs ('You'll Never Know What You're Missing', 'One Minute To One' and 'Sweeter Than You'), all of which are good, plus 'Half Breed', not as in Cher, but by John D. Loudermilk. The rest is fairly nasty, but I should note that 'You'll Never Know What etc' was covered here by Emile Ford, whose brother now plays in Medicine Head. Not a totally recommended album.

I expect you're saying to yourselves, "How can he only spend a few lines on that one, when he spent loads more on the earlier ones?" The answer is fairly simple—in the same way that every artist eventually goes over the top, Ricky was on a downhill slide. All the innovation was no longer noticeable in artistic terms. The songs were patchy as far as a whole album went, and excitement turned to being routine. Also, I'm finding that the music is less inspirational to me personally.



Still, we must press on, with 'More Songs By Ricky'. Four good tracks, one that's halfway there, and seven of junk. The key is at the top of the titles—'Musical Arrangements by JIMMIE HASKELL', it says. He tries so hard to earn his money that he gave poor old Rick the castration treatment. The good tracks are 'Ain't Nothin' But Love', and 'Proving My Love', both by Baker Knight, 'Hey Pretty Baby', by Dorsey Burnette, which is the best track on the record, and 'Make Believe', by someone called Marie. The halfway one is also by Baker Knight, and is called 'I'm All Through With You', but is taken over by the strings to a certain extent. The rest of it is pure schmalz, cabaret club mung, and the best thing about the record, apart from the tracks mentioned, is the sleeve, which has a lot of pix of Rick, not still Ricky, with captions like "Rick, like so many young people, today, an avid camera fan, seldom goes anywhere without his Kodak"; or "The studio refrigerator is always well stocked with Rick's favorite [sic] drink—Coca-Cola." Finally, "If it has wheels and moves fast, Rick likes it. Here he's trying out Dave's motorcycle on the studio lot." Now I

sincerely don't want you to think that I'm mocking or knocking—remember, at the time of this, the fifth LP, he was still only twenty, and I expect he was the victim of every possible manipulation by those making money out of him. Having met the man, I'm sure that he wouldn't have done all that cabaret stuff if he hadn't been forced to, and the whole thing stinks of total hype, as if the manipulators were trying to move their boy quickly into the Las Vegas circuit, so that they could afford their second yacht. They've damn near disposed of Burton, chopped bits off the male chorus and made them into females, and given Ricky songs his granny might like. The result—no singles from the album, and no success. The mention of singles provokes a list,

direct crib from his. There may be a lot of truth in the rumour that I was welcome as a cleaned up Elvis, because I was a few years younger, so there was a large group of younger people who were left out of identifying with Elvis. I was on a family show, and people considered us part of their family, with TV coming right into their homes. I never set out to necessarily capitalise on what I was—if anything, I wanted to be a dirty rock'n'roll singer, but I had no choice. It's people who make up that image—I still go through all that stuff about Ricky and Rick, but I never really cared, and every other article I read about myself starts off, 'Rick, as he is now known . . .', and I go, 'Oh yeah'. My real name is Eric, which should blow a few minds."



The following singles were not released on LP at the time: 'Mighty Good'/'I Wanna Be Loved', 'Young Emotions'/'Right By My Side', 'Yes Sir That's My Baby'/'I'm Not Afraid', 'Milk Cow Blues'/'You're The Only One', before LP number six, 'Rick Is 21', which contains 'Hello Mary Lou' and 'Travellin' Man'. After that, you get 'A Wonder Like You'/'Everlovin'', 'Young World', 'Teenage Idol'/'I've Got My Eyes On You' and 'It's Up To You'/'I Need You'. Sort of reminds you of the Roy Wood situation a bit, doesn't it? Another small curio comes around this time, an EP called 'Ricky Sings Spirituals'. Two songs by Baker Knight, two by Ricky himself (or at least by someone called Nelson), and a very up-front female backing chorus. I'm afraid that neither spiritually or musically is it very inspired—in fact, as soon as it's finished, you feel you'll never really want to play it again. Perhaps the motivation is again that Elvis copy thing, which I'm sure Ricky never really subscribed to. Again, it smells like manipulation, but I've got a quote on the subject. "I wasn't trying at all to be Elvis when he was in the army, and my Spirituals EP wasn't supposed to be a

It seems kinda obvious that 'More Songs By Ricky' was a washout, when you hear 'Rick Is 21'. It won't be mentioned again, but this is where the name abbreviation changed, and the style of the music reverts strongly to the third album, I reckon. The songwriters are interesting—Dorsey Burnette gets the first track, 'My One Desire', and Jerry Fuller makes his first appearance as a writer, a significant point when you consider that he wrote '(It's A) Young World' and 'It's Up To You', as well as 'Travellin' Man', which is on this album, together with a perfectly amazing track called 'Break My Chain' which just has a blistering Burton solo. Inevitably, there's some rubbish here, presumably to keep Haskell employed, such as 'Do You Know What It Means To Miss Orleans', but much of the stuff here is of a standard above average. Oh, there's a couple of other interesting songwriters—Dave Burgess, once a member of the Champs, and an up and coming young lad named Gene Pitney. Hands up, all those who knew that he wrote 'Hello Mary Lou', which has perhaps the best known bit of Burton guitar from this period. Six of the tracks here are good,

three so-so, and only three bad, including the aforementioned 'New Orleans' and a totally misplaced 'Stars Fell On Alabama'. A strange LP, but with more good things than bad.

At this point, I've just re-read Ed Ward's sleeve notes on the 'Legendary Masters' album, and he puts this album down as being "comprised largely of seeming leftovers," with which I can't really agree, because it's probably the next best album after the third one.

This marathon is coming to an end, the end of the first era. Before we go any further with the last album, 'Album Seven', and the compilations, there are a few things Rick said which belong in this period, so here's a good place to put them in.

JAMES BURTON

It would be nice to be able to put in a lot about the man who made Ricky's albums nearly as famous as Ricky did, but life's not like that, unfortunately. However, Rick isn't a very loquacious person, and I think he'd agree to that, and this was the total.

"Nobody knew James before he joined me. It was his first time in town from his previous experience on 'Louisiana Hayride'. He had a certain sound, and he was the front runner of a lot of guitar styles, which people don't even realise now. He

ducer's clique that you have to get in, and so he just wanted to stay there. Now that James is with Elvis, it's not really like being on the road, because he normally only plays Las Vegas. It's a joke between Elvis and me—"So you finally got James then!", although he had Scotty Moore, who was also extremely good. In fact, Scotty almost came with me in those early days when he was with D.J. Fontana and Bill Black."

SONGWRITERS

"Most of the songs I got were by writers I didn't know, but Baker Knight, who gets a lot of songwriting credits over the years, was a great friend of mine. I always chose my own material." (I don't believe that. J.T.) "Quite often, James would appear with some record, or someone would send it in. For example, Gene Pitney recorded 'Hello Mary Lou' about a year and a half before he gave it to me, when he used to do a lot of demos, for Aaron Schroeder, I guess. It's not true that I used the name of Jerry Fuller as a songwriting alias. He's now a producer for Columbia, I think, and he certainly produced the Union Gap. He started off as a vocalist, and had a couple of hits in the States. He took 'Travellin' Man' to Sam Cooke originally, and a while before Sam died, I met him, and he said he was really sorry he hadn't done that one. It was laying around for a year before anything was done about it."

Ed Ward feels was the last genuine album that Rick made for Imperial. I don't know whether that's true or not, because the 'Legendary Masters' mentions one called 'It's Up To You', which conceivably contains some of the 'Young World' stuff as well as the title track, but I'm fairly certain that it wasn't put out here. Still, there's no way that 'Album Seven' could be described as bad—it's just the same as before, but with somewhat inferior songs, although one can't say that about the excellent version of Gershwin's 'Summertime' which is very gripping. Generally, though the songs are of a novelty, banal type, the only other exception being 'Today's Teardrops', which was also the B side of Roy Orbison's 'Blue Angel', my familiarity with that showing where I was at in the autumn of 1960. But as far as England went, that was the end of an era, the last Rick Nelson album to come out on the famous London label.

REISSUES

Two important ones, one for hard up folks, and the other a prestige package. The cheapie is 'The Very Best Of Rick Nelson', which is a straight budget price reissue of 'Million Sellers'. You get sixteen of the tracks we've mentioned, and all for about a pound. Excellent value, and a very fine introduction to the work of Mr Nelson. For the more ambitious among you, 'Ricky Nelson', in the Legendary Masters series, is a twenty-six tracker double album with even more goodies, split up as follows: from the first album, two tracks, from the second, five; third, eight (excellent!); fourth, two; fifth, none; sixth, three; seventh, none; plus six odd tracks which were singles. At this point, I'd like to point out a small mistake in Ed Ward's otherwise praiseworthy sleeve note, and that is that the track 'A Long Vacation', which is the title track of one of the later repackaged albums, was not a new track, and comes from the fourth album. That was one of several cash-in type albums released after Rick had left Imperial for Decca, and the most horrid of these is one called 'Rick Nelson Sings For You', which was put out at the same time as an album of new material on Decca called 'Sings For You'. Very scrupulous, these record people...

END OF PART ONE

We'll leave the final words of this rambling episode to Rick. "I joined Imperial for five years, and when that time was up, I signed with Decca for twenty years, and as I'm apparently enjoying some kind of revival at the moment, it's not unexpected to see the Legendary Masters. I quite like them, in fact, but I wish they hadn't split it up into stereo, because really there are basically only three or four instruments most of the time, and they were mostly recorded on one track machines anyway. I don't think the Legendary Masters are a big deal in the States but for what it is, it's done very well, and the guy who wrote the notes was very good. I don't regard it as competition between my old and new images, because I can't pretend I didn't do those things. As long as people put it in the right perspective..."

Hmm, Wonder if I did? Next issue, the middle period, covering the first seven or eight Decca albums. Bye for now.

□ JOHN TOBLER



was the first one with a Telecaster, and the first one to put banjo strings on his guitar. It finally happened that James was making more money playing sessions, and the same went for Joe Osborn [who replaced James Kirkland on bass around 1961]. James really got to be a security for me at one time, to the extent where I didn't know whether I could do a show without him. It got to the point where he wasn't available to go on the road—if you start playing sessions, and then you leave for a time, they just get someone else. It's a pro-

ALBUM SEVEN

After several albums where backing musicians were not mentioned, this sleeve lists the Nelson band, which by now had James Burton and Richie Frost from the original group, while Kirkland and Garth were now replaced by Joe Osborn and Ray Johnson. Worth noting that only Nelson and Presley bothered to name check the lads who were part of their success story, and look what's happened nowadays... trail-blazing indeed. Even so, there's an element of déjà vu about this album, which

zigzag poll results

dylan song

INTRO

When I fondly dreamt up this poll, I had no idea that it was going to take the best part of my afternoons, for a protracted period of time, to count the bleeders. Especially in the summer months when I should be spending that time watching sport on the telly (the real reason for my retirement folks). So I've counted these up during Royal Ascot, The World Cup, Wimbledon, The British Open (that little Seth Efyken fellow Player, really has got the most beautiful technique, you have to admit), and the best part of two Test series. So, many thanks for all the entries—all 632 of them. One of the principal delights was to find an entry that indicated a vast common area of agreement. One bloke was into all my favourite bands—Dan Hicks, Family, Nick Drake, Boz Scaggs—extraordinary. Unfortunately after I had carted those 632 home, they kept arriving in the office, but I figured I had enough on my plate coping with all those, so it's not absolutely accurate—but near enough. I hope you enjoy reading them and playing a few of the records again.

—Connor.

1. All Along The Watchtower—Hendrix
2. Mr Tambourine Man—Byrds
3. You Ain't Goin' Nowhere—Byrds
4. Mighty Quinn—Manfred Mann
5. It's All Over Now Baby Blue—Them
6. My Back Pages—Byrds
7. Si Tu Dois Partir—Fairports
8. I'll Keep It With Mine—Fairports
9. This Wheel's On Fire—Brian Auger/Jutie Driscoll
10. Tears Of Rage—Band

Strong Challengers

When I Paint My Masterpiece—Band
Percy's Song—Fairports
I Shall Be Released—Youngbloods

Report

Again, a fairly predictable victory, with the first two songs collecting about 80% of the votes between them. Staggering absentees were Odetta who has made some dynamite versions of Dylan songs, and Rod Stewart (ditto), who would have collected all my four votes for 'Only A Hobo'. Only *one* other person voted for it, which is really surprising. It's fabulous.

albums

Winners

1. Forever Changes
2. Trout Mask Replica
3. Notorious Byrd Brothers
4. Moondance
5. American Beauty
6. Clear Spot
7. Hot Rats
8. Safe As Milk
9. Leige And Lief
10. Electric Ladyland

Strong Challengers

Sergeant Pepper
Highway 61 Revisited
Alone Together
Pet Sounds
Blonde On Blonde

Report

The Floyd scored well but on all their albums, which must say something. Otherwise, not many surprises, except for the absentees, which aren't really that astonishing. ZigZag readers rumbled the Stones years ago. I would have voted for Hot Rats and Bandstand.

z.z.band u.k.

1. Traffic
2. Henry Cow
3. Caravan
4. 10 cc
5. Bowie
6. Stackridge
7. Kilburn And The High Roads
8. Soft Machine
9. The Kinks
10. Starry Eyed And Laughing

Strong Challengers

John Martyn
Steeleye Span
Man
Bonzos
Sutherland Brothers And Quiver

Report

Plenty of ignorance here about what ZigZag has done in the past. Come on lads and lasses, buy those back issues. And blimey, not a vote for Free, except for my four.

z.z.band non-u.k.

Winners

1. Little Feat
2. Steely Dan
3. Tangerine Dream
4. Gong
5. Amon Duul
6. Jackson Browne
7. The Band
8. Doug Sahm (and Sir Douglas)
9. New Riders Of The Purple Sage

Strong Challengers

Earth Opera
Kaleidoscope
Steelwind

Report

Some geezers actually voted for The Byrds, and Beefheart! Maybe they misread the question. I'm still out of step with you all. Two votes each to Brian Wilson and JJ Cale. They didn't score a sausage.

flawless

1. Forever Changes
2. Abbey Road
3. Workingman's Dead
4. The Band
5. Highway 61 Revisited
6. Pet Sounds
7. Where's The Money
8. The Yes Album
9. Trout Mask Replica
10. Music Of My Mind

Strong Challengers

Everybody Knows This Is Nowhere
Layla
Tubular Bells
American Beauty
Ziggy Stardust And The Spiders From Mars

Report

Someone pointed out that the notion of a flawless album was inane since flawlessness was itself a flaw. I'd refer them to Bertrand Russell's work of many years ago on the notion of self referring classes for my reply. What I was after was an implicit statement of what standards readers most frequently evinced in their judgements of albums, and I think we got it to a certain extent. I would have voted for 'After The Goldrush', but my mind was changed by Tom Stieghar whose entry was a delight to read, who justified his votes for 'Where's The Money'

with these words. 'This isn't only one of my favourite albums, but the best live record I ever heard. It's got that live feel to it, but not overpowering like eg 'The Real Live John Sebastian'. The timing is superb—(Tom means the intros and gags—)and is a great showcase for some of Dan's tongue-in-cheek songs'. Too true. Listen to 'Caught In The Rain'.

neglect

Winners

1. Kevin Ayers
2. Nick Drake
3. Tim Buckley
4. Loudon Wainwright III
5. Captain Beefheart
6. Roy Harper
7. Boz Scaggs
8. David Ackles
9. Michael Nesmith
10. Syd Barrett

Strong Challengers

Randy Newman
Jackson Browne
Wild Man Fischer
Mike Hart

Report

The blonde dipso scored very heavily, maybe you all thought I meant neglect of person. The disparity between the column inches of newsprint, and quality inches of vinyl is most glaring, to my mind, in the cases of Nick Drake, Ry Cooder, and Randy Newman (2 votes).

pioneer

Winners

1. Captain Beefheart
2. Dylan
3. The Misunderstood
4. The Beatles
5. The Mothers Of Invention
6. The Velvet Underground
7. Jimi Hendrix
8. Love
9. Pink Floyd
10. Grateful Dead

Strong Challengers

Peter Hammill
The Byrds
Cream
Buddy Holly

Report

The good Captain won this one by the proverbial street, to which nobody in their right minds could take exception. Interesting notes: (1) virtually no votes for anyone before mid-sixties, except Holly; (2) only John Ingham voted for The Kinks and The Who and (3) virtually no votes for the weirdo experimenters.

surfing

Winners

1. Surfin' USA (Beach Boys)
2. Surf City (Jan & Dean)
3. Wipe Out (Surfaris)
4. Do It Again (Beach Boys)
5. California Girls (Beach Boys)

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6. Surfer Girl (Beach Boys)
7. I Get Around (Beach Boys)
8. Ride The Wild Surf (Jan & Dean)
9. Little Old Lady From Pasadena (Jan & Dean)
10. King Of Scurf (Bonzos)

beach boys

Winners

1. Good Vibrations
2. God Only Knows
3. California Girls
4. I Get Around
5. Surf's Up
6. Sloop John B
7. Sail On Sailor
8. Heroes And Villains
9. Help Me Rhonda
10. California Saga

There or thereabouts

Do It Again
Don't Go Near The Water
Feel Flows

Report

An astonishingly wide selection gained votes—over 50 tracks—and it's a testament to their excellence that they were spread so widely. I've always been a Beach Boys fan, but I think, probably shortsightedly, that their recent work is truly phenomenal. I think, in fact, that California Saga deserves all four votes.

producer

1. Frank Zappa (Production on his own records)
2. George Martin (Sergeant Pepper)
3. Bob Johnston (equally split between Cohen and Dylan)
4. Brian Wilson (Pet Sounds)
5. Glyn Johns (principally Eagles' Desperado and Sailor, although Stage Fright got quite a few. He only mixed that, I think)
6. Phil Spector (most votes were cast for his pre-Beatles work)
7. Eddie Offord ('Yes' albums)
8. Ted Templeman (Beefheart's Clear Spot and Van Morrison)
9. Joe Boyd (Work with Fairport Convention)
10. Holzman, Rothchild, Botnik (Elektra earlies)
Allan Toussaint (Lee Dorsey)

Other Contenders

David Briggs (Both Spirit and Neil Young's work were well supported)
Jimmy Miller (Stones obviously, but also Spooky Tooth and Traffic)
Felix Pappalardi (Cream, Mountain, and The Youngbloods)

Report

A difficult section to count, since a lot of people voted for the producer of their best produced record, if you see what I mean. But as it turned out the results reflected the idea of the producer as a real creative force, and not many people would cavil at the results. Two votes each for Joe Boyd's work with Nick Drake, and Glyn Johns' work on Sailor, would have been my allocation.

running order

1. Forever Changes
2. Astral Weeks
3. Moondance
4. Notorious Byrd Brothers
5. Sailor
6. Dark Side of the Moon
7. Sergeant Pepper
8. Naturally
9. Recall The Beginning—Journey From Eden
10. American Beauty

Strong Challengers

Fearless
Live Dead
Hunky Dory
Beggars Banquet

Report

Plenty of insulting comments accompanied the submissions, ranging from 'silly' to 'you bloody twats, why should I waste my time...'. The point about sticking this one in is that most of the musicians I know dread the final sessions when they have to decide the running order, and consequently put as much effort into the running order as anything else, and it is interesting to see if music lovers of the authority knowledge and enthusiasm of Zig-Zag readers, had any particularly strong feelings about it. Curiously enough, a spot check of about 100 entries revealed a considerable lack of overlap between this section and, say, the flawless album section, so perhaps they do see a significance. For what it is worth, I think most of the winning selections have one side which is beautifully ordered, but I can think of only two albums that have a running order that seems to me to be perfect, and they are Gasoline Alley (The way the second side moves from Country Comfort to Cut Across Shorty with that violin, and then has those two beautiful songs about lost love and then finally ends up with a raver is little short of magical—takes you right through the possibilities of rock—superb) and The Band.

sleepy

Winners (see Report below)

1. Yes
2. James Taylor
3. Emerson, Lake and Palmer
4. Leonard Cohen
5. Focus
6. Genesis
7. Deep Purple
8. Melanie
9. The Moody Blues
10. Joni Mitchell

Also thought to be powerfully somnolent

The Carpenters
Cat Stevens
Soft Machine
America

Report

Aesthetic confusion reigned. I regard a band that puts me to sleep as a crummy band, for the simple reason that usually there's so little of interest going on that you just nod off; thus, other quite suitable descriptions would have been, Premium Pratts, Top Turds or Rank

Rubbish. Now as it happened many voters thought I meant the opposite—ie music to go to sleep to, music that is relaxed and tranquil, and generates an irresistible serenity, resulting in sleep. So, by rigorous deduction—I figure that a fellow who votes for the Dead in four other categories, is praising them by voting for them in this category)—I separated the two types of entry out, and the winners of the Sleepy (but Good) sub-category are:

1. JJ Cale
2. The Band
3. The Byrds
4. Neil Young
5. The Floyd
6. The Dead
7. Terry Riley
8. John Fahey
9. Miles Davis
10. Bonnie Koloc

best gig 1

Winners

1. Grateful Dead during their 1972 tour.
2. Captain Beefheart during his 1973 tour, accompanied by *THE* Magic Band.
3. Van Morrison during his 1973 tour, but mainly at the Rainbow.
4. Captain Beefheart at The Albert Hall in 1972
5. The Doors and Jefferson Airplane at the Roundhouse in 1968.
6. The Isle of Wight Festival in 1970.
7. The Stones tour in 1972
8. Genesis while they had their most-recent but-one show (1972-73).
9. The Bath Festival 1970
10. The Pink Floyd doing Dark Side of the Moon.

More goodies

The Who polled well but really for three or four different periods, pre-Tommy, early Tommy (Albert Hall/Coliseum) later Tommy (just about everywhere) and recent gigs with Quadrophenia. So they are Honorary winners, Floyd doing Atom Heart Mother scored well, Traffic in all their various stages also.

Report

A considerable amount of common territory was found between voters. I had visions of this section being won by a gig with two votes. It seems to me curious, and rather odd that most submissions are recent. Have we all got faulty memories or something. My favourite gigs of all time were The Band at the Albert Hall c 1971, reeling through the park with W.S. Walcott's Medicine Show ringing in my ears, Thunderclap Newman at The Farx club in Potters Bar round about the same time (Speedy announced 'Cinnamon Girl' as being by 'Neil Diamond, er, no Neil Young... er, no, er, yoeah... Neil Diamond'), Family at the LSE in 1970 I think, and The Faces in Croydon about 1971. Just thinking about those gigs... whew.

best gig 2

Winners

1. Dylan with The Band at the Albert Hall in 1966
2. Ye Olde Woodstocke
3. Van Morrison at the Rainbow 1973
4. Monterey Festival

5. Bangla Desh concert in New York
6. The Bath Festival
7. The Allman Brothers with Duane Allman
8. The Pink Floyd doing Dark Side Of The Moon
9. The Acid Test period Grateful Dead
10. UFO period Floyd

Other Notables

Eric Clapton's return at the Rainbow (a great night, much better than the record indicates)
Watkins Glen
The Technicolour Dream
Glastonbury Festival
The Dead at The French Chateau

Report

My personal preference besides all those listed above, would have been at the Troubadour the night Dan Hicks recorded 'Where's The Money' or the gigs from which Mirror Man is derived. Many humorous entries, ranging from QPR winning the league cup (3 out of 10) to The St Valentine's Day Massacre (10 out of 10).

This part of the poll obviously excited everyone's imagination, and all I can say is that it was pure pleasure to read them all. The Ideal Band section produced some wildly improbable and fanciful entries, like four lead guitars etc etc but most of the entries displayed a very thoughtful and well reasoned grasp of the complementary possibilities of the musicians involved. But what really staggered me were the samplers; ZigZag readers are obviously a nation of A & R men, and could do the job at least as well as most of the present occupants, and in many cases, better. The rest of the winning entries speak for themselves.

Finally, the oddest piece of entry comes from Adam Mars-Jones who won the sampler section.

'P.S. I realise this is irrelevant but did you know that Pink Floyd is an anagram of Kindly Fop, Matching Mole of Hamlet Coming, and Alice Cooper of Ice-Cool Rape? I thought not'.

Ummm, and on that cryptic note, we'll end.

If all the winners write to O.D. McGuire, our 'business' manager, with their choice of LP, he'll see them right, by applying his seductive talents to the record companies involved.

ideal band

Winners

The Perfect Country Band.
Byron Berline—fiddle
O.J.'Red' Rhodes—pedal steel, dobro.
Chris Hillman—bass, mandolin.
Michael Nesmith—rhythm guitar.
Gene Parsons—drums, banjo.
The song to perform + record:
CHRISTINE'S TUNE,
plus if they were still alive (not sure if they qualify for inclusion as they are no longer with us)
GRAM PARSONS—rhythm guitar, keyboards
CLARENCE WHITE—lead guitar.
—John Graveling (Durham)

Earl Palmer, drums.
J.Jamelson, electric bass.
the late Bill Black, string bass.
Steve Cropper, Richard Thompson, Robbie Robertson, guitars.

Dave Bartholomew, trumpet
Lee Allen, tenor sax.
Red Tyler, Baritone sax.
I can't remember his name but the steel guitar player with the old ~~Coffets~~ would be a nice inclusion. I love his electronic punctuations.
Allen Toussaint, keyboards
Van Morrison, vocals.
Background vocals to be added to taste.
Song... 'One more heartache' (Robinson, Moore, Rogers, White, Tarplin
—Ian Lee (Northants)

Excellent submissions

Lou Reed, David Bowie, Mick Jagger and Ray Davies' singing 'Tutti Frutti' accapella
—Bruno Juffin (Clermont Ferrano, France)

Tim Buckley—lead vocals
Linda Ronstadt!—back up vocals
Patti LaBelle)
Mike Shrieve—drums
Airtio Moreira—percussion
James Jamerson—bass
McCoy Tyner and Chick Corea—keyboards
Mike Bloomfield—guitar
Huks Brown—guitar
—Mike McCormack (Manchester)

sampler

Winners

Captain Beefheart down the ages

Side One

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. Electricity | 3.00 |
| 2. When Big Joan sets up | 5.19 |
| 3. White Jam | 2.57 |
| 4. The Smithsonian Institute Blues (or the Big Dig) | 2.11 |
| 5. Click Clack | 3.31 |
| 6. Sugar 'n' Spikes. | 2.29 |
| Side Two | 19.27 |
| 7. Hair Pie Bake 2 | 2.23 |
| 8. When It Blows Its Stacks | 3.41 |
| 9. My Human gets the Blues | 2.42 |
| 10. Big-eyed Beans from Venus | 4.23 |
| 11. Ella Guv | 2.23 |
| 12. Old Fart at Play | 1.54 |
| | 17.26 |

—Adam Mars-Jones (Cambridge)

Neil Young

- | | |
|---------------------|-------|
| 1. Heart of Gold | 3.05 |
| 2. Southern Man | 5.41 |
| 3. Country Girl | 5.05 |
| 4. On The Way Home | 2.25 |
| 5. I Believe in you | 2.24 |
| 6. Words | 6.42 |
| | 24.42 |

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------|
| 1. After the Goldrush | 3.45 |
| 2. Cinnamon Girl | 2.58 |
| 3. Harvest | 3.03 |
| 4. Expecting to Fly | 3.39 |
| 5. Cowgirl in the Sand | 10.03 |
| 6. Till the Morning Comes | 1.17 |
| | 24.05 |

—Neil Munro (London SW7)

Clarence White—Man of Music

Coming into Los Angeles (Arlo)
Fiddle Song (Bootleg Byrds)
Time Between (Younger than Yesterday)
Huckleberry Hornpipe (C Gazette)
Bugler (Farther Along)
Mr Spaceman (Untitled)
Old Kentucky Home (12 songs—R Newman)

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Tulsa County Blue (Easy Rider)
Cokras (Skip Battlin)
Every Hand in the Hand (Arlo—Running
Down the Road)
Ballad of Dick Clark (Skip Battlin)
Back Again (Kindling)
—Anthony Taylor (Leicester)

Warner Bros/Reprise/Raccoon Sampler

Side 1
Jeffrey Carr—'Hounddog Turkey' (from
album 'For You') 2.56
Ron Elliott—'All time Green' (from
'The Candlestickmaker') 2.57
Gram Parsons—'Big Mouth Blues' (from
G.P.) 3.52
Doug Kershaw—'Mama said Yeah' (from
'Doug Kershaw') 2.48
Steve Young—'7 Bridges Road' (from
'7 Bridges Rd') 3.22
Neil Young—'Southern Man' (from
'After the Goldrush') 5.41
21.36

Side 2
Ohio Knox—'Give Me John Ford' (from
'Ohio Knox') 4.55
David Blue—'Turning Towards You' (from
'Me—S David Cohen') 3.35
Van Morrison—'When that evening Sun'
(Tupelo Honey') 3.02
Gene Parsons—'Monument' (from
Kindling') 2.06
Beaver and Krause—'Good Places'
(from Ghandarva') 3.37
Jesse Colin Young—'Peace Song'
(from 'Together') 4.30
21.45

—Andrew Hawkey (Cards.)

Commended

Geoffrey Evans (Coventry). 'The Richard
Thompson Story' which was a wonderfully
perceptive picture of Thompson as writer
and performer.

Bob Moore (Yorkshire) 'Family' which
was an excellent history of all the bands,
and avoided the sampler's usual problem
of too many B-sides etc.

Tristan Wood 'The Lovin' Spoonful
featuring John Sebastian' A record that
doesn't look like a sampler, but like a real
record. Superb value at 90p (Christ I sound
as though I'm reviewing it).

The following people provided, would
you believe, really good samplers of Beef-
hearts which I thought just failed to match
up to the winning entry. Whatever else
Beefheart freaks are—and there's a lot of
speculation about that—they certainly know
their music. And I know who should do the
next interviews with him, so I'm keeping all
the names and addresses and we'll try to
fix something up next year. Anyway, here
are the members of the Blimp preservation
society. Colin Lawless (Lancashire), Steve
Bickerstaff (Kent), R Escritt (York), Kaare
Bursell (Cheshire), H.A. Cowan (Huntingdon).

rock&roll

Winner

When recorded on an LP, the co-efficient
of the albums rockness can be measured by
the simple formula:

$$R = 2v(D + W) - P$$

$$C + 2M$$

Where 2v = quantity sold in 3 months by
Virgin Imports

Where D = no. of drivelly articles written
in the music press
W = no. of words of flatulent praise issued
by the publicist
P = the number of times John Peel calls
the record 'extremely fine'
C = highest position reached in MM LP
charts
M = No of times my mother compares the
music unfavourably with that of the
Carpenters

PS. What a bloody silly question. Its like
saying 'Define the Universe and give two
examples.'

—Neil Munro (London SW7)

Commended by the Judges (i.e. me)
171. What does a strawberry taste like?
Suffice to say it takes most of my money,
a lot of my time, sends shivers down my
back, used to send tremors up my ma's
back, sometimes wipes the smile off my
face—I love it. Ahhhhh.

—Steve Bickerstaff (Kent)

I had thought Zig-Zag would have had
more genre, than to perpetrate silly classifica-
tions of this sort, however, you asked for it
—Bees Make Honey playing 'Kneetrembler'
live.

—David Suff (Essex)

MORE RESULTS NEXT MONTH

FROM EDINBURGH BEATNIK TO ABERYSTWYTH COWBOY

The life and times of Bert Jansch
as recounted to Pete Frame

Part one: Catching dreams from the clouds

If you readers out there have been
getting a little worried (like me)
that the once great Charisma label
has been going slowly off the rails,
lately — don't worry about a thing.
The Charisma Renaissance starts
here — with the new Bert Jansch
album, 'LA Turnaround', released
earlier this month.

Having been a long-time Bert fan
(I even bought two copies of his first
album on the day it came out), I was
delighted to get the chance to inter-
view him — but easier said than done.
After an abortive attempt to drive
him from Island Studios to his farm
near Aberystwyth — he "borrowed"
all the money I had on me and we
never got further than Bermondsey
(which is the wrong direction, apart
from anything else), where we spent
most of the weekend in a drunken
stupor, teaching Danny Thompson
how to play golf — we re-convened
the interview at his manager's gaff
in Putney.

The interview inevitably got
out of hand as it became more like
a reminiscing conversation — but
having never seen a full/in depth
biographical tract in print, I fig-
ured 'what the hell... let's chuck
the lot in — as much detail as
possible.

This first part deals with his
early years, but if it becomes too
tedious or you can't read my in-
terminable 'scrawl' — try listening
to his album instead. It's great!

PETE: Can we start by talking about
how you first became interested in
music and how you were prompted, or
inspired, to dive into it so deeply?

BERT: Well, I was a fan of Elvis Presley
and all that sort of rubbish when I was
a kid, and my mum had made me go

to piano lessons — which didn't last
too long because I got bored with it —
but the first time I actually saw a guitar
was when my music teacher brought one
into the classroom for everyone to have
a look. I suppose my interest in the
instrument could be traced back to
that, because I think it was there and
then that I decided I wanted to be a
guitarist rather than a pianist.

I couldn't afford to buy a "real"
guitar, so I used to try and make them
..... one actually looked like a guitar
— had frets and everything — but I
was only about 15, and my resources
as a guitar builder were very limited.

At that time, skiffle, and Lonnie
Donegan especially, were going full
tilt, but I didn't know the first
thing about the way to play the
guitar — though my 6 months or so
at the piano had given me a rudi-
mentary knowledge of things like
keys and scales.

Anyway, around this time I left
school and went to work in a nurse-
ry, as an apprentice-type nursery
man earning three quid a week or
whatever.... and I bought a guitar
on h.p. In fact, my boss signed
the agreement as guarantor — but
in those days, there wasn't the
range of instruments you find these
days, and I bought a cello guitar
..... I knew nothing at all about them,
but it looked alright to me.

PETE: Had you come across folk
music by this time?

BERT: No....that came a bit later
when I discovered the existence of a
folk club in Edinburgh, where I
lived. It was run by Roy Guest, and
called The Howff — Same as the one
he's currently running in London.
It was sponsored by some sort of
Arts Council, I think, but they used
to have Archie Fisher and Jill Doyle,

1. The Howff is at 109A Regents Park
Road, London NW1

who is Davy Graham's sister, to give
guitar lessons — and I used to go
along with a couple of mates to
try and learn how to play.

PETE: Was the club essentially a
platform for local musicians, or did
Guest import a few "heavies" from
England?

BERT: Well, my recollections seem to
focus on Roy himself, singing things
like 'Kosher Bailey had an engine', and
Hamish Imlach, who was probably
the first real folksinger I ever saw
— storming away on his guitar.....
and I used to sit about six inches
away from his guitar, watching his
every move!

PETE: I've always thought of Archie
Fisher as a staunch traditionalist,
not really noted for either his
guitar playing or blues singing—but
yet you seemed to pick up a great
deal of both from him.

BERT: He is a traditionalist in a way,
but believe it or not he's quite a
good blues guitarist as well.....the
range of things he can play is
amazing really, but he never plays
them now. He used to in those
days though..... maybe he wasn't
so strict. He used to say "have
you heard this one?", and launch
into a Rev Gary Davis number —
which hasn't the remotest connec-
tion with Scottish tradition!

PETE: When I first used to see you
in the London clubs during the lat-
ter part of 1964, I remember you
introducing several songs as having
been taught you by Archie Fisher
— songs like 'White House Blues',
which he must have altered from
the original bluegrass version, and
another which really impressed my
Civil Rights filled head called 'One



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Olin — Sanctuary

Day Old'.

BERT: Actually I think I learned 'White House Blues'² from another singer on the same scene - a guy called Len Partridge, who also gave me guitar lessons; he was a very fine player, but never got any publicity because he hardly ever moved out of that Edinburgh circle. As for that other song you mention..... I can't remember it at all!

PETE: Come on - you used to sing it everywhere.... I know for sure, because I made my bird-at-the-time take the words down - but her short-hand was hopeless and it took her several gigs.

BERT: My memory must have gone to sleep, because I can't remember a thing about it - I'll have to think about that one..... you've got me going now.

PETE: It's about a black kid, and though he's only one day old, he's bugged before he's started - it's a good old heart-stirring integration song with a strong glimmer of hope and optimism in the last verse. Anyway - did you participate at this club.... as a floor singer?

BERT: No.... I began by taking guitar lessons from Jill - and then I decided to leave home.... I did a bunk and actually went to live at the club, where I became an employee, helping Roy out, because by this time the audience had grown fairly large - partly due to the Edinburgh Festival. When that was on, he'd book someone like Martha Schlammie and the place would be packed out that week. So I got involved in the administration.....

PETE: rather than playing?

BERT: Well, funny enough my first musical contribution was giving guitar lessons..... I went full circle from taking them to giving them, though I never actually performed there. You see, when Jill left, I took over - mainly because there was nobody else to fill the role.

PETE: Presumably you'd achieved a fair degree of competence by then?

BERT: Only what I learnt from Jill, supplemented by my short spell at the piano - but both Archie and Jill had gone and I was probably the most proficient player left.... so I filled the gap.

PETE: How did you go about it?

BERT: It was five bob an hour! The pupils used to attend the club regularly, and I'd have a curriculum worked out..... I could go into great detail about my teaching methods, but it would take all day. I reckon I'm a pretty good teacher actually..... I could break it all down and go through the whole thing from A to Z.

PETE: I remember a big sign pinned to the ceiling joists in Collets which said 'BERT JANSCH DOES NOT GIVE GUITAR LESSONS' - as if the guy

² A great version of 'White House Blues' can be found on John Renbourn 'Faro Annie' album on Transatlantic

behind the counter was sick of explaining this to aspirant folk heros! This would be around January 1965.³

BERT: Yeah? I don't know how that could have originated, because I don't recall any enquiries when I was down in London.

PETE: Is it right that you made a couple of preliminary reconnaissance forays before actually moving to London.

BERT: Well, for most of the early Sixties I seemed to be on the move somewhere or other. The first time I came to London was with a guy - I can't recall his name right now, but he became a roadie for some group a bit later.... he was a London guy who I'd met at the club. I don't know how old I was, but I was as green as fucking arseholes! We stayed at his parents' house out in Buckhurst Hill, just outside London - and I remember getting caught with him on the railway. We were fiddling the fares, you know..... buying a ticket for threepence and travelling hundreds of fucking miles.

PETE: I suppose you talked your way out of it, you old smoothie! What does a young Scottish lad expect to find when he comes to London - gold paved streets?

BERT: I didn't expect anything particularly; I was just open to the world. You see, I'd never even been out of Edinburgh.... not even to Glasgow, which is just across the way. I just wanted to travel around and see a few places - but I also had this idea in the back of my mind that I wanted to be a folksinger.

PETE: Did you have any contacts or money?

BERT: No - none at all, of either. But that particular trip didn't last too long because I went back to Edinburgh quite soon.... only to wander off again - this time to Morocco and Tangiers, where I stayed for about three months. That would have been about 1963, when I was 19.

PETE: How did you travel?

BERT: Thumbed. In fact, to re-trace my steps a moment, I think that was my third trip abroad, because I'd been to the South of France twice before.

PETE: Why Morocco? The beatnik dream, the lure of the hookah? Or were you into camels and sand?

BERT: Oh, you know - it was like the dope centre of the universe; all my friends were saying how great it was, how smoke was dirt cheap and all that.... it was most definitely the place to go.

³ Collets Record Shop in New Oxford Street is an excellent place for snooping - loads of magazines, books, records, paraphernalia.

⁴ This is an interesting expression - probably culled from the Oxford Dictionary of Comparisons.

PETE: So dope had reared its ugly head as long ago as 1963? I thought that in those days 'drugs' was all down to the prosecution of the odd spade caught selling a reefer in the corner of some jazz club.

BERT: Well, you wouldn't believe it, but up in Edinburgh, in my circle of acquaintances, we were getting through pounds of the stuff as early as 1961, when I was 17.... and we had long hair too - long by 1961 standards anyway.

PETE: Who else was around then? Anyone I'd have heard of?

BERT: I shouldn't think so, but a bit later I got involved with Robin Williamson, Clive Palmer (who had come up from London), and Jill Doyle again - she'd come back - and we started our own folk club at the Crown Bar in Edinburgh. In fact, Archie and Jill started it first, on Thursday nights, and we (Robin, Clive, and me) formed another one on Tuesday nights.... and I think this is where the division started; Archie's club became very much more traditionally orientated, whereas ours went the other way - contemporary and more freaky stuff for the Stoned heads, as you might say. By this time, I was singing and playing, but I was also helping to run the club.... the whole bit.

PETE: Presumably you then decided to move down to London on a permanent basis?

BERT: Not really. At that time, I had just started to do gigs - as opposed to just messing around - and I was intent on playing as many as I could.... so I was travelling down to clubs just over the border in the North of England and in the Scottish lowlands, an area which seemed to be full of clubs.

PETE: And they accepted your music? Which was what?

BERT: It was basically the stuff which wound up on that first album.... in fact, it was exactly the same songs.

PETE: And something as devastatingly different and new, would go down in folk clubs used to things like 'Blood on the coals' and 'Cushy Butterfield'?

BERT: Sure.... but these clubs were by no means as traditional as you seem to think.... I mean, Len Partridge and Hamish Imlach and people like that were the regular guest singers, so the area of folk was much wider than the limitations of traditional music - though that was very popular, of course. On one hand, you had Len, who was into American stuff like Doc Watson for instance, and then you had the 'White Heather Club' sort of things.

PETE: So your coming to London was initially to play the clubs?

BERT: Right. I came down with Robin Williamson looking for work, and the first place we got a gig was at the Troubadour. We also met Anne Briggs during that visit.

PETE: Where did you stay?

BERT: I think we were living in Earls Court, but it's difficult to pin it down in my memory, because I've lived in just about every part of London at one time or another; Acton, Ealing, Swiss Cottage, all over!

PETE: When I used to book⁵ you for gigs in early 1965, you were living at 90, King Henrys Road - sort of round the back of Chalk Farm towards Swiss Cottage.

BERT: Well, by that time I'd been back and forth between Edinburgh and London about a million times.... that was the beginning of the John Renbourn / Les Bridger era.

PETE: What were the circumstances of your meeting John Renbourn?

BERT: That was during another trip down from Scotland! I was trying to find somewhere to stay, and I'd somehow got involved - possibly as a result of working at Bunjies Coffee House of Charing Cross Road - with Les Bridger. He had a pad, and so I naturally attached myself to him. Anyway, I was staying at his place, trying to avoid his cat which had a habit of shitting everywhere, when John Renbourn happened to come round with Dorris Henderson. Well, we got chatting and bang! Within a couple of months, he'd moved in too - and of course we played together for 5 or 6 years.

PETE: To revert to that sign pinned up in Collets; that place was always a hub of folk activity, wasn't it?

BERT: Yeah.... all the folkies would go there and be sure of meeting people on the same wavelength - and I really got to like that chick there, Gill Cooke; she's done so much for the folk world and hasn't ever been given much credit. But that shop has been a second home for so many folksingers.... and it probably still is.

PETE: I recollect seeing Derroll Adams in there around that time, with his cowboy hat and ear-ring, and I seem to think that you and he became friends through Donovan, who was singing some of your songs at the time.⁶

BERT: Right. How that all happened was like this: I was resident at the Scotch Hoose for about a year and then also at Les Cousins, which had just started up. I was resident at both for a while, which was mad on the face of it, because they were only about a hundred yards apart - but it seemed to work. Now Donovan had all of sudden become a huge cult figure through his appearances on 'Ready Steady Go' and that first single 'Catch the Wind' - and I got to know him after that.

⁵ I used to run a folk club in Luton - horrible place it was. You could have cut the apathy with a knife.

⁶ Donovan sang 'Deed I do' on his second album - it is credited to 'Pied Piper Music' on my copy - and he was also singing 'Running from home' on gigs.



He was already world famous, but he would come down to Cousins and mix with the crowd who used to get down there - and in those days, you felt rather awe-inspired by this 'television-character', as I used to call him. Anyway, Donovan took a very very strong liking to Derroll, who had popped up from the Continent or somewhere.... and somehow, I got involved too. We used to see a lot of each other: Derroll, Donovan and me.

PETE: In those early days of fame, Donovan was trying hard not to let success go to his head; he still retained all his mates, took them with him as far as he could, and played little clubs for nothing, when he could possibly have sold out the Albert Hall.

BERT: Sure.... well, my friendship with him was a Cousins job; we used to meet there, drink there, and play there.

PETE: Do you think you could've shared to the same sort of instant international success if you'd felt so inclined?

BERT: Well, there is a school of

thought which feels that Donovan had very little to do with it.... that he was merely picked up by a couple of mad pushy geezers who put a hat on his head, stuck him on the telly, and made a million pounds out of him. I wouldn't like to say how true that was, but I do know that his managers made money out of me.... they did a "sign your name here, lad" scene on me, and being a kid, I put my name to some publishing thing involving a couple of songs Donovan wanted to record. The album subsequently got into the charts and everything, but I wasn't exactly showered with royalty cheques.

PETE: I know that Don's career has been beset with court cases and legal battles, which have obviously taken their toll on his personality - it beats me how he managed to come through it all in one piece.... and still make an album now and then.

BERT: Well, Donovan has been fortunate in some ways, and unfortunate in others, but it didn't take me long to see the kind of things that were

going on in the area of music where folk meets pop - and in no way did I ever entertain any thoughts of "going commercial". I don't know at what stage in my life I decided what was for real and what was a hype, but I've always played my cards straight down the line..... I don't want to be a party to any hype. If people don't like my music, I don't want it to be hyped down their throats. I mean, I suppose I'm a pawn just like everyone else in this business, but at least I'm a conscious thinker, and I know where to draw my line.

PETE: Did you ever get approached by the Tin Pan Alley-type mohair men?

BERT: Not in those days - because nobody knew who I was really - but over the years I've been approached by several "names"..... but I've always turned them down.

PETE: In case they shoved you into a sequinned suit and made you wear make-up?

BERT: Maybe..... though if anybody said that to me now: "do you want to make a million pounds - you've got to put make-up on", then I'd fucking well put make-up on - for a million pounds!

PETE: In that first half of 1965, there was a much vaunted Melody Maker "folk boom" - what with Donovan in the charts, Dylan with 'The Times they are changing', the Byrds and so on - but on a club level, there were all sorts of interesting things going on too. Did you ever come across, for instance, Paul Simon?

BERT: I shared gigs with him quite a few times over a period of about two years.....

PETE: What did you think of him?

BERT: Not much..... still don't.

PETE: What about Jackson Frank?

BERT: Now he was a genius..... an absolute fucking genius. A lot of the music that came out of that period was most certainly due to him. He wrote one song in particular, 'Blues run the game', which influenced just about everybody who heard it..... you could say that it changed the face of the contemporary songwriting world. He was the ultimate. I used to sing that song, John Renbourn used to, and every other folksinger did too.

PETE: And other songs of his made their mark too, didn't they? Like 'I never wanted you, babe', which Sandy Denny took into the Fairports.

BERT: Absolutely. As far as I know, he only made one album, 'Jackson C. Frank', which was a brilliant record..... then he went back to the States, and no-one's heard a word from him, or about him, ever since! And yet he exerted so much influence in those few months he was here. &

PETE: After what I think of as "the first wave" of you, Renbourn, Wizz Jones, Mick Softley, and so on, came

7. Renbourn's version can be found on his 'So Clear' sampler album.

8. If anyone has a copy of this album to flog, or any news of Jackson C. Frank - please let me know.

a "second wave" of Al Stewart, Roy Harper, and co. Did you ever get into them?

BERT: (Deathly hush). I think that Roy Harper has a lot to offer, if you're prepared to sit down and listen. As for the others from that period, I don't think I've ever listened to any of them.

PETE: What about Ralph McTell, who was a little later?

BERT: Well, I didn't know Ralph personally at that time, and I only heard his records because he was on the same label as me - Transatlantic. I wasn't too impressed with his stuff then, though I am now. His later albums offer much more to me than the early ones, which seemed to suffer from.....

PETE:too many cooks?

BERT: Maybe. But the thing about the scene back in 1965 was that everybody had something to offer, like if I wanted to hear a traditional song, sung well, I could listen to Anne Briggs; or if I wanted to hear really good outrageous guitar, I could listen to Davy Graham; but there was plenty of interest to be found in almost every performer. Yet - at the same time - we were all in the melting pot, look to each other for guidance or whatever.

PETE: I'm not really au-fait with the current folk club scene, but it seems to me that there's no focal point these days.

BERT: Yes, it seems to be all spread out now. Then, if you went down to Cousins, you could be sure of meeting all the people you wanted to see in that week.

PETE: To get back to your nomadic lifestyle, a great deal of romance has always surrounded your next flat - that one in Somali Rd, NW2. It seemed to be a hive of industry: you, bent over the guitar, Les Bridger trying to learn some of your songs, and John Renbourn sandpapering the soundboard of his guitar until it was razor thin? Is that a very accurate representation?

BERT: It was sometimes like that, but most times we were usually either drunk out of our minds, or stoned out of our brains! That was a great place though, because it was all musicians; we three (me, Les and John) were living upstairs, and the Young Tradition lived downstairs..... and there were always desperate attempts to avoid paying the rent to this little Jewish guy who owned the house. But yes, I know John used to sandpaper his guitar - which was alright for him, because at least he had a guitar! I didn't. I used to borrow one when I had a gig, and more often than not, it was Les Bridger's. He had a really lovely Martin..... come to think of it, I used to pay the instalments on it for borrowing it. It wasn't until a bit

9. If you look at Renbourn's guitar on the sleeve of his first Transatlantic album (that brown thing), you'll see a lollipop stick between the soundboard and the neck! (What a trivial piece of information!)

later that I got my own guitar, which John Bailey built for me - and John Renbourn and Les clubbed together to buy me a case for it, as a birthday present.

PETE: Where's Bridger now?

BERT: He's in Denmark, doing exactly the same things as he was then.

PETE: I remember seeing him busking, dressed in flamenco gear - banging his heels and strumming the shit out of his guitar.

BERT: Well, when I first knew him, he was working in a pantomime..... he was an extra; had a funny costume and had to dive on stage once or twice a night!

PETE: So the Somali Road days were studded with drinking and drugging? (Need I ask?)

BERT: You could say that! Nowadays I still drink a lot, as you well know, but I don't use much pot because it slows me down - but in those days it was incredible; we used to bake cakes with it, make fudge..... you wouldn't believe it. But at no time did we have any scares or busts - or any sort of stuff like that.

PETE: I think that all your solo albums on Transatlantic, except the first one 'BERT JANSCH' Tra 125, and the two samplers, have been deleted this month (August).

BERT: About time too! I'm glad they are off the market. I wonder why the first one's still available? Possibly because it's sold, over the years, more than all the others put together, I think. I don't know the exact sales figures, but in Transatlantic's terms it has been a huge seller, and a regular source of income for them.

PETE: And you, presumably.

BERT: No, not for me. Not that first album. That was sold to Transatlantic for one hundred pounds.

PETE: What? £100 flat? Not even a royalty percentage?

BERT: I get royalties on just three of the tracks, because they were recorded after I signed the contract..... they sent me back to record 3 tracks to increase the playing time, and I do get a royalty on those. The rest is all their's!

PETE: Surely Nat Joseph had the grace to give you a hefty ex-gratia payment for providing him with what must be Transatlantic's biggest selling album ever!

BERT: (Baleful look, accompanied by slow shake of head). The thing was, I was hungry, starving and broke at the time..... and in many ways, if I hadn't made that record I wouldn't be where I am today - not that I'm anywhere now! You see, Bill Leader was interested in my music, and wanted to make an album, which he did - but the best deal he could get, after taking the tape around, was £100 cash, from Transatlantic.

More next issue

ZIGZAG 45 PAGE 46

BERT JANSCH

"L.A. Turnaround"

Jansch's debut album for Charisma is probably one of the 5 best albums the label has put out. If ever a man is due his place among the 'superstars' it's Bert Jansch.

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SOLO CONCERT - Billy Connolly (Transatlantic TRA 279). (Double LP).
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LIMITED EDITION - Can (United Artists USP 103).
HERGEST RIDGE - Mike Oldfield (Virgin V2013).
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SANTANA'S GREATEST HITS - Santana (CBS 69081).
PEACE ON YOU - Roger McGuinn (CBS 80171).
SPYGLASS GUEST - Greenslade (Warners K56055).
TWO DAYS IN NOVEMBER - Doc & Merle Watson (United Artists UAS 29642).

IMPORTS

Lotsa nice imports to mention this month, a large number of them being on the Capricorn label which is now distributed by Polydor in this country. So if Polydor do their job, there should be albums by Grinderswitch, Hydra, Johnny Jenkins, Duane Allman, Richard Betts, and Wet Willie available here soon. **GRINDERSWITCH**, whose debut album 'Honest To Goodness' (Capricorn CP 0135) you may have heard John Peel play, are amazingly enough the brainchild of a former Allman Brothers roadie. Joe Dan Petty is pictured on the sleeves of 'Live At Fillmore East' and 'Brothers And Sisters', and, being a fair old bass player by all accounts, he's been known to take over on bass at various stages during Allman Bros gigs. Now he's a full-time member of Grinderswitch along with Dru Lombard (lead gtr), Larry Howard (rhythm gtr), and Rick Burnett (drums). Their album is produced by Paul Hornsby, and Richard Betts makes a guest appearance to embellish what is an extremely impressive debut. Boogie bands of the highest quality seem to be cropping up thick and fast from the deep south of the US, and another one would appear to be **HYDRA**, a four-piece from Atlanta. According to a Capricorn press hand-out however, Hydra are aware of the ever-present dangers of being lumped together with all the other Southern bands. They say "our association with Capricorn will encourage the all-too-frequent comparisons made between any Southern band and the Allman Bros. Hydra is the farthest thing in the world from them". Well, I don't know about that last statement, but as I've only listened to parts of their debut album 'Hydra' (Capricorn CP 0130) very briefly, I'm willing to believe that there's more there than meets the ear first time. Look out for it anyway. One of the best albums that Capricorn have ever released is 'Ton-Ton Macoute!' by Johnny Jenkins. Originally issued in

1970 it features Duane Allman, Berry Oakley, Butch Trucks, Jai Johanny Johanson, Pete Carr, Eddie Hinton, Paul Hornsby.....all the best Southern rock musicians in fact. Johnny Jenkins is of course the same Johnny Jenkins of Pinetoppers fame for whom Otis Redding used to be lead singer for awhile, and this album, commissioned by Phil Walden, then Redding's personal manager, features songs like 'Walk On Guilted Splinters' (Dr. John), 'Down Along The Cove' (Bob Dylan), and 'Bad News' (John D. Loudermilk). If you didn't pick up on it first time around, now's your chance to do so, because Capricorn have had the impeccably good taste to re-release it, and 'Ton-Ton Macoute!' (Capricorn CP 0136) is too good an album to pass by a second time. Coincidentally, 'Walk On Guilted Splinters' is on 'Duane Allman Anthology Vol.2' (Capricorn 2CP 0139) along with 20 other tracks from artists as diverse as Aretha Franklin, Lulu, Ronnie Hawkins, and Sam Samudio. Allman's astonishing flexibility and effortless skill were amply demonstrated on the first anthology but this one really pushes the point home, and there's plenty here to surprise and delight both the rock and soul fans among you. Allman Brothers' freaks will want the album for its previously unreleased tracks which include two solo numbers, an Hourglass number, a Delaney & Bonnie track, and two Allman Bros numbers, 'Dimples' and a version of 'Midnight Rider'. Details of personnel, recording dates, etc, are fortunately provided, and the whole package has none of the odious trademarks of a cash-in rip-off that an insensitive hand could have given it. 'Highway Call' (Capricorn CP 0123) by Richard Betts is as good as it should be considering his well-deserved stature among the guitar greats. Not surprisingly, it's very much a country album with very little of the hard edge that always underlines the work of the Allmans. Listen to 'Rain' on side one for an indication of his melodic sense and skill as a guitarist, and the 14 minute long 'Hand Picked' on side two where the redoubtable Vassar Clements shows up well on fiddle. Don't expect a flashy, guitar-dominated album because it most certainly isn't that, it's just a good, solid, collection of country songs tastefully and expertly performed. The last of the more interesting Capricorn releases is 'Wet Willie' (Capricorn CP 0138), another re-issue, this time from 1971, and possibly the best of the four albums they've now made. I personally don't rate Wet Willie as highly as most of their label-mates, but I can see their appeal, and anyone with a penchant for raucous, slightly predictable R'n'B would be well advised to investigate this one. I know all ZigZaggers are walking encyclopaedias of obscure information, but do any of you remember The Good Rats who had an album of that name out on the Kapp label in 1968? "An early punk masterpiece" was how one reviewer

described it, and indeed it was. But that was the first and last we heard of them, until recently, when the two founding members, the brothers Peppi and Mickey Marchello (two of the very strangest-looking geezers you could ever imagine), re-formed The Good Rats and made an album, 'Tasty' (Warners BS 2813). I haven't even heard it so I can't tell you anything more, but it could well be worth looking out for.

Next, there's one album that could well rank as the best of the year by the time we all start making out our lists. It's the brilliant new **LITTLE FEAT** album, 'Feats Don't Fail Me Now' (Warners BS 2784). If any sort of justice is to be done, then Little Feat will be enormous. They're easily one of the best bands that America have ever had, and after their recent period of inactivity and temporary disarray, they seem to be back on their feet (oh dear, sorry about that), and ready to make another effort at winning over the great record-buying public. I want to talk about the album a bit more thoroughly when it's finally released here, but if you can't wait, get to hear the first track, 'Rock And Roll Doctor', and then get ready to lose £3.

Other recommended imports are 'Let It Flow' (Capricorn CP 0134) by Elvin Bishop, 'Richard Greene & The Zone' (Warners BS 2755).....read all about him in ZZ 38, 'Groover's Paradise' (Warners BS 2810) by Doug Sahm, and Doug Kershaw's latest album, 'Mama Kershaw's Boy' (Warners BS 2793) which the Warners' hype kit describes as 'The Louisiana coonass' latest album, filled with swamp yowls, sweet country violins and Cajun music enough to make you want to get out there with the muskrats and moss yourself!!!' And if that's not enough, there's Jesse Winchester's new LP 'Learn To Love It' (Bearsville BR 6953). An expensive month ahead methinks.

- Andy

VIRGIN RECORDS IMPORTS

1. FEATS DON'T FAIL ME NOW - Little Feat.
2. LEARN TO LOVE IT - Jesse Winchester.
3. HONEST TO GOODNESS - Grinderswitch.
4. HIGHWAY CALL - Richard Betts.
5. GROOVER'S PARADISE - Doug Sahm.
6. DUANE ALLMAN ANTHOLOGY VOL.2.
7. MAMA KERSHAW'S BOY - Doug Kershaw.
8. BOYER & TALTON - Cowboy.
9. ICE WATER - Leo Kottke.
10. TALES OF THE GREAT RUM RUNNERS - Robert Hunter.
11. THE GOLDEN SCARAB - Ray Manzarek.
12. STARS & STRIPES FOREVER - Nitty Gritty Dirt Band.
13. LET IT FLOW - Elvin Bishop.
14. MIAMI - James Gang.
15. HONKY TONK HEAVEN - Flying Burrito Bros.

RECOMMENDED SINGLES

GREGG ALLMAN - Midnight Rider/Multi-Coloured Lady (Capricorn K 17516).
RUFUS - Tell Me Something Good/Smokin' Room (ABC 4008).
NEIL YOUNG - Walk On/For The Turnstiles (Reprise K 14360).
BOB SEGER - Get Out Of Denver/Long Song Comin' (Reprise K 14364).
SANTANA - Samba Pa Ti/Incident At Neshabur (CBS 2561).
JOHN CALE - The Man Who Couldn't Afford To Orgy/Sylvia Said (Island WIP 6202).
EAGLES - Already Gone/Ol' 55 (Asylum 530).

Compiled by ANTHONY OLIVER and ANDY CHILDS.

JANIS IAN

'Stars'... a superb new album that reflects a unique talent;
 Janis Ian - a songwriter with songs to sing... and be remembered.
 Songs like 'Stars' and her new single 'Without You'.
 All on her debut album 'Stars' on CBS 80224





If fate takes its course, as I fully expect it to this will be the last ZigZag to emanate from the crumbling offices of Old Compton Street. No, we're not taking over Centrepoint, and we're not moving out into the country either, we're just being transferred to the main Charisma building at 37 Soho Square (right opposite the Nellie Dean... a hangout for tramps, cut-throats, press officers, wastrels, record company executives lunatics and other VIPs). At the moment we're the only people left in the building. Charisma Agency has gone, Hustler (the management company) has gone, the music publisher chappie's vanished, in fact if it wasn't for the telephones ringing constantly and a few friendly faces calling in occasionally to see if we're still alive, I'd be inclined to believe that we've been forgotten. Life at Soho Square will have its advantages, but I think I'm going to miss the close little office community that we had here, I mean how could anyone forget a character like Fred Munt... Hustler, Mothers fan extraordinaire, 'ringmaster' at the Reading festival (more about that later), friend of the stars... we've had some quite spirited discussions over the merits of Neil Young and The Velvet Underground, and it seems the only thing we agree on so far is the unmistakable quality of J.J. Cale, Cat Mother (remember them?), and a few others. Then there's Jan, his charming, super-efficient secretary who's also the wife of Dave Greenslade, (Jan's coming to work for us very soon so she'll straighten us out and we'll be more organised and reliable than ever before). And what about Angie with the South Sea Island sun-tan, smiling face, and extra-large bristols who operates the switchboard like she was born for the job. In the Charisma Agency there's Paul Conroy, instrumental in the success of the ZigZag Fifth Anniversary Concert, soul-freak, and Pretty Things maniac (we're currently working together on the Pretty Things story), the ebullient Nigel Kerr who looks a lot like Todd Rundgren, and their lovely elegant secretary Geraldine who's a mine of information (mostly gossip) and who makes a devastating cup of tea. All that leaves is us, and as those of you who've plucked up the courage to venture up here will know, we share our office with Charisma Books, operated, most successfully I might add, by Cathy McKnight, a lady whose charm and stunning articulateness has been known to silence the most difficult and forceful antagonist, and Sarah, her almost equally formidable new assistant. So now you know all the people we've had as office neighbours. Most of them will still be around in one form or another, but it still won't be the same, (sob, sob).

We're all recovering from the effects of the Reading Festival this week... an event I found quite enjoyable not because of the overall quality of the music, but despite it. There were bands playing that weekend who really were the most appalling crap I've

ever heard in my life, a large majority of the acts for one reason or another made very little impression on me either way, and about half a dozen or so were predictably excellent. On Friday evening, 10cc were brilliant, a complete surprise to me because I'd never seen them before and didn't expect them to be so dynamic and so unlike the unreal image that Top Of The Pops creates. A great band.

On Saturday afternoon, Procul Harum played a beautiful set finishing by public demand, with 'A Whiter Shade Of Pale'. Saturday night belonged to Traffic and especially Stevie Winwood who, as always, looked ill and nervous but played superbly. After what appeared to me to be a couple of decidedly uninspired opening numbers, they delivered versions of 'John Barleycorn', '40,000 Headmen' and 'The Low Spark Of High-Heeled Boys' that dispelled any doubts as to their quality. Of the lesser-known bands at Reading, Chilli Willi and G.T. Moore & The Reggae Guitars were, not surprisingly, the best. G.T. Moore excel in a melodic, strutting brand of reggae that is danceable, great to sing along to, and, considering all the band are white, remarkably true to its roots. I'm sure you all know what the Willis sound like by now, and when I say that they gave a dynamite, polished performance early on Sunday afternoon, designed to get everybody off their arses, then you'll know what I mean. Unfortunately, their set was all too short, and they headed back to London almost immediately to play at the Roundhouse in the evening. Of the other acts that stood out, The Sutherland Bros & Quiver were very good, Chapman/Whitney & Streetwalkers (playing their last gig together) were suitably impressive both musically and 'theatrically' (Roger Chapman is still the jovially demented abuser of mikes and tambourines that he always was), and the last band that I saw, Steve Harley & Cockney Rebel, (we packed up and went home when Focus were on), weren't quite as bad as I expected them to be. The songs were mostly rather lame, and Harley himself is nowhere near as good a performer as he likes to think he is, but the crowd loved them and responded almost to a man when the last song called for the audience to join in. To see and hear about 20,000 people singing together like a Cup Final crowd was quite something, and as someone remarked afterwards, one was left with the feeling that Harley is simply a musical non-entity with a remarkable flair for PR.

On the way home, crouched in the back corner of our van, watching the M4 disappear behind me, I thought how well organised and controlled the actual festival was, and how uninteresting and dull most of the music had been. If we hadn't had our stall down there I think I would have found the whole affair as boring and tedious as reading a book full of bus tickets, but we met some friendly faces, had some amusing conversations with people who were obviously in no

fit state to even know what festival they were at (man), and generally had an enjoyable time. Curious thing is though, I'm not at all sure whether I'm looking forward to next year's.



One consequence of Reading is the non-appearance of Tim Buckley Part 2 in this issue, but it will definitely be in next month, as will the Willis story (to coincide with the release of their spiffy new album), and, if all goes well, John Sebastian, Tim Hardin 2, Rick Nelson 2, and The Butts Band. We're still interested in any ideas for articles that you may have, especially on subjects that require readership participation... what we'd like you to do is to suggest a band or artist (preferably one that is rarely, if ever, written about but deserving of more praise), and collect as much information together as you can and send it to me. I'll set the ball rolling and mention The Pretty Things, Blue Cheer, Autosalvage, The Insect Trust, and Joe Boyd. Anybody got any info?

At long last, Fat Angel 13 is out, and it's the last one that I'll be putting together. From now on, Clive Anderson will edit it and he's aiming to produce one every two months. Issue 13 contains articles on The Allman Brothers, Paul Butterfield, Robert Johnson, The Insect Trust and Leo Kottke, and it's 20p from 213 Eastcote Lane, South Harrow, Middx. Also out now is Omaha Rainbow 3 with a remarkable interview with Pete Frame, telling of the trials and tribulations of keeping ZigZag together for four years. There are also features on Roger McGuinn, King Crimson, Dorris Henderson, Arthur Lee, Nirvana, and Jefferson Airplane. A very good mag, it's yours for only 20p from 10 Lesley Court, Harcourt Road, Wallington, Surrey.

I think I'm getting near the end of the page here which is great, because all I've got left to dribble on about is the brilliant concert in Hyde Park which I've just arrived home from. Kokomo (my goodness!... what a band... article on them soon), the Willis, Toots and the Maytals, Julie Felix (I gave her a miss), Roy Harper (not sure about him... nice bloke though), and the great ZigZag hero Roger McGuinn and his fabulous band. What a day's music! McGuinn was every bit as good as everyone hoped he would be, that old Rickenbacker making the sound that puts flutters in the hearts of Byrd freaks everywhere. Bloody fabulous, and congratulations Blackhill for organising a memorable show.

Right, that's it, enough of this sycophantic nonsense. See ya next month, take care, and don't go to any of those free nine-day pop festivals... you can never be too sure what sort of person you'll meet.
—Andy

From a man who has a lot inside:

Leonard Cohen

A new album 'New Skin For The Old Ceremony'. Leonard Cohen has found the medium for those thoughts and feelings that had to come out. Share them with him. Listen to his album out now 'NEW SKIN FOR THE OLD CEREMONY'. On CBS records and tapes. No. 69086.



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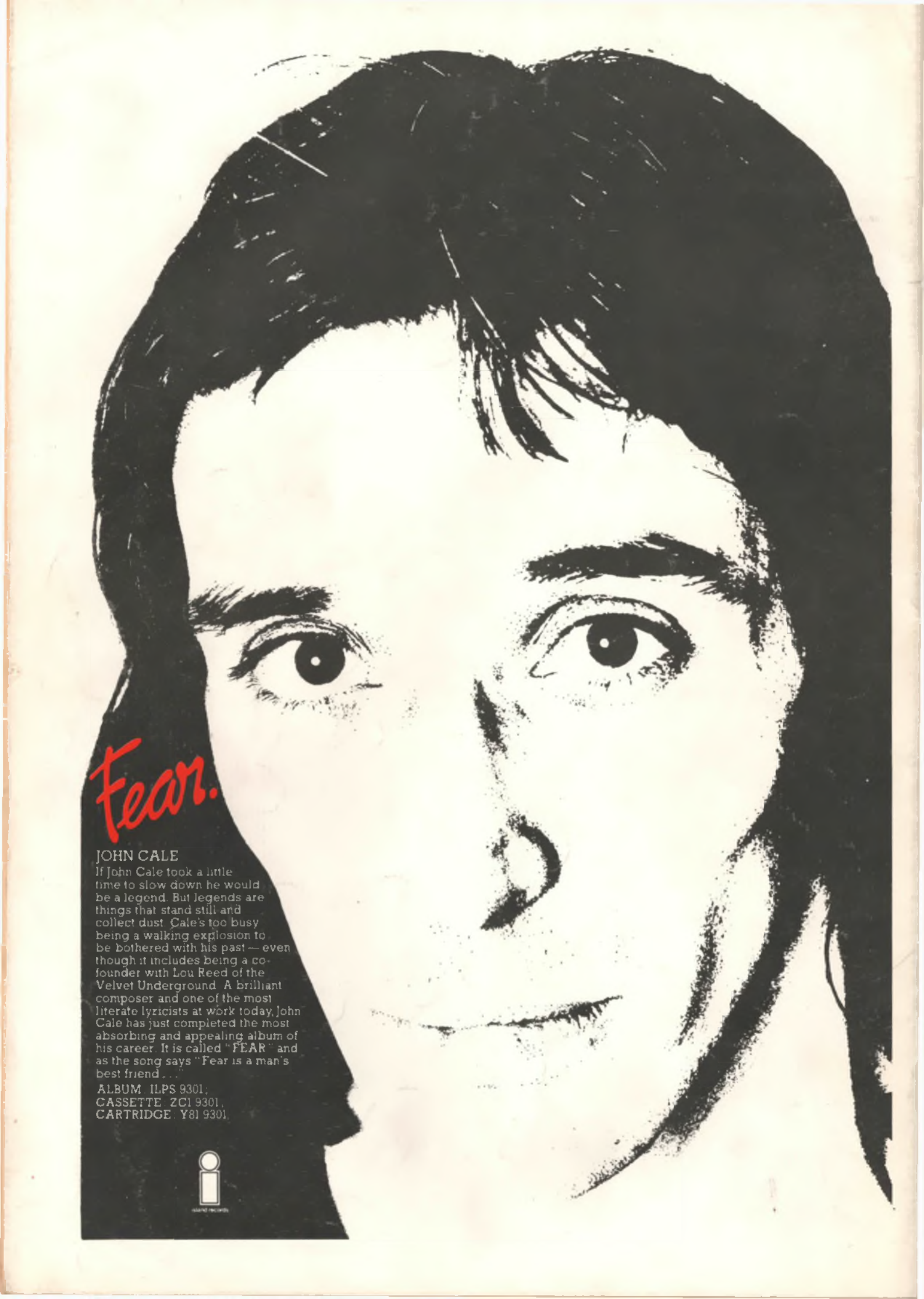
September

10 Edinburgh - Usher Hall
11 Glasgow - Apollo
12 Manchester - Free Trade Hall
13 Newcastle - City Hall
14 Liverpool - Empire
15 Bristol - Hippodrome
17 Sheffield - City Hall
18 Birmingham - Hippodrome
19 Brighton - The Dome
20 London - Royal Albert Hall



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Fear.

JOHN CALE

If John Cale took a little time to slow down he would be a legend. But legends are things that stand still and collect dust. Cale's too busy being a walking explosion to be bothered with his past — even though it includes being a co-founder with Lou Reed of the Velvet Underground. A brilliant composer and one of the most literate lyricists at work today, John Cale has just completed the most absorbing and appealing album of his career. It is called "FEAR" and as the song says "Fear is a man's best friend..."

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