

BE~BOP DELUXE

LEO KOTTKE

ZIGZAG

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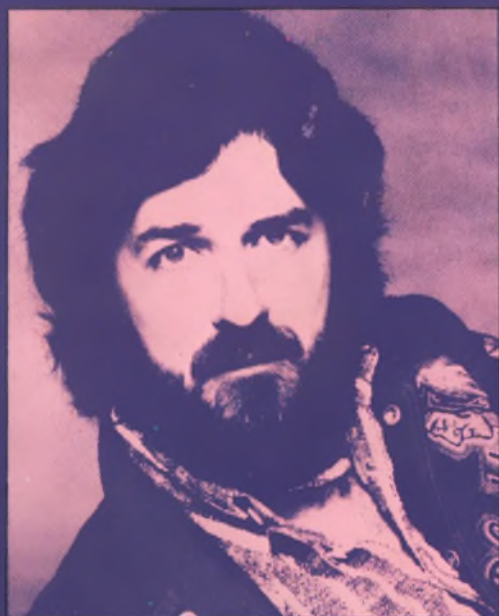
The Rock Magazine

25p

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PETE WINGFIELD

IN THE EARLY DAYS of *ZigZag*, when Frame and I were young lads, Childs wasn't even born, and San Francisco was where it was at (baby), it was oftentimes difficult to get to interview the superstars of the time. Thus, it became necessary to adopt some minor version of what may be called the critical faculty, the theory being that if we couldn't get to Mick Jagger, even though he read the *mag* at the time, we would have to work out for ourselves just who the good guys and the bad guys were. This process led us into some deep water, as those few of you who still have your early copies of *ZigZag* will agree. Andromeda was one of our mistakes and maybe Bent Frame. There were others—for example, we got to Tony McPhee prior to his brief flirtation with stardom, Thunderclap Newman before their hit (just), and a whole encyclopedia

a sequence of events. Gigs started getting scarce, and Chris the drummer decided to leave London, because there didn't seem too much point in hanging about. We had some gigs booked for the autumn, about four gigs, and we got a friend of mine, who I used to play with at school, to play drums for the four gigs, and then it was the end. After that, they continued with another guitarist, Rick Hayward, and I think they were a much better band without me, totally unrecognisable. They were really very good and funky, and I think they'd do well now, because the new drummer, Kenny Lamb, was very good too. He went off to Holland to play in a group called Living Blues, which is an awful name. He was one of these guys who'd lived in Holland for about nine months, and still didn't speak a word of Dutch."



of other names known only to the dedicated fan, a class to which most of the *ZigZag* writers belong. One of my own early endeavours was with Jellybread, a band local to where I was at the time, viz Brighton. From Jellybread, which collapsed in a mess some time ago, came a musician whose influence over the rest of the group I found hard to take at the time. Since then, I have grown to admire very greatly his piano playing, his writing abilities in the well known *Let It Rock*, his devotion to soul music, and most recently the extremely wonderful 'Eighteen With A Bullet', a single which maybe has done more to fill the chart with intelligence than the vast majority of its competition. Pete Wingfield—this is your life. At least your life since you left Jellybread, which is where we start.

I CAN'T REMEMBER exactly when I left Jellybread, but it was around the late summer of 1971. It wasn't really me that left the band, but more

KEEF HARTLEY BAND

"I was offered the gig with Keef—a phone call came through. I think it was Chris Mercer who recommended me to Keef, and he's on 'Eighteen With A Bullet', so the wheel turns full circle. The rest of that band was Miller Anderson, but only for a couple of weeks while I was there, and he was replaced by Junior Kerr, who I saw for the first time since very recently at the sessions for Jerome's [Rinson] album. I didn't recognise him, which was very embarrassing. He used to be in one of the London soul bands, but not a well known one. Then there was Nick Newell on reeds, who I've also run into recently, and Chris Mercer. Gary Thain on bass, who has recently left Uriah Heep, and Keef on drums. Plus myself on grotty Hohner electro piano. After Miller left, the vocals were done by me, Junior, and Chris a little bit. That band suddenly crumbled, when John Mayall made

Keef an offer he couldn't refuse, and that was it. He just said, 'I'm really sorry', because the band was cooking, but it wasn't making big money. It was always a live thing with that band, and the records didn't really sell that many. Keef's biggest stroke of imagination was the whole Indian imagery, because it stood him apart, and other than that, there was nothing very different."

COLIN BLUNSTONE BAND

"After the Hartley Band was a period of hiatus, punctuated with the occasional session. It's difficult to know when I started doing sessions—I just drifted into them through Mike Vernon, probably during the Jellybread days, doing those blues people who were also on Blue Horizon, and I did a few during that period, until the Blunstone gig came up, which I thought would be good for a few weeks until it crumbled. In fact, that went on for eighteen months. That was a great time, and everyone got on really well, but looking back, retrospectively, I don't think the band should really have been formed in the first place, because there was a constant tug of war between the image and the reality, between the sensitive type of image which Colin had, and the reality. But one hit single, and the whole thing could have changed. 'I Don't Believe In Miracles' was recorded just before I joined, but I felt as if I was on the record, because I played it enough times. I seem to walk in Russ Ballard's shadow, having at that time mimed to his playing on television doing that number, copying his piano playing. I've just recently, with Nick Newell and Alan Bown, incidentally, mimed to a track off Roger Daltrey's album, which Russ played piano on, because he was playing guitar, and he wanted someone to mime the piano. Again, the wheel goes full circle."

I THINK basically the end of the Blunstone band came because we weren't getting anywhere very fast. The harsh facts of the matter were that the summer was coming, and there weren't really enough gigs in the book to warrant keeping the band on at forty quid a week, plus sessions, of course. Luckily, I never had to blow out any sessions to fulfil my contractual obligations to Colin, but I think that if the band had gone on any longer, I would have had to, and that would have pissed me off. And that band finished during late spring last year. I was never going to join Atlantic Flight, the band that the rest of the people in Colin's band tried to form, although I think the name may be the subject of a *ZigZag* piece in ten years' time, a cult. People will be searching for non-existent Atlantic Flight records, and demo tapes...."

SESSIONS

"This session thing is something I always try to downplay, because people kind of grab hold of it, and shake it to death, but I'm not a session man—I'm not Clem Cattini. Those are the guys that really work, the guys that can do anything, and do it all the

'The Wheel Goes Full Circle'

time. My reading's not good enough for one thing. I'm a desperate bluffer. But I do get pick-up gigs, like supporting Bryn Haworth, that sort of thing. I like it that way. I don't want to blow out all of that. I think I'd stagnate if I had to blow out everything to do my own thing. What have I been on recently? ... both Mac and Katie Kissoon hits, Al Stewart's album, a couple of tracks on the Mud album that's just come out—I'm slapping the ivories on 'Tallahassee Lassie' and 'Let's Have A Party'."

AS FAR as my time with Van's concerned, there is an album scheduled called *Stiff Upper Lip*, which is supposed to come out in the autumn, but apparently Van wanted to re-record some of the tracks with us, and has done some more tracks in San Francisco which he's not been happy with, or something, and I don't know whether he's got an album out of it or not. *Stiff Upper Lip* will definitely include at least some of the stuff we did, because *Stiff Upper Lip* refers to a track called 'Mechanical Bliss', which was the original title of the album, and it's Van doing a sort of colonial ... you won't believe it, it's bizarre in the extreme. Working with Van is undoubtedly one of the highlights of my career so far. For two reasons—first because it was very easy, because we think along the same lines anyway, and also with no guitar player—you know, you'd just take an idea, and it wouldn't be clashing with anything. Then, of course, it was highly paid, large audiences, the whole bit.

"When we were backing Van, first of all we had Dallas Taylor on drums, who wasn't much to shout about as a drummer, I don't think. Also, Van just wanted to play R&B standards. It was an unfortunate beginning, but out of it came something very good. I didn't know any of his songs beforehand, but they're all the same anyway, the same chords. He just shouts out "Three" or "Two"—it's a unique way of going about it. But he's an amazing performer. Some of the gigs, particularly in the States, and the Knebworth one here, had an absolute magic about them. I've just been working, for the first time since that tour, with Pete [Van Hook] and Jerome [Rinson] on Pete, the bass player's own album. It's going to be called *The Way To Love* and it'll be on Warner's. Van got in touch with us through this geezer Claude Nobs, who runs the Montreux Festival, who recruited me in the first place because I'd been recommended to him by someone to do with Barclay Records in France, who is a good mate of Joe Jammer, with whom I've done a lot of sessions. We're the core of the Olympic Runners, and we get off on each other's playing. The rest of the Runners are the same rhythm section as on my album, Glen LeFleur on drums, and DeLise Harper on bass. I could only get Glen for 'Top Of The Pops', so I had to get other guys from Gonzalez in to learn quickly. Panic stations—can you imagine having to remake the record in three hours? I had to make up in facial expressions what wasn't there in the mix! In fact, the Runners is a Mike Vernon

brainchild. The name is mine, but it was born out of a session at Olympic, when we were doing a session for Jimmy 'Fast Fingers' Dawkins. We've never worked there since, just that once. The album eventually crept out on Polydor, called *Transatlantic 770*. It's a good album, actually, but ruined by one of the dullest sleeves you're ever likely to encounter. We started jamming, and it all came out very well, so we kept the tapes. That was with Tony Stevens, who's now with Foghat, and Reggie Isidore, who was with Robin Trower. The first couple of Runners things were with Bruce Rowlands on drums, and Chris Stewart on bass, who's now working with Joe Cocker, but now the personnel has crystallised. The Runners have now made two albums worth of tracks, twenty tracks, of which only two singles have been released here on London. The first single in the States was a double sided hit, with the B side bigger, 'Put The Music Where Your Mouth Is', and the A side was 'Do It Over'. We're going to go on with it, because there's no reason why we shouldn't, although it'll be strictly a studio thing. We don't take any time composing, we just go into the studio, and record the album in about six days, working it out in the studio, mix it, ship it, and that's it. Mike Vernon produces, but he's more than a producer for the Runners, because he hustled the deal, not that it's a particularly spectacular deal. Mike's enormously proud of it, though. He puts on records 'Recorded in Chipping Norton. Rhythm track—the Olympic Runners'. He's trying to make an identity with Chipping Norton, and justifiably so, although I don't think it went on the Bay City Rollers' records.... I haven't played on their records, but I'll tell you one good record I've played on recently, and that's the Harvey Andrews record on Transatlantic, with Jim [Toomey] from the Blunstone band, Richard and Linda Thompson, and Pat Donaldson—a lot of nice people."

A SOLO CAREER

"I figured there was money in songwriting, having done that stuff for Colin. I guess it was really on the strength of the songs on Colin's album, and other unrecorded demos, that I went round publishers for a publishing contract, and thankfully, I seem to have stumbled into the right scene, and ended up with Island Music. I signed for them about Christmas time last year, then thought about a recording deal. A couple of other companies were interested, but they became less interested when they heard I'd signed a publishing deal already, so I ended up on Island Records as well."

AND THAT'S as far as we're going to go with Pete at the moment. However, a shameless plug will follow for his newly released album, *Breakfast Special*, which your local record shop will supply under the code name of Island ILPS 9333.

I'd almost made up my mind about the fact that Pete's album was in fact a dreaded

concept album. Frankly, in these days such a description almost inevitably means what is so amusingly termed a stiff, although such an effect is often not merited. It's just the description that has that 'Keep Off The Grass' connotation. So it's with relief that I can mutter after all that rubbish that the predominant, but not total, inspiration for the album comes from the lady who only very recently adopted the name of Mrs Wingfield. Of the ten tracks, seven are to a great extent tender love songs, undoubtedly aimed directly at the lovely Jane, and those seven include 'Eighteen With A Bullet', plus several with similarly fascinating story lines, like 'A Whole Pot Of Jelly (for a little slice of toast)', 'Number One Priority', which is a very strong song due for a bunch of cover versions, I feel, and the overtly X certificate 'Hold Me Closer', which hopefully will not be understood by too many of those under the age of consent. The first side is all love songs either tender, gentle, joyful or rampant, or any number of other adjectives. The biscuit's bottom, as Pete might say, is somewhat different, featuring a shameless dance craze rip-off called 'Kangaroo Dip', an 'Alley Oop' copy, complete with stutter, Winifred Atwell solo and piano sound, and false ending. The mixture of 1975 technology and musical expertise with 1955 cliché is irresistible. Similarly, 'Shining Eyes' comes straight from some Temperance Seven type song book, a romantic musical comedy song, except that the lady to whom it is sung is apparently buried in a heap of rubble after an air raid. Such a track must give rise to concern about Mr Wingfield's real age, as I haven't seen anyone strolling down the Strand, as he claims to have done, in my entire fifty-three year old life. Nevertheless, there is something missing—the megaphone for vocalising. Everything else is right, the whistling, the spoken middle eight, the break in the voice, and the predictable piano twiddle at the end. A well observed death record? Rather more predictable (there, I've said it again!) is 'Please', a lost love boogaloo with a well fuzzed bass line, and my only real reservation about the album is regarding its programming. If some of the last three tracks mentioned had been put among the sincere sings of side one, perhaps a better balance might have emerged. Nevertheless, you are recommended to check out this exceedingly good LP in your famous friendly local emporium, and if you do, I suggest that you start with side two. The reason for this is that many of you may be just as cynical as me, and while we've all done that gazing into the eyes bit, about which Pete is exceedingly sincere, and for which I respect and envy him, it's sometimes very hard to see the romance in this idyllic life of ours. A final word to the backing musicians, already mentioned previously, who play with great feeling for Pete's compositions. Such sympathy is all too rarely found on 'solo' albums and he's lucky to have them. I await with interest to discover the next direction of the Wingfield career. I know it'll be good.

JOHN TOBLER

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Emmylou Harris

ONE OF the most satisfying features of last month's readers' poll, courtesy of the famous Mac Garry, was the high placing among the albums of the century accorded to Gram Parsons' *Grievous Angel*, which every *ZigZag* reader should have heard and therefore own. Even more so than his first album *G.P.*, which also quite rightly appeared in the Top Sixty, *Grievous Angel* is a truly beautiful piece of work, a blend of bitter-sweet ballads and up-tempo stuff with an air of almost desperate gaiety, immaculately and emotionally played by a dream band of Glen D. Hardin, Emory Gordy, Ron Tutt and James Burton, augmented by various people from the L.A. country-rock community, and although Gram's vocals were maybe not always perfect in their pitch, the weight of feeling they carried made such technical niceties superfluous. Duetting with Gram on both albums was a hitherto unknown lady called Emmylou Harris whose voice proved an ideal foil and partner for Gram, and his tragic death in September of '73 cut short a fast-blossoming partnership, the possible fruits of which are suggested on the achingly beautiful 'Love Hurts' or the gospel-tinged 'In My Hour Of Darkness', which they wrote. So it was particularly good news for admirers of Parsons' music when Emmylou released a solo album, *Pieces Of The Sky*, in February of this year, supported by most of the people who had played on Gram's, and particularly good news for me when I was able to meet her during a brief promotional visit last month to talk about her career and music.

'SHE... SHE CAME FROM THE LAND OF THE COTTON...'

Emmylou was born in Birmingham, Alabama, an area not noted for its contributions to popular music, and spent her youth as the daughter of a marine, in assorted army bases around the Southern states, locations not noted, etc. etc. so, not surprisingly Emmylou's early interests lay away from music in drama, which she went to study at college.

"I suppose I really started in my late teens. I got a guitar when I was sixteen, and I plunked around on some Joan Baez and Buck Owens. That was the beginning of my eclectic love of different kinds of music and songs and people. I played a lot in college because I was bored. I played in bars and got together a group with a guy, just the two of us; he played twelve-string, and I played a high-strung guitar, and we had an Ian and Sylvia type of sound. We did Hank Williams tunes and Beatles songs, and all kinds of material with just a basic acoustic duct, but I wasn't really into that. I was really intent on pursuing a drama career. Gradually I wanted to go to a better drama school, so I quit college to earn money to go to Boston University, and while I was doing that I supplemented my waitress' income by singing. I was living in Virginia Beach, Norfolk, and there was a really nice music community there, this was around '66/67, and I really got into music more and more, so when the time came to



go to Boston and I'd been on a few summer courses, I didn't want to be an actress at all, I wanted to sing, so I just quit that too and went to New York City."

THE STREETS OF NEW YORK CITY

Unfortunately Emmylou arrived in New York too late to join the thriving folk scene that had come out of Greenwich Village in the mid-sixties. Almost everyone central to that era had moved on, either to national prominence, or out to the West Coast, where it was all happening, allegedly.

"I arrived there very late in '67, too late in fact to catch any folk music that was happening. Suddenly everything was changing, and it all happened without me realising it. The psychedelic era had moved in and there were no places to play, nobody wanted to hear a folk singer so I had a pretty tough time of it in New York. I'd always wanted to go there though, and I was fascinated by it, I loved it even though it was very gloomy and very dirty, it was exciting to live there, a challenge to survive in that city.

"I managed to work a lot, I was lucky, I managed to work at Gerde's Folk City; I made a living singing into the first half of '68, I was doing OK, I was making maybe 100 bucks per week. I was playing all different things, some country, some originals, I was doing stuff by Jerry Jeff Walker and Paul Siebel, who were also having a tough time of it, but were great songwriters. At least I didn't feel terribly alone; within all that incredible era of awful, messy music that was happening, there were still people like Jerry Jeff, and Paul and David Brom-

berg who were making decent, good, melodic music. There were some good things happening, and I think that kept me from thinking I was going out of my mind. I ended up staying there two years... the first half was pretty productive I think, because of all those people that I met, but then I got out of it, I ended up being married and pregnant, and kind of cut off from everything."

Emmylou's personal problems prompted her to leave New York and move to Nashville, where things got no better for her. "I was too uninvolved with my music at that point, I just had too many personal problems to become involved with the music scene. I have a feeling it would have been even worse than New York, because I was definitely not country enough in their image of country."

Eventually Emmylou was compelled to return to Maryland to live with her parents and things took a definite turn for the better.

"I got into the music scene in Washington DC, which was really turning towards the lighter side of things. I met a lot of really neat people, who got me back into music, back into the nitty gritty of getting on stage in a bar with a couple of mikes and just playing."

ENTER THE GRIEVOUS ANGEL

The big break, as everybody knows, came in 1971, when the Flying Burrito Brothers came to town and met Emmylou. Originally they asked her to join them, and then promptly broke up, but Chris Hillman knew that Gram, who had already left the

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He has composed music for the feature films *The Body*, *'Sunday Bloody Sunday'* and *'Ghost Story'*, most of the music for the British Pavilion at Expo 70 (Japan), music for numerous documentary films including BBC TV *'Omnibus'* and BP *'The History of The Motor Car'* series. He musically arranged and composed melodies for Pink Floyd's *'Atom Heart Mother'*, produced and arranged Bridget St John's LP *'Songs For The Gentle Man'* and did *'Music From The Body'* LP with Roger Waters (Pink Floyd). In 1972, the BBC TV programme *'One Man's Week'* showed a week in his life (in half an hour).

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Emmylou Harris

band, was looking for a girl singer to join him, and told him about Emmylou on his return to L.A.

"I got a call from Gram who'd just been with the Burritos in Baltimore at their farwell performance, and he said, 'Hi, I'm Gram Parsons, I'd like to sit in with you and see how we sound together,' and I said, 'Sure'. So he came down and I met him at the station, and I had to work that night so he came along to the club"—the Cellar Door Club run by Walter Egan, whose *'Hearts On Fire'* appears on *Grievous Angel*—"and we did a few songs together. There were about three people in the audience, but it sounded real good, and he said, 'Well, you'll be hearing from me,' but I was really sceptical. I don't think I believed it would happen, I had become quite a pessimist in my old age. The music business had really burned me, it does most people, but I was just kind of gutted from it, combined with my personal life and everything, and that's why I didn't really take Gram very seriously."

In fact it took Gram a year to get things sorted out, and then he sent for Emmylou to fly out to the West Coast to do the sessions for the *G.P.* album.

"That night we had worked at the club was the first time we had ever sung together, and *G.P.* was the second, so we had done absolutely no work, we didn't even have any rehearsals. *Grievous Angel* was much more together vocally, because we had worked together all that year, starting in January '73. We had been singing together right up until we made that album, so we were just starting to get that together. We had a natural duet doing, which is really very rare, and we had just started to polish it up and get onto a whole new level of being able to sing when he died. I think that on *'Love Hurts'* we probably began to hit our potential."

'SAD STORIES FULL OF HEARTBREAK AND DESIRE ...'

"There's three unreleased tracks in the can, there's one other one that I rate with *'Love Hurts'*, which is an old Louvin brothers' song which we did, *'The Angels Rejoiced In Heaven Last Night'*, it's just an old gospel number, it's my favourite track of anything we ever did. I was thinking about releasing it myself, but I changed my mind. I might still do it, but it would probably not be on the next album, maybe the one after. If an anthology of his work doesn't come together by that time, which I'm hoping it will, then I might use that one track. The only reason we left it off *Grievous Angel* was that he had *'In My Hour Of Darkness'* and *'\$1000 Dollar Wedding'*, which were real death trip songs, he felt, and he really didn't dig the fact that people were always putting him on that trip; the fact is that he was really into a lot of heavy stuff, but it wasn't for the reason that he wanted to wrap that image around himself. He purposely left that song off, he explained it to me over the phone, because I was disappointed that he had left it off, and he said, 'Well, you know, we'll put it on the next album,' so that was the only reason he left it off, just because he

really didn't want that death trip laid on him. He was a person who was very, very full of life, not a morbid person at all, people sometimes get that impression of him. I'm sure that Gram had a lot of dark visions, but I think that anyone who sees the darkness sees the light also better than anyone else. I'm sure he was tuned in to both sides, but people tend to look on the dark side of Gram's life and work more so than the really high, beautiful, light part of it, which is too bad."

'HOW WOULD YOU FEEL IF THE WORLD WAS FALLING APART AROUND YOU ...'

At the time of Gram's death and the subsequent bizarre events, Emmylou was back in Washington, having returned there immediately after the recording of *Grievous Angel* to prepare to move out to California. Perhaps surprisingly she decided not to go through with this and take advantage of her association with Gram, preferring to stay in Washington "working in order to deal with putting my life back together".

"I didn't see any need to go to California. All my experience out there had been wrapped up with Gram, and at first I really wanted to go out there. It's strange how you react to a tragedy. Staying in Washington was painful in a way, because I had been there and had a lot of hard times, and then I had met Gram and my life had changed and become very wonderful, and full of lots of good things to do, and my friendship with him was of course very close, so all of a sudden to be back in Washington was like having a wonderful dream and then waking up to reality and everything being very hard to take, like closing in on you. It was almost like the last two years had never happened and there I was right back where I had started, and so it was difficult, but I just had a feeling that if I went to California it would be a mistake, because I needed time to do a lot of thinking without any influence from anyone else. I needed time to figure out what I was going to do, and even though it was really hard I had a lot of wonderful friends who helped me and I'll be grateful to them for ever and ever. I got a band together and just plunged right into work, and I'm a person who needs work."

The Angel Band as they were called, comprised Emmylou, Tom Guidera on bass—an old friend from the pre-Parsons days, and Danny Pendleton on pedal steel, "an older guy who works for a guided space flight centre, and he plays the most beautiful steel, but he just couldn't give up twenty years of government work to go on the road and lose his pension." They played bars in the Washington area for the best part of a year until July '74 when Reprise, Gram's old label, signed Emmylou up, partly because of the interest shown by Brian Ahern, Anne Murray's producer.

"It was actually Mary Martin's suggestion, she's the Warner Brothers A&R person. Ed Tickner, my manager, brought her down to hear me, and she's quite a woman, she's really a Joan of Arc. When she gets on a crusade she just doesn't let go, and she decided

that I was going to be signed, and Brian would produce me. She knew Brian from years ago, and she brought him down to the Red Fox Inn to hear me do my Tuesday night jaunt—four sets per night and people drinking beer and yelling in the background, and he recorded it on his little tape recorder and really liked it and figured he could do something. I was sceptical of producers, I figured any producer was going to overpower me, because I didn't like strings, I wanted to do songs like *'Coat Of Many Colours'*, and although I thought that Anne's albums were beautiful I knew that I wasn't Anne Murray, and my album shouldn't sound like hers. But I had this feeling that Brian was probably a good producer because he knew how to showcase different people in different settings. You really get this feeling from the man, he exudes this quiet confidence in knowing what he's doing, and I certainly needed that, so I just went with my intuition, and also the fact that I was going to have Glen D. Hardin and James Burton at the sessions. I figured that it would be a good combination and maybe something would come out of it, and I was right, because they all got on incredibly well, and we had a wonderful time making that album; everyone was relaxed, everyone had a good time. Everyone would come early to the sessions and stay late, because they enjoyed hanging out, and I just can't imagine doing an album any other way. I guess I'm spoiled."

'... PIECES OF THE SKY WERE FALLING IN YOUR NEIGHBOUR'S YARD ...'

An all-star credit list on an album sleeve is no guarantee of memorable or moving music inside it, but *Pieces Of The Sky* is a stirring example of master craftsmen giving their best to create something at once technically impressive and emotionally tangible.

"Perhaps it was because of a feeling of cameraderie as we had worked with Gram, but it wasn't like we were in church or anything like that, in fact we were very loose and it was very jocular and open, because we were friends, we knew each other from before. We were recording in a house with a fire going in the fireplace and nobody was uptight. Brian is certainly a very laid-back person and nobody was pressuring anybody about the time, nobody was punching a clock, the truck was in the driveway of the house, we could have gone on all night; in fact we'd do sessions until one or two and then J.B. and Glen D. and anybody else who wanted to stay would hang around and play old Lefty Purcell songs all night and sing, just drink and get high and enjoy ourselves."

The songs on *Pieces Of The Sky* are all personal favourites of Emmylou's, a mixture of old standards like *'If I Could Only Win Your Love'* and *'I or No One'*, which she used to do with Gram, songs written by friends Rodney Crowell, who now plays in her band, Billy Sherrill and Danny Flowers, and Emmylou's own song *'Boulder To Birmingham'* written for Gram after she had been in Los Angeles at the time of the Topanga Canyon fire.



Poco's eighth is Poco's best

The band that married country with rock then gave us a brood of seven fine albums is Poco. Now all seven combine to give you their eighth... and undoubtedly their best...
'The Very Best of POCO' EPC 88135
 Two record collection
 High calibre, high harmony, high energy.
 Country rock 'n' roll. On Epic. Also on Cassette.



EMMYLOU

"People say why don't I include more original songs—it's because I don't have any. I'm a lyric writer and if I feel I've got a good lyric and it happens that somebody comes up with a good melody then I'll record it, but I'm not going to be pressured into being a songwriter, there's just too many good songs around. I was surprised at the success of 'Boulder', and it's going to be a real hard song to follow, because it turned out beyond my wildest dreams, mainly because of Billy's involvement with it—he's a beautiful melody writer."

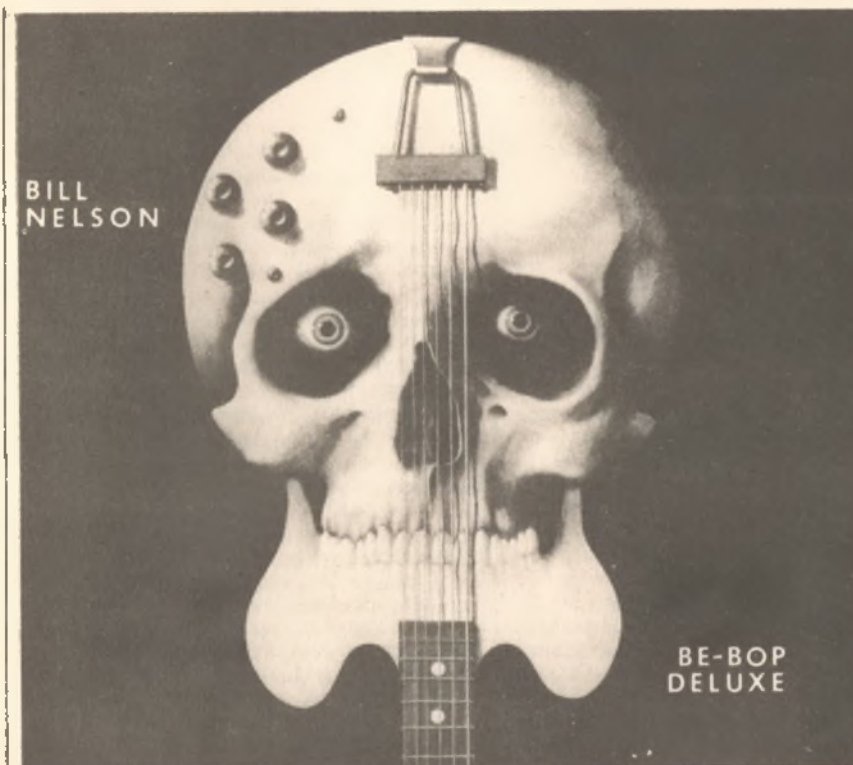
Original material or otherwise, Reprise obviously have a most commendable confidence in Emmylou's future, as they've given her what must be one of the hottest working bands imaginable—Glen D. Hardin on keyboards, Burton on guitar, John Ware, the drummer from the First National Band, Emory Gordy on bass, and Hank de Vito, who was with Jesse Colin Young on pedal steel—and at a time when many top American acts seem most reluctant to visit these shores, it's excellent news that they will probably be coming over in November.

"I think of England very fondly, because *Grievous Angel* received incredible critical acclaim over here, and obviously I have a lot of feeling about that album, and when it came out in the States it got a lot of reviews that said 'Wow, this is great', but I felt that a lot of the writing had more to do with the fact that Gram was dead, the fact of all the bizarre incidents after his death than real interest in the album. Warner Brothers chose not to promote it, which I agree with, but it just didn't sell at all. It probably didn't over here that well, but I think it was voted by critics as the best album of 1974, so I have a warm spot in my heart for the people over here for feeling that way about the album, for accepting it for what it is, and it's an amazing album, one of the greatest ever recorded. It's not because of my work on it, I just sit back and see it as it exists, and it's fine and wonderful, and perhaps some day it will be given the credit it deserves, and Gram will someday get the acclaim that he deserves, not that it really makes any difference, I mean he did what he did and you can't take that away from him. I think most of the people who got something from him, who were affected by his music and his vision, are doing what they are mostly because of him, and therefore his influence is felt. The fact that there's nothing on my album sleeve that says 'This album is for Gram Parsons'... I mean it's so obvious to me, and to anybody who followed our music that his influence is all through the album, and the playing on the album, and the musicians on the album. I really think that his influence is there to the point where it would be redundant to say anything."

There's not a lot one can add to a statement like that, except to say that *Pieces Of The Sky* is one of the year's finest achievements, and should be checked out by all those who have ears to hear, and if she gets over here with that band it's an experience you miss at your peril.

□ PAUL KENDALL

DIARY OF AN AXE VICTIM



If any one artist deserves to crash his way into the ranks of British rock heroes this year, then it is undoubtedly Bill Nelson. To start with, he's an ace guitarist—imaginative, tasteful and a pretty tough match for any of our longer established 'superstars'. Then there's his lyrics, coloured by his vivid imagination and remarkably effective use of imagery, whilst carefully avoiding the traps of over-emphasis and unnecessary obscurity which characterise the pretentious outpourings of so many would-be 'rock poets'. His style of singing is also one of his unique features, the unusual and surprisingly effective little inflections which he puts on certain words and phrases bringing to life his lyrics with a depth of feeling so often missing in rock vocalists.

BILL'S ENTERPRISING spirit and charismatic stage presence have already earned him the beginnings of a cult following, centred around his home town of Wakefield in Yorkshire. Having been around on the local scene since the age of sixteen, about ten years ago, he has, not surprisingly, built up a large local following, and his involvement with the multi-media events and the local Holyground studios (more of which will be said later) have added to the aura of mystique which arouses the curiosity of many of his advocates.

A somewhat shy and instantly likeable person, Bill is unusually honest about his achievements and, when I spoke to him, made no rash claims about being the next Jimi Hendrix, or whatever. The apparent hardness of character portrayed by the rather straight-looking publicity photos of

him, which highlight his heavy eyebrows and stone-like features, could not be further from reality. His soft voice, tinged with subtle Yorkshire overtones, suggesting a gentle but ambitious disposition.

Although he's only been playing professionally for less than two years, Bill's exploits in the music field go back much further, starting with the usual routine of school bands.

"We used to play in youth clubs for free ice creams and bottles of pop, playing Shadows and early Stones things, Chuck Berry and Muddy Waters. Then I got an offer to join what was at that time the best band in the area. They were called the Teenagers, but funny enough I was the only teenager in the group—everyone else was well into their twenties. I was at art college then and we used to play in the evenings at local pubs and night clubs, cabaret, that sort of thing, playing really straight music. I went through various incarnations of club bands, playing mediocre standards and top ten things and I got really fed up with that scene, so I got a three-piece band together while I was at college called Global Village. That was before the Global Village Trucking Company existed. We were doing Hendrix influenced things—rock and blues, and it was around that time that I started writing, although at that stage it wasn't really strong in terms of tunes or anything—it was simple riffs with rather weak lyrics some of the time. We did some multi-media concerts with the art college people, using back projection and so on, but before you could buy liquid wheel projectors it was medicine bottles with water and coloured inks."

WHILE BILL WAS playing with Global Village he came into contact, through friends at college, with a guy called Mike Levon who had started his own home studio in Wakefield, called Holyground. At that time Holyground wasn't really much of a recording studio—really it was just Mike's bedroom which he and a friend, Dave Wood, had begun converting with the help of a few ceiling tiles and a two-track Tandberg. Global Village went along to Holyground to record a demo of Traffic's 'Mr Fantasy', of which they had five acetates pressed.

A short while later an album was put together at Holyground and the few copies that were pressed were distributed locally. All the pressing, distribution, etc, was arranged by Mike and Dave themselves and the album became the first to appear on Mike's Holyground label. Bearing the strange title of *A To Austr* (taken, presumably, from a dictionary heading) it featured a number of local musicians who had got together to record some songs that a couple of friends of Mike's had written, and being quite prominent on the local scene by then, Bill was invited down to play acoustic guitar, plus a little Hawaiian guitar on one track.

A To Austr was never really expected to be a financial success—it was more a sort of exercise in 'alternative' record production, cutting out the big business aspects associated with large record companies and leaving everything in the hands of those responsible for the music. It did, however, provide Mike with a start, and he had proved that it didn't necessarily take an enormously expensive recording studio to produce a reasonable recording, while at the same time giving local musicians a chance to have their music put on record.

A second Holyground album followed and, once again, Bill went down to play on it, contributing some lead guitar to three of the tracks. The album was called *Asral Navigations* and, as with *A To Austr*, it was on Mike's Holyground label and was sold from the main record shop in Wakefield.

After Global Village had split up Bill became involved with the church and formed a gospel band called the Gentle Revolution.

"Yes, I became what at that time they called 'converted'. Gentle Revolution lasted for two years and we used to go round playing in prisons and remand homes, a lot of churches and youth clubs as well, playing music which I was writing. That band was a six-piece and we had a really talented keyboard player called Richard Brown.

"We did a big multi-media concert in Wakefield—only a local thing but it was pretty ambitious. I used to dabble in 8mm movies and I did this thing called 'Prelude To Humanity', which had four separate parts to it. It's a bit pretentious really, but the first three parts were supposed to be basic inhumanities—man's inhumanity to his environment, to his fellow men and to himself. The fourth one was supposed to be a solution, which was a kind of church

BE BOP DELUXE

solution to all this. We illustrated it, not just by music, but we wrote a few dramas which were played out on the stage by members of the church and we had mime sequences and poetry readings. There was one particular sequence in the film which lasted for about twenty minutes. It was about a guy who got into the drug thing too heavily—this was the whole moral of the thing—and it was about the visions he started having. They started off being really good and exciting and beautiful, but it gradually got worse until he was in this state where everything he saw was just dark and horrible. The whole thing, in a way, was just an excuse for me to have a bit of fun—kind of complete self-indulgence in the visual side, you know. We had members of the band dressed up in various things on the film. I remember the organist had a hood and a cloak on and a skeleton mask, and we got him to climb up on this railway bridge over the local river, the River Calder. He was kind of crucified on it and there were trains passing over, with a drop of goodness knows how many feet into the river below. But it all came over really well on film and we had this very Floyd-like music to accompany the part on the river.

"Anyway, in the end I fell out with the church in a way, because although it was very influential on me at that time, I was beginning to disagree with their principles and the way that they were teaching things. It was very narrow and I had one or two arguments with the elders of the church, basically because I wanted to change things for the young people. So I eventually stopped going and the band split up."

BY THE TIME Gentle Revolution split up, Bill and the keyboard player, Richard Brown, were both working as local government officers—Bill for West Riding County Council and Richard for the West Riding Architects Department. They immediately started a search for local musicians, with the idea of forming another band. The musicians they found were very talented but unfortunately had a lot of personal hangups—something which has hindered Nelson's career a number of times and is now reflected in some of his songs. The drummer, for example, had been separated from his wife and a reunion would only be possible if he gave up playing altogether. Similar problems were being experienced by the bassist.

"So there was this bassist, the drummer, Richard on keyboards and myself on guitar. All we were doing at that time, it was a bit self-indulgent, we were just seeing how complicated we could make things, just for the hell of it. It was almost like a Yes/Mahavishnu Orchestra situation. We were indulging in our whims purely as musicians without even thinking of communication—it was a bit cruel. It's a good job we never got on the road or it could have been quite horrible, but it didn't work out, simply because of the situation with the people personally. They couldn't commit themselves to the band."

IT WAS AROUND this time, during 1971, between the end of Gentle Revolution and the beginning of Be-Bop Deluxe, that Bill made his first album. After the completion of *A To Astral* and *Astral Navigations* at Holyground, Mike Levon had been putting more money out of his own pocket into the studio and the equipment now included a two-track Ferrograph and a home-made mixing desk which Mike had built himself. The mixer was located at the top of the stairs, on the landing outside the bedroom, so the studio was the bedroom, and the window between the studio and the control room (the landing) was the bedroom door.

Bill already had some songs written so he went back to Holyground and, with the help of a few friends, recorded a solo album, *Northern Dream*. The finances for the album were advanced by Bill's friends, Ken and Betty from the Wakefield Record Bar and, when completed, the album was sold from their shop. The initial pressing was 250 copies and it was treated in the same way as the previous two Holyground albums—no distribution deals were arranged, the whole thing being a purely local affair, recorded and engineered by Mike. A booklet was put together to go with the album and Bill invented the name Smile Records for his record label (the actual record number is LAF 2182). The album has rapidly become something of a collector's item, the demand, understandably, having been accelerated by Bill's growing popularity. To meet this demand a second pressing of 500 copies was made, although the original plates for the booklet have, unfortunately, been lost. In return for their help in financing and selling the album, Bill has given Betty and Ken the rights to any profits made, and repeated attempts by EMI to buy the tapes have, not surprisingly, been turned down. Although the Record Bar in Wakefield was initially the only place selling the album, a few copies are at last finding their way to different parts of the country, so keep your eyes open and you may be able to pick one up.

On *Northern Dream* Bill is credited for all vocals, guitars, flutes and recorder, most of the bass parts, and drums on one track, 'Rejoice'. Richard Brown plays harmonium on 'End Of The Seasons', piano on 'Sad Feelings' and drums on all tracks. Two other local musicians appear on the album—Gareth Eilledge plays bass guitar on 'Rejoice', 'See It Through' and 'Smiles', and Leom Arthurs contributes some bass guitar on 'Everyone's Hero'. When you consider that the album was recorded in what was originally Mike's bedroom, the quality of the mono recording is quite remarkable. True, it lacks the depth of a stereo recording made in a professional studio, but the loose, unpolished feel of the album adds a certain warmth and personal touch to the music. The songs are far more relaxed than the material which Bill subsequently recorded with Be-Bop Deluxe, he himself describing it as 'a lazy sort of album', but many similarities can still be drawn between parts of *Northern Dream* and Be-Bop's first album, *Axe Victim*, most notably the guitar play-

ing. The lyrics are simpler than those he writes now, but still lean towards the same kind of poetic imagery, at times displaying touches of humour and at others involving more serious subjects. Although the facilities at his disposal were limited, Bill was still able to overdub other instruments and harmony vocals, as he explained.

"Because it was a 2-track machine, the principles involved were very difficult—it's not like using a 24-track studio. One track would be put down on the left-hand channel, say an acoustic guitar, and that's bounced on to the right-hand channel adding, through another input, another instrument. Then you bounce back, so you're going backwards and forwards from left to right all the time. Consequently, whenever you add something it's fixed, because each time it's transferred from one channel to the other it's in that proportion, in volume, to the instrument which was on before it. It's messy and very complicated but you get there eventually. It does mean, though, that when you finish there's no mixing to be done—the levels between each instrument are fixed as you go along. Naturally, there's only a certain amount of overdubbing that you can do, because the tape hiss builds up too much."

NORTHERN DREAM opens with a very short, light-hearted track, 'Photograph', which is followed by 'Everyone's Hero', a more serious song with a simple but infectious lead and bass riff repeated at various points throughout. Bill's voice is easily recognisable, even though his distinctive style of phrasing had not fully developed at that stage, and his guitar playing was, by then, fairly well moulded into its present style. 'House Of Sand', an acoustic track with some pleasant bottleneck and vocal harmonies, is followed by a beautiful song called 'End Of The Seasons', Richard Brown's harmonium blending with Nelson's acoustic guitar to provide a backing for the vocals. The time change halfway through leads into a final verse, followed by a short piece of electric guitar improvisation and ending with some Ivor Cutler-ish harmonium. 'Rejoice' and 'Love's A Way' are perhaps indications of Bill's past associations with the gospel band, both in style and lyric content. 'Rejoice' relies mainly on the acoustic guitars for its rhythm while the overdubbed recorders add a brighter touch to the music and, as with much of the material on the album, the style develops through the song to incorporate electric guitar, with a loose instrumental ending. 'Love's A Way' is a slender song, lacking the gaiety of 'Rejoice', its wistfulness being heightened by the echoing background vocals, together with the simple accompaniment of acoustic guitar, bass, drums and the very sparse use of electric guitar. But it is the closing track of the first side, an instrumental, which captures the tranquility that runs through the album, even though it is comparatively short. Called 'Northern Dreamer', it is all that its title suggests—dreamy, melodic, beautifully restful and, above all, simple. Over a backing of

strummed electric guitar, very slight percussion and mellow bass, the lead guitar plays a beautiful melody, overtly simple, yet devastatingly effective. A good comparison would be 'Lullaby' from Wishbone Ash's *Pilgrimage* album. Towards the end a second guitar takes over, distorted and lacking much of the peacefulness with which the piece began, yet not so harsh as to sound out of place.

The second side begins with a humorous, very relaxed song, 'Bloo Blooz'. Really the whole thing was just one very clichéd send-up, as Bill explained.

"Side two starts off with well, it's supposed to be me coming out of the bog actually! You hear the clank of coffee cups and then a toilet flushes, which is downstairs actually, underneath the studio, and that's followed by my footsteps coming up the stairs and the studio door closing. Then we tune up and there's a boot, 1-2-3, and off we go. It's really just as it happened. The track's a bit of a send-up in the old 'Fleetwood Mac, Chicken Shack...' style, all the old clichés are there. There's only one verse of vocals followed by three purposely stylised guitar solos, and then at the end we just all collapse into laughter."

The other three main tracks on the album are in a more serious vein, the first of which, 'Sad Feelings', is a predominantly acoustic song with some dreamy electric guitar overdubbed on top, following the conventional pattern of verse, chorus, verse, etc. 'See It Through' is another fairly conventional acoustic song, featuring some nice bottleneck guitar with a lazy, summery feel about it. 'Smiles' is a more complex track, changing from a very dreamy acoustic beginning into a constantly changing pattern of acoustic and electric passages, highlighting some excellent guitar playing which is similar to the more 'upfront' style to be found on the Be-Bop Deluxe albums. A few seconds of acoustic guitar harmonies called 'Chyme Peace' brings the album to a close.

The feeling you're left with after listening to *Northern Dream* is one of peacefulness and relaxation, even though parts of the album (the heavier parts of 'Smiles' for instance) are fairly lively. This is undoubtedly largely due to the conditions under which it was recorded, making it eminently suitable for playing at night or on lazy afternoons.

HOLYGROUND IS still functioning incidentally, with Mike Levon firmly at the controls and with much better equipment. Mike is also trying to get the Holyground label sorted out on a more reliable foundation.

The recording of *Northern Dream* proved to be much more of a blessing than Bill, at the time, could have imagined, as it played a major role in getting him a contract with EMI. He'd sent a copy of the album to John Peel just on the off-chance that he might like it and to his pleasant surprise John not only liked it, but gave it a few plays on his show. As you probably know, he's given Bill a good deal of support since then.

"I had a phone call from Dave Croker of EMI and he said they'd got a copy of *Northern Dream*—God knows where from because it was only on sale in Wakefield! Anyway, he said

could I go down and have a talk about future recordings, because he was interested in re-recording *Northern Dream* at that time."

By then, the band which Bill and Richard Brown had formed following the demise of Gentle Revolution had split up and after two or three gigs under the name Flagship, with Richard Brown switching from keyboards to drums (as on *Northern Dream*) and Gareth Eilledge on bass, the first line-up of Be-Bop Deluxe began to form.

"I met up with an old school friend whose band was in dire trouble because they'd lost some of their members, so he said why didn't we go down and have a blow. Well, Richard and I were looking for people to play with who could at least commit themselves time-wise, so we went round to where they were rehearsing for a jam and we thought, 'Well, it's worth a try' and that was how the first line-up of Be-Bop Deluxe was formed."

That first line-up comprised Bill on lead guitar and vocals, Richard Brown on keyboards Robert Bryan on bass, drummer Nicholas Chatterton-Dew and Ian Parkin on rhythm guitar. When the phone call from Dave Croker came the band had only been together for four days, so Bill hurriedly got some tapes together to take down to him.

"By the time Dave phoned, the band had learnt two songs which I had written, one of which was 'Jet Silver' which later appeared on the first album, so we went to Holyground that day to get these two songs down. I brought the tape down to him and he said, 'Yes, it sounds good, but four days old—it could go one way or the other, it's very hard to tell. Give it a few months and we'll come up and hear you when you've got some more songs together and you're a bit more relaxed.' So for the next few months we just kept plugging away at it.

"The very first proper gig we ever did was at a pub called the Duke of Cumberland in a village just outside Wakefield and we ended up getting a virtual residency there. Strangely enough, although Richard had been the organist in the church and in the church band with me, he'd pretty well turned into an alcoholic. Once he got away from the church he went berserk. I hope his dad doesn't read this—he's the vicar! But he just went a bit over the top and he used to influence the rest of the band tremendously, so we used to get very drunk on gigs. When we arrived at our first gig we were drunk and for a laugh I'd taken along a load of poster paints because I thought it would be a great idea if we all painted ourselves! So we went into the gents', because there wasn't a changing room, and painted our faces. Then it was kind of, 'Well who's going to go out first'—Well I'm not...' etc, because we had all these dressing gowns, anything we could find at home that was bright and outlandish. God, we looked like a set of... I don't know, the New York Dolls had nothing on us! Anyway, we eventually staggered out to the bar and got some more drinks down us and then we got up on stage and it went down a storm. We even had the roadies dressed up in those days. At first it was just a laugh, but it

caught on and gradually became more sophisticated. We started using make-up instead of poster paints and we had clothes made.

"We had a mime sequence where we used a taped piece of music in the middle of one of the songs, the story of which was about how when a guy who plays in a rock'n'roll band dies, he's idealised, whereas when he was alive nobody took a blind bit of notice. The reaction to that really amazed me, because although I'd written it with a particular purpose in mind, I didn't want it to be explained to the audience and on the times that we performed it we talked to people afterwards and everybody had a different interpretation as to what it was about. I really loved that because they'd put their own imagination into it. We could only perform it a few times though, because we were only playing a few small local gigs at that time, so there was no way we could break away and play it to new audiences and we thought that if we overdid it people would know what to expect and it would lose the element of surprise which it worked upon."

WHILE EMI were still making up their minds as to whether they wanted the whole band or just Bill himself, Be-Bop Deluxe decided to release a single on their own which they could then sell on gigs, as by now there was a fairly strong demand from their audiences for recordings of their songs. The single, 'Teenage Archangel', was again on Bill's Smile label, although instead of going back to Holyground they decided to record at a small place called Box Studios in Heckmondwyke, about three miles from Wakefield. About 1,000 copies were pressed of the single, most of which were sold on gigs and, once again, John Peel lent a hand by giving it a few plays on his show. A fairly commercial, up-tempo song, with a time change halfway through which would probably destroy its chances as a single now, it had as its flip-side an early version of 'Jets At Dawn', which later appeared on *Axe Victim*.

Richard Brown, although an excellent musician, only remained a member of the band for a short while, leaving after about fourteen gigs.

"He was married and his wife started getting heavy so he had to pack it in, which was a great loss to me as he was such a strong player. The other guys in the band weren't brilliant musicians but they were very keen and wanted to work hard, which was more important to me at the time."

Meanwhile, EMI were becoming increasingly interested in the band and after a gig at London's Marquee, Be-Bop Deluxe were signed up and given the deal for *Axe Victim*. Up until this point they had still only been semi-pro, working on local gigs and writing new material.

BE-BOP DELUXE'S first album for Harvest, *Axe Victim* (SHVL 813), was recorded almost as soon as they were signed in about

BE-BOP DELUXE

March 1974 and released in June. Due to the short notice, any available dates at a number of different studios had to be booked, with the result that the album ended up being recorded and mixed all over the place, including Air, CBS, Audio International and Abbey Road. Surprisingly though, the continuity of the album was unaffected even though the band were having to get used to new engineers practically every other day.



Produced by Ian McIntock, *Axe Victim* expressed perfectly many of the feelings and frustrations Bill had been experiencing with both this and previous bands. The title track in particular referred to feelings which were later developed on their second album, *Futurama*. Firstly there is the warning of such lines as 'Please be careful... I'm an axe victim, hung up on these silver strings', a message reiterated in 'Love With The Madman' from the second album and expressing the belief that any musician, artist, poet, etc, who is totally dedicated to his art becomes a prisoner of his creation—in Bill's case, an 'axe victim'. Secondly he makes the point that there is, unfortunately, more to being in a band than just playing, the superficial gloss of advertising etc, masking the true character of the musician. But behind it all... 'Backstage we stand naked, all the makeup cleaned away', this again being reiterated on *Futurama*, in 'Stage Whispers', with lines like 'The great deception is not my achievement...'

"At times it can get like that. Like this morning I was doing a photo session for a magazine in a pub where there were all these foam and fibreglass fairground things and the guy was saying, 'Come on, smile now, nice and airy' and I just didn't want to smile. And I had to record a telephone message which was like, 'Hi there! This is Be-Bop Deluxe, etc...' and I thought, 'What the hell's this? Why can't the music be enough?' But all the time I think in the back of my mind that it's worthwhile because it's getting the band over to a wider audience, it's just that it's a bit of a strain.

"As far as being an 'axe victim', the situation affected me so far to the degree where my marriage split up, simply because my wife got fed up with my being away from home so often. Even when I was at home, if I had an idea I couldn't put it

off until tomorrow—I'd rush straight to the piano and start working it out. I don't make any excuses for it to anybody and I totally blame myself for that, but I'm just a victim of being that kind of person. Although the process is painful, the satisfaction you get in the end is the total reward and if there's one thing in life that I've found that rewards me, it's that."

BUT THERE IS far more to *Axe Victim* than merely Bill's frustrations. Tracks like 'Jet Silver And The Dolls Of Venus' and 'Third Floor Heaven' provide us with glimpses of his vivid imagination, the former in a romantic, space-age style and the latter in a more down-to-earth sense. Bill's love of his native Yorkshire is evident in 'Adventures In A Yorkshire Landscape', a portrayal of the local landscape as seen through his eyes.

"I've written a whole load of things about Yorkshire that didn't get on the album, because what I wanted to do at one time was to put them all on one side of an album and have a kind of suite about Yorkshire. I hope that one day I'll be able to put all these Yorkshire things together and just have a piece that will encapsulate the whole mood of the area."

Most important of all though is the way Bill actually delivers his songs—both vocally and instrumentally. I really can't think of anyone who has yet managed to capture the perfect singing style which he has developed, putting just the right accent on various words and, in so doing, making the impact of his lyrics even more effective. His guitar playing too would easily shame most other contemporary rock guitarists, leaping out to grab you by the throat or drifting gently in and out of the lyrics, depending on the mood of the song. 'No Trains To Heaven' contains some of the best guitar work on the album and when I last saw the band it was used as the final number of their set, incorporating drum and guitar solos, with Bill skat-singing along with his guitar.

The only track on *Axe Victim* not written by Bill is 'Rocket Cathedrals', a lively piece of space-age rock'n'roll which was written and sung by the bassist, Rob Bryan. Also making a brief vocal appearance is Jenny Haan of Babe Ruth, who was introduced to Bill by their bass player, Dave Howlitt, who is an old friend of his. Jenny had particularly asked to do something on the album and she can be heard singing along with the chorus on 'Third Floor Heaven'.

Really though, there is so much to *Axe Victim* that it would be pointless to try to do it justice in the space available—far better to listen to the album itself and make up your own mind.

One track from the album, 'Jet Silver...' (which, incidentally, almost ended up on *Northern Dream*), was also released as a single (now deleted), with 'Third Floor Heaven' as the flip-side. Despite its beautiful sing-along chorus and lovely guitar it failed to really do anything though—mind you, looking at the state of the charts, that's

probably a point in its favour!

COINCIDING WITH the release of *Axe Victim*, Be-Bop embarked upon a British tour, supporting Cockney Rebel, playing mostly material from the album plus a long guitar show-piece called 'Watch This Space'. The reactions to their performances were encouraging, but all was not well, for Bill had been under pressure for some time to split the band and assemble a fresh group of musicians whose abilities would better complement his own. After the tour with Rebel, Bill finally came to the decision that he would reluctantly have to split the band, the announcement coming mid-way through August 1974, the same time as Steve Harley was getting his new-look band together.

"It's very hard for me to talk about it because they were close to me as friends, but things weren't quite gelling in the studio—it was taking too long at times and I was having to work things out for them. People in the record company had been saying that I needed to get people behind me who were a bit stronger musically and for a long time I refused to do that, but it got to the stage where I realised I was either going to have to do it or go back to square one."

Following the Cockney Rebel split, two of their old members, keyboard player Milton Reame-James and bassist Paul Jeffreys, teamed up with Bill to form the second of Be-Bop Deluxe's line-ups. Milton introduced Bill to Simon Fox, who at that time was doing a lot of session work and had previously been drummer with Hackensack, and he completed the line-up. However, although the musicians were competent enough, this line-up was very short-lived, only playing a handful of dates before disbanding.

"We only did ten dates actually, and they were pretty disastrous. We were under-rehearsed mind you, but I think there were too many stylistic differences on Milton's part. His style of playing that he had with Cockney Rebel was very fixed that way and although he's a very original player he didn't quite suit what I was writing. He did introduce me to Simon though and that was the one good thing that came out of that liaison. Simon and I came to the decision that the thing with Milton and Paul wasn't quite what we wanted, so we split the band up and started auditioning people. Once again it was a very hard thing to do when we split the band, because we hadn't fallen out with either Milton or Paul on a personal level, but it just wasn't working musically. We're still friends though and Milton came to see us at Victoria Palace."

Following the split, Bill and Simon Fox started auditioning for a bass guitarist and keyboard player and after working their way through a good many bassists, they came across Charlie Tumahai. Born in New Zealand of Tahitian and Maori parents, Charlie had previously been in a fairly successful Australian band called Mississippi, but he had left Australia to make a name for himself in England and had been over here for about six months when he auditioned for Be-Bop Deluxe. Bill was well satisfied with Charlie's playing and he immediate-

ly joined as the third member, but as far as finding a keyboard player was concerned, things didn't work out so easily. Repeated auditions had been fruitless and by now it was getting towards the end of 1974—time, really, for Be-Bop to be thinking about getting another album out. It was decided that Bill would play all the keyboards on the album and, meanwhile, the search for a fourth member would continue, but just as rehearsals for the album were starting, Bill came across Andrew Clarke. It was, however, too late for him to start rehearsing for the album, so it was recorded as a three-piece and Andy joined the band after its completion.

"We thought it was about time we got another album out, because people would be wondering where we were. We'd tried loads and loads of keyboard players and suddenly I thought, 'I know one!' because Andy used to be in a band called Mother's Pride, who had supported the original Be-Bop Deluxe on local gigs up north on a couple of occasions. I'd remembered thinking at the time how his keyboard playing really stood out and through various feelers which I put out through agents who had got us gigs up north, I was put in touch with someone who put me in touch with Andrew, although Mother's Pride had split up by then. His real name is Simon actually, but we didn't want to have two Simons in the band, so to avoid confusion we use his middle name, which is Andrew. He came down to some of the sessions for the album, to learn the numbers as we were mixing them. He used to memorise them and then when we finished the album he started rehearsing with us."

THE ALBUM, *FUTURAMA* (Harvest SHSP 4045), was recorded at Rockfield Studios in January 1975, with Roy Thomas Baker, previously known for his work with Queen, producing. Once again the lyrics are shaped by Nelson's powerful use of imagery and his guitar playing is nothing short of incredible. The crashing chords and wildly flowing guitar passages of 'Sound Track', the almost violin-like sweetness in parts of 'Love With The Madman', the dreamy acoustic guitar of 'Jean Cocteau'—all of these combine to produce an album of beautifully varied textures.

'Stage Whispers', the album's opening cut, immediately bridges the gap between *Axe Victim* and *Futurama*, continuing the themes of the former regarding the superficiality of performers' stage images and the truth that lies behind the false appearances of showbiz. But though a glossy face may be painted, the music will show the real truth—'This guitar does not lie'.

Bill's impressions of Yorkshire again crop up in 'Music In Dreamland' which is given an added touch of local colour by the participation of the Grimethorpe Colliery Band.

"They'd done the session for Roy Harper album (*HQ*) in the morning and we had them in the afternoon. They really must have enjoyed playing on it, they were all chatting about it."

One characteristic of Bill's writing which seems to be developing is that of his curious references to birds. Even on the first album

vague references were made, but on *Futurama* he frequently draws comparisons between people and birds, although his tendency to do this seems to be quite an unconscious one. The most obvious example of this is 'Sister Seagull', in which not only the lyrics but also the echoing seagull cries of his guitar give a perfect impression of soaring flight and rolling clouds. The theme of the song was originally inspired by a rather strange and haunting dream which Bill's girlfriend had.

"She had a dream that she was a priestess, and the symbolism involved was really weird. She had her head shaved and earrings on—a gold sun on one side and a silver moon on the other—which all tied in with this priestess thing. I was in this dream with her and she wasn't allowed to speak, the only method of communication being to change the colour of our eyes. Each colour our eyes changed to represented a different thing and for some reason I could never change my eyes to grey, which represented love. She said she could see us both, you know how you can sometimes see yourself in dreams, as though through a camera. Anyway, we were both walking along this cliff and suddenly there was this scream, which started off as a human scream and gradually turned into a seagull's cry. Well, I spun round to look back at her, but when I looked where she had been, instead of this priestess figure, she had turned into a seagull and was flying away up into the clouds. It was that dream that inspired 'Sister Seagull'.

Although Bill played keyboards on the album, most of the music concentrates on



his guitar playing, the keyboards usually only performing a back-up role to add depth to the music.

One other musician to make an appearance on *Futurama* is Andy Evans, a jazz string bass player who plays on 'Jean Cocteau'. Originally the track was going to have no bass at all, just acoustic guitar and percussion (there is no actual drumming on it, just various 'rattley and tinkley things', as Bill described them), but the inclusion of string bass adds to the mellowness of the song, without destroying the mood in the way that an electric bass would. The song itself has a beautiful, lazy, slightly French flavour, with some dreamy acoustic guitar.

"I admire Cocteau—not so much the words he's written, but his whole approach

to what he did. He did everything he could get his hands on to do with the creative process, he didn't only express himself through the sort of poetry that people think of as being a written form. Poetry to him was a quality rather than a form. There was a time when I used to think that what I was doing would be purely related to a guitar, but now I like to think of it as being towards anything that I can use as a creative vehicle. I'd like to write a book of lyrics, poems and stories, and I do a lot of paintings at home, and there's a film score I've written which isn't so much a story as a sequence of visuals with music. The songs have vague stories or meanings, but the meaning should come from the person viewing it rather than me."

FUTURAMA WAS released in May and one of the tracks from it, 'Maid In Heaven', was also released as a single (HAR 5098). Unfortunately it didn't pick up much in the way of airplay and was consequently virtually doomed to obscurity, but nevertheless it stands as a pure rock'n'roll masterpiece, Nelson's characteristically humorous and colourful lyrics and powerful guitar playing putting it in a class of its own. Before 'Maid In Heaven' was released, a different version of 'Between The Worlds' was recorded, with Nick Mobbs and Bill producing. This was originally going to be the single and, although the idea was dropped, a few of these accidentally slipped into the shops, so if you're lucky enough to have a copy, hang on to it as they're rapidly increasing in value. 'Lights', the flip side of 'Maid In Heaven', also comes from the same session and the difference in production between the two sides is very noticeable.

Since the release of *Futurama*, Be-Bop Deluxe have been doing a fair amount of gigs in Britain, a few of which I went to, and all of those I saw were absolutely incredible. Do go to see them if you get the chance. I can think of no band more likely to make it to the top over the next year than Be-Bop—talent like that just can't go ignored for ever.

They have now started preparing material for the next album and the titles Bill gave me of songs he had written when I last spoke to him were: 'Ships In The Night', 'Heavenly Homes', 'Fair Exchange', 'Sleep That Burns', 'Crystal Gazing', 'Crying To The Sky', 'Blazing Apostle' and 'Life In The Air Age'. Possibilities for the album title so far are 'Hot Valves' or 'Sunburst Finish', and among names being tossed around with regard to the production, is that of Bob Ezrin, which could prove interesting, although a number of alternatives are also being considered.

Things at last, are beginning to look good for Be-Bop Deluxe. Their first State-side tour is already lined up and, given the right push, they could easily make it big on both sides of the Atlantic.

But pushed or not, one of these days Bill Nelson is gonna be a star...

□ TREVOR GARDINER

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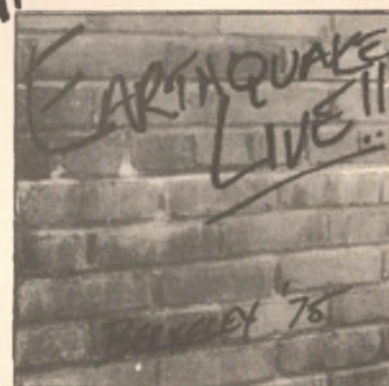
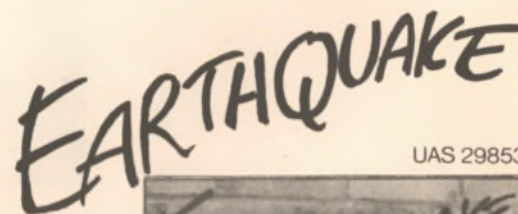
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UA
UNITED ARTISTS RECORDS

MOODIES

Justin Hayward, John Lodge, & Ray Thomas talk about their solo albums and the future of the Moody Blues.

So what do you think of the Moody Blues? At a rough guess, I'd say that the majority of *ZigZag* readers have never entertained the idea of buying a Moody Blues album, more because of the image than the actual music.

True, they're very respectable, most of them are stinking rich, and they make records which sell to middle-class trendy young couples living in the stockbroker belt who know and care as much about rock music as Batman. But that's hardly the Moodies' fault. The fact remains that they are immensely popular, and I for one don't mind admitting that I've always had a soft spot for 'em. I can remember the days when they were a 'hip', 'underground', 'progressive' group, and everyone loved them, and John Peel played one of their singles, 'Voices In The Sky' every week on 'Top Gear' for about a month (doubtless he'll be extremely embarrassed to recall that), and although their music hasn't altered radically since those heady days, they still write good tunes and make consistently lavish albums. I've always wanted to document their career in full and if and when they get back together after their break, I'll probably get round to it, but for now we'll concentrate reasonably enough on their current solo projects. Drummer Graeme Edge has his own album out called *Kick Off Your Muddy Boots* (Threshold THS 15), but it was Justin Hayward, John Lodge, and Ray Thomas that I talked to in two separate interviews about their projects and about the indefinite future of the Moodies. Justin Hayward and John Lodge's album is called *Blue Jays* (Threshold THS 12), and Ray Thomas' goes under the title of *From Mighty Oaks* (Threshold THS 16).

ZZ: Can you start by explaining the reasons for making the *Blue Jays* album, because it strikes me as being very similar to the Moody Blues, whereas most offshoot albums tend to be different for a reason?

JH: I think it's similar in as much as we've always been songwriters and you can't do anything deliberately to change the kind of songs you write. It came about because in March or April of last year we had just finished a nine-month world tour with the Moodies and everybody wanted to do different things. Mike stayed in America and everybody had different ideas. As soon as we got back we started writing because that's the time when you tend to write a lot, and between us we had about twenty songs; and our studio at West Hampstead was just finished. Tony Clarke was there, so we said 'Why not just put the songs down,' and it just snowballed from there.

ZZ: Could we go through the album track by track because it's fairly evenly split up composition-wise. How for instance do you go about writing a song together?

JL: Well it's not really sort of black and white. It's one of those things where Jus might be around and I've got an idea for a song and Jus comes up with an idea in a similar mode which fits naturally.

ZZ: I presume that you work pretty closely with Tony Clarke on the arrangements?

JH: Yes, more so than any normal producer would. He was a musician himself, he knows exactly what he likes and he knows our songs so well: he knows what he wants to get out of them. Musically he had a big influence on us with this album because he knew Providence, the group we worked with. He discovered them and recorded them in the first place—Tim Tompkins, Tom Tompkins, and Jim Cockey.

ZZ: What about the other guys on the album—Graham Deakin, and Kirk Duncan. How did you choose them?

JH: It was from another session we did as a favour—we met Kirk and Graham there. We went into record and they were the first people we thought of, so we asked them along and it all fell into place.

SIDE ONE

JH: 'This Morning' (Hayward) ... there were only three of us on it originally. Kirk did the backing track and we put it down anyway; then it changes tempo at the end and turns into a big instrumental. It's got very close harmonies—we worked out the harmonies all the way through in thirds between John and I and I think it was the first vocal session we did.

ZZ: Is a lot of it overdubbed, because the arrangements are very lush?

JH: What we always do is as soon as we put down the basic track and everybody knows what's happening, we put down a guide vocal all the way through with the words and everything. Then everybody knows exactly what the song's about and we then work on all the overdubs we want to do. On the electric guitar for instance, unless I do a guitar solo straight off, which is unusual, it more or less has to be an overdub because I'm the only guitar player. It's also easier for separation to do the strings as an overdub.

ZZ: How long did it take to do the whole album?

JL: We started in June '74, and don't forget this was a brand new studio which had never been tried out, and although nothing went wrong with it we spent a lot of time working out things that happened in the studio, like getting the 2-track to work took about two days, but it never broke down. Fantastic place. We went in June, took August and September off, and finished it in December in time for Christmas.

The next track 'Remember Me, My Friend' (Hayward/Lodge) was the first song we recorded in the new studio. We rehearsed it with everybody and it went down first take all the way through. It was also the first time we met the other guys. We rehearsed it up in the afternoon and put it straight down, and then about a week later Providence turned up, we played them the track, they added their bit, and there it was ... couldn't believe it. It was at that point that we realised that it wasn't just a collection of songs we were knocking out, it was going to be a proper album, and it sort of snowballed from there.

ZZ: Did the music take shape as it went along?

JH: Yes, and that track was really the beginning because it had a lot of energy going for it, and also it was a very spontaneous thing that actually went on for 9½ minutes, but we cut it back to 4½ just to get it on the record. It was an exciting start and we knew we were on to something, the band had taken on an identity, and it was something we had written together.

ZZ: Is the order of the tracks on the album important?

JL: We think it is. We try and go through a mode thing all the way through, using different keys and tempos.

JH: As it goes through, every song is in a different key, each one is a key change. Sometimes on Moody Blues albums we lost a bit of power because we didn't change key between songs ... it's just one of those technical things. And every song has a different tempo as well.

The next track, 'My Brother' (Hayward), was the third one we recorded. It was at a time when everyone was feeling relaxed, everyone was friends, there was nobody that was not going to be there at the end of the album—we realised that, and that relaxed feeling comes through on the track. It was an easy one to do.

ZZ: How did you get the idea for the next track 'You' (Lodge), because a lot of the lyrics are abstract, aren't they?

JL: It's ideas I think, or a lack of a definite statement if you like ... a collection of thoughts really. I don't believe you have to pigeon-hole everything that you think or

MOODIES

say; it's the decision that you make after you think about everything . . . it's what you do with it, that's what 'You' is really all about. But I was also fiddling about with different types of tunings on the guitar, and I found this chord I was interested in . . . I knew someday it would turn up.

JH: We both played lead guitar on that track as well.

JL: We sat in the studio at about 4 o'clock in the morning and plugged straight into the mixer.

ZZ: The following track, 'Nights, Winters, Years' (Hayward) has got an orchestra on it.

JH: It was the first of the three songs on the album we did with Peter Knight. It was purely coincidence really, we had to speak to him to see if he got his gold record for *Days Of Future Passed*. He hadn't as it turned out, and we told him we were in the studio and asked him to come along. He came along and we played him a few things and we mutually agreed that we'd like to work together again, like eight years later. So we did a little demo of each of the songs and he took them away. 'Nights, Winters, Years' was the first one we did with the orchestra on . . . it was really a simple song which I played to people at home, and Peter carted the orchestra in and made it into this. Incredible! Fantastic feeling! He's a wonderful guy, he really is. I think he's the best musical director in the country.

SIDE TWO

JL: 'Saved By The Music' (Lodge) was a lot of fun to do. I suppose it shoots back to 'Just A Singer In A Rock'n'Roll Band' . . . it means that everybody else's music is important to me as well. Certainly I sit at home and listen to records of a night, and sometimes people think you don't do that for some strange reason. We had great fun making that track . . . Providence are in there, and we worked a French horn part in there and nobody could play a French horn. Jim Cockey, the violinist, got a book called 'How To Play The French Horn' with diagrams and everything—he learnt from that.

Providence are from Idaho, and at the end of that track when it really gets going they changed their name to Over The Hill To Boise (capital of Idaho). If you knew Providence, you'd probably understand that . . . they're mountain people, they live practically in the Rockies in Oregon. During the recording they went camping on the Brecon Beacons in South Wales, and then a couple of weeks later up to Ben Nevis . . . this is like in the middle of November.

ZZ: It seems to me that on nearly all of the Moody Blues albums, by chance or deliberation, there is always one track that sticks out as an obvious single, and the same applies on this album. The one picked for a single, the next cut, 'I Dreamed Last Night' (Hayward) is an obvious choice I think.



JH: Well, the single is really a double a-side. There's 'Remember Me', which the band wanted, we wanted as the single, and 'I Dreamed Last Night', which like you, everybody said has got to be the single. Fortunately it's a hit in America. It was an easy track to write and an easy track to record—one take. It took about an hour to write actually.

JL: 'Who Are You Now' (Hayward) is the next track and it's the only real acoustic number on the album . . . no double-tracking anywhere, it was done straight off. There are a number of songs that are to do with definite statements, and 'Who Are You Now' is a definite statement in as much as it must have happened to everybody—they'd like to know who somebody was or they'd like to see somebody they knew ten years ago, first love, etc. 'You' is a definite statement as well—songs that are about people and specific subjects. 'My Brother' is about a specific person as well.

Then the next track 'Maybe' (Lodge), is really just a collection of thoughts, I just sat down and played it. I used a harmonium which was Mike's, 120 years old like but it's got a great tone. Unfortunately the air leaks out of it so I couldn't use it on the album—I use a pipe organ instead.

JH: The last track, 'When You Wake Up' (Hayward/Lodge), is in fact the last track we recorded for the album and it's a joint composition. The beginnings of that song were actually lying around on a piece of paper on the piano the whole

time we were recording the album, and every time we passed it we said we should do something with that. And when we needed a closing number it just fell into place.

JL: As a matter of fact we were just going to venture onto something else, and it was literally, 'Hey, do you remember that piece of paper on the piano?' at 12 o'clock in the control room, and by 4 o'clock we knew what we were trying to do as it were. It was also done on a note of optimism—we'd just about finished the album and everybody was in on that session . . . roadies, everybody. It was like the final statement of the album and we wanted everybody to take part in it.

ZZ: Were there any songs you didn't use on the album?

JL: Yes, we carried on recording in fact after we put the album together—we were in the studio last night actually. We're trying to set up a new album and a tour right now.

ZZ: So what's the position with the Moody Blues then? When are you going to get together again?

JL: As the Moodies I don't know because Mike and Graeme are round the other side of the world . . . it's circumstances really.

ZZ: Are you all working on solo albums?

JH: Yes, we're all recording in our own way, we're all doing different things. But we've got no plans at the moment.

JL: It means committing people to do things which circumstances won't allow them to do.

JH: It's not one of those things where it's musical policy, it's not musical differences at all. In fact for a couple of the guys it's been either leave for a while or face your first bankruptcy, because we're a band that's gone through incredible financial hassles and the figures talked about the Moody Blues really got ridiculous—figures that we could have earned if we'd have recorded six albums a year and worked on the road all the time. But we never did and it just got crippling for a couple of the guys, so it was either split or face complete bankruptcy.

ZZ: I suppose having your own record label has its disadvantages as well as its advantages.

JL: Yes, incredible disadvantages. But at least when things go wrong it's your own fault. That is one face-saving thing. And of course when something goes right you feel blooming good.

JH: We have the freedom to record what we like, where we like, when we like, and re-

MOODIES

lease whatever we like.

JL: Like we started this album in June last year and we took two months off when *The Best Of The Moodies* thing was put together, and then Graeme [Edge] went into the studio as well. We didn't finish until December, and by the time we got all the artwork done we were into February—like eight months gone. If we just made the album and said to someone 'Package it and put it out,' we could probably do two a year and four tours, but we like to make sure everything's right.

ZZ: Do you feel bemused or bitter about the treatment you get from the press?

JH: Actually it's sort of split down the middle because the press either f**kin' hate us or we're OK. We've been successful in terms of record sales for getting on 10 years and everybody's said something good about us . . . years ago they said we were good, 'progressive' and 'underground' and all that, and we were certainly never an overnight success. Blue Jays is coming up to being the biggest thing we've had in England, which is insane . . . great, but strange. It hasn't been knocked very much in the press because it's a good album, we're proud of it.

RAY THOMAS

ZZ: When I talked to Justin and John about their album they indicated that they'd done it because they had so much material that they couldn't find an outlet for in the Moody Blues. Is that how you feel?

RT: Not so much because I normally write for a deadline, apart from stuff that I just do for myself. Also we've just finished building this great studio, and there are no immediate plans to do a Moodies thing as half the blokes are away all over the world, and it seemed stupid to leave it there doing nothing. Plus the fact that I can't just sit around and vegetate.

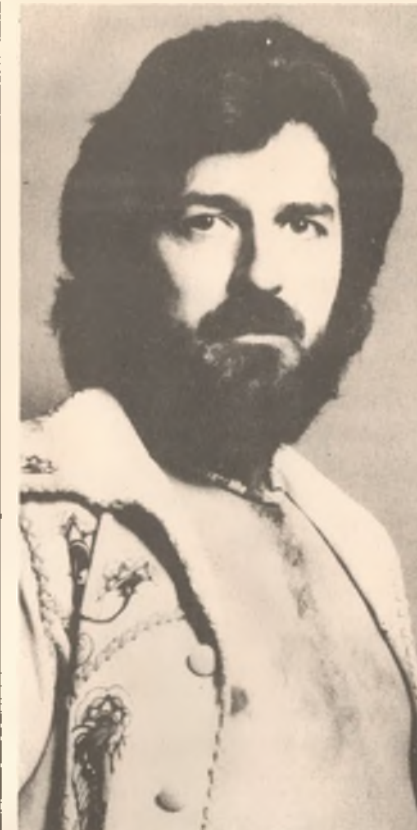
ZZ: The album starts with an overture . . .

RT: Well in a way I suppose that's a bit self-indulgent, but I get a kick out of hearing a full orchestra play a theme that I've worked on, plus the fact that when you hear the whole album it makes sense . . . it pulls the whole thing together.

ZZ: Before we go any further, let's talk about the musicians on the album. B.J. Cole (pedal steel), Nicky James (vocals & percussion), and Mike Moran (keyboards) we know about. What about guitarist John Jones and bassist Trevor Jones?

RT: Well John Jones and Trevor Jones are brothers and they have their own group called Jonesy. Also the drummer on the album Dave Potts plays for them as well. We've just started getting that set-up as a bona-fide group which we hope to get out on the road hopefully in November.

ZZ: In this country as well?



RT: I don't know if we'll play this country because I'd like to go into Europe and the States first . . . I want it to be really tight before I play here because I always find it harder to perform on my own turf; I'm sure Americans find that in America.

ZZ: Have you been meaning to do a solo album for a long time?

RT: Well it's like with Justin and John, you get a lot more freedom doing a solo thing. With the Moody Blues, we always viewed 'The Moody Blue' as like the seventh person and everything was channeled towards that end. Most of our stuff was concept . . . *Days Of Future Passed*, *Lost Chord*, *Threshold*, a lot of people read more concept into the later ones than I think was there, but that's like where everybody's head was channeled; and you can get into a bit of a musical strait-jacket after that length of time. We're our worst critics. You can give one of our albums the biggest bum write-up but at the end of the day we're harder on ourselves than anybody in print. I mean it would be easy just to churn out . . . *Days Of Future Passed* . . . we could make three or four of them a year, but that's not where it's at.

ZZ: If we could talk for a bit about the Moody Blues, how do you feel about the progress you've made, the position you're in now after having made eight successful albums?

RT: It's a successful format obviously. The Moody Blues, as we call it, has its own

sound, a distinct sound, and I wouldn't knock it. I'm proud of being a member of the Moody Blues because there are a lot of bands who I think have been a lot luckier with only half as much talent. I won't name anybody but there are a few bands about that have got away with murder, and I don't think the Moody Blues would do any kind of rip-off. I think everybody got value for money and we did the best that we could at the time; and the only reason we're taking a rest now is so that we don't fall into that trap . . . and it's the hardest thing to do at the moment. I think everybody really wants me to say how much I hate everyone else, and I don't, I love 'em.

ZZ: How do you personally view the way the music's progressed over the years? Is it satisfying to you?

RT: Yes, I think for five blokes we've put an awful lot of sound about with all the different combinations, musically and vocally. But just with the five of us we're finding that we've got to get to the end of the combinations, and when you're talking about eight albums, you're talking about 80 or 90 tracks!—which is a lot of music. I mean you could sit and listen to the Moody Blues from dawn to dusk . . . if you had the stomach for it!! [laughs] So if we went in to do the ninth album somebody might come up with a sound on the guitar that sounds like a flute, but if I was playing a similar kind of passage to something that was done way back in *Days Of Future Passed*, which was done like eight years ago, we'd most likely get away with it because people might not recognise or remember it. But we do, so you see we're our own worst judges, or our own best judges.

ZZ: So will you get back together again?

RT: Oh I think we will; I think the next Moody Blues album will be a bitch after all this. I think what it needs is for somebody to come up with an idea and then everybody to expand on that, then I think we'll be away again. It was very gratifying and very exciting working with the people on my album, and writing with Nicky James was a great kick too. Putting our break into perspective, Mike, Graeme, and I have been together since May 1964 and I worked with Mike in a band previous to that. I've also worked with John since I was 17, John would have been 15 at the time, so on and off this is not the first time something like this has happened if you view it like that.

We shut ourselves away a bit . . . that's why we got labelled a little bit when people were saying "You're being pretentious". I've always said the Moody Blues were never pretentious because we only wrote about experiences we had. If you were to say "OK you're not pretentious, but don't you think you were a bit self-indulgent?" I'd have said "Yes". But I think any artist is. Being creative at all is self-indulgent. And that comes right back to the overture 'From Mighty Oaks' . . . I'd agree if that criticism was laid against it, but I think it's a nice piece of music the way it turned out.

MOODIES

ZZ: Did you envisage it turning out like that or did you work a lot in conjunction with Richard Hewson who did all the orchestral arrangements?

RT: Richard was recommended to me by a lot of people and by the time he came along we'd finished most of the backing tracks and rhythm tracks, and we put the backing vocals on. They sounded pretty full as they were and I just put a skimpy guide vocal on because I didn't want to try for a performance because I thought I'd get off on the orchestra, which was the case. It gives you that bit more adrenalin I suppose. So we just laid those tapes on him and I told him what order they'd be on the album, and we said like we can hear 'cellos here or brass there, and I said, "I'd like you to do an overture, it's got to be around about three minutes long to get the sides in balance," and I said, "You can use what theme you like off the album but without giving too much away," because if you play the whole thing on the first track the rest isn't going to mean much. And so I gave him a pretty free hand at that and I think he did a great job. It knocked me out, and once he knew the order as well... well as I said it makes more sense when you hear it all the way through a few times.

ZZ: Is there a definite theme running through the album?

RT: I don't really think so. I mean people read a lot of things like that into it. Some people have said it sounds a lot like the Moody Blues, other people have said it doesn't sound anything like the Moody Blues. I said to Tony Clarke yesterday that if you take the Blue Jays album, and put Mighty Oaks on top of it, and when Mike's finished his, put that on top of those two, and press them all down into one record, and then play it, it'll be a Moody Blues album.

ZZ: Well what about the songs on the album?

RT: Well there are a few ballads, one with a rather country feel to it, and the ones on side two are kind of up-tempo. 'Rock-A-Bye Baby Blues' was the most difficult to sing—it's got very tight harmonies; 'You Make Me Feel Alright' was the first song written and it's a love song—it's about a woman's intuition; 'Adam And I' is for my kid—it's like what you'd tell a kid in three or four minutes if I had to live his life; and 'I Wish We Could Fly' is all about if you could fly you'd be able to look down, see

everything from a completely different perspective, and find out how much of a bloody mess everything is. All the songs apart from two I wrote with Nicky James. 'Rock-A-Bye Baby Blues' is one of Nicky's songs that I liked, and I wrote 'I Wish We Could Fly' on my own.

ZZ: You co-produced the album as well with Derek Varnals. Was that an experimental thing for you?

RT: The actual production side was, yeah. I worked with Derek who engineered it. We've got a great working relationship. I told him I didn't want to get involved with the technicalities of the thing, I knew basically what I wanted the thing to sound like. So I said, "You look after the technical bit, all the knobs and faders and things", because I think that interferes a hell of a lot with the music. And at the end of the day so to speak the working relationship was great, and I'm pleased with the result. I think it's a good album and that's as far as I'll go. If I didn't think it was good I wouldn't release it. I'm just pleased with it, especially for a first time out, I think it's worked out really well.

□ ANDY

ROGER MCGUINN & BAND

Presenting Roger McGuinn & Band. Long-awaited new album by the founder member of The Byrds—now backed by his regular band, Lone Star, who wrote some of the material. Rock—Roger McGuinn-style. More imaginative than ever.

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La Booga Rooga



Andy Fairweather Low's NEW SINGLE

From the Album of the same name on A&M Records



WATCHOUT FOR LABOOGAROOGA
IT'S TOO GOOD TO MISS!

The Paramours were regarded as the second Southern wave, after the Baracudas and the Rickers fellers, who were doing at the time of the decade. But they had a head influence on the scene. (Trower named the Rickers fellers as his favourite group). While most national groups of the time were Cliff Richard & The Shadows type, these boys played raucous rock n' roll a la Johnny Kidd. The Baracudas were a trio - with both the guitarists playing double-neck guitars!

The Paramours had a Sunday residency at the 'Shades Club' (and were replaced by the families when they left the yard for the by time). Line up number two consisted of singers for Parlophone. 'Posion Ivy' / 'I feel good all over' R 5093, Dec 1963. 'Little Bitty Pretty One' / 'A certain Girl' R 5097, March 1964. 'It won't be long' / 'You're the one who loves me' R 5155, June 1964. Blue releases: 'Cutting In' R 5272, April 1965. 'You never had it so good' / 'Don't you like my love' R 5351, Oct 1965. A sixth single, the jazz styled 'Freedom', was recorded but never released, and the striped shirted Paramours faded into oblivion - but only for a few months whilst Barrow planned the next step.

PARAMOUNTS #2 1963-1964. GARY BARROW, ROBIN TROWER, CHRIS COPPING, DERRICK BROOKER, WILSON COOPER. Played with George Coopey & the Runners. Recorded 3 albums: 'Paramounts' (Suez 1963), 'SHINE ON' (Suez 1964), 'SUEZ' (Suez 1965). Unable to get suitable work and acclaim in Britain, they moved to Hamburg, where they did most of their business in USA. 'Hamburg' allowed them to escape the 'Face' and 'Top Ten'.

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PARAMOUNTS #4 1965-1966. GARY BARROW, ROBIN TROWER, CHRIS COPPING, DERRICK BROOKER, WILSON COOPER. Played with George Coopey & the Runners. Recorded 3 albums: 'Paramounts' (Suez 1963), 'SHINE ON' (Suez 1964), 'SUEZ' (Suez 1965). Unable to get suitable work and acclaim in Britain, they moved to Hamburg, where they did most of their business in USA. 'Hamburg' allowed them to escape the 'Face' and 'Top Ten'.

PARAMOUNTS #5 1966-1967. GARY BARROW, ROBIN TROWER, CHRIS COPPING, DERRICK BROOKER, WILSON COOPER. Played with George Coopey & the Runners. Recorded 3 albums: 'Paramounts' (Suez 1963), 'SHINE ON' (Suez 1964), 'SUEZ' (Suez 1965). Unable to get suitable work and acclaim in Britain, they moved to Hamburg, where they did most of their business in USA. 'Hamburg' allowed them to escape the 'Face' and 'Top Ten'.

PARAMOUNTS #6 1967-1968. GARY BARROW, ROBIN TROWER, CHRIS COPPING, DERRICK BROOKER, WILSON COOPER. Played with George Coopey & the Runners. Recorded 3 albums: 'Paramounts' (Suez 1963), 'SHINE ON' (Suez 1964), 'SUEZ' (Suez 1965). Unable to get suitable work and acclaim in Britain, they moved to Hamburg, where they did most of their business in USA. 'Hamburg' allowed them to escape the 'Face' and 'Top Ten'.

PARAMOUNTS #7 1968-1969. GARY BARROW, ROBIN TROWER, CHRIS COPPING, DERRICK BROOKER, WILSON COOPER. Played with George Coopey & the Runners. Recorded 3 albums: 'Paramounts' (Suez 1963), 'SHINE ON' (Suez 1964), 'SUEZ' (Suez 1965). Unable to get suitable work and acclaim in Britain, they moved to Hamburg, where they did most of their business in USA. 'Hamburg' allowed them to escape the 'Face' and 'Top Ten'.

PARAMOUNTS #8 1969-1970. GARY BARROW, ROBIN TROWER, CHRIS COPPING, DERRICK BROOKER, WILSON COOPER. Played with George Coopey & the Runners. Recorded 3 albums: 'Paramounts' (Suez 1963), 'SHINE ON' (Suez 1964), 'SUEZ' (Suez 1965). Unable to get suitable work and acclaim in Britain, they moved to Hamburg, where they did most of their business in USA. 'Hamburg' allowed them to escape the 'Face' and 'Top Ten'.

PARAMOUNTS #9 1970-1971. GARY BARROW, ROBIN TROWER, CHRIS COPPING, DERRICK BROOKER, WILSON COOPER. Played with George Coopey & the Runners. Recorded 3 albums: 'Paramounts' (Suez 1963), 'SHINE ON' (Suez 1964), 'SUEZ' (Suez 1965). Unable to get suitable work and acclaim in Britain, they moved to Hamburg, where they did most of their business in USA. 'Hamburg' allowed them to escape the 'Face' and 'Top Ten'.

PARAMOUNTS #10 1971-1972. GARY BARROW, ROBIN TROWER, CHRIS COPPING, DERRICK BROOKER, WILSON COOPER. Played with George Coopey & the Runners. Recorded 3 albums: 'Paramounts' (Suez 1963), 'SHINE ON' (Suez 1964), 'SUEZ' (Suez 1965). Unable to get suitable work and acclaim in Britain, they moved to Hamburg, where they did most of their business in USA. 'Hamburg' allowed them to escape the 'Face' and 'Top Ten'.

PARAMOUNTS #11 1972-1973. GARY BARROW, ROBIN TROWER, CHRIS COPPING, DERRICK BROOKER, WILSON COOPER. Played with George Coopey & the Runners. Recorded 3 albums: 'Paramounts' (Suez 1963), 'SHINE ON' (Suez 1964), 'SUEZ' (Suez 1965). Unable to get suitable work and acclaim in Britain, they moved to Hamburg, where they did most of their business in USA. 'Hamburg' allowed them to escape the 'Face' and 'Top Ten'.

The Orioles would play two sets a night at the Cricketers pub, whilst starting with Carl Perkins' 'Matchbox'. Also played Don Gibson's 'Sweet Dreams', 'Isle Wives', 'Tango', 'Mickey', 'Little Queenie'. 'I can't get a witness', 'Poison Ivy', and 'Cover RAB' rock classics. Their repertoire was Bobby Darin's 'Rockin' Robin'. Birch: 'In the middle eight, where it goes - up - jumped the buzzard and the orioles, and the buzzard would shout out: "ORIOLES!" It occurred twice in the song, and every body would be ready to yell it out.' According to Will Birch who saw them many times, Orioles #2 was their best line-up.

THE ROAMERS #1 1963. Wilko and The Figure were playing pop and R&B together in a band twelve years ago! An interesting fact is that the youthful Wilko was playing double bass managed at the time.

THE ROAMERS #2 1964. The Figure, Wilko, and The Figure were playing pop and R&B together in a band twelve years ago! An interesting fact is that the youthful Wilko was playing double bass managed at the time.

THE ROAMERS #3 1965. The Figure, Wilko, and The Figure were playing pop and R&B together in a band twelve years ago! An interesting fact is that the youthful Wilko was playing double bass managed at the time.

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THE ROAMERS #5 1967. The Figure, Wilko, and The Figure were playing pop and R&B together in a band twelve years ago! An interesting fact is that the youthful Wilko was playing double bass managed at the time.

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THE ROAMERS #11 1973. The Figure, Wilko, and The Figure were playing pop and R&B together in a band twelve years ago! An interesting fact is that the youthful Wilko was playing double bass managed at the time.

THE ROAMERS #12 1974. The Figure, Wilko, and The Figure were playing pop and R&B together in a band twelve years ago! An interesting fact is that the youthful Wilko was playing double bass managed at the time.

THE ROAMERS #13 1975. The Figure, Wilko, and The Figure were playing pop and R&B together in a band twelve years ago! An interesting fact is that the youthful Wilko was playing double bass managed at the time.

THE FLOWERPOTS #1 1964. Inspired, in turn, by the Beatles, the Orioles, their one major claim to local fame seems to have been an early sound recording. The Flowerpots #1.

THE FLOWERPOTS #2 1965. Inspired, in turn, by the Beatles, the Orioles, their one major claim to local fame seems to have been an early sound recording. The Flowerpots #2.

THE FLOWERPOTS #3 1966. Inspired, in turn, by the Beatles, the Orioles, their one major claim to local fame seems to have been an early sound recording. The Flowerpots #3.

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THE FLOWERPOTS #12 1975. Inspired, in turn, by the Beatles, the Orioles, their one major claim to local fame seems to have been an early sound recording. The Flowerpots #12.

THE FLOWERPOTS #13 1976. Inspired, in turn, by the Beatles, the Orioles, their one major claim to local fame seems to have been an early sound recording. The Flowerpots #13.

THE FLOWERPOTS #14 1977. Inspired, in turn, by the Beatles, the Orioles, their one major claim to local fame seems to have been an early sound recording. The Flowerpots #14.

THE TRADEWINDS #1 1964-5. Inspired, in turn, by the Beatles, the Orioles, their one major claim to local fame seems to have been an early sound recording. The Tradewinds #1.

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SAINTS & SINNERS 1964-5. Inspired, in turn, by the Beatles, the Orioles, their one major claim to local fame seems to have been an early sound recording. Saints & Sinners.

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THE SOUTH SIDE SOUND?

THE MICKY JUPP BAND July 1975 to now. Have just started out on the London pub circuit, and also played the Roundhouse recently. Is beginning to attract publicity as a result of the Kursaal and the Feelgoods. But they are not the only ones. The Micky Jupp Band is a mixture of R&B classics, old rockers, pop hits, and Micky Jupp originals.

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LEO KOTTKE

and I must be one of the luckiest guys on earth to have seen it, heard it and experienced it. It wasn't long after that—about six months in fact—that he died of stomach cancer. God knows what he was feeling at the time although it does seem appropriate when you consider all he ate and drank that night.

ZZ: So your approach to guitar was basically as a direct result of banjo and right hand technique.

LK: Yeah, that and my idea of melody and where it belonged came also in a backwards fashion from banjo because I could never get a very melodic feel out of the banjo—I was never very good at it.

So I went back to guitar and got what I'd been missing on banjo but I still had this stuff that I'd learnt fortunately not completely on banjo so I was able to adapt it. I think if I'd really got a grip of that banjo technique it wouldn't have happened for me on guitar. There was one tune I remember that really made a huge impact on my playing and especially on the stuff that I write now, and that was 'Living In The Country' from an album by Pete Seeger called *The Bitter And The Sweet*. I also heard the duet version on an album called *Nonesuch* which he played with Frank Hamilton. That tune taught me a whole lot about the index finger because in order to play it you have to get the index in there in spots where it's difficult to do it and it took me a long time. I finally got round to it and it was the key for getting really loose for me. After that I started to feel I was on my way.

ZZ: OK, on to the next period.

LK: It was about then that I wound up in the navy, which was one of my great mistakes. I'd joined the Navy Reserves when I was at high school, I don't really know why except that I liked to swim underwater and I joined the Submarine Service. It turned out to be a smart move because it kept me out of Vietnam, it kept me out of Boot Camp, and the only way to do that was to join the Submarine Reserve. I went to the University of Missouri and I was miserable there although I did start to realise, what I hadn't in Washington, that when I played, people felt the way I did when I was playing and that was my first experience of communicating with guitar. I'd dropped the Kaye at senior high school and got a Goya classical although I didn't stick with that very long because I found a twelve-string! It's the one that was eventually stolen and also the one that's on the Takoma record. I found this Gibson twelve-string in a record store and it's the best guitar I've ever played. I've found the same model and year and everything since and there's no comparison—so that's gone forever.

I stuck it out for one semester at Missouri, getting very bored but playing all the time. Then I found out that because of some act, I had to be in the Army Reserve. I wasn't going to double up so I quit and went straight into the navy and for three

months I was floating around in a submarine. In firing practice, which involved shooting at light bulbs that were thrown into the Atlantic Ocean, I lost a lot of the high end in my hearing. I'm technically deaf but not legally because I can understand speech and hear within the range of the human voice but I don't hear the spread of harmonics on a note for instance, so it's a big problem for me. It's a common kind of hearing loss, it's a nerve loss and it's permanent.

So they discharged me and I wound up... before joining the navy, for about six months I was hitch-hiking around trying to avoid it. I was in a lot of trouble a lot of times and I was very naive, so when I got out of the navy I decided to go back to college, so I went up to St Cloud, Minnesota and started going to school and playing clubs in Minneapolis. I just kept dropping out of the classes and finally sent some tapes off to John Fahey and made a record on a Revox at a club where I was working and that wound up on the Oblivion label.

ZZ: Can we talk briefly about that record? Wasn't George Hanson involved?

LK: No, George Hanson was in charge of producing the re-recording of that record because I didn't like the quality of the Oblivion record. I'd been playing at this club for a couple of years and filling it up and I'd go to the club and see thirteen people lined up to come in and my heart would weep with joy. We realised after a couple of years that there must be a thousand people who would buy a record of a live performance so we made it and pressed it at a plant in Minneapolis on some real crummy vinyl that tended to crumble around the edges. I got a little out of hand about it because I thought it should be done better because the guitar was all on one side and the voice all on the other so that if you listen on anything but mono it was so unreal it was painful.

The re-recording only took an already unsophisticated performance and made it more obvious. Technically it got a little better but not much. I just feel fortunate that I made those mistakes when I did.

ZZ: What was the time lapse between the Oblivion release and the subsequent reissue on Symposium?

LK: Not long. Just about three or four months—I'm talking about the recording... the release I don't know about. Mike [Justin] wanted to press more of the Oblivion because he could have sold more and actually now if I had my choice I'd rather that that be the thing than the other because at least the mike was in front of the guitar and I wasn't trying so damned hard. It's also more representative of what I was doing at the time and less an attempt at being good.

Right around this time I shipped off these instrumental tapes to Fahey and after about a year I got an answer saying 'Send some more' because he suggested putting one on a sampler. I remember getting all

excited and my friends and I went out and got real drunk. I sent off another tape and again there was a long wait before he wrote back and sent a non-returnable cheque and asked me to do an album. So I went into the studio that I'm still recording in [Sound 80] and made the Takoma album, *Six & Twelve String Guitar*, reissued on Sonet in the UK. It was very easy because all I had to do was sit down with that perfect guitar, put a mike in front of it and fortunately it was done right that time. I just ran through everything I knew. It took about three hours and the sequence on record was the way it was performed in the studio; that was one of the first albums recorded at Sound 80. But some of the things I did I probably wouldn't have attempted but for that guitar. Having got it down then, I can now sort of muscle it out on whatever I'm playing these days—but I just can't say enough for that guitar.

Incidentally the recording in Britain is not from the master tapes. It's a couple of generations removed from the original. Maybe it's changed now but at first John didn't want to do it that way. The result is that it's not quite as even from the top to the bottom as it is on the master tape.

ZZ: Were you aware that you were the manufacturer of a guitar prototype album?

LK: No, I was just very worried that I might be making a fool of myself once again because that's how I felt with the Oblivion record and I'd had that experience with the Symposium record where people were saying 'Jesus, Leo what did you do—you don't sound like that'. No, I was just pleased that I was able to do a record for a company that I had a lot of admiration for. I did listen to John a lot and get a lot from him. But the first time I knew it was a successful album in terms of the way people reacted to it; there was a review in *Rolling Stone* and that review started the whole ball rolling. From there I got a lot of support from a few disc jockeys who latched onto that thing and really believed in it.

The first guy that comes to mind is Randy Morris in Chicago, there's another man in Milwaukee whose name I can't remember. Randy convinced a guy named Richard Harding in Chicago to book me into his club. But up until this time any work I was getting was through John or through Mike Justin, who was still on my side and whipping things up for me. Randy convinced Richard that he wouldn't go broke for the week if he booked me in and he booked me in for three nights and the thing sold out every night and that was as a result of the review but especially Randy Morris because he played the thing on the air. It was a surprise to us all that I wound up playing many times there.

ZZ: What about California?

LK: Well California took me a long time because when I got there it was after a job in Oregon with John—where I first met John. The record had been out six weeks and I hadn't yet met him. Anyway I even-

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tually met him at his house and he really reacted to that guitar too. But it was stolen that night. Eventually I wound up at the Ash Grove in Los Angeles and I bought a brand new guitar so for the first time I was playing a standard instrument instead of a great instrument and I sounded like shit. I really had to overcome the effect I'd had on people in California when I came back a second time because I couldn't play, and I was so bitter about it that I came offstage like a complaining punk and did myself a lot of harm in the beginning.

I went back home some months later and played a great theatre in Minneapolis called Home Grown and got a terrific response which convinced me that this was a satisfying way to live. I started to pursue it and then some personal things in California, my wife becoming pregnant and getting very sick, forced me to get some contracts and money and stuff. We'd gone out six months after the Takoma record had come out, sort of to meet Fahey on a vacation.

ZZ: Did you ever get caught up in the Fahey philosophy, science, religion, turtles and deserts?

LK: Yes, I was mesmerised by John and still am. I always say that you should just follow him around with a camera and tape recorder because he's one of the smartest, most knowledgeable people I've met. He believes in steel string guitar and the roots of American music—he believed that it was possible for one guy on a guitar to perform concerts and he was the first guy to think that way and actually do it with a record company.

ZZ: I remember somewhere reading about you clipping in all the turtle shit outside his backdoor or something like that.

LK: Yeah that's when we were packing records for Takoma and I was kind of schlapping for the company. He had two very rare turtles that were travelling in and out of the office... but he didn't appreciate my comments about that.

ZZ: Was there any far-reaching purpose in you going out to California?

LK: I wanted to see if I could go over with such a foreign audience as Oregon compared with Minnesota, and basically to meet John. We played at the bowling alley in Eugene, Oregon, which had just been renovated, and played a job in Pomona together. Then we were going to see Takoma's offices and come back home and I was going to either teach or go out and live at a place called Collen Lake, Minnesota, and starve to death probably.

ZZ: So you still had this affection for Minnesota?

LK: Yes I really did. There was a lot of pressure at one time to live in California so that I could stay in touch with the industry side of things but I steered clear of that and I'm very glad that I did. Most people think it's a good idea to do that and maybe for some

people it is, but it would have destroyed any interest I might have had. So I got out to Oregon—I drove out and felt very mystical and romantic about the whole thing—it was a tremendous adventure that we would actually be able to cover all that distance with our expenses paid and get paid for playing. On the way there in Montana, Mary [Leo's wife] conceived our first child and eventually we got to Oregon and met John at a friend's house—the only guy I knew there was Al Gaylor who I eventually wrote 'Tiny Island' with.

We played the concert and there were a lot of dogs on campus running all over the stage and barking and yapping, and the place was full of people. It was a lot of fun and I noticed that John got just as nervous as I do about playing. He refused to let me open up and wanted me to come on after him, which, by the way, is the same thing as Miles Davis does; he never wants to follow anyone, he always wants to open the show and there's a lot of good thinking behind that. So I played the job and they liked it, and that night on the way back to the hotel we decided to stop in at Al's house in a very residential neighbourhood, and while we were in the house, which was about five minutes, the guitar was stolen. So I lost the best guitar I've ever played, and everyone who played it thought the same thing.

I didn't react but Mary burst into tears when we realised they'd broken into the back seat of the car—they broke a window and yanked the thing out along with a Martin six-string. I didn't feel anything until about two weeks later and then I felt the loss for about two years. So we were stuck because I had to play another couple of jobs that I was contracted for and I didn't have a guitar. We took all the money we had and found a guitar so that when I played Eugene I used a six-string and although it would work, it wasn't me. I got to San Francisco and picked up that cutaway 12-string that I used for slide with the Martin conversion—it had a 28-inch scale which means it's about 3 inches longer than a standard guitar. I wasn't aware of things like that because I'd been completely spoilt by this one perfect instrument. Anyway this guitar in the hotel room sounded beautiful but when I got to Pomona with no picks, Fahey gave me a big, big introduction that was embarrassing, and I sat down, and the moment I touched the strings it was like everything turned to shit. I couldn't hit the strings, I realised that the string scale was way too long to fret, I mean I couldn't grab anything; I was missing notes both with my left hand and my right and worse than that I was nowhere near professional enough to swallow it and muscle on through. I was frowning and got real depressed and I started to complain and I started to explain that it wasn't my guitar, and it's very unfair to do that to an audience. It was a crushing experience and I'll never forget it—I just slumped off the stage.

You know, suddenly I was going to be a dad and a provider, and I'm a traditionalist in that sense, and I got very terrified. The

only thing we could do was to move in with John. We'd gotten to know John through the first couple of jobs, and because John hired me as a record packer for Takoma we got to move into the apartment and eventually I got a two week engagement at the Ash Grove.

In the interim while I was packing records and worrying, I met Denny Bruce who is now my manager and producer and I was introduced to him by John, who had known him through Vanguard records and the *Yellow Princess* album. Denny, who was familiar with all the people in the business, invited everybody he knew to the Ash Grove. I was telling him that I'd lost my guitar and couldn't play anymore but Denny's not a guitar player and he'd heard me playing around the house and everything where it is different. But the night he'd invited everybody I went onstage at the Ash Grove and did exactly the same thing I'd done in Pomona—I was mad, I was depressed, I was whining—it was just an absolute terrible set. I'm sure I lost a ton of people who would have been willing to support me that night had I at least acted like an adult, and one thing I do remember about that was Leonard Feather coming and listening and noticing that there was something awry and as a result didn't write anything about it but said 'I'll wait' and that was a very kind thing to do. I know that I was insulated from the reaction from that first night by Denny because I never did see any of the reviews—I'm sure they weren't very good.

ZZ: So you were pretty demoralised by it all.

LK: Oh yeah, because Denny's an honest guy, he doesn't hide his feelings and it was pretty clear to me what had gone wrong and that I wasn't sounding the way I used to sound. Now that cutaway is a great instrument but I just stick to slide on it. Anyway the torment went on for two weeks and we were really getting in deep trouble because Mary got progressively iller. We had to do something so Mary left and went back to her folks because at one time she was close to death and the last place anybody would want to die is Pasadena which is where we were living. So after the Ash Grove thing she went back to Minnesota because after two weeks the club couldn't pay me—they'd been burnt out two or three times by anti-Castro demonstrators. The organiser was flat broke and thought, probably rightly so, that he should pay his staff before he paid his performers.

So I moved in with John and developed an instantaneous good relationship, and apart from the fact that the slightest noise would wake him we got along great. We were right down the same beam, both of us, and we spent about a month talking about guitar music and listening to his very eclectic record collection. John likes to find obscure classics, things that have been overlooked, and he can do. He's got stuff that I'd never heard of before and he's really

an explorer and discoverer; his company philosophy was that if there's an audience for it—if somebody somewhere was interested—then he'd record it, and as a result you can hear Charlie Nothing and the Psychedelic Saxophone which probably three or four people have.

Through Denny we were really trying to get a deal with a company that could give us some money so that I could go back to Minnesota where Mary was. So we got an offer from Capitol and we agreed to set up a production company that would be funded by Capitol, the production company being Denny Bruce and John Fahey. We began *Mudlark* almost immediately. Denny chose the musicians for that record but the unfortunate thing about that record was that although Larry Taylor and Roy Estrada were excellent, there was another bass player named Pat Smith who was playing with Thelonius Monk at the time and I'm sorry he didn't wind up on more than one track. The problem was we couldn't get the right sound on his stand up bass or his electric and that was strictly our fault and it puzzles me because Dave Hassinger is a very experienced engineer of course. Other than that the record was terrifying because it was... I still didn't like the way I was sounding and I wasn't fluent in the way that I had been.

I borrowed and tried many guitars. I got the steel national that's on 'Lady Margaret' and 'June Bug' from a friend whose wife would never allow him to sell it to me. But I realised after a while that they were getting a divorce and since they were splitting up the goodies I'd dip my hand in the till and get that guitar. That was a beautiful instrument, better than any other national guitar I've played. I still have it but the resonator collapsed so that went down the tubes. I borrowed a Roy Noble guitar from Fred Gerlach—it's the one used on 'Room 8' [The biggest twelve-string I've ever seen] says Leo in the sleeve note] and that guitar came close to the original Gibson and as it turns out Roy Noble is just the daddy of them all—he was the inspiration for David Russell Young and Mark Evan Whitebook who are the two most well known builders in Los Angeles. It's pictured on the back of the album but we couldn't use it on all the cuts because Fred had other plans and he eventually sold it but he wouldn't sell it to me. I do now have a Mark Evan Whitebook guitar and a David Russell Young and Mark Evan's especially comes close to that old Gibson so in the long run I was starting to develop something that would pay off. I used the cutaway Martin conversion with 28-inch scale on 'Hear The Wind Howl', 'Monkey Lust' and most of the material but in all kinds of different ways—caped up with LaBella strings, with bronze strings, with Monelle strings, with silk and steel through an amp, through a transformer without an amp, with a Neumann, with an AKG, we were just constantly trying to get a decent sound because we were used to hearing that Takoma record and that's what had convinced Denny and kept me confident.

ZZ: Were you happy with that album?

LK: Yeah, not with the vocals—looking back on it I think 'Lady Margaret' was the best vocal—but at that time I was convinced that the problem with my singing was that I was hollering too much and pinching my throat shut, and on that album I tried very hard to keep my throat open and to sing, and I shouldn't have done that, I should have remained as ugly as I thought I was and I don't know why I felt so badly about my singing but then I got one complaint from John who said he didn't like my singing, and I just started to collapse. I'd offered him vocals back in the Takoma days but John said 'No, I hate your singing' so that's why that was all instrumental. But there's things about 'Mudlark' that I love very much—I love 'June Bug', I like 'Hear The Wind Howl', it's nice and huge and fat and Pat Smith's playing on that is great and it was my first chance to play with other guys, which was difficult.

ZZ: *Greenhouse* is your least favourite album I believe.

LK: Yes, although I'm re-evaluating my feelings now because you just told me somebody thinks I peaked at that record. Because the experience of doing it was more arid than *Mudlark* or any of the other records, you know *Greenhouse* wasn't so exciting or terrifying because where we'd been willing to make a departure with *Mudlark*, we weren't able to with *Greenhouse*. I had to do it in Minneapolis, I didn't want to go back to Los Angeles because the record took so long and it scared me out there. Besides I'd had such a hard time and been so blue out there that I really didn't want to go back. I insisted on going to Sound 80 where I did the first Takoma record only this time I had a different engineer. The whole experience was difficult because Denny wasn't familiar with the engineer whereas he was familiar with Dave [Hassinger].

Once again I was still having the same guitar problems and I did not have enough material on that record and to me it was an effort to fill it out towards the end. Listening back there are some things on there that I'm very pleasantly surprised at. I heard 'You Don't Have To Need Me' on the radio and I used to cringe at the thought of that song but when I heard it on the radio it wasn't as bad as I thought it was. It gets a little corny but I like the structure. But overall it wasn't much fun, it was frustrating, it wasn't very up and it wasn't very down and again I was doing a lot of guitar borrowing. I played my first Bozo on there, I played my first electric stuff. I used a Hoffman guitar which was made by a guy in Minneapolis for 'Last Steam Engine Train' and we had some trouble with that because the 'A' string was booming out. Paul the engineer was as nervous as we were because it was the first record that had been done by those guys at the production studio so it was important to them because they wanted to get into the

commercial market. But the record was received very well—some of the tunes on there are requested a lot, like 'The Ice Miner', 'Song Of The Swamp', 'Bean Time' [note: Leo goofed, 'The Ice Miner' is on *Mudlark*].

ZZ: That must have been your biggest selling album.

LK: Well *Mudlark* was the biggest seller although *Greenhouse* did eventually top *Mudlark* although it took a long time and it didn't really do as well. Then what came next?

ZZ: The live album at the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre—*My Feet Are Smiling*. And I remember you saying that you played that concert with jugglers, magicians and stunt teams if I recall.

LK: Yeah, that's right. We had Wally Pickle who played three trumpets at the same time while he jumped around on a Pogo stick. Each of them did a little ten minute act. We had a guy named Jose something-or-other and the first thing he did was put a ball on a table top and balance himself on one finger—it was breathtaking and the audience just went crazy because it was in the round. I think the sequence went from a magician to Jose and ended up with Wally Pickle, who by the second night was so overcome with the laughs he was getting that he stretched his set out by another fifteen minutes. But it was one of the best shows I've ever been involved with. Most of the cuts on that record were from the second night and I've learnt an awful lot from it mainly about how not to rush and get too excited.

ZZ: I remember at the time you were really pleased with the composition of 'Egg Tooth'.

LK: Yeah. I'm more happy with it now in the present form. I've worked it out a little more, but you know that's been used frequently, to my surprise, by television people in the States. The last time I saw it used was a documentary on a women's basketball team called the Red-heads who were travelling around in a station wagon in the midwest. But that record was the roughest one to get onto wax because we couldn't limit anything and there were some things we were afraid wouldn't make it onto disc. As a result we couldn't get levels that were proper in the mix.

ZZ: Strangely, your next album *Ice Water* is the only album that hasn't been issued in Britain.

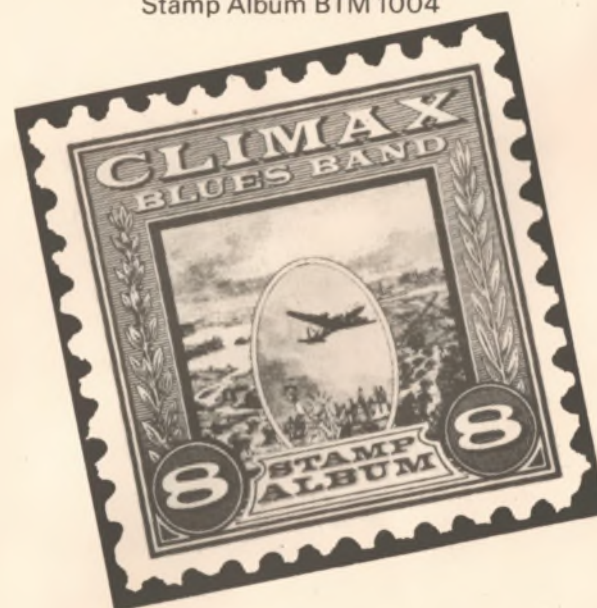
LK: Yeah and that's a shame because it would be an easier record I would suspect for EMI to sell. I've always been a problem for the record company because they've never known exactly what I'm going to hand them and they don't know... for instance *Dreams And All That Stuff* I think was confusing. *Greenhouse* I know was and they had no idea how to sell the

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stuff.

ZZ: Are Capitol on top of the situation now?

LK: Yeah, I think they've realised that they're right in guessing that there would be a market for me and so they've made money on all the records and made more money every time. It's been nothing but a steady climb, there haven't been any dips yet. *Ice Water* was when I finally found some players in Minneapolis and those guys turned out to be my favourites because they're home town guys, they're jazzers... before I played with them I hadn't met them but I had heard them on tons of jingles, and local television. Howard Roberts is a fan of theirs so is Johnny Smith.

ZZ: The last two albums have featured pretty much the same personnel.

LK: Yeah, and all we do is sit down and I mention the way I see the tune. The difference between *Ice Water* and the new album is that *Ice Water* wasn't done entirely live, sometimes it was me and drums or me and bass and the voice was put on after, mainly because it made it easier to get it right but harder to get any real life out of it, but on the new one—the one that hasn't yet come out—it's a lot more 'live'.

ZZ: There's some really nice duetting on the latest one that we've heard—*Dreams And All That Stuff*.

LK: A lot of that was done 'live' too but it was very planned and I had more to do with the arranging and production on that record than I have on any others though I regret we used the Dolby noise reduction system on it because it does terrible things to the music. Dolby representatives will argue until you're blue in the face against this but it takes off the rough edges, it smooths everything out and takes the high end out of the guitar and you lose a lot of wood. More than anything else though it's as if you took the music and buried it around a thousand miles down in a block of granite. We call it the deep rock sound and the voice sounds as though it's coming from the middle of Death Incorporated—it's lifeless. Dolby swear it's doing nothing to the music but it is—all you have to do is record a snip with it and a snip without it.

ZZ: So the new album is in the can.

LK: Yeah, one side is instrumental and pretty much along the lines of *Dreams*. The other side has three vocals and has bass piano and drums and there's one instrumental with bass, piano and drums and one track on that side is two electric guitars that I played. I used the same musicians. I could have worked with Eric Grevatt—he's great and I've seen him work with Weather Report but I don't know him, he's not a friend of mine, and I like to sit down and understand the musicians at the beginning.

ZZ: I read that you were considering recording a project with another guitarist.

LK: Yeah, that's going on the shelf because we can never seem to get together. It's a guy named Mike Johnsen but that might still happen. I'm waiting to do duet work with somebody—I've tried it with steel and that didn't work, I've tried it with bass and drums and that didn't work, but it's got to be somebody who leans into it and grips it from the bottom up and Michael doesn't do that, Michael is a very collaborative player and he plays very gracefully and well but I'd like somebody with a little more sock.

At this point Leo was snatched from the caravan and plunged into a meeting with his lawyer... which is probably for the best since we'd probably still be talking now. Zzzzzz.

Discography

Circle Round The Sun—Oblivion.

Circle Round The Sun—Symposium SYS 2001 (1970)

Six And Twelve String Guitar—Takoma C-1024 (1971) subsequently issued on Sonet in UK

Mudlark—Capitol E-ST682 (1972)

Greenhouse—Capitol E-ST11000 (1972)

My Feet Are Smiling—Capitol E-ST11164 (1973)

Ice Water—Capitol ST-11262 (1974) import

Dreams And All That Stuff—Capitol E-ST11135 (1974)

□ JERRY GILBERT

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5th Dimension



Johnny Rivers

5TH DIMENSION
EARTHBOUND
JOHNNY RIVERS
HELP ME RHONDA

THE HISTORY of these artists goes back to those heady days of 1966, when Rivers, an already established star in the US, discovered a Los Angeles soul group called the Versatiles. He had already come across a young songwriter who he signed to his publishing company; and when it came to the group's debut album on Rivers' own Soul City label, the songwriter was given the job of rehearsal pianist. Various changes occurred during the making of the album, and when it was released the group had become the 5th Dimension and the young songwriter, Jimmy Webb, had written the title track *Up Up And Away*. To round off the story, the album received a gold record. Well, the 5th Dimension since their first two albums with Webb—the second being *The Magic Garden*—have settled down to become a very schlocky, but successful, showbiz group, never developing their outstanding vocal talents to the limit; whereas Rivers and Webb have had a pretty lean time of it in recent years.

Johnny Rivers is probably best known over here, through no fault of his own, for

some rather dire versions of such goodies as 'Memphis', 'Maybelline', 'Baby I Need Your Loving', 'The Tracks Of My Tears', and has once again decided to regurgitate some golden oldies, except this time they work. The album kicks off with the old Four Tops' number 'It's The Same Old Song', with some storming horn playing from Chuck Findley, Jackie Kelso, and Jim Horn. (Worth a single release I would have thought, Epic?). The notorious good taste of the British record buying public has seen to it that *Help Me Rhonda* will sink without a trace. For those who haven't heard the record yet, it's taken at a faster pace than the original and with a great deal more vitality. Great stuff! That sax solo, needless to say, is by Tom Scott. There's a nice tight version of Arthur Alexander's 'You Better Move On', which spotlights Rivers' ability to pull through by surrounding himself with greater talents than he; one only has to look at the LA reggae band to bear that out. When the material falls short of expectation, there's always something to get from the musicians. The credits are, as ever, worth a mention—Jim Gordon, Larry Knechtel, Joe Osborn, Dean Parks, Mike Melvoin, Michael Omartian, Larry Carlton . . . I could go on. Make no mistake about it, some of the material is distinctly mediocre. Any album with Jimmy Cliff's 'You Can Get It If You Really Want It' has me opposed to it from the start. Other good tracks are Michael Georgiades' 'U.F.O.', with a hook very similar to Stills' 'Love The One You're With', Sherm Kelly's 'Dancing In The Moonlight', and a beautiful Ned Doheny ballad 'Postcards From Hollywood'. It's been eighteen months since Rivers' last foray onto vinyl, but it's been well worth the wait. I have always felt he leaves a lot to be desired as an artist, and that he would be well advised to stick to his role as an entrepreneur; but if he can keep turning them out like this, that's okay by me. Forget the few bad songs, and take in all the other good aspects. It takes a few spins to get into, but once you're there you'll be all right.

If Johnny Rivers had only done one thing in his life, and that was to discover Jimmy Webb, that would have been more than enough. (For connoisseurs of trivia, Rivers was the first person to record that Webb evergreen 'By The Time I Get To Phoenix'.) *Earthbound* might be by the 5th Dimension, but Webb's arrangement and production make it his showcase in every way. If the Rivers album takes some getting used to, this one takes even longer. On initial hearing it's a great disappointment. Once again it comes down to material. Why Lennon-McCartney's 'I've Got A Feelin'' and the Stones' 'Moonlight Mile' are present, when so many better songs from their repertoire are available seems very strange; one has only to turn to the 5th Dimension's 'Ticket To Ride' and Thelma Houston's 'Jumpin' Jack Flash' to realise what Webb is capable of when it comes to arranging their best material. Webb recently told me, while on the subject of songwriting, that it wasn't exactly pouring out of him. I am afraid to say that I have to agree with

RECORDS

him on the evidence of the songs on this album. The title track is superb as is 'Walk Your Feet In The Sunshine', although Webb's own solo version on *Land's End* is far superior; but the rest of the material, although good by most standards is a disappointment when you know what he can do. If the songs don't quite measure up to Webb's usual standard, his arrangements and production certainly do. While that aspect on the Rivers album was good, on *Earthbound* it's brilliant. Jeff Porcaro, Fred Tackett, Jesse Ed Davis, and Dennis Budimir help out on this occasion. The two black marks go to Larry Coryell's acoustic guitar playing, which sounds as if he arrived late at a fiesta and is making up for lost time; and John Myles, of whom I know nothing, except to say that his piano playing is ordinary, and his vocal arranging even more ordinary. Do it yourself next time, Jimmy. Webb remains an enigma. Since 1970 he has written only one hit song—'All I Know' for Garfunkel; his solo albums haven't sold a thing, and all his recent production work has met with commercial failure. While people sing the praises of some two-bit producer, who has a couple of hits; Webb, who in my opinion is in a class of his own, can't seem to please anybody—perhaps he's too clever. The title track which segues into George Harrison's 'Be Here Now' is one of the most impressive musical ideas I have heard in a long time, and yet I have played it to people that are glued to BBC1 of a Thursday night for whom it does nothing. I can't promise that Floyd, Zeppelin, Dead fans and the like will go for it, but it sure as hell shows up Barry White, the Stylistics, and all the rest of that pseudo soul dreck, over which Tony Blackburn wets himself.

DAVID ANDERSEN



Grateful Dead

GRATEFUL DEAD
BLUES FOR ALLAH
Grateful Dead GD-LA494-G

AS ONE WHO has been frequently criticised for my unlimited devotion to the Grateful Dead and my continued belief that they are still one of the best bands in the world, I viewed the announcement of their

temporary retirement last year with mixed feelings. On the one hand I knew that their albums were becoming more consistent, that individually they were easily surpassing even the highest standards of musicianship, and that they were still one of the foremost 'live' rock groups in the world. But then on the other hand I had my doubts about the musical direction they were heading in, and the nagging feeling that the road they took after *Live Dead* has led them into a blind alley of sorts. As Phil Lesh has pointed out in this magazine, the Grateful Dead are not at their best when writing three or four minute songs . . . they're good at it, sometimes exceptionally good, as both *Workingman's Dead* and *American Beauty* undoubtedly prove, but the Dead excel themselves, to a degree that no other band has yet matched, at the art of improvisation. Side one of *Anthem Of The Sun* and the first two sides of *Live Dead* are still my own personal favourite pieces of Dead music, but even they only sometimes point to areas of music that have yet to be fully explored. The fact that they were and still are fully capable of adventuring into new territory but chose, on record at least, to develop their songwriting inclinations, has been a frustration to me that only the quality of their later albums has managed to alleviate. Then of course on a purely technical and practical level there was the ever-increasing amount of people and equipment that eventually made extensive touring a virtual impossibility both economically and physically.

So I thought that given a 'break' of nearly two years, they would be able to assess their situation, concentrate musically at what they were best at, revert to a more reasonable and practical sound system, and pick up the loose ends that they left straggling aimlessly over the last days of the nineteen sixties. As things transpired, their 'retirement', like most of the Dead's projects, has been a very loose arrangement. They've played major gigs in America at least twice since then, all the individual members have been playing almost constantly with a variety of different people, and they've also found time to make a new album, *Blues For Allah*.

It doesn't represent such a marked departure as I'd have envisaged, but the fact that a sizeable chunk of the album is basically instrumental goes some way to fulfilling my own tastes and aspirations for them. There are songs, really excellent songs like 'Help On The Way', 'The Music Never Stopped', and 'Crazy Fingers' which are quite similar to those on *Mars Hotel* and *Wake Of The Flood* . . . beautifully crafted, intricate, and melodic, but it's the instrumental passages that I feel represent the band's major statements and development. 'King Solomon's Marbles', 'Stronger Than Dirt Or Milk', 'The Turkey', and 'Sand Castles And Glass Camels' are very disciplined and coordinated pieces of improvisation, and 'Stronger Than Dirt' especially sounds like a section from a 'Dark Star' performance that has evolved to a degree that suggests a constant and fruitful evolution in this direction. But it's the title

track mid-way through the second side and everything thereafter that sees the Dead really taking chances. 'Blues For Allah' is so immediately weird and unlike almost anything they've ever done before that its very presence on an album that mostly delivers everything a Dead Head could want, is quite disconcerting. But then that's the Grateful Dead. Ever since the days when they used to get up onstage and never know whether they were going to play for ten minutes or ten hours, they've always shown us both sides of the coin . . . the beautiful and the ugly, the best and the worst, and the known and the unknown. And I think it's safe to say that wherever there's an unknown the Dead will somehow go there, and right now this album is ultimately pointing the way. A great deal of it represents a progression and development, but within a style that we're all familiar with by now, while the rest of it is edging towards ideas that will probably take a while to fully realise. And it's that, the combined qualities of experience, endless ability, and an adventurous spirit that maintain my enthusiastic respect for the Dead and leave me, even now, eagerly awaiting their next album.

ANDY



Eric Clapton

ERIC CLAPTON
E.C. WAS HERE
RSO 2394 160

TWO THINGS occur to me. Firstly, if I continue to review every Clapton album and concert, maybe one day I'll get the interview. Join me in hoping, if you will. Secondly, there would appear to be a fairly large number of record buying persons for whom the name of Eric Clapton on a record is insufficient cause to purchase. This second occurrence can only be improved by the album we're discussing. For many years, persistent requests have been made Claptonwards that he should revert to the guitar style which initially found him fame with John Mayall, and he does just that on this album. 'Rambling On My Mind', track two, side two, contains a guitar solo which you won't believe. I imagine this particular track was recorded at Hammer-

RECORDS

smith, perhaps on the night Pete and I marvelled at the end of last year, and it has been a cherished ambition ever since to hear a guitar solo which contained even a smidgeon of whatever it is that made me marvel that night. My ambition has been achieved, and I can play it as often as I like, which will be often.

Quite seriously, a hardened hack like myself with more albums than time to play them, rarely hears anything too invigorating, music which makes you start miming the performance. That track made me feel exactly the way that I want music to make me feel, and if you've ever been in that blissful condition, you'll certainly be interested enough to make hearing this record a high priority.

Actually, there's another totally memorable solo on 'Have You Ever Loved A Woman', and the other four tracks, while not meriting a similar scream rating, are the equal of anything that Eric has produced since his re-emergence with 461 Ocean Boulevard. The band, already much praised in these pages, are just as sympathetic as anyone could wish, and the audience don't interfere with my pleasure in the slightest.

The final message concerns you, and says "find out about this record. The apocalypse may not be too far away, and if you don't hurry, you might never know just how unbeatable a guitarist we are privileged to hear is Eric Clapton. This is the real thing..."

□ JOHN TOBLER



Starry Eyed and Laughing

STARRY EYED AND LAUGHING
THOUGHT TALK
CBS 80907

"I JUST CAN'T believe it's fool's gold." Too damn right. This is the real thing. All of us who thought SEAL had blown it can breath again. Certainly, it had begun to look as if all the usual hassles were going to push the band under, but they're back and better than

ever. Much better.

Though still retaining the elements that first attracted so many of us, this is a much tougher sounding band. By the time you read this they will be well into a 3½-month American tour, and if they can survive that, they really are going to be something. The album following on that could be a classic.

But back to the present, and *Thought Talk*, the title of the band's second album. I'm surprised they chose to call it that, actually, because the number certainly is atypical of the rest of their work. Still, it's their album, so they are entitled to call it what they wish.

Just in case some of you are not familiar with what one of the weekly music comics called "ZigZag's house band", they are Tony Poole (12-string guitar), Ross McGeeney (lead guitar), Iain Whitmore (bass guitar) and Michael Wackford (drums & percussion). All three guitarists write and sing and, if I express a preference for the album's first side, then this merely reflects my personal preference for Iain's songs and vocals.

'Good Love', the opening track, is also the single. Iain takes the lead vocal on this group composition, while Ross contributes a beautifully controlled guitar solo midway through which I find is a constant pleasure. Pity it won't be a hit. On the other hand, as soon as I first heard 'One Foot In The Boat' live at the 100 Club, I was convinced that it would be a good choice for a single. It's my favourite of Tony Poole's songs, with a great chorus, and some particularly fine drumming from Michael Wackford, busy but never intrusive.

This is followed by Iain's 'Since I Lost You', on which he again sings lead. There's a neat organ fill on the chorus, and a very powerful instrumental middle section. The band move to acoustic guitars for Ross's 'Down The Street'. Really fine harmonies on this one, leading into the moment Iain sings 'With your lady', high and clear and very Pocoish. That always stopped me dead in my tracks when I heard them live. One point. Is it taken slower on record than I recall from those live performances?

More acoustic guitars lead into the side's fifth and final track, and it's my favourite. Another of Iain Whitmore's songs, 'Fool's Gold' sounds as if it should have been included on the Eagles' *Desperado*. It would definitely not sound out of place. A beautiful vocal and combined guitar/cello break make this a track to return to time and time again.

Side 2 also has five tracks, opening with Ross on his own composition, 'Believe'. More good harmonies on what I would describe as a 'cool' sounding song, in contrast to 'Keep It To Yourself', the side's second track and the second group composition. This is driven along at breakneck speed by Wackford's drumming with, for a change,

an organ break in mid-song. The group harmonise throughout this one, but Ross McGeeney is back to the fore on another of his own numbers, 'Don't Give Me A Hard Time'. I find this the most interesting of his three songs here, complemented by another of his fluid guitar solos.

So to Tony Poole's 'Flames In The Rain'. Great fun here, trying to catch all the lyrics first time round. You can also play the popular 'Spot the musical influences' again. I heard it first at the Nashville recently, and a healthy chunk of the live performance's raw power finds its way on to this track. Another of Tony's neat choruses, too. In fact, a chance for everyone to go berserk, and I would have been happier to see this as the album's closer, rather than the basically instrumental 'Thought Talk' which does so.

A number of tracks are fleshed out by guest instrumentalists like Jeff Bannister, Frank Riccotti, Colin Walker and Pete Zorn but happily, none of these guest appearances intrude on the overall 'group' sound.

In any review it is hard (even impossible) to convey through printed words what the album actually sounds like. This review has one simple message... Buy the album! That way we can all look forward to a follow-up from one of the best bands we have. And maybe I'll get my wish and see 'Miles Away' committed to vinyl. I just can't believe it's fool's gold. Good grist, that's what it is.

□ PETER O'BRIEN



Man

MAN
MAXIMUM DARKNESS
United Artists UAG 29872

ONE OF THE undoubted highlights so far this year for all *ZigZaggers* has been the long-overdue visit of John Cipollina to these shores, and if he turned out to be a more eccentric and flamboyant performer than some of us had imagined, he was still great... a true guitar hero. He of course toured over here as a temporary member of the Man Band and it is to them that we must offer our thanks, first of all for bringing Cipollina over here and secondly for committing one of their gigs onto vinyl. *Maximum Darkness* was recorded 'live' at the Roundhouse on May 26th and is probably the best 'live' album we're going to hear this year, not just for Cipollina's frequent bursts of imaginative playing, but because

Oxygen, Ivor Cutler, salt, sex,
Pekka Pohjola, sleep, David
Bedford,  and Edgar Froese
all have something in common.

You can't live without them.



Ivor Cutler
VELVET DONKEY
V2037



David Bedford
THE RIME OF THE
ANCIENT MARINER
V2038



Pekka Pohjola
B THE MAGPIE
V2036



Edgar Froese
EPSILON IN MALAYSIAN
PALE
V2040

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from Virgin.



RECORDS

of Man themselves who show up superbly—the best I've heard from them in a long time. Guitarist Micky Jones in fact outshines Cipollina for at least half of the album with his tight melodic riffing and inventive solos, and their sensitive choice of material demonstrates both how immaculately precise they are as a band and also how they can expand a number at ease making room for extended solos and for Cipollina to lay down his embellishments.

The album opens with '71 71-551', a Deke Leonard song to be found on his *Iceberg* album, and a perfect example of Man as a tight, powerful unit—a simple melodic guitar riff, a strong, very basic rhythm (Terry Williams' drumming is brilliantly effective throughout by the way), and a lengthy Micky Jones guitar solo. The other two tracks on side one, 'Codine' and 'Babe I'm Gonna Leave You' not surprisingly bring Cipollina more to the fore than anywhere else on the album. Both numbers were of course standards in the early Quicksilver repertoire and although they're on neither of that band's first two classic LPs, they are to be found on a motion picture soundtrack album called *Revolution* (United Artists UAS 5185) which although deleted is worth keeping an eye out for as it also contains original tracks by Mother Earth and the Steve Miller Band. 'Codine' is a great song, definitely one of the most delicate and explicit written on the subject of drugs and Cipollina handles most of the guitar work very much in the manner of the Quicksilver version—lots of huge, almost dissonant chord work and jagged licks. 'Babe I'm Gonna Leave You' is equally impressive and far too good a song to be left dormant all this time.

The second side contains two old Man favourites, 'Many Are Called, But Few Get Up' and 'Bananas' and those of you in any way familiar with their work will already have a pretty good idea of what it sounds like. Man fans will love it, while Quicksilver freaks can only ponder as to how it would have sounded if Cipollina wasn't mixed down almost out of it. Apparently however he was inadvertently out of tune for most of the time so maybe it's just as well we can't hear him.

Lastly a word about the excellent sleeve at a time when most record companies seem to be packaging albums in receptacles no more imaginative than bus tickets. The front cover is beautiful—a blown-up shot of Cipollina's colourful guitar with lettering by the eminent Rick Griffin. Amazingly enough though, this is not the original design intended for use by Griffin at first came up with a cartoon drawing of two mice which somebody pointed out looked remarkably like Walt Disney characters. On checking with the Disney organisation it was found that the cartoons did in fact bear more than passing resemblance to two characters used in a Disney cartoon about fifty years ago and never shown since. The said organisation did however require a ludicrous amount of money for copyright, therefore successfully putting a wet blanket over that idea. A shame, but no matter, this sleeve

will do just fine. Inside (it's a gate-fold sleeve), there are plenty of tasty pics, a dedication to the memory of Ralph J. Gleason, Tom Donahue and Peter Ham, and a deserved name-check for Frame, promoter John Curd, and *ZigZag* associate Jake. Good people, beautiful packaging, and above all, dynamite music... be good to yourself and get it.

□ ANDY

Rock'n'Roll Reissues

THE CRICKETS
BACK IN STYLE
MCA MCFM 2710

BRIAN HYLAND
SEALED WITH A KISS
ABC ABSP 101

THE VERY BEST OF JOHNNY AND
THE HURRICANES
CONTEMPO CRMD 1002

ELVIS PRESLEY
THE SUN COLLECTION
RCA Starcalt HY 1001

NEIL SEDAKA
24 ROCK 'N' ROLL HITS
RCA Starcalt HY 1005

THE VERY BEST OF DEL SHANNON
CONTEMPO CRMD 1001

REMEMBER we spoke recently on the subject of Buddy Holly and the Crickets? At that point, I was at least effusive in my praise of what were in effect the albums which taught me about what I presume to be our favourite mutual subject. This month's collection of oldies differ only in that all are compilation albums, and it's worth noting first off that finally rock'n'roll compilation albums are being put together by persons who know, instead of the people who goofed yesterday, and get the job of compiling albums as a punishment. Such buckets of crud are easily distinguishable as they contain one or two hits painfully stretched around a smelly mass of useless material, probably provided by the artist in order to fulfil his contractual commitment before moving on to his next record company. The Crickets album probably consists of just about every track they made for Coral after Buddy Holly's sad demise, a total of nineteen. According to the sleeve, four of them have never been released before, and frankly that's no surprise when you listen to them. Of the rest, nine are undoubtedly worthwhile, and the other six may or may not appeal. To clarify that last statement, only someone unfamiliar with the original versions of 'Great Balls Of Fire' and 'Rockin' Pneumonia' would really like the Crickets' budget album type attempts at them. Still, the good stuff, 'Love's Made A Fool Of You' and 'I Fought The Law' are great songs, either

in these original versions or in the Bobby Fuller copies. I heard this story about Bobby Fuller, who was a late fifties Holly successor with a lot of promise, until, so the totally unconfirmed story goes, some business associate poured petrol down Bobby's throat and then thoughtfully applied a match, so ending that promising career. Fascinating, isn't it? 'Someone, Someone' was covered by Brian Poole and the Tremeloes, whose inferior version got to number two in 1964, so my *Rock File* tells me. I fancy that 'Baby My Heart' was covered by the Drifters/Shadows, and certainly 'More Than I Can Say' brought many a teenage tear to the young ladies of

the late fifties in Bobby Vee's version. 'Peggy Sue Got Married' is for me preferable in the Buddy Holly posthumous version, but it's still a great song, and 'Don't Cha Know' contains one of the most shameless lyrical rip-offs (from 'Dream Lover') that I've ever heard. I don't have much to say about the rest individually, save to single out a song written by the great Buddy, 'Ting-A-Ling', which is somewhat derivative, but still interesting. Congratulations to John Beecher, who wrote the sleeve notes on the Holly/Crickets albums of last month, and who does the same here, as well as compiling the album. The only distressing feature appears to be that this is a full price album, as opposed to the budget price of the other two. As Mr Beecher must be fully aware of this album's inferiority, where's the sense? Nevertheless, there's some very good stuff here.

The business about prices goes at least double for Brian Hyland. Without actually cheating, this album could have been called *Brian Hyland's Greatest Hits*, because in America, all but one of these tracks was in fact a top hundred hit. It's interesting to note that Anchor's contractual position gives them the rights to both the ABC and Dot catalogues, so that nine of the tracks come from what I believe to be the purple period, from 1961 to '63, while the remaining three come from 1969. Mind you, there's little to distinguish anything from anything else, with the honourable exceptions of 'Sealed With A Kiss', 'Warmed Over Kisses' and 'Ginny Come Lately', and perhaps 'I'm Afraid To Go Home', which also boasts the faintly tragic harmonica sound which was Hyland's trademark.

The problem affecting Brian Hyland in his first hit period with ABC, as I see it, you understand, was the fact that two people called Udell and either Geld or Gold (which I suppose are similar commodities anyway) wrote all nine of the songs on here, and to say the least, they ran out of ideas on the three songs favourably mentioned above, which all came out within nine months of 1962. Outside the possibilities presented by Brian's Bobby Vee like voice in its normal form, they seemed to dry up completely, and in fact the only slightly bearable track from that period otherwise is the peculiarly masochistic 'Let Me Belong To You', in which the 'tie me down and have your evil way with me' sentiment is expressed in a rather juvenile manner.

RECORDS

After he stopped getting hits for ABC, he was transferred to Philips, and had five hits for them before going to Dot, where he managed to make Thomas Wayne's great 1959 hit 'Tragedy' into something as lively as a senna pod. It's included here if you're finding it difficult to sleep, and the other two Dot tracks are equally exciting. After Dot, Brian went round to UNI, which oddly enough is now combined contractually with Kapp and with Leader. You see, the first Hyland hit was 'Itsy Bitsy Teenie Weenie Yellow Polka Dot Bikini' on Kapp's Leader subsidiary, and then in 1970, ten years after that, he was on UNI. I can't wait to see MCA (who own Kapp, Leader and UNI) doing their compilation album.

Time for the marks. Brian Hyland should get an EP out containing the four tracks mentioned a few paragraphs ago, and the rest of this junk should be destroyed. At full price, only those who already have mink-lined toiled seats would find this valuable. I'll look forward to the EP, which I deserve, having listened right through the LP.

Johnny and the Hurricanes were also to a certain extent the slaves of the people who gave them their material, but in their case, the writers, who were basically King and Mack, with help from (variously) Mendelsohn, Conatser, Kelly, Emerson and sometimes members of the group, had a more than happy way with a riff. Most of

the Hurricanes A sides were adaptations, for example 'Red River Rock' was 'Red River Valley', 'Beatnik Fly' was 'Jimmy Cracked Corn', 'Down Yonder' and 'Ja Do' were rocked up versions of themselves, and 'Rocking Goose' and 'Reveille Rock' can probably be imagined by anyone who has heard even one track of Johnny and the H's. The B sides are what I remember with more affection though, because they were prime examples of that splendid rock'n'roll hybrid of the turn of the sixties, the instrumental with the totally irrelevant title. The theory was that you get a catchy riff, however short, and with guitar, saxophone and organ, make it into a two and a half minute twelve-bar nothing. If that sounds like a put-down, and it does, it's because we've got far too used to the complication of not listening to well played punchy twelve-bars, which is a loss. The perfect simplicity displayed in 'Buckeye', 'Lazy', 'Sandstorm', 'Crossfire' and 'Time Bomb', and just remember what I said about those titles, is pure unadulterated joy, and I betcha there's not more than ten per cent of you there who've ever heard them, which makes ninety per cent of you the losers. The original rock'n'roll era produced Duane Eddy, the Ventures, England's own Shadows, and dozens of one-hit wonders like the Scorpions, the Ramrods, and then their later relations like the Chantays and the Surfaris. Johnny and the Hurricanes were

definitely in the front rank of these almost anonymous hitmakers, and while it would be silly to say their music hasn't dated, its perfect simplicity is a delightful tonic in comparison to much of today's supposedly innovative pop music. A bird with whom I was once not as friendly as I would have liked to be, once told me, squinting out of her rather blood-shot eyes, that instrumentals were so much better than vocals because you could make them suit your mood at the time you heard them without the irritation of a songwriter you'd never met trying to tell you something you might not want to know. Not as succinct as some might like, but nevertheless based in truth. I like instrumentals, and at the risk of coming this 'I heard it before you did' thing once too often, perhaps we could all use a bit of undemanding music in place of the intense concentration which frequently seems to be a vital part of enjoying music in the mid-seventies. Recommended, and not just to fellow geriatrics.

At this point, please note that all compilation albums should have both the name of the compiler and a sleeve note. The Crickets have both, the Hyland has neither, and Johnny and the Hurricanes have no compiler and an uncredited sleeve note. Compilers of the world unite!

Which brings us to one of the world's great compilers, Roy Carr, who adorns the *NME*. Roy was involved in the *Hard Up*

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RECORDS

Heroes project, and now, despite being uncredited, he tells me that the Presley collection was his original concept, having been suggested some while ago, and only now coming to fruition. He also tells me that only the first batch of this album are without his sleeve note, which will undoubtedly be interesting and informative, so if you get a copy without a note, get your shop to re-order, unless you're particularly into rare esoterica which can be subsequently sold to those who buy Japanese Presley singles at inflated prices just because they boast a picture sleeve.

Roy's concept was to lump together the tracks that Elvis made for Sun Records of Memphis before the unfortunately short sighted Sam Phillips decided that the definite promise of thirty-five grand of dollars was of more immediate worth than the indefinite, if promising future. You can read all about that aspect of things in Jerry Hopkins' excellent book *Elvis* which is now available in paperback, and is as essential as *Let Sleeping Vets Lie*, or whatever is this week's chart-topping book.

Not quite as essential, however, as the record we have here, which is simply one of the finest records that has ever been made anywhere, anytime. While the recent *ZigZag* album poll showed that you lot out there have bloody good taste, not a single fifties album made the top fifty, which means the potential sale for this album, should you bother to make sure you hear it, is positively huge. Forget the current Presley catalogue for the purposes of this exercise, because it's as different as say, Souther, Hillman and Furay is from the Buffalo Springfield, which is, as Damon Runyon once so wisely said, more than somewhat. As far as legend has it, only ten tracks were released of Elvis on Sun, and the whole of the first side plus the first two on side two are these, lovingly placed in the right order. The additional six tracks, while not released on Sun, were made for that company, and even if you really don't want any versions of 'I Love You Because', let alone two, they're simply solid gold as well. The pure energy which shows through these tracks, particularly those first ten, is quite staggering in comparison to anything that emerges these days. Of the albums that comprise this review, this is the one to get first, and don't forget it. A total must, and if Frame were here to do his pretty polly on my shoulder, I guarantee you that he'd agree. I also get the feeling that the album costs less than a couple of quid, for a change, so do not pass your dealer (records), but brush the dust off your wallet and purchase. Oh yes, Roy also tells me that the next thing is to get RCA to release those tracks which have previously not seen the black vinyl light anywhere, but which come from the same sessions. Letters and petitions to anyone you think can help.

In any other company, the Neil Sedaka job, which is basically wall to wall hits with the somewhat unnecessary inclusion of a gratuitous live 'history of rock'n'roll', in which good old Neil does impressions, would be a welcome addition to anyone's

collection of the genre, but next to Elvis, it don't make it. Still after you've got used to Elvis (not tired, note, but used), then Neil Sedaka is definitely worth a listen. At least ten of the sixteen tracks which fall outside the dreadful history/medley are pure classics, demonstrating the Brill Building at its best. Just check out the unbelievable backing vocals on 'Next Door To An Angel', which take the same artefacts to a breathless conclusion after their birth in 'Happy Birthday Sweet Sixteen' and 'Breaking Up Is Hard To Do'. Genius. Adolescent, maybe, but still genius. My only complaint is that 'No Vacancy', the other side of 'The Diary', hasn't made it yet to microgroove. Great song, too - "on my dish washer's pay, I can't find a place to stay". Otherwise, excepting the medly, a gas, and well worth consideration, albeit in less serious terms than Elvis. No compiler or sleeve note.

Oddly enough, the Del Shannon record, the last in this marathon memory mausoleum, bears a certain resemblance to the first, the Crickets' collection, in that some unworthy cover versions tend to tarnish the solid gold gleam from the goodies. On the two records, the brilliant and the merely mediocre are split about fifty/fifty, but everything I would want to hear seems to be included. 'Runaway', 'So Long Baby', 'Hats Off To Larry', 'Little Town Flirt', even 'Kelly', so the uncredited compiler can be proud of his work from that point of view, and while we're on the subject, Geoff Brown's sleeve note is worth a mention, and a favourable one, at that. However, I feel that I would rather have seen the exclusion of the later tracks, these including a couple of Beatle tracks. After all, the original is still very much the greatest in that sort of case, and a single LP would have been more appropriate. I think. Nevertheless, it's great to see that someone at last has bothered to do a Shannon compilation, because he is an artist of astonishing originality at his best, and even after fifteen years, 'So Long Baby' sounds totally amazing, with a sound wall reminiscent of Spector, but from a slightly earlier date than Phil's first examples. Really a record to cherish, even if a bit of track skipping becomes necessary for the over-fastidious (like me).

Emerging from the tunnel, I'd like to think that some of you might listen to some of these albums, and maybe even buy some of them. Leaving all that aside, the truly fascinating thing about the whole business remains the fact that so many rock'n'roll gems have been re-issued so close together. Is the general consciousness among record companies coming to the conclusion that old is gold, or is it a huge coincidence? Perhaps the next few weeks and months will give us the answer, but until then, don't forget what the Showmen said: "Rock and Roll Forever Will Stand". It's been twenty years since Elvis recorded 'That's All Right', and still people like me are reviewing it, and perceiving dynamite. A gratifying thought, indeed.

☐ JOHN "Spirit of '57" TOBLER

Animals

THE ANIMALS

THE ANIMALS (MGM4264)
ON TOUR (MGM4281)
ANIMAL TRACKS (MGM4305)
BEST OF... (MGM4324)
ANIMALIZATION (MGM4384)
ERIC IS HERE (MGM4433)
BEST OF VOL. 2 (MGM4454)
WINDS OF CHANGE (MGM4484)
TWAIN SHALL I MEET (MGM4537)
EVERYONE OF US (MGM4553)
LOVE IS (MGM4591)

ANYONE FOR the Animals? After John's scoop of cheapo Turtles and Mike Nesmith albums in ZZ52, how's about this little lot for £1.50 each? As we all know, the Animals were one of the 60's toughest and rawest R&B outfits. Their British success is well known, but their US standing was little short of phenomenal, dwarfing the stature of their contemporaries; Pretty Things, Spencer Davis Group, etc. Yep, they were right up there with the Stones. Rather than fill the magazine with detailed reviews, here is a brief review of each album.

The Animals features two early hits, 'Baby Let Me Take You Home' and 'House Of The Rising Sun' and as many solid R&B tracks as the first Stones set. *On Tour* is worth having as it never came out here, again chock full of R&B classics, 'Boom Boom', 'Dimples', 'She Said Yeah' and lots more. A great album. *Animal Tracks* follows with three more hits, 'We Gotta Get Out Of This Place', 'Bring It On Home To Me' and 'Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood'. A superbly-packaged *Best Of* followed and is worth having for the sleeve alone. *Animalization* is next and although not a vintage album produced another three hits in 'Don't Bring Me Down', 'Inside Looking Out' and 'See See Rider' (US hit only). With the demise of the original group and the emergence of Eric Burdon as front man, *Eric Is Here* was hastily released - and it shows. It produced a minor hit for Eric at home, 'Help Me Girl'. It also includes three Randy Newman songs, which shows that it wasn't only Alan Price who was into Randy long before his rise to prominence. *Winds Of Change* is just that - the Animals' San Francisco/psychedelic era. Looking back it's obviously dated with its pretentious liner notes and songs like 'San Franciscan Nights'. Nice version of 'Paint It Black'. *The Twain Shall Meet* was more unadulterated 'meaningfulness'; a rambling album which continued Eric's knack of producing one or more hits per album - this time it was 'Monterey' and 'Sky Pilot' (who saw that on TOTP?) *Every One Of Us* sees a slight return to a more solid, bluesy playing and is the most consistent of the psychedelic trilogy. No hits this time, but I'm sure everyone of us knows about 'St James Infirmary'. If nothing else, the band were prolific and 1968 saw a third album released, a double even, *Love Is*, including extended versions of 'Coloured Rain', 'River Deep, Mountain

RECORDS

High' and 'To Love Somebody'. After that the Animals split up and the rest is history.

All those of you who were considering shelling out about £6 for the shoddy ABKCO import double *Best Of The Animals* should reconsider. For the same money you could have four of the above in original form. By the time you read this, most of your friendly neighbourhood stores should be carrying some or all of these essential discs. If not, try phoning Bruce's Records, Edinburgh where I got mine.

□ BERT MUIRHEAD

This Months Recommended Albums

WISH YOU WERE HERE—Pink Floyd (Harvest SHVL 814)
PABLO CRUISE—Pablo Cruise (A&M AMLH 64528)
JAMAICA SAY YOU WILL—Joe Cocker (Cube Hilly 20)
FOLKJOKEOPUS—Roy Harper (Sunset SLS 50373) (re-release)
LA BOOGA ROOGA—Andy Fairweather Low (A&M AMLH 68328)
BEAUTIFUL LOSER—Bob Seger (Capitol E-ST 11378)
DESTINY—Felix Cavaliere (Bearsville K55505)
THE ALBUM OF THE SOUNDTRACK OF THE TRAILER OF THE FILM OF MONTY PYTHON AND THE HOLY GRAIL (Charisma CAS 1103)
KING BRILLIANT—Howard Werth & The Moonbeams (Charisma CAS 1104)
ATLANTIC CROSSING—Rod Stewart (Warners K56151)

Other Releases

JELLY ROLL MORTON (DJM DJML 052)
WILLIAM & THE FAMOUS DOOR—Count Basie & His Orchestra (DJM DJML 053)
JINGLE JANGLE MAN—Phillip Goodhand-Tait (DJM DJLPS 453)
FIGHTING—Thin Lizzy (Vertigo 6360 121)

HAWKWIND—Hawkwind (Sunset SLS 50374) (re-release)
WE GOT BY—Al Jarreau (Reprise K54045)
DRIVE ON—Mott (CBS 69154)
NEW ARRANGEMENT—Jackie De Shannon (CBS 80878)
SHE LOVES TO HEAR THE MUSIC—Asha Puthli (CBS 80978)
7-6-5-4-3-2-1 (BLOW THE WHISTLE)—Gary Toms Empire (Epic CPC 80968)
ALL THEM BLUES—Various Artists (DJM DJLMD 8005)
MORE COUNTRY MATTERS—Various Artists (CBS 22005)
ALL THAT JAZZ—Pats Waller (DJM DJLMD 8003)
FUNKY MULE—Ike Turner (DJM DJSLM 2010)
SECOND CHAPTER—Danny Kirwan (DJM DJLPS 454)
NON-STOP—B.T. Express (EMI INA 1501)
THAT'S THE WAY OF THE WORLD—Earth, Wind & Fire (CBS 80575)
GET OFF MY CLOUD—Alexis Korner (CBS 69155)

GET ON DOWN WITH BOBBY BLAND (ABC ABCL 5139)
CABBAGE ALLEY—The Meters (Reprise K44242)
OUT IN FRONT—Olympic Runners (London SHU 8483)
LIFE, LOVE AND FAITH—Allen Toussaint (Reprise K44202)
ALL THE FUN OF THE FAIR—David Essex (CBS 69160)
MINSTREL IN THE GALLERY—Jethro Tull (Chrysalis CHR 1082)
DANGEROUS—Eugene Wallace (EMI EMC 3067)
THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW—Music From The Original Soundtrack (Ode 78332)

TROUBLE IN PARADISE—The Souther Hillman Furay Band (Asylum SYLA 8760)
MELISSA—Melissa Manchester (Arista ARTY 104)
NASHVILLE—Original Motion Picture Soundtrack (ABC ABCL 5145)
GREATEST HITS VOL.1—Roy Clark (ABC ABCL 5140)
FREE HAND—Gentle Giant (Chrysalis CHR 1093)
YOUNG'S BREW—The Jonny Young Band (XTRA 1153)
FOCUS ON NEIL DIAMOND—Neil Diamond (London FOS M 7/8)
THE VERY BEST OF JACKIE WILSON (Brunswick BRLS 3016)
HALF A LOVE—Chi-Lites (Brunswick BRLS 3015)
THE VERY BEST OF ACE CANNON (London SHU 8486)
ONCE UPON A RHYME—David Allan Coe (CBS 80908)
SPARTACUS—Triumvirat (Harvest SHSP 4048)
BALLAD OF A ROCK'N'ROLL LOSER—Titanic (CBS 80786)
RITCHIE BLACKMORE'S RAINBOW—(Oyster OYA 2001)
THE DOUBLE-BARRELLED MARTY ROBBINS (CBS 88152)

ROCK WITH ALVIN—Alvin Stardust (Magnet MAG 5007)
CHAIN REACTION—The Crusaders (ABC ABCL 5144)
LIVE—The Sensational Alex Harvey Band (Vertigo 6360 122)
FEELIN'S—Loretta Lynn/Conway Twitty (MCA MCF 2717)
INTRODUCING JEANNE PRUETT (MCA MCF 2718)
IN HONG KONG—The Temperance Seven (DJM DJSLM 2013)
INSIDE OUT—Flock (Mercury 9100 016)
HOUR OF THE WOLF—Steppenwolf (Epic EPC 69151)
SABOTAGE—Black Sabbath (Nems 9119 001)
LIVE LIBEL—Pete Atkin (RCA RS 1013)
PLAY LOUD—Hustler (A&M AMLH 33001)

Import Deletions

IMPORT DELETIONS are perhaps the only way to get some of these oldies but goodies, but they can also be a way of countering inflation when buying fairly recent releases. At prices from £1.35 to £1.75 they are really good value. But there are a few titles to avoid due to defective pressings, eg. *Let It Be, Please To See The King* (Steeleye Span), *Sunlight* (Youngbloods), *Book Of Taliesyn* and *Shades Of* (Deep Purple). The following however are highly recommended: Eleven of the old Animals LPs are coming into the country and they're all reviewed elsewhere in this issue. At the time of going to press they are available at Quinns, 137 Rose St, Edinburgh, but check with your local deletion specialist because they should be in more shops soon.

OTHER NEW ARRIVALS

Hermans Hermits: *Hold On, On Tour, Blaze, Kind Of Hush, Both Sides Of, Best Of Vols. 1 & 2, and Mrs Brown*. These are all in stock at Rock On, Soho Market; Quinn's, and Asman's, Cannon St.

OTHER GOOD GRIST

Michael Nesmith: *Loose Salute, Magnetic South, Nevada Fighter and Tantamount To Treason*.
Red Rhodes: *Velvet Hammer*.
Turtles: *Battle Of The Bands, Turtle Soup*.
Procol Harum: *Whiter Shade Of Pale*.
Them: *Them*.
Dillards: *American Duck*.

I hope to be able to let you know of some more cheap goodies in the future and I will continue to advise of the imports to avoid.

□ GARY ABBOTT



WELL, NO DOUBT the more perceptive among you will have noticed two major changes in this month's column. Firstly it's no longer given to you in Frame's illegible scrawl—not because I wanted to deprive him of the opportunity to make himself useful (it gives him such pleasure), but because he's hied himself off across the Big Water with his men from Starry Eyed and won't be returning to these declining shores until Christmas. The result of this, of course, is that instead of reclining in the Dark Lantern with the good people of Aylesbury I find myself compelled to spend the evening at old Kendall's gaff—where I'm staying in between my various travels—slave over a hot typewriter, and attempt to catch up on some of the backlog of mail that built up while I conducted an exhaustive survey of West Country alehouses. Oh yes, hello to Amanda in Sidmouth and Jane in St Ives, sweet ladies both.

So on to the second Major Change—there is, as you will see if you examine this page closely, no poll this month. Perhaps it

was largely my fault for laying such an ill-defined category on all you eager pollsters, or perhaps it's the GPO's fault for charging exorbitant rates and taking weeks to deliver, but response was well down on previous months, and too many of you confined your lists to the rock world. Therefore, as the results in their current state (Dylan top incidentally, closely followed by Jerry Garcia) don't reflect the true scope and depth of ZigZag readership, and as not one person mentioned the estimable Hunter S. Thompson, I've decided to pretend that last month's category didn't happen. Perhaps we'll return to it at a later date with a closer guide to its aims. Anyway, on to this month's poll, which is a bit more conventional—send me a list of your ten all-time favourite VOCALISTS, MALE OR FEMALE (no chauvinist piggery in this neck or the woods), to the same address as last month: The Famous Mac Garry, c/o Earth Records, 72a Friars Square, Aylesbury. Please remember that as the readership is universally acknowledged as the most informed and authoritative in the world these polls are of the greatest

interest and import, so everyone with the ability to write and the wealth to afford postage should rush me their nominations as soon as possible.

And so swiftly onwards. Record of the month is Bruce Springsteen's *Born To Run*, for the simple reason that it's the only album Kendall's let me hear since I got back from my wanderings; actually it's bloody good, even if it doesn't contain anything quite as classic as 'Sandy'. This month's journalism award (yes, it's back) goes to Kursaal's Svengali Paul Controy for his cordon bleu letter to the NME. The New Rock Venue Award (probably a once-off thing) goes to the brand new multi-million pound Friars place which opened last night and is a bit smart—Dave Stopps makes good.

Well that's enough for now. I'll be off on my travels again if this infernal rain decides to stop, so perhaps I'll get to meet some more of you avid ZigZaggers in the flesh, but I'll be back in time for next month, always assuming there is a next month, so get those lists'n'letters rolling in. I'm sorry if I don't get round to answering all your kind letters, but time and ready capital prevent such a luxury—nevertheless they are all much appreciated, and life wouldn't be the same without them. Au revoir, my friends, take care, and remember: 'The man that hath no music in himself, Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds, Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils.' One of Shakespeare's, your majesty. Bye for now.

□ MAC

VIRGIN IMPORTS

ALONE TOGETHER
Dave Mason

AMERICAN METAPHYSICAL CIRCUS
Joe Boyd & The Field Hippies

SURREALISTIC PILLOW
Jefferson Airplane

HOT ROCKS
Rolling Stones

MORE HOT ROCKS
Rolling Stones

KINKS KRONIKLES
Kinks

MAGIC BUS/MY GENERATION
The Who (double)

INTERVIEWS OF OUR TIME
Lenny Bruce

LINDA RONSTADT & THE STONE
PONIES

'SOUNDS ahead'



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(mainly rock)

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very hard to find we try to stock
all that's available.

BLABBER'N SMOKE

Just to prove that even in these times of depression and endless crises miracles can still happen, we're back again! Most of our problems have now been more or less sorted out but not without a few sacrifices and changes. This is the last Zigzag you'll see in its current format as from next issue we're going to "broaden our appeal and increase our commercial potential" as they say in the biz. Which means that we're going to have a full-colour cover and that we'll be featuring people who appeal to a more general taste thereby increasing our sales sufficiently to be able to sustain ourselves. Sounds ominous don't it? Well I don't think it's going to be that bad although it definitely won't be the old Zigzag weall loved and cherished, which is a shame. Don't be surprised if there's a lot of new writers on the mag either.

But while I've still got the chance to waffle on to you lot without worrying how many of you there are, I'm gonna make the most of it, so here goes.

Unbelievably, amidst all the pressures of having to get an issue out without an office to work in, I had a thoroughly enjoyable time really. In fact I did a bunk for about two weeks and went to Denmark and Sweden with String Driven Thing. A full account of our adventures will appear shortly including how we met two members of the original Spirit in Copenhagen and didn't even realise it! String Driven, even as I write this, have embarked on a British tour and have a new album out very soon, so keep a look out for it and go and see them when you can.

Since we last spoke, I've also been to France with the Feelgoods (globe-trotting old bugger! you must be thinking), where they played a festival in Orange to thousands of kids who went stark raving bonkers. The reaction that the Feelgoods received was really quite astonishing and they did it again at the Reading Festival a week or so later when they dominated the whole of Fridays affairs. I've written a piece on the trip to France which, for various reasons, I couldn't use in this issue, but you will be able to read it soon, I promise. Incidentally just in case you didn't know, the Feelgoods start a British tour as well shortly and their second album 'Malpractice' is now out and it's superb. A more energetic and vicious sound you'd be hard put to imagine.

There are a couple more albums too that I got after the records pages were completed and they are 'The Who By Numbers' and 'Born To Run' by Bruce Springsteen. . . . both brilliant in their own way, and if you've been sharp enough to get your Who tickets and intend to queue for Springsteen tickets, you can see both acts in all their full glory during a month that promises so many great gigs, it's untrue. Besides those already mentioned, Todd Rundgren, Blue Oyster Cult, Paul Simon, and The Flamin' Groovies are all coming over. The fabulous Groovies are here primarily to record an album, for Sire Records who've just signed them, at Rockfield with Dave Edmunds producing. But there is also a good chance that

they'll be playing a gig or two probably in London, so keep a look out for that one. Our old mate Greg Shaw is coming over with them, and besides a sparkling dynamite new issue of 'Who Put The Bomp!', he's also put out two more excellent singles on his Bomp label. They are 'If She Cries'/'Love Of The Loved' by The Poppees, a New York group that Greg discovered, and 'Captain Nemo'/'Tonight' by The Wackers which is an outtake from their 'Wack & Roll' album and one of the last things they recorded before breaking up. Both singles are on my recommended list of tracks this month along with 'Island Lady' by Pablo Cruise, 'Eight Ton Crazy' and 'Wide Eyed And Legless' by Andy Fairweather Low, 'Shine On You Crazy Diamond' by the Floyd, 'Born To Run' by Bruce Springsteen, 'Help On The Way' by the Dead, 'Slip Kid' by the Who, 'I Can Tell' by Dr. Feelgood, and most of the new album from Poco who I saw recently at the New Victoria Theatre and were absolutely stunning. They were as good as those memorable sets they played at the Rainbow three years ago, and Rusty Young has just got to be the best pedal steel player I've ever seen. Brilliant.

Back to 'Who Put The Bomp' for a second. With a bit of luck it should be widely available in this country very soon and if you've never seen a copy, you can do no worse than pick up the new one which is the best looking one yet. It's got a lot of stuff on surfing music, an introduction to Dutch rock, a complete discography of Paul Revere & The Raiders, an interview with Roky Erickson - he of the '3th Floor Elevators', and loads more. Totally absorbing and a record collectors nightmare - you're bound to read about records you've never heard of but know you desperately need, send 50p to British agent (!?) Bob Fisher, 16 Central Close, Whetstone, Leicester LE8 3JB. Also out is a new 'Omaha Rainbow' (No. 6) which besides the usual detailed account of John Stewart's activities, has articles on the Doors, the Kursaal Flyers, the Burritos, the second part of an interview with 'Rolling Stone' man and radio star Paul Gambaccini (do you listen to his show every saturday?), Gordon Lightfoot, and all the usual grist. Worth anybody's 25p, you can obtain a copy from Peter O'Brien, 10 Lesley Court, Harcourt Road, Wallington, Surrey SM6 8AZ. While on the subject of mags, there's a new 'Hot Wacks' out soon and also a Hot Wacks 'special' on the legendary Van Dyke Parks which consists of an interview that John and Pete did with him and Lowell George in California yonks ago. . . . should be good.

Incidentally, old Frame is currently back over in the States, this time on a three-month East Coast tour with Starry Eyed And Laughing. If he ever comes back alive after that one he'll deserve a medal and a years free treatment at the hair clinic. He promises to send loads of stuff over as he'll undoubtedly meet thousands of interesting people who most of us have never heard of.

A note from secretary Cheryl

who at this very moment is ensconced behind her typewriter, a few thousand Zigzags, and a sackful of mail, trying desperately to keep up with your correspondence and requests. She says when you write in with a query about your subscriptions could you please include your address and sub number 'cause it makes things so much easier and it means you'll get your issues quicker. Thanks.

And now a list of rock books that may be worth investigating. First of all there are three books quite recently published on the Rolling Stones the best of which is undoubtedly 'A Journey Through America With The Rolling Stones' by Robert Greenfield (Panther 75p). A gives a really sharp insight to the Stones themselves, the almost unbelievable preparations and careful planning that takes place before a tour, and the fanatical interest that still follows them all over the States. An excellent book. The other two are 'The Rolling Stones: The Greatest Rock'n'Roll Band In The World' edited by David Dalton (Star Books 50p), and 'Mick Jagger' by J. Marks (Curtis Books \$1.50) both of which I've only read segments of and seem slightly less than accurate and captivating. Then there's 'The Grateful Dead' by Hank Harrison (Star Books 70p) which was originally titled 'The Book Of The Dead' in a much more stylish American version. Because of the time difference in publication dates and the sequence of events which have since taken place there are a few changes made, but essentially it's the same history of the Dead basically from a social viewpoint, and very good reading it is too.

George Tremlett is a bloke whose written hundreds of books on pop stars . . . everyone from the Osmonds to the Who, and quite frankly they're all evil potboilers. . . . real hack jobs with as much care and love for the subject as you'd expect from a councillor in Richmond-upon-Thames - and that's what he is folks!, and the only book of his that I've actually bought is 'The David Bowie Story' (Futura 40p). I bought it because a) to my knowledge there's never been another book on Bowie, and b) I hope to be able to interview him at length one day so I thought I might learn something I didn't know. I haven't finished reading the book completely yet, but so far I haven't found out anything that hasn't been nicked from somewhere else. 'Yah, boo, cad, bounder! Two books that have been recently published by Charisma/Futura are 'Buddy Holly: His Life And Music' by John J. Goldrosen (70p) which looks very good (I haven't started reading it yet), and there may be a chance that we'll serialise some of it in Zigzag. The other one is 'Van Morrison: Into The Music' by Ritchie Yorke (75p) which Mac talked about last month. The definitive book on Van Morrison is still yet to be written, and the same goes for the Who, the Dead, Bowie, and until Pete finishes his forty chapter epic, the Byrds.

Erk! Lack of space has thwarted and muffled me yet again, so here's to the next time around. Andy.



SIR LAUNCELOT

TIM THE WIZARD

HERBERT THE PRINCE

YOGHURT

PAKISTANI MILKMAN

CASTLE AAAAGH!

BRIDGE OF DEATH

GORGE OF ETERNAL PERIL

BLACK BEAST OF AAAAGH!

THE HOLY GRAIL

CLASSIC, SILBURY HILL

FOUR SCORE YOUNG BLONDES BETWEEN 16-19½ yrs

HOLY GRENADE OF ANTIOCH

WOODEN RABBIT

WEDDING PARTY

THREE HEADED GIANT

SIR GALAHAD

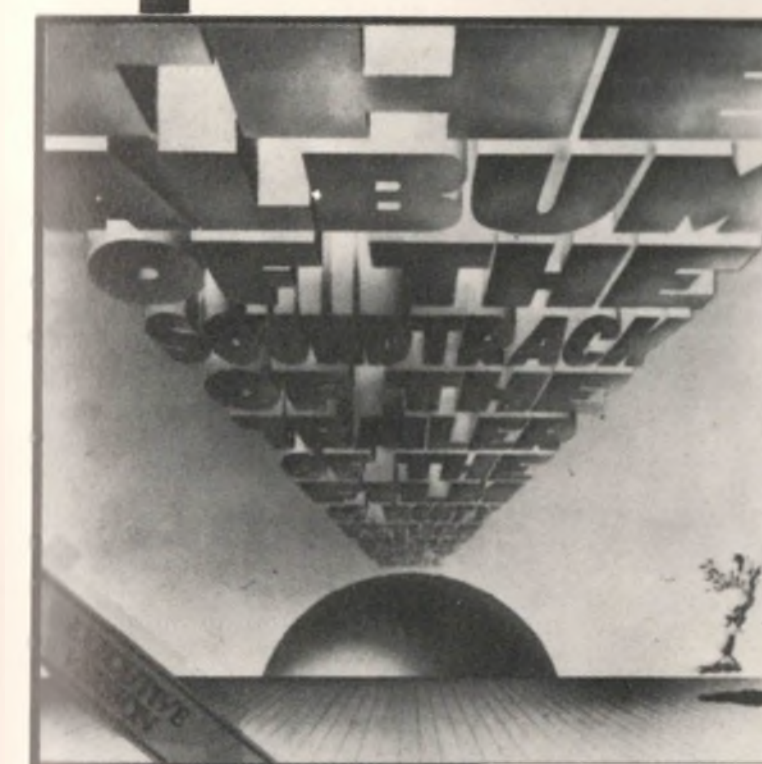
FEROCIOUS RABBIT

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