

NUMBER 63 AUGUST 1976

25P

ZIGZAG

THE ROCK MAGAZINE

**Ian Hunter
Little Feat
Jethro Tull
Flamin' Groovies
Clover**





FOR THE FIRST TIME IN EUROPE A RETROSPECTIVE ONE MAN SHOW FEATURING
THE WORK OF RICK GRIFFIN, CALIFORNIAN ARTIST EXTRAORDINAIRE!
A COLLECTION OF ROCK & ROLL, SURFING, COMIX & MOVIE POSTERS - SOUND SYSTEM BAR
ALCOCK & DICKS TRADING CO., PO BOX 244, LONDON SE3. TEL. N° 852 2793, 323 3916

ZIGZAG 63

August 1976

YEOMAN COTTAGE
NORTH MARSTON
BUCKINGHAM MK18 3PH

editorial board
PETE FRAME
JOHN TOBLER
ANDY CHILDS
The Famous
MAC GARRY
PAUL KENDALL

advertising
JOHN TOBLER
Brookwood
(048 67) 5840

layout
PETE FRAME

photographers
CHALKIE DAVIES
TOM CHEYENNE

cover illustration
BRIAN TALBOT

typesetting
POLLY CANDLE

hangin' around
KRIS NEEDS
MAGENTA DE VINE
TREVOR GARDINER

subscriptions
and back-issues
SUE ANDREWS

Grateful thanks also to Andrew & Maurine
at Word Of Mouth Archives, and Martin
Hall's Acme Tape Transcription Services

ZIGZAG IS PUBLISHED BY PRESTAGATE
LTD OF KENNET STREET, READING AND
DISTRIBUTED BY SPOTLIGHT PUBLIC-
ATIONS LTD.

Copyright here and abroad of all editorial
content is held by the publishers, Presta-
gate Ltd, and reproduction in whole or in
part is forbidden, save with the written
permission of the publishers. c 1976.

Due to overwhelming public demand (thank you Fred Wilks of Wend-
over), the contents column, which I had blown out as superfluous, is
back...and I must say it's great to feel wanted!

Plunging straight into our mixed bag of Zigzag fare, we immediately
come across the carrot topped and golden hearted IAN HUNTER, who
once offered to put his 'All The Young Dudes' royalties into Zigzag to
prevent it folding during one of our periodic financial crises (but was
saved from instant destitution when Charisma bailed us out for a few
years).

I was the 24th journalist to interview Ian during his recent promot-
ional visit - and the following day he was to embark on a 5 day tour of
local radio stations - so you can imagine that he was a) well knackered,
and b) tired of answering questions. We've been good friends for years
- ever since the earliest days of Mott the Hoople, but as soon as my
microphone reared its plastic head, our relationship seemed to deter-
iorate to that of artiste and journalist, and there developed a strange
sort of tension which harnessed the real ebullient Hunter. I only wish
I could have surreptitiously recorded the hours of laughabout remin-
iscence we had later that evening, with Ian and Miller Anderson making
my sides ache at tales of their rock'n'roll exploits in the late sixties -
stories peppered with unscrupulous managers, gigs with the Dubliners,
continental tours which got no further than a cafe in Denmark Street,
wild night-time van rides with Freddie Fingers Lee and Paul Raven,
the quest for fame and fortune...great bloke, old Hunter - and he may
be over here for a tour later this year. At the moment, he's in
Woodstock, rehearsing with the Fabulous Rhinestones (including
ex-Dylan bassist Harvey Brooks, and Kal David from the old Illinois
Speed Press).

John Tobler's BONNIE RAITT extravaganza draws to a close, and
his Ian Matthews interview will DEFINITELY be in the next issue...
that's a promise! I very rarely see young JT these days, whereas in
our days of posing as record company execs, we used to go drinking
nearly every lunchtime. How are you doing, mate?

Calvin Worthington concludes his trilogy with a CLOVER interview.
Clover has always been a bit of a Southend pier of a group, but lack
of success has never swept away the stilts supporting an unbounded
loyalty and enthusiasm...even to the extent that John McFee would
rather take humble employment as one of the Doobie Brothers' gard-
ener than make a lot of money touring with Van Morrison and risk
Clover splitting up. Currently poised on the brink of a BIG break-
through - we've all got to keep our fingers crossed for Clover. We
need 'em, folks.

Mac Garry uncovers more of the early days of JETHRO TULL, con-
cluding that 1968 was their best and most interesting year. I wonder
what Mr. Anderson would have to say about that. Nothing, I expect.

Such is his obsessive devotion to the fine music of the FLAMIN'
GROOVIES, that our intrepid punko reveller Kris Needs spent Friday
evening and the whole of the night talking to the band, before bundling
himself onto the 6.30 train. He continued local revelries (it was his
22nd birthday) the whole of Saturday, before someone's quarry tiled
kitchen floor offered a comfortable bed for his alcohol drenched body
and soul - and then he spent Sunday afternoon and evening, and Monday
evening and night with them before catching the milk train again, in
time for work on Tuesday morning. In no fit condition for such travail,
he had to write a piece (for the noted local newspaper who enjoy the
doubtful benefit of his full-time service) about the building of the mar-
ket square clock tower, which was 100 years old that week. Following
that he fell asleep on the press bench of the law courts, where he was
supposed to be reporting the cases of local Arnold Laynes, Johnny
Reggae and other petty miscreants. With Cyril Jordan's guitar ring-
ing through the empty corridors of his cranium, he only just managed
to tap out his Groovies article before the arms of the National Health
wrenched what was left of his abused body for a suitable recuperation
period. He should be out soon.

LOWELL GEORGE (warped by the rain and driven by the snow)
regaled Paul Kendall (drunk and dirty, but still willing) with hours of
conversation and instructions on tape-editing and spiral staircase
acrobatics, which Kendall distilled into a two parter, starting on page
eleven. Kendall and Needs, both refugees from different John Otway
groups, have formed a new band...the Aylesbury Bucks! Look out!!

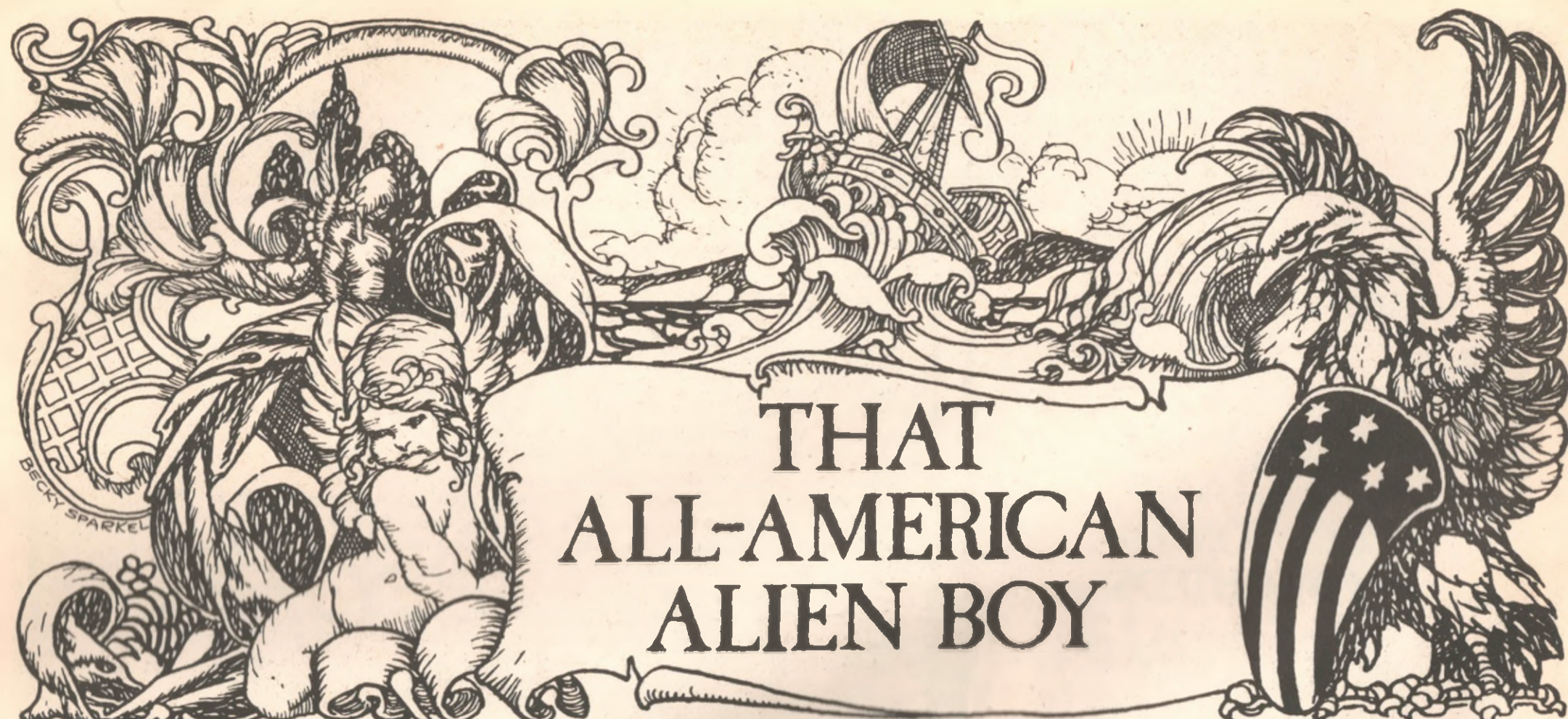
In the midst of our review section we've reintroduced 'Lip Smackin'
Good', where readers are invited to try their hands as reviewers by
writing about their favourite albums. This month's discourse on Ducks
Deluxe first offspring is a mite over-enthusiastic perhaps but there
again, that's the only way to live. Keep those 'lost classics' reviews
coming in, folks...there could be another Nick Kent lurking in your
idle biros.

Something which continues to knock us out and keep us going, is the
unbridled enthusiasm of your letters...so much so that we feel we're
putting the magazine out for our friends rather than as a commercial
enterprise - but it would help to stabilise our shaky foundations if we
could just get the circulation up a little. Hundreds of you write in to
ask if you can help us in any way, and it's only just flashed on us that
we have the finest marketing force in the country...you readers! So,
if you think you could help by doing a bit of flyposting or sticker-
spreading in your town - please drop a line to Sue at Zigzag, 10 Kennet
St., Reading, Berks. You never know, you could become Marketing
Director of the Best Rock Publication In The World!

We'll be loping around at most of the festivals and concerts this
summer...so please come and have a chat. And here we go - off to
the first; Eric Clapton at Crystal Palace. It's going to be another
good summer.

"Rock'n'roll is here to stay!", sang Danny and the Juniors in 1957...
and nobody believed them! Ah, what fools these mortals be.

Pete



THAT ALL-AMERICAN ALIEN BOY

IAN HUNTER

"You climb up the mountains, and you fall down the holes", sang Ian Hunter in 'All The Way From Memphis', and he's certainly experienced the extremes of fortune in the rock world, where his contribution has been considerable: dedication and dues-paying on the hungry Hamburg run, a string of brilliant recordings during the years when he drove Mott the Hoople to the top, one of the most readable and interesting of all books written on rock (just re-packaged and re-issued), and now he's making some lasting albums as a solo artist.

Aesthetically climbing the mountains he may be - though in cold commercial terms he seems to be falling down one of those holes at the moment... but he's happy, and knows he'll come bouncing back. "It's a most peculiar thing, music... I always find it's bigger than me, and I have to follow where it leads me", he says.

His musical history has already been amply sewn up in previous Zigzags, so I began my questions at that point, in April 1975, when he deserted Wembley in favour of the New World.

ZZ: People seem to think of you as an expatriate, rather than a tax exile... but you shuffled the Hunter Ronson tour dates last year to make sure you were out of England before the start of the tax year, didn't you?

IH: Well, put it this way: I'm not unaware of Her Majesty's Government's fiscal policies! I was definitely leaving the country anyway, and it would have been foolish not to take advantage of the tax situation... but that wasn't the motive behind my leaving. I had really got into a rut with my lyrics... I remember sitting up there in my flat in Wembley, day after day, totally bereft of any inspiration. Empty barrel! It was a horrible feeling of having dried up, because wherever I went in London, to look for ideas - nothing came... and I felt it was time to move on.

ZZ: Surely you were happy with things like 'Once Bitten Twice Shy' and 'Boyl' off the first solo album?

IH: Yes, I was, but they were exceptions. Generally I felt I had nothing to say, and I knew that New York would provide a stimulus... which, in fact, it did. On the other hand, because I haven't been around during the past year, sales of my records have taken a dive... and I need to get them up again; I don't want a nice, quiet, semi-retired career.

ZZ: So what did you do when you first moved to the States?

IH: Well, I suppose I sat around stiff for about 4 months, just looking around and taking it all in. Everything you can't do in England, you tend to do to excess until the novelty wears off - so I used to sit and watch telly all night... and all day too! In fact, I got really hooked into watchin' g the news, which I found really frightening. Americans seem to regard it as commonplace, but I was staggered by the rampant corruption; politicians, Medicare officials, company directors - all with their hands in the till, embezzling huge sums of money. Like this one guy was buying Renoirs with welfare money which should have gone into these homes for old people... and the people were having to live without basic necessities like soap and towels. It was stagger ing... and the TV news was just blitzkrieg, that kind of story all day long. So you have to digest that, and get used to the American Way, before you can think constructively - but on the other hand, it is life, and I feel strangely comfortable in that kind of high energy madhouse situation. It really gave me a new impetus to write.

ZZ: How true were the reports that the Hunter Ronson tour of America was a wash-out?

IH: Well, that was just stupid. I mean, Chris Charlesworth and I have been

having rows for years. He's a lousy writer and he knows it - and he knows I know it too. It simply wasn't true; our shows weren't sell-outs, but neither were the Jefferson Starships, the Grateful Dead, Deep Purple or any of the big names, because Spring '75 was a really depressed time in the industry, but the gigs were all over three quarters full, and the audiences went away happy. I was really perturbed by Melody Maker; I wrote to them telling them to get off my back... I even sent Ticketron slips to prove the attendance figures, and they eventually stopped - but all that stuff didn't help my career any.

ZZ: What happened to the band when the tour finished?

IH: They went home; they were only contracted for the tour, and when it was over, they split back. We knew that we'd be off the road for some time, so it was silly to keep them in hotels, on retainers. You see, the original plan was for us to start work on a new Ronson solo album, but then we had to shelve that idea, because RCA didn't want another album, because the last two had lost money... at least, that's how I understood the situation. Anyway, by this time I'd already got four songs that I was really pleased with - written specifically for Mick - and we were going to go in and cut them, but I think Mick was very relieved not to have to make another album, because he wanted time to groove around, have a think, and take his time preparing for his next effort... even though RCA wanted him to cut some singles, he drifted off and had a whale of a time playing with Dylan and McGuinn and all those guys.

ZZ: So after the tour, you retreated to your new house in the woods of up-state New York?

IH: Yeah, Mick lived there for a while too, and we worked together on new material, arranging it and so on, but the business side of it got a bit twisted



Hunter, the teen-idol front man of Mott the Hoople, snapped during the 'All The Young Dudes' era of late 1972.

up - as it inevitably does. Both CBS and my manager wanted me to be a solo artist - not linked with Ronson - so I offered him half my bread. I said "OK, the album will have to go out as Ian Hunter, but you'll make the same money as me"... but he wasn't keen on the idea; he wanted us to form a group called Joe Soap, or whatever - which would obviously have been a commercial disaster.

Anyway, the outcome of it all was that Ronson's manager wanted him to get more than half - so he'd be making more than me out of an album released under my name! I think that arose as a result of my going around telling everybody how great Mick was; I mean, he is a great player - but Defries (Ronson's manager) misconstrued that to mean I couldn't survive without him at my side... whereas I was just praising him to bolster up his confidence, because he didn't have much at the time. So anyway, Mick and I drifted apart; he left my house and moved into Dana Gillespie's vacant apartment in Manhattan... and, as it turned out, I think it was for the best that we split up.

ZZ: I presume he felt more at home in the city...

IH: Well, funnily enough, it took time for him to get in the swing of things. In fact, he'd never been down to Greenwich Village until I took him there. Originally we went down to see Patti Smith, because he wanted to get the job of producing her first album.

ZZ: You met Dylan in the Village, didn't you?

IH: Yes. We ran into Bobby Neuwirth, who was playing folk clubby sort of

places, and he wanted Ronson to join his band... but Mick wasn't into it.

ZZ: I don't blame him - Neuwirth is without talent!

IH: Well, his band was really strange... but then when Dylan's name cropped up, Ronson went hurtling off down there. Now at that time Neuwirth was getting a band up for Dylan, and it was going to include Rob Stoner, who'd been in Jake & the Family Jewels, and Kenny Pine, from the Fugs and the Quinalmes Band... and Dylan was going to the clubs to watch them and see how they were coming together. As far as I know, Ronson got up and jammed one night, and Dylan was knocked out to the extent that, from that moment, Pine was out and Ronson was in... and that was that. Next thing you know, he's touring as part of the Rolling Thunder show, which I felt he held together to a great extent.

ZZ: Absolutely, he was superb... which is strange, because I'd read that he didn't like Dylan until he met him.

IH: Well, he used to reckon Dylan couldn't sing! But when he first moved in with me, Mick was still on the Mainman trip - going to Reno Sweeney's, making sure his hair was just so - exactly the right shade of blond and the right length - and he wasn't into the Greenwich Village vibe at all... until I took him down there, and he realised that things were happening.

ZZ: So how did you meet Dylan?

IH: I was sitting in a club called the Other End, with Ann Patell from

Elektra Records, and she said "Do you want to go next door, Dylan's playing there"... and he was - in this restaurant! Just sitting there singing and playing all the songs off 'Desire' - months before it was released... and the songs just chilled me to the bone - I mean, you know how I've always worshipped Dylan. So he was singing 'Hurricane' and 'Sara' and 'Joey'...

ZZ: When I saw him sing 'Joey', I got the distinct impression he was doing the whole thing as a joke, a send-up - and yet all these self-righteous wankers have put him down for glorifying a gangster...

IH: Sure... he was laughing and winking all the way through it - as if it was the most preposterous satire imaginable! His tongue was almost bursting his cheek! I thought it was great! Anyway, I wasn't pushing to meet him or anything, but he was talking to everybody after his set - a little bit pissed on wine - and he looked me straight in the eye and said: "I know you from somewhere, don't I?" So Neuwirth told him who I was... and he charged around the pavement whooping "Mott the Hoople! Mott the Hoople!" and I thought he was taking the piss, and said something like "Come on, man"... but he was being genuine; he knew all the songs from the first album.

ZZ: That must've been because all the reviews said it was a continuation of 'Blonde on Blonde', and he got curious enough to investigate it.

IH: Well, he was singing great chunks of 'Half Moon Bay' and 'Crossroads' right there on the street! I'd been told that the Byrds and the Band had listened to the early Mott albums, but

I never dreamed Dylan would be familiar with them... especially not after six years! It knocked me out, I can tell you... but I was a bit pissed off that he hadn't listened to anything since!

ZZ: Fancy him remembering 'Half Moon Bay'!

IH: Right... because I always think of that as the essence of Mott: it had everything in it... all the jumbled ingredients of those early days, thrown together in one bizarre track!

ZZ: So really, Mott the Hoople acted as a stepping stone to a more elevated status, where you can be accepted by the Dylan clique, and be looked upon as a major force in the rock business - whereas poor old Mott seem to have stayed at the same level.

IH: Well, the Mott experience was essential to me, and so was my partnership with Ronson, which came at a time when I wasn't ready to take on the world alone. I needed a strong ally to make the transition from a group I'd relied on since semi-pro days, to solo artist... I mean, I was scared to death of going solo.

ZZ: I know that when you left Mott, there was a lot of rancour in the air, but now, 18 months later, which highlights stick in the front of your mind?

IH: Well, I'm still not far enough away from the scenes which went down... but when you said that, the Albert Hall incident flashed through my mind; I mean that had that element of mass defiance that characterised those early days when we were trying like mad to break through. At that time, we had so little encouragement from the media; the press hated us, and everybody else hated us - but we had this strong body of fans who stuck with us... and the Albert Hall gig was the climax of the fans and us making our stand against the rest of the world! It was like a declaration of independence!

ZZ: That was when the fans went wild and ripped up the joint, wasn't it?

IH: Well, I always regarded that with a little suspicion. The Albert Hall was being renovated at the time, but the authorities stung us for 1200 quid to cover 'damages'... and they thought we'd deliberately encouraged the damage. As if a band as deep in debt as we were would deliberately attract a bill for over a thousand pounds... plus automatic bans from several venues we'd never even played at! But that gig was a high point... same as the week on Broadway, that last Hammersmith Odeon gig where Bowie and Jagger came to see us, and they tried to lower the curtain on us, to get us off stage... they were great moments... but really it wasn't the same after Mick Ralphs left in summer '73.

IH: I remember you telling me he was going to leave, when 'All The Way From Memphis' was roaring up the chart, and I thought he must have gone mad!

IH: So did I, at the time... and when I heard the tapes of the first Bad Company album, I still thought he was mad! I mean, I'd heard 'Can't Get Enough Of Your Love' for years... he'd had it on his Revox for ages, and I just couldn't see it working as a song - so we used the riff for 'One Of The Boys' instead. Then Bad Company came out with it, and it was one of the year's



biggest singles! It just shows how wrong I was... but in all honesty, I listened to the new Bad Company album and the new Mott album, and it's just like listening to Soft Machine - it doesn't do a thing for me.

ZZ: I always thought Ralpher was a fabulous player in his Mott days, but then he opted for a more basically riffy style to gain mass acceptance with Bad Company.

IH: Well, I'll tell you something: Ralpher came up to my house a year ago, and played like I'd never heard him play in my life! I never realised just how good he was until he left Mott... and now he's improved 50 times over - just amazing. But you don't see him do that on stage; he's just one of these modest blokes who hangs back in the shadows... he's a safety first merchant - doesn't like being on the edge... but he can play! He was so good, Ronno was frightened to jam with him.

ZZ: Do journalists still ask you why you left Mott?

IH: No... most of them feel that it's not a hip question, and they steer off it. They ask about Ronno though, and if I've seen Bowie lately.

ZZ: Before we leave the Mott days - do you feel that you were regarded as a bawling, jumping clown rather than a serious artist? I mean, all those great slow songs were overlooked completely.

IH: It's funny you should say that, because that's what I thought - and yet most of the people I talk to now seem to have latched onto them as high points... things like 'Original Mixed Up Kid' and 'Waterlow'. At the time, though, the entire emphasis was on the riffy stuff - that's what was expected of me on stage. It was always 'Jerkin' Crocus' or 'Crash Street Kids'... that was the image I had to project - loud and raucous.

ZZ: I saw the new Mott the other day, and it was really weird to see someone else singing 'All The Young Dudes'.

IH: Well, I saw a review which said it was a pleasure to see the song being sung by a young dude... and that's very true, because I certainly didn't feel like a young dude in my latter days with them. Nigel Benjamin's got all the balls and guts that I couldn't muster in that group any more... the combination was worn out, and I just had to move on - and the failure of 'Saturday gigs' was the clincher that confirmed it... it was time for a quick exit. I mean, I thought that was the best single we ever did, and it frightened the life out of me when it didn't make it... just wrecked me completely, because I was so sure of it. All the eagerness drained out of my being, and I went to pieces... ended up sitting on a bed talking to a doctor, as if he was the only friend I had in the world.

ZZ: What exactly happened when you were hospitalised on leaving Mott?

IH: Well, I just had a sort of nervous breakdown - couldn't see what I was doing, couldn't sort out my thoughts... and I just poured out my whole life to this doctor. Great bloke he was... I'd initially gone over to New York to sign the deeds of my house, and I just collapsed. They checked me over for physical stress, but couldn't find anything wrong... it was purely a mental condition, but it laid me out. There was a sold-out tour about to start, and I simply couldn't pull myself together to do it... it was entirely beyond my control. I just sat there blubbing to this doctor, who said that it was like a man who was out to make a name for himself in business or politics, but just couldn't handle the pressures - and he said that if I didn't get away from it and rethink my life, I'd be on the way to an early grave. He was emphatic that I left the group - and my whole being knew that he was right... and I had several days of complete solitude in this cold New Jersey hospital room to sort myself out. I know that if I'd done the tour, I'd have freaked uncontrollably...

ZZ: You haven't been on stage for a year - don't you miss the roar of the greasepaint and the smell of the crowd?

IH: Yes, I do - but I've been on the road for a good few years, and a rest doesn't hurt anybody... I'll feel all the better when I do start again - and when I do start playing live again, I want it to be an event. At the moment, I'm watching my career closely - and I want the real thing... I don't want to come out as a second leaguer.

ZZ: Have you seen any bands lately?

IH: Yeah - millions. The only one that really knocked me out was Weather Report... I think I should become their singer! They've got amazing beginnings and amazing endings, but nothing in the middle - and I think I could put something in the middle for them. I dare say they'd laugh at that suggestion, but to me, it would be the most logical thing in the world...

ZZ: How's 'All American Alien Boy' doing?

IH: It did 56,000 in its first week in the States, and it got a big advance order over here... but it's a bit early to say how it's going to go.

Next month we round it off with the story behind the album.

Pete

New Riders

From one of the finest American West Coast bands - their first album on MCA NEW RIDERS. MCF 2758.

MCA RECORDS

of them stood on one leg in a long ragged coat? And how many blues bands could come up with a single as unique and unpredictable as 'Love Story'? I couldn't believe the power of that thing when I first heard it... a great churning, hypnotic riff, interrupted by mandolin interludes and a most unusual solo. In short it was outrageously adventurous for a single - especially at such a crucial time in their crossover-to-bigtime effort - and displayed an apparent disregard for any chartbusting ingredients... which is why it didn't get in the charts, I guess. (Their first hit single didn't come until 'Living In The Past' got into the top three the following June).

In the middle of November, with the first album at number 10 on the national chart and number 5 in the Luton chart, Mick Abrahams got a rather strange telephone call... "Hey mate - can you give me some more details about this lead guitarist gig that's coming up in your group?"

Unfortunately, there was no film crew present to catch the changes in Mick's expression as the nature of the situation dawned upon him... he was out!

Little Micky had been a naughty boy and he was out... which is why the MM news page subsequently printed the following vague rubric: "Mick Abrahams has left Jethro Tull. A replacement is being sought".

Abrahams: "I called Ian a few names about the underhand way they got me out, but I think he was just too scared to tell me outright. In fact, I was getting pretty sick of the way things were developing - like the B-side of 'Love Story' had been cut without me even knowing it - and I had almost reached the point of quitting... but Ian and Terry had decided to get rid of me at the end of November - only I found out about it through that phone call. The whole episode was a bit uncool, but it would have been childish and very unprofessional of me to complain in public... so I kept my mouth shut and formed Blodwyn Pig".

I could probably find less than a handful of people to agree with me, but I thought 1968 was Jethro Tull's best year. After that they became more proficient musically, and far more popular, but far less vital. The whole thing became almost contrived... the one leg bit, the predictable interviews... and my interest in them, which had been red-hot, waned to passing-pink. But like I say - that's purely personal bias, and I'm sure my Luton roots have a lot to do with it; with Abrahams out, I didn't feel so much local pride surging in my bosom - apart from which I preferred Mick's rougher, gutsier style to Martin Barre's crisp, clean lines.

So at this point in time - November 30th 1968, I'm closing the casebook... except to tie up a few loose ends.

Now I've always thought of Jethro Tull as a car; Ian Anderson's the driver, and he just changes the tyres when the tread wears thin or (as in the case of Glenn Cornick, for example) they burst. The car's getting on a bit now - it's almost nine years old - but as long as the driver retains his faculties it'll purr along without any trouble for a few years yet - and there'll always be a plentiful supply of tyres. Like he recently switched the rear off-side tyre; replaced the Hammond G80 with a Glascock Gripper XL.

Guitarist Abrahams leaves Jethro Tull

GUITARIST MICK Abrahams has left Jethro Tull and will form his own group after disagreements over musical policy.

Terry Ellis, manager of Jethro Tull, told MM: "For some time, Mick has disagreed with the basic policies, both musically and otherwise, of Jethro Tull."

A permanent replacement has not been found. At present the group were using various depts, including Tony Iommi from Birmingham group Earth.

The only perplexing factor is that the tyres could be just anybody. They are totally replaceable... only the driver is indispensable.

The only way you can run a band democratically is if all the members a) think along the same lines, or b) are selfless enough to give and take and share, or c) are prepared to follow the direction of the most creative element... and, human nature being what it is, such situations are rarely sustained. The roads of rock are littered with wrecked bands who split for 'internal reasons' and 'diverging direction' - usually precipitated by squabbles about money, relative importance within the group, musical direction and so on.

How much easier and sensible it is to run the group along fascist lines - where one guy takes the financial burden on his shoulders and takes any profits which accrue, and pays his backing band a weekly salary - as in the case of Silverhead or Cockney Rebel, for instance.

I have absolutely no idea of the financial structure of Jethro Tull, but I'd be fascinated to see how they've cut the bread over the years... and I don't mean that in a snidey or disrespectful way. I'm just interested. And I'm also interested in the way Terry Ellis and Ian Anderson appeared to exclude the others from any creative role... does Martin Barre never write any songs, for instance? Are they all content to take the money and say nothing? What would I do in similar circumstances? And what about this for a telling quote from Glenn Cornick: Question: Did you have any influence over the way Jethro Tull developed? Answer: I had influence on the bass playing.

Mick Abrahams: "Jethro was run on very strict lines - which was what caused the initial dissention, I think. It was good fun and very free until we started to get somewhere, and then the discipline really tightened up... unnecessarily, I thought, because much as we pissed about off stage, we were totally professional on stage... no mucking about - just as professional a performance as we could give. Then it became apparent that Ian was going to write all the material without any of us getting a look in... my song ideas weren't even considered. So when I heard that I'd got the boot, I wasn't really surprised, because I'd made it obvious that I wasn't prepared to be superfluous; to be part of a band which didn't really appreciate my contribution... I'm not the sort of bloke who can accept that kind of situation - just playing along behind a front man, being tossed a bone every now and then by being allowed a solo here and there... certainly not for fifteen quid a week, which is what we were getting at the time I was fired".

Actually, the search for a replacement for Abrahams is quite an interesting story, as Glenn Cornick relates: "David O'List, who had been with the Nice, was going to join, and we started

rehearsing with him as soon as Mick left. Initially it worked out well, looked very promising, and we thought it was going to be fine... but then we realised it wasn't going to work at all, and we had to go through the MM small ad trip, which was a real pain. Out of 80 auditioners, only two could even play! One of them, Tony Iommi from Black Sabbath (nee Earth) was our first choice, but it was soon obvious that it wasn't going to be a suitable combination really, and we gave the other guy, Martin Barre, a second chance... he'd fluffed the first because he was so nervous, but in the end he turned out to be most suitable for our purpose".

"I remember that Jimmy McCulloch turned up, looking about ten, and did about 5 minutes of Clapton impersonations, which were pretty good for his age, but not quite up to Wings standard. His first words were "Oh shit... I thought it was going to be John Mayall!", because we'd put 'Top Blues Band' in the advert!"

(In fact, John Mayall had asked Mick Abrahams to join his group a few weeks earlier, but Abrahams had turned him down because he believed in Jethro).

Cornick himself left Jethro some time later - after prolonged antagonism over the 'no drugs, no women, no alcohol' rule. "I didn't do any drugs of any sort, and nor did any of the others - but whereas they didn't make a habit of getting drunk or pulling women, I did... and it was a bit stifling to be the only guy in the band doing it. It didn't affect my work on stage or my attitude towards the music, but it divided the group... we never seemed to have any unity or community spirit... and after big discussions, we agreed that because there was so little communication, I'd be better off to leave - which I did".

Drummer Clive Bunker left a few months later, leaving Anderson the sole survivor of that original great band - that raw, vital, honest band whose heart and soul pumped and burned with spirit. They were great!

And where are they now? Well, Glenn Cornick, after a long and relatively unsuccessful attempt to get his Wild Turkey flying, is now in a group called Paris, whose debut album just came out.

Mick Abrahams formed Blodwyn Pig and enjoyed considerable success fronting this and various other bands. He now holds down a lucrative position at a sports centre on the outskirts of Luton, and does the odd gig with his latest band. Say "Hello" if you go and see them... he's a really nice geezer.

Clive Bunker seems to have his scene well together; one of the few quiet rock stars to make an elegant transition back to the human race. He has financial fingers in numerous prospering pies, including a big engineering factory, a coach hire firm, a boarding kennels, and a landscape gardening operation... and he still finds time to play in a little local band - just to keep his drums rust and dust free.

And Ian Anderson? He's a world famous superstar, wealthy enough and fond enough of England not to be a tax exile... a little under nine years since he came down to Luton with his world in a knotted hankie.

Mac Garry

When Chalkie Davis, the poor man's Lord Snowden, and I arrived at Lowell George's hotel room late one afternoon, we found him ensconced amid a vast array of tape-recorders and hi-fi debris, editing a tape of their Charlton concert for Capital Radio. Despite having been buried in this arduous task for some twelve hours, Lowell proved to be both a dream interviewee, and a most conscientious host - as Andy Childs had discovered last year while talking to the man for Zigzag 50 - and because that article pretty much covered the history side of Lowell and Little Feat, I decided to let our conversation take a more unfettered course, taking in such diverse topics as Paraguayan harp music and Lowell's Mickey Mouse socks.

LG: I was on an airplane once with these socks on, and I was sitting in the first class section for some reason... someone must have made a mistake buying my ticket, I guess. Anyway, the man sitting in front of me, who looked like he could have been the head of a huge steel corporation, (mostly because he was huge), noticed the Mickey Mouse, and became so enraged that he called the stewardess to verify if I was entitled to be sitting in the first class section of the plane. Then, after a while, we struck up a conversation during which he asked why I was wearing Mickey Mouse socks, and I said "Because I don't have any others". He was a weird guy... but anyway, I guess you didn't come here to hear about my socks.

ZZ: I guess not. When Bonnie Raitt was over here, she said you were going to call the next album 'Nigger Rich'. Would you care to substantiate or deny this vile rumour?

LG: Well, I'd love to call it 'Nigger Rich', but I'm afraid I'd get some hate mail. It has to do with the cover. It's one of the first concept covers that I've laid on Neon, and it has to do with, not necessarily black folks, but the gigantic middle class, who think they are 'doing well', but at the same time they are destroying our surroundings - more roads!... more pylons!... put another piece of asphalt through!... let's have a ski resort here!... that kind of attitude. Recreation is a wonderful thing, but in the States, it becomes de-creation, and also very expensive - it's a lot of crap, and that was the purpose of the idea 'Nigger Rich'. There's some old folks in a camping van, and the old man's watching a football game on the TV on the camping table, and his wife is sitting on a camping stool reading 'National Enquirer' with a picture of Cher on the cover, and they're in orbit over the moon, which is covered with beercans...

ZZ: 'Beercans On The Moon'.

LG: Right, the Ed Sanders idea... a juxtaposition of time frames, elements and things we've all seen - which is kind of what the covers have been to date.

ZZ: Where did you find Neon Park? (The guy who's done all the covers since 'Sailin' Shoes').

LG: He was hitch hiking one afternoon, and a friend of mine picked him up on one of the sidestreets of Hollywood. He cruised over to my house, and I met the man, because I admired his cover of 'Weasels Ripped My Flesh' - I mean... an electric weasel... what-



Chalkie Davis

**"Are you ready up there, Lowell?
OK....now, when
I say 'Roll em'....I want you to sweep
down the staircase, as majestically as
you can in that condition, and bellow
'My name's Lowell George,
and I'm here to talk about
LITTLE FEAT'**

ever next!! - so we began a friendship and also a business relationship, in that I would say "Give me a cover". Many times he wasn't told anything about the album, because I believe art is art, and I would rather do that than have somebody construct a concept and get heavy, because seriousness really doesn't play too great a part in what we're doing. It happens, and you never really know...there's really no concept...except perhaps 'Feats Don't Fail Me', which was a party record - have a beer or two and dance or whatever happens - that's the frame of mind we were in for that record.

ZZ: It's got a very live feel to it.

LG: It took a month to prepare in the studio, and two weeks to record, with very few overdubs. I wanted to experiment with the documentary aspects of an album, the idea of a group at a particular period in time. It wasn't exactly what you'd call a gigantic financial success, but it was one of the most successful documentary albums ever made.

ZZ: How did Van Dyke Parks come to produce 'Spanish Moon' on that?

LG: Van Dyke and I were writing some, and roaming the ghettos of Hollywood, looking for Brian Wilson, who was lurking, and we struck up a friendship. We continue to work together occasionally, although he's busy at the moment working on a screenplay for a film about an unsuccessful record producer in Hollywood - it's very funny from what I've read, everybody's in it. Anyway, I asked Van Dyke if he wanted to do it, and we got into an enormous argument with Warner Brothers, because Van Dyke is famous for his huge budgets. He was going to do more, but we reached a point where we got stuck, and the band broke up for about two weeks.

ZZ: What do you mean by 'got stuck'?

LG: It was a great hobby, but nobody could make a living out of it - that's one of my one liners that I've used before but it's true. With the amount of touring, and the kind of places we are touring, it's still kind of the same, but it's more fun now, and there's a bit of extravagance; but when you're on the road for seven or eight weeks, you've got to do something. You can throw furniture out of the window, but that's not my idea of a good time. What I really enjoy is this kind of nonsense. (Waves arm at 'portable studio').

ZZ: Was the financial situation in the band's early years as bad as it seems?

LG: Well, Richie Hayward and his wife and kids slept in my living room for a while, and I slept in his living room for some time. Bill Payne slept in my VW van when he was real broke...in the early days of Little Feat, it was 'starvation central'.

We re-signed with Warner Brothers this year, and we got the cheque on the day before the end of the fiscal year, which meant we didn't have 30 days or whatever to spend any of it, so Uncle Sam came along, and said "You guys have made too much money", so we're back to square one. It's action paintings...all a mistake.

ZZ: Is the band's earning power, or lack of it, the reason why you and Bill, particularly, do an abnormal amount of outside work, considering you're already in a pretty busy band?

LG: Everybody has done work with other people. Bill has done all kinds of work over the last six months - Carly Simon just cut 'One Love Stand' with almost the whole band playing. I very rarely do a session for anyone I'm unaccustomed to, because I don't want them to waste their money if I can't play the way I like to play. Bill still does a lot of outside work, but I don't have too much time. Some guys go to a session and end up playing the same tune 58 times - completely boring, why bother? I'd hate it, so I try to steer clear of that.

ZZ: The 'Paris 1919' session must have been something out of the ordinary.

LG: That was unusual, but it was great fun. Wilton Felder was the bass player, Richie was the drummer, Paul played, I played - that's about it. I had known John when he was in the A&R office. He wanted to put an album out called 'The Worst Of Warner Brothers', a collection of the demos that people had sent in...a sort of bad Portsmouth Sinfonia.

ZZ: What about Robert Palmer, how did you get involved with him?

LG: Well, Robert just called me up and asked if I wanted to come to New Orleans and work with the Meters. That was when the band almost broke up, until I got a call from Bob Cavallo, our manager, saying "We have a studio ready for you to work in at an incredible rate. Do you want to do it?"

(Note: this was Blue Seas studio in Hunt's Valley, Maryland, where they recorded most of 'Feats Don't Fail Me'. "It has been bulldozed now. They found some hippies sleeping on the couch; the parent company decided they didn't want them there, and two weeks later, the equipment was gone and the place was levelled").

We had broken up for more money, because we could each survive quite well individually, and I had great doubts about my ability to cope with all the hassles that take place, but now it's "OK, so what...". I still rant and rave. Sometimes it's necessary, depending on who you're dealing with, but it's all fun, all a very interesting game.

ZZ: Weren't you supposed to be getting a group together with Jackson Browne at one time?

LG: It's difficult to actually form a group with Jackson. We were thinking of something like that, but I don't think it will happen in the way we imagined it. It'll be very loose and a lot of fun. I played some concerts for Tom Hayden recently with Jackson and Bonnie, and it was such a pleasure to see how loose those people can be, and yet still play so well. I think that was a real turning point for me.

ZZ: There were rumours connecting you with John Sebastian and Phil Everly as well, weren't there? Around the time Roy Estrada left...

LG: That was the 'Everly/Sebastian' fiasco! Bob Cavallo came to me with the thought that it was a possibility to put a group together, but everybody's frame of reference was a little askew. For instance, there are ten years of references that Phil Everly couldn't relate to, which I have to work with on a daily basis...we were just not aligned. We had one get-together where we all sang, and it was really nice - really great three part harmony

with John on the bottom, Phil on the top, and me in the middle - but it could never come to fruition, not in a million years. John had beautiful songs, and things went so well when we experimented, that we all got over-excited, and proclaimed "It's happening!", but human chemistry ruled out any chance of it ever being a going concern.

ZZ: It baffles me how any group stays together. The tolerance level must be really high.

LG: Well, it beats me too! Sometimes I shudder to think of the psycho dramas that must exist within a group like Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young. Can you imagine? Enough to make Sigmund Freud rise up and scream "Oh no, I was wrong!"

It's rough to have that many creative personalities in one room together at the same time, and it's rare that you can get a group like that to stay together, because they're definitely going to wear each other out and grate on each others' nerves. You may respect someone's skills and would love to work with him, but at the same time you know you can't, because you would wear each others' nerves thin - so groups form, work, break up and re-group in different combinations...and that's the way it has to be. Little Feat has seen one or two changes over the years, and the complexion has changed. You've got to keep moving or else you get stuck...in Las Vegas or somewhere!

ZZ: There are suggestions at the moment that there's a bit of a gap between the rest of the band and yourself...that they do a lot of rehearsing without you.

(Note: it might just be my imagination, but the Hammersmith Odeon gig on the following Monday had a very odd feeling to it, and those who went round the Who gigs with the band claim that relations aren't as close as they might be...we'll have to wait and see...que sera sera).

LG: Well, I'm often in the studio, beating my brains out over a hot tape recorder, and that's the reason why that occurs, and will continue to occur, though not as much. So far as writing goes, there's always a song or two that I have a specific theme for, that I want to render in a particular way, and if you have other minds on it, it changes, so sometimes I prefer to just do it on my own.

ZZ: Actually, 'The Last Record Album' seemed to be a very consciously democratic album.

LG: Yes, I wish for everyone in the band to step forward. For a long time I was getting a lot of attention, but, for example, Bill Payne is a magnificent musician, and also deserves a lot of attention. Basically the idea that is circulating right now is that we should all do our best and have a good time. If it doesn't happen, that's the breaks, and if it does - great...and for some odd reason, the ratio of shows that are mediocre to shows that are really excellent has really changed. As far as the band's concerned, our shows here have been very middle of the road compared to the gigs we were doing on our last tour of America, when we had ten dates with Bonnie Raitt, and everybody really boogied, everybody did something.

In the beginning, about one show in three was a real dud, but we've ex-



"Who would have thought they'd give me a tickertape welcome in the privacy of my own hotel room? ?!!"

panded that to about one in ten, though we have problems here in the UK. Our voltage in the States is 110 at 60 cycles, and here it's 240 at 50 cycles, so we've had to jump through a hoop trying to get the stage set-up right. It wasn't right at Charlton, but we finally figured out what was wrong by Glasgow, and then forgot it again for the Dutch festival in Rotterdam.

That gig was terrible, except that I got to see the Chieftains. Now that is the kind of music I love...traditional music, acoustic music that can be played in a room like this without arousing the wrath of the folks next door - although I have turned the tape up real loud, and nobody's complained. (Note: referring to the tape of superb Paraguayan harp music that held played while we made ourselves at home). Keith Richard was staying across the hall, so I guess they're used to it. Word has it they had to fumigate the room when he left...I don't know whether that's true or not. I really admire him at this point, for the elements he's combined in his rhythm guitar style - it's raucous, raw, nasty, all the things he wants it to be. He gets it across.

ZZ: Did Richie's accident disrupt the recording of 'The Last Record Album' very much? From those hospital bills on the sleeve it looks as if he had a real Frankenstein job done on him.

LG: Yeah, he fell off his motorbike...he looked pretty bad there for a while.

I went along and suggested they should sew his big toes onto his forehead so he could wiggle them when he played, which was the first joke that anybody had told him at the hospital, and I think it cheered him up a bit - though the plastic surgeon did not laugh.

That happened in the middle of recording the album, which kind of broke things up. There was some very sporadic activity in and around that album, and at one point I just finally said "Stop!" We could have gone on and done some rockers, because the album is kind of laid-back, but I was just worn out, and I thought the music was adequate - some of it was real good. 'Day Or Night' is one of my favourites. A few things suffer for it. 'Mercenary Territory' was going to be a much more extravagant piece of music, arrangement wise, but I just didn't have the time.

ZZ: How do you work in the studio? Do you have the last word on things?

LG: It's left up to me until somebody says "That stinks!" It's more or less a matter of getting in there and trying to get the feel of the song, and putting it down the best we can, and sometimes it takes years.

ZZ: Why did you take over the production for 'Dixie Chicken'?

LG: Well, Ted Templeman simply didn't have the time. He was busy making hit albums with the Doobie Brothers.

ZZ: The sound on 'Dixie Chicken' is much thicker, more soulful, more complex and polyrhythmic. Had you deliberately expanded the group after Roy left with that sort of progression in mind?

LG: Kenny had just come along to the auditions, and then he brought Sam with him, as they had been in Delaney and Bonnie's band together. Paul I had known since high school - I had known his elder brother when he was about 14, and a complete punk. I saw him play in a band called Lead Enema...

ZZ: I bet they were a pain in the arse...

LG (wincing): ...Right, the Lenny Bruce joke...anyway, he was out of work at that time, and I asked him if he wanted to play. In terms of guitarists, I needed a place-keeper; I'd be lost most of the time trying to find out where I was in relation to the rhythm section, so Paul was helpful in that he covered a lot of the guitar parts that I used to play - or didn't used to play - enhancing them in his own way, which left me to play some lead. Now we've reversed the effort. I play rhythm for him on 'Skin It Back', and more of that is going to take place.

'Dixie Chicken' was the first album I was really allowed to sing on, and to experiment - with microphones, etc. It's real tough, because there's always the budget hanging over your head, and that was an expensive album, but you have to live with these things for the

rest of your life, and it doesn't go away. You try to do your best so hopefully when you're at a party and some clown puts the record on the stereo...you know...

ZZ: Do you feel reasonably satisfied, looking back over the five albums?

LG: I go back and listen to the first album, and I cringe. The renderings of the songs on that album are really not up to par, they're not up to snuff...to hear a vocal dip in and out of tune...

ZZ: But isn't that only your hyper-critical modesty. There are some inspired performances on that...some of Bill Payne's piano playing, for instance.

LG: Oh yeah, I agree, but overall... I dunno. We did a GTOs session once which was real fun - even if the product wasn't top drawer, because there were no real singers in the GTOs, they were performers rather than singers - but that was the original Little Feat on those GTOs songs: Russ Titelman on guitar, Ry Cooder and me, and I go back to those two cuts we did, and I gasp and cringe... they are hell-on-earth. Frank Zappa's hell-on-earth would be to have to listen to 500 new singles each week, but mine is to listen to those GTOs tracks and that first Little Feat album...oh, we could have done so much better.

ZZ: What about the other albums? The playing and production on them sound just great to me.

LG: They've got better. In terms of material, 'Sailin' Shoes' has a very American approach, and the song writing has to do with a lot of very

American subjects, while the other albums are more investigatory. There are a few songs that I despise. The thing is, a group makes an album, then plays the songs live and does them better and better, and you go back to the record, and the difference is horrific. 'Sailin' Shoes' has changed drastically - I like it much better now than the way it was recorded.

ZZ: Presumably that's why you re-recorded 'Willin'' and the 'Cold, Cold Cold/Tripe Face Boogie' medley.

LG: Right. With 'Willin'', the original was recorded when I was in the Mothers at least two years before the band did it. I cut it at nine in the morning before I rushed out to start a Mothers' tour. Russ Titelman asked me to go in and cut it, because he was starting a publishing company, and wanted to use the song. We'd been friends for some time, and I said "Sure". When I'd done it, he placed it with a few people - the Sunshine Company did it; Johnny Darrell, a country singer got hold of it, and it gradually became a sort of local underground success. Anyway, that demo was the start of Little Feat really, and the start of Little Feat's involvement with Warner Brothers. Frank wanted us to be a Bizarre group, but negotiations broke down, and Russ Titelman got it moved into high gear and got us onto Warners.

ZZ: The original 'Willin'' was done with none of the group members, then?

LG: There were none on that one, no. I didn't even know Bill Payne at that point...and that's why the song was redone on 'Sailin' Shoes', to make it a group effort...I wanted the whole

group to be on it. Subsequently we found that some songs didn't need the whole group...having us all play detracted from the real substance of the music on some tracks.

ZZ: Have you heard the Byrds' version of that song on 'Live At Buddy's'?

LG: No, what was that?

ZZ: It was a bootleg. Nice version, but no bread for you!

LG: You don't get much bread anyway, when it comes right down to it...well, you do and you don't. To be really successful as a songwriter you have to be a Bobby Sherman, or a Carly Simon or a Nilsson, to move you into high gear...I keep mentioning Richard Perry produced artistes - maybe subconsciously because I work for him from time to time. I did a Nilsson cut on 'Son Of Schmilsson', and I didn't get paid for it, so Van Dyke Parks suggested that I send him a telegram saying "Pay me, schmay me"...which I did - and he thought it was so hilarious that the bread arrived the next day. It takes Van Dyke's twist of humour to get things moving!

OK, that's all for now. Next month Mr. George will regale us with his thoughts on such topics as truck driving, the romance and glamour of the wonderful show-biz industry, success and what it means to him, and the latest hot gossip surrounding his clandestine relationship with Cher...Can you wait???

Paul Kendall

(PS: Merci beaucoup to Angie at WEA, without whom, etc., etc.)



Left to right: Paul Rothchild, Fritz Richmond, John David Souther ('Looking badass as usual'), Will McFarlane ('My present guitar player, who I met in Jack's Bar, Cambridge, singing 'I'm So Tired Of Being Alone'. I signed him immediately, and he's a John Hall freak too!'), Gary Mallaber, Freebo, Fred Tackett, Bonnie, Bill Payne and John Hall.

AT HOME WITH BONNIE RAITT

John Tobler concludes his lengthy treatise on Ms. Raitt's recorded works.

'STREETLIGHTS' (Warners K56075) is the nearest to average that Bonnie's records get. There are some good songs - by such as Joni Mitchell, ('That Song About Midway' from 'Clouds'), and James Taylor, ('Rainy Day Man' from the Apple album) - plus some excellent songs, like Allen Toussaint's 'What Is Success', 'Streetlights' by Bill Payne, and the magnificent 'Angel From Montgomery', originating from John Prine's first album...but the rest of 'Streetlights' is pretty lame by comparison.

ZZ: Why pick Jerry Ragavoy as producer?

BR: Well, everyone I liked - Lenny Waronker, Teddy Templeman - were all busy, and I thought Allen Toussaint would be too much of a diversion, so I thought of Jerry Ragavoy, and because a good deal of what I do is soul music, I thought I'd try to use professional musicians, and see what it was like to put the whole thing in someone else's control. It worked out fine, as all records do when you first start working with someone - you talk these great platitudes about getting on really great...I love Jerry,

and I love the musicians on the record, and it's amazing to me that there was so much rapport between me and those musicians, even more rapport than when you're working with your friends, who try to use your friendship, and use it against you, like 'If you're really a friend, you'll let me play a sax solo'. Whereas all of a sudden, Jerry Ragavoy was calling the shots. I like it least - even though it's a professional shot, it has nothing to do with me! The song choice and the use of horns and strings...it's nice, but it's like any other...

ZZ: It doesn't sound like you...

BR: I'm glad you picked up on that.

ZZ: I don't like the Joni song or the James song much.

BR: They're not produced right. Live I do them real well, but those are examples of the songs that I made Jerry put on the album; I mean that he agreed to put on in exchange for a couple that he wanted. We just disagreed about material, and what he did to the production of those, I thought, was lifeless. They both can be really moving songs - 'Rainy Day Man', I thought, could easily have been a real soul single like Ace's

'How Long' - that kind of white soul music, or whatever it's called. I thought the title track was OK, because I love Billy Payne's writing, but I think it's more or less over-produced. I wanted to work with Jerry, thinking 'At last, an R&B album', and he said he didn't think I could sing it, and having worked with Erma Franklin, Lorraine Ellison and Howard Tate, I was kind of struck down, because the reason I picked him was so that I could do R&B songs. I felt if they were going to make me do a live album...

Lou Courtney wrote 'You Got To Be Ready For Love' for me, and Allee Willis, (who co-wrote 'Got You On My Mind') is a good friend of mine. She has a brilliant album on Epic. Michael Kamen was in the New York Rock'n'Roll Ensemble, and is David Bowie's musical director. The band was hot - Stephen Gadd is one of the killer drummers of all time, and Babbitt has played on tons and tons of soul things.

ZZ: Someone told me he was the original Motown bass player, before they started to have hits... (Note: the man's real name is Bob Kreinar).

BR: Yeah, and he's the only one Freebo

ZIGZAG TOP THIRTY FOR JULY

LAST MONTH	THIS MONTH	ALBUM TRACK (or single*)	ARTISTE	NUMBER	MONTHS ON CHART
2	1	Desperados Under The Eaves	WARREN ZEVON	ASYLUM K53039	2
3	2	Memory Motel	ROLLING STONES	ROLLING STONES COC 59106	3
4	3	Shake Some Action	FLAMIN' GROOVIES	SIRE 9103 251	3
1	4	L.A. Freeway	GUY CLARK	RCA APL 1 1303	4
6	5	Cypress Avenue	VAN MORRISON	WARNER BROS K46024	88
7	6	Topanga	JOHN PHILLIPS	DUNHILL DS 50077	75
12	7	Don't Touch Me There	TUBES	A&M AMLH 64580	2
9	8	Murder Man	JOHN OTWAY & BARRETT WYLDE	TRACK 2094 111*	31
-	9	I'm Losing You	DWIGHT TWILLEY BAND	SHELTER ISA 5012	1
11	10	Rebecca	FLO & EDDIE	COLUMBIA PC 33554	8
10	11	Man Of Constant Sorrow	KALEIDOSCOPE	PACIFIC ARTS PAC 102	3
14	12	Past Present & Future	SHANGRI LAS	PHILLIPS 6336 215	127
5	13	Only Sixteen	DR. HOOK	CAPITOL E-ST 11397	8
-	14	Border Town	FLYING BURRITO BROTHERS	CBS 81433	1
-	15	Don't Fear The Reaper	BLUE OYSTER CULT	CBS 81385	1
21	16	If Not You	DR. HOOK	CAPITOL 23795	2
17	17	Transient Friends	GENEVIEVE WAITE	PARAMOUR PR 5089 SD	15
13	18	Me And My Uncle	MIKE WILHELM	ZIGZAG UA-ZZ 1	7
24	19	Gypsy Blood	GRAHAM PARKER	VERTIGO 6360 129	2
-	20	Can I Make It Last	BOZ SCAGGS	CBS 64248	14
8	21	Irene Wilde	IAN HUNTER	CBS 81310	3
18	22	Roadrunner	JONATHAN RICHMAN	BERSERKLEY UAS 29858	7
19	23	Twelve Thirty	MAMAS & PAPAS	DUNHILL DS 50031	99
-	24	Yellow Sox	KURSAAL FLYERS	UK 2330 101	1
-	25	Turn The Page	BOB SEGER	CAPITOL EST SP 16	1
-	26	Take The Money And Run	STEVE MILLER	MERCURY 9286 177	2
20	27	Clang Of The Yankee Reaper	VAN DYKE PARKS*	WARNER BROS K56161	5
25	28	These Days	JACKSON BROWNE	ASYLUM SYL 9013	32
-	29	Cry Like A Baby	BOX TOPS	BELL 6025	1
-	30	Stranger In Blue Suede Shoes	KEVIN AYERS	HARVEST SHVL 800	1
Bubbling Under:					
		Harvest	CLOVER	FANTASY 8405	
		Daydream Believer	THE MONKEES	ARISTA 63*	
		Rose Of Cimarron	POCO	ABC ABCL 5166	
		Lay Down The Burden	JESSE WINCHESTER	BEARSVILLE K55512	
		Stormtrooping	TED NUGENT	CBS 81196	
		Smile Is Diamond	IQ!	UNITED ARTISTS UAS 29942	
		Through The Eyes Of Love	FROST	VANGUARD VSD 6556	

would defer to.

ZZ: After what you said on the first LP, this one seems so strange.

BR: I wanted to hire a plane with a banner, and go across the country, saying "I'LL BE BACK. DON'T WORRY, I HAD TO DO THIS. FOR - GIVE ME". I really had no choice, it was my turn in the barrel. The fascinating thing is that it's an interesting thing to do if Warners is paying for it, and you have no other choice. At the time that came out, I did my first major fifty city cross-country tour with Jackson Browne, and that was the album for the tour, so that was the first thing many people had heard by me. If they were going to like me live, they'd go out and buy this album, and my expression on the cover picture (look it up for yourselves)...but Jerry's a sweetheart, and I don't want to badrap anyone. I love all the people I worked with, and there's a great many people, ironically all of Texas, who think this is my best album. Isn't that bizarre? So you're insulting people who like it... I didn't do interviews, because I thought it was rude to the people I spent six months working with to say it - I'd rather just downplay it. Later on, as people told me they didn't like it, I felt relieved - a sign of their taste, you know. Then I ran into a bunch of people that liked it, and I realised it was insulting to say something bad about it. They paid their money, so they should be allowed to like it.

ZZ: You'd never do it again...

BR: No, I'd never be in a position where I didn't have that much control now - I'd rather not make records. It was a real learning experience.

ZZ: It's absolutely what you said you weren't going to do in your sleeve notes on the first album.

BR: Yeah, but not by choice. You see, what happened was this: On 'Takin' My Time', I went way over budget - because of the spiralling effect of hiring my friends. It started off with the first album, just sitting around, pleased that I'd got a contract. I had refused to sign unless I had complete control artistically, so the way I did it was to get an independent production deal, where they give you money for the album, and you give them the tapes. So it's up to you if you want to spend \$6000 on string arrangements, or \$6000 on beer for your friends - just as long as you deliver an album. It's up to you, so it's actually a good way to make an artist toe the line, and be a bit more budget conscious. So that first one was a party record, which musically was real funky, though I find it a bit hard to listen to now, because my voice was so young, though the feel on it was real good.

The next two were done basically the same way, but each time a little bit more professionally - and the problem that arose, which can't be read between the lines or heard between the grooves, is that although it looks like we're having a good time, and although it really was fun at times, I had to be essentially running the whole thing, and when I hired all my friends, some of them didn't get along. For instance, I thought it would be neat to get a jazz bass player, and put him in with a Mississippi Delta guitar

player next to a rock'n'roll drummer - but sometimes they weren't used to having the situation controlled by a woman. I got all these guys together in one room, and they'd play on my feelings for them. Not to badrap anybody, but in those situations there wasn't anybody for me to go to and say "Help, somebody's not working out, or somebody's getting too high or too egocentric". So I went over budget because I was getting too personally involved with the musicians.

I had started doing 'Takin' My Time' with Lowell (George, folks), when he and I were real close, but we were like locking horns, just too strong personally. We waited six months to get in the studio together, and when we finally got in there, he wanted to play slide guitar, and so did I, so we were just fighting. Luckily John Hall was a much more moderate sort, and an old friend from the second album, and he happened to be in L.A. mixing Orleans' first album, so he said he'd come in and save it for me. Consequently, that album went way over budget, and because of the deal I had, I didn't leave myself any money for the next album, so Warners said "Three albums and you haven't had a hit yet (which I don't particularly want, although they didn't realise that). It doesn't look to us like you are managing your affairs too well", and I had to make my next album with a producer, unlike the first three, which were essentially without a producer. We just called someone a producer on the sleeve.

They thought 'Streetsights' was going to be more commercial, but I knew it wouldn't be - in the first place because I didn't give a c**k whether it was or not. Warners said: "Just wait - this'll be your biggest album", and I said I'd wait, and sure enough, it sold no more than the others, so I got my control back for the last one... but at no point have they told me what music to make.

Which brings us up to date, to the latest and greatest Bonnie Raitt album, 'Home Plate'. This is a killer for most of its ten tracks, with four particular standouts in 'Run Like A Thief' (which JD Souther, the composer, sings on his now deleted first album), 'Pleasin' Each Other' by Bill Payne and Fran Tate (who I presume to be his lady), 'Sweet and Shiny Eyes' by Nan O'Byrne (which is a kind of updated Weavers type song around the familiar Laredo theme), and best of all, which nearly makes me break into tears, the incredibly beautiful 'I'm Blowin' Away', almost inevitably by the quite wonderful Eric Kaz.

Apart from those, there's a nice tuff Delbert and Glen song in 'Sugar Mama', where Bonnie gets a chance to do her slide guitar bit; two good soul-ish songs in 'What Do You Want The Boy To Do?', an Allen Toussaint number also featured on Boz Scaggs' new and very good album, and 'Good Enough' by John and Johanna Hall. Then there's Fred Tackett's 'Fool Yourself', which the discerning reader will recognise as being from 'Dixie Chicken'. While we're talking about it, I trust some of the previously unconvinced among you will have noticed the frequency with which Little Feat have been mentioned hereabouts, and perhaps the fact that these heroes seem to have much in common with Bonnie may add an extra impetus to your

desire to check the lady out. Now we'll talk about the album...

ZZ: Why did the American copy of this album list the tracks in the wrong order?

BR: Because at the time the artwork was due, they didn't have the sequence. It happens a lot - like Little Feat, one of the songs wasn't even on the album. Sometimes you record 15 numbers, and the artwork's due a month and a half before the tapes, so that's the only way you can get around it.

ZZ: Do you regard this as being the culmination of everything you've been leading up to?

BR: You've got it! What a way to say it! That's why it's called 'Home Plate' - first of all I grew up in L.A. till I was fifteen and despised it really, and now I find after I've lived there again, I like it a lot. After 'Streetsights', it was a signal to the people that like me that I was coming back to the people on 'Takin' My Time', which was my favourite album in terms of musicianship and being comfortable, even though there was some difficult stuff happening as well. It represents the pleasure of having a producer to blame things on, and coming into the studio and being able to say "I don't like the way you're playing on this song", to have someone else to lean on the bad guy and say "Freebo, I'm going to try someone else on this tune, but we'll bring you back if it doesn't work".

But I can't do that, because I get too personally involved with these guys - they're all my friends. So I need a producer, and Paul (Rothchild) is a gentle enough guy. It's back in my hands - I pick the songs, and it's all my absolutely favourite people who wrote songs for me and played on the album. I had complete control. I'm not completely happy about the mix, but every one has something they don't like about a record.

ZZ: Tell me about Nan O'Byrne.

BR: She's wonderful, and I've got a tape of her new songs with me. She's 35 and from Texas, and she's an old friend of Bobby Neuwirth's and Paul Rothchild's, and that's how I got the song, because she sang it for Bobby. She's never recorded professionally, and I think she's a journalist of some sort in Santa Barbara. I heard that song, and just had to do it. Everyone and his mother sings on that song. Turns out that the union came up and saw who was on it, but luckily we didn't report the night that thirty people sang on it, because it didn't work. It sounded like 'Kumbaya'! We had hand-picked people to make it sound like a drunken bar-room, which is harder than you think. If you get a group of people singing together, it sounds like folk music unless you walk around.

ZZ: This album was made in June/July of last year...

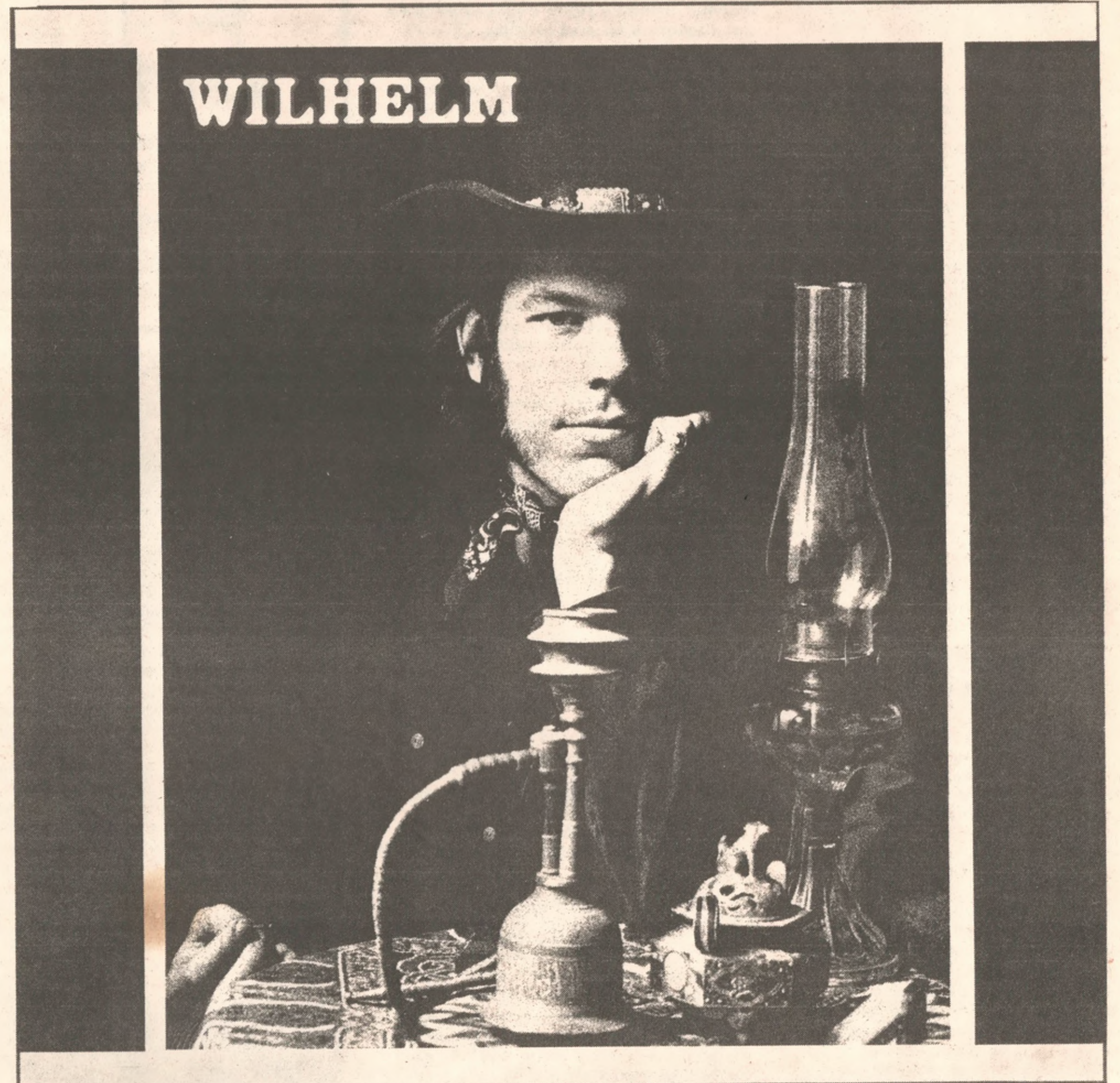
BR: I always crank another record out every year in my summer vacation.

And that's all the albums to date.

I gather that a follow up tour to the triumphant New Victoria performance is pencilled in for the autumn. I'll hopefully see you there.

John Tobler

ALL THE WAY FROM THE RED DOG SALOON



ZIGZAG RECORDS BRINGS YOU THE FIRST ALBUM BY MIKE WILHELM

Remarkably, this album will set you back no more than TWO QUID...including postage! Orders are being dealt with by a mail order specialist firm, and copies of the album will NOT be available from shops or any other source. OK? So, please send your cheque or postal order for £2.00, made out to C.E.C.Ltd., of 60 Adams Street, Birmingham B74AG.

NB: For financial reasons, the pamphlet referred to in the sleeve note has not been included, but the full Wilhelm story is in ZZ26, now available from the back issue dept. for 30p including postage and packaging.

A stunning album and a pair of London gigs last month heralded the return of the fabulous Flamin' Groovies, San Francisco legends still crusading for fun and excitement in rock'n' roll.

Their Roundhouse appearance was like a homecoming. The whole place stood and roared a welcome back to the ir heroes and the Groovies replied with an electrifying set, which mixed songs off 'Shake Some Action' with fave 60s classics like 'Please Please Me' and 'Big City'. Definitely one of the gigs of the year, if not THE gig, and a razor slash of optimism in the tired face of rock.

I was fortunate enough to spend quite a lot of time with the Groovies during their stay in London, and saw "both ends of the spectrum" as Cyril Jordan put it. There was the triumph of the Roundhouse, but the following day's gig at Dingwall's Dance Hall was a disaster in classic Groovies' tradition - in other words, they'd been messed around again. Still, more of that later. It still turned out to be an amazing weekend. The Groovies believe in enjoying themselves, and make sure that helpful refreshments are always on hand. The fact that it was my birthday, itself usually a cause for overindulgence, resulted in a gross hammering of the metabolism, albeit a highly enjoyable one. By Tuesday morning I felt like one of Cyril's used guitar picks, so 'scuse me if some of the recollections are a bit hazy.

Anyway, without further ado, join me on the evening of Friday, July 2nd, and embark on a weekend with the Flamin' Groovies.

FRIDAY

The group were staying at one of those plush-tacky places usually used by American tourists, which they had christened the Agnew Hotel. It's odd that these tourists should spend all that bread to come all that way to stay in a place done up in mock Western railroad style - you know, plastic fittings and 'Rawhide Express' signs all over the place.

Frame, who'd come along to see old buddy Greg Shaw (editor of the excellent 'Who Put The Bomp' and new manager of the Groovies), and myself stumbled across Cyril Jordan and roadie/ace bloke John Seaton in the restaurant, where they appeared to be devouring joke food.

Cyril's in fine form, pouring out funny stories about the time, during a particularly dead gig audience-wise, the Groovies bombarded everyone with tomatoes, ("Unfortunately, we hit the guy who was digging us!"). Cyril considered flinging tea bags into the Roundhouse audience as part of the Bicentennial madness, but thought better of it in view of the imprtant nature of the gig.

Frame and I were interested to hear Cyril's reaction to Nick Kent's recent claim in Zigzag to have played rhythm guitar on the 'Slow Death' single. "How could he say that? That guy used to be my friend", said the peeved Groovie. James Farrell, the guy who really played on the session has to be restrained when told that Kenty is in the vicinity. (More next month, scandal lovers!).

After food, we adjourned to Cyril and

John's room, where refreshments of a more pleasant nature were broken out. We interviewed Cyril for about an hour and the results can be seen in the next Zigzag. It was fascinating stuff, covering everything from where the Groovies buy their Beatle boots to Mike Wilhelm's latest activities.

The interview curtailed when there was a knock on the door and in burst the rest of the Groovies, accompanied by Greg Shaw and the legendary Sable Starr, who'd come along for the trip. Formal introductions over, everyone got loosened up and talking. While Pete and colleague Greg exchanged news, I spoke with Jimmy Farrell and drummer David Wright, an exceedingly pleasant pair of geezers. They're very happy with the new album, but not so happy about the fact that it's been out in France for months, and they don't even have their own copies. The whole group go on their knees at the mention of Dave Edmunds, who produced 'SSA' at Rockfield studios in Monmouth. The group were most surprised when I told them I was related to Edmunds - but had never, in fact, met him. It's a weird feeling when a cousin you've known of since childhood produces your favourite album of the year!

Anyway, here's Jimmy on Edmunds (although we'll go into the actual recording of the album in more depth next month): "He's good, man, real good. He was very sympathetic to what we were trying to do, which is hard, because I don't think there's that many people in the business who are". (Obviously the band want to record their next album with Edmunds at Rockfield).

Jimmy and David knocked me sideways when they said they'd been doing day jobs until recently to make ends meet. Both quit a few weeks ago to start getting the Groovies back on the road, but the fact that they had to resort to seeking employment in the first place is outrageous. Jimmy was shifting antiques at an auction place while David sold magic tricks in a shop! Apparently he and Cyril are pretty good magicians. (Maybe they could conjure up some ears for Allan Jones).

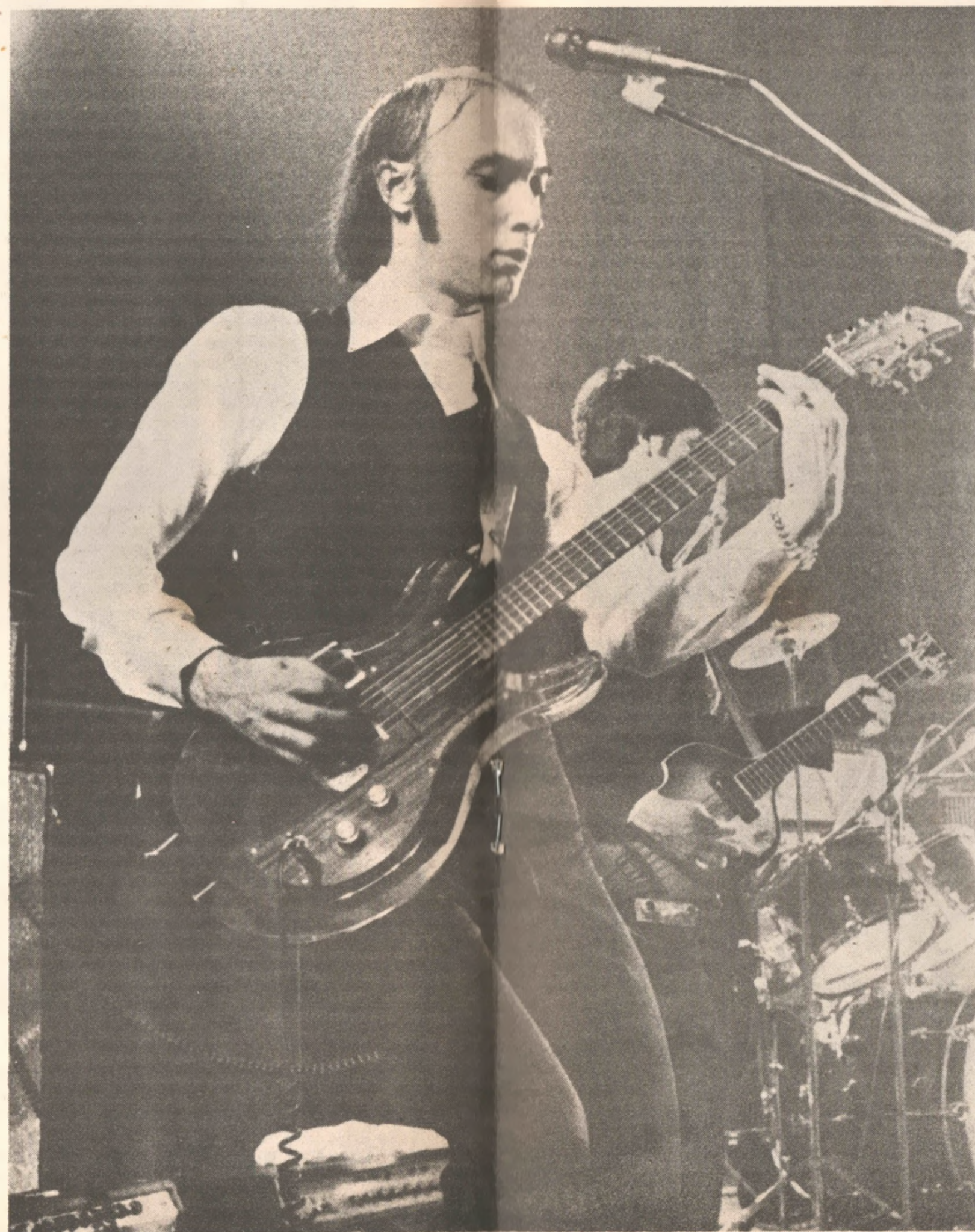
Anyway, it was a case of get a job or work 'stupid clubs' in the San Francisco area, "and you get tired of that" said Jimmy. After years of slogging round places where the audience are more interested in what's coming out of and being poured into their mouths, the Groovies vowed never to waste their time playing such places again, which is why they were against the second gig at Dingwall's.

Suddenly everyone decided to go to the Speakeasy. I gleefully accepted the Groovies' invitation to join them as it had just turned midnight meaning I had just turned 22, and celebrations were in order. Frame, horrified at the prospect of finding himself in the unholy place, made his excuses and left, eagerly anticipating plonking a rather rare Loose Gravel single he had just scored from John Seaton on his turntable.

The Groovies were on the guest list at the Speakeasy and on arrival even turned the heads of jaded old posers - with their 60s suits and Beatle boots. Serious drinking began and everyone tapped their feet to Reggie's Rockers, a sort of trad band who included the Groovies' 'Doctor Boogie' in their repertoire. Being plied with tequila sunrises, which I have to admit I had

KRIS 'OVER-THE-TOP' NEEDS GETS A DOUBLE SHOT OF THE FABULOUS

FLAMIN' GROOVIES



never had before (down goes my score on the pose-ometer) I was soon well sozzled along with certain Groovies. Sable and Chris had been having a drinking contest and it looked like the still-standing Sable had won, judging by Chris's wilting posture.

More tales flew - George Alexander had a goodie about the night he and Cyril crashed a Lovin' Spoonful/Beach Boys gig in Frisco ten or so years ago and the audience booed the BBs off, chanting 'More Spoonys!' or something.

With certain people the worse for wear (including me) we decided to go back to the hotel. Chris staggered off in search of taxis not to be seen for some time. Eventually one came and we roared back to the Agnew.

Back in Cyril's room we all sat back feeling hungry. Hassling brought forth room service with sandwiches which looked and tasted like they'd been made the week before. Long cigarettes of blockbusting effect were circulated and soon it was just Cyril, Seaton and myself left in the room. We rapped for what seemed like hours on everything from dope - "We've been stoned every day for ten years, man!" - to the Groovies' plans for rock'n'roll domination - there was some great stuff. However, me being a bit gone forgot to turn on the tape recorder to capture all these goodies for you out there in Zigzag land. Whoops... sorry!

I finally staggered into the cold light of day at about 5.45 a.m., hoping to catch the first train back to Leighton Buzzard. Despite the fact that the hotel overlooked Euston Station it still took a good 25 minutes to find it, and when I did, I keeled over and happily watched the train come in and go out again. Sabotaged by the Flamin' Groovies! Still, I got the next one and went home to more birthday celebrations.

SATURDAY

I made a halfhearted attempt to recover my sobriety... and failed hands down.

SUNDAY

"Shake some action's what I need, So let me bust out at full speed!"

Sunday July 4 was the Big Day, when the Groovies played their first British gig since 1972. They've only done one solitary appearance, at Paris Olympia last November, since then. In those three years the Flamin' Groovies legend has grown and grown here and on the continent. All eyes would be on the Groovies that night.

Saturday had been spent in rehearsal and Sunday afternoon sound checking. The group had been worried on Friday because they were using hired Japanese amps instead of their own, which were in the States. The sound turned out OK, however.

Arriving at the hotel in the afternoon everything was calm. Max Bell was interviewing the Groovies, except for Chris Wilson, who I spoke to in the Rawhide Saddle, or whatever, restaurant. Chris is right into ghosts, metaphysics and the occult, along with the rest of the Groovies. He said he wished the English visit had been longer so he could have gone ghost hunting

in Cornwall. As we swapped ghost stories it transpired the band are also fanatic readers of HP Lovecraft, amazing author of the most frightening stories ever. Chris grew up in Lovecraft country - the Boston area. Although some of the places he writes about exist, HP created a lot of names - like Dunwich - himself, said Chris, who says there's still a lot of spooky old places round there. Chris relates a particularly creepy tale of his Lovecraft investigations. Apparently he and some friends, mooching around the ancient parts of Boston, came across a cellar with a trap door in it. Beyond the trap door were huge catacombs stretching under the city, which were immortalised in such stories as 'Pickman's Model'. "We were too scared to go down - we wanted to, but couldn't, man". Don't blame you, mate!

Chris, who reckons he might have been a research scientist had he not joined the Groovies in his late teens, is probably the snappiest dresser in the Groovies. He was sporting a natty black velvet three piece suit, tie and Beatle boots! Contrary to what some people think, the Groovies have not just leapt into beat gear for a quick gimmick. "We've always like to dress up but never could find this sort of stuff before", said Chris. Now a tailor in London makes their suits and the boots come from Anello and Davide. ("They're really comfortable"). Chris has certainly changed his style from '72, when he was an orange satin clad, long haired Jagger model singer. Now he sports a guitar onstage too.

It was time to move off to the Roundhouse. Still feeling groggy from the night before (and coming in target for many jokes) I lurched out to the lobby to hitch a lift to the gig with the Ramones. When the Ramones arrived at the hotel on Saturday, the ever friendly Groovies invited them out for a night at the Speak. Apparently the Ramones politely declined the invitation, fearing they would get mugged in London after midnight - and their stamping ground is New York's Bowery!

Dee Dee Ramone (he's the bass player and the guy who yells 1-2-3-4 before numbers) emerged in the lobby moaning how he was never going to share a room with Joey Ramone again, 'cos he always "floods da bathroom" washing his hair, then spends two hours combing one side until it's dry, only to complain that the other side looks different! Then the man himself appears, all 6'7" of him, with hair still wet. "Dis is my Bay City Roller look", he grins, pointing to his pencil-thin legs, which are encased in too-short levis, green socks and quite new plimsolls.

The Ramones' gig is the high powered rock cartoon we had expected, and very enjoyable too. More on them next month. After the Ramones' set, which DeeDee, whose hand was bleeding, proclaimed "Horrible!", a during and post-gig soiree began in the Roundhouse Wine Bar. A huge American flag had been erected and Groovies, Ramones and Bob Marley (!) records were played while the wine flowed. (The start of my downfall again!). Blimey it was hot, the building was like a sauna bath, hotter than hell. I must have lost pounds. I forgot to mention the Strangers. From what I saw, they played a fine set, really taking off on 'Go Buddy Go' and got a far better reception than at the Patti Smith gigs. A very promising band who'll be featured

in Zigzag pretty soon.

Down in the dressing room the Groovies had donned their new stage gear - black 60s style velvet-collared suits, white shirts and those Beatle boots. George even had a violin bass.

Suddenly it's Groovies' time. The crowd erupts as the band take the stage and launch into a string of rockers - 'She Said Yeah', 'Let The Boy Rock'n'Roll', 'House Of Blue Lights' and 'Lover Not A Fighter'. The way this band rocks out is amazing! Jimmy rips out hot rhythm licks, David hits his drums in a style I haven't seen done so well in years - the Ringo anchor beat topped with lashings of cymbals - while George's bass is solid as a rock. Chris sings his heart out and is main mover in the front line. Then there's Cyril. That night he played at least ten solos and countless fills which had me fighting for air in disbelief. No affected grimacing here, Cyril just bends into his plexiglass guitar, legs apart looking like John Lennon, and lets rip with deadly, stabbing power.

Without a doubt one of the most exciting guitarists I've ever seen. So here were the Groovies, back with a vengeance and getting the crowd off. The 'SSA' tunes sounded great, especially the title track, which takes on a new power live, and the wondrous 'I Can't Hide', complete with BAROOM-BOOM before the final coda. (See next month's Cyril interview for the full story behind that!) 'I Saw Her', the old English lament, was haunting as ever.

One of the standouts was 'Ups and Downs', an old Paul Revere and the Raiders single which is likely to be on the next Groovies' album - irresistible. There were also dynamite versions of the 'Pretty Things' 'Big City', which featured a terrific rock-out guitar solo, 'Please Please Me' and the Stones' 'Miss Amanda Jones', which closed the set. But the Groovies weren't allowed to go before being called back for two encores - 'Under My Thumb' and 'Married Woman', during which my ecstasy count was flashing red! (Oh yeah, if you were there and marvelled at the prophetic powers of the geezer yelling the titles of those two encores seconds before the Groovies launched into them, I must confess 'twas I - Cyril told me what the encores were before the gig!)

Well, there it is, the first gig for a long time where I've been unable to suppress a huge grin throughout. It was a classic performance, the Groovies bursting with energy, confidence and freshness, totally committed to their new music. And if they're this good after a three year lay off with borrowed gear, imagine what it'll be like after a couple of months gigging...



After the gig we joined the liggers back at the party, started swigging the wine but still managed to miss the food. Talking to the band afterwards it was possible to learn just how much the heat had affected them! Apparently Cyril's echo tape had melted during the third number! He said 'I was nearly blacking out up there, man' - but added 'I really enjoyed the gig'. All the group agreed - they were just-



1970: George Alexander/Tim Lynch/Cyril Jordan/Roy Loney/Danny Mihm



1972: Alexander/Mihm/James Farrell/Jordan/Chris Wilson



1976: Alexander/Wilson/David Wright/Jordan/Farrell

READING FESTIVAL '76

So what do you get on Friday?

**The Front Line in Jamaican Music.
Beefheart's Original Magic Band.
Superfunk from The Filthy Supercharge.
And...GONG**

That's all you get on the first Friday
of this year's Reading Festival.
U-Roy, the original Jamaican toaster.
The fantastic Mighty Diamonds.
Mallard, the magic band.
Supercharge.
And the ineffable Gong.

**So don't come on Friday
if you don't like music.**

Catch their albums out now on Virgin.

The Mighty Diamonds Right Time V2052

U-Roy Natty Rebel V2059

U-Roy Dread In A Babylon V2048

Mallard Mallard V2045

Supercharge Local Lads Make Good V2053

Gong Shamal V2046



ified in being well pleased with themselves.

That's why it's so infuriating, when so many people obviously enjoyed the gig, to read the self-opinionated condemning of the Groovies new style in some of the rock weeklies. Worst offender was Allan Jones who managed to intellectualise diarrhoeaetically (?) on the Ramones and the ir place in modern society, etc. and then dismiss the Groovies in a couple of lines, thus missing the point of not just one, but both bands! I think Max Bell was the only bloke who really understood what that gig was about - FUN. So what if the Flamin' Groovies are finally letting the ir beloved 60s come to the fore, image and music-wise, they just like dressing like that, and it's completely different from anyone else. The 60s influence in the music is long time influences coming through - the music still has FLAMIN' GROOVIES stamped proudly all over it, the Groovies have intensity (which Greg Shaw says is the most important ingredient in rock), excitement, they can make you cry or scream with delight and musically are tighter than a Beattie wig. Now they've hit upon the essence of rock'n'roll nothing can stop them, (Whoops, seem to have gone over the top there a bit - still, it had to happen sooner or later). Anyway, after ligging and swigging a little longer, Frame and I took our leave, myself stuporised for the third time in two days.

MONDAY

"Turned my head around,
But you tore me down"...

Having got to sleep at about 3a.m., I was rudely awakened what seemed like minutes later. My mouth felt like an empty guitar case, and my head ached. Up I got and went through the day - which consisted mainly of writing a feature on Aylesbury's Market Square clock - very Groovied-out and eagerly anticipating that evening's gig at Dingwall's.

Still feeling a bit shaky, I arrived at the Agnew and went straight to Cyril's room, which was beginning to feel like a second home. It seemed to act as Groovies HQ too, as most of the group, friends etc. hung out there in spare moments. It's pretty full when I arrive - Max and lady, assorted Groovies, John Seaton and even Noj Ingham, he of the two 'Shake Some Action' reviews, are all there.

The Groovies are all apprehensive about the coming gig. Cyril: "You can't see what's going on except right in front of the stage". Chris: "It's all horrible new paint. Don't know what this gig's gonna turn out like".

All eyes turn to the TV, which I accidentally switch on when my leg brushes the bedside table. There's a hilarious film of slow motion frog-jumping as part of the Bicentennial coverage (!) then 'Bonnie & Clyde'. I leave the Groovies immersed in shoot outs to catch the Ramones car before they leave for the gig. Missed 'em! I curse on arriving at an empty lobby. I hotfoot the mile or so to Dingwalls, bumping into Ramones manager Danny Field outside, who gets me in.

The place is packed and very hot. Posers abound, and it seems like every one has turned out for the Groovies, including the Sex Pistols and Ian Dury, late of the Kilburns. Johnny Rotten

props up the bar holding court with a pack of deranged-looking followers, including an ageing rotund blond who looks like she just played the lead part in a joint production of 'F rauleins In Uniform' and 'Night Of The Living Dead'.

I'm just thinking that it must be hotter in here than at the Roundhouse, when 1-2-3-4 WHAM! the Ramones are on. They play better and even more frantic than last night, building up to an all-out six song power-drive at the end. After the set we adjourn to the car park for an interview, which will appear next month.

Soon it's Groovies time again (12.15 a.m. on Tuesday to be precise). It's basically the same set as last night but something's wrong - the place seems designed so nobody can see, although the audience seems more intent on drinking and posing, the sound's not too hot, although the temperature is, and the Groovies seem a bit ill at ease. Who can blame them? What a dump to play. Drunkards shout, some people dance, a few more clap, it gets hotter, smokier, and through it all the Groovies battle on. Whoever was mixing the sound must have had his socks stuffed in his ears. The vocals and sound aren't very good. James breaks a string in 'I Can't Hide' - the replacement is in the dressing room, which is locked. So it goes, a classic bum gig.

Afterwards, the Groovies are pretty brought down, understandably. Cyril: "It was one of the worst gigs I've ever done. I hated every minute of it, the place was a dump". George: "We stopped playing clubs like that years ago because we were fed up with this kind of thing happening. We should never have done that gig".

Never mind, lads. The Groovies on an off night can still shut down a whole bunch of other groups. As a gig it was still enjoyable, although piling in comparison to the previous night's triumph. And Cyril still managed to rip out a killer solo in 'Big City'.

Cyril later described the gig as 'the other end of the spectrum'. Yes it's true, the Roundhouse had been one of those magic nights where the band is on top form and the crowd with them all the way. Had they left it at that and flown home next day the Groovies legend would have been left intact and upped a few notches to boot. It's to the band's credit they didn't blow the gig completely and escaped with the Flamin' Groovies mysterioso intact.

Apparently the Dingwalls gig was arranged by the record company to try and recoup some of the bread they had put into the visit. The group agreed to doing Dingwalls but put their collective cuban-heeled foot down when the Nashville and other pub venues were suggested.

Go back to the hotel, get loose and crash was the general strategy after the gig. Politely declining an offer from the Sex Pistols to jam at their studio round the corner (!) everyone leapt into cars and headed back to the Agnew.

Now if the gig hadn't been sufficient to write yet another page in the Groovies Book of Bad Breaks and Foul-ups, this was the masterstroke to complete the chapter - on arrival at the hotel, it appeared that some unscrupulous person had run off with John Seaton's case, containing plane tickets for the following day, passports and all sorts of other valuables.

There followed a rather despondent two hour wait in the lobby for... dunno really. Chris did Ed Sullivan impersonations, I retaliated with Hughie Green but it did not really take the edge off the gloom which permeated the hotel air. "I don't care anyway, man", said Cyril, who must have been through similar scenes 100 times before anyway.

Then the phone rang. It was for John. Someone had picked his briefcase up by mistake and was sending it around by taxi. Sighs of relief all round and all up to Cyril's room in a much happier frame of mind.

By now it was 4 a.m. on Tuesday, but we talked for another two hours. Cyril has a wealth of rock'n'roll anecdotes. In their teen punk days, he and George crashed the dressing room of every gig to come to Frisco - "We'd get into the dressing room every time. We saw everybody then, the Beach Boys, the Lovin' Spoonful, Jackie de Shannon. The only time we failed was with the Beatles" (their idols). That was not for want of trying though. "We hired a limo and drove past the crowd through the gates. Everybody thought we were the Beatles, then they looked in and saw it was us. We got through all the gates except the last one, man. The guards looked in and we went 'fab' and 'gear', but they weren't fooled, man. We didn't get in". One of the pair's big moments was meeting Brian Jones at the airport by crashing the VIP lounge.

This apprenticeship in gig-crashing served them well later. During their English sojourn of '72 when J.Geils was playing a London date, Cyril and Co. got in by knocking on the back door and yelling "J.Geils!" The leather-jacketed Groovies passed as their American colleagues and got in. Problems arose when the real J.Geils Band turned up at the same door a little later and got turned away.

It's ironic that one of the only gigs the Groovies couldn't make backstage was their own, when they were supporting David Bowie at Dunstable in '72. After playing a raw'n'alive set which included 'Slow Death' and 'Sweet Jane' they retired to the dressing room. When it was Bowie time they tried to get out back to watch his set, but were told in no uncertain terms to stay in their room, an incident which still sparks instant violence in any Groovie today.

Round 5.45 a.m. everyone was about ready to crash, all except me, who had to catch the 6.05 back to Leighton Buzzard to be at work by nine (what a thought!). Warm goodbyes were said and off I went.

TUESDAY

Finally getting home that evening, all the nights of excess and no sleep followed by a day's work, two Flamin' Groovie gigs, the heat and birthday celebrations all seemed to catch up at once and I keeled over on the sofa in an aching heap. I was aware of a gurgling euphoria in the pit of my abused stomach... the Flamin' Groovies had played and they'd been magnificent, as well as being some of the friendliest people I've had the pleasure to meet.

I just summoned up enough strength to put 'Shake Some Action' on the stereo. Feel better already!

Kris 'White Dope On Punks' Needs



Little do you know, gentle readers, that it is the intention of this awesome bunch of cuties to unleash their manifold talent on Britain...and thanks to the far-sighted wisdom of certain enlightened vinyl moguls, it just might happen. Keeping their fingers crossed are, left to right: Sean Hopper - keyboards; John McFee - lead & pedal steel guitars; Alex Call - vocals & guitar; Hughie Louis - harp & vocals; Michael Shine - drums; John Ciambotti - bass. Meanwhile John Mac and Hughie provide the details of...

CLOVER'S STORY

This interview took place at the Howland Johnsons in Mill Valley when Lee Brilleaux, Sparko, Hughie Louis and myself got back from bar crawling from Bolinas to Mill Valley, and ran into Wilko Johnson and John McFee, who had been at John's house perusing his collection of 'If it's got strings I want it' instruments. It seemed like a good time to get Hughie and John to spill da beans.

ZZ: How did Clover form?

JM: Well, I'm from the south of LA - near Disneyland actually - but when I was 15 I came up here and started playing with Alex Call, when we were both at Tamalpais High School, just down the road there. So with Mitch,

our old drummer, who was at the school too, we formed The Tiny Hearing Aid Company...but then I got arrested and had to go back to LA.

ZZ: What for?

JM: Well, it was a curfew violation actually, but I was stoned on LSD at the time, wandering down Haight Street in San Francisco, and they put me in a mental hospital for a few days. Then I got put on probation and they sent me back to LA to finish High School there for a few months. Anyway, after that I came back up here to rejoin The Tiny Hearing Aid Company and brought my brother along to play bass, but he was too drugged out on acid, so we got another guy, and when he went we got Johnny Ciambotti on

bass, and shortly after that we changed our name to Clover.

ZZ: So hardly anyone was in another group?

JM: Johnny was in one called 'The Outfit', and I was in lots of little LA groups, but it was so long ago it's almost as if I never played in any others.

HL: We're super inbred!

ZZ: So how long have you been together?

HL: July 4th will be nine years.

JM: Me and Alex have been together 10 years now. We're the 'oldest San Francisco band, apart from the Dead - but they've had multiple line-up changes.

ZZ: So how did you come to sign with Fantasy?

JM: We got lots of offers, but they gave us plenty of money 'cause Creedence was doing so well. That was the big boom, man; everyone was getting signed. We got all the offers, but... well... we waited, and then took the big front money! Fantasy had all these profits, because Creedence were just about the biggest band in the world, and they paid huge money as a kind of tax loss thing. We were really young and didn't really know what we were doing; I'd just turned 18 and had a total 'Fxxx You!' attitude to the world. We didn't care. I mean, I signed the contract without reading it... (laughing) I was young and out of my mind on drugs... I never thought about where the next dollar was coming from! There were times when we would just antagonise the audience, and at the gig where Creedence flipped out over us and started to talk Fantasy into signing us, we really...

ZZ: Come on, stop laughing and tell us!

JM: Well, we were totally wiped out, and had been up for three days on acid, speed and beer, and at that point were totally wired and weird. We started our set, and in the middle of the second song this fag in the front row tried to get Clambott's attention - and he started ramming this guy with his bass, and for some reason I was pissed off - it didn't sound too good to me - so I started freaking out on guitar and Alex got into chanting 'Fxxx You!' into the mike - just a totally idiotic performance... and then we threw down our axes and walked off stage. Creedence thought it was our act... it blew their minds!

At this point everyone in the room was convulsed with laughter, as this sort of behaviour is so far from the way John conducts himself now - living as he does on just fruit and vegetables and strenuous yoga exercises.

ZZ: And now you've gone the other way and don't take anything at all.

JM: Right. I mean, I haven't changed my personality radically, but I'm not as belligerent as I used to be. The rest of the band call me Yogi Bear now... but one of the reasons why I don't take drugs or drink alcohol anymore was that I was actually physically dying; playing the clubs every night, drinking, smoking... I had to quit, or my body would have packed up!

ZZ: What happened to the albums?

JM: They had zero promotion. No promotion at all. Literally none. We were playing in Houston and places, to sell out crowds, without one record in the stores. (This was unfortunately the case in England: 'Forty Niner' had only just come out when Liberty/UA lost the rights to the Fantasy label and all stock had to be destroyed). Business wasn't taken care of at all; it had with Creedence, but only because John Fogerty took care of it himself. He was really on the case, whereas the Clover manager at the time had 'personal problems'. So the whole thing cut back and it got really tight; the only way to make a living was to go into the clubs.

ZZ: Is that when you and Sean Hopper joined?

HL: Yeah, we joined just after the albums; you know, we got jamming,

and it got really energetic, so we stayed.

ZZ: This is when you started getting more 'dance music' orientated?

HL: We'd gotten more into dance music, yeah, because we were forced to do the clubs - you had to make 'em dance and grab 'em with the show. The thing is that we were working six nights a week during this time - thinking there'll be a contract next month, next month, but now we see that during these years, we were really getting our musical shit together. Now we can look back, in retrospect, and realise we weren't ready - we're much better now.

JM: When we record again, it'll be well evolved; but back then, after we'd split from Fantasy we were just in limbo - kind of embittered by the whole scene, and the band started to change direction; Mitch Howie left, and we went through a whole series of drummers... until Michael Shrine came along to audition. We said "OK, let's do 'Fairweather Fan'", and he said "Which one was that when you played last night?". I said "Oh, the second one in the second set!", and he flicked through these cards and he had the drum parts of each song written out! - after seeing us once! He's incredible! A real musician; reads, writes, arranges, plays vibes and percussion too.

ZZ: How did you start doing sessions - because in England, you're best known for your studio work. (On albums by Boz Scaggs, Van Morrison, Bill Wyman, Steve Miller, etc.)

JM: Well, the first sessions I did were things like the Brothers Four, during the folk boom, and then Janis Ian. I don't know how I got them - just word of mouth, I guess.

HL: Ed Bogas, who produced the albums, also did a lot of jingles, which the whole band did - like Annie Green's Spring Wine and even, would you believe, Clover Seeds! It's this clover that grows two feet tall; it's scientifically treated clover! McFee gets all the steel sessions in the Bay Area, like C&A Sugar, Shakies Pizza... all sorts of radio and TV commercials, as well as regular album sessions.

JM: Most people just ring me up out of the blue, like Van Morrison did, for instance, and Boz Scaggs. I also did a bunch of gigs with Boz, and he asked me to join his band at one time.

HL: Now he's got a right not to like Clover (although he does), because some of the things Alex and me used to do to keep him away from McFee were outrageous! A lot of people have asked McFee to join bands, but he's just stupid, like the rest of us! I mean, he could have been on tour with Greg Allman now - instead of which he's gardening!

ZZ: You mean you do gardening for a living?

JM: Yeah, well, I end up having to do gardening every now and then if I don't get sessions for a while. I look after one of the Doobie Brothers' gardens!

ZZ: Well, I find that amazing! Is there any truth in what Alex was saying to me that you re-did all the pedal steel parts on the Grateful Dead's 'Mars Hotel'?

JM: Well, there were pedal steel parts on there which Garcia couldn't cut, yes.

ZZ: Does Jerry Garcia know you re-did them?

JM: Oh yes, he knows it's me - but I don't think they consulted him before I was asked to do it. Roy Siegal engineered it, and Lesh and Weir were the only ones there at that session. There's no bad feeling, though... the Dead are often at our gigs, especially when we play River City. Most of my Dead related work has been with Micky Hart, though... up at his studio in Novato. He's a great guy.

ZZ: I've heard that you do an incredible amount of rehearsal.

HL: He plays all the time, man - he cheats.

JM: I like to play all day if I get the time... but I started out playing ukelele, believe it or not. I was about 10 or 11, and my dad showed me a couple of country things... and I got into chords at about 12. It was a great pre-guitar instrument, from which I gradually spread out.

ZZ: And when did you start playing pedal steel?

JM: When I was about 17. I really dug country music - it was all I heard on the radio... and when I saw these guys actually playing pedal steel guitars, I thought "Oh wow, that's the most magical instrument I've seen!"

HL: It's the American sitar - it's such a bitch to learn.

JM: I just sat down and figured it out; I have never had lessons or anything - well, except for voice lessons. In the early days of Clover, our equipment man bought a pedal steel, and I just started learning it.

ZZ: Clover did all the soundtrack for the film 'Payday' with Rip Torn, didn't they?

HL: Yeah, that was a great flick, man. In the scene where the guy comes in and turns on the radio, it's 'Monopoly' from the first album. It's Clambott's tune, so he gets some 'pops' from that. Ed Bogas was the musical consultant for the movie, and he got us the sound track. He's done some amazing stuff since the Clover albums - like he did the 'One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest' soundtrack, and he arranged all Sly Stone's strings - he's a heavy.

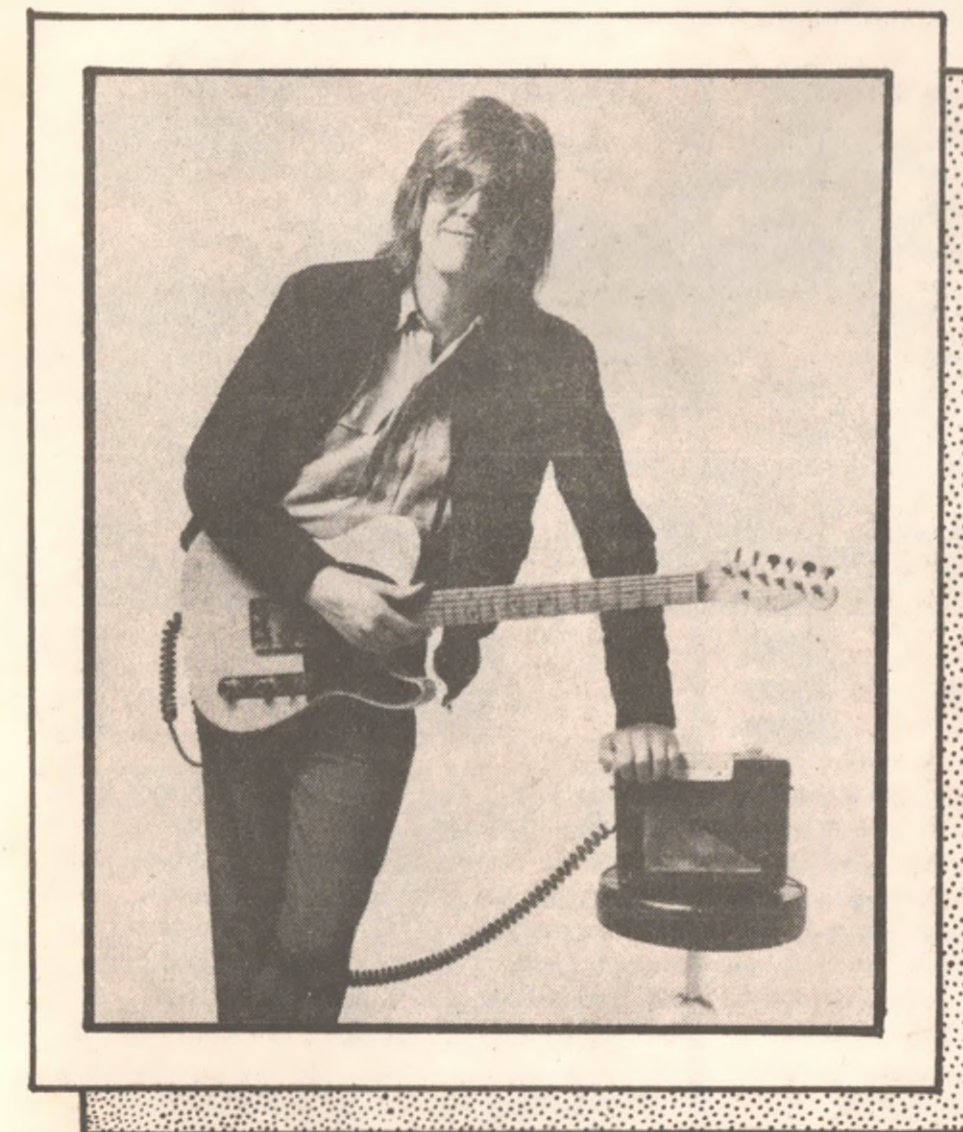
ZZ: It was the same with Clover; they pioneered the country cowboy thing.

HL: Oh yeah, man; and the influences keep cropping up; the sound, the style, the image, everything. If you look at those old Clover sleeves, and then look at the Doobie Brothers, there are a lot of similarities. The image is the same; a bunch of guys on horses - like on 'Stampede'... and on the back are individual shots with six-guns. The Clover style is now Top 40 hit... that area, the country hippie. Clover were the original synthesisers of that kind of music and those influences, and we are ready now, man. Ready as anybody can be.

Calvin Worthington

Unfortunately, neither Clover album is available these days, but much deleted American stock finds its way over here... so keep your eyes open. The first album, 'Clover' is good - but the second 'Forty Niner' is a solid gold cracker! These albums, however, are only the start... you just wait and see! The Clover revival starts here!

SOMETIMES IN LIFE YOU'VE GOT TO MAKE A DECISION...



THIS IS NICK LOWE, HE IS A POP MUSICIAN. HIS ALONE IS THE PRIVILEGE OF HAVING THE FIRST RELEASE ON STIFF. A 45rpm RECORDING TITLES ARE 'SO IT GOES' B/W 'HEART OF THE CITY' THEY'RE REALLY NIFTY... COPIES AVAILABLE DIRECT FROM STIFF @ 32 ALEXANDER ST. LONDON W2.. ONLY 65p INC. P+P OR FROM HIP RECORD SHOPS... THIS OFFER IS NOT OPEN TO MEDALION PURCHASERS OR MEN WHO WEAR MAKE-UP...

THIS FABULOUS LIMITED EDITION MEDALION STRUCK IN FINEST RECYCLED VINYL & PLATED IN RIO... IS AVAILABLE TO PROGRESSIVE MUSIC FANS WHO HAVE THE COMPLETE 'WORKS' OF ELP, YES & GENESIS ETC. ...JUST SEND IN ALL THE SLEEVE ARTWORK (NOT YOUR PRECIOUS RECORDS) TOGETHER WITH A... CHEQUE/ P.O. FOR ONLY £99.99 TO STIFF RECORDS @ 32 ALEXANDER ST. LONDON W2...

...IF YOU WANNA ROCK...
WE GOT STIFFS IN STOCK

FUTURE RELEASES WILL BE TRACKS FROM CHILLI WITH BIRD, RED HOT PEPPERS, BOWEN & BOWEN, THE PINK FAIRIES. OTHERS WILL FOLLOW WHEN WE FEEL LIKE IT. SEND SAE FOR NEWSHEET/QUESTIONNAIRE/FREEBIES.



R · E · V · I · E · W · S

'Live Bullet'
BOB SEGER & The Silver Bullet
Capitol EST SP 16 Band

'Blow Your Face Out'
THE J. GEILS BAND
Atlantic K60115

'Steal Your Face'
GRATEFUL DEAD
Grateful Dead UAD 60131/2

Welly welly, my droogs...and what have we here? Live doubles from three of the US of A's fave live bands, and all recorded - with the exception of one side of the Geils album - at the respective home gigs. Sounds like a real treat in store, and for 66.66% of the time, that's exactly what it is.

Bob Seger's been around for about ten years now, and in that time he's made eight studio albums, nearly all of which contain some great stuff, offset by some less inspired content; but here, in front of an extremely live Detroit audience, ('I was reading in Rolling Stone where they say Detroit audiences are the best rock'n'roll audiences in the world' - mucho crowd appreciation - 'I thought to myself 'Shit, I've known that for ten years!' - even more of same), he runs through a selection of his best stuff, from 'Ramblin' Gambler' Man' off 'The Bob Seger System' right through to five tracks from the last one 'Beautiful Loser', and in almost every case leaves the studio versions for dead.

After a frenetic opening with 'Nut-bush City Limits' things fluctuate between mellower songs like 'Jody Girl' and 'Turn The Page', the uncompromising funkiness of Van Morrison's 'I've Been Working' and the headlong lurching strut of 'Bo Diddley'. By 'Heavy Music' and 'Katmandu' on side 3, it's getting a bit hectic, and when you reach 'Get Out Of Denver' - one of '74's great unrecognised singles - and an outrageous rock'n'roll medley as an encore, you've got yourself a sizeable dose of high energy insanity, Seger-style, in the privacy of your own home.

No praise is too high for the Silver Bullet Band, none of whom I've ever

heard of in any other context. From the subdued tastefulness of 'Turn The Page' - where Tom Cartmell's willowy sax is outstanding - to the superbly disciplined attack of the out-and-out rockers, they are unimpeachably magnificent, playing with an intensity that's sometimes been missing on Seger's studio albums, where he's tended to use heavy session guys rather than his working band.

Seger himself, meanwhile, amply demonstrates over this wide range of material that he is a great singer, handling the slower songs with real control and feeling, and getting stuck right into the heavier stuff. The subject matter of most of the songs is potentially risible - unabashed hippies vs. straights stuff straight out of a 1968 time warp...hard tales of victimisation over long hair, and laments about the narrow-mindedness of the paranoid older generation - but the Seger credibility rating is eleven on a scale of ten, so he gets away with it, and anyway, he's talking primarily to an audience who probably still feel the pinch of that sort of atmosphere in the Mid-West. Total identification is what we're talking about...no inflatable phallus or extravagant stage sets are needed to get the audience off, just the music, and an occasional aside to let the people know he's one of them. "This is for all the working people in the audience tonight", he says at the start of 'I've Been Working', and the answering roar tells you they know he means it.

While the progress of Bob Seger's career has often been so slow as to be imperceptible, the J. Geils Band took off like a cat on a hot plate when their first album was released in 1970, and by the time they got over here in 1972, they were at white heat - just one of the most exhilarating, exhausting bands I've ever seen. Since then, though, the impression coming across the Atlantic has been that they'd gone off the boil a bit, but you'd never guess it from listening to this album.

If Bob Seger tends to apply some slow submission holds before going in

for the kill, the baaad boys from Boston leap straight out at the bell with a series of crisp forearm smashes that guarantee an instant knockdown. With the exception of 'Chimes', which has a swirling, moody coda tacked onto the rendition on 'Ladies Invited', all the songs are roughly three or four minutes long, filed down to a lethal cutting edge that slices through all resistance.

The band's as ferocious as a starved tiger and as tight as Tobler's waist-band, with Seth Justman on keyboards offering further evidence of his growth within the band, and the interplay between Magic Dick on the lickin' stick and Geils himself hot poop indeed. Peter Wolf vocalises over it all with his customary venom, and as it's a live album, there's the added joy of his little raps and interjections. "To the jungle", he yells, as the rumble of Stephen Bladd's tom toms get the instrumental 'Sno-cone' underway at the start of side 4, and by now the natives are getting restless for sure. A rabble rousing 'Raise Your Hand' gets the whole place doing just that, and after the slow-burning fuse of 'Start All Over', the inevitable concluding explosion comes with 'Give It To Me'. The highlight of the whole shebang, though, comes at the end of the first side on 'Musta Got Lost', which builds, after Wolf's lengthy intro, into a raging snorting, uncontrollable beast of a number.

Both the J. Geils and the Bob Seger albums are superbly well recorded, and pack maximum music power to go with the live excitement that's generated even on vinyl, giving the lie once and for all to the notion that live albums are largely cop-out contract fillers or poor substitutes for the real thing.

Now for the bad news. Reluctance to slag off a band whose music I have loved down the years, and to give Andy Childs heart failure, leads me to draw a swift screen across the Dead double. It was recorded in 1974 at the Winterland, which means it's already pretty well redundant, and unfortunately it also means that several

of the numbers are drawn from 'Wake Of The Flood' and 'Mars Hotel' - not definitive Dead, in my humble opinion. Elsewhere you get versions of standards like 'The Promised Land', 'Big River' and 'El Paso' - all of which have been done much better before. The production is erratic - to be kind about it - much of the playing is sloppy and listless, and poor ol' Jerry Garcia sings with approximately as much tunefulness and conviction as my Dad warbling along to the Black and White Minstrels. It's really very hard to imagine what prompted the Dead to release this, especially after 'Blues For Allah' had promised so much in terms of rejuvenation.

Consummation, consolidation or consternation...you pays yer money, and you takes yer choice.

Paul Kendall

JAMAICA:
BABYLON ON A THIN WIRE

Adrian Boot and Michael Thom as
Published by Thames & Hudson £2.50

If anyone had told me a few months ago that I'd be reviewing a book which dealt with reggae music, I would have been horrified. The only way that such a thing could happen, I would have reasoned, was either because there was no other music left to review, or because I'd finally lost my marbles, or because one of my mates had taken over U Roy's management.

In fact I'm writing this on the very same day that Derek Jewell has his review of Bob Marley's Hammersmith concerts in the Sunday Times. In the last few days, I've read major features by Ray Coleman in the Melody Maker and Neil Spencer in the NME on the subject of Marley, and in the last few weeks, I've been getting more and more records by Jamaican artists. There's a definite movement afoot if such a dyed in the wool country rock freak as myself can get to the stage where I'm starting to get interested, and while I don't see myself getting involved in the reggae phenomenon, it's instructive to know what's behind it all - after all's said and done, it's a hell of a sight more interesting musically than that limp imitation soul that people in Wigan stay up all night for.

So when Paul Conroy, manager of the Kursaal Flyers, told me that the bloke whose house he lived in had done a book on Jamaica, and wanted it mentioned in Zigzag, I agreed to play the white man, an unfortunate phrase under the circumstances. The fellow involved is Adrian Boot, who as well as being a very fine photographer, also once contributed a feature to ZZ about Roy Harper several years ago, and he, together with Michael Thomas, of whom I was previously unaware, has written this fascinating book. (Mr. Thomas also wrote an excellent full length feature in Rolling Stone 139, called 'The Wild Side Of Paradise', which is recommended - Ed.)

It's not completely a book about the history of reggae, but more an explanation of some of the history and mythology behind the scene, which leads musicians like Marley to smoke a pound and a half of dope a week, and to believe that Haile Selassie was, or is, despite his death, the religious leader who will head the repatriation of the Rastafarians to Ethiopia, from whence they believe they came. The information in the book is obviously highly

LIP SMACKING GOOD



The second in a series where readers review the albums of their choice.

'Ducks Deluxe'
DUCKS DELUXE
RCA LPL1 5008

One of the things which always saddened me was the apparent low regard for Ducks Deluxe - a group which always lingered in the corner of my heart. It seemed that whenever I mentioned their name, even in the most respectable of circles, I was mocked rotten by people who obviously held the group in the lowest esteem. I just didn't, and don't understand it.

Of course, every failed band has its bedraggled adherents - but in this case they, or rather we, have solid evidence to point to...two 5 star albums, sadly clogging the cheapie racks already.

It's easy to dismiss the band out of hand; their live performances, especially in the latter days, suffered from a spectacular lack of subtlety, and they never really got far beyond their early pub image. What little press excitement they generated when they started out back in the last half of 1972 died out as quickly as the devastatingly unspectacular Kohoutek - but the album, released towards the end of 1974 is, I maintain, a classic, and maybe one day, when copies have been totally unobtainable for 5 or 6 years, it will be acclaimed as the work of genius it most certainly is.

A very raw 3-track garage job it may be, but then the Ducks' approach always was a very basic, unshaven approach to presentation - ("Are yer red dy fer some rock'n'roll?") - though their contribution to the current punk rock fad now sweeping through the earthier strata of live rock music in the southern half of the country has been completely ignored...they were without doubt the spearhead of the punk renaissance, though in terms of catching the commercial bus, they were a few years too early.

Rhythm guitarist Sean Tyla has to be one of the legendary figures in rock...the Frank Marker of Tin Pan Alley, stumbling through a nasty business but still managing to keep his grubby integrity intact. Sean Tyla, the great role player, thinking he's Duane Allman or Lou Reed or George Kennedy, and suffering from the over-riding illusion that he's a cowboy, writing lyrics from which you'd think he'd been raised by a family of itinerant slave descendent spades, on the move along the Gulf Coast...nosing around Texas, Louisiana and Florida.

Proud of their stand in favour of local group equipment and beer from the bottle, the Ducks sprawl across the front of the sleeve in characteristic poses - while on the back, they stand stolid, resigned, hard and wretched, but also resolute and certain. "Two fried eggs and dirty underpants" was Tyla's famous encapsulation of life in a rock'n'roll band, and as soon as you hear the first track, 'Coast to Coast', you know that this is one of the best groups since the golden era of Siren and Stackwaddy.

Now I love Tim Roper's drumming, a real snare wopper, and Nick Garvey with his bank clerk's stance and abundant under-rated talent was a considerable asset, and I'll never forget Martin Belmont blowing my mind every time I saw him lurching and wrenching away, with that Fender Gommcaster special looking like a wooden spoon in those massive fists...but for me, Sean Tyla was the star.

Of the twelve dazzling tracks, all Grade A or B+, my favourites are Tyla efforts.

'West Texas Trucking Board' is total Tylarian fantasy, complete with 'Positively 4th St.' organ, and the flimsiest storyline of any narrative song I've heard. It involves a guy riding into Deadwood one night, establishing his identity to the doubting law official, and explaining that he has to serve some papers, the delivery of which will involve getting up a posse. It's a marvellous little cameo.

He lights a cigarette at the start of 'Falling For That Woman' - just to add a pinch of scuzziness to the song - and then has the stunning, uninhibited gall to distort his natural voice until it sounds like Leon Russell before he's had his cornflakes...and the lyrics: "...the newspapers, they say you've been mugged...(grunt)". What kind of line is that?

'Daddy Put The Bomp' mentions Eddie Cochran singing 'Summertime Blues' and again finds Tyla role-playing - this time in the bible belt swamplands.

Other knockout tracks are 'Please Please Please', 'Hearts On My Sleeve' and 'Don't Mind Rockin' Tonight'...but the whole album, taken in context, is a joy.

They should have made it, but dropped by RCA in the wake of their total-failure programme of 1973/74, the Ducks burned themselves out and finally expired on the stage of the 100 Club on Tuesday July 1st 1975.

They could have knocked the Stannels into a cocked hat.

Billy 'Sword' Wilkinson
of Burgess Hill

instructive - for example, did you know that Haile Selassie's name before he adopted that one was Ras Tafari? Then there's an explanation of the significance of Marcus Garvey, whose face appears on Jamaican banknotes, and who was the person who started all this tribal awakening before the second world war.

Music comes into it, certainly, but just for once, I found it extremely interesting to learn about the political situation on the island, which, if the book is even partially accurate, is remarkably close to boiling point. When you become aware of what surrounds the music, the quasi religious flavour of so much of it, which seems in terrible contrast to 'Will The Circle Be Unbroken', becomes very much more reasonable.

The pictures, taken by Adrian in Jamaica, are often equally surprising, and the written word cannot possibly do them justice. Having read the text, the intrepid Boot's venture seems still more surprising, because many of the photos are of the very people who have created the thin wire on which Jamaica is suspended. Gaining their confidence sufficient to be able to snap them must have been an enormous task, but the end result clearly indicates that all the trouble was well worthwhile.

If you're a reggae person already, I'm fairly sure you'll enjoy this book as much as I liked the Redneck Rock book. If you're not, then I recommend that you take a little time out to discover about what you don't understand. I certainly enjoyed it.

John Tobler

CONVERSATIONS WITH ERIC CLAPTON by Steve Turner (Abacus Books £1.25).

Books written on and around the subject of our music often tend to be padded out, usually because the artist or group about whom the book is written is less than co-operative. Here we have a book which is the epitome of what can be done with the artist's approval, and with a writer who has researched his subject to a very large extent. If you are into Eric Clapton, it is absolutely essential reading, which I guarantee you will not put down, and even if you're not, it's fascinating stuff, the tale of a man, who despite his totally deserved superstar status, suffers from very much the same problems as anyone else.

The main hook for those external to the music is the story of heroin addiction, which was conquered by acupuncture and electric shock treatment. While there are still gaps (for example, was the acquisition of the drug and its subsequent use really quite as simple as it's described, or was there pressure brought to bear by 'friends' to check it out), this is undoubtedly an honest account of where EC was at during certain periods of his life, and underlines the uncertainty with which his career progressed. His attitude to what many of us would consider to be big deals is refreshingly simplistic - and things happened, he bent accordingly, and the music that came out sometimes seemed to be a by product.

It reflects great credit on Clapton that this book was written at all - I'm sure you're all aware that he's one of the least interviewed people of recent years, and allowing Steve Turner to ask some of the unaskable questions he does, certainly gives us a much more accurate picture of a man most



of us really want to like, but whose movements were shrouded in rumour. It's very difficult to lead any normal kind of life when you're a rock star, because the slightest excessive move will be reported in isolation, and it's only by a book of this nature that the record can be kept straight. Some of the book has appeared before in Rolling Stone, but by no means all, and it was some time ago. The same format of pure question and answer is maintained throughout, and while that may render the book incomprehensible to those unfamiliar with Eric Clapton, it's pleasant to read this sort of thing, and not be interrupted by factual introductory paragraphs which tend to break the flow. The only thing which does break the flow is the illustrations, a series of photographs of which many are previously unpublished, and are therefore well worthwhile.

I'm not going to criticise this book at all - it's something I've wanted to read for years, and I'm only sorry that I wasn't the one who wrote it. No Clapton fan should be without a copy, and if you read Zigzag, you should be a Clapton fan. So go and get one.

John Tobler

'Olias Of Sunhillow' JON ANDERSON Atlantic K50261

Enlightenment already! Jon Anderson undertakes an intrepid voyage to the most distant, misty recesses of human understanding, and returns to unfold the mysteries of the universe to us poor bumbling mortals. In an inspired flight of imagination that would make Tolkien or Moorcock blush, Jon relates the breathtaking tale of three wizards who transport a race of beautiful people from one dying planet to a new Utopia on a wondrous spaceship, which, like the good folk on board, derives its energy from the power of music.

Within the confines of this apparently simple tale, however, Jon has crammed an infinite wealth of experience and realisation, well beyond the comprehension of ordinary men. Read this as an example of his immaculate revelations:

'Worlds that lie between
Are simply seconds of words we do
not mean,

Cast a pastel sky
Or simply wonder until the day you die!.

Cosmic couplets of this nature are commonplace, and while turning the full weight of his mighty mind to realms hitherto undreamt of, Jon manages to extend the scope of the English language with new words like 'alternity' and 'translike', and a revolutionary use of prepositions.

As if this wasn't enough, Jon's good lady wife gets her say too:

'We strive, we undergo
All of our thoughts
But still life goes on
And the universe is one
We are all of one beam of life!.

Far out and solid, madam...nothing's better left unsaid.

The sugar to help the mystical medicine go down comes in the form of energetically strummed acoustic guitars, whizzing and bleeping synthesisers (there's a great Tiny Clanger impersonation!), and majestic mellotrons, creating an awesomely lush musical setting in which Jon wrestles with lines like 'Total relating appointed close factors of what we regard as the answer lies there!.

'Olias of Sunhillow' must rank as the greatest contribution to the expansion of mass consciousness since Patrick Moraz's 'Story Of it'.

Michel Delving

RICK GRIFFIN EXHIBITION AT THE ROUNDHOUSE

Elsewhere in this mighty mag, you should find an advertisement concerning an exhibition to be held at the Roundhouse highlighting the work of Rick Griffin, probably the prime San Francisco rock artist of the late sixties, and still a definite force in the design of sleeves and posters.

The exhibition has been organised by Alcock and Dicks, the people whose T-shirts you should know all about because they're advertised in the magazine, and Rick Griffin in person will be coming to open the show, which runs from August 11th to August 21st, from midday until 8pm. A modest fifty pence, much of which will be donated to the roundhouse rather than the organisers, will gain you admission, where you will be regaled with San Francisco sounds from the late sixties, and be able to enjoy beverages from a licensed bar, as well as being able to feast your eyes on seventy original pieces of Griffin artwork covering album sleeves, gig posters, comics, film posters and (oh joy!) surfing. Seemingly, Griffin has been contributing to 'Surfer' magazine since he was thirteen, and still enjoys catching that wild last ride, as he lives by the Pacific.

If the thought of the Roundhouse and the attendant downer freaks throwing up, the constant enquiries about whether you have any acid, and the overflowing bogs appal you, don't despair, because the show is in a part of the building called 'Roundhouse Downstairs', which has a separate entrance.

As a final inducement for those of you with some spare cash, you can buy limited and numbered editions of four of Griffin's finest prints, a poster for 'Aoxomoxoa' which preceded the album sleeve and was for a concert at the Avalon Ballroom, a Quicksilver and Kaleidoscope poster referred to as 'bleeding heart', a Hog Farm Benefit Poster, and a humorous effort called 'Can-A-Blist', a wishful think-

METALLIC KO



ICE AND THE STONES

LIVE ALBUM
RELEASED JULY 21ST - SKYDOG RECORDS

U.K. DISTRIBUTION:
BIZZARRE RECORDS DISTRIBUTION 33, PRAED STREET, LONDON W.2.

AVAILABLE FROM:-

IN LONDON

ROCK ON
VIRGIN
HARLEQUIN (DEAN ST.)
ROUGH TRADE
HOT STUFF

H.M.V.
FLYOVER
ROCKIN' RECORDS
RAMONES RECORDS
BIZZARRE

OUTSIDE LONDON

VIRGIN (ALL BRANCHES)
H.M.V. (BEDFORD)
FUNHOUSE (MARGATE)
ROCK BOTTOM (CANTERBURY)
REMEMBER THOSE OLDIES (CAMBRIDGE)

CATAPILLA (EXETER)
SUNSHINE (OXFORD)
DRIFTIN' (CHELTENHAM)

ing advertisement about the legalisation of something or other.

Such activities as these are few and far between, as I'm sure you know, so we're all going to go, and we urge all of you who can possibly spare the time and money to get there too. Only about a hundred yards down the road is Compendium as well, where you could easily spend some worthwhile time and perhaps money. Supporting worthwhile causes is rarely as rewarding as this one promises to be.

John Tobler

'Son Of Spirit'
SPIRIT
Mercury SRM-1-1053 (Import)

Let me explain. This review is being written as an unashamed, unsolicited seconding of Max Bell's proposal that Randy California is the unheralded hero in rock music today, and in the hope that if enough noise is made, Phonogram will belatedly see fit to release this album, which is probably the finest ever under the name of Spirit, and certainly one of the best released - or not - in this undeniably vintage year.

The original five piece Spirit made four albums between 1968 and 1970, varying from the good to the exquisite, but after reaching their recorded peak with 'Dr. Sardonius', they split up. Jay Ferguson and Mark Andes went off to form the uninspiring Jo Jo Gunne, Ed Cassidy and John Locke unfortunately continued the Spirit tradition with a pair of old farts from Texas called the Staehely Brothers, making 'Feed-back', one of the shortest and shoddiest albums in rock history, and Randy... well, Randy had a nasty accident near the end of recording 'Sardonius', falling off his nag and testing the firmness of the terra with his head, which cracked. (His head, I'm afraid, not the terra).

Little was heard of Randy for a while after that, except for rumours that the fall had scrambled the contents of his cerebral cavity somewhat, and that he was now a bona fide space case. For most die-hard Spirit fans this diagnosis was conformed when he reappeared in 1972 with a solo album, 'Kapt. Kopter and the Fabulous Twirlybirds', which was very strongly influenced by his old jamming buddy from the mid-sixties, Jimi Hendrix, even to the extent of having Noel Redding on a couple of tracks (under the unlikely pseudonym of Clit McTorus). As far as I can make out, about two people in the whole world, apart from myself, like this record.

In the spring of '73, California toured Britain with Ed Cassidy and a bassist called Larry Knight, who were actually Kapt. Kopter, but used the name Spirit for commercial purposes (again to the horror of die-hard fans of the jazzy, 'soft rock' Spirit). Apparently things were at a pretty low ebb at this stage, and it seems that on the night before they played Aylesbury (when I thought they were fabulous), Randy had had to be dragged out of the Thames after lobbing himself off London Bridge!

Although Spirit (ie. California and Cassidy plus a bassist) were now back together on a long term basis, it wasn't until early last year that their next album did come out, by which time the band had signed with Mercury. 'Spirit of '76' (Mercury SRM-2-804, Import - just deleted in this country... Booo!!), like most double albums, is a



bit inconsistent. Some of the stuff, for example the versions of 'Like A Rolling Stone' and 'Walking The Dog', and Randy's own 'Joker On The Run' and 'Feeling In Time' are dynamite, and the bits of silliness and tedium through the four sides are well outweighed by the good grist, but the real killer proof of Spirit/California's stature in the scheme of things was shortly to follow.

I got my copy of 'Spirit of '76' in February of this year, and I don't think it had been out very long at that point, but apparently Phonogram, who handle Mercury in this country, still don't consider it good enough to get a release here, which is just ridiculous.

'Son Of Spirit' is far more controlled than Randy's two previous efforts; the atmosphere is easy, relaxed, and much of the texturing is acoustic, and Randy's guitar virtuosity, which dominated 'Kapt. Kopter' and got a good airing on 'Spirit of '76', is subordinate to the songs, except on the slow, bluesy 'The Other Song', which is primarily an excuse for Randy to play some lovely Echoplex. On the rest of the album - all originals, except for a brief 'Yesterday' - he creates beautiful, delicate tapestries of acoustic and electric guitars, shot through with synthesiser or harmonica colouring, which are sometimes set on a solid rhythmic framework, and sometimes left to hang free, wafting gently in the refreshing breeze that blows right through the album.

Nick Kent once said that few people in the seventies get the sort of warmth and humanity into their instrumental sounds that the great groups of the sixties achieved, but Randy California does, from ringing acoustic guitar to a great horn-like tone on 'Yesterday' and the intro to 'Don't Go Away'. Subtlety and immaculate good taste are the keynotes, though, and the true beauty and complexity of the record is only gradually appreciated - after six months or more, I'm still finding new harmony lines, new threads in the overall weave.

The songs themselves are quite excellent - California's always been

a master of mellifluous melodies, and those on this album rank with his best. 'Maybe You'll Find', in particular, is a love song of staggering poignancy, and if Phonogram released it as a single... who knows? Gallagher & Lyle and Dr. Hook have proved that Joe Public is ready for such unobtrusively commercial music, and Randy California is a champion in this field, as he is in the fields of singing, song-writing, arranging and guitar heroism.

The lyrics for the most part are simple, even simplistic, and either romantic or quasi-mystical, with no sign of California's earlier ecological or political preoccupations, but the music is the message here, and it's completely seductive.

Look, even if you have to fork out four quid for an import copy of this record, (which I hasten to point out I did), I urge you to do so, and guarantee you won't regret it. Randy California is one of the very greatest exponents of the music we all love, and it's up to us to ensure that he doesn't continue to be ignored. If this is what breaking your head does for you, I'm off to saddle me up a rumbustious hoss.

Paul Kendall

'New Riders'
N.R.P.S.
MCA MCF 2758

This is the first album from the New Riders Of The Purple Sage on MCA, and follows seven albums in five years on CBS, where the group went in an upward arc initially, reaching a peak with the 'Panama Red' album, released in late '73, which contains what I consider to be their all-time killer track, 'Lonesome LA Cowboy', which the more observant among you will have noticed was written by Pete Rowan. From that point on, their career with CBS degenerated to the point where their epitaph for the label, 'Oh What A Mighty Time!', was roundly criticised as rubbish by every acquaintance of mine who ever heard it.

So often, the impetus provided by a change of label acts as a shot in the arm, although whether such a phrase is appropriate when discussing groups from California is doubtful. Anyway, that has happened to a certain extent here, and while I can't tell you that NRPS are right back at the top of their form, it's surely an improvement over the recent past in many respects. It's not a long album, with ten three minute songs, only one of which is written within the group, in this case by Marmaduke Dawson. A strange contrast to the group's first album, which he entirely wrote, but at least an admission that the muse within has gone quiet. Had the other nine songs been inspired choices all the time, instead of in five or six cases out of nine, the album would be well on the way to a 'catch it if you can' rating, but let me say right now that I never want to hear 'You Never Can Tell' again, and 'Hard To Handle' belongs to no-one but Otis Redding. The versions here are most unnecessary and belong in a furnace. The rest fortunately ranges from reasonable - 'Swimming Song' by Loudon Wainwright and 'Annie May' - to highly acceptable, a category which includes a nice version of the Stones' 'Dead Flowers', with some good Buddy Cage steel playing (and it's a track which previously appeared on the 'Home Home On The Road' album), '15 Days Under

The Hood', which was written partially by Jack Tempchin, whose other credits feature 'Already Gone' and 'Peaceful Easy Feeling', for both of which he has my undying gratitude, the Dawson song 'Can't Get Over You', which again highlights Cage and also Spencer Dryden's chunky drumming, plus two songs whose licks come directly from the Golden Book of Country Licks. Harmony vocals, predictably appropriate bass lines, and a topping of tasteful steel are the sort of ingredients, and the songs are from a 'Truck Drivers' Favourites' anthology.

What is most impressive about the record is that for the first time since he joined the band, there isn't a Skip Battin song featured, which is not to put him down, but rather to say that to my mind, they haven't increased my enjoyment of an album when they have been included. As you may know, Skip has now joined the Burritos, and will be replaced for the Wembley gig by Steve Love, ex of Rick Nelson's Stone Canyon Band and the Roger McGuinn band, and therefore used to playing with the right people.

In fact, the opportunity to be seen by that many people could easily help sales quite considerably, for when it comes down to it, the New Riders are exactly the right sort of band to watch on a hot day, surrounded by beer cans. Having heard this album, I shall definitely watch them at the Stadium, although if I hadn't heard it, I'd probably have turned up late. See y'all there? Octavius Knox



IN THE NEXT ACTION-PACKED ISSUE OF

ZIGZAG

A BAND CALLED

THE EAGLES

IAN MATTHEWS

WARREN ZEVON

REVIEWS

NEWS

GRIST

FAB PICS

BITS & PIECES

TRIVIA

LITTLE FEAT

FLAMIN GROOVIES

KATE & ANNA MCGARRIGLE

BEWARE OF

Worthless & Fraudulent Imitations.

JEFFERSON STARSHIP

BOONE AND JOCKO in

SUBSCRIBE!

MY GOD - IT'S BOONE... AND MAC GARRY TOO! WHAT ARE YOU GUYS DOING HERE? I THOUGHT HURLEY WASN'T GOIN' TO DRAW US THIS MONTH.

WELL, PLANS HAVE CHANGED... WE'VE GOT TO DO THE SUBSCRIPTION HYPE.

SHUT YOUR FACE, YOU WASHED-UP OLD SEA-DOG... LEAVE ALL THE TALKIN' TO ME.

YOU SEE JOCKO, IF READERS HAVE THE FORESIGHT TO SUBSCRIBE TO ZIGZAG... THEY CAN GET AN ALBUM CHEAP.

A GOOD ALBUM?

NOTHING BUT THE FINEST! GO ON - I CAN LISTEN AS I EAT.

I TELL YA FOLKS... I CAN'T STOP EATING!

LISTEN, JOCKO... YOU CAN GET 'DESIRE' BY BOB DYLAN, OR 'GO FOR BROKE' BY IAN MATTHEWS.

OR 'REACH FOR THE SKY' BY THE SUTHERLAND BROS AND QUIVER, OR 'DE DEMENTO'S DELIGHTS' OR 'LA BOOGA BOOGA' BY ANDY FAIRWEATHER LOWE!

YEAH? BUT HOW MUCH? 12 ISSUES OF ZIGZAG PLUS AN ALBUM - ALL FOR ONLY £5-50.

THE OTHER RATES THE SAME? £4-20 FOR 12 ISSUES WITHOUT THE ALBUM, £5-50 FOR EUROPE, \$16 USA - SURFACE, \$21 BY AIR?

YUP!

WELL, WE'D BETTER SUBSCRIBE TODAY! WHERE DO WE SEND THE BREAD?

SAME PLACE - ZIGZAG, 10 KENNET ST, READING, BERKS. COME ON, READERS... DO IT TODAY!

Boone and Jocko, and Michael Hurley appear by courtesy of RACCOON RECORDS, CALIFORNIA



The super duper Kursaal Flyers: Tom Collins/Kirk Douglas/Dick Bullock/Pearl Shuttlecock/Will Larch.

A RANDOM EIGHT

This is a new column, replacing Mac's Fallible Guide. What we plan to do is give a random selection of 8 albums to a different musician each month, and let him tender his capsulated opinions. To kick off, Will Birch, drummer and songwriter with the Kursaal Flyers (and also owner of one of the largest and tastiest record collections in Europe), accepted the carrier bag.

When the editor of Zigzag invited me to be 'guest reviewer' and offer my comments on eight new records, my common sense warned me that 'artists' should not attempt 'journalism'. But when Mr. Frame added that I could keep the records, another kind of common sense took over. My own vinyl habit has reached crisis proportions; out of eight records there could be one or two I'd buy anyway. Ashamed, I accepted the invitation and temporarily joined the ranks of the 'registered' vinyl addict! And when I saw the eight records in question (only one of which I'd already bought), I realised the dilemma facing reviewers. To 'review' only the artists you like is a cop-out (I think). To speak your mind inevitably upsets.

LOUDON WAINWRIGHT 111
IT-Shirt! Arista ARTY 127

What a great prefix! Clive Davis is gradually turning Arista into a real good label. Some of his signings give the "Oh, we'd better have one of those!" impression, but other signings are reassuring and inspired, e.g. the Kinks! And Loudon Wainwright, whose career Mr. Davis handled with affection when they both slaved and suffered at Columbia. This is the record I'd already bought and I love it! Anticipating Loudon's sixth on his third, I half expected him to be out of steam, but he's back at almost his best. From 'Reciprocity': "She was determined and he saw it his way/ He threw a tantrum and she threw an ashtray". I've not yet seen the obvious promotional device for this record, but it must exist.

ALEXANDER ROBERTSON
'Shadows Of A Thin Man' SPARTY1000

Oh dear. This one should have the

Arty prefix. I've listened to it twice. The production is good; the musicians, led by Herbie Flowers, are superb in a British way, but I'm afraid I find the music shallow. The lyrics are sort of Clive Jamesy. Sorry.

FOOL'S GOLD
'Fool's Gold' ARTY 131

Pleasant if uninspired. Country rock moustaches abound. The production, shared between Glyn Johns, Joe Walsh, Glenn Frey and John Stronach, is consistently good. The lightweight material is well performed, but never really rises above the level of background music.

TERRY GARTHWAITE •
'Terry! ARTY 124

Glad to receive this one, I would have bought it anyway. Miss Garthwaite was a member of the late and under-rated Joy of Cooking (as everyone knows). She later made a country record with Toni Brown, and now she's solo. I expected another country album, but there are varied styles here. A black influence predominates. 'Wah Wah! Watson plays guitar, maestro universal synthesiser system, maestro sample and hold unit, and voice bag. Alright by me. Will he become known as 'Sample and Hold Unit' Watson? A good record.

BRIAN PROTHEROE
'Leave Him To Heaven! Chrysalis CHR 1118

My tastes are wide, but don't encompass musicals glorifying the rock'n' roll era. Protheroe has talent, but this programme of predictable R'n'R standards is a waste of time in the recorded medium.

JERRY LEE LEWIS
'Golden Hits! Phillips Int. 6336 245

To the casual punter, a deception. Not Jerry Lee's Sun dynamite, but his smooth Mercury remakes. To be fair, Martin Hawkins more or less mentions this in his small print sleeve notes. Presumably released by Phonogram to fill the void left in their catalogue after the 'departure' of the Sun originals. Although by the time of these recordings, Jerry Lee had developed a fair old technique at his

pumpin' piano.

DRANSFIELD
'The Fiddler's Dream! Transatlantic TRA 322

Is the group called Dransfield, or is it a Barry Dransfield solo album? Hard to tell. He is assisted by Robin Dransfield and Brian Harrison, who also produced. English folk music with electric bass and drums. Neat fiddling. Not my bag.

STREETWALKERS
'Red Card! Vertigo 9102 010

Great rocking stuff. Might have bought this. Any self-respecting mod will have grooved to Derek Martin's 'Daddy Rolling Stone' around 64/65 (also covered energetically by the Who) and that same mod will have seen Family in their earliest days. (In fact I'll bet the Farinas did 'Daddy Rolling Stone!'). Here's the connection... Streetwalkers close side one with a great version of the same. Also a mono single; are Doreen's BBC Mafia allowing the public to hear it? It would sure give the Fun Thirty a much-needed kick up the arse. The rest of the record rocks out. Chapman's voice is dynamic, and this record is in the charts where it belongs. I'm overjoyed to see Chapman and Whitney succeeding, because Family were one of the very few genuinely creative and worthwhile groups of the progressive era. Now they're rockin' like thunder!!

Well, that's it... the good, the bad, and the nowhere. I won't pretend I've played all these records to death, so those that have received harsh treatment could be growers... except SPARTY 1000. Buying records is so different from being given review copies. It's almost better! Albums that have thrilled me so far in 1976 are Blue Oyster Cult, Warren Zevon, Boz Scaggs, Graham Parker and Don Williams. Finally some information: Music For Pleasure (believe it or not) have issued the great lost Charlie & The Wide Boys LP. It's true! The number is MFP 50293. I bought it today for a mere 25 bob. It exists! Charlie Ainley wrote a mean song, and all fans of the beat will enjoy it. Bye for now.

Will Birch.



*A refined, humorous paper, printed in colours.
Interesting Competitions. Clever Stories.
Smart humorous pictures.*

Join the stars reading Zigzag back issues! These extremely valuable volumes are not only a giveaway at 30 pence each (including post and packaging), but also constitute a shrewd investment, (in only seven years, the value of number one has increased by 5000%!). Don't delay... send off today! Please make cheques or postal orders payable to Zigzag, and send your requirements, plus name and address, to Zigzag Back Issues, Prestagat Ltd., 10 Kennet St., Reading, Berks.

ONE TO TWENTY FIVE... SOLD OUT COMPLETELY
TWENTY SIX... Charlatans/Joe Cocker/Hawkwind/Dan Hicks/San Francisco Family Tree/Brewers Droop/Greenwich Village/Dave Van Ronk/Elton John.
TWENTY SEVEN... Jimmy Page/Bridget St. John/Ducks Deluxe/Kinks Traffic/Robin Trower/Stillis/Byrds1.
TWENTY EIGHT... Jimmy Page/Nitty Gritty Dirt Band/Kim Fowley/Canterbury Family Tree/Kevin Ayers/Love/Byrds2.
TWENTY NINE... Genesis/Eagles/Beefheart/Everly Bros./Byrds/Speight/Farewell to first Golden Era!
THIRTY TO THIRTY TWO... SOLD OUT COMPLETELY
THIRTY THREE... McKendree Spring/Led Zeppelin/Robert Fripp/Boz Scaggs/Clarence White/Frame In Memphis.
THIRTY FOUR TO THIRTY SIX... SOLD OUT COMPLETELY
THIRTY SEVEN... Charlie Watts/Nils Lofgren/Mighty Baby/country Joe/Crazy Horse/Grateful Dead.
THIRTY EIGHT... SOLD OUT COMPLETELY
THIRTY NINE... Michael Nesmith interview/Ralph McTell/Steve Miller/Evan Parker/Not much else.
FORTY... Dave Mason/Peter Hammett/Michael Nesmith/Allmans/Pic of Mac/Terrible cover.
FORTY ONE... Worst selling issue ever! /Byrds/Quicksilver/Velvets/Free/John Martyn/Moby Grape.
FORTY TWO & FORTY THREE... SOLD OUT COMPLETELY
FORTY FOUR... Eric Clapton/Tim Buckley/10cc/Marc Benno/Magic Band/Tangerine Dream/Blue Oyster Cult.
FORTY FIVE... Bruce Springsteen/Russ Ballard/Grateful Dead/New Riders of the Purple Sage/Poco/Rick Nelson.
FORTY SIX... Ron Wood/Leonard Cohen/Phil Lesh/Poco/Kevin Ayers/Rick Nelson saga Part 2.
FORTY SEVEN... Keith Richard/Roy Harper/Grace Slick/Chilli Willi/Rick Nelson and Redwing.
FORTY EIGHT... Jesse Winchester/Butts Band/John Sebastian/Arthur Lee/Neil Young/Curt Boettcher.
FORTY NINE... Ray Davies/Curt Boettcher/Gene Clark/Nick Drake/Jess Roden/Home, etc.
FIFTY... Little Feat/Sneaky Pete and the Burritos/Arthur Lee/Lindisfarne/Nico/Neil Young.
FIFTY ONE... The Doctor Feelgood story/Ian Hunter/Norman Greenbaum/Henry Cow and Gentle Giant.
FIFTY TWO... Lou Reed/Country Rock/The Strawbs/John Cipollina/The Burritos/Caravan/Wishbone Ash.
FIFTY THREE... Genesis/Pure Prairie League/Country Rock/The Magic Band (Mallard)/Jesse Colin Young/Strawbs.
FIFTY FOUR... Stephen Stills/Andy Fraser/Speedy Keen/Country Joe & The Fish/Billy Joel/Ciancy.
FIFTY FIVE... Tim Buckley/Gerry Rafferty/Jack Bruce/Larry Knechtal/Todd Rundgren/Joe Walsh.
FIFTY SIX... SOLD OUT COMPLETELY
FIFTY SEVEN... Loudon Wainwright/Van Der Graaf Generator/Poco/America/Sutherland Brothers & Quiver/The Flamin' Groovies.
FIFTY EIGHT... Commander Cody/Bob Dylan/Barry Melton/Steve Miller/Blue Oyster Cult/Kaleidoscope/Nick Kent/Sandy Pearlman.
FIFTY NINE... Nick Kent/10cc/Kaleidoscope/Gram Parsons/James Burton/Country Joe/R reviews, etc.
SIXTY... Procol Harum/Nils Lofgren/Sons Of Champlin/J. J. Cale/Kaleidoscope/Eddie & the Hot Rods/Reviews, etc.
SIXTY ONE... Dr. Feelgood/Procol Harum/Dillards/Bonnie Raitt/Ozark Mountain Daredevils/Solution/Reviews/Charts/Mac.
SIXTY TWO... Jethro Tull/Dr. Feelgood/Procol Harum/Tom Waits/Janis Ian/Reviews.

SMALL ADS

Advertise here for only 7p a word!!! (Exclamation marks free - so use as many as you like!). All ads must be pre-paid by PO/cheque. Box numbers 50p extra. Advertisers must supply their name and address. Zigzag reserves the right of refusal. Late stuff will be held over to the next issue. Send your ad, written at least semi legibly, to Zigzag, Prestagat Ltd, 10 Kennet Street, Reading, Berks.

HOT WACKS ALBUM PRICES ARE THE CHEAPEST ON EARTH!!!!!! Shrink-wrapped US albums for less than a quid - despite the constantly shrinking pound! Are we all insane? Send a sae, soon as poss, to Bert Muirhead, Hot Wacks, 16 Almondbank Terrace, Edinburgh EH11 1SS

Looking for a record!!! - 'Leather Coated Minds!!!! - Send wants lists plus offers - SAE, Tim, 41 Seagrave Rd., London SW6.

PAWS FOR THOUGHT: Eric the Gigpax cat offers his body AND colour prints - slides of Van der Graaf, Gong, Bay of Pigs, Alberto Y Lost Trios Paranoias and Sam Apple Pie PLUS free propaganda on Hitler Youth Enterprises. Sets of 20 gloss 3 1/2" x 5" prints - £4.85, 20 slides - £3.50. Send to: Eric, Gigpax International 15, Marks Rd, Wokingham, Berks. (Cheques & POs made out to T. Kerr) Miaoou for now!!!

COMPENDIUM SELLS FANZINES!!!! Trans Oceanic Trouser Press, Who Put The Bomp, Omaha Rainbow, Hot Wacks... write for Fanzine Alley List to Compendium Books, 240 Camden High Street, London NW1.

HOT WACKS 11, ready now, featuring Jan & Dean, Jerry Jeff Walker, Dr. Hook, Frankie Miller and lots more. 28p from 16 Almondbank Terrace, Edinburgh EH11 1SS

American Kaleidoscope: When Scopes Collide - Pacific Arts PAC 102
MC5: High Time - Atlantic 40223
MC5: Kick Out The Jams - Elektra 42027
Gene Clark: Roadmaster - A&M 87584
Gene Clark: White Light - A&M 88172
Kentucky Mountain Boys/Chris Hillman: Bluegrass Favourites - Ariola 87598

Sneaky Pete Kleinow: Cold Steel - Ariola 87736
Dillard & Clark: C&D - A&M 86027
Flying Burrito Brothers: Live In Amsterdam (2LPs) - Ariola 86439
Flying Burrito Brothers: Honky Tonk Heaven (2LPs) - A&M 87585
Flying Burrito Brothers: Bluegrass Special - Ariola 86501
Burritos: Hot Burrito - A&M 85272
Dillard & Clark: Fantastic Expedition - A&M SP4158
Dillard & Clark: Thru The Morning - A&M SP4203
Burritos: Gilded Palace Of Sin - A&M SP4175

All distributed by: Charmdale Ltd., 3 Sandringham Mews, Ealing, London W.5. 3DG. (01-579-9331). Ask for these and many more interesting imports at your local record store.



The studio was filled with the rich odour of roses, and when the light summer wind stirred amidst the trees of the garden, there came through the open door the heavy scent of the lilac, or the more delicate perfume of the pink-flowering thorn.

And hurdling the garden wall, hot foot from those old Kentucky hills of Tennessee, comes the ancient mariner, just in time to scribble out this month's column...and we start with the gig of the month.

The American Independence Day Flamin' Groovies/Ramones/Stranglers/Andy Dunkley Roundhouse jamboree might even be the Gig of the Year. In over 5 hours of music, I didn't hear a single half minute of dross...it was all great! Even the Ramones, who I fully expected to be dreadful, grabbed my heels and shook me rigid with the most unique approach I've ever seen since the sixties. (Is he kidding, they wonder?). The Groovies were sensational, of course, and the Stranglers have a demon hybrid Seeds/Doors sound which must bring them wider recognition before September. Dunkley's selections are always from the heart, and he played some corkers to celebrate the Bicentennial.

There were four of us from Zigzag there, and we all dug it madly - as did every single one of the capacity audience EXCEPT Allan Jones from Melody Maker...and he didn't enjoy it at all - even when me and Needs threatened to give him a fat lip if he wrote a snide review. And what did he do? He wrote a snide review. Now look here, Jonesy...we all love you, you've written some ace stuff in the past, but you're definitely going off the rails lately. What's the matter with you...you lost your zip or something? Somebody snuffed your sparkle? If the Melody Maker persist in their 'serious' posture, why do they allow such silly, misrepresentative, school-boy dilettantism? Who the hell do they think they're representing if their reporter is the only person in the stuffed Roundhouse who didn't like the Groovies? Spreading nonsense like that, it's a good job nobody reads the MM these days. What that tired old rag needs is a kick up the pants and a box of Q-Tips. And Allan Jones should be locked in a hermetically sealed room and force fed with a tape loop of Budgie and the Groundhogs jamming together.

Enough of this windmill tilting, and on to the lyricists poll. As you can see, Bob Dylan won by a mile, and justly so, with young Joni beating it out with Neil for number two. Now Robert Hunter...there's a strange geezer for you - why doesn't Childs interview him for us? And photograph him too.

The poll category this month is FAVOURITE TRACK OF ALL TIME, which will not only cause you a great deal of brainplay, but is guaranteed to give me spaghetti eyes when I come to collate the results. Think hard,

F.A.V.O.U.R.I.T.E
L.Y.R.I.C.I.S.T.S

POS	READERS' POLL • JULY 1976	votes
1	BOB DYLAN	438
2	JONI MITCHELL	353
3	NEIL YOUNG	337
4	JACKSON BROWNE	276
5	LENNON/MCARTNEY	267
6	BECKER/FAGEN	265
7	GRAM PARSONS	233
8	PETE TOWNSHEND	214
9	VAN MORRISON	206
10	ROBERT HUNTER	201
11	JIM MORRISON	183
12	FRANK ZAPPA	178
13	LOU REED	177
14	JOHN STEWART	169
15	PETER HAMMILL	163
16	PAUL SIMON	161
17	MICHAEL NESMITH	160
18	GENE CLARK	152
19	ROGER MCGUINN	147
20	CAPTAIN BEEFHEART	146
21	LOWELL GEORGE	133
22	NICK LOWE	130
23	RAY DAVIES	128
24	JOHN PRINE	121
25	JAGGER/RICHARD	120
26	LOUDON WAINWRIGHT	118
27	NILS LOFGEREN	113
28	KEITH REID	113
29	JERRY JEFF WALKER	108
30	ROBBIE ROBERTSON	106
31	IAN ANDERSON	99
32	RANDY CALIFORNIA	99
33	BOB MARLEY	89
34	BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN	88
35	CLIVE JAMES	84
36	LEONARD COHEN	79
37	BRIAN WILSON	77
38	ROBERT PLANT	72
39	PETER GABRIEL	70
40	ROY HARPER	70
41	RANDY NEWMAN	68
42	DAVID BOWIE	65
43	JON ANDERSON	63
44	JIMI HENDRIX	60
45	GRACE SLICK	57
46	STEPHEN STILLS	54
47	KEVIN AYERS	53
48	IAN HUNTER	48
49	RICK ROBERTS	45
50	KEVIN COYNE	43
51	DAVID CROSBY	43
52	PETE BROWN	39
53	ARTHUR LEE	36
54	PHIL LYNOTT	36
55	DAVE COUSINS	36
56	JOHN DENVER	32
57	IAN MATTHEWS	30
58	FREY/HENLEY	30
59	RICHARD THOMPSON	28
60	EMMYLOU HARRIS	27

my friends, then list your ten favourites in order of preference and send them to Mac Garry c/o Yeoman Cottage North Marston, Buckingham...and while you're at it, I'd like you to send me your favourite SUPER SNATCHES OF VINYL. No, this is nothing to do with a certain famed bass player's sex life, but those little moments which always grab you for one reason or another. Let me list you some of mine, and you'll maybe understand what I'm talking about. In 'Christine's Tune', after he sings 'She's telling dirty lies' on the last chorus, you'll hear Gram Parsons cough to clear his throat. Then there's Roger McGuinn's great 'ohhhhh' in '5D', Dylan's 'aaahhh' before the last verse of 'Like A Rolling Stone', Stevie Winwood's gasp before the guitar solo on Traffic's 'Don't Be Sad', etc., etc. You get the drift? They can be any phrase, note, solo, exclamation, etc....but I want your explanations as to why you like them. We'll print the best selection, so if you want your name in the old mag, get your quills out.

Credit where credit is due: I am not a Sounds devotee by any means, but as I write this they are the only one of the weeklies to have reviewed the year's best album - viz, the Warren Zevon album. Not only was the review (done by Miss Charone) extremely perceptive and well put together, but they also ran a full page feature on the guy. They're also the only weekly to have had a feature on Guy Clark. We're proud of you!

Hold the presses! I've just had a copy of this week's MM thrust before me, and on the page laughably headed 'Review Section...5 pages of insight', there lurks yet another review of the above-mentioned record. Would you believe a whole 98 words?...AND that includes a 'review' of John David Souther's latest effort! Presumably written by an avid ELP aficionado, or maybe even Allan Jones, this remarkable piece of insight informs us that 'Zevon has a strictly minimal talent as a songwriter', and that he is 'essentially disposable'. That's funny...I was just thinking the same about MM. It's lucky the old rag's cheaper than ordinary bog paper, or their sales would drop even further.

Omaha is busy preparing a new Rainbow, Bert Hotwax has a new issue in the downpipe, and Nuggets (who have moved to 87 Station Road, Harborne, Birmingham 17) should have number 3 out by the time you read this.

Well, here we are at the bottom of another issue - so please keep those lists and letters coming! Enthusiasm is what counts - and as far as I'm concerned, it's you readers, and not us, who are the lifeblood of the magazine.

Teardrops Will Fall department: Romantics amongst my readership will be heartbroken to learn that my seven month alliance with teenage desiree, Becky Sparkel, the noted Fire Water Queen, is no more. What is left to hold me on dry land, I ask myself? Is it time to go down to the sea again - to the lonely sea and the sky? Meanwhile, I sit in Aylesbury's Hollywood Hawaiian Hotel, listening to the air conditioner hum...

T F Mac G

PS: Grateful thanks to Robin Boulton for collating the poll results in my absence. Give the lad a coconut.

GRATEFUL DEAD



STEAL YOUR FACE

A 2 album package recorded LIVE
at the Winterland, San Francisco.

UAD 60131/2 Cassette 2TCK 60131



Goodtime music with -

COMMANDER CODY

& His Lost Planet Airmen



We've Got a Live One Here!

Double live album recorded in England Early 1976.



K66043