

Number 65 October 1976

Beach Boys

Linda Ronstadt

Ted Nugent

Ramones

25P

ZIGZAG

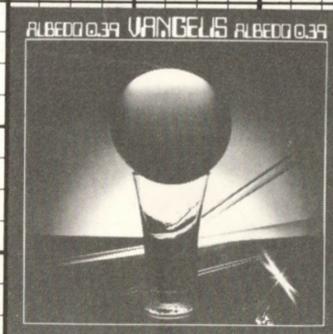
THE ROCK MAGAZINE



ALBEDO 0.39*

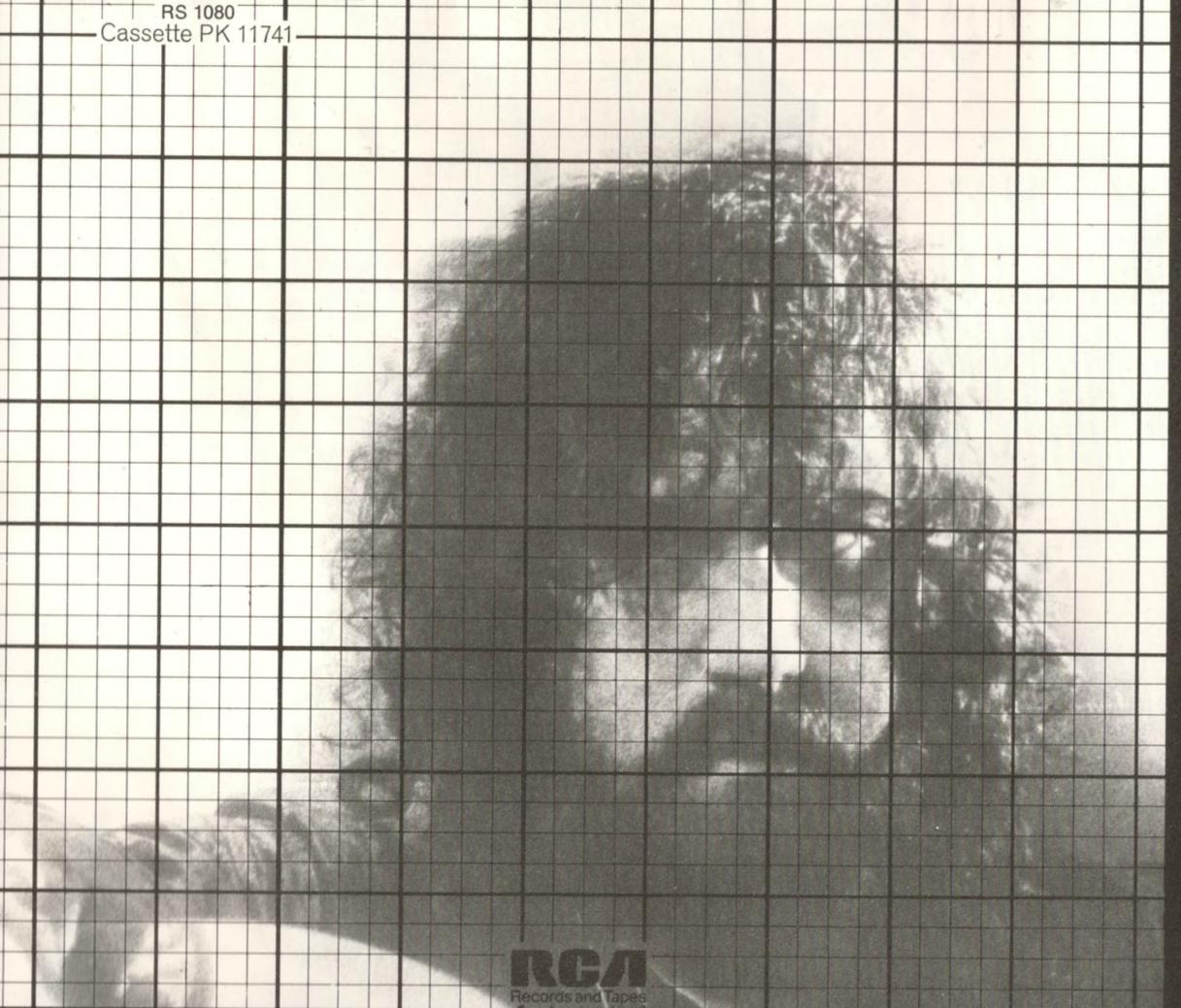
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ZIGZAG 65

October 1976

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CONTENTS

THE ROCK ENCYCLOPAEDIA IN A MILLION PARTS.

Do you know how much correspondence we had about Jackson Browne's feet (as featured on last month's cover)? We had sacks of it!! Just thought you might like to know.

This month, we've reduced the type size of some of our articles, in an attempt to cram even more sniff-snaff into the magazine. Can you still read it...or would you prefer larger type and fewer articles? Please let us know, because this magazine only exists for you. Are you aware that each issue contains over 25,000 words - nearly all of which are pregnant with meaning...so if you are crazy enough to have amassed a complete set, you have a Rock Encyclopaedia of over one and a half million words! And it's still far from complete.

OK...let me get cracking on this month's run down, or I'll get carried away.

John 'Flaming Typewriter' Tobler hurtled into the metropolis to secure the detailed history of the BEACH BOYS - only to have some managerial chappie come along after 14 minutes of interview, and whisk Mike Love away for his daily meditation. "Talk about coitus interruptus", wailed the unhappy and frustrated Tobler. Ah, but never mind...he was able to let his pumping fingers run wild on the second part of his IAN MATTHEWS investigation. This month he chronicles one of Matthews' more interesting chapters...his first solo period and his plainsinging Plainsong days.

Tobler, whose schoolteacher was forever rapping his knuckles and bottom with rulers for reading NME instead of Latin text books, now has more details of the history and evolution of rock music stored in his head than any other fifteen living persons. As well as his journalistic and radio work, he has just completed a book - more of which will be revealed nearer publication.

LINDA RONSTADT does not suffer fools gladly - but in my case she made an exception...so we are able to bring you the only complete authorised Linda Ronstadt story. Well, we would have been, but we got cut off around the start of 1969. You see, back in November 1973, Tobler and I spent three weeks in California, during which we did some 43 interviews. In order to induce various record companies to grease our passages (What?!?), we contracted to write up several of these in the pop weeklies - which we subsequently did. Much of the tape load we brought back, however, has still to find its way into print...and one such interview (which has never previously appeared in its entirety) was with Linda. I had prepared for a colossal, all-encompassing interview, but such were her commitments (and, indeed ours) that the only time we could meet was one afternoon between 2 or 4 - after which we'd arranged to whizz off to meet Michael Nesmith for the first time ever. So, we got chopped off in her prime - but when she arrives here next month, we may be able to finish it off.

Linda is currently topping the American charts with an album whose title track was written by WARREN ZEVON, whose own album is a Yeoman Cottage Grade A1 Certified Killer Classic. We played it to death, till the surface noise buried the quieter passages - and then we got a new one, and played that to death. From your letters it's clear that many of you out there are Zevon converts too - so you'll no doubt be interested in Mac's lengthy interview with the fellow (judiciously pruned to deny you gentle readers the fascinating but utterly irrelevant details of Mr. Garry's latest romance).

Are THE RAMONES really any good? No, they're dreadful! Ah, but they're interesting and unique - or at least they were unique before all these half-assed imitators sprang out and filled the pages of the weeklies with that over-used and mis-applied word 'punk'. Anyway, before the Ramones drift off to the Great Welfare Queue In The Sky, the celebrated rubber-legged giggler Kris Needs cornered them in the gutters outside Dingwalls to probe their worth. Needsy, by the way, is currently laid up; last year he was careering down a long concrete stairway on one of those big brightly colored polythene toy tractors (just a normal day!), when he fell off and bugged the muscles in his back. Last weekend, he sneezed rather too hard, and it all seized up again! He has to remain prone for two weeks.

Paul Kendall, this year's fastest rising rock journalist (also a central pillar of the Aylesbury Roxette), came face to face with TED NUGENT and lived to tell the tale of his days with the Amboy Dukes. (That's Nugent's days, of course, Kendall vigorously denies ever having been a member of the Amboy Dukes).

What else have we got? Oh yes, episode two of the JOEL SCOTT HILL story. Even as my trembling hands beat feverishly on these hard-wearing plastic keys, the Burritos are winging homeward after their tour...to yet another shake-up? (Never mind - it's all good family tree material). This month's scrawl sees Joel struggling around California in the mid-sixties...ah, but just wait till we get to the bit where some loony thrusts a bowie knife into his thigh! It's all exciting stuff, I can tell ya!

No reviews at all this month...there simply wasn't room - so the return of Andy Childs will have to wait until next month. Andy, by the way, has just left his job as press officer at UA, so hopefully he'll find time to scrawl out some stuff, as he lies on the pavement outside the Tithe Farm between opening hours.

I always leave this column till last...stupid really, because I can never think of anything to say - but it looks as if I've filled it up at right...which means another issue goes off to the presses! Just let me make myself a cup of coffee, and I'll get started on the next one.

Pete.

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*Golden Mile

ANNUAL WORKS OUTING TOUR 76

21 Oct. _____ Cheltenham Town Hall	5 _____ Plymouth Technical College	18 _____ Newcastle City Hall
22 _____ Southend Cliffs Pavillion	6 _____ Brunel Univ. Uxbridge	19 _____ Middlesbrough Town Hall
23 _____ Kingston Polytechnic	10 _____ Birmingham Town Hall	20 _____ Manchester Univ.
25 _____ Oxford Polytechnic	11 _____ NEW VICTORIA LONDON	23 _____ Aberdeen Music Hall
29 _____ Lanchester Polytechnic	12 _____ West Runton Pavillion Cromer	24 _____ Glasgow City Hall
30 _____ Univ. of East Anglia Norwich	13 _____ Loughborough Univ.	25 _____ Edinburgh Heriot Watt Univ.
2 Nov. _____ Colston Hall Bristol	16 _____ Guildford Civic	26 _____ Leeds Polytechnic
3 _____ Johnson Hall Yeovil	17 _____ Liverpool Univ.	27 _____ St Albans City Hall

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This interview with Linda is three years old - though it's none the less relevant for that. Recorded at her Hollywood home in November 1973, some time before her breakthrough to real national stardom, it concentrates entirely on her early career. Minor extracts appeared in a 1974 Sounds article, but otherwise the interview has never been previously published.

Since Linda plans to set foot on our sceptred isle in a month or so, it seemed like a good idea to brush the dust off the cassette and transcribe it.

As a point of interest, an almost unheard of young singer called Emmylou Harris, who was staying with Linda at the time, sat quietly embroidering throughout the interview.

Linda Ronstadt: Are you the guy who did that genealogy chart on the Eagles?

ZZ: I can't deny it.

LR: Oh well, I feel better already. You see, I'm very nervous about interviews. Quite frankly, I find a lot of interviewers very ghoulish; so many are just like psychic vampires... just gossip mongers. There again, I guess it's so much easier to sell papers when you exploit or sensationalise your subject. Not long ago, this guy - supposedly a friend of his - did an interview with Jackson Browne which just made him out to be like the sexual marauder of the century... made him look like an idiot who hardly ever had his pants zipped up. That article convinced a bunch of us that we should never do interviews again... but I knew you'd be OK, because you're genuinely interested in the evolution of the music - that family tree was just amazing! There was stuff on there about me that I'd forgotten all about. Anyway... let's go: where do you want to start?

ZZ: Well, so little has ever been revealed about the early half of your career... I'd like to talk about that, if I may?

LR: Great... ask away.

ZZ: I understand that you started singing in Tucson, Arizona, where you were in a group called the New Union Ramblers, with your sister and brother...

LR: How on earth did you know that? The only way you could possibly have known that was by phoning my mother! Have you been speaking with my mother?

ZZ: No, I just hoard useful information. The point is that your family had a very strong musical heritage, right?

LR: Right. I guess it all stems from my grandfather, who was a rancher and a self-taught musician; he could play anything from flute to piano, and he used to be a bandleader too... played guitar in this little band which used to play in the town square - because Tucson was a fairly small place back then. He used to compose marches and so on - as well as play a wide variety of music that was currently popular.

I still have his guitar, in fact. He had a real old beautiful Martin, with a rosewood back and an ebony fretboard... and he taught my father to play guitar. My father used to sing too; he had such a beautiful voice that he could make me cry... but most times it wasn't as serious as that. He and this friend of his often used to sit around with a bottle of Tequila and sing good old bloodcurdling revolutionary songs... no, it wasn't Tequila, it was a similar drink, but made from a different cactus - and there was a worm in the bottom of each bottle... it was the traditional Mexican way of giving it that perfect flavour!

Anyway, my father and his friend used to sing these songs, and whenever one of them forgot the words, he had to take another hit from the bottle. After a while of course, they couldn't remember anything at all! But the thing was, if you took the last drink from the bottle, you had to eat the worm too... and the worm soaks up a lot of alkaloids during the time the drink is stored until ready for consumption... so it's very psychedelic! Gets you real loaded!



LINDA RONSTADT

recalls her days with the
STONE PONEYS

Linda Ronstadt at the time of her first post-Stone Poneys recordings.

My father was a really fine singer, and we (there were four of us kids) grew up surrounded by and loving all this music. He taught my sister to play guitar - just rudimentary chords to start off - you know, CFGA and D... and she in turn taught my brother, who taught me. So when I was 16, I was playing a bit of guitar... although I didn't pursue it. In fact, I've only just started playing again - I play 'It Doesn't Matter Anymore' during my set. Hey, am I rattling on too fast... going into too much detail?

ZZ: Oh no... Zigzag readers like as full a picture as possible.

LR: That's good. Well, as you said, my brother and sister and I had this trio called the New Union Ramblers, and we used to appear at local coffee houses in Tucson, and sometimes do local TV and radio shows... we used to sing whatever we liked - whatever we thought was pretty.

ZZ: I read somewhere that your greatest influence was Mexican music and a girl called Lola Beltran in particular.

LR: Right enough! We used to sing folk songs, country songs, bluegrass and Mexican music, because we weren't too far from the border... and yes, I was very heavily influenced by all the Mexican music that came on the radio... it's really driving music, but it's got really weird time signatures and time changes. Do you know about Lola Beltran?

ZZ: Not a thing.

LR: Well, she was my favourite girl singer in all the world at that time; she was the hottest chick singer in Mexico - a real hero figure... does sort of Mexican country music.

ZZ: Do you speak Mexican, or should it be Spanish?

LR: I speak a little Spanish. My father spoke it fluently, and to some extent it was always spoken around our home, but I can't speak it that well. If I'm down in Mexico for a couple of weeks, I can understand it... but I can sing it better than I can speak it.

ZZ: What were the Mexican songs about?

LR: Oh, the lyrics were invariably very dramatic. Actually, my favourite was about a singer who died, and the trees and the fields are all mourning his death because he was such a great singer - and it tells about how his songs will live on in the hearts of the people, and in the wheatfields, and the coffee fields, and everything. It sounds real corny, I know, but sung in Spanish it really is a beautiful song.

ZZ: OK... let's leave Arizona, and move the scenario to California, where, according to your official biography, you formed the Stone Poneys, an acoustic group that made three mildly successful albums for Capitol. Could you fill in some detail, please?

LR: Well, the Stone Poneys was really Kenny Edwards and me. Kenny's a really great musician, but we didn't really do an awful lot in that group.

ZZ: Does that mean you'd rather not talk about them?

LR: I don't mind talking about them, but I don't really think it means anything... like I say, I don't think we ever achieved anything of any significance.

ZZ: What preposterous nonsense! For a start, you brought Mike Nesmith's writing to the public at large. ('Different Drum' was an American Top Twenty hit in January 1968)...

LR: Well, I got that song from the Greenbriar Boys; they made three albums for Vanguard Records, which really influenced the Stone Poneys. They had this singer called John Herald, and I used to listen to him a lot... I was really impressed by his vocal delivery and phrasing. We got 'Different Drum', 'High Muddy Water' and 'Ramblin' Round' from the Greenbriar Boys

...and 'Dark End Of The Street' and 'We Need A Whole Lot More Of Jesus', I first learnt from John Herald too.

ZZ: You did a lot of Tim Buckley material as well...

LR: That was because he shared the same manager as us, Herb Cohen, but I really loved his writing anyway.

ZZ: I think we're jumping too fast here... can we go back to when you arrived in California?

LR: There was this guy called Bobby Kimmel; he was a bass player from Tucson who sometimes used to back the New Union Ramblers. He went off to California to look for fame and fortune, and about a year later he phoned me and asked if I wanted to be in a rock and roll band. I said "Sure!" and hopped in the car, and drove over... that's how it all began.

ZZ: Was that the Stone Poneys?

LR: No, we were called the Kimmel Brothers! This was Bobby Kimmel on guitar, Kenny Edwards on guitar, a drummer, a bass player, and me... and that would have been 1964, I guess.

ZZ: There was some conflict with management fairly early on, wasn't there?

LR: You know about that? You want the story? We were in a laundromat, washing our clothes and wondering where the next gig was coming from... and Bobby was a real stickler for work - he couldn't bear to see good rehearsal time being wasted - so we were sitting there, singing away, practising harmonies, as our clothes were swirling round. Anyway, these guys, who were having lunch in a restaurant across the street, heard us singing - and immediately wanted to become our managers.

ZZ: They heard you from across the street?

LR: Cross my heart! So they really gave us the Las Vegas hustle; they wanted us to change our name to the Cygnets, wanted me to wear a long gown, and wanted to groom us for cabaret work in the lounges of Las Vegas! Well, we were just so far away from that kind of thing, but they gave us all this bread to buy equipment... which they took back when they realised we weren't going to fall in line with their plans.

ZZ: So the acoustic approach was of necessity... because all the amps were repossessed?

LR: Exactly! It was back to square one. We played some beer bars and little clubs like Crispin's Hut, and The Insomniac at Hermosa Beach, and we started playing folk music again. The acoustic sound sort of developed from there.

ZZ: How did you arrive at your new name, because there's an old Charley Patton record called 'Stone Poney Blues', isn't there?

LR: That's the source. We were looking for a new name, and someone was leafing through an old blues record catalogue at the time.

ZZ: So how did you get out of the beer bars? Did you try for gigs at the Ash Grove, or somewhere like that?

LR: We kind of aimed for the Troubadour, which has always been the happening club in LA - although Kenny was always an Ash Grove hanger-on... there was always a sort of bubbling rivalry between the more ethnic Ash Grovers and the rather more commercial Troubadour set. Anyway, we succeeded in getting an audition at the Troubadour, and that led to a gig - opening for Oscar Brown Jr... to an all black audience! They all turned up in furs and Cadillacs, and we were just totally out of place; it was like throwing meat to the lions! We just about quit right after that gig... but then we ran into Herb Cohen, who became our manager.

ZZ: Presumably he got you onto Capitol.

LR: Herb introduced us to Nik Venet, who had worked for Capitol before and went

back to work for them shortly afterwards. He signed us up.

ZZ: Actually, it would be silly to go into those Stone Poney albums too deeply, because they are literally impossible to get hold of in England... but the group had, to all intents and purposes, broken up by the time you made the third one, hadn't it?

LR: Yes, it had... and I was going out on the road as Linda Ronstadt and the Stone Poneys - but with different musicians, and different line-ups. Bobby Kimmel was still with me, but we had other guys - like Shep Cooke, for instance, who had also been a backing musician for the New Union Ramblers... lots of big circles, aren't there? He played guitar, and occasionally a bit of bass and banjo.

ZZ: Did Capitol drop the group but keep you?

LR: Yes... with the result that I had to bear all the financial responsibility for the third album. Like it seemed to me that everybody connected with the Stone Poneys made money except me! That third album was just a nightmare, really: I didn't know how to sing, I didn't know what I was doing, and it just seemed that there was so much backstabbing going on around the place... everybody was trying to trick everybody else. Anyway, we finished recording it, but my manager hated it... he wanted to it all away and start over - so I had to go to New York and record it again. I wanted it to be a country album, but I was in a minority of one... even to the extent that the dobro I had requested for one track was mixed out. My manager was adamant that country stuff wouldn't sell, and I was always fighting him over that, because I was convinced it would. Apart from Hearts & Flowers, and a few lesser known groups, nobody was doing country rock, and I was sure it could cross over and take off... but, like I say, nobody believed it except me.

ZZ: And then a few weeks later, along came Gram Parsons into the Byrds, and suddenly everybody was doing country rock.

LR: Right... which led to the Burritos, the Eagles... well, your family tree tells the whole story.

ZZ: Did you know any of those country rock pioneers?

LR: I'd known Clarence White since I was 16, because he used to come to Tucson with the Kentucky Colonels, and Bobby Buchanan used to come round to my house in Topanga in 1967 and tell me about this great new country rock band he and Gram Parsons were trying to get off the ground... the International Submarine Band. Then I used to see the Flying Burrito Brothers when they first started up; I used to go to this club in the valley and marvel at Sneaky Pete's playing... that would be early 1969, I guess. I can't say that I knew all the people real well, but I knew some of them, and I did feel a spirit of kinship because we were all trying to make headway in the same musical area - even though most people in the business thought we were crazy.

ZZ: If at first you don't succeed...

LR: Well, I was in an odd sort of position at that time; I really didn't think I was ready to be a solo artist, which is what Capitol and my manager wanted, but on the other hand, I felt that the Stone Poneys combination had exhausted itself... and I didn't want to be part of that either... and my resolution was constantly being shaken to pieces because I was going out on the road with bands that were just horrible. I mean, at that point, when the Stone Poneys finished, I should have just stayed at home for a couple of years with my guitar, and learned how to sing... it was as simple as that. So what did I do? I went out and played clubs with bad sound systems and inadequate monitor speakers - so I could never hear myself... I didn't know what I sounded like - I was just singing blind against the volume of the band... only the people out front could



CAROL GRIMES

An already familiar name in rock circles is that of CAROL GRIMES. Carol, who was born and bred a Londoner, began her lengthy career in clubs, where she formed several excellent rock bands. The first of her groups to come to prominence was the jazz-flavoured band, "Delivery".

Numerous personnel changes within the group then led Carol to form her next venture, a band that has been credited as the first on London's 'pub-rock' circuit, "Uncle Dog".

Having written her own songs for some time, Carol found Uncle Dog the vehicle by which to introduce them to her live audience. Uncle Dog was also the first group which presented Carol Grimes singing and playing percussion to an audience in the United States, as their album was released there to a warm critical reception.

Once again, personnel changes, coupled with Carol's growing confidence in herself as a songwriter and performer, led to her departing Uncle Dog in favour of a solo career.

"Carol Grimes" is the second album that Carol has recorded in America, but is her debut album for Decca Records. With the help and guidance of Don Nix, Mick Jones and Bob Potter, this album shows a positive step forward in her recording career. It shows her dedication to working in an exciting American environment with the musicians of her choice.

Carol is now singing with the exuberance of a performer who has finally found the happiness of breaking through after years of honest effort.

All in all, this is an album of pure magic and an album to be acclaimed as Carol's finest so far.

An album not to be missed!



DECCA

te'll just how bad I was. Well, that lasted through most of 1968... I'd go on these tours, and they would be such an ordeal that I would get home really depressed and not want to sing or play or do anything... I'd just shut it all out of my mind - so I didn't improve at all during that period.

ZZ: Did you pick the material for the three Stone Poneys albums?

LR: Yes, most of it. On the first one, most of the songs were written by Bobby and Kenny - plus a couple written by Tom Campbell, who often used to write with Steve Gillette, who was another songwriter whose stuff we did. In fact, he sang on our recording of his 'Back On The Street Again'. We used to look for the more interesting songwriters of the period... and they were people like Tom, Steve, Pamela Poland, John Herald, Michael Nesmith, Jackson Browne, Steve Noonan, Fred Neil...

ZZ: Tim Buckley...

LR: Oh, of course... we did several of his; 'Aren't You The One', 'Wings' and 'Hobo', which he used to call 'Morning Glory'. That song was about our house, you know... the first house I lived in when I moved to L.A. was in Ocean Park - this groovy little beach house, which I really loved. Anyway, after I moved out, Tim moved in... and he wrote 'Morning Glory' about it.

ZZ: Which other girl singers were impressing you at that time?

LR: Janis Joplin was probably one of the best I'd seen at that time. I listened to Edith Piaf, and Billie Holiday... and Maria Muldaur, or Maria d'Amato as she was then, was a favourite of mine too... and Dorothy Moscovitz from a group called the United States of America; she just knocked me out! She had such fantastic voice control - if you asked her to make her voice sound like an electric razor, she could do it, or like somebody calling a hog, she could do that too.

ZZ: It's about time some more chick singers burst into the big time.

LR: Oh, it'll happen... don't worry about that. I'm sure the age of girl singers is about to come. There's a girl somewhere - no-one's heard her yet - but she's going to take the world by storm. (Emmylou didn't even look up from her embroidery).

ZZ: I'm sad to say we've got to leave... could you sign my autograph book before I go, please?

LR: Sure... and I'll draw a picture of Tobler for you!

FOR PETE

 Linda Ronstadt

Stone Poneys Discography:
 'Stone Poneys' Capitol ST 2666, January 1967
 'Evergreen, Vol. 2' Capitol ST 2763, August 1967
 'Linda Ronstadt, Stone Poneys & Friends, Vol. 3' Capitol ST 2863, May 1968

(The first one was re-released on Capitol ST 11383 in 1975, and a compilation album called 'Different Drum', featuring Stone Poneys tracks was released on Capitol ST 11269 in 1974. The latter was the only one released in Britain - on Capitol's Vine label).

A few days ago I was leafing through a back-issue of 'Rolling Stone', as is my occasional wont, and came across a review of 'Call Of The Wild', Ted Nugent's first album for Frank Zappa's Discreet label from 1974, which said: "A forerunner of everyone from Jimi Hendrix to the Iron Butterfly, Nugent has outlasted most of them by simply standing still"... which, in a way, is exactly right. What Ted Nugent is doing now isn't radically different from what he was doing seven or eight years ago, when the Amboy Dukes were in the middle of the Detroit rock holocaust. But some fourteen years on the road, gigging over two hundred nights per annum, has harnessed the early unco-ordinated energy, instilled tremendous control and accuracy into his native raw attack, filtered his various influences into a distinctive, individual style, and taught him the art of dynamics... so that now - and I say this after bearing witness to his aural onslaught three times within a fortnight - if Ted Nugent has a superior currently operating in the field of 'power rock', as he chooses to call it, then I have yet to see or hear that person.

I'm sure he would agree with that, because it's no secret that one of the world's greatest Nugent fans is Big Ted himself; yet the impression that I got from a lengthy conversation with him was not - as I had been expecting - of a bombastic bullshitter, blinded to reality by the glare of his own ego, but of a man proud of his own abilities and achievements, yet fully aware of his limitations, and self-assured to the point where he doesn't feel any necessity to shout about himself, except when it will garner him some useful publicity. In a way, a parallel with Muhammed Ali is valid, but the element of almost manic desperation that sometimes creeps into Ali's self-assertion is entirely absent in Ted Nugent: "I talk very boldly about my music, and some people think I'm arrogant, but if you've made a sculpture and taken it all over the world, and you haven't run into anything like it, and a lot of people admire it... then you tend to be very proud of it".

"Got my guitar when I was 10 years old/ Found a life of rock'n'roll", goes the opening line of 'Just What The Doctor Ordered'; which isn't exactly true, because by the time he was ten, the young Nugent was already performing in public with his guitar teacher, doing small recitals and parties round Detroit, having been given his first instrument by an unsuspecting aunt at the age of eight.

"I just took basic guitar lessons so I knew a couple of chords, the names of the strings, and how to hold a pick, and to read boogie woogie and honky tonk. Then I formed my own band called the Royal High Boys when I was about eleven or twelve, and we played parties and dances, and the beach bashes round the lakes. Then when I was 13, I formed the Lourds, and we became quite popular in Detroit".

I assumed that the name of this band must have come from the French word for 'heavy', but Ted was quite surprised and amused by the suggestion. "I didn't realise that, but it makes good sense, because we were raucous mother fuckers, man. We were driving, man, I don't know how I was like that when I was so young, but I just pounded away". Obviously the Lourds were more than just any band of young kids... not long after they formed, they were playing the 12,000 seat Cobo Hall, supporting the Supremes.

"We just auditioned and we kicked ass. We did Beatles - the nastier Beatles - we did every Rolling Stones song that ever emerged. We wrote a few of our own; we did a lot of Motown, a lot of R&B, a bit of Blues... but all with a lot of spunk, a lot of sass, you know. This was around '62 and '63, then in '64 I moved to Chicago with my parents, where I stayed until '67, much against my will. I formed the Amboy Dukes and we played around Chicago..."

The name had previously been used by a Detroit bar band from a few years earlier, and was also copped by a British group

who recorded on Polydor in the late 60s - hence the fact that some of the British copies of the Dukes' albums bill them as 'The American Amboy Dukes'. Ted's reluctance to leave Detroit was down to his reluctance to leave the music scene there, which was very energetic, even in 1963, and his attempts to introduce a little of that energy to his new home town were not all well received:

"Years and years before there was any Jimi Hendrix, before the Who... the stuff I used to do in 1963/64 makes what I do now look timid. I'd jump on top of the amps, then jump into them, and knock 'em all down, jump on the drum stand, jump on the tom-toms... and these guys would be going "What the fuck are you doing?.. Get the hell out of here!!" I'd jump down and scream in the drummer's ear, and one night when I was doing that, I bit him! It was a guy called Bruce Piscaro, and he had blood coming out of his ear, and he just walked off stage... I finished the set without a drummer. The other guys in the band were giving me some real funny looks. I admit I was a real lunatic, but I didn't mean to hurt anybody... that was a long time ago".

Incidents like that, and Ted's demands for work-rate and energy output meant that, even in the early days, the Amboy Dukes turnover of personnel was pretty alarming:

"The band I got together in Chicago was constantly going through transitions. I wasn't much for compromise, and everybody had to put the hammer down. I wanted to rehearse a whole lot, and I wanted us to be the best band around, and not everybody wanted to keep up the pace I chose. As soon as I graduated from High School when I was 17, I went back to the Motor City, because that was where it was at... the music was always energetic, and everybody was raucous as hell".

The people who had accompanied Ted on his exodus from Chicago soon fell by the wayside, however, and he replaced them with friends he had known before moving away - John Drake, who had sung with the Lourds, Steve Farmer who had led a rival group, Rick Lober on keyboards, Dave Palmer on drums, and Bill White (apparently a former Mr. Detroit 1964, and therefore group bodyguard) on bass.

"As soon as we came in, we started making a whole lot of noise, we were outrageous, we really smoked, we kicked 'em out, you know. We became the most popular band in Detroit, so we became the first band to get a record deal.

"There was a cat named Bob Hankins, who somehow got out of the used car business with his father and into the rock world. He dug people, but he had no communication with either music or people. I knew him way back when I had the Lourds, and in those days, anybody could have come up to any kid who played guitar, and said 'recording studio', and right away they're his victim. I thought he was the king man who was going to do it for me. So, when I got it together in Chicago, I called him to come and hear us. Bob came and liked the sound, and told us about the real king of the music industry: Mr. Bob Shad, Mainstream Records... Mr. Gentleman himself... the cat who had his hands on Cannonball Adderley and Wes Montgomery. He had his hands on them all right, but as soon as they saw what was going down, they split. Hankins talked us into recording for Shad, telling us how perfect he was, and we bought it, because we had nothing else to go by. We recorded and really got fucked. It was a ridiculous contract, and I was too young to know any better. Nobody exercised any kind of quality control, and nobody within the record company had any idea of the kind of rock'n'roll we were doing, so the productions were abominable, the promotion was non-existent, and the career co-ordination was non-existent".

The first Amboy Dukes album - called 'THE AMBOY DUKES!' came out in late 1967, on Mainstream TL 5468, boasting a garish 'psychedelic' cover and rather



Photo by the spinning Chalkie Davies

Motor City Madman TED NUGENT

silly sleeve notes. "This is a dynamic young parcel of excitement", they gush enthusiastically, "and you can believe it when we say that The Amboy Dukes turn themselves on with music".

Actually, for a bunch of lads in their late teens making their first album, and getting one day in a four track studio to do it, it's not an uncreditable effort. The extended version of 'Baby Please Don't Go' which opens proceedings is great - as owners of the 'Nuggets' compilation will be able to testify. The rough starkness of the original Them hit is turned into a raging tour de force, as Mr. Nugent demonstrates that, even at 18, he'd got a fair control of nasty feedback at his fingertips.

Elsewhere, the evidence suggests a band without any particular direction to follow. Ted's affinities tended towards the other side of the Atlantic: "I really liked the way the British bands - the Stones, the Yardbirds, the Who - I really liked the way they interpreted the original American rock. They did it with a little bit more audacity than anybody else, and I really loved that. I was deeply enthused by the Stones more than anybody else, but we didn't record any Stones songs, because I didn't feel they could possibly be improved on. I cherished and adored the Stones songs".

So instead there's a cover of Cream's

first hit 'I Feel Free' and the Who's 'It's Not True!', a handful of original numbers veering more towards Steve Farmer's predilection for poppy melodies than Nugent's rock'n'roll insanity, and a version of 'Let's Go Get Stoned', which I'm damned sure wasn't Ted's idea.

"Steve Farmer had been a big writer with his other groups, so I took care of a lot of the music, and he wrote the lyrics. Steve really wrote some very interesting things. I couldn't get next to the cosmetic lyrics, you know, but he wrote some very tasty changes in there. He was into drugs, though, while I never was. Why should I bother, you know? I saw those guys swan dive into the dirt, and I didn't have to follow. I think it's pitiful. I think if your senses are keen, then you're capable of having a lot more fun, capable of enjoying yourself more. A lot of these guys are in stupors, and they don't know what the fuck's going on. It's a sad state of affairs".

Steve Farmer's big moment, and indeed the Dukes' brief taste of international notoriety, came in the summer of '68, when 'JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE MIND', taken off the album of the same name (Mainstream S6112), made it into the national Top Twenty. Sad to say, however, this break didn't have quite as beneficial an effect on the band's career as it might have done:

"It was good in that it broadened our horizons, and we were able to tour more,

but unfortunately our managers didn't know how to co-ordinate that, and we were put on tour with Tiny Tim. They were stupid... they figured that because Tiny Tim drew audiences it would be good for us, even though the audiences consisted of completely anti-rock'n'roll people. We were loud and obnoxious, and it was a disaster".

This move away from the local spotlight onto a more nationwide stage meant that the Dukes became slightly divorced from the Detroit scene, which was just becoming the happening thing, and it's clear from reading 'Creem' that the Duke's were not regarded as one of 'their' bands, though Ted claims to have been very closely involved with the whole Motor City uproar:

"I was a prime manipulator of it. I really feel, and I'm proud to say, that in '61, '62 and '63, I was instrumental in instigating the high energy music scene in Detroit. I feel very much a creator of it, and coming back from Chicago with the Amboy Dukes, we carried the energy on. It was a very competitive scene in Detroit, with some very high energy bands - the MC5, the Rationals, Dick Wagner's band the Frost... oh God, in one year you could play five nights a week in Michigan in a different place every night. Within ten miles of Detroit there must have been at least thirty clubs. It was everywhere - rock'n'roll, rock'n'roll... it was a great

scene".

The album that bore the hit single is a schizophrenic affair. Side one consists entirely of Ted Nugent songs, while side two is an eight part 'concept' piece along hippy trippy 'meaning of life' lines, incorporating 'Journey' and kitsch gems like 'Why Is A Carrot More Orange Than An Orange'. "That was Steve Farmer's little trip", snorts Ted, scornfully; but in fact, if treated as a piece of quaint late sixties memorabilia, it's quite listenable... certainly more so than, say, the Ultimate Spinach.

This time around the band were generously given a whole week to record the album, so the overall sound and performances are a notch up on the first effort - an aspect also helped by the arrival of Greg Arama to replace Bill White, and Andy Solomon to take over Rick Lober's keyboard duties. I would surmise that the rough and ready aggression on side one was closer to the band's live sound and Ted's concept of what they should have been doing, while Steve Farmer's more melodic, commercial compositions were more the record company's idea of the group's direction. The single, however, was a successful collaboration.

"Steve had a flair for coming up with melodies and vocal arrangements, and it was easier for him to write the words if he wrote the melody. I would just keep jamming away... every night I'd be down in the basement working out on songs I was writing, and he'd come down and put on a lyric. I let him write the words to some of my early songs, because I wasn't much into words, then later, on the songs that I wrote, I did everything".

Around this time, the Dukes were all living together in Detroit - except for periods when Ted went off to stay with other people, like the MC5 - but it wasn't a terribly harmonious arrangement:

"We all lived in the same house, and it was mayhem, complete mayhem. I couldn't stand their hippy ways and filthy habits... I couldn't stand it. Steve was such a nice guy, really, he wouldn't do anybody any harm - Icept one night when he tried, and I almost killed him - but he was just such a damned hippy... they all were. It nauseated me. I was always cleaning up after everybody".

As time rolled by, the Dukes constant ginning programme consolidated their position as a big attraction in the Midwest and Southern States - especially in Florida, of all places, where the 'Daily Planet', Miami's answer to 'Creem', was pleased to describe Ted as "the greatest guitarist in the nation". At the same time, Ted gradually assumed leadership of the group more positively, and eventually even took over the management.

"I always wanted the band to be a vehicle by which I could express myself, and looking back, a lot of the compromises I made were detrimental, and I really believe that my way would have been a lot more successful earlier on if I had forced it through. I took over management because I was so upset about the way we had been looked after. I was suspicious of other people's motives, and always have been up until this year. I did a pretty good job... we probably grossed between 100,000 and 250,000 dollars a year. We'd sell out 5000 seats regularly, here and there, and on occasions we'd sell out 10,000 seats, but basically it was a \$3000 a night act, sometimes going as high as \$6000".

Unfortunately Ted's hardline, 'no compromises' policy hadn't come into effect when 'MIGRATION' (Mainstream/London SHT 8392) was recorded in early 1969. The title track, a Nugent-penned instrumental, is pretty good - a taste of things to come on later albums - and 'Good Natured Emma' is OK, but apart from that it's not terribly exceptional, and some of the songs - to whit, a ridiculous squeaky version of 'I'm Not A Juvenile Delinquent' and Andy Solomon's quite laughably bad 'Curb Your Elephant' - have no place on any self-respecting turntable. Ted - to-

his eternal credit - played no part in the creation of these monstrosities, so far as my ears can tell.

"Yeah, well... a band should be a vehicle through which everybody in it should be able to express themselves, even though I thought they were terrible songs. Again, I was compromising too much. Nowadays, unless it's a real fuckin' cooker, I don't even want to hear about it".

Prior to making the album, John Drake was shown the door, because Ted felt that he wouldn't be able to handle the vocals on songs like 'Prodigal Man' and 'Emma'. Ironically enough, one of the record's low points (in my opinion... Ted disagrees) is the raucously insensitive singing on 'Prodigal Man'. To be fair, though, it must be said that the new singer Rusty Day - formerly of Rusty Day and the Moonlighters, a renowned Detroit bar band - does better on the rest of the record, even when struggling with some uninspiring material.

Not long after the release of 'Migration', Nugent really brought the axe down. First to go was the group's connection with Mainstream Records:

"We had been super burned on everything. We saw writing royalties, they can't shake that... but nothing on recording or performing royalties. No-one made anything from Mainstream except Steve Farmer and I for writing. 'Migration' sold like a bitch, but it was over a long period of time, so it never made the charts. It had a regional breakout in every state in the nation, but Mainstream claims it sold nothing. In the end we just refused to record for Mainstream, because they weren't doing anything for us, so we played around, and then Breakout Management picked us up and got us signed to Polydor".

After the band's departure, Mainstream released a 'Best Of The Original Amboy Dukes' (S 6125), with ten tracks spread pretty evenly over the three albums, but contrary to rumour they didn't put out a live album, because they didn't have any live tapes. All four albums are deleted, but last year Pye, who now has rights to Mainstream stuff, put out a double album called 'Journeys and Migrations' (MSTD 103). This consists of side one of the first album, side two of 'Journey' and all of 'Migration', and is a pretty good purchase at the price of a single album, even if there are a few inexplicable omissions, and the personnel credits are a complete balls-up.

Along with the services of Mainstream, Ted had also dispensed with Steve Farmer and Rusty Day, leaving Andy Solomon and himself to do the singing: "In Steve Farmer's case, he couldn't play guitar and he couldn't sing on stage, and I was really getting upset with his druggy lyrics". To tell the truth, most of the comings and goings within the band seem to have been connected with dope - at one point Ted even banned its use, and introduced a \$500 fine for contravention thereof, though that was soon forgotten, as nobody ever had the \$500.

"The changes had a whole lot to do with that, because I wouldn't have it. I wouldn't have it around. For a long time I wouldn't even allow it by anybody, and if they didn't want to hear about it, I'd say "Get out of the band". But once I'd found some real competent musicians, and some responsible characters, they could do anything they wanted as long as they were ready, willing and able once the music came up... that's my attitude now. Steve, John, Rick... all those guys think I fired them and deprived them of a career in music... they hate my guts. But meanwhile they were getting in my way - I had some music to play, not this trash that they wanted to do".

Now down to a four piece, the band moved from Detroit to Long Island in October 1969, a month after signing with Polydor, who were New York based; and in the December they recorded their fourth album 'MARRIAGE ON THE ROCKS/ROCK BOTTOM' (Polydor PD 1 6073) with

Eddie Kramer, the top New York studio man, who has since worked with just about everybody who's set foot inside the Big Apple. Eddie's production - a vast improvement on the Mainstream albums - and the fact that Ted was now 90% in control of the music, means that this was the Dukes best album yet.

Again it kicks off with a lengthy instrumental 'Marriage', which although it contains a few riffs and themes that are familiar from other Dukes albums rates pretty high on the old tastometer. This number was supposed to be inspired by Ted's idea of him marrying music, and the cover was going to depict a wedding cake superimposed over pictures of the Woodstock crowd, and on top of the cake were going to be figurines of the band getting hitched to amplifiers.

"It was very much like the Stones 'Let It Bleed', but everybody told me it was a dumb idea, and then when they came out with it, I really rubbed it in - "So you think it was a dumb idea, huh? And now my dumb idea comes out on a Rolling Stones cover? ... you pricks!"

Ted's other six numbers are well up there too, even though some of the arrangements are clever to the point of being awkward. "That was a good album, it was just a little schizoid... we thought we were getting really cute there, we thought we were being really creative". Ted was also starting to get into the eye-catching titles that are now one of his trademarks: 'Non-Conformist Wildebeest Man' or 'Brain Games Of Yesteryear', for example... there'll be more about Ted's titles next time.

The bad news, though - the almost unbelievably bad news - is that Ted still maintained philanthropic ideas about group democracy, and allowed the other guys in the band to contribute one number to the album. Which would have been OK, if it was just a little three or four minute ditty tucked away somewhere unobtrusive, but it's an item by Andy Solomon called 'The Inexhaustible Quest For The Cosmic Cabbage (Parts 1&2)', it takes up over ten minutes of valuable vinyl time, and it is the worst, absolutely the worst thing I have ever heard. Mere words are insufficient to convey the quite awesome beastliness of this artifact - the work of a man with minimal writing talent, but a gross surfeit of pretension, who contrives to throw together the Beach Boys, Bartok, Chuck Berry, avant-garde and cocktail lounge jazz, and fairground organ, without the slightest regard for coherence, logic, good taste or the listener's unfortunate ears. You have been warned!

"I can't stand it", agrees Ted, "but the rest of the guys were very much in favour of somebody else getting their songs on. It's really abominable... I hate it! I hardly played on it, because there was nothing for me to get my teeth into".

'The Inexhaustible Quest' really is the ultimate vindication of Ted Nugent's increasingly autocratic attitude towards the Amboy Dukes' affairs - both musical and business. All the worst moments on their albums are virtually nothing to do with Ted at all, and of all the guys he fired - supposedly so callously - none of them went on to do anything at all... with the exception of Rusty Day, who formed Cactus along with Tim Bogart, Carmine Appice, and Jim McCarty, the old Detroit Wheels guitarist, and the man who originally inspired Nugent to use Gibson Birdland guitars. They made two albums for Atlantic: 'Cactus' in 1970, and 'One Way Or Another' in 1971; and it's interesting to note that he probably wouldn't have got that gig, had not Jeff Beck's car accident taken care of plans for a Beck/Bogart/Appice/Stewart link-up.

John Drake and Rick Lober made an abortive effort to get something going in early 1970, but nothing ever came of it, so all the original Amboy Dukes, having had their brief flirtation with stardom, returned to the obscurity from whence they had come... all except for Mr. Nugent, whose further adventures will be investigated next month.

Paul Kendall

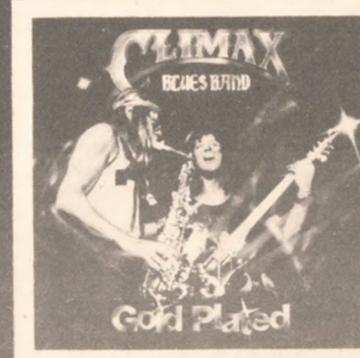
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Waddy Wachtel, Frenchie Naylor, Kim Fowley, The Turtles, Frank & Jesse James (alias The Everly Brothers), Bones Howe, Frazier Mohawk and Jackson Browne are just a few of the odd assortment you'll meet as we look away down Gower Avenue in search of

WARREN ZEVON

(top of the chart again this month)

I simply could not believe my luck... two minutes earlier, and I'd have missed him completely.

RCA, as an extremely noble gesture of gratitude for Zigzag single-handedly breaking the Guy Clark 'Old Number One' album and making the fellow into an instant cult hero, had flown me to meet Clark in his natural habitat - principally so I could write a giant article to coincide with his second album, which RCA are due to spring any day now.

I met Mr. Clark, who was as warm and as human as I'd imagined, taped a long interview (which will appear next month), mooched around Nashville to soak up the atmosphere, and talked to a few musicians - although I must admit that, apart from exceptional works of genius like Guy's album and 'Blonde On Blonde', and milestones such as 'California Bloodlines' and 'I Can Help', I am not particularly enamoured with either the 'Nashville Sound' or the 'Nashville Vibe'.

As a result, two days in the city were enough for my purposes; after that all I could think about was shooting off to New York, where we intended to sniff around until the money ran out.

Airports are great; I love airports... and American airports are especially interesting because they're a bit like the restaurants/rest areas on the M1; you invariably see musicians stretching their cramped limbs, changing planes, and stocking up on reading matter for the next leg of their journey. Nashville's airport is a stopover/ connection for Atlanta, Memphis, New York, Toronto and all sorts of other places... it throbs and hums with activity all round the clock, and those long breeze-block corridor walls must have seen every significant musician from Elvis Presley to Bob Dylan.

So Shannon Bodine (last minute replacement for the flown Fire Water Queen) and I were skipping as lightly down the corridor as our baggage would allow, when I saw a vaguely familiar face approaching. He was laughing about with a bunch of guys - obviously musicians - but though bells were ringing, I couldn't think who the hell he was... it was one of those faces you can't quite put a name to - but our eyes met, and he zoomed towards me with hand outstretched. "Hi man... how are you... what are you doing here" he said - and it suddenly clicked that it was Jerry Donahue,

who I'd met at some Mick Softley sessions at the Manor years ago, and again recently at Aston LeWalls village hall (near Banbury) when I went there with Frame to interview the then-new Fairporter Bruce Rowlands.

"I'm fine", I replied, told him what I was up to and asked him what brought him to Nashville. "Oh I'm in a backing band... we're doing a tour to promote this new guy on Asylum..." "Oh really? Who might that be?" I asked.

"That's him right there... hey, Warren, this is a journalist from England, mac... Mac, this is Warren Zevon".

Well, I almost collapsed! And so did he when I started swooping around the hallway, singing chunks of his album!

That was it! Shannon and I turned right round, went to the Delta desk and postponed our flight. Warren Zevon was playing the Exit Inn in Nashville that very evening, and there was NO WAY I was going to miss that!

Perspicacious readers (ie. those who read my articles) will be only too aware that of several albums I have recommended this year, two in particular have completely caught my imagination and knocked me bandy... 'Old Number One' by Guy Clark, and 'Warren Zevon'. The Guy Clark record caught the romantic cowboy daydreamer in me, and the Zevon one - a brilliantly arranged and produced piece of mysterious magic - spun me right into the heart of Los Angeles, a city which, like the music business, I detest but love... my logic tells me to keep away, but the attraction overwhelms reason.

Warren had just come down from New York, where he'd played two nights at the Bottom Line (supporting John Hammond) - as well as Jerry, his band included drummer Mickey McGhee, ex-Linda Ronstadt and Goose Creek Symphony, and Jackson Browne's bassplayer Doug Haywood... so I was ecstatic!

That same afternoon, in Warren's room, we sat on the bed and set the capstans of the cassette in motion. Obviously I had no prepared notes to guide the interview, but from my discussions with Tobler and various others when the Asylum album came out, I knew enough to winkle out most of his musical history - and in writing the interview up, I have

been able to dig around and amplify points I was unsure of.

The first time I ever heard Zevon's name was in 1973. I'd just written a long piece on Kim Fowley (in Zigzag 28) and the indignant Fowley (who had wanted the article to mention every single name with which he had ever been even remotely involved) came on the phone, slugging me off and enumerating the episodes of his career that I'd been foolish enough to miss out... one of which concerned Warren Zevon - "Who I discovered and produced for Imperial Records", exclaimed the modest Kim.

"I have never heard of Warren Zevon", I replied evenly.

"What?!", he spluttered - almost speechlessly aghast at my ignorance, "...he wrote half of the Turtles' greatest hits!"

Half an hour later, Fowley's diatribe complete, I investigated the Turtles albums and discovered that two obscure tracks were credited to Zevon... which is where I started this interview.

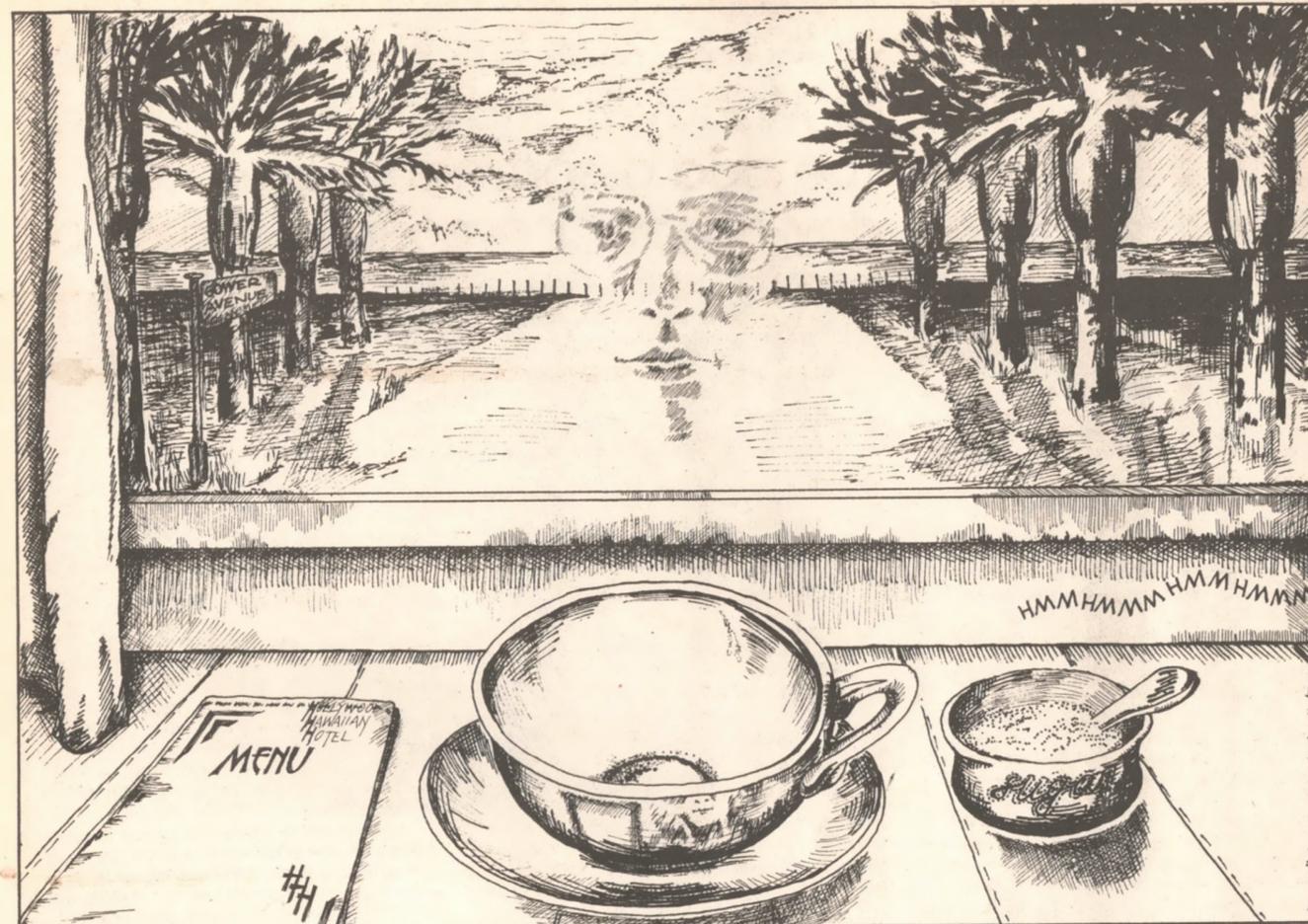
"Yes, that was the first time my name appeared on a record label", said Warren. "It was practically a walk-in-off-the-street proposition: I happened to know a girl whose sister knew a guy whose brother worked at White Whale records - and their publishing company, Ishmael Music, signed me as a songwriter".

He had just come south to Los Angeles "in search of serious musical employment" after an abortive band project in San Francisco.

"Actually, I was born in Chicago, but spent most of my childhood in Arizona, Los Angeles and San Francisco - travelling back and forth - but all through school I never considered anything except music as a career. I had a strong interest in painting, but music dominated - and that band was my first foray into the rock 'n' roll world... I was seventeen, and straight out of school".

"I had no real formal musical training as such, though I spent all my spare time trying to educate myself. I'd heard rumours that if you worked your way into one of those highly respected music colleges, as much would be lost as gained... so I studied on my own, apart from a few piano lessons".

"As a matter of fact, I left high school to become a folk singer in Greenwich Village... but my career



there was brief. I played a floor spot in a coffee house, convinced I was following in Bob Dylan's footsteps, but I was so nervous that I lost my fingerpicks in the soundhole of my guitar. It was so humiliating that I headed back to San Francisco, got in with a band, and swore never to play with finger picks again".

As I mentioned, Warren wrote two songs for the Turtles, who were a hit act at the time, but not that big yet... one-hit-wonders waiting to consolidate their early success with this Moby Dick of a record company.

'Outside Chance' appeared on the B-side of both 'Well I Meet Again' (April '66) and 'Making My Mind Up' (June '66)... both flops. Then 'Like The Seasons' came out on the back of 'Can I Get To Know You Better' (July '66). Using the record industry's principal tenet ('throw as much shit against the wall as possible - some of it has to stick!'), White Whale really churned Turtles singles out at full speed - until one began to get airplay... whereupon the hype machine went into full-speed-ahead action to make it a hit. As it happened, the very next single 'Happy Together' (November '66) was a monster... the Turtles biggest and best. And by the way: the Turtles were, and are, one of the greatest groups ever - in case you didn't know.

Back to Warren: "During this time, I was also singing, because I was primarily interested in being a performer - and I cut two singles for White Whale myself. This young lady and I recorded under the name of Lyme and Cybelle, but we didn't get anywhere: the first was called 'Follow

Me', and the second was our cover of Manfred Mann's cover of Bob Dylan's 'If You Gotta Go, Go Now'. In 1967 the lyrics were considered too heavy for AM radio, and it was banned... which is where Lyme and Cybelle's recording career stumbled to its conclusion".

Would you believe it? Tobler actually has a copy of 'Follow Me' (on White Whale WW 228), a rather complexly structured song which credits V. Santangelo as co-author. The B-side is the ubiquitous 'Like The Seasons'.

(If any readers have copies of these singles, or cover versions of Zevon songs cut by Nino Tempo and April Stevens, and Tony Jackson from the Searchers, during this period... I am interested!)

Early in 1968, Zevon found himself standing, not at the crossroads, but at a fork: in one direction lay Frazier Mohawk - charismatic loony/inventor of Kaleidoscope and Buffalo Springfield/producer extraordinaire... and in the other stood Bones Howe - a solid and successful producer who'd worked with the Turtles, the Association, the Mamas and the Papas, and even Zevon himself.

After a short period of dalliance (during which he bumped into Jackson Browne - of which more later), he signed a three year contract with Bones Howe's publishing company, Mr. Bones Music: "I was with him from 1968 to 1971, which wasn't a particularly fertile period for me musically... all I have to show for it is a regrettable - mostly regrettable - solo album".

The album in question is a relatively monstrous late sixties artifact called

'Zevon: Wanted Dead or Alive' (Imperial LP 12456), an import only. I'm sure Warren wouldn't thank me, but I feel duty bound to tell all you wonderful people out there that this record is currently available from deletion merchants - real cheap... but I must warn you: it is at least 75% dire.

"I got the Imperial contract through Bones, but Kim Fowley was appointed producer. He had apparently just discovered an old Johnny Winter album which Imperial were able to re-release in time to catch the wave of Wintermania, and this gave him a great deal of clout with the label, and I guess he told them I was going to be the next big thing".

"In turn, Fowley encouraged me to believe I was going to be the world's next great guitar phenomenon. I was delighted to hear that, of course, after which he was able to persuade me to do anything... but during the sessions, I had a sudden attack of taste, and decided to finish the album without him. I would say that any tracks which vaguely resemble civilised music were probably cut in the post-Fowley period... but the whole thing was recorded in a matter of a few days - a bit of a garage effort really".

The title track (a dreadful thing, heavy on the Spanish guitars and grunting) was written by Fowley and journalist Marty Cerf - the same team which brought you such epics as 'Falling Off The Edge Of My Mind' by the Seeds - and does not rank among the more memorable songs in the world... and nor do any of the rest, to be honest, though 'Tule's Blues' (also recorded by Victoria on her

'Secret Of The Bloom' album) tends to get played rather a lot up here in the wilds of Yeoman Cottage.

Despite the presence of various session men, including Skip Battin and Drachen Theaker (then in Los Angeles with Arthur Lee), and the fact it was cut at Wally Heider's studio, the sound is TERRIBLE. The production is weedy, the arrangements have no substance, and its only relevance is to show the ASTOUNDING development of Mr. Zevon in the five years which followed.

One redeeming feature is Warren's guitar playing: on both 'Hitchhiking Woman' and 'Calcutta' he rips out some amazing stuff, some of which sounds as if it may have influenced Neil Young's subsequent direction.

"OK... I admit it; that album is best forgotten. I'm not ashamed of it, but I'd just as soon not be reminded of it".

For those readers who possess the album, a couple of insights: the autobiographical lyric of 'Travelin In The Lightning' is "entirely fiction", and co-writers Black Ace Turner and Xavier Fletcher are both Zevon pseudonyms.

One last thing: one track 'She Quit Me' (an absolutely dreadful backroom demo which must have cost all of three and sixpence to record) was featured on the soundtrack of 'Midnight Cowboy'. Having never seen this motion picture, I don't know how it was fitted in, but Bones Howe was behind its selection: "I don't know what politics were involved in getting the song to the attention of the director, but I was pretty pleased about it... that song paid the rent for a long period, I can tell you!"

Running concurrently with his attempts to emerge as a superstar was his term of employment as a jingle writer. "I was quite successful. I wrote some car commercials, and drink commercials, but in the end it just led to frustration. I wanted to make them into decent songs instead of snappy tunes... and I also began to feel really guilty; there I was, trying very earnestly to write my own music, but knowing full well that I could make infinitely more money as a result of 15 minutes work on a radio jingle. If my music had any value, I didn't want to use it to sell bad wine to people who didn't need it".

"Eventually, I wrote some lyrics which the advertising agency found particularly offensive, and they fired me for insubordination... I was asking for it".

Having switched to piano as his main instrument, he hooked up with the Everly Brothers - an association which, on and off, lasted from late 1971 to autumn 1975... though that scissor happy pinhead who calls himself editor of this magazine has forced me to rewrite this chapter, cutting my original to a quarter of its length, and compressing four years into a few hundred words.

Warren's primary task was to re-shuffle and reorganise their road band. "I kept their bassplayer and drummer, but brought in this great guitar player I had the good fortune to find - Waddy Wachtel, who became a real good friend during the eighteen months we toured together. We played everywhere from Oyster Bay in North Carolina to the Royal Albert Hall, which as well as being good experience, was a lot of fun".

These, of course, were the last



days of the Everlys; trouble had been bubbling beneath the surface for some time, and they eventually divided after a farewell gig at Knotts Berry Farm in Los Angeles, in 1973. According to Warren, it was just the culmination of a lot of recurrent aggravation. "They've been touring together for something like 15 years, and they'd been planning to split up for the last three. It wasn't a spontaneous decision made on stage... their last gig was announced as their final appearance together".

The only Everlys album featuring Zevon is their last, 'Stories We Could Tell' (RCA SF8270 - released in 1972), on which he plays keyboards to an undisclosed extent. I love the album; some great musicians, some great tracks.

After the split, he went with Phil Everly (though he did a short tour with Don in 1974, during which the lead guitarist was Lindsay Buckingham), and his name appears on each of Phil's three solo albums. The best of these was the first: 'Star Spangled Springer' (RCA SF 8370, released late 1973). Warren arranged the album and played keyboards. The producer was none other than Duane Eddy... and this was his fine st hour since the turn of the sixties. (And would I have guessed in 1961, when I was so enraptured by the guttural strains of his twangy guitar that I had his name emblazoned on the crossbar of my bike, that he would be guesting on something as lame and half-arsed as the Vince Hill Show 15 years later?).

Warren: "I disagreed with a lot of his ideas, but he had a firm enough hand to keep it rolling smoothly, and I thought he did a pretty good job. Phil insisted that I arrange the album, which is typical of him - he always champions his friends... and I feel there are several good songs and arrangements".

I happen to know that this is one of Omaha O'Brien's favourite records (he loves the line "riding on a fast line from Batley!" on 'It Pleases Me To Please You'), and John Peel was captivated by it too... he used to play it to death on his show - particularly my favourite tracks: 'The Air That I Breathe', which subsequently hoisted the Hollies to their highest peak, and 'Snowflake Bombardier'. The arrangement - especially the piano, the strings and Duane's proud play-out - turns the latter into a classic track... but for some weird reason there is a beat missing before the second chorus - it always used to throw me as I sang along!

In 1974, Phil Everly signed a world-wide contract with Pye Records, and, as you would expect, promptly plummeted from the public eye as a result. Warren's sole contribution to 'There's Nothing Too Good For My Baby' (Pye NSPL 18448), was co-authorship of 'It's True' - a rather forgettable piece of hocus pocus, in my view.

Finally, we come to Phil's most recent record 'Mystic Line' (Pye NSPL 18473, December 1975), which Warren arranged and played keyboards on. He also co-wrote two songs.

"Phil caught me en-route home from Spain (see next issue) and I spent a month in London last fall, staying at Fleetwood Mac's house, and working on that album. It was a really nice time, except that my wife was in the King Edwards Chest Hospital, suffering from pneumonia".

That eminent and erudite rock historian Ken Barnes, who wrote the sleeve notes, likes the album rather more than I do.

And that's it for this month. In the next issue: Jackson Browne - a friendship with wings - and "the best album to come out of Los Angeles this year".

Mac Garry

The Strangers moved up to Los Angeles, where we based ourselves for some time - during which we were on the road quite a bit. When we weren't gigging; however, we often used to hang out at this club in North Hollywood called The Palomino..... and that's where I first ran into Jimmy Proby: P.J. Proby himself - then known as Jet Powers. He would sometimes come down and sit in with The Strangers at the Tailspin..... him and a songwriter friend called Jim Ford.

At that time, Proby was making his living by making demos for Liberty Records publishing department, and he got me into that for a while.

Liberty would give us a song and ask us to do it in the style of the artist they wanted to sell it to..... and we'd come up with as close an imitation as possible.

The best things Proby did were for Elvis - a lot of album tracks, some of which came out sounding just like the demos. Elvis was concentrating on movies rather than records at that period; he was living up in Bel Air, and we used to go up to his place a lot, because there were always parties going on. An Elvis party consisted of him sitting in the middle of the room, as the star attraction, and everybody else assuming the roles of extras, or something. He was working very long hours and people reckoned he was taking pills to keep going.... it was a weird scene. He was on a real star trip.... all his friends and relations from Memphis were there - and we were always playing tricks on him - phoning him up, pretending we were someone else, or sending really low down funky chicks up to his place.

Elvis was a superstar alright, but we respected him because he was the guy who opened the door for all the white cats; before Elvis, you just couldn't have white cats playing at a place like El Monte Legion Stadium..... all the rock shows we went to see when we were at school featured only black acts - then Presley came along, and the whole scene changed radically.



Well, after some months, the pressure from home got pretty heavy and we went back to San Diego - basically to placate our wives who were under the impression that we were out on the road having a ball all the time.... all these weird reports kept filtering back to them! So we dug in down there again - played around town, gigged in Palm Springs, El Centro, went to Arizona again, and back up to LA now and again..... and they were strange days, looking back on them.

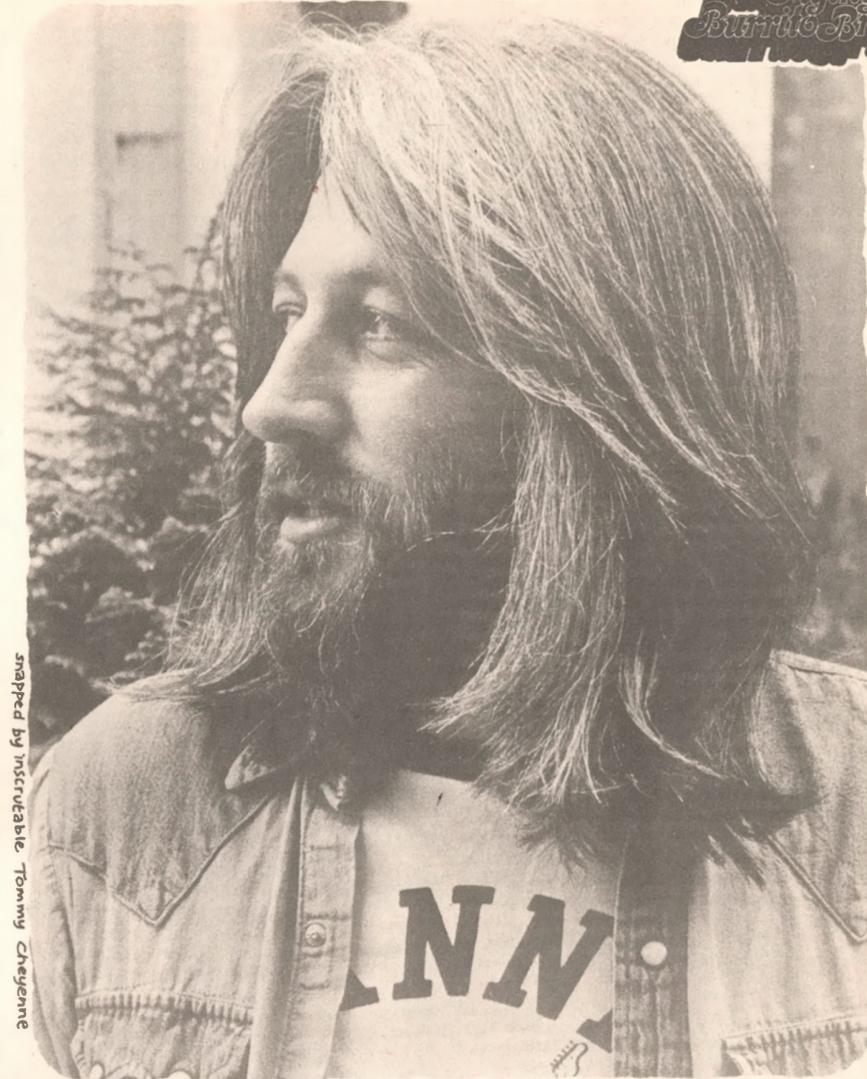
Most places we played were real raunchy; some were so rough that we weren't at all surprised to get back to our car and find the windows smashed and the tyres slashed. There was always an element of trouble, but if you knew how to handle yourself, it was OK.

The DJ hops, like the Jimmy O'Neil shows I mentioned earlier, were attended almost exclusively by white kids, but places like El Monte and Compton drew mainly black or lower class rock audiences.... and they went along geared for trouble.

I used to have a 1947 Chevy, a white one - and I often used to go back to it after the gig and find blood on it! It was basically an attitude hang-over from the fifties, when people would only roam from their own territory to cause trouble..... and there was so much jealousy over "our turf" and "our territory" and "our women". Any encroachment meant fighting! Merely by being out of your area, you were starting a rumble - so when these rock clubs started opening up, there were a lot of showdowns until the mid-sixties, when things had begun to mellow out. I mean, it was real West Side Story stuff, I'm telling you! Rock has become so polite these days, but at the turn of the sixties it was basically a low class, moronic pursuit! I mean, guys would have bets as to whether they could go up to some cat and knock him out with a single punch.....! Sunday punches, they were called!

stand you feel so disposed, take a scissor and snip snip this page. In another 242 months you'll possess the first couple of hundred pages of the Joel Scott Hill story

snapped by instructable Tommy Cheyenne



'It's a measure of people who don't understand
The pleasures of life in a rock'n'roll band;
I got my first guitar 'fore I hit my teens.....
Now I'm over 30, and I'm still wearing jeans'

THE JOEL SCOTT HILL STORY EPISODE 2

The Flying
Burrito
Bros

One of the rowdiest places was El Centro, which was on the border of California and Arizona. The state line was also the change between two time zones - so when the bars shut at 1 a.m. on the Arizona side, everyone came across to the California half of town, where it was only midnight. There was a lot of fighting and shooting there... real wild scenes involving Indians, Mexicans and blacks - real cowboy saloon stuff. People would get beaten up or cut to ribbons, but we would just play on! That was the plan... just keep playing, despite what was happening out front!

We never carried knives or guns ourselves because for one thing we were under-age and were playing the clubs and bars with phony identity cards, and for another, we didn't want a reputation as fighters. We tried to keep out of trouble, even though we had many a bottle thrown at us... and it was pretty disconcerting and demoralising to arrive at a club and see mouldy fruit and vegetables plastered all over the back wall - where the last band hadn't gone down too well!

Later on, when we were older and could work under our own identity cards, we often got involved in fights. Like one time, my cousin was in the audience, and he got attacked by some tough guys... so we ran outside and got them - but not before they'd stomped on him and broken all the bones in his face. Some of the guys were just so mean... their whole life was getting drunk and demonstrating how tough they were. Later on, with the arrival of dope, that kind of behaviour tended to die out to a great extent... belligerence disappeared, and rock began to attract a totally different type of person.

Ever since I was in Junior High School, dope was around in abundance... San Diego was so close to the Mexican border that it was all over the place - though it wasn't at all fashionable or popular. It hadn't caught on yet, so there weren't any dealers or middle men, and you could get a kilo for as little as 30 dollars.

Anyway, we're up to Summer 1963 now... just before the Beatles broke through in America. I had decided to go back and have another stab in the recording studio; I was tired of banging away in the clubs, and wanted to see if I could get something going on record again... so I went back to Jim Lee. He was still a hot producer/manager, and had Chris Montez, who had just had two top ten hits in England. Chris Montez had just toured England with the Beatles and had seen the amazing scenes of hysteria that America was yet to latch onto... and Chris brought back their first album.

Jim Lee had the idea that I should cut some Beatles songs with the Strangers, so I went back to San Diego to work them up. Meanwhile, 'I want to hold your hand' took off over here, sweeping the entire Beatles catalogue into the charts... and that was the end for all the American bands. If you weren't British during 1964, you could forget it. Consequently, our sessions for Monogram were lost as soon as they were leased - and we went back to country music once again, and back to the clubs.

To tell the truth, I wasn't at all keen on most of the English stuff - because I just couldn't get used to the vocals. The music was great - because we could see their roots... the Little Richard screams, and Chuck Berry riffs, and Carl Perkins licks - but the vocals sounded so strange! Then the Stones came along - and we loved them. In fact, when they came to LA for the

first time, we went along to meet them. The Stones all knew Jimmy Lee, because he was a friend of Andrew Loog Oldham's... so they came by the house and we took them out to the beach... first time in the States, and they wanted to go to Malibu - so off we went. The thing that sticks in my mind is how rude they were to everyone! I'd met all the Beatles when they were in L.A. and they were real friendly and polite - but the Stones were rude to photographers, journalists, everybody....

The Strangers played a concert with the Rolling Stones too, in San Diego - and on the same bill were the Outcasts, featuring this guy called Bob Mosley, who was at school with me. He'd been a folkie, but formed a band as a result of the Beatles boom.

Whilst the Stones were around, we got to hear their first album - and we were amazed to hear all these old blues songs which we had also played at various stages of our career... and we thought we could probably get somewhere if we cut some blues tunes too. So we cut several R & B tracks... none of which got anywhere.

By this time, we'd changed our name to the Invaders and we wore black leather suits... but we were still locked in the San Diego club and concert scene.

Then something happened; a club called The Whisky A Go Go opened on Sunset Strip, and it immediately established a reputation - especially as a result of Johnny Rivers becoming a star. So we decided to switch tactics once more - start playing danceable music and head north to Los Angeles yet again.

We were lucky enough to land a residency at a new club on Santa Monica Boulevard called The Action. It was designed to compete with The Whisky, and opened with a great flourish - loads of publicity and capacity audiences... and that was when Hollywood, especially Sunset Strip, was just beginning to change from its old cocktail lounge image to a more rock orientated scene.

We were back to calling ourselves The Strangers again during this period, but we'd dropped our horn player and were down to a trio... which was Harold Kirby on bass (now working in an aircraft factory), Willie Kellogg on drums, and me on guitar and vocals... and this would be late 1964. Well, we got a good thing going at the Action, because we knew so many of the local musicians, and they were always coming along to jam with us.

We were resident there for four months, making good money - and on our night off every Monday, they'd put on this other group called The Mothers of Invention - with Frank Zappa and Henry Vestine!

During our Action residency, we went through some personnel changes; Willie Kellogg left and we replaced him with this kid who'd just come in from Chicago... Fast Eddie Hoh. He'd been in loads of bands back east, and he didn't stay with us for long... he went off to join the MFQ... and we got in this young kid called Johnny Barbata. He was just a young kid who'd been hanging out at the club every night, wanting to sit in and jam, and eventually he slid into the group when Eddie left. He wasn't old enough, but he said he'd get himself a phony ID.

Then Harold quit, so I called up Bob Mosley, who was playing around San Diego in various bands, and he came and joined us. By this time The Whisky had become so popular that the owner, Elmer Valentine, decided to open a second club between San Francisco and San Jose - up on the peninsula. The Strangers - Mosley, Barbata and I - were hired to play there.

At this point, there were two more changes: we brought in this singer, a chick called Joni Lyman, who had cut several records with Jack Nitsche, and (because the other 2 Strangers had gone) we became The Joel Scott Hill Trio, with Joni Lyman. In fact Joni was a real hot singer and was very popular in Los Angeles. (She had also been in Nooney Rickett's band at one time.) So we played there for a couple of months and then these agents from San Francisco began to offer us gigs around the city.

This was just around the time that the scene was starting to happen in San Francisco... people were talking about The Charlatans, the Grateful

Dead, Big Brother, and The Beau Brummels - and it didn't take long to figure out that there was far more happening there than in LA. In fact, LA was dead in comparison. So we decided to stay around San Francisco and bring in an organ player to fill out the sound.

Originally, we wanted to bring in more guys, but though the club owners were forced to pay union scale rates to all musicians, the big groups had to pay most of it back under the counter - or else they didn't get the gig! So instead of bringing in 3 new guys, we got in this organist called Lee Michaels. Johnny Barbata was from San Luis, and Lee Michaels was from Atwater, which is a farming area, and they knew each other from high school bands... they often used to bump into each other as they toured around central California.

So Lee joined us for the rest of our gigs around San Francisco, and then went back to LA with us. We were supposed to resume playing at the Action, but I went down with a real bad case of pneumonia and was forced to stay in bed... during which time, the band fell apart. Lee went back up to San Francisco and got his own scene together. Joni went back with Nooney Rickett, and the Turtles, who'd just lost their drummer, snapped up Johnny Barbata. So that was the finish of that little escapade.

When I got better, I joined T.L.C. - Tender Loving Care, a band managed by my own manager. That was a club band with Tommy Poole on bass, Buddy Deal on sax, and Bobby Newkirk on drums... and my first gig with them was in Frisco, playing at a topless club. At that time Frisco was the only place to have topless dancers and as a result it became like a sort of Tijuana... a very big tourist draw for business men from the Mid West, who got a kick out of seeing chicks walking around with their breasts exposed.

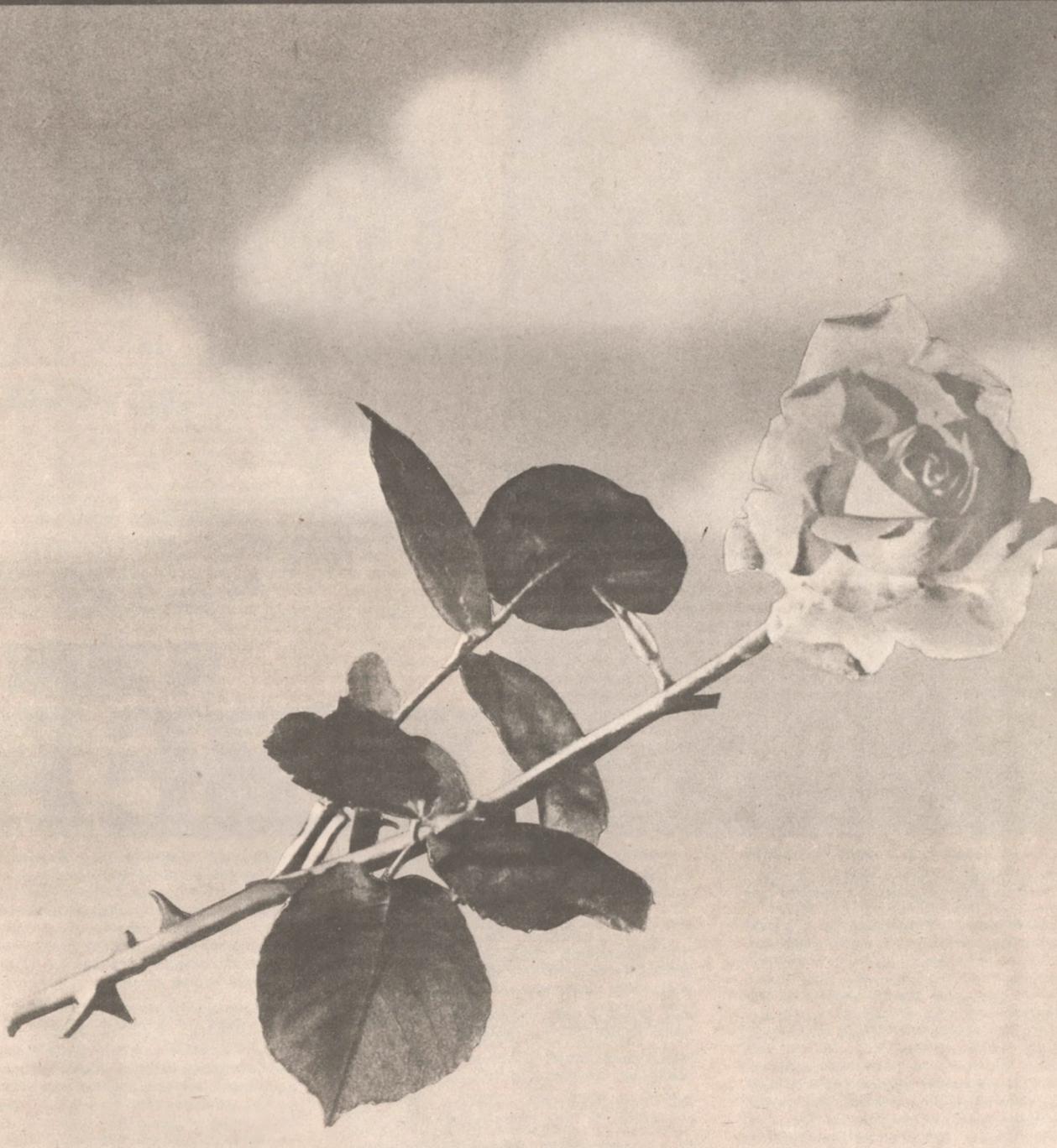
Obviously no one paid any attention to the music, so we bottled it and headed back to Los Angeles, where we cut 5 sides with Nik Venet... but there was some kind of jiggery pokery over the contract and we pulled out.

Then we got a gig on the Strip at a place called The Trip, which used to be an old Hollywood style nighterie called The Cloister, I believe. Psychedelia had arrived, and the Trip was the place for a while... till the Sunset Strip curfew and cops thing exploded. We were the house band there - just at the time the owners changed to a black music policy... which was a total failure. People like Stevie Wonder and the Temptations were playing to 10 or 15 people. So the club lost a lot of money, nobody got paid, and we quit... and took a gig at a club called The Haunted House on Hollywood Boulevard.

Then, we were playing there one night when all these tough guys in suits came in; they whisked away the owner and said "he's not the boss anymore... we're taking over - anyone who doesn't want to work for us has the option to leave". I left!

Pete

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Hi—
They say I live a fast life. Maybe I just like a fast life of driving my Sting Ray and XKE, playing my drums, and meeting so many girls and guys (especially girls). I wouldn't give up this life for anything in the world. It won't last forever, either, but the memories will. Thank you for writing so many great letters. I hope I can answer them soon.

I'll see you in your town,

Dennis Wilson



People ask me sometimes how I come up with my ideas. Sometimes I don't know. The feelings you get from going to school, being in love, winning and losing in sports—these are my inspirations. A sociologist might say I am trying to generate a feeling of social superiority. I live with my piano and I love to make records that my friends like to hear. The fellas have worked so well with me—you'd never know we were brothers and cousins. Thank you for giving me the incentive to create our records.

Sincerely,

Brian Wilson



It's been a while now, but it seems like we just started out yesterday. I still get that overwhelming feeling when we're announced to come on stage. And a fantastic ovation—you could never know how much we appreciate them. To Mom and Dad; Brian, Dennis and you: I hope you are proud of us. You know we owe so much to you.

Always,

Carl Wilson

Well, I may not be in the family, but being in the Beach Boys has been one of the greatest experiences of my life. Recording sessions are a real panic and the life of an entertainer is very fulfilling; two hours of sleep a night and tranquilizers before each meal. I play rhythm guitar and sing various background parts with the fellas. Thanks to everyone for being so good to us.

Al Jardine



They've given me this small space to express something a guy could write a book about. There are a thousand memories. Like being on stage in our own state capital, Sacramento, California, and seeing so many happy swingin' kids goin' wild! And then there's the helpless feeling of seeing a girl, who maybe spent her last dollar to see us, crying or something, 'cause the cops wouldn't let her stay and get a Beach Boys autograph.

Some of the people I've met since The Beach Boys started have become really special to me. I hope you know what I'm trying to say—it's more than just "thank you." Like I said, you can't really say it all in such a small space.

Maybe I'll get another chance sometime.

Mike Love



Surf's up!

Interview by
John Tobler

Original Pix
by the sharp shooting
Chalkie Davies

NO. 1 SURFIN' GROUP
IN THE COUNTRY!



14 MINUTES WITH A BEACH BOY

One of the great omissions of Zigzag's entire life thus far has been a piece on the Beach Boys, who I consider to be the most charismatic group there has ever been. That's not to say that I haven't experienced brief flirtations with several other groups, but when they fade from my memory, I've noticed that I always instinctively revert to 'Endless Summer', which replaced my original favourite, 'Best Of Vol. 2', a couple of years ago.

Mike Love was recently in London for an all too brief period (as will be seen), the reason being that the group have made an hour long video programme, which is due to be shown on American TV soon, and presumably in an effort to sell it to interested British parties, it was previewed in London. Before we get to the meat, let me recommend the video in the highest possible terms - it has a prodigious quantity of great music, humour (Van Dyke Parks is amazing in it), and lots of other stuff that I'll leave as a surprise. See it if you possibly can... The interview which follows wasn't quite what was intended. You'll see.

ML: Keith (Richard) is in the hotel if you want to interview a real funky rock star.

ZZ: I'm more interested in you.

ML: You're just trying to flatter me!

ZZ: Why would I bother - I'm as old as you are.

ML: (After age comparisons). I'm your senior, so treat me respectfully if you will, please. OK, what's your first question? My first question is where are all those beautiful Oriental girls who walk around the streets here?

ZZ: What is this thing that Americans have about Chinese people?

ML: I don't know about other Americans but I love Oriental girls.

ZZ: You're not the only one - Ray Manzarek is married to one, I believe.

ML: Is he really? Dirty dog! That's it - if I marry one, it'll probably break the fixation.

ZZ: I would imagine so... tell me please about David L. Marks. A gentleman who is much neglected in Beach Boys history.

ML: He is sorely neglected, and unjustly so, for he's a fine gentleman, a nice person, and he also studied classical music at a music school in Boston. Went from playing rhythm guitar with the Beach Boys to Dave Marks and the Marksmen, a small band in Southern California. He returned east to study in the conservatory of music, but now he's back on the West Coast, doing what I don't know,

because I haven't talked to him for the last couple of years. When I last saw him, about three years ago in Boston, he was doing very well, feeling good, he'd grown up very handsomely and nicely, and he wasn't the same snotty punk kid he was when he was in the group!

ZZ: He was with you while Al (Jardine) was away for a while, wasn't he?

ML: Al went away for about a year. He had pretensions, ideas, of going to dental school, but he soon figured - I could have told him this and saved him a lot of trouble - that he could look down a whole lot more mouths at one time on stage with the Beach Boys than one at a time in a dentist's chair.

ZZ: How many albums was David Marks on?

ML: 'Surfin USA', 'Surfer Girl' and 'Shut Down'.

ZZ: What influence did Murry Wilson have on the Beach Boys?

ML: What influence does any father have on his sons?

ZZ: You're not his son, so you're in no position to answer.

ML: I'm his nephew. Or he's my aunt. Was, he's deceased. He had very

little influence on us day to day... his influence was mainly genetic in relationship to the Wilson boys, and the fact that he was... you'll see in the special that he's spoken of rather reverently by Dennis. He was a harsh man, an aspiring songwriter, and he would have been a stage mother except he was more of a father. He aspired to write music, and he at least created a musical climate, an atmosphere behind the group. He was our first manager - at first he didn't think we knew what we were doing... we were just kids, we didn't know anything. And then finally, somehow, we got a hit record, and another one, and he took these few songs that we recorded to Capitol Records, and got a contract with Capitol Records, which was actually what you call a slave contract. They used to have indentured servitude - you remember that? In the 1700s, you'd leave England, and go to work in the cotton fields for a while. But then in 1961, they called indentured servitude a Capitol Records contract, and we were living under that miserable spectre (and I don't mean Phil) for about eight or nine years until we finally got out of it, and into a decent contract with a respectable company, and one that's not a flagrant prostitute of our beautiful art!

ZZ: I can only follow that by asking

you whether you approve of 'Endless Summer', after that little diatribe. I gathered that the Beach Boys are co-operating fully with Capitol in their reissue programme.

ML: We have nothing to say about it. I met with Capitol Records on 'Endless Summer', which is a reason that it's so terribly successful, of course, but the fact of the matter is I hoped they would do an anthological kind of approach, rather than 'Soldies' or '20 Golden Greats' or something, and so we got 80% there. The artwork was, I thought, meagre, to say the most about it - to be nice about it, it could have been done a lot better, but it accomplished, it took the edge off what they had planned. 'Endless Summer', the very title itself, that was the title I gave it, is better than '20 Golden Mouldies', because to me it implies two of the most important qualities of the Beach Boys - timelessness, the eternal quality of the music and summer - 'Endless Summer'.

ZZ: You're saying that you didn't have anything to do with 'Spirit Of America'?

ML: Nothing. We were just doing our duty.

ZZ: So did you approve of it in any way, the track choice, for example?

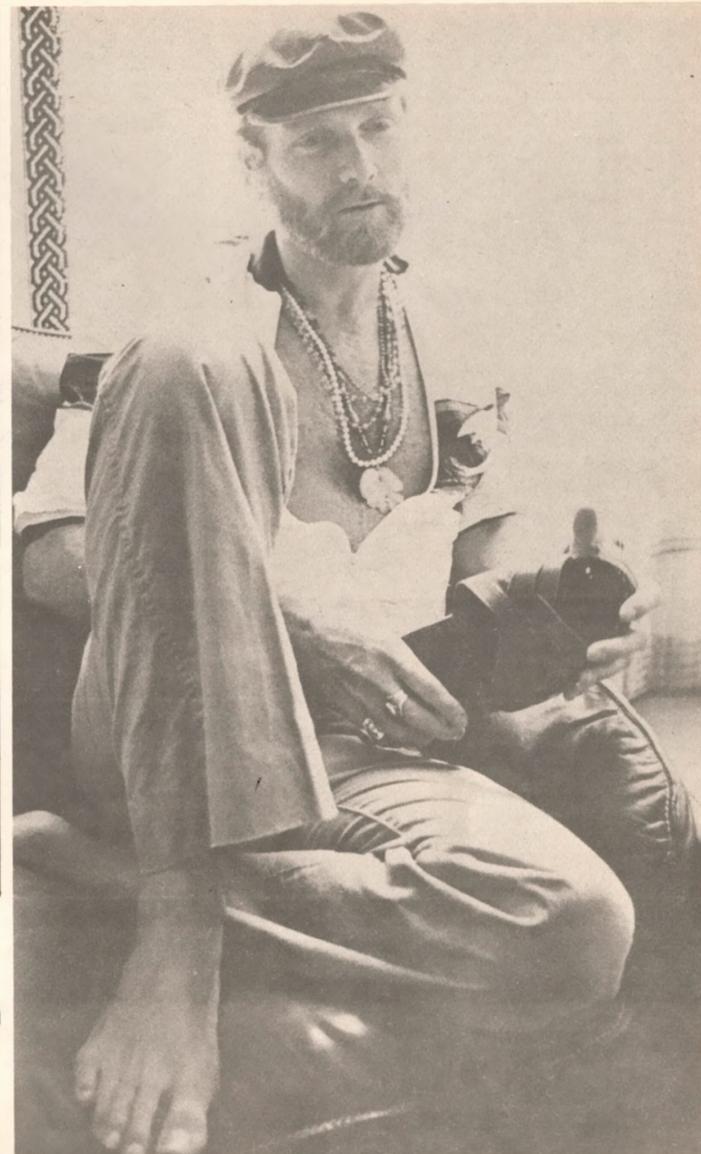
ML: I approved of the fact that it sold

about a million.

ZZ: So you're not keen on Capitol, but you're taking the money?

ML: No, I'm saying that we had a lousy royalty rate. They promoted us very well for the first four or five years, then they failed miserably in promoting that change, which would have been very commercially sensible on their part, but they didn't ever do it. In '68 or '69, they were still promoting us as the number one surfing group in the USA. How relevant was that after 'Good Vibrations', 'Pet Sounds', 'Smiley Smile' or Vietnam and everything else? It was not, I tell you.

Right in the middle of psychedelia, they were talking about the number one surfing group in the USA. It's obnoxious corporate intellect! Just because a certain style sells in one year, it's going to sell in the next - not necessarily so, and we weren't fixed to that. We'd moved on, evolved and changed as much or more than anybody, sometimes pressing the legal limits and sensible limits of credibility with our peers. Look at 'Good Vibrations' when it first came out - the number one disc jockey in New York, Bruce Morrow, Cousin Bruce, said to me that it scared him. He said he hated it - he hated 'Good Vibrations' because it was so different. He wan-





ted to hear 'I Get Around' or 'Surfin USA' one more time, or 'California Girls Part Two'. When 'Good Vibrations' came out, it was rather logical and sequential after 'Pet Sounds' which was rather sequential and logical after 'I Get Around' - witness the first verse: "I'm getting bugged driving up and down that same old strip, I got to find a new place where the kids are hip", meaning awareness, you see, so we could see the seeds of rebellion as early as 'I Get Around'.

ZZ: 1964, August, when my first daughter was born.

ML: Was that 1964 August? That was when Mick Jagger came back here on 'Ready Steady Flipout' or whatever was happening at the time, and he said 'Oh great mumble mumble mumble record, I Get Around'. He came back and he actually mentioned it. He still couldn't get no satisfaction!

At this point in proceedings, a brief but hilarious exchange occurred, which has been removed, as lawyers already seem to make quite enough money without our assistance.

ZZ: I gather that at one stage there was a move to change the name of the Beach Boys to simply Beach...

ML: Where did you hear that?

ZZ: I read it in 'Rock Marketplace'.

ML: In that case it couldn't be wrong. That and Roget's Thesaurus.

ZZ: A great similarity...

ML: Although I must say I've never read 'Rock Marketplace'. I swear I haven't, but that doesn't mean anything - I don't read a lot of rock press. I read very little.

ZZ: Tell me about it then...

ML: The rock'n'roll press? I don't know anything that's going on. I'm very naive about 'what's happening'.

ZZ: Very good at evading questions as well! Was there an idea that you were going to change Beach Boys to Beach?

ML: Alright, I'll tell, I'll tell! No, that was a statement that I rather facetiously uttered in jest with some dry and caustic humour, when once upon a time I was asked if we had ever thought of changing our name, and I said "Well, we've thought about dropping the 'Boys' - to call ourselves The Beach would be very hip and psychedelic in 68 or 7 or something, with flower power, lover of the Beach" ... and then Elton John comes along years later, and 'The Beach Is Back' and we're OK, you know. 'It's OK', as a matter of fact. (An obscure reference to the latest, and very fine, single by the Beach Boys, I expect you'll all have realised).

ZZ: Tell me about Brother Records and who else is on it.

ML: Nobody. We had the Flame there for a while, but that was a glorified label deal. That was a logo, if you know what I mean. Logo.

ZZ: I know exactly what you mean. Why haven't you got anybody else? What's the point of having a label which is only you?

ML: Did you ever hear that song on the 'Holland' album, 'Only With You'?

ZZ: You're evading the question again.

ML: Because we spent enough time doing the Beach Boys, on tour, in the studios and stuff. Why the hell were we going to spend the rest of our lives promoting and producing other people? Besides that, we didn't have the mechanics or the proper management and promotion people around us at the time. We had a couple of leeches and frauds and never do wells, and so the ideas that we had to develop Brother Records and stuff, which were very good, were never translated into sound business practice. We never got immersed that deeply, like the Beatles, who did Apple Records, to where we lost millions of dollars... we stopped short of it.

We said "Well, the only way you're going to be a record company is if you have your own distribution, sales and promotion. Just making a royalty deal with a major record company to distribute a product is nothing more than a distribution deal for your production company, so you really have no mastery over your own destiny. We saw that immediately after we'd signed it, so we said "Oh shit, we've had it!"

ZZ: So there was the intention originally to put Flame on it, and what about the Redwoods?

ML: The Redwoods! Those people were Three Dog Night. The thing is, that was one of the stupidest fxxx-ups in the world of recording. Three Dog Night sold more records, singles that is, than anybody in the world, and Brian Wilson produced them originally, but you know, it was funny. They'd go in, and they wouldn't sing good enough for him; he didn't want to hear any sharps or flats - he was at that period of his life when he was horrible to live with. But he's great musically - that's why our music has lasted, because he was a great stickler for perfection, and he would hear them sharp or flat, or they didn't have the quality. It's not just a note being sung, but the particular pitch and timbre, and subtle overt and covert implications that Brian's looking for. Who knows... cosmic or whatever, but the fact of the matter is that he had them in the studio for several days, and he was really funny. They didn't meet up to his expectations, but they went off and made billions!

ZZ: Was the theory that they were going to be on Brother?

ML: Yeah, that was the idea.

ZZ: And was it true that 'Darlin' and 'Good Vibrations' were written for Danny Hutton originally?

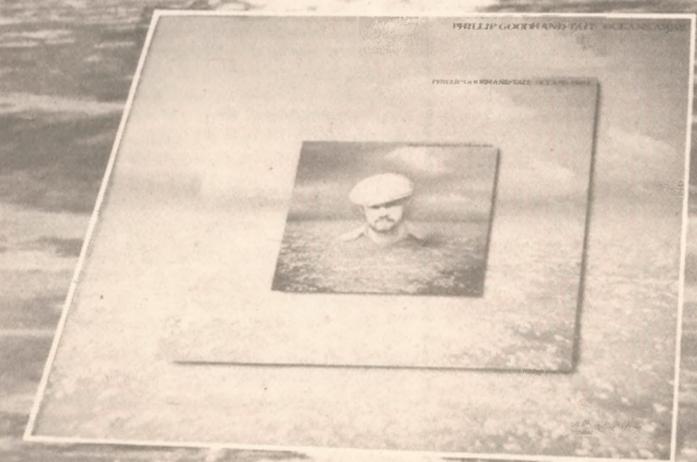
ML: Yeah... 'Good Vibrations'? Not Danny, take it easy. I mean really not.

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That sounds like a Bruce Johnston quote. 'Darlin' was originally going to be Three Dog Night. Which they'd sound great doing too.

At which point we were joined by a gentleman named Warren Duffy, who was accompanying Mike on the trip.

WD: Gentlemen, I'm afraid that I have to interrupt.

ML: What time is it?

WD: It's 5, 30.

ML: We've only been here five minutes.

ZZ: Is there any possibility of carrying on after the film? I have a million other trivial questions to ask.

ML: How many millions?

ZZ: About forty, but they're not all trivias - there's the Van Dyke Parks question, for instance. We've had about a quarter of an hour of tape, and only covered about six points.

WD: And you want to ask forty? Impossible. Please understand, we have literally been besieged, and Mike, and I must speak on his behalf, has been very patient. We can only work so long, and we started quite early, and it's going to go on quite late. Tomorrow we have to fly from here, and he has to be on stage to do a show tomorrow night back in America, so I would appreciate your understanding. We have two more interviews to do tomorrow while we're packing, and getting ready to go to the plane, so we have squeezed in as much as we can. Everyone would like to have an awful lot of time, and it's impossible.

ML: I'll tell you what we can do, if you want to write down those questions and give them to Warren sometime...

WD: You're going to be at the film tonight. We can record them on cassette, and mail them back to you.

ZZ: If you'd do that, I'd be most grateful.

WD: I'd be more than happy to do that for you. He only has half an hour now. (To ML) I'll have to speed you along to meditate, to shower and to dress, because the car's coming promptly at six. As a matter of fact we're supposed to be there at six, and it's 5, 30 now.

And that, Zigzagers, is what happened. I'm looking forward with great interest to getting the tape back, when I hope to be able to deny or confirm a few more of the many rumours that exist surrounding the Beach Boys. I repeat, they are my all-time favourites, weathering all kinds of musical fashions that crop up, consistently able to sound fresh despite the passing of time, and a joy forever. Additionally, I strongly recommend that you ignore the rantings of critics of '15 Big Ones', and invest immediately, at the same time getting yourself a copy of '20 Golden Greats' on Capitol, which has to contain some of the finest music you'll ever hear, music which only plant life might be unable to appreciate.

This has been a public service announcement on behalf of good music. Ignore it at your peril - to do so brands you as a clown of Am in proportions. It's also worth noting that the opinions expressed by Mike Love are not necessarily those of the magazine, but I still think they were pretty interesting.

Little old John Tobler from Pasadena

London's Roundhouse had nearly lost its old roof by the time New York's leading punk sensations the Ramones careered into the home-run powerdrive of the first ever British gig last July.

Many a brain was frazzled by the Ramones' formula for one of the most exciting sounds in rock, that is... maximum power and energy plus classic pop melodies, minus excess frills (ie. solos). Even Garry was heard to remark after their set "That's one of the most original acts I've ever seen".

The Ramones are just the tonic for a tired rock scene that's heard one too many guitar solos of the boring variety. (If there's any justice, that Roundhouse bill, completed by the fabulous Flamin' Groovies and startling Stranglers, should play a major part in the future of rock'n'roll. All three acts are working in different areas, but show the same intensity and originality).

Yes, the Ramones are a breath of fresh air - not of the insipid summer breeze variety, rather the blast of a roaring wind tunnel. Their album was great. Live they were better, picking up the audience and carrying them away in an ever mounting wave of lethal energy which even hardened rock surf riders found hard to withstand. (Stick in the muds like that chap from Melody Maker are the ageing sea walls which will eventually be breached).

On the two nights I saw them, the Ramones overcame mysterious sound problems and initial hecklers to drive on with a ferocity born of frustration. They crammed about 15 breakneck numbers into 30 minutes, pausing only for bassist Dee Dee Ramone to yell 1-2-3-4 before powering into the next riff.

In their leather jackets, jeans and shades, the Ramones look like a punk caricature. But they certainly don't sound like one. Johnny Ramone hacks out a never ending barrage of power chord thunder from his blood-spattered axe, and looks fit to splinter the instrument with his blazing buzz-saw hand. Dee Dee is a rumbling counterpart to Johnny. Tommy Ramone's drums are the rock solid anchor. In the middle stands beanpole clothes peg Joey Ramone - "Tall, languid and mysterious" according to Punk magazine - who sounds like a weird mutation of David Johansen and Herman (his hero).

Cornering the Ramones for an interview was no easy task, but eventually I caught up with them in the car park at Dingwalls after they had played a well-received set. The Ramones hype and savage stage presence led me to believe or fear they may be rampant punk hoodlums devoid of brain power, only capable of launching into high octane riffs at the magic shout of 1-2-3-4! Thankfully this wasn't the case, and the group all turned out to be friendly, quiet and dedicated to putting their music together. (Which isn't so easy to do as it sounds. Some-one else would have already done it if it was).

The Ramones certainly don't see themselves as a New York punk cult, or even a New York band, they want to get out of CBGB's as soon as possible and get rich and famous.

Anyway, here we are sitting in the car park outside Dingwalls. Blaring out is 'Oh Yeah' by the Shadows of Night. Perched on the end of the wall is Dee Dee Ramone. He doesn't contribute to the interview 'cos he's talking to a fan. (Dee Dee's probably the punkiest member of the group,

slouching around, kicking walls and generally achieving the image of the kid of the group. During a four second drum break in the Dingwalls set, he took a swig from a bottle then calmly lobbed it over his shoulder when he realised it was time to start playing again).

Gangling Joey Ramone looms over the proceedings with a weird grin on his face. The strong silent type, he only actually said one sentence during the whole interview!

Johnny Ramone and Tommy Ramone, sitting on either side of me do the talking. Johnny likes horror movies and John Denver. Tommy is like group spokesman and businessman. In fact he started off as the Ramones' manager.

Right. Introductions over we'll shoot right back to the beginning. What spawned the Ramones and how were they born? The answer begins at Forest Hills High School, New York, where Johnny, Joey, Dee Dee and Tommy are kicking around in the same class. Naturally they were all in bands, ("Nothing serious though, you know"), but most of these adolescent years seem to have been spent hanging out, roaming the streets and lobbing the occasional bottle through a window! They also attended all the local gigs.

This way of life continued for a few years until the four left school in 1970 and, flushed with a newly acquired responsibility to society... hung out and roamed the streets, not even bothering to go to Woodstock ("We weren't gonna sit in no mud!"). Joey painted pictures of fruit and veg, and they all continued in small time bands ("Nothing serious though, you know").

The prototype Ramones was born in early 1974. At this time Dee Dee was singing as well as playing bass, Johnny played guitar, and Joey bashed the drums! Apparently he drowned out the rest of the group with his unique cymbal sound! Tommy was manager and producer. For a little while there had been another bass player Ritchie Ramone, but he appears to have gone over the top and into an institution.

The name 'Ramones' came to the band one day while they were considering suitable appellations.

Tommy: We had a whole bunch of names that we threw together and Ramones was the best one. It's good once you get used to it and don't think we're Mexicans! (Huh?!)

This early Ramones gigged a little, but the group really consider summer '74, when Tommy switched to drums to be their kick-off time. In August they played at CBGB's - the tiny Bowery club famous for its spawning of new talent, that has started its own record label. From then on the place was like second home to the Ramones.

Tommy's switch to drums came almost as a last resort. Joey's unusual singing voice and charismatic presence made him a must for the singer's spot. (His 'unique' drumming may have had something to do with it too!). Dee Dee stepped aside to concentrate on his bass playing and 1-2-3-4s!

With the drummer's seat empty the search was on for a replacement.

Tommy: We were auditioning drummers but couldn't find one who had the right sound. Drummers would come down and I would have to show them what to play. In the end I said "Fuck it, I'll play the drums!"



Kris Needs, a rather weird creature whose brain has the capacity to appreciate talents as diverse as those of Tom Rapp and the Runaways, decides to investigate that incessant barrage of noise, the

RAMONES

Gigs at CBGB's continued. Johnny: At first we just played to five people. Six months later we were playing to thirty people. It was real slow, it didn't seem like the writers were going out to discover new talent, I dunno. Finally they (the writers) came down. Lisa Robinson came to see us, and she went and told other people and everybody came for the second set... in between sets we got more people. After that everything started building. Mostly we kept playing CBGB's and Max's a couple of times.

With the word out that the Ramones were hot, New York's blank generation started latching onto them. Big gigs began to come in - 2000 kids booted them off when they supported Johnny Winter!

Among the many people interested in the band was former MC5, Stooges and Lou Reed manager Danny Fields, who also edited '16' magazine! He became their manager in late '75.

The Ramones signed with the Sire label in December and last February set about recording their debut album. It only took about eighty hours over two weeks to record and is one of the year's most impressive debuts. Craig Leon succeeded in capturing the ferocity of a live Ramones gig in the grooves - a mighty feat when you consider what's happened to the other stage-busters on vinyl.

Tommy: The stuff on the album is up to two years old. We wanted to

get all the old stuff on this one so that it would be out of the way. We're really happy with it. We tried to combine as much of the live sound without losing the studio quality.

This sequence of our chat built up to the one and only vocal contribution from Joey Ramone.

Johnny: It's good party music! Sounds good when we hear it at parties and clubs when we're hanging out drinking. It's a good pick-up in the morning too!

Tommy: Yeah. Put it on in the morning and it'll wake you right up.

Johnny: If you smoke a joint it's good to listen to them!

(Roll of tympani, trumpet fanfare..)

Joey: You have to wake up, smoke a joint and put it on!

Tommy: ...then you go back to sleep!

With their album and gigs making quite an impression and the Ramones potentially teen dreams, the group are happily hatching plans for world domination, making no secret of the fact they'd like to be as big as the Beatles and leave their twilight New York stamping ground for good. Now the thought of the Ramones forsaking New York and CBGB's is about as credible as Lou Reed moving to North Marston, but here's Johnny: We have all intentions of getting out of New York and making it all over. We're trying not to play New York. I mean, New York is really nice. I love New

York and, uh, but the fans aren't the type of fans you want. I mean, I want young kids, you know, right up the front. We want to reach high schoolers.

I mentioned the enraptured youths pressed against the stage of the Roundhouse mouthing every word of the songs they performed from the album (admittedly not the most demanding feat).

Johnny: That's our audience. That's who we want. In New York audiences are more quiet, they try to be sophisticated. They all come and they, uh, pack the place and they come back every time you're playing, but they're...uh...more quiet.

Tommy: One guy at the Roundhouse kept yelling "Don't play music!" You couldn't really tell if he was for us or against us!

Johnny: I wasn't sure if he liked us or he didn't. I think he liked us!

Tommy: The first time a lot of people see us, they're sort of mystified. They don't know what's going on. If you're not used to the songs and you haven't heard them before, they sound really like from outer space. People don't know how to react.

Tommy Ramone has definite ambitions for the group: We wanna go round the world. We're not a New York band, man, we're an American band, and we'll play any place where they'll come and see us.

But if fame and fortune strikes will

we see the Ramones exchange tattered levis and Bowery flats for Rod Stewart outfits and mansions? Tommy: I think emphatically not: We don't want to get fat! By that I mean we don't wanna lock ourselves away in mansions and keep away from what's happening.

Johnny: It's not in our mentality to do that. After we retire maybe that's what we'll do...

Tommy: ...but not as long as we're playing. (Laughs).

Johnny: We have a lot of drive, uh, to do good. I know everybody loses it, but you just have to try not to. We might change but that'll be because we want to. We're not going to change drastically. I guess we'll do a couple of slower songs.

At this point I fell off my bit of wall in disbelief. The Ramones doing a slow song? My mind was put to rest (I thought that happened years ago—Ed) when Johnny explained 'slow song' in Ramones language:

'Boyfriend'... that's a slow song. (Well, I s'pose so Johnny!) We'll do a couple of things like that. When you play an hour I guess you have to, you know.

Tommy: Then we'll start doing country blues and bluegrass!

Oh yeah, this business about short sets. I was quite surprised at the Roundhouse when the Ramones performed well over half an hour. I'd heard they were pushing it if they were on for 20 minutes. The group are aware that as their fame spreads and audiences grow, they will be required to play longer to satisfy the punters. But the group still maintains at the moment that it plays more than enough to drain a crowd dry.

Tommy: I think we give them enough. We give a show, you know. We do 15 songs and there aren't many groups who do that.

Johnny: We don't do any stopping you know. If we stopped and talked to the audience we'd add another ten minutes. We really feel that what we are doing should be done in half an hour. Eventually we are going to be forced to play an hour, but, uh...

From my stage woodworm's eye view of the band it was not hard to see that the blistering pace of the longer-than-usual set was taking its toll of the two guitarists' pinkies. Dee Dee was forced to wrap his formerly-for-show handkerchief around his thumb to cushion the blows, and Johnny... well, his hand is just a blur for the whole set but there were definitely blood coloured splatters decorating his guitar.

These he confirmed on Monday: I started to bleed towards the last couple of songs. It happened tonight too. I used to happen every night, but all of a sudden my fingers got hardened. I dunno why. Maybe I was playing harder. I dunno.

An hour's set will surely reduce the man's hands to mere pulp! While we're at it, why no guitar solos, Johnny?: They literally bog us down. They slow us up and bog things down. I can see us putting on record some short melodic thing for a nice melodic song, you know, but most of our songs don't call for guitar solos. The chords are doing everything, I'm driving away where the guitar breaks would be.

That's why the songs are so short then?: Yeah. Actually the way that came about was we would write a song

and it would end up being two minutes. We'd write the song, then clock it, and they end up being short!

How do you write a Ramones song?: Tommy: We just throw things against the wall and see how they bounce off.

Johnny: Sometimes somebody gets an inspiration from something he... uh, something alive.

The Ramones songs often contain elements of 50s and 60s pop on top of the thunder. Tommy: Basically we're influenced by late 50s and early 60s music... hit singles mixed in with hard rock.

Johnny: There's 14 singles on our album. We write singles - but the album's a concept.

All the material for the next album, which may be called 'Pinhead', has been written. Titles include 'Revenge of the Pinheads', 'Swallow My Pride!', 'Gimme Gimme Shock Treatment!', 'Glad To See You Go', 'I Remember You' (not the Frank Ifield hit, unfortunately for Frank), and 'California Sun' (the same one which appeared on 'The Dictators Go Girl Crazy' which was formerly a hit in the States for the Rivas). The last four were done live, and 'Shock Treatment' is destined for killer status, combining an irresistible melody line with scorching attack. All four Ramones chorused in unison that the English are great audiences, and they wanted to return as soon as possible and "play all the cities in England".

Return soon they do to play some of them. Do yourself a favour and go and see them. The effect is shattering!

Kris 'Today Your Love; Tomorrow the World' Needs

Last month we left Ian moaning and groaning about the 'Best Of Ian Matthews' Southern Comfort album, which MCA chose to thrust upon an unsuspecting public - so before we waltz onto his first 'solo years', let's investigate the nature of his discontent.

"Alright... I like the picture on the front - I'll admit that, though I've never seen the photo before in my life. It must have been taken at Reading Festival in 1971, because I only had that guitar for two months... I sold it to Glenn Frey, who hates it! Personally I would have taken off 'Even As', 'The Watch', 'I've Lost You', 'Once Upon A Lifetime', 'My Lady' and 'The Road To Ronderville'... and I'd have put on 'Brand New Tennessee Waltz', 'And Me!', 'Darcy Farrow' and 'Dream Song', as well as some unreleased stuff, like 'Yankee Lady' (written by Jesse Winchester) and 'Belle' (by Al Anderson). There were also three of my own songs - 'Scion', 'The Struggle' and 'The Parting', which I'd like to have seen on an album".

Just to complete the Matthews Southern Comfort picture as far as possible, there are several other unreleased tracks lying dormant in the vaults... including Al Anderson's 'Tina' and 'Touch Her If You Can'.

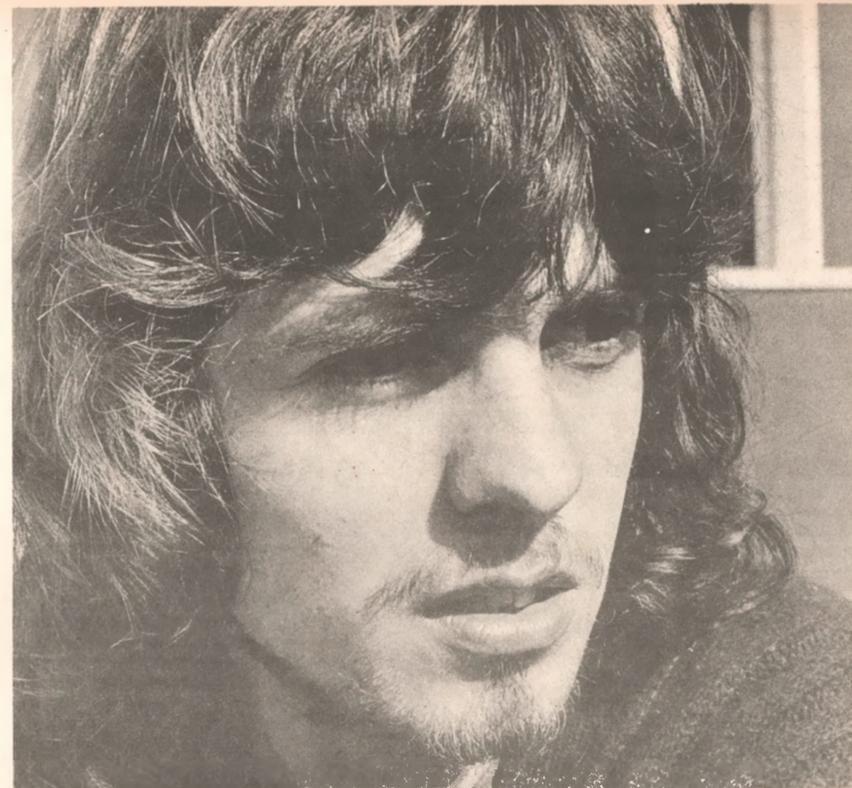
Right... let's get moving. You'll recall that we left Ian without a record deal. He'd just managed to extricate himself from MCA despite having had a recent number one smash... but there would seem to be few stranger moves in the whole chequered history of the record industry than the one Ian made at this stage, because he went to Vertigo. Now Vertigo was Phonogram's attempt to catch up with the rest of the market in 'progressive rock' - and in a remarkably short time, the label had become a huge joke!

Let me say immediately that just about all vestiges of the joke image have now vanished, and Phonogram is one of the hottest companies around in 1976. In 1971, which is the year Ian joined up, the initial burst of enthusiasm for the label, which had Rod Stewart, Juicy Lucy, Manfred Mann's Chapter Three (Manfred told me he liked Vertigo because of the recording label, one side of which was a mesmerizing pattern, which induced sleep if you watched it revolving) had dissipated, and some alarmingly second division stuff was being released. Ian still maintains that he didn't regret joining - "It was a good move - they needed some culture on the label (very true), and it was a small label when I joined".

Be that as it may, Ian didn't stay too long at that particular fair - just a few days longer than it takes for two and a bit albums. The first was 'If You Saw Thro' My Eyes' (Vertigo 6360 034) and was produced by Ian, although that wasn't the original intention. ZZ: I gather that Paul Samwell-Smith (see 'Yardbirds, Cat Stevens) was nearly involved in this album... IM: He was involved.

ZZ: But he doesn't get a namecheck... IM: No, he doesn't. I talked to him, and he decided that he'd like to produce it. He started it, did maybe four or five basic tracks, then we started a few vocals, and he began acting strangely. He'd turn up late, or leave early, or he'd be ill while he was there. Eventually, I decided to give him the two kind words - "No money". He was doing things like cancelling my time, and giving it to Cat Stevens, and using my session men on the time he gave to Cat. That's how Cat Stevens got Gerry Conway, but at the same time I got Del Newman to help me at Paul's suggestion.

The basic group involved on the album contains many familiar and predictable names, but it's none the worse for that. From previous associations, there's Gerry Conway, Sandy Denny and Richard Thompson, while Pat Donaldson on bass was acquire'd via Conway and Trevor Lucas, Sandy's old man. Perhaps the most interesting inclusion is of this year's guitar hero, the excellent Tim Renwick. "I knew Quiver at that point. We once talked about



GOIN' BACK WITH IAN MATTHEWS

getting together, after I left Southern Comfort". Now that alliance could have changed the course of music history if it had happened. Additionally, Keith Tippett plays piano on a couple of tracks, and Andy Roberts entered Ian's life.

"I met him before we started the album, through Paul, and it was strictly a kind of sessionman/artist relationship at that point. But he added a lot more to the album than just being a sessionman... like that little intro at the beginning of 'Desert Inn' was Andy... and just to tie up the personnel side of things, a lady vocal trio of Doris Troy (I asked her to bring whoever was available"), Nanette Workman ("She sang on 'Let It Bleed' - she's really amazing looking, and sings pretty good too!") and Liza Strike sing on 'Southern Wind'. That's according to the sleeve - "In fact, I don't think Liza Strike was there. I think it was Lesley Duncan".

The material is predominantly by Ian, nine songs out of the twelve. The other three include a couple by Richard Farina, 'Reno Nevada' and 'Morgan The Pirate'. Seemingly Ian used to sing both 'Reno' and another Farina composition called 'The Bold Marauder' when he was with the Fairports. The odd man out is Alan Jacobs and Jeremiah Burnham, better known as Jake and the Family Jewels, 'It Came Without Warning', which was originally on a 1970 Polydor album called simply 'Jake and the Family Jewels'. These three songs are quite excellent, with magnificent guitar solos and fills from both Richard Thompson and Tim Renwick, and would be worth the price of the album even if the rest were rubbish, which I hasten to add it's not.

Ian's songs can't be termed unforgettable here - some of them, notably 'Desert Inn', 'Hearts', and the beautiful final track 'Thro' My Eyes', on which Sandy Denny sings harmony with Ian, are well worth your attention, though, and I'm sure that

it's only a question of familiarisation in most cases. Three exceptions are 'Hinge!', a two parter which ends the first side and starts the second, the first part being an instrumental arranged by Del Newman, and the second part an accapella minute and a bit by Ian, which I really don't much care for, and 'Never Ending', where Keith Tippett plays what may easily be a typical piano piece for him, but in my estimation fits like a car in a bicycle race, an epithet which took me at least 25 seconds to conceive.

As I remarked to Ian, this wasn't exactly an enormous commercial success at the time, but as he remarked back, "It was a definite landmark in my musical career", and it was also the first time that he could be termed a prolific writer. Finally a mention for the sleeve, which I think is quite exemplary - good photos of Ian (again by Steve Hiatt), printed lyrics, full personnel. The answer to a writer's dream.

Unfortunately, that particular aspect of things wasn't so well catered for on 'Tigers Will Survive!', the 1972 (and final) Vertigo album (6360 056). The sleeve depicts a Red Indian gentleman, who Ian tells me was Chief Santanta of the Kiowa, although the unfortunate fellow doesn't get a name check. "I just wanted to show that tigers don't survive. He was one of the big rebels when the treaty was signed with the American Indians, but I just wanted to use him as an example, just an Indian, not any particular Indian. The American Indians' fate is a typical example of what I was getting at when I wrote the title song, because it really should have been 'Tigers Won't Survive!'".

Inside are several nice sepia pictures of Ian, on the largest of which he is standing with another gentleman and a lady, the three in an affectionate and smiling

ZIGZAG TOP THIRTY FOR SEPT

LAST MONTH	THIS MONTH	ALBUM TRACK (or single*)	ARTISTE	NUMBER	MONTHS ON THE CHART
1	1	Desperados Under The Eaves	WARREN ZEVON	Asylum K53039	4
2	2	Memory Motel	ROLLING STONES	Rolling Stones COC 59106	5
7	3	So It Goes	NICK LOWE	Stiff BUY 1*	2
4	4	Topanga	JOHN PHILLIPS	Dunhill DS 50077	77
13	5	Can I Make It Last	BOZ SCAGGS	CBS 64248	16
5	6	Cypress Avenue	VAN MORRISON	Warner Bros. K46024	90
3	7	Shake Some Action	FLAMIN' GROOVIES	Sire 9103 251	5
9	8	Murder Man	JOHN OTWAY & BARRETT WYLDE	Track 2094 111*	33
6	9	I'm Losing You	DWIGHT TWILLEY BAND	Shelter ISA 5012	3
17	10	Here Come The Weekend	DAVE EDMUNDS	Swansong SSK 19408*	2
11	11	Transient Friends	GENEVIEVE WAITE	Paramour PR 5088 SD	17
10	12	Border Town	FLYING BURRITO BROTHERS	CBS 81433	3
8	13	L.A. Freeway	GUY CLARK	RCA APL1 1303	6
-	14	Roxette	DR. FEELGOOD	United Artists UAS 29990	1
18	15	Clang Of The Yankee Reaper	VAN DYKE PARKS	Warner Bros. K56161	7
23	16	Someone To Lay Down Beside Me	LINDA RONSTADT	Asylum K53045	2
21	17	Me And My Uncle	MICHAEL WILHELM	Zigzag UA-ZZ 1	9
12	18	Past Present & Future	SHANGRI LAS	Phillips 6336 215	12.8
28	19	Only Sixteen	DR. HOOK	Capitol E-ST 11397	10
14	20	Rebecca	FLO & EDDIE	Columbia PC 33554	10
20	21	Twelve Thirty	MAMAS & PAPAS	Dunhill DS 50031	101
-	22	Darkest Hour	ARLO GUTHRIE	Reprise K54077	1
-	23	Rum Runners	ROBERT HUNTER	Round RX 101	8
25	24	Long May You Run	STILLS/YOUNG BAND	Reprise K54081	2
-	25	Theme From An Imaginary Western	JACK BRUCE	RSO 2659 024	36
16	26	Man Of Constant Sorrow	KALEIDOSCOPE	Pacific Arts PAC 102	5
-	27	Old Cheyenne	IAN & SYLVIA	Columbia G32516	1
19	28	September Gurls	BIG STAR	Ardent ADS 501	19
-	29	Snowflake Bombardier	PHIL EVERLY	RCA SF 8370	1
-	30	San Francisco	SCOTT MCKENZIE	Ode Z12 44002	105

Bubbling Under:

Stoney	JERRY JEFF WALKER	MCA MCG 3522
Your Eyes Are Looking Down	HELP YOURSELF	Liberty LBS 83484
Hospital	JONATHAN RICHMAN	Home Of The Hits BZ 0050
Second Avenue	ART GARFUNKEL	OBS 2672*
Styrofoam	THE TYLA GANG	Stiff BUY 4*
Twilight	THE BAND	Capitol EA-ST 23927

posture. "That's my wife Chris, and that's Paul Nelson in the middle. He was originally a writer, and used to write for 'Rolling Stone', doing all the Dylan things. Then he went to Mercury Records as head of A&R, and he's been there ever since. Paul's a really good person, and he signed Michael Brown to the label, and although he didn't sign me, he fought like hell for me while I was with Vertigo".

At backing musician time, we have the entire Quiver, Tim Renwick, Cal Batchelor, Bruce Thomas and Willie, plus even Timi Donald, who was the group's drummer before leaving to rejoin White Trash, after which Willie joined from Cochise. Add to that Andy Roberts, by now a firm friend of Ian's, Bob Ronga, who played piano here and there and will join the story soon, Ian Whiteman of Mighty Baby also on piano, Ray Warleigh on alto sax, and one Woolfe J. Flywheel on accordion, the Marxian pseudonym hiding Richard Thompson, who, like all right thinking people is a Marx Brothers fan. (For the uninitiated, it is the role played by Groucho Marx in the 1941 MGM film 'The Big Store'. However, you will be spared the long and detailed discussion of the Marx Brothers which took place at this part of the interview).

Let's hit the songs - Farina's there in spirit again, with 'Unamerican Activity Dream', the tenor of which should be obvious from the title, and Eric Andersen, another under-rated American songwriting name, first appears in Ian's recorded repertoire with 'Close The Door Lightly When You Go'. "It wasn't the first time I'd done that one though. I used to do that song with the Fairports". One gets the impression that the Convention were in fact up to a lot of things that never made it as far as the studio...

There's also a song by Pete Carr, who's an Englishman who was once a writer for 'Let It Rock' among others, and did some work on the television with 'Disco 2' or something similar. Not content with that 'he's a songwriter too. He was signed to

DJM at one time, and they started to make an album that I was producing, but quit halfway through. Peter wrote an amazing song that John Peel played incessantly called 'The Angel And The Woman' - I kept hearing this amazing song on Top Gear, and I had to find out who Peter Carr was".

It is a good song, as are most of those on the first side of the album, which includes the Farina and Andersen things, as well as the Carr song, 'The Only Dancer'. Of Ian's two songs, 'Never Again' is good, but 'Morning Song' doesn't seem to get anywhere. The guitar work, by Renwick, Batchelor and Roberts, is predictably good, while Thompson's accordion provides a kind of Peter Sarsstedtish quality on 'Close The Door Lightly' and 'The Only Dancer'.

The second side however seems a little less attractive, although it's hard to put the finger on the exact reason - perhaps it's just that the songs are generally not very fast, which tends to leave the Quivers, who were at their best on quicker songs, a little at a loss. Nevertheless, some of the songs are very good, especially 'Right Before My Eyes', the Peter Lewis song from 'Truly Fine Citizen', despite the fact that the album was far from the Grapes' finest hour, and a remake of 'Please Be My Friend' from the 'Matthews Southern Comfort' album, which really works very well.

Then there's the accapella version of 'Da Doo Ron Ron'. The idea was Ian's, conceived on an American tour he undertook, backed by Richard Thompson and Andy Roberts, with Roadie duties in the hands of Bob Ronga, who before long actually appeared on stage with the other three. "It went down well on stage - we used to close with it, so I decided to record it for a single when we got back". Ronga, by the way, played bass and keyboards, a point which I neglected to mention, and to clear up the trivia points, the American sleeve was lighter in colour than its British counterpart, and Ian

Whiteman's name being spelt Whitman was not I.M.'s fault, or so he claims. The only item of doubt concerns Whiteman's courtesy credit to Blue Thumb records, which we couldn't work out, as he was in Mighty Baby at the time... I guess the 'Thumb' should have read 'Horizon'. And that's all that Ian appeared to do for Vertigo, with the exception of a rather speedy version of 'Devil In Disguise', the Gram Parsons/Chris Hillman song, which appears on a two album sampler called 'Suck It And See' (Vertigo 6641 116). You may also know the song as 'Christine's Tune' from 'The Gilded Palace Of Sin', which I'm afraid is far superior to Ian's version.

For your information, the other artists on the double album are a motley collection of other Vertigo artists - only Status Quo remain on the label now. Anyway, Ian was about the first name on the record to leave the label. "The best thing about Vertigo was that they gave me an amazing three year deal, which I stood for two years. And it was an ever increasing deal - it increased by thousands of pounds per year. But it got to the stage where the money wasn't the main thing - I really wanted to sell records, but they didn't know how to market my records, they really had no idea. And they were giving me a hard time, they wouldn't help me tour. When I signed, I thought that maybe they would be able to deal with me, but while I was there I was seeing the other people they were signing, like...". At this point good taste intercedes to prevent us actually printing any of these ghastly names in Zigzag, and I thought 'I've got to get out of here!'

The next Ian Matthews album recorded wasn't in fact released until 1974, although it was made in November 1972. The album in question is 'Journey From Gospel Oaks', which is where Ian was living at the time - and, in fact, until he moved to America.

"That was made after Plainsong was formed, and after we'd talked to Vertigo



Plainsong: Ian Matthews/Dave Richards/Bob Ronga/Andy Roberts.

about signing Plainsong, and they said 'Well, we don't have to sign Plainsong - we already have Ian Matthews'. That alone deprived them of Plainsong. We played down at the Scotch for three nights running so that people could come and have a look at us. Vertigo had inserted 'Vertigo Records' under 'Plainsong' in the weekly programme, and every night on stage we denied having anything to do with Vertigo". So was this album some kind of demo for Plainsong? "No, it was recorded as an obligation. After we decided we wanted to sign with Elektra, they said 'OK, you can go, but we want some money back'. So I said 'Well, I don't have any money to give you, because I'm saving you the whole of the third year of the contract anyway'. So they said 'OK, here's £5000, go and make us an album'. So I booked five days at Sound Techniques, and made them an album".

The interesting question is why it came out on Mooncrest (Crest 18, by the way). "You tell me. I think that's another Robertson ploy, because Sandy produced it, and if it comes out, he makes money. I got the money for my songs". Did you actually produce those tapes and give them to Vertigo? "Yeah, well, Sandy did, and they just didn't release it. All that came out was 'Christine's Tune', which I neither wanted for the album nor mixed, and which I scrapped, in fact. It's the only place you can get that track, and they obviously omitted to tell Mooncrest when they sold the album, which I presume they did through Sandy Robertson. Even the cover photo was done for Vertigo. I found out about the album on a gig in Asbury Park, New Jersey (home of the future of rock'n'roll, you remember), when I met an importer who was going to import it the following month, and he asked me if I knew about it,

I couldn't figure out how Mooncrest got hold of it. Right before that I had read in NME in their studio column that 'Sandy Robertson is mixing Ian Matthews' latest album for Mooncrest'. I couldn't figure out what they meant, because if it had been the Phonogram album, it was already mixed! What it must have been was that he was putting strings on the single 'Met Her On A Plane', and mixing that, because the rest of it was exactly the way Sandy and I mixed it.

"I didn't know what was happening - it could have been some Southern Comfort things sold to Mooncrest. I was going to do a country album to start with, and then it turned into an album of other people's songs, and then it turned into something else again, because I figured I'd never get to use these two songs of mine, 'Knowing The Game' and 'Franklin Avenue', because Plainsong hated them, so I thought everyone in the future would hate them. Now I regret putting them on that album, because 'Knowing The Game' I thought turned out really well".

Hold on, Ian, let's talk about the record a bit first. It's pretty familiar in almost every case as far as songs go, and it sounds to me like exactly the sort of record I'd like to hear the Burritos doing these days. Great songs, probably not over familiar to the man in the street, although a longtime Zigzagger should be word perfect on most of them. You can't really go wrong with a bunch of writers like Gene Clark, Tim Hardin, Mickey Newbury, Jim Webb, Merle Haggard and so on. Just a quick note to say that 'Bride 1945' by Paul Siebel was an unexpected and welcome inclusion, despite the fact that Ian couldn't hope to get close to the great original, and that 'Things You Gave Me' was written by the great Glen D. Hardin. Glen isn't exactly noted as a

prolific writer, and Ian found the track on Rick Nelson's 'Country Fever' album, about which I've enthused at interminable length in the past.

I don't intend to say much more about the record, except to recommend it. Certainly, 'Knowing The Game' is an excellent song, which deserves cover versions, or even an update by Ian himself, while 'Franklin Avenue' isn't far behind. The personnel listed is Ian, Andy Roberts, Jerry Donahue on guitar (he plays some very fine licks every now and then), Pat Donaldson on bass, and Timi (mis-spelt on the sleeve) Donald on drums. In view of what Ian said about the existence of Plainsong at the time of recording, I wonder just how accurate that list is - I can certainly hear a piano on 'Things You Gave Me', which could easily be Bob Ronga... the only other point of note is that on the advertisement for the album, Mooncrest proclaim that... included in this previously unreleased album (sic) are Ian's favourite songs by some great composers - Harry Nilsson, Jimmy Webb, Mickey Newbury and Tim Hardin. Looks great, except that there's no Nilsson song included, and Ian was sure that he never recorded one. Perhaps it's gone to the great vinyl vat in the sky...

Which brings us to another peak in Ian's career, which I'm sure you'll have noticed has never been the smoothest of affairs... this peak was Plainsong. "It was my idea. We came back from America, and Richard was obviously going to nip off and do Sandy's (Denny) things, and Andy had to do a solo tour as soon as he got back, so Bob and Dave Richards, who had been in Everyone with Andy, started doing Andy's tour with him. I went along to a couple of gigs - the first one (chuckles) I got a phone call from Robertson, I think it was,

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although he'd probably deny it, in Birmingham. Chris and I were going to see Andy play at Birmingham Town Hall, and we got this call saying 'Andy's losing his voice! Can you come up sooner than you planned and help him out?' So I went up and did about three quarters of the show with him... and it felt good, just working together in England, with a different bass player. Then I went along to another gig at a college in South London, again just to see Andy as a friend, and we talked then about putting Plainsong together". The other two members of the group were Bob Ronga, who Ian obviously knew, and Dave Richards with whom he was less familiar... "I didn't know Richards very well... (in a stage whisper) and I wish I never had!"

To untangle the contractual situations, particularly with regard to management, was a less than simple proposition. "Sandy Robertson was already managing Andy, and Howard and Blaikley were managing me. We didn't want to go with Howard and Blaikley, so Sandy said 'If they'll give Ian up, I'll give Andy up'. Sounds like a love affair, doesn't it! Hopefully, that would get us out of the management situation, and Sandy would still be our producer, which we agreed with, as long as we could get out of both management things. So Sandy let Andy go, and we talked to Howard and Blaikley, and they said 'You can go... for x pounds'. So we weren't managed, which was the biggest mistake we ever made".

Plainsong signed up with Elektra Records. Whoever reads Zigzag regularly must know that I'm an Elektra freak of the first order, yet it seemed (and still does) another strange Matthews move, as Elektra have not had much success at all with the few British signings to their roster. "Jonathan Clyde (at that time Elektra label manager, and now in charge of Dark Horse Records - hello Jonathan!) was really enthusiastic. He came down to see us at the Music Workshop (the Scotch) and when he called Jac Holzman, Jac said he'd wanted to sign me for a long time, so he gave the go ahead".

'In Search Of Amelia Earhart' was the title of the only released Plainsong album, which came out in 1972. It is close to magnificent, and it's undoubtedly the best of Ian's albums thus far discussed. The title comes from the story of a lady aviator, a famous name of the 1930s, about whom a very fine book was written by a man from CBS news, Fred Goerner, relating how he spent several years of his life attempting (and, readers of the book may think, successfully) to prove that the US government's version of how the lady disappeared bore little relation to the truth, but was hushed up to prevent an international incident, as Amelia was in fact a spy for the American intelligence service.

"Andy read the book first, and I thought it was pretty amazing when I read it, but the idea wasn't of a concept album. In fact it's not a concept - we just went too far on the cover so that people got the wrong idea. We wanted to get across the point about Amelia being what she was - I suppose not many English people knew about Amelia anyway, and we thought if we put the picture and her name all over the cover, people would think that we wanted to tell them something, but that something wasn't that it was a concept album, although it's obvious now that that would be the first impression". The Earhart tie-ins as far as the music goes are two particularly fine and beautiful songs, 'Amelia Earhart's Last Flight' by one David D. McEnery ("It was a folk song by the writer who made one album on some obscure folk label. Which Andy Roberts has, and I want it!") and Ian's own 'True Story Of Amelia Earhart', which is a pretty magnificent achievement, especially in view of the fact that lyrically it sticks pretty much with the facts of the Earhart story as expressed in Goerner's book. "I'm quite proud of it - I read the book, and then I wrote the song. I corresponded with Fred Goerner for a while, and after the album was released - I'm not saying it had anything to do with

the album, it was just coincidence - the American government released a white paper saying that Amelia Earhart had worked for them. They didn't say she was spying on the islands, but Goerner was obviously right on the trail".

The rest of the record isn't far behind the two Amelia tracks - there's a version of 'I'll Fly Away' done nearly a cappella with appropriate handclaps. ("I heard it on an album by Goose Creek Symphony"), and a song called 'Yo Yo Man' sung by Andy Roberts, which was written by Rick Cunha and Marty Cooper ("I heard the song on the Mason Williams 'Sharepickers' album"), which is a little like 'Louisiana Man', and features some very angry Tony Jõe White-like angry guitar. Add to these riches another Paul Siebel song, the magnificent 'Louise' (and a plea to Paul to get himself together and make some more records), 'Call The Tune', written by Ian, with a hypnotic riff, and lyrically making a vague comparison between life and the music biz, 'Diesel On My Tail' as made famous by Jim and Jesse, and discovered for this album by Andy Roberts, and tack them onto the opening track 'For The Second Time', another of Ian's very best songs, and you've got a hell of a record. And we haven't yet mentioned the final three tracks, 'Even The Guiding Light' and 'Side Roads', both written by Ian, the former probably autobiographical, and the latter the one less than excellent track, and finally 'Raider', the Jerry Yester/Judy Henske song from 'Farewell Aldebaran', a long deleted item on the Straight label (remember that?).

Altogether an extremely impressive record, and one that I believe has just been put back in the Elektra catalogue here. A few trivia points - Harry Isles credited as Harry I get you teeth out - where's the pleasure in that? Isles was the roadie for the Liverpool Scene, in which of course Andy Roberts had participated. "He was more than a roadie, he was like a South London guru. He was an amazing guy, who put us straight on so many things. He almost ran the band".

Thanks are extended to Bernard Stone of Turret Books, who produced the Fred Goerner book about Amelia, and to Paul Kriwaczek for his string organ. "He built that instrument, which you can hear on the very beginning of 'For The Second Time', and the only other time I know of it being used was when Andy used it on a Cat Stevens show once. It looked like a lap steel, and it worked by touch - when you touched it, the sound grew out of it, instead of coming straight out. You could slide and fade it - an amazing machine, it was a prototype, and I don't think it was ever manufactured by anyone, because Paul worked for the BBC". Another bizarre instrument mentioned is the cello mandolin, played on 'Diesel On My Tail' by Martin Jenkins again, who also contributes fiddle on 'Raider'. "Oh yeah, it's a great big mandolin, like a bass mandolin. Amazing machine, and it sounds great. I've never seen one before or since". Add to that information that fact that Timi Donald plays the drums on all but 'Call The Tune', where Dave Mattacks does the honours, and that's the first Plainsong album wrapped up. Unfortunately, contrary to what was previously asserted, it isn't back in catalogue, but the numbers to look out for are K42120 (UK) or EKS 75044 (US), and you should look out for them.

Due to my 'special relationship' with Elektra at that time (I wrote most of their biographies, some of which are still being used, I'm amused to discover). I am the fortunate possessor of a white label unsleeved copy of a further Plainsong album which never quite made release. Perhaps we should just do a track listing first, and please note that where a * appears after the title, it can also be found on Ian's next album 'Valley Hill', where a + appears, it's on 'Some Days You Eat The Bear', and where a = appears, it's on Andy Roberts' 'Urban Cowboy' album. Ready?

Side One: Old Man At The Mill (trad. arr.

Matthews)/Urban Cowboy (Roberts)=/The Fault (Matthews)+/Swinging Doors (Haggard)/Keep On Sailing (Matthews)*&+/Miss The Mississippi (Halley).

Side Two: Home (Matthews)+/First Girl I Loved (Hartford)/Save Your Sorrows (Matthews)*/Nobody Eats At Linebaugh's Any More (Hartford)/The Goodnight Lovin' Trail (Phillips)/All Around My Grandmother's Floor (Evans/Roberts)=.

You can see that most of the songs are available elsewhere, although in most cases, they are not identical to the versions on this album. Also 'Goodnight Lovin' Trail', which is nothing less than a fantastic track, can be found by those who are of a persevering nature on an Elektra sampler released in 1973 called 'The One That Got Away! (K22005), with a lot of other good tracks by others. Due to the fact that this record is rather difficult to obtain, I'll restrict comment to Ian's words:

"On 'Valley Hill', all I kept from the original recording of 'Old Man At The Mill' was Andy's rhythm instruments and Andy's vocal. Everything else was an addition - I added drums and fiddle, and re-recorded the bass". The song came from the Dillard's version - "I used to do it on stage with Southern Comfort, as a square dance. 'Urban Cowboy' Andy used on his album, and I liked it. It's a great song, except for the time change - I wish he'd kept it all in one time. With 'The Fault', I think I changed practically everything except the sax. 'Swinging Doors' I hate - let's say the choice of that song wasn't mutual! 'Keep On Sailing', I think, is one of my good songs. I kept Timi Donald on drums, I changed the bass, I kept Andy's acoustic guitars, which were great, and I kept the sax and B. J. Cole's steel. He played great steel, and just that thing of Lyn Dobson's sax with the steel was something I wanted people to hear - I don't know if people noticed how strange it was for the two of them to be playing together. 'Miss The Mississippi' is a great song that I got from Jimmie Rodgers, and 'Home' I re-recorded totally for 'The Bear'. 'First Girl I Loved' again was not a mutual choice - Andy and I disagreed over it. 'Save Your Sorrows' I kept Andy's rhythm guitars. Originally I was going to credit Andy and Richards, but then a Plainsong lawsuit blew up, and I was upset and bitchy about it, and took their names off. I added Bob Warford and a bass drum, which made the song."

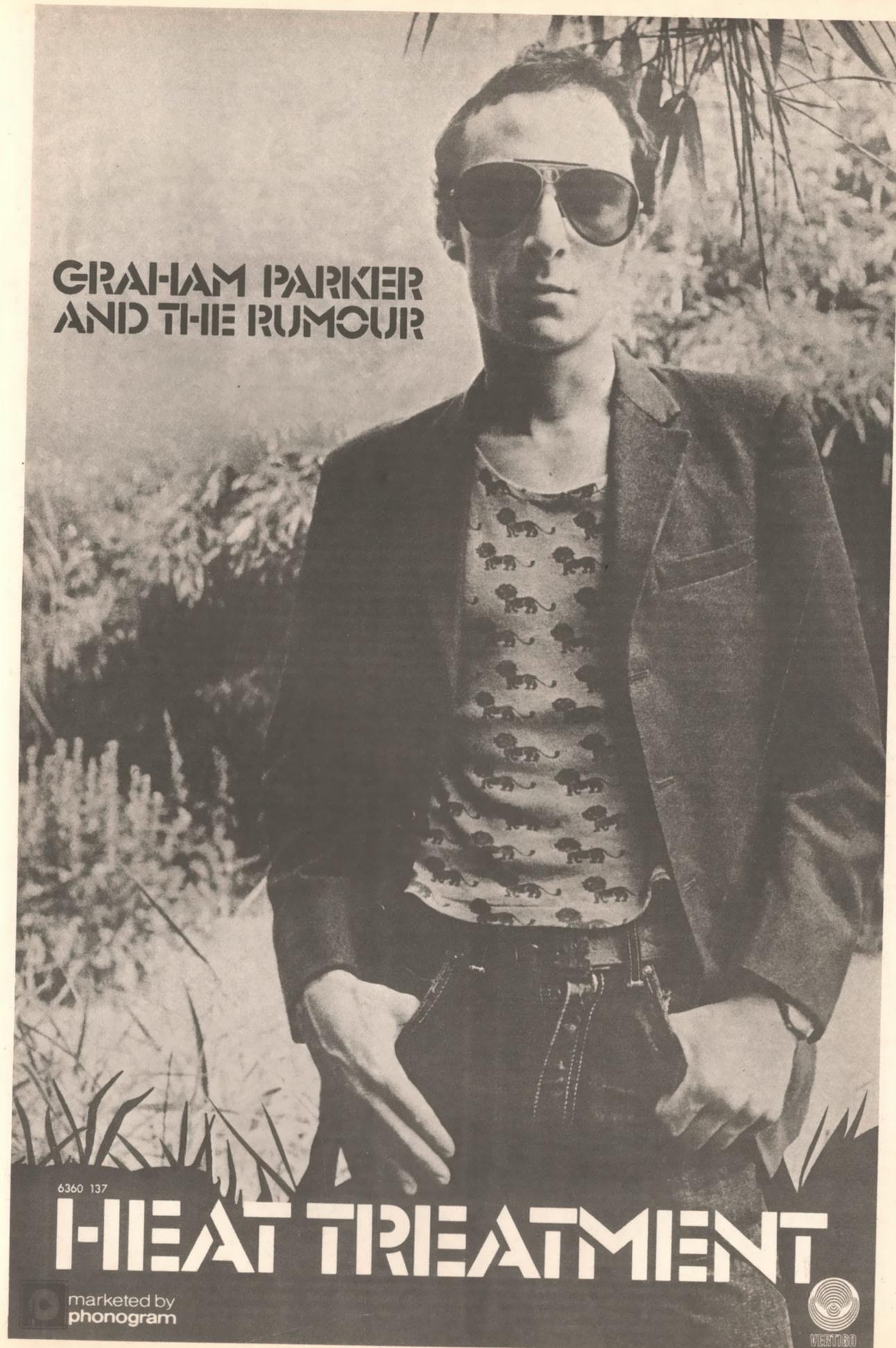
"'Nobody Eats' is a great song by John Hartford, and 'The Goodnight Lovin' Trail' is another great song by Utah Phillips. That's the one I stole from Rab Noakes. Utah made a record of his own, all about trains and hoboes, and it's called 'Good Thought'. He's like a modern day Woodie Guthrie. 'All Around My Grandmother's Floor' was an old song from the Liverpool Scene."

"The record was mostly produced by Sandy, because we lost interest in it. We were a three piece by then, because Bob Ronga had left. He was a hard person to figure out. As a three piece, we decided to try and make an album as much like the stage act as possible by not using a drummer. So the first 'drafts' were done without drums, and it sounded terrible - so stark, so boring and so long - so we decided to add a drummer to certain numbers. I wanted to add a drummer all the way through pretty much, give or take a couple of songs, and one of the others didn't want to add a drummer at all, and I think Andy wanted to add a drummer on certain songs. Then we put drums on some of them, and then we wanted to add B. J. on dobro - we were just disagreeing all the time, and it got out of hand and it got sloppy, and we forgot why we were making it. It turned out a mess, a complete mess".

At which point I sagely mutter that it didn't sound too bad to me, and Ian says: "For a mess, no - I mean, my mess is someone else's good album".

At which point we will again leave Mr. M until next month, when everything should be brought up to date.

John Tobler



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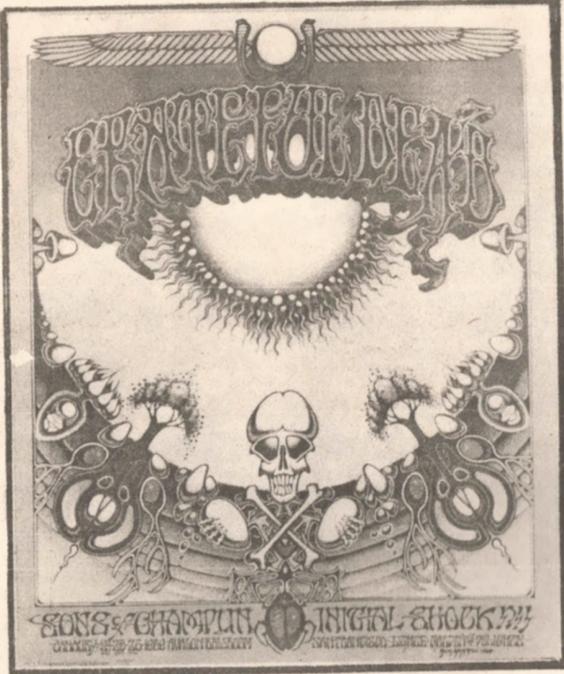
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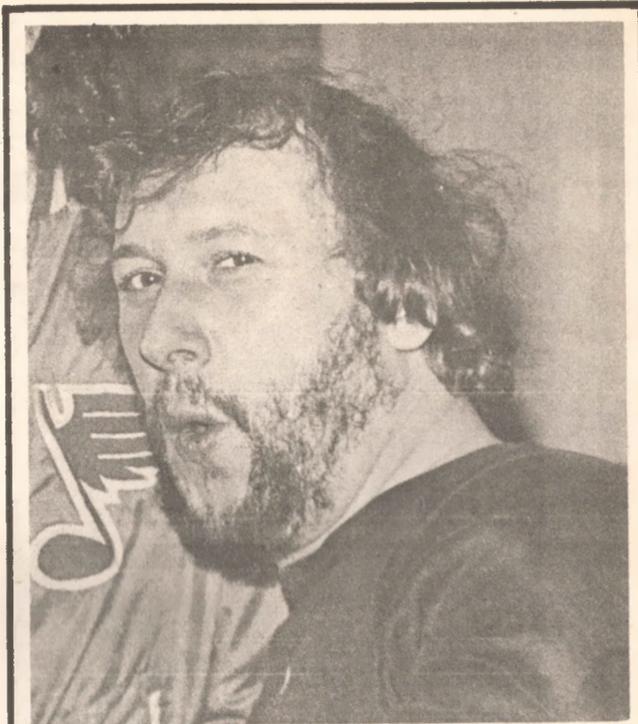
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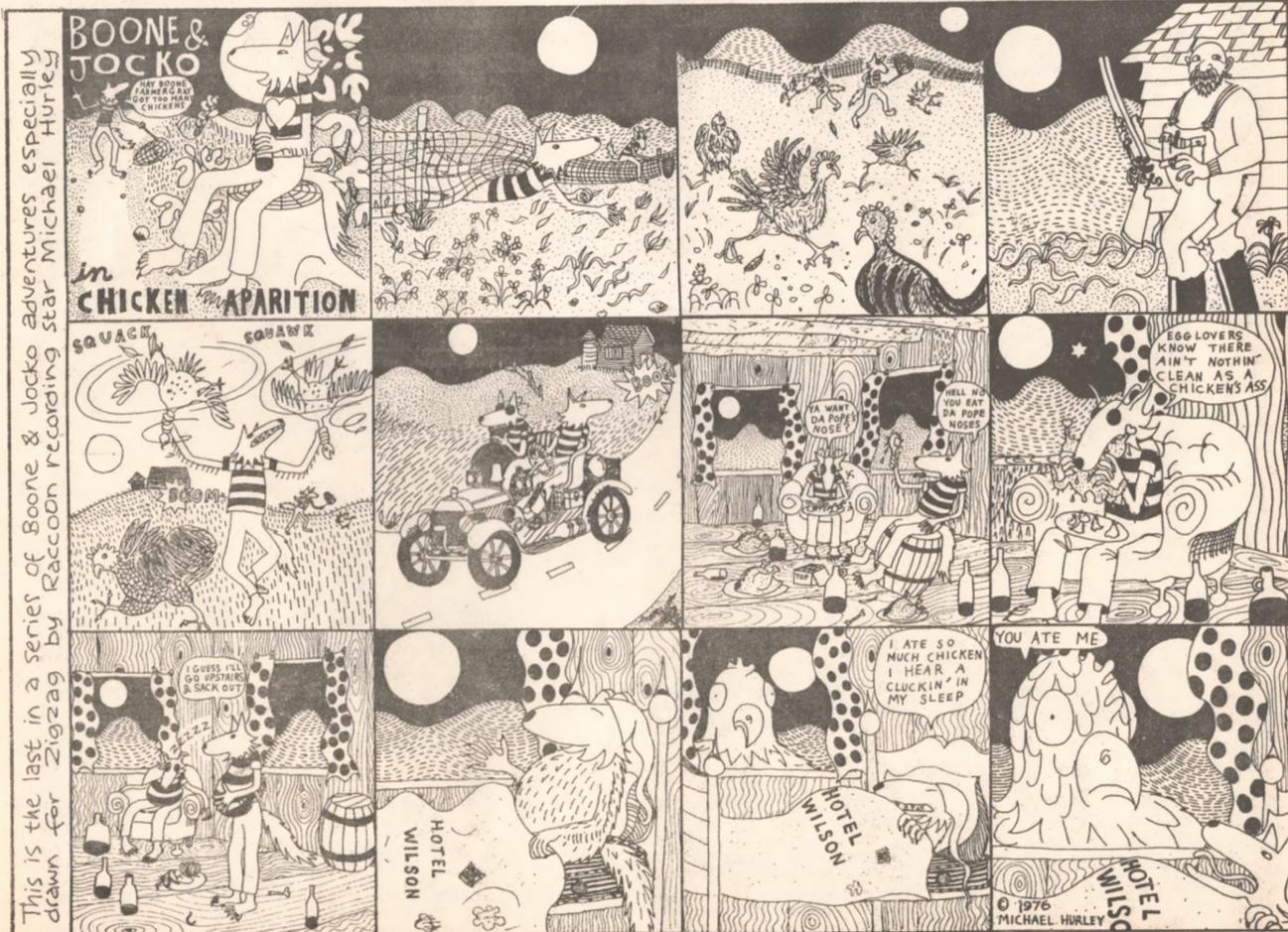
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HUGH JEAN

A RANDOM EIGHT

In this, the second of an occasional series, we handed a carrier bag of 8 recent albums to THE STRANGLERS and invited them to play the role of record reviewer and send us their capsule reviews. Contrary to what they said at the end, we were not trying to offload 'the bummers'; the albums were picked at random from review copies we'd received.

In case you aren't aware of the Strangers, they are just about the best London based band to come through this year. See them if you can. The considered opinions and valued judgements are those of Hugh Cornwell (gtr/voc) and Jean Jaques Burnel (bs/voc). Over to you lads.

Kris.

'Night Man' DIRTY TRICKS
Polydor 2383 398

What an atrocious band. Amazingly boring flashy guitar heroes - this is the end of an era. I feel like strangling the lead vocalist. He shouldn't give up his day job, or else he'll find himself short of cash. Tony Visconti produced it, but the material stinks. Polydor should be shot.

'Resolution' ANDY PRATT
Nemperor K50279
This is highly ineffectual muzak. The whole of the first side is 'Middle of the road' and didn't do anything to me. I can't see people rushing out to rip this album off, didn't bother with the second side.

'Airborne' FLYING BURRITO BROS.
CBS 81433
Pleasant country music, but boring. Am I repeating myself. Good players, but they sound very knacked out. These ageing daddies should retire to Miami and make room for the new blow wave.

'All Time Greatest' CHUCK BERRY
Phonogram SON 006
A nice one. Yes, I admit it, one good album. The only one with two sides worth listening to. Chuck Berry must be my favourite black degenerate. This is the only album with an exciting sound to it. Everybody's obsessed with immaculate production these days,

and not bothering about the material, which in most cases is lousy.

'Jaco Pastorius' JACO PASTORIUS
Epic EPC 81453

Another computer-technoflash jazz thing with no soul. The guy enlists obvious help in the form of such blokes as Herbie Hancock so no more should be said except that he's neat on bass. Too busy.

'Turnstiles' BILLY JOEL
CBS 81195

Bruce Botnick mixed this album, and it's not his best by a long shot. In fact Bruce has done good stuff in the past with Love, the Doors and the Stones, among noteworthies who have used his talents. Maybe he's working with third rate material. Bruce has never let us down before so we hope he's not broke or something, 'cos we'd put him up any time.

'Wilderness' C.W. McCALL
Polydor 2391 225

It's obvious that this bloke knows where the convoy went to and he should have stayed on it. It's real redneck stuff. The joke is you should read the credits to musicians. There's hundreds of them, and it's his album. But that happens with singles. Should have retired with whatever proceeds he made and bought a chicken farm and run it. (That's how Himmler started off). Professional musically.

'I'm Easy' KEITH CARRADINE
Asylum K53042

Can't remember this one, because it was wet. Some pretty boy who vaguely assembles chords and melodies on a piano, and hopes to do a Randy Newman or at worst a Gumby O'Slubberchucks.

Oy... have you given us the bummers to review - I mean the ones you aren't do? Load of old farts recording these days. The establishment recording artists are gonna have to retire soon, and all those who aspire to their particular brand of directionless career orientated over-self-indulgence should do too. Load of imitators.

The Strangers

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MEANWHILE



One never knows when the blow may fall.

"If you don't stop taking the piss out of the Melody Maker in your column, you can go and work for Amateur Gardening", screamed our esteemed editor, on hearing whispers that MM had become extremely incensed by some of my comments about them. "Alright", I said, "I'll turn over a new leaf: I'll try to find some good points and shower them with praise".

Later that day, I happened to be standing in the bar at Friars (in Aylesbury - Centre of the Universe) talking to two extremely noble and influential fellows, when who should stroll in but MM's star writer, Allan Jones! Determined to put my new resolution into practice, I greeted him cheerily. "Hello Allan", I chirped. "Hello, c--t", he replied. So astonished was I that I thought my ears were playing tricks on me, and I asked if he could kindly repeat his greeting.

I know you'll find this as difficult to believe as I did, but the fellow actually had the audacity to call me a c--t yet again... without the deletions, I might add! Now, this may be common parlance in the MM office, but up here in the Centre of the Universe, where the finer things in life - such as gentlemanly conduct and courtesy - are still cherished, we are not used to such obnoxious language - especially not in public places! And this from the mouth of the very same fellow I once saw interviewing Sneaky Pete with a Zigzag family tree spread before him as a guide! Of course, if I receive a written apology, the matter will go no further - but if I don't...

Polydor Records phoned and offered an interview with Crosby (David, not Bing). "Ah", I thought... "a nice long chat about sailing, about dolphins and songs of the sea, a bit about the Byrds... what a nice little feature I'll be able to write from that!". Three days later, Polydor rang back to say that C&N had cancelled all interviews on doctor's orders: they're too exhausted.

Aaah, the poor dears... my heart bleeds for them. They must be so tired - all that hard work they do, I mean, all that climbing in and out of aeroplanes and limousines, all those long hotel corridors, all those steps up to the stage, and that strumming and singing and flexing of nostrils... it's all too exhausting, my darlings. I tell you, coal miners and deep sea fishermen don't know when they're well off.

The poll results you can see before you were so difficult to collate that I was forced to employ four nubile young virgins to assist me.

For the poll this month, please send me your ten favourite DRUMMERS, listed in order of preference. That should be a lot simpler for everybody. My address remains, as ever: c/o Yeoman Cottage, North Marston, Buckingham MK 18 3PH.

Well, having had my column barbarically reduced yet again, I've run out of space, which is just as well, because my brain is still reeling from the shock of 'The Jones Incident' - so much so that it's deprived me of my usual effervescence. I think I'd better go and lie down for a few days.

T.F.Mac



FAVOURITE TRACK OF ALL TIME

poso	zigzag readers poll - September 1976	
1	Like A Rolling Stone	BOB DYLAN
2	Stairway To Heaven	LED ZEPPELIN
3	Desolation Row	BOB DYLAN
4	A Day In The Life	THE BEATLES
5	Layla	DEREK & the DOMINOS
6	Sad Eyed Lady Of The Lowlands	BOB DYLAN
7	(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction	ROLLING STONES
8	Eight Miles High	THE BYRDS
9	Dark Star	GRATEFUL DEAD
10	Return of The Grievous Angel	GRAM PARSONS
11	Astral Weeks	VAN MORRISON
12	Strawberry Fields Forever	THE BEATLES
13	Willin'	LITTLE FEAT
14	Fountain Of Sorrow	JACKSON BROWNE
15	American Pie	DON McLEAN
16	Take It Easy	THE EAGLES
17	Mother Country	JOHN STEWART
=	And More Again	LOVE
19	Madame George	VAN MORRISON
20	The End	THE DOORS
21	Boulder To Birmingham	EMMYLOU HARRIS
22	Before The Deluge	JACKSON BROWNE
23	Who Do You Love?	QUICKSILVER MESSENGER SERVICE
24	Some of Shelley's Blues	MICHAEL NESMITH
25	White Rabbit	JEFFERSON AIRPLANE
=	Suite: Judy Blue Eyes	CROSBY, STILLS & NASH
27	Gimme Shelter	ROLLING STONES
28	Surf's Up	BEACH BOYS
29	My Old School	STEELY DAN
30	Hey Joe	JIMI HENDRIX
31	Wasn't Born to Follow	THE BYRDS
=	Summer In The City	LOVIN SPOONFUL
33	Supper's Ready	GENESIS
34	In My Hour Of Darkness	GRAM PARSONS
35	Jessica	ALLMAN BROS
36	Listen To The Lion	VAN MORRISON
37	Song For Our Ancestors	STEVE MILLER
38	Tonight's The Night	NEIL YOUNG
=	Southern Man	NEIL YOUNG
40	Dixie Chicken	LITTLE FEAT
41	The Joker	STEVE MILLER
42	America	SIMON & GARFUNKEL
43	Cortez The Killer	NEIL YOUNG
44	For A Dancer	JACKSON BROWNE
=	All Along The Watchtower	JIMI HENDRIX
46	Brown Sugar	ROLLING STONES
=	Not So Sweet Martha Lorraine	COUNTRY JOE & the FISH
48	Reeling In The Years	STEELY DAN
49	Suzanne	LEONARD COHEN
50	Won't Get Fooled Again	THE WHO
51	Sarah	BOB DYLAN
52	Waitin' For My Man	VELVET UNDERGROUND
=	Joanne	MICHAEL NESMITH
54	Dear Mr Fantasy	TRAFFIC
55	These Days	JACKSON BROWNE
56	For Free	JONI MITCHELL
57	Desperado	THE EAGLES
=	Mr Tambourine Man	THE BYRDS
59	Good Vibrations	BEACH BOYS
60	Sefronia	TIM BUCKLEY
=	Lady Friend	THE BYRDS

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Ted Nugent

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