# SCENE AND (LHEARLI)

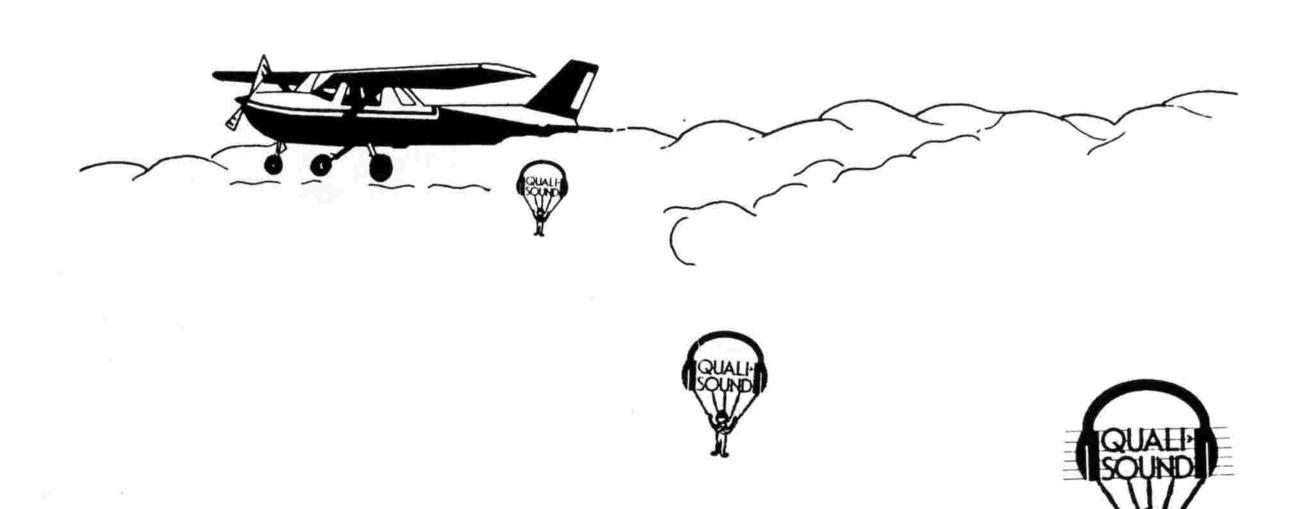
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OCTOBER/NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1991

MID-ANGLIA'S ROCK MUSIC MAGAZINE

SONIC LOVE COALITION ETHER : THE DREAM SEASON THE BLACK SKY : CRANES CARY BROWN: AND LOTS MORE...





#### WHO NEEDS A FLIGHTPATH ANYWAY

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WANTED - someone to type, lay out and paste up Scene & Heard: access to new technology would be useful. Applications to Paul Christoforou, tel. 0223-358044. Yes, after almost five years of sniffin' glue (cow gum, actually), veteran S&H scribe Phil Johnson has stepped down from the editorial team and has left a large gap in the production process of the magazine, which must be filled if we're to continue.

We also say goodbye to one of our newer regular contributors, Alastair Nicolson, who is moving back to his home town of Manchester. S&H won't be the same without Alastair's unique wordy musings (see the Slowdive review on page 22 to see what we mean!)

Now for some good news: Kelsey Kerridge Sports Hall are making their facilites available on Saturday evenings to local bands. The deal is that KK will take £1 for each paying admission to a gig (subject to a maximum of £100): as the hall - situated at the top of the building - holds 300, and there's a bar available, this doesn't look too bad a deal for enterprising bands/promoters. We're giving it a go on 16th November, to launch this issue. For details of booking the accommodation, ring Lindsay Townley on 0223-463210.

Finally, belated thanks to The Color Factory, The First Five Minutes Of Betty Blue and The Excitable PJ Maybe for playing in our last benefit gig and helping to raise sufficient money to ensure that, at least, this issue came out!

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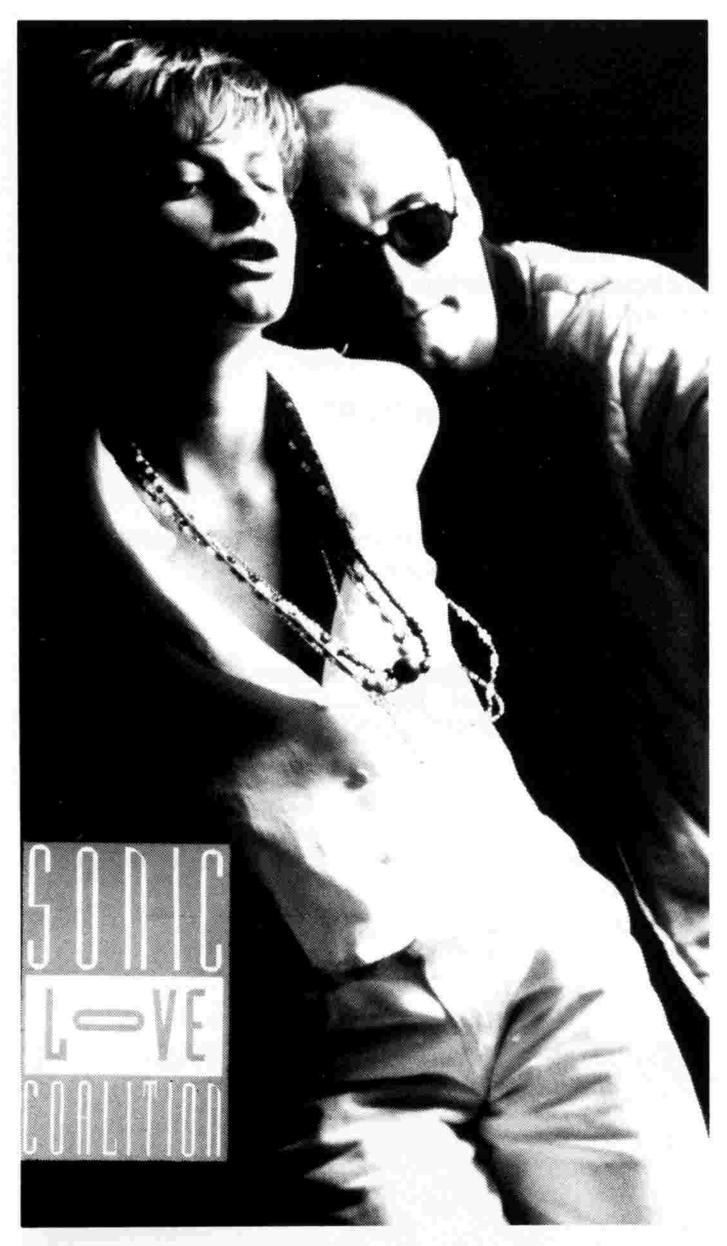
Bunters Take-away, High St.

#### Peterborough

Steve Jason Concert Tickets, Westgate Arcade.



Alison Shaw (Cranes): page 14



Liz: "Chris (Mann) came up to me at Strawberry Fair (1989) and said 'I've booked a studio for next Saturday, listen to this and write a song, we'll be recording 10 am'. House Grinder had just finished and I was a real fan of them so I was very flattered. So we did it but I wouldn't play it to anybody now."

Chris: "For the last year and a half all we've done is written songs. Before that first Christmas we wrote and recorded five songs. We did the usual stuff of shoving them on a tape and sending them out to all the record companies. We had interest from a number of them. For me it was a step forward: instead of being completely ignored or thank you very much but no thanks, we got 'yes, we like it, send us more stuff'. In the April of the next year we did three more tracks and again sent them off, again we got more feedback. We recorded another track about a month after that. We had got that far and the debate was what to do next because we were really just repeating ourselves. Then in September of last year, we met Keith (Jeffrey of The Junction)."

Liz: "Apparently someone was playing the demo and he heard it."

Chris: "He liked it and he offered to put a single out for us on Slippy Gimbo, which we agreed with. Then he offered to manage us and as we needed a manager we said okay."

Liz: "Then he forced us to do gigs, which was a good thing really. We didn't think we'd get away with it, did we?"

Chris: "Gigs are Liz's favourite thing and they're my worst

nightmare. We did our first gig in November last year supporting The World Of Twist at The Junction. There was just the two of us for that, Liz singing, everything on the computer and me playing the drums. The second gig was also at the Junction, which was a complete disaster as one of the samplers blew up in the soundcheck, so everything had to be shunted across samplers which is why the sound was absolutely dire. Our third gig was at The Riverside in Newcastle supporting The Real People."

Liz: "Even though they were a proper band and we came on with our computer, a microphone, and your keyboard the audience responded really well."

Chris: "At Christmas time last year we did a demo at Qualisound which Keith hacked round all the record companies and we were beginning to get far more positive interest from them. We thought we had a good chance of getting signed so we put the single off. It went as far as us going to see the people in London and talking to them. 'Yes we love your stuff, yes we'd like to hear more and yes we'll come to your gigs.' We were talking to Island and Chrysalis Publishing, the publishing thing was looking really promising, they went as far as offering us a deal on a Friday, saying we'll have the papers ready for you on Monday morning but they didn't say which Monday morning and the papers have yet to arrive. That was three or four months ago. At our next gig in London (supporting Frazier Chorus) we had nine record companies there. That was a disaster, if there ever was a disaster, it was really bad. Taking a computer to gigs is not a good move so by that time we'd bought a DAT. So we were playing along to backing tapes with me playing keyboards (which I don't play very well). The Frazier Chorus at that time were relatively trendy, they'd had a good dance single (Cloud 8) so we thought, popular band on the rise, wicked, we're going to support them, it's going to be hot and sweaty and everybody's going to love us... and there were 100 people there in a place built for 600."

"There was the usual support band thing of no sound whatsoever, so it was dead quiet. My feeling was that I was playing in the front room. I could hear people talking at the front of the stage, that's how loud it was. The best bit was when the last song got to its ending bit I just walked off stage because I'd had enough by that time and the Frazier Chorus in the dressing room, they use sequencers etc, said 'here, the music's still going!', as if I'd been playing 15 keyboard parts and drum parts all night! That definitely put me off playing live like that."

"So the next thing we did was to get a band. Leroy out of the Bible had said if you ever want a bass player let me know. We thought about that and thought why not. We got Leroy to play bass and Johnny (Hasleham) to play guitar, through our associations with him in The Cherry Orchard. That's how it stands at the moment, all the drums are on backing tape, I'm actually playing real keyboards, Liz is still singing and we've got a bass and guitar to do all the difficult bits."

"We haven't really sorted out what the band is going to sound like yet, we've rehearsed 4 times and played three gigs so far. I'd like to record with both the band and also the computer stuff. On the record (How You Gonna Feel - see record reviews), although both sides were done with the computer, one side sounds like a band playing and the other sounds like the computer, it's both the same song. The great advantage of dance singles is you only have to put one song on them, and you can go on for as long as you like! I quite

like the idea of two sides to things, one side with a real band with crap bits and bits out of time and the other side with the hardened down computer type approach."

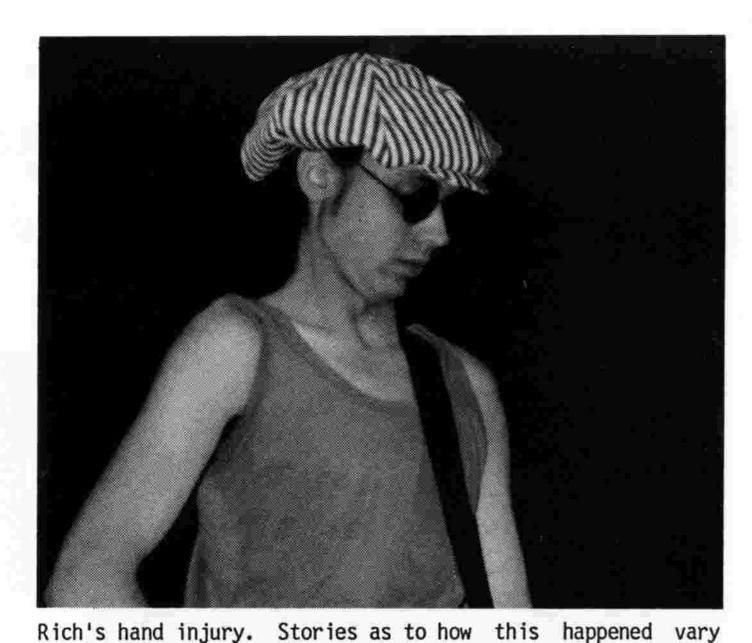
"It's no longer sufficient to stand on the stage and make it to the end of the set and think 'wow, they didn't can us off'. With House Grinder it was always such a complete aggression, assault thing it didn't matter whether they liked you or not. If they didn't like you, you still achieved something. Whereas with this we're obviously into a more musical type thing, we want people to enjoy themselves. Being a dance band we'd like to get people to dance really!"

"We think we're good enough, as good as any other old crap on the radio. If you talk about competing, we're competing with people in the charts. I mean if that Prodigy thing can get in the charts then anything can. I can't see why we can't be a massively big pop band basically. But there's only so much you can do, then it's up to the record companies to sign you. God knows how they make up their minds to do that!"

STEVE HARTWELL

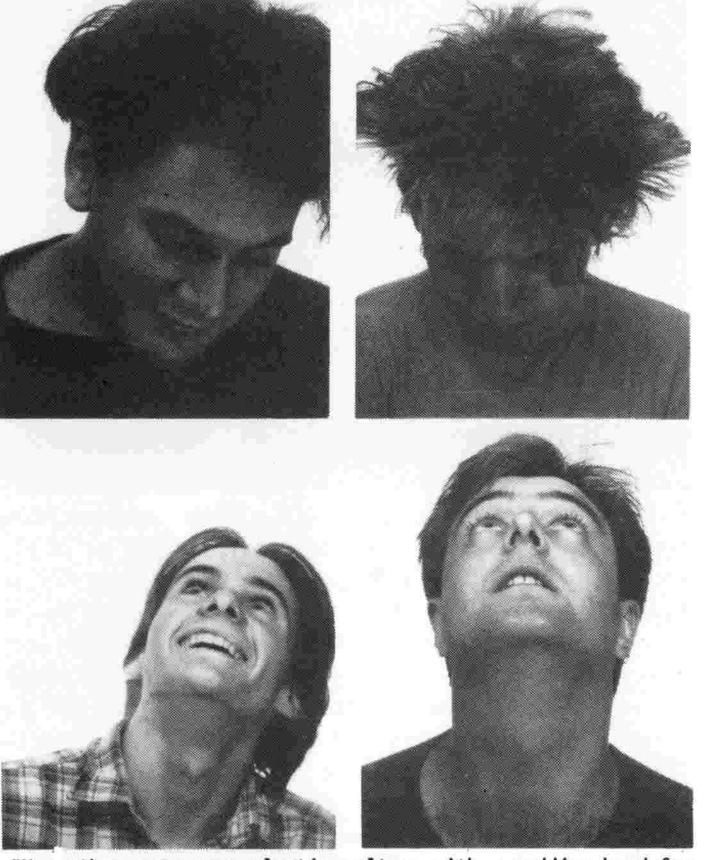
## GOSSIP

In the gap between the appearance of our last issue and this one, we've lost yet another popular local band: this time it's THE NIGHTJARS. We understand that singer John and guitarist Tim are working on forming a new band, as are the two Davids, Fletcher (drums) and Wick (bass): apparently, Fletch will be playing lead guitar and doing the vocals, so if there's anyone out there who wants to buy a second-hand drum kit, give Fletch a ring on 0487-710474... ED HARBUD, veteran drummer of yesteryear with (amongst others) The Great Divide and The Fuitbats, still has a yearning to be a pop star, and is giving it one more go with No Dakota, whom he's recently joined as keyboards player. The fact that Ed hasn't a clue how to play keyboards is, apparently, of little consequence. Rumour has it that Boo Hewerdine is giving him some rudimentary instruction... newest record label, DEREK RANDALL RECORDS, is floundering at the moment: financial problems are not only holding up the release of This Replica's new EP but also the release of a potential money-earning Cambridge United F.C. record. If you've got any useful suggestions as to what the label supremo Malcolm Spurt can do with 900 unsold copies of The Dear Johns' single, do write to us, and we'll pass them talking of THIS REPLICA, Jesse J., former on... frontman/guitarist with the USAF Mildenhall based band, At 10 Paces, has now joined the Soham-based quartet... and RICHARD FAIRCLOUGH, occasional writer of the Weekly News' Rock Scene column and former vox/gtr with Indiscretion, has joined The Buzz... KEITH'S DAD have joined the ever increasing number of local bands who've had the dubious 'honour' of having one of their recordings played on Radio 1... What's happening to THE COLOR FACTORY? First, we read that singer Ali Loaker is starting up another band; they've not yet found a suitable replacement for drummer Adam; and now there's rumours flying about that bassist Merry has left. The Color Factory, together with Jacob's Mouse, are due to support Kingmaker at The Junction on 21st November... welcome to E.P., a new monthly magazine with a strong local band content: the more opportunities of exposure for our local bands, the better... NUTMEG, arguably still the area's no. 1 band, have been off the road recntly due to guitarist



from cutting it on a beer glass whilst pissed out of his head, to damaging it in a Soham gang wars fight!... as fervent supporters of the local rock scene, S&H felt a strong sense of pride at The Junction recently, when BANDERAS headlined. This popular band includes four former members of local bands in its line-up... also in the audience that evening was JOHN CORNELL, former drummer with The Vanishing Point, Stormed and The Floorshow: John has just returned from working as a roadie on Gary Numan's recent world tour... local promoters STATUS PROMOTIONS are sueing Thee Hypnotics for breaking their contract and pulling out of their scheduled November appearance at The Junction. Apparently, they've decided to go on tour with The Cult... Peterborough's PLEASURE HEADS are no more. Bassist Dave Colton has now formed another band with Chris Lovell, former frontman of Boysdream; and co-vocalist Pete Elderkin is concentrating on his Laughing Gravy promotions in the city. The remaining four members are staying together, and already have written a new set and have played a couple of gigs. No name has yet been decided upon... THE HONEYTRAP have recently made a couple of unscheduled appearances at The Junction. When the tour supports pulled out of the Mock Turtles and the Slowdive gigs, the Peterborough power popsters stepped in at short notice... St. Neots band CRASHING DREAM are urgently in need of a singer/writer. Band influences include Velvet Underground, Violent Femmes, REM, Rain Parade, Chameleons. Contact Alfie on 0480-407169... Pat, diminutive guitarist with I THOUGH I TOLD YOU, had a nasty shock at a recent gig in a Sudbury pub. When speaking to the landlord about a long-standing debt owed to the band, he not only received settlement, but also received a poke in the eye. Pat was so traumatised that he had to pull out of the band's gig in Harlow a couple of days later. Ironically, the 'reserve' team - with Chris from Soluble Fish on drums and drummer Martin on guitar - was well received by the locals, and were even promised a support slot in London by the headline band, The Keatons... TRIBE OF DAN's line-up has changed yet again: new bassist is Chris Cutting, formerly with Infernal Death, Digitalis and Razing Agent 500, and Ali Byworth returns to the drum stool... there's a new place just opened for bands who've got the dosh to spend on making videos: THE DEMONSTRATION STATION in Lt. Downham (near Ely) provides audio and visual production facilties. It's not cheap, but the quality's good. For details, ring 0353-699760... What's happening to the Rock Competition, we ask...

## THE DREAM SEASON



"My mother gave me a plastic vulture with a nodding head for my 21st birthday", explains John, The Dream Season's new recruit, getting around the difficult subject of what makes him laugh. "Also seeing one of those low slung basset hounds on a hot summer's day dragging a large erection over the pavement. Made me wince a bit, though."

It's a hot summer's day here in St. Ives, and we're sitting in the undergrowth, musing with pop's latest sensations.

John (gtr): "It's a thriving metropolis, isn't it? There's no real reason to move - everything's here, rehearsal room, equipment..."

Mark (vox/gtr): "The competition's not too hot, either, which is quite good, that's why I wanted to form a band. The local scene's pretty good, but a lot of local bands I saw were pretty shitty, what they were doing, and I thought if they could do it, then we could do a lot better. Nobody really wants to do anything out here, it's all happening in Cambridge."

The Dream Season have been together for only four or five months. The songwriting nucleus of Mark (the laid back one) and Andy (the quiet bassist and Simon `Slowdive' Scott lookalike) recruited Glenn on drums (who's also practicing gynocology on his van). John the ecotoxicologist arrived only six weeks ago via the good old Weekly News Rock Scene column.

Andy: "The name came from a book I read. I can't remember which book, but we spent ages trying to think of a name for the band."

Mark: "The Self Raising Flowers was one we rejected. The music's really an indie-dance crossover - a tuneful guitar noise, but definitely not like Flowered Up. There's the obvious influences in there, like the Neds, MC4, Wonderstuff and Wedding Present, but not Flowered Up!"

Right, so much for that line of interview then. Down to the nitty gritty. The Dream Season's debut gig came during a series of packed, hot, sticky Junction Bar affairs, and with a batch of solid melodic strummings, they won over some of the already bewildered French tourists.

Glenn: "It was a smart place, a really good gig - we didn't get invited back though. We had to blow out a Scene & Heard launch party 'cos Andy went on holiday."

Glenn's previous local appearances include a memorable heat of last year's Rock Comp. with St. Ives funk outfit No Way.

Glenn: "Mmm yes. The singer liked walking off stage more than he did singing!"

So, if The Dream Season continue the rapid progression up rock's unsteady rope ladder, would they ever consider signing to a major label?

John: "What, keep our integrity and remain poor? It really depends how big the advance was, I suppose. No, bugger integrity, we'd go major!"

Andy: "It always helps to be mentally deranged though, doesn't it?"

Gigs in the area these days are sadly far and few between. You either have to be absolutely massive, flavour of the month, prepared to play in any toilet (and I mean toilet), or just be bloody lucky. Here's Dream Season's masterplan:

Mark: "We're sitting by the phone really, aren't we? No, we've done a live tape with six songs on it. It was recorded on a four track, but it's come out pretty good."

Glenn: "There's a hundred and one impressions on the other side as a sort of freebie!"

John: "It's Mark's mum on piano - she's our support."

The Dream Season side of the tape is indeed pretty good. They're ideally suited to a rough, raw production where the guitars sear and soar, the rhythm section grooves on down man, and Mark's melodic vocals hold the whole package together. It's definitely not Flowered Up. Songs like 'Satisfied' and 'Won't Go' demand you to take notice, fizzing dancey gems that should hold them in good stead for the future.

Glenn: "We've got forthcoming gigs at Ramsey Leisure Centre with Jacob's Mouse, and a charity one at Hinchingbrooke School. We're also in the semi-finals of the Chatteris Rock Competition. We didn't win our heat, but they liked us and invited us back as guest band."

Mark: "It was a really good place and we went down well."

John: "It was a bit empty though. People as close as Ely didn't even know about it. The Nightlife may well open as a regular venue, but it's difficult to take anything in Chatteris seriously. There was more cattle there than people! We're big in Croatia though!"

So does Phil Johnson's sudden raving and insistence on an interview worry you?

John: "Who's Phil Johnson?"

Glenn: "Is he the one with the funny voice?"

St. Ives bands - don't you just love 'em?

PETE GARNER

## CAMBRIDGE FOLK FESTIVAL - JULY 1991



Pictures: Steve Gillett (tel. 071 700 1652)

## "WE'RE NOT THE CHARLOTTES MK. II!"



ROBIN, PETRA AND IVAN

ether, n. 1. Clear sky, upper regions beyond clouds. 2.(phys.) A medium assumed to permeate space & fill interstices between particles of air & other matter, medium in which electro-magnetic waves are transmitted. 3.(chem.) Colourless light volatile liquid produced by action of sulphuric acid & other acids on alcohol, an anaesthetic. 4. A Huntingdon indie pop band.

It's the end of September , but the summer sun lingers on. Here in the beer garden at the Fort St. George on Midsummer Common, three members of Ether are enjoying a leisurely pint. Four weeks earlier, Ether played their debut gig in the Junction Bar: a week ago, they should have made their London debut at that haven for all up-and-coming pop kids, the Falcon pub in Camden Town, but the headline band pulled out and the gig was cancelled. Not that it made any difference, because Ether are temporarily off the road while bassist Ivan's broken fingers (accident at work) heal. Ether's singer and second guitarist, Petra Roddis, was a former member of The Charlottes, who, amazingly, split up on the eve of the release of their first LP (ironically entitled 'Things Come Apart') on the Cherry Red record label:

Petra: "Simon was the one to make the move (to Slowdive), and although it was sad, I was glad he did it, and I don't blame him for doing it, 'cos it was getting annoying. We were selling more and more singles, getting more and more people to gigs, but everything we did got slagged off by the press. I got really fed up with all those shitty journalists. I alienated a few of them at the L.S.E.: I can't remember what I said, but they were in the audience, and they took it personally. I'd just had enough with people like Everett True (Melody Maker) - you know what he's like, always going on about girls in bands. The Ride tour was the

highlight for us, after that nothing was the same."

"Graham (Charlottes' guitarist) is biding his time. He's got some amazing songs though: we went round to see him, and he played them to us on his acoustic guitar. We were so green with envy. He's already done a demo which is so good - Cherry Red paid for it, I did backing vocals, Andy (Charlottes' bassist) played bass, and his friend Keith did some drumming. Graham can sing really well, actually. If he can get something going, I wouldn't mind being in his band again!"

Ether were conceived well before The Charlottes split up: Petra: "Ivan was selling T-shirts at the Charlottes' gigs. I said to him, if something happens to The Charlottes, let's do something else, and he agreed. I knew Robin (gtr.) through his ex-girlfriend who I worked with. Robin was the little guy at the front of the early Charlottes' gigs, spinning around with Ivan. When The Charlottes split, I got the band together. We practised on our own without a drummer, which was pretty fruitless, so we put an advert in the Weekly News for a drummer, and got Ian. At one practice, he started playing 'Venus' exactly like Simon did: I think he thought he was going to join The Charlottes, and went out and bought all the records! I like Ian, he's never been in a band before, and he's got a lot better since he's got to know us."

"We were stuck with record company commitments. They wanted us to play in Japan and America as The Charlottes, which we just weren't prepared to do. I was really cynical about everything. We were going to have it all calculated at first, because I was really worried about being bitten twice by the press - I think they'd be expecting a lot from me because of The Charlottes. It's not like coming from obscurity, so we wanted it to be right. But Robin was getting fed up after a while, so we thought 'let's just do it'. We'd written a lot of songs, and although a lot have gone already, never to see the light of day, we'd got enough for a gig."

Ether's reception from the Junction audience was polite, rather than than ecstatic:

Petra: "We've listened to the contructive criticism from the Junction gig, and have shortened the songs, put more grit into it. The problem was that everyone was expecting it to be The Charlottes Mark 2."

Robin: "My style is in the same vein as Graham's, but it's quite different really."

Petra: "That was a problem as well, 'cos everyone was saying that Graham had the timing so right, he used to burst in at the right moment. Robin's getting frustrated, 'cos he's not Graham - he's different. As soon as I first heard him, I knew he'd been listening to Neil Young!"

Both Robin and Petra have just moved to London to start degree courses this October:

Petra: "Most of my friends have done their degrees, and I haven't even started. I applied for college in London two years ago, because of The Charlottes. I'm doing Religious Studies and Media Studies..."

Robin: "... and I'm doing Applied Ecology. I want to get a degree, but I don't particularly want to be an ecologist!"



Petra: "I'm living two minutes away from the Bull & Gate, and it's helped, 'cos we've got a gig lined up there now. We'll come down here for rehearsals at Qualisound - if Steve Bottomley will still have us - Ivan and Ian will come to London for the gigs. Graham used to manage it, he was going to college in the middle of the Ride tour."

"I'm still signed to Complete (the music publishing division of Cherry Red Records) for another two albums at least. I think they're expecting us to go onto the Cherry Red label, but I don't know about that. The thing is, Simon is also on Complete, but he's signed to Creation, so it can work that way. It's in Complete's best interests to find us a good record company, but they haven't done anything yet, which is

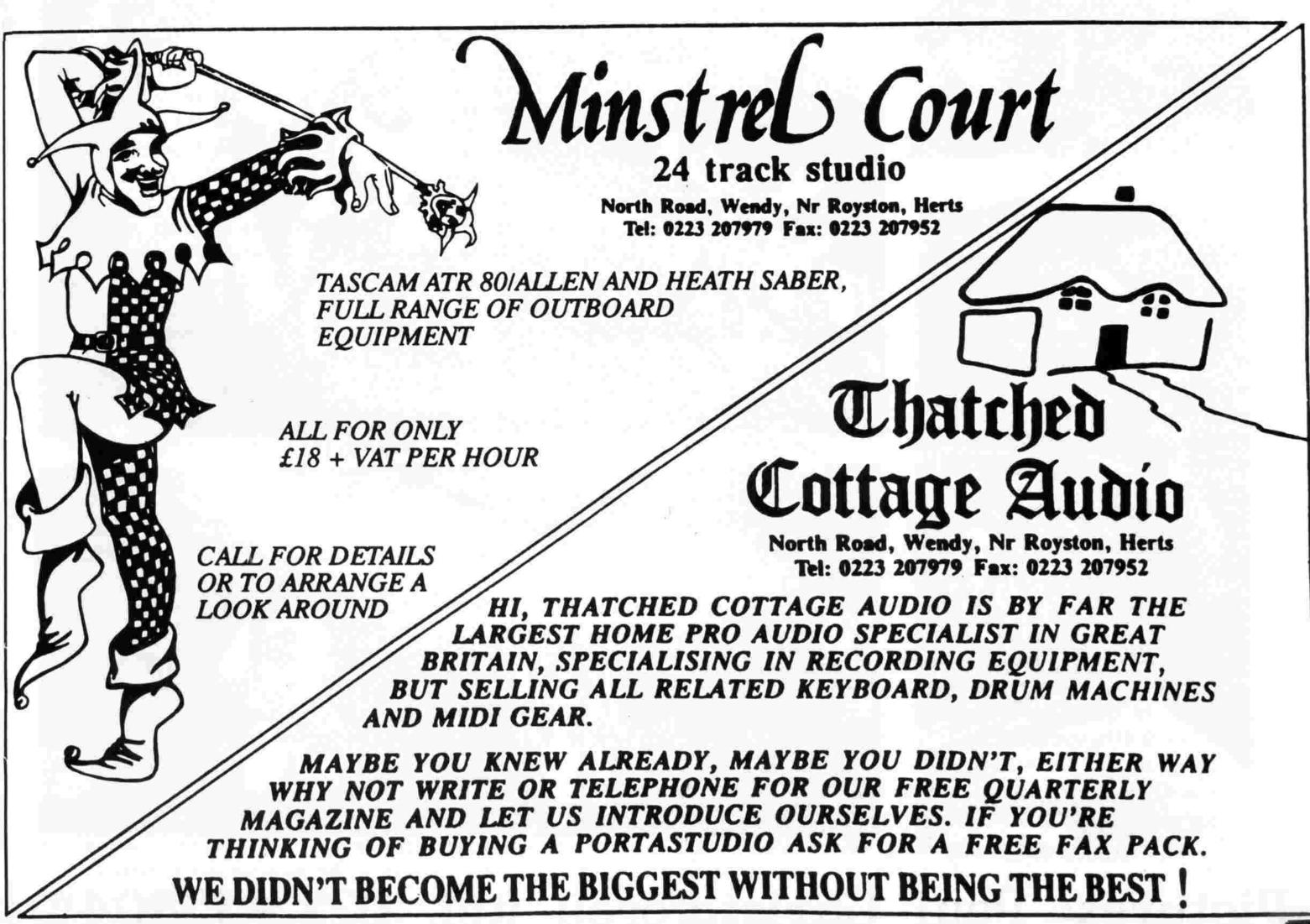
annoying. Because I wasn't very forward in The Charlottes, they don't really listen to me - they know they can back me down. We want Complete at least to pay for another demo, so we can get gigs. We want to get something pretty quickly, 'cos we know that we can play in London and pull in a lot of people."

"I'm sure I've some some money somewhere from royalties. They've said that we've got to wait till the money comes in from Japan: apparently, the (Charlottes) LP has sold twice as well out there as it has in England, so it could be a lot of money. We've got all our gear, so hopefully we can get a van - my 2CV can't go on much longer!"

"That's another problem, the creation of The Scene That Celebrates Itself; nobody's got a chance with that going on, have they? The press are making those bands compete with each other. I think we should be very wary of it. But you can't help what the press label you; it'll stick in people's minds, even if they know what you're really like. Some of those bands are crap - like Moose - but you've got to feel sorry for them: they've just come out of their bedrooms, and suddenly they're bunged right into it. They don't know where the hell they are. That's another reason why we spent a long time rehearsing before playing live."

"I'm not paranoid about the press, they just piss me off, but I'm not going to let them stop me doing anything I want to do."

PHIL JOHNSON



## THE JUNCTION'S JESUS GREEN EVENT - AUG.

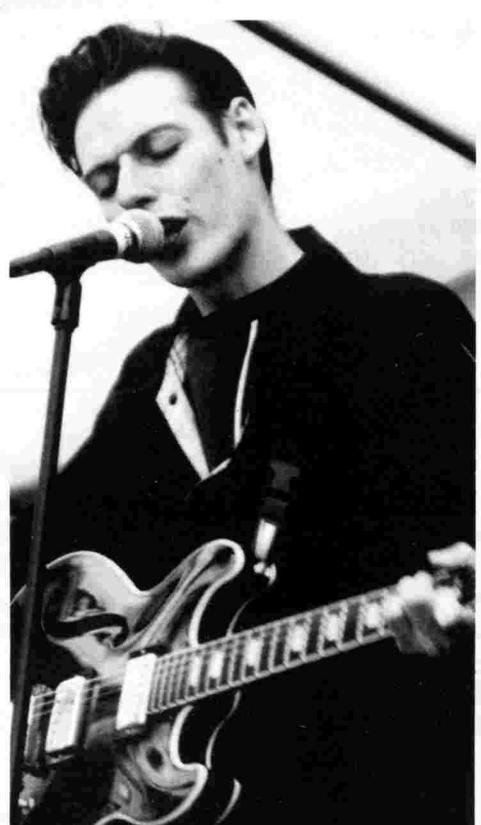


**BOO HEWERDINE** 





BOOGA AND EZIO



JASON SMITH (ROSEVEL PLAIN)



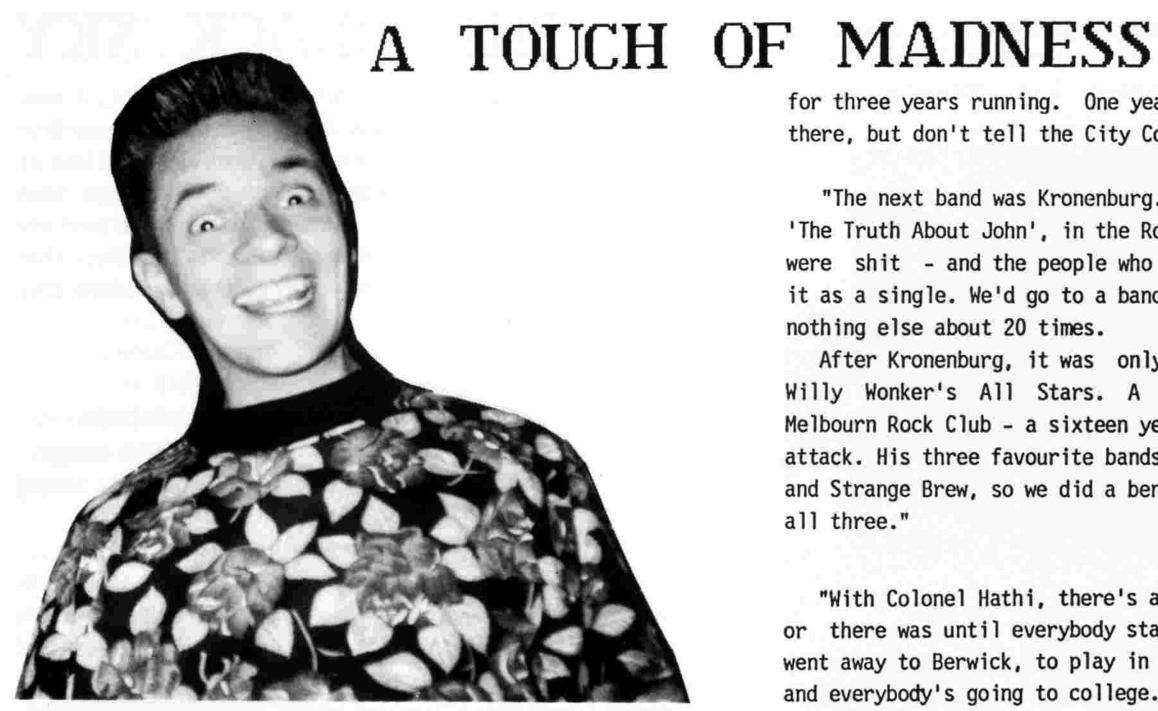
JOHN AND LIZ (SONIC LOVE COALITION)



CHRIS WILLIAMS (CROSSLAND)



Pictures: Paul Christoforou (tel. 0223-358044)



As S&H looks forward to reaching the grand old age of six years, we thought it's time we caught up with one or two of the local musos who've been around just as long - if not longer. We start with GARY BROWN, currently lead singer with Colonel Hathi's Dawn Patrol. If you haven't seen the band, you might well have come across Gary in his role as Steward at the Corn Exchange: he's the one who smiles when he tears your ticket.

"My first band was at school, we were called 'Hangover' a wonderful name! I was 14 or 15. I'd bought a bass for £40; I was appalling, I really was. We had a bloke singing who came to about two practices, got heavily into drugs and disappeared. So we trimmed down and I started singing: the first practice, I was too scared to sing. We started doing Ruts covers and 13th Chime covers.

My first gig was with my next band, Albert Tatlock's Barmy Army, that was at the St. Peter's Hall in Wilburton, with The Claim and Total Onslaught. We told the organisers that we were Country & Western bands! We organised 90 people to travel in a double decker bus, all standing up. We pulled up outside the hall, invaded the pub next door and got kicked out. Because they thought we were Country & Western, they'd put out deckchairs in the hall!

Our biggest gig was in Stevenage: we supported the UK Subs and Chelsea. The Fields Of The Nephilim supported us as fourth band. We actually were three days away from supporting The Damned at Ipswich Gaumont until More Music decided to collapse. They were an agency from Colchester who ripped everybody off at Fisher Hall in Cambridge some years ago: they've still got three of my mikes."

"We entered the first Cambridge Rock Competition, and changed our name. We thought Albert Tatlock's Barmy Army wouldn't get us anywhere, so we became Strange Brew, our favourite film at the time. I wore this really old grey suit with brand new shoes, so I slid about on the Guildhall's polished wooden stage.

The Second Competition was really good because we got to the final. We were all in suits but it didn't help us. It seemed like everyone I knew from my whole life was there.

I worked at the Burleigh behind the bar for three years, so I saw about three bands every night. As I was there, I had the monopoly on booking the Saturday before Christmas for three years running. One year we got 360 people in there, but don't tell the City Council!"

"The next band was Kronenburg. We did our best ever song, 'The Truth About John', in the Rock Comp. - the rest of them were shit - and the people who run Nutmeg wanted to record it as a single. We'd go to a band practice and play that and nothing else about 20 times.

After Kronenburg, it was only just little bits, like Willy Wonker's All Stars. A bloke who used to go to the Melbourn Rock Club - a sixteen year old - died of an asthma attack. His three favourite bands were The Desmonds, Therapy and Strange Brew, so we did a benefit with a band made up of all three."

"With Colonel Hathi, there's a chance to do something or there was until everybody started going off: the drummer went away to Berwick, to play in a cabaret band at Butlin's; and everybody's going to college. We keep changing members. There was a little tour - three dates in Berlin - that fell through about a month ago, and we did have three dates in Hanover sorted out until some Dutch band undercut us! What they want to do with a Dutch ska band, I don't know. That was actually a ska festival, and we were going to headline three nights with a few German bands. They were only willing to pay £650, and it would have been a struggle to get out there for that.

Our support slot with Bad Manners was really good. They had exactly the same line-up as us, so our sound was perfect. They were really good to get on with, and they did say that we could support them again... but they haven't rung us back! We seem to get into the habit of doing two gigs in one day: the Bad Manners one was on the same day as Strawberry Fair; we played with The Nutty Boys at Harlow and then went straight down to a Scooter Rally in Clacton. We got there about one and a half hours late, and they said we couldn't play; we had a bit of a scuffle, got everything on stage, found somebody to do the PA and played. The sound was really appalling, but we enjoyed ourselves.

We've played at the (Sir George) Robey, but that's with a London band called the Riffs who, for some reason, love us and want us to play every gig that they do, and anything they couldn't do, they'd recommend us for it. We seem to get some really intimidating gigs in London, we seem to pick really dodgy pubs. There's one place in Brixton where one bar was full of blacks and the other side was full of N.F. skinheads - nothing really happened, but it wasn't a nice atmosphere to play in. We played at the Robey on the day Arsenal won the Championship; their supporters came in and smashed the place up - we left just as the first bottle flew past my head!"

"Believe it or not, the nicest person I've met at the Corn Exchange was Boy George - he didn't leave until he'd said thank you to every single person there. Most of them are alright; I once did a duet backstage with Roachford. I remember Ozzy Osbourne - he was so drunk and so paranoid. There were only about 12 fans outside waiting for him. I had to help his manager get him to his coach - he was so worried that everyone was gonna get to him. He's only about 4'2" high! "

PAUL CHRISTOFOROU

Peterborough's grunge goths, THE BLACK SKY, have just come back from a busman's holiday in Czechoslovakia. Here's an extract from their diaries:



#### Day 1: Thursday 19.9.91

Left Peterborough approx. 2pm with our driver Adrian (from Ripon in Yorkshire). Caught 7.30pm ferry & spent journey to France getting drunk with a couple of Australians! Stopped by French customs so they could go through our pockets, but otherwise journey uncomplicated. Carried on through Belgium & Holland to...

#### Day 2: Friday 20.9.91

Travelled through West & East Germany & arrived in Czechoslovakia approx. 8pm. The only problem with the Czech border guards was they laughed at our passport photos! Got to Usti Nad Labem only to find that person due to meet us was nowhere to be found. Finally decided to adjourn to nearby bar. We were taken under the wing of an elderly Czech, who found us accommodation in a sports hall for the night.

#### Day 3: Saturday 21.9.91

Roamed aimlessly round town for a while & looked for a phone to call the agency. Eventually found a music shop as Adrian wanted an accordian (!) & persuaded owner to let us use his phone. Got through to the agency who by this time were starting to panic. Found out tonight's gig cancelled but were told to go back to rendezvous point to meet Alex the road manager. Alex turned up approx. 3pm & we decide to head for town of next gig, Litvinov, approx. 80 kms away. Arrive there early evening. Find hotel, then restaurant & then, most importantly, venue WITH BAR. Gig is on for tomorrow so everyone relaxes a bit & we spend the evening sampling the venue's hospitality!

#### Day 4: Sunday 22.9.91

Got up fairly late after last night's efforts & went to venue to set up. 2 support bands also at the venue for the gig, one Czech & one Dutch. Gig goes well & band are well received. Lots of people stay after the gig for a chat. The people at the venue have baked a cake & got in some champagne as it's Paul the drummer's 30th birthday.

#### Day 5: Monday 23.9.91

## THE BLACK SKY I

Travel to Prague, making brief detour to Alex's flat, & head for venue where we meet lads who have travelled over from England to see the band. Found out they had complications as one of their bags with money, passport, etc. had been stolen. However, spirits rise & gig goes well & band win over reserved Czech crowd. Spend the night in a flat that has been loaned to the band & everyone sleeps where they fall!

#### Day 6: Tuesday 24.9.91

Get mobile late in day & it's on to the next town, Jihlava. The venue is called the Avant Garde Music Club & everyone there is very welcoming. Very good & very loud gig marred only by the fact that Mark launches himself off stage near the end of the set, misses the crowd and hurts his ankle! Party afterwards is one to remember & Ian the bassist is given 5 bottles of champagne for his 21st birthday. There's also free beer, vodka, wine & also a free taster of Czechosovakia's fungi! In the early hours end up having a barbeque & bonfire. All retire to bed tired but happy.

#### Day 7: Wednesday 25.9.91

Most people go to various flats for a wash & brush up whilst Alex takes Mark to the local hospital to have his ankle looked at. He arrives back an hour later with it in plaster! However, the tour must go on. Travel on to next town, Olonouc, & head straight to venue. As we're late, have to set up straight away but PA man good, so no problems. The best gig yet: packed hall, great sound & crowd go mad. Spend ages after the gig talking to the crowd & signing autographs! Also we sell out of merchandise. Eventually get back to nearby hotel, Peterborough crowd there as well. Alex smuggles in the beer & post gig celebration party ensues.

#### Day 8: Thursday 26.9.91

Travel onto next town, Opava, after a late lunch only to find out the gig is cancelled as the promoters have been squabbling between themselves. Did a quick interview with local press, bought supply of beer & retired to nearby hotel, who loaned us a room for an impromptu party, so day didn't end too badly.

#### Day 9: Friday 27.9.91

Next town on the tour is Fridek Mistek. Get there early afternoon & again head straight for the venue. Turns out to be a hall of culture & is very ornate with carvings, statues & chandeliers! The promoters don't seem to have gone overboard here & only a small crowd turn up, but those there enjoy the show & the set is well received. We all retire to a nearby club & disco till lam & then go back to the hotel for another party, for a change!

#### Day 10: Saturday 28.9.91

Travel to Ostrava & find that another gig has been cancelled. Spend the evening at the hotel's club & disco & decide to make a night of it anyway. Retire to bed in the early hours.

#### Day 11: Sunday 29.9.91

Day off as planned. Everyone gets up late & after quiet afternoon we all decide to sample the delights of aforementioned club again. End up having a balcony party in the hotel & 9 people get through 14 litres of wine!

## IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Day 12: Monday 30.9.91

Travel on to next town, Valmez. Book into a hotel next to a girls' school, where they seem to find our get-up quite amusing & all hang out of the windows giggling! Go to town square in the afternoon for some food & to change some money, & hear the daily half-hour propoganda broadcast from speakers on the lamp-posts on the square - most odd! Get to gig early. Good PA man so set up quickly. Great gig, the crowd chants for more at the end & there's so much stage diving at times the audience can't see the band. Two little lads about 6 years old get up on stage & it makes their night. After the encores the band do an interview for a local fanzine & then retire to the hotel for another party.

#### Day 13: Tuesday 1.10.91

Travel on to Zilina. Scenery breathtaking on the way as we're up in the mountains amongst the forest. However, good mood evaporates when we get to the venue to find it only half finished & although there's a PA and 15 people, no one knows how to work it. After four and a half hours trying to sound check, & Mark finally throwing well deserved tantrum, band decide to set up sound themselves & put Alex on guard. Gig finally goes ahead 2 hours behind schedule & again band is well received, but mood is a little subdued to say the least amongst the band due to all the hassle. No party tonight, just a quiet drink, a lot of moans about the gig & to bed.

#### Day 14: Wednesday 2.10.91

Get moving at 11am & head for Bratislava. It's a long journey today, so we have a meal stop at a buffet in the mountains. Finally arrive at Bratislava approx. 4.30pm & then have to argue about accommodation as the guys promoting the gig have lent us a flat, but there's only enough space for 5 & there are 9 of us. Eventually get booked into a hotel, after agreeing to pay personally, & have a meal, a few drinks & an early night.

#### Day 15: Thursday 3.10.91

Get up early & head into town for some souvenir shopping. Meet Alex who is a bit despondent about the venue. It turns out the large hall we should have been playing in isn't finished & we're to play at an illegal club with no entertainments licence. Visions of being raided by the police start to haunt us. Get to venue early evening & it turns out to be as bad as expected. The gear has to be taken down a spiral staircase to get it into the club. It's also like playing in a sewer as the gig's that far underground, & to top it all the PA man's terrible & doesn't have a clue waht he's doing. Vlad, the agency boss, is doing his nut as he wants to record the gig for a C.D. to be released next year. However, we get a reasonable sound in the end & the gig goes ahead. After the gig go back to the hotel & have an emotional & inebriated last night party. Retire in the early hours of the morning.

#### Day 16: Friday 4.10.91

Have an emotional farewell with Vlad & Alex from the agency & set off sadly home. Travel through Austria and West Germany on the way home & then on to France. Make good time, apart from hitting freezing fog in Germany, & the French customs decide to play 'search the English' again! Occupy the bar on the cross channel ferry & then drive back to

Peterborough arriving Saturday early evening.

Although there were a few organisational problems & a couple of cancelled gigs, we had a great time. Czechoslovakia seems to be in the same mood as England was in during the late '70's and early '80's. Since the revolution they are all getting into as many different types of music as is possible, the favourites being punk, heavy metal & thrash, with a bit of ska & reggae thrown in as well. Hopefully if all goes to plan The Black Sky will be back abroad next year, as the agency want us to do another tour & an album over there in early Summer '92. All in all, it's great country to visit!







Currently flying high in the independent charts with their new album 'Wings Of Joy', Southsea quartet CRANES took to the road in September for a three week national tour. S&H's Alastair Nicolson caught up with them at The Junction:

#### AURA

Qualities of one inspiring awe in others. A facet sadly absent in today's music makers. One need only look at the moronic mayhem of the Madchester craze to realise this. Even the most ardent fan of the Happy Mondays would have a hard job putting hand on heart and swearing that s/he was stunned by the sheer weight of emotional and spiritual intensity of the ribald bard Ryder. Free drugs! Free sex! Anarchy! ... no aura.

#### **CRANES**

The brain-child of Jim Shaw, Cranes were first foistered on an unsuspecting public in 1985, via a song 'Vegetable' on a 28 track Portsmouth compilation album. This was followed the year after by an album 'Fuse', a collection of stark, haunting, uneasy drum and bass patterns interning the mournful wails of Jim's sister Alison. Three further members were recruited (Simon, Kevin and present string scourger Francombe) to record the initial eight track Mark 'Self-Non-Self' mini album mid-way through 1987, coinciding with the band's first live appearances (although its release was delayed until 1989, all but five pressings containing only six tracks after the others were mistakenly recorded over). Simon and Kevin soon departed, to be replaced at the end of 1989 by a second guitar guru, Matt Cope. Relatively unknown outside their home town until then, a lifeline was thrown by the NME, who tipped them as "a band to follow" at the start of 1990. Record companies were soon clamouring over the quartet's signatures, Dedicated securing a deal in the Spring. Four singles (three earning Melody Maker's 'Single Of The Week' honours) and a further album later, Jim's seedling is now blossoming, ripe with the leaves of summer.

#### DADAISM

So many of today's bands can be easily pigeon-holed into musical sects: Depeche Mode as New Age; Iron Maiden as Heavy Metal; Bomb Everything! as Hardcore. Cranes are irreverential to such accepted criteria. Cranes are set apart from the norms, outside and above them. Their sound varies from the brutal, staccatoed drum and guitar volleys of 'Give' and 'Starblood' to the dulcet, tender piano strains of 'Adoration' and 'Tomorrow's Tears'. Yet, at the vortex of each track are the plaintive, high-pitched tones of Alison. Jim and Alison are the creative core of the band, Jim writing the music, his sister adding her voice later. As you may expect, there's incompatability at times.

Jim: "There's some songs I write that she listens to and just goes "Eeeugh!". Having said that, I never say "Eeeugh!"

about her singing!"

Alison: "Aww! Jim just writes so much stuff that there's a bit of a selection process. Some of the stuff I think you don't need singing on because it's already a complete piece of music. Sometimes I just can't find any space on it to do anything that compliments it, so I'd rather just leave it, 'cos it sounds good as it is."

Alison - the eternal diplomat.



JIM, MARK, ALISON AND MATT

#### **EMOTIVE ONOMATOPEIA**

The science of inferring emotion from sound. if a dog yelps, one knows it is in pain. On first listening to a Cranes track, one could be forgiven for thinking there are no lyrics, for thinking that Alison is simply making her own mumbo jumboed concoction of noises, Liz Fraser style. Even the band are at times unsure:

Mark: "I'll have you know that we've been in the studio, turned all the instruments off and just listened to her voice with no reverb: and we still don't know what she's singing about!"

"We notice that we can hear more words when we're at gigs, when it's not all mixed in. We've even thought of making a weird hat that Ali could wear with mirrors on it, to see her lips move!"

Alison: "There are some songs, like Focus Breathe, with no lyrics."

Mark: "You told us it was in French!"

Alison (hurriedly and perplexed): "Er, well the version I used to sing live was in French, but the one that went on 'Self-Non-Self' wasn't!"

Lyrics or no lyrics, the emotional intensity Alison emits both on record and on stage is immense. It's akin to witnessing the catharsis of a lonely, sensitive and fragile being, yearning for love. Personal music for each individual listener to make their own, and give their own interpretation to. In fact, most songs do contain lyrics. As expected, the subjects of lovelornness and solitude reoccur. The two latest singles, 'Adoration' and 'Tomorrow's Tears', are more optimistic though, the lyrics indicating a flicker of light at the end of destiny's tunnel. As hope is instilled, the words have become more discernible.

Alison: "I sort of started off the album being a bit more confident, but I then bottled out half-way through; we were going to have the words a fair bit clearer, but in the end, just to make it sound like we wanted it to sound, we didn't. I just don't feel comfortable with the vocals mixed really loud and clear, it just doesn't seem like our sound if we do. If there was a song that really demanded very clear

spoken words, then, you know.... I think the mystique will always remain."

AURA PART TWO

Alison: "The crowds' reaction has been really up and down on this tour. The only gigs we've really liked were at Glasgow, Sheffield, Birmingham and Norwich."

Mark: "Norwich was good. There was a lot of action, that's why we really enjoyed it. We were a bit worried because the press do go on about how the audience were "visibly stunned", and it can be a really boring gig from our point of view if the audience is quiet. Glasgow was weird in that people would clap after each song and then suddenly others would go "shh, shh", and it would drop to silence again, as if it was like they'd heard you had to be really quiet at Cranes gigs!"

Go and see Ned's Atomic Dustbin or The Wedding Present, and the venue is a frenzied mass of sweaty, bouncing limbs. Go and see Cranes and there's.... reverence. Even at their London gig, people were respectful, polite in their applause. At Brighton, rigamortis set in. No stage diving. No knickers flying through the air towards Matt. Just reverence. Even with the crystal clear sound and stunning strobe light show the Junction offered. Even during the impassioned renditions of 'Reach' and 'Starblood'. Yet, on stage, there's Mark with dreadlocks flailing in time to Jim's frenetic pummelling, and there's Alison immersing herself in reflection, ventilating her innermost feelings. And there, it seems, is where the aura lies. Hers is a great pathos. And all wish to emphasise.

ALASTAIR NICOLSON (with help from Amanda O'Reilly and Antony Scott)

## REVIEWS

## COMPACT DISCS

TRIBE OF DAN
Shook Up Shook Up LP
Mister M Records MRMCD 3

Tribe Of Dan, aka Dan Donovan and itinerant friends, join the select bunch of local bands who have released stuff on CD. This 13 track recording, which is also available on cassette, amply displays the many sides of Dan the solo performer and Dan the band.

At a recent Dan gig, I was soundly berated by a Mooseketeer (a TOD follower, for the uninitiated) for allowing S&H to suggest that Dan's music was, on occasions, reminiscent of Status Quo's. I personally wouldn't have said that (though I can understand why the writer thought so) but I do detect a similarity with another just as unlikely band - AC/DC! 'Barking Dog', 'Blind Lead The Blind', and even the superb 'Like You', with its irresistable hook line "love, love, love, love" (for best effect, see the Mooseketeers perform the live version) - all carry the AC/DC trademarks; and let's face it, Dan's music is definately more 'heavy' than 'indie'.

Having said that, three of the best tracks on this album do not fall into the 'heavy' category. 'Be My Friend' has the feel of the 'Berlin' period Lou Reed; 'River Song' is an immensely moody piece, reminiscent of the work of



Cambridge's '80's techno-pop band, Perfect Vision; and finally 'Your Hand' almost defies description - very emotional, touches of Kate Bush and Peter Gabriel.

As you would expect with any thirteen track release, some of the material is no more than average, but even these are well worth a listen, if only for Dan's snarling vocals and underrated guitar playing. It's been a brave decision to release these recordings on CD, and it's one which I feel sure will be supported by the band's followers all over the country.

PHIL JOHNSON

(Pre-release copies are available from Mister M Records, 16 Kingfisher Close, Chatteris, Cambs. PE16 6TP)

## RECORDS

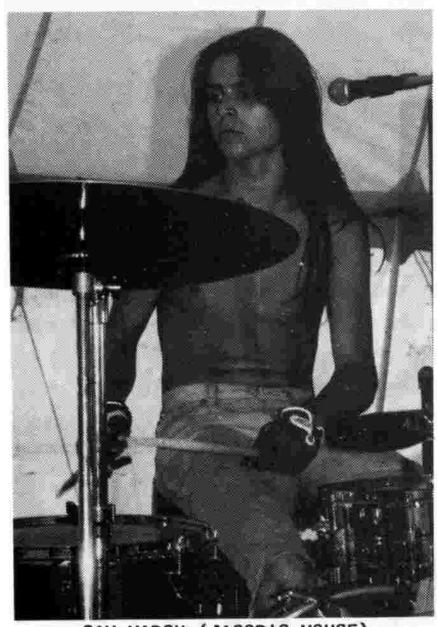
SONIC LOVE COALITION
How You Gonna Feel
Slippy Gimbo Records SLIMBO 4
Distributed by APT

Slippy Gimbo is run by Keith Jeffrey (of The Junction) and a friend based in Newcastle. Their first record, by a band called MIC, sold a very respectable 20,000; the Digital Scream record (see review) only managed about 1500 but let's hope the Sonics repeat MIC's success!

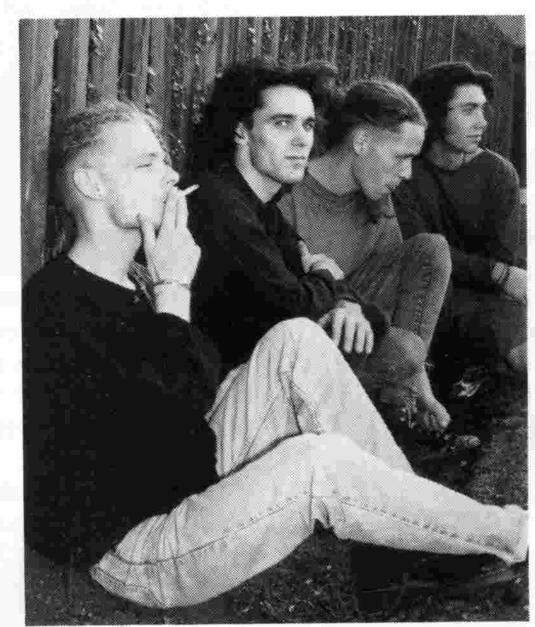
There is no doubt that this is an extremely accomplished dance record. As usual Chris' drums are inventive and the rest of the track more than matches them. Previously, when I've seen the Sonics live as a duo the vocals and drums have been very strong but the rest of the instrumentation felt like an after-thought. As a band, and on this record, that deficiency has been completely removed. Whilst live they are joined by both bass and guitar, on the record there is only the guitar of John Hasleham (ex-Cherry Orchard, as are Chris and Liz).

Both sides of the record feature the same song but with

## PETERBOROUGH WOODSTON WEEKEND - SEPT.



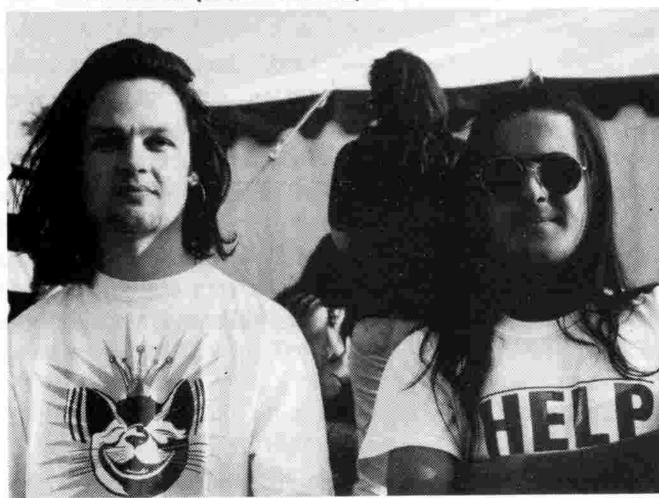
SAM MARSH (JACOB'S MOUSE)



THIS REPLICA



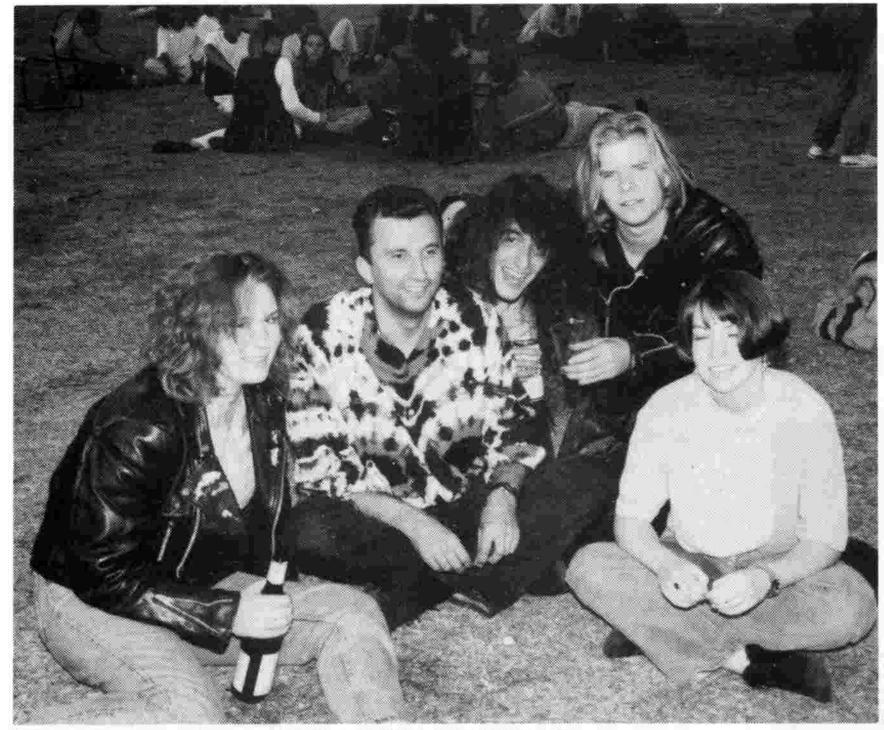
LIANNE HALL



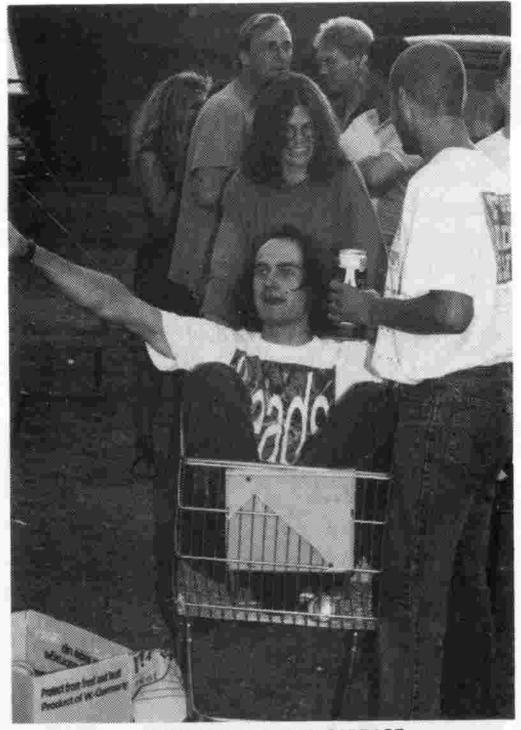
CO-ORGANISERS DEAN AND SHOP



STORMED'S NEW GENERATION



GIZZ BUTT'S IN EVERYWHERE



CLEARING UP THE GARBAGE

Pictures: Phil Taylor (tel. 0778-344812)

(Continued from page 15)

the obligatory different mixes (cool and hot). As an added twist they could be described as pre and post quantise (ie. before and after the timing errors have been corrected!). In fact the timing of the release of the record could have been a little better as it has a summery sound.

Buy a copy and be as smug as hell when they're famous!

STEVE HARTWELL

Available from any record shop via APT (Jays have it in stock).

JACOB'S MOUSE No Fish Shop Parking LP Blither Records BLIT 1

Anyone who's anyone and who bought the Mouse's first EP (which made Single Of The Week in the music tabloids) and has sat around impatiently tapping their fingers, is in for an absolute treat here. The Mice get nasty, and this vicious, fire-spitting, downright awesome concoction of powered noise combines the Boothby brothers' throaty bass and searing West Coast American grunge guitar with Sam's tribal drums and passionate war cries.

'A Place To Go', always a live favourite, is given the full treatment - drenched in chaotic feedback, steeped in raw untampered electric power right to the point where you pick yourself back up off the floor and think things just can't go beyond this... 'Justice' is also given just that: it's a lolloping frenzy of a song with the hoarse lyric "got no home to go to" ringing constantly around your head for hours. Originality abounds on the record, and 'Tumbleswan' in particular is a nighmarish voyage across twisted guiutars and echoed overlapping voices.

It's been a long hard ladder to climb for Jacob's Mouse, and they're now reaping some of the benefits they deserve. All credit to them for sticking to principles and not falling victim to fashionable dance beats.

JOHN ASHBY

'No Fish Shop Parking' will be released at the beginning of 1992, and will be available from all good record shops, as well as Jacob's Mouse gigs.

DIGITAL SCREAM
Gracy 3 / Gracy 7
Slippy Gimbo Records SLIMBO 2

This is a chart record! Well, it reached 158 in the Gallup chart for one week. I managed to listen to all of it at the wrong speed, I'm not sure whether that says more about me or the record! Being a dance record there can be no doubt that Chris Mann is involved somewhere and the complicated percussion and the break orientated structure are a dead giveaway. This is in fact a collaboration between Chris and Paul Dorking (with Paul's brother Phil Darke engineering). It might almost be said that this is a Sonic Love Coalition record as Liz also appears, albeit as a sample!

According to Chris, "this was recorded in January and what happened in July? There was Cubik 22, and Quadrophonia. It's not quite the same tune but... they

ripped me off even though the DAT never left my house!" In fact the record didn't surface until August so it had the appearance of being a cash in. Chris again: "The only place it's going to get played is in clubs, it's not particularly a radio record or a record you'd listen to at home."

Gracy 3 is the stripped down instrumental heavy techno mix and Gracy 7 features a more complete vocal. Despite Chris' comments I think the '7' side is very listenable and as well as featuring a proper vocal line it also has some very nice sampled vocal effects. One to be proud of!

STEVE HARTWELL

Available from any record shop via APT (Jays have it in stock).

### **TAPES**

GROSS ENCOUNTERS
9 track demo tape

When Jane Edwards gave me this first recorded offering "a capella eccentricity from the Queens of Kitsch", as it
says on the cover - I really did wonder how an act so
essentially visual would come over on audio tape. The answer
is very well, in the main. Jane and her four female singing
partners have taken nine tunes and stripped them bare of
instrumentation, with the exception of sparse percussion.
'Stop! In The Name Of Love" is the opener, five voices plus
bongos. Despite the clarity of the vocal delivery, this is
the song that tends to lack its original rhythmic backing
the most. 'Iko Iko' was always more of a tribal chant than a



song, and therefore works well. There's a fun-filled novelty number complete with animal noises, and then the girls get serious for just three and a half minutes of their lives with the delicate 'I Don't Come Any Other Way'. The harmonies are all aboard the 'Chattanooga Choo Choo'; 'Who Will Wear The Crown' is a lesser known number of some substance, which just begs to be heard; finally, the quintet get excited over a 'Fever', which has their collective orgasms spilling into poor old 'Rockin Robin'!

Quite simply, you've really got to go out to see and hear this lot.

PAUL CHRISTOFOROU

A taste of things to come. Taken from next year's excellent 'No Fish Shop Parking' LP, these relatively new songs are two of the most accessible ever written by Jacob's Mouse.

'Carfish' has a touch of traditional blues in its roots, which is confirmed by Sam's soul-shouting vocalising. Jebb lays down thick slabs of bass notes, Hugo nips in and out with sharp shards of guitar riffs and the whole thing builds up to a frenetic and abrupt conclusion.

'Caphony', on the other hand, is gradually working its way around to becoming the highlight of their live set. Starting off with some Duane Eddy-style rockabilly guitar, the drums and bass chug along quite merrily until they're interrupted by a violent outburst of heavy, aggressive guitar: it's a cue for Sam to roar "Snow White, Blood Red!", and for the slam dancers to go ape-shit. Good stuff from one of the few bands capable of producing genuinely exciting rock music.

PHIL JOHNSON

EZIO LUNEDEI Ezio! Ezio! Ezio! 6 track tape

The first time I remember seeing Ezio, he was standing arms aloft in triumph: his then band Spiritwalk had just completed their third gig, but more importantly, they had just won the 3rd Cambridge Rock Group Competition, having entered the contest with just four songs and minimal preparation.

For a while, Spiritwalk enjoyed themselves: they wrote a batch of sturdy melodic rock songs, and consistently pleased their followers down at The Burleigh Arms and The Boat Race. Then the bubble burst when two members found better things to do. Still, Ezio and the boys had plenty to look back on, most notably support slots at the Corn Exchange to artists as diverse as Bruce Cockburn and Erasure. And there was a single which was only released in Italy.

When talking about playing solo, Ezio cites not having others to worry about as an advantage. However, when he first branched out alone, it appeared that a lack of assistance could be his Achilles' heel - with most of his arrangements being so sparse, his songs sounded unfinished.

It's pleasing then to report that for the most part, the six tunes on this tape not only benefit from Ezio's immaculate guitar work but also from his having recruited a little help - instrumentally - from Booga (Mark Fowell), another fine local axeman, whilst the words on 'Moonstruck' are co-credited to another acquaintance, Paul Howard. As for the rest of the tape, 'Just To Talk To You Again' sounds like a trip to Boo Hewerdine country, and 'Moonburn' has a wonderful Latin American flavour. On side 2, there's the autobiographical 'Saxon Street'; the slightly Elvis Costello's 'Alison' soundalike, 'Valentine': and the least distinctive selection, 'I Was Dreaming'. The tape is not perfect, but it's well worth a listen.

COKE Parts 1 to 4 demo

Coke - short, sharp and sweet. A concept tape taking in the originality, loneliness and minimalism of the Velvet Underground and mixing it to the repetitiveness and mind-numbing eccentricity of, say, Loop or Hawkwind. The tape is black, no words, no details - just phased and delayed guitars jumping between shadows. Part 4 features what appears to be overdriven guitars standing squealing and screeching in a closet, and end with the distinctive sound of a toilet flushing in the background. It's weird, it's trippy, it's as funny as Geoff Capes' armpit on a hot day... but like the drink, Coke is addictive; like the drug, it's deadly. Could we have a contact address please?

PETE GARNER

CREED
Third State demo

Death Metal really isn't my forte, so I was a bit apprehensive about listening to the Creed tape - but I was surprised, because, with the exception of 'Mr. Groove', the songs are reminiscent of early Destruction, circa 1984/5.

Listening to the Creed tape is a fairly heavy going affair, the music contained within perhaps being the aural equivalent of wading though a sea of quick-setting cement! A lot of the tracks are much the same, and the production on the tape does not improve matters, turning parts of songs into blurs, such as the fast sections on 'Fearful Symmetry'. The tracks that do stand out are 'Your Demise', a jolly little ditty (!) which keeps the listener on his/her toes with time changes that put British Rail to shame; and 'Mr. Groove', a funky sounding number which sounds like a theme tune to a mid-1970's American TV adventure series.

All said, the demo (Creed's first) shows evidence that the band has the ability to move on to better things in the future, and to make a name for themselves on the live scene.

CHRIS NUNN

BLIND 4 track demo

When this plain black tape was thrust into my hands, and subsequently thrust into my stereo, I fell head over heels in love. I fell in love with all four tracks. I fell in love with the Lush-like female vocals, in love with the crushing pink and white washes of guitar noise, the swooping pulsing bass and tacky drum machine. I fell in love with Blind. I fell blindly in love. And then I saw them play live. I despised them. Gone was the urgency, the melody and the songs. In came mediocrity, laziness and third generation indie pop. Maybe it was just a bad night. The memory of the tape will live with me for some time, but the romance is over. I'm going back to my Flatmates collection.

JOHN ASHBY

SHADES OF INDIFFERENCE 3 track demo

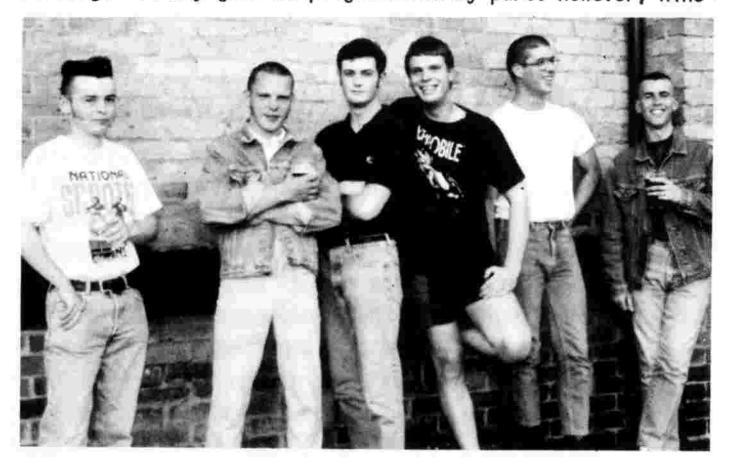
For those who've had their heads firmly buried in the sand for a good while, it may not have gone unnoticed that I have a little bit of a warm spot and a great deal of time for this St. Neots band. They breezed on stage at past rock competitions, singer Warren truly captivated the audience he looks so fucking cool - they hammered off some pretty decent numbers and then popped off back down the A45, rarely to return. They're heading now (they told me) for more serious things, and the best of luck to them. Their tapes have always been a bit of a disappointment and this is not an exception. The opener is a little too simplistic, not very tight and the vocals are quite badly out in places... not a good start. The second 'Central Calm' is a good song with a better opening and, despite a dodgy snare sound and murky mix, the strength shines through. 'Tear Me Apart' is another good song, though, again, the vocals falter slightly: Mark (guitars) and Warren make an excellent songwriting team (I assume they do it all themselves), combining for an REMish sound (there's a lot of bands doing this sort of thing), but the whole tape sounds as if it was done in a very great hurry. You'll get gigs but not a deal, unless you find a very far sighted A&R man (who'll probably sack most of the line-up). Next time, go into a good London studio (not as expensive as you may think), record an absolute gem and sell me the rights for a tenner - you're too good to let yourselves down like this...

MARK CURTIS

ANOTHER MAN'S POISON

Get Ready to Rumble demo

Another Man's Poison are Charlie Hall (vox), Jason Hughes (lead gtr), Dave Childs (rhythm gtr), Alan Swain (bass) and Darran Romain (drums). Together they create an unrepentant sound which thrashes its way through the seven songs on this tape, all original compositions. 'Get Ready To Rumble' is a perfect description of what you get. A few clues scattered around the cover suggest that scooters may also play an important role in the soul of this band. Down to the songs: my personal favourite is 'Selling Out', a hard hitting little number which seems to capture the essence of a million conscious-seeking, tortured pop songs, without using any long words at all. This band still has some way to go; the overall quality of the performance is not too good, although it may just be prejudice on my part. However, nine



tenths of the battle for any new band is originality and self-belief. AMP has more than enough of both, and musical competence is something that will come with time, so stick at it.

JANE WILSON

EIGHT DAYS IN CROMER
Fun Day Out demo

This wonderfully named Peterborough based band have come up with an exceptionally loud tape which manages to marry thrash metal to melody, in much the same way as Sub Poppers Mudhoney and Swallow do. The guitars grate and grind, bubbling in an underworld where every beat sounds like a minor explosion. The studio recorded side throws up some interesting musical tangents: 'Nothing To Contribute' and 'Last Chance' echo Chunk's dancier side; and their hilarious ska thrash version of The Specials 'Message To You Rudy', whilst being far from original, is still worth a mention for its sheer entertainment value. The live side, recorded at Peterborough's infamous Shamrock Club last year, features several tracks of ear-splitting high speed white noise and an immaculate Mudhoney cover. A tip for 1992 perhaps?

PETE GARNER

DONALD ELSEY'S BIG DECISION
"...Gorgeous..." demo

I like Donald Elsey: not only does he willingly accept the shit that S&H fling at him, but he actually comes back for more. He's taking no chances with his new demo - copies were sent separately to the three 'editors', in the hope that one of them would summon up enough enthusiasm to review it. I've drawn the short straw...

Apparently this tape's been very well received in the good ol' US of A (Station WFDH-FM, transmitting out of Tenafly, New Jersey, to be precise), and it's not too difficult to see why - all three tracks are surprisingly well-recorded (4 track) country-tinged AOR melodic rock. The opener, 'Greg's Theme', is a driving little number, with some sharp geetar solos from Mr. Elsey (who also provides the competent vocals). 'Mystery' slows the tempo down a little, and whilst it's not quite as infectious as the first track, nevertheless it's a crisp, clean tune. 'Strange Fascination', with its singalong chorus, is the pick of this promising batch of songs: here, Donald and his brother combine on vocal harmonies to sound alarmingly like Jesus & Mary Chain's Reid brothers. Elsey's previous recordings were somewhat inconsistent, to say the least. This package shows all the signs of approaching maturity - nothing startlingly original, merely well-written and well-played trad. rock.

In his covering letter, Donald informs us that he's now acquired a new line-up, in the form of Martin Holt (gtr/vox with The Denial) and Gary Todd (former bassist with Cactus Jack)... and they're available for bookings, folks: telephone Chatteris (03543) 5521.

PHIL JOHNSON

## **GIGS**

COLONEL HATHI'S DAWN PATROL / THE BUZZ / ANOTHER MAN'S POISON

Man On The Moon, Cambridge

Three bands with one thing in common - they all share an unashamed fascination for some of pop music's angry young men of the past. Exactly why, I'm not sure, but one thing's for certain - it surely can't be the local environment: after all, Cambridge doesn't really have inner city problems, racial tension, high levels of unemployment or serious drug abuse. And the Arbury Estate is the nearest thing we've got to an urban ghetto!

First band on, ANOTHER MAN'S POISON, relatively new, but playing a dated Oi/punk set. The thing about Oi bands was that they (and their followers) always looked threatening; at least that's how it seemed to me on my occasional forays down to the Sea Cadets in the early '80's. AMP sing and play with smiles on their faces, which, let's face it, is bound to take the edge of what is essentially an agressive and angry form of music. Still, they're young and inexperienced, so there's time for improvement.

THE BUZZ frustrate me. Andrew Lindsay (vox/gtr), ex Men From Uncle, Mel's Kitchen and now one of the elder statesmen of Cambridge pop, is undoubtedly one of the finest guitarists in the region, but again, he's yet another still caught up in the past. This time it's Paul Weller and '60's soul music. In fact, the Weller stuff is OK, and if The Buzz stuck to that style and developed their own material, they'd have some credibility and validity. But while their set includes dire cover versions of Martha & The Vandellas' 'Heatwave' and Del Shannon's 'Runaway'....dear oh dear!

At last, what a packed'n'sweaty Man On The Moon have been patiently waiting for - Gary Brown leads onstage COLONEL HATHI'S DAWN PATROL. Their ska/reggae rhythms beg comparison with The Specials (thus completing, with The Jam and the Oi movement, a trio of influential rebels with a cause). However, unlike The Specials, their songs carry no crucial messages, but then who cares, cos everyone's having a good time moovin'n'groovin to the funky Hathi beat. After almost ten years on the local band scene - most notably with the Albert Tatlock's Barmy Army/Strange Brew line-ups - Gary Brown's calculated match play and astute team selection has finally come up with a winner. Good on yer, Gazza!

PHIL JOHNSON

SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES Corn Exchange, Cambridge

It's fourteen years now since a youthful Siouxsie Sioux and Steven Severin, together with the then little known Sid Viscious, first assaulted the nascent punk explosion. Siouxie, always the model punkette - spitting like a viper yet spellbinding in her elegance - quickly assumed the mantle of Queen of the Revolution. Several line-up changes, acrimonious bust-ups, alternately brilliant and torpid albums later, the Queen stands proud, surveying her subjects from the Cambridge stage.

Yet time has softened Siouxsie: no longer is there that sneer, that rancorous look of old. Tonight there's an energy founded from contentment; the bovver boots have been moulded

into moccasins - though the feet can still kick sharply. The show is centred around the new album 'Superstition', a pleasant melding of the traditional sinister cartharsis with a wiggle-friendly, almost baggy, beat. 'Kiss Them For Me' is all bounce and candyfloss, whilst 'Shadowtime's crescendoing medley develops from a shroud of swirling bass into an eruption of lilting piano. These two standouts more than make up for the rather languorous 'Got To Get Up'.

For me however - and this is probably due in no small part to my advancing years and receding hairline - it's the ancient stuff which warms my cockles most. And there's plenty. 'Happy House', with its viscose guitar webs and discordant howling rant, remains hypnotic, and 'Tenant', psychosed and twisted, are both full of those precious nuances in Siouxsie's voice. True, she may just struggle with the top of the range notes now, and perhaps 'Cascade' loses its subtle guitar swirl, but few of tonight's audience quibble. The Queen has retained her crown and is now gliding overground, a painted bird in her paradise place.

ALASTAIR NICOLSON

I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU / MARY MUNGO & MIDGE / BLIND Man On The Moon, Cambridge

The two beacons bravely shining through the barren wastelands of Cambridge's summer gig scene emanate from the Junction Bar, and The Man On The Moon, where the ambience is the nearest we've got to that of the ill-fated Burleigh Arms. Tonight's package was put together by members of BLIND, a newish four piece band from the Huntingdon area. Blind are fronted by a diminutive female guitarist, with a vocal style not a million miles away from Natalie Merchant (10,000 Maniacs) and Tanya Donelly (Throwing Muses). In fact, my main criticism of Blind is that they appear to be too much influenced by contemporary American guitar rock bands - but then this is more than offset by the quality of their musicianship and their ear for a catchy pop toon. One to watch out for.

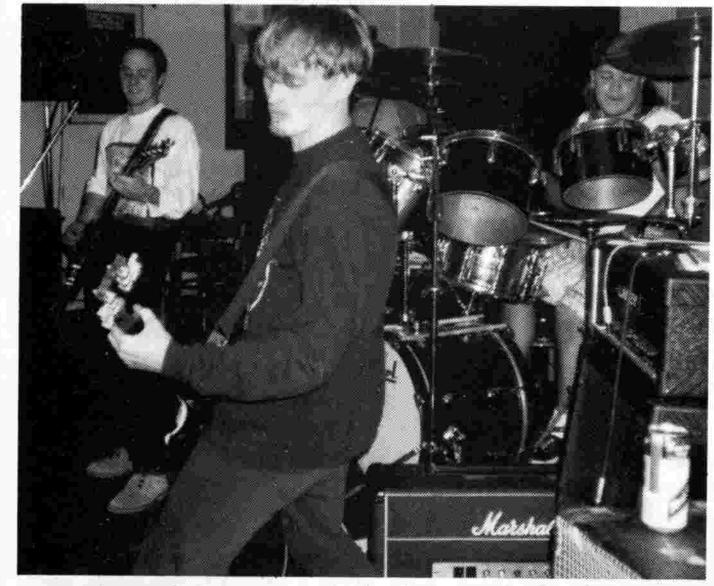
MARY MUNGO & MIDGE, another Huntingdon area band, have been around for nearly a couple of years, but haven't been seen too often in Cambridge. Long-standing followers of the local rock secene will quickly recognise Graham Probert (ex Graham and the Mushrooms) on guitar and vocals, and Ben Jordan, the former vox/bassist with Flowershop/Turtle Noise, now, surprisingly, playing drums (MM&M's third member is bassist Nick). Probert's guitar work has changed little from the Mushrooms/Stinkhorn days, and consequently the set is top-loaded with heavy psychedelic riffs, but now and again a few surprises are thrown in - a slower number here, a dance groove piece there. A powerful performance overall, but I can't help thinking that they would benefit from having an extra guitar in the line-up.

Haverhill's finest (and oldest) dancemasters I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU are having something of a stop-start year, thanks initially to stolen equipment and now to lack of rehearsals (due to drummer Martin working away in foreign climes, viz Grimsby). Suffice to say that tonight's set, curtailed by slack timetabling, was predictably unpredictable - no more, no less. Here's to the next time.

PHIL JOHNSON

THE BLACK SKY / EIGHT DAYS IN CROMER
The Junction Bar, Cambridge

The Peterborough Effect comes to Cambridge. EIGHT DAYS IN CROMER are a young hardcore/thrash trio who've been together for almost a year. Tonight, they were making their Cambridge debut, and impressed the locals with an energetic, raucous and not too serious performance. In fact, their whole



approach reminded me very much of the attitude of the early Pleasure Heads - very funny, very noisy and very chaotic. Don't miss them if they come back to Cambridge.

Despite rumours to the contrary (last issue of S&H), THE BLACK SKY's line-up is as it was: Ian (bassist) is still with the band, but second guitarist Shop has got the chop (again). Tonight's set was marred by P.A. problems - Mace's vocals sounded as if they were coming down a telephone, rather than through a microphone, and the problem wasn't helped by over-loud bass and guitar. But mishaps like this don't put The Black Sky out of their stride too much (a frustrated Mace kicked a pint of lager over one of their followers), and they delivered a solid if uninspired set of grunge rock. No doubt their minds were firmly fixed on the enticing prospect of their forthcoming tour of Czechoslovakia.

PHIL JOHNSON

ETHER / THE DREAM SEED
The Junction Bar, Cambridge

Tonight's gig closed the first series of local band gigs held in The Junction Bar. Overall, they've been very successful, and - according to Martin the Bar Manager - we can expect another series before the end of the year. two bands on display tonight had just two things in common they're both from the Huntingdon area; and both were playing their debut gigs. THE DREAM SEED are very young and, on the night, very nervous and under-rehearsed. Subconsciously adopting the herding instinct by huddling closely together in the centre of the stage, the opening bars of their first number brought to mind some of the archetypal hippy bands of the sixties - The Enid in particular - but this impression quickly faded when the singer launched into a sub-Happy Mondays' drone. Most curious of all were the guitar breaks - excellently played, but his metal riffs were totally at odds with what the rest of the band were trying to put

across (I think!). Still, as we often say, they're young and they've got time on their side...

And so onto the long-awaited debut of ETHER, fronted by ex-Charlottes' singer Petra Roddis. It was no surprise to hear that Ether are, in fact, The Charlottes Mark II. Close your eyes, and you'd swear Graham was playing guitar; those swirls of reverb spiced up with injections of wah wah - all the trademarks of Mr. Gargiulo. Most of the songs were a little samey, but Petra's guitar playing gave extra intensity to the overall sound. Unlike the previous band, Ether were well rehearsed, and it showed. What they need to do now is to work hard on songwriting, and produce more material like their closing number, 'On A Line', which stands up against anything that The Charlottes ever produced. Try to get a listen to this song on their three track demo - the final minute is quite stunning!

PHIL JOHNSON

ORCHESTRAL MANOEUVRES IN THE DARK Corn Exchange, Cambridge

This, the 'Sugar Tax' Tour, is OMD's first series of UK dates for five years. And much water has flowed beneath the bridge in that time. Minus the dependable Paul Humphries, the band is now synonymous with Andy McCluskey - he of the curly locks and rubber gyrating limbs.

Andy enters the fray to the backdrop of launch pad anthem 'Apollo XI', and welcomes the packed hall with an infectious enthusiasm belying his years. 'Sugar Tax' seems appropriate enough opener, although I can't help but wonder how many people are mentally inserting "Poll" into the "Ban The Sugar Tax" chorus refrain. Then a blast from the past the staccatoed electronic blipping bombast of 'Messages'. Already, feet are a-tapping and shoulders oscillating, and by the climax of 'Call My Name', ther are unheralded scenes normally reserved for the most bullish of Tom Jones gigs. Yes! Countless bras and knickers are catapulted skyward, smothering a by now rather ruddy-cheeked Andy. Perhaps due to this - and who can throw the blame - the tempo is checked, the more poignant and introspective 'Then You Turn Away' and 'Big Town' are unleashed, both rich and luxuriant in their swells of bottom-end keyboard.

Soon however, the masses are chilled into reverance by that schizophrenic techno intro and military drum of 'Maid Of Orleans', the delivery so passionate that one can almost fan the flames flickering on the sanguinolent stake. 'Pandora's Box' and 'Seven Seas' resume the new once more, the latter's percussion conjuring images of glamthrob Gary Glitter - in my mind at least - but these are eclipsed by the coup d'etat 'Enola Gay'. This rather sums up the evening - the new material is pleasant, sometimes catchy and uplifting, sometimes more reflective, but it's the pre-1984 compositions which remain the most memorable, both in melody and lyrical content. This is seemingly ratified by the artist himself, the encores being 'Joan Of Arc', that glorious exhumation of despair with a backdrop of wailing beanan sidhe, and the contagious 'Electricity'. But that's not intended as a criticism of the new; simply recognition of timeless rhapsodies.

PHIL WATTS BAND / BOO HEWERDINE / CANTERBURY STREET Homerton College, Cambridge

Although put together in just 17 days, this 'Rock For Romanian Orphans' benefit gig was a well publicised event, with everybody involved giving their all for nothing. On arrival, things looked healthy: there was a well built stage with good lighting, and on it were CANTERBURY STREET. I'd seen them before, but that was indoors. The larger expanse of a bigger platform seemed to suit them. OK, so singer Pete



Cousins just had to prance around like a somewhat demented being, but this is all part of the entertainment. Canterbury Street are 'musicians' and they know how to play, but once they'd showcased their talents - flashy guitar and sax solos all round - the opportunity to get over-indulgent got the better of them, and they were less than convincing as a live unit.

BOO HEWERDINE was on next, but he didn't have much to play. The crowd in front of him comprised almost entirely of foreign language students; consequently his songs, especially the poignant and appropriate 'Motherless Child', were lost on them. The applause was polite for an artist who'd given up a day's recording to appear - but really he shouldn't have.

And so to the headline act: yes, it was THE PHIL WATTS BAND, featuring no less than nine musicians, many of whom can claim to be amongst the most accomplished in the area. Phil Watts' voice sounded similar to Neil Diamond's: that said though, and all is said. For this band had nothing to offer, beyond the individual playing ability of its members. Their songs certainly did not bear analysis. Just before the end of the gig, buckets were being shaken in an effort to drum up some more support for those needy orphans. I threw my remaining sheikels in the direction of one such container and took my leave.

PAUL CHRISTOFOROU

BOO HEWERDINE The Junction Bar, Cambridge

It's about ten years ago since Boo Hewerdine burst forth onto the Cambridge gig circuit. He was quickly hailed as one of the city's - indeed, the area's - most talented songwriters, a man with height and humour to match his huge, though occasionally misguided, genius.

The main problem with Boo in those days was that he was such a prolific songwriter that he didn't always recognise a good song when he wrote it. How many times did he play a song once in public, only to store it in the Hewerdine vaults, never to be heard of again?

The intervening years have been both cruel and kind to the man who now (unintentionally) adopts a Curly Watts lookalike image, and has just a couple of guitars for stage partners. Tonight's set comprises old established Bible numbers - including 'Blue Shoes Steppin', and the classic but ill-fated 'Graceland' - nestling alongside new songs such as 'Gravity' and the highly potent 'Ignorance'. The latter is the title of his new album, if he ever gets around to finishing it! It is a song of immense power, and with an opening line of "Said the butcher to the knife, 'must I take another life?' ", it has all the hallmarks of a modern day anthem for a multitude of pressure groups. It would be an unlikely but wise choice for a single, and could bring in some handsome royalties. It is also the most poignant song that Boo has ever written.

Midway through tonight's performance, he unveiled a song called 'Please Stay', which he introduced as "an old soul number, I'm the only one who knows it". Sorry Boo, but the Rollers covered it in 1974, but I wouldn't expect you to know that, and you'll be pleased to know that yours is infinitely better!

The new Hewerdine is worldly-wise, his tongue is razor-sharp, and his voice emotive - he's never sounded better, and that also includes his guitar playing. Such was his performance tonight that he was called back for three encores - but despite all the experience he's gained through gigging over the years, he's still a shy and unassuming man off stage.

The world is Boo's oyster. This latest vehicle is destined for huge success - if he wants it. He is so versatile that he is equally at home in the intimate surroundings of small venues, such as tonight's, or large outdoor festivals. What chance of him playing - indeed, headlining - a future Cambridge Folk Festival? If he came from Greenwich Village, he'd already be a God: in Cambridge, these things take a little longer. Let's just hope he doesn't buy a Sinclair C5!

MALCOLM ENGLISH

SLOWDIVE The Junction, Cambridge

There's a plethora of adjectives which could be used to describe the blissful sound this quintet weave, but only one will do - "numenous". Really, if there is music playing on the harps of the angels in heaven, it could be no more sacred than this. Eddying guitars create an atmosphere of divine balm on the beautifully introspective opener 'Spanish Air', while 'Slowdive' and 'Morningrise' are given a rounded air by the superb drumming of former Charlotte Simon, underpinning the waves of sublime white noise which spiral and crash, and then ebb away to serene calm. 'Catch The Breeze' increases steadily in tempo, and then pauses wistfully before gushing into a celestial storm. All the while, the tornado's vortex is nucleated by the (ec?)static Rachael, detached and entranced, purling her gentle cantabiles like a shy Philomela. Slowdive have been accused of dwelling on similar chord formulae, but their oblations are lavishly dulcet and mellow, producing a nectarious ambience rivalled by so few of their supposed peers. NASCENT NUMENOSITY.

ALASTAIR NICOLSON

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Another Man's Poison 0223-214131

Babylon 0733-413703 Betty Blue 0223-414681

Beyond This Place 0638-780524

Big Blue World 0733-347294

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The lunction 410256

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The Wrestlers 358777 The Zebra 312058

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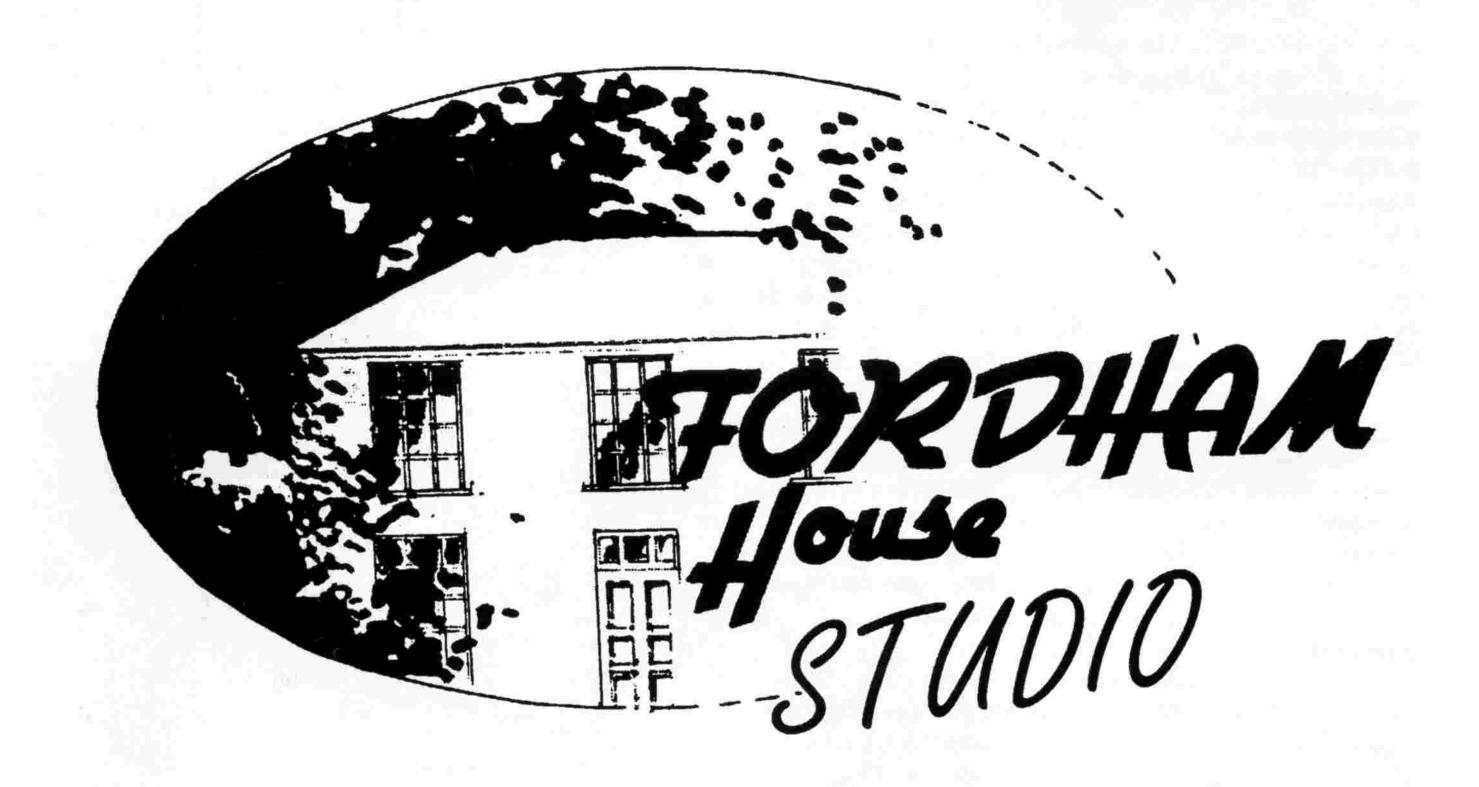
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