

SCENE AND OVERHEARD

CAMBRIDGESHIRE'S ROCK MAGAZINE

JANUARY/FEBRUARY/MARCH 1989

VOICE OF THE BEEHIVE : SPIN
THRILLED SKINNY : BLACK CANDY
DARLING BUDS : TREVOR DANN
5TH CAMBRIDGE ROCK GROUP
COMPETITION PREVIEW



MEL'S KITCHEN : first band on stage in this year's competition

T H E
P r i n c i p l e

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to a new year, and a new issue of Scene & Heard. The start of a new year also heralds the start of Cambridge's Annual Rock Group Competition, and quite naturally, this issue concentrates on this - without a doubt, the biggest local rock event in the County.

But Peterborough and Huntingdon are not forgotten, and inside you'll find out what's going on in those areas of the county.

Some of our planned interviews did not quite materialise in time, so Pluck This, Mr Kite, Big Blue World and Flightpath Studios will have to wait until the next issue (out at the beginning of April) before they can read about themselves.

Thanks go to all those bands who sent in demo tapes and photographs: those tapes which have not been reviewed in this issue will certainly be included in the next.

We hope that you find this issue informative and entertaining. Any suggestions for articles in future issues will be welcomed.

PAUL & PHIL

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CONTENTS

- 3 Editorial & Contents
- 4 Rock Competition Preview
- 9 Spin
- 10 Black Candy
- 11 Trevor Dann
- 12 Voice Of The Beehive
- 13 The Peterborough Effect
- 14 Darling Buds
- 15 Thrilled Skinny
- 16 A - Z Of Cambridge Rock pt. 2
- 17 Fact & Fiction
- 18 Metal Matters
- 19 County Scene
- 20 Reviews
- 24 Listings



5TH CAMBRIDGE ROCK GROUP COMPETITION

HEAT PREVIEWS

by Paul Christoforou (Heats 1, 3 & 5)
and Phil Johnson (Heats 2, 4 & 6)



NUTMEG - WINNERS OF THE 1988 COMPETITION

HEAT ONE:
25th
January

MEL'S KITCHEN

Mel's Kitchen will bring their brand of "souly pop" to the Corn Exchange, together with a fair few supporters. They've recruited a new lead vocalist since last year's contest, when they were placed fourth in what turned out to be the strongest heat. See also Tape Review. Line-up: Iain Bell (bass); Andrew Lindsay (gtr); James Kilsby (drums); Martyn Sutton (vox).

POSSESSION

At the time of writing these notes, Possession were frantically trying to arrange a switch to another heat, as vocalist Mark Cowling will be out of the country on the date of the first heat. Formed from former Haverhill bands

(including the seminal Melting Trees) last year, this goth band's first demo tape received 'critical acclaim' in a recent issue of S & H. Rest of the line-up: Steve Bastion (bass); Steve Gibbs (gtr); Simon Iron (drums).

BOYS'LL BE BOYS

This pop band hail from the St. Ives/Huntingdon area. An interesting line-up, here, incorporating keyboards and extra percussion. One of the 'boys' is vocalist Helen Davies! From the late influx of tapes received at the time of writing, this band's offering was by far the most impressive. See also comments in Huntingdon Rockscene. Rest of the line-up: Jason Bunting (keys); Adrian Radwell (drums); Joel Combes (keys); Paul Fisher (gtr).

WILD BILL HARTZIA AND THE MALARIAL SWAMPDOGS

Boasts both the biggest name, and the biggest line-up.

Probably the most popular student band of 1988, this almost acoustic band is a throwback to the '50's skiffle era. Singer/guitarist Dan Gooch is a man of many parts: a Cambridge Footlighter (who probably had something to do with the Footlights' single reviewed in this issue by Chris Williams) and a satirical socialist singer/songwriter who performs solo under the name of The Red Herring. Rest of the band: Dan Wiltshire (mandolin/vox); Saul Berkovitz (bass); Steve Quilley (banjo/vox); Joe Gardiner (sax & other things); Paul Ruane (fiddle); Philip Salmon (accordion); Grainne MacAlonan (fiddle/vox); Owen Evans (drums).

CHILL OUT

Well I did not know that Ian Docherty had a dislike of jazz funk (see Tape Reviews). As it happens, I was pleasantly surprised by Chill Out's tape. In 1988 they were called Sound Advice and came nowhere. They should make more of an impact

this time round, having added keyboards and sax. Line-up: Mark Ablewhite (vox); David Watts (drums); Richard Watts (gtr); Steve Duffy (bass); Duncan Maletka (keys); Tony Gallucci (sax).

THE DESMONDS

No question that The Desmonds will make an impact with their unique combination of sharp songs, wacky sense of humour and flared trousers. Reached the semi-finals last year. Drummer Adam (Arable Desmond) Jones plays his fifth Rock Comp. Rest of the Line-up: Chris (Viscount Desmond) Evans (gtr/vox); Spazz (Neon Desmond) Jones (bass/vox).

SHADES OF INDIFFERENCE

This young St. Neots-based new wave band have the unenviable task of following the Desmonds. Have undergone several line-up changes in their two year existence. Line-up: Warren Buckland (vox); Mark Ridley (gtr); Chris Thorpe (bass); Anthony Grieves (drums).



SHADES OF INDIFFERENCE (Heat 1)



Dave Challenger & Debbi-Jayne DEJA VU (Heat 4)



THE NIGHT JARS (Heat 6)



Steve Seymour & Roz Metcalfe THE MELTING MEN (Heat 3)



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HEAT TWO: 1st February

SPIN

Nucleus of last year's TV Messiahs, a promising if somewhat disorganised indie-pop group. See band interview in this issue. Line-up: Mark Dyer (vox); Howard Blackburn (bass); John Platten (gtr); Steve Prudden (drums); Simeon Hearn (gtr).

AS YOU LIKE IT

May be a new name, but the faces are very familiar. Janne Jarvis, Rowan Robertson and Kevin Hart are well known as former bassist, guitarist and drummer respectively of the now defunct Indiscretion. For those of you who preferred the heavier side of Indiscretion (as occasionally seen at the late lamented Burleigh Arms), then you're in for a treat. Other band members: Jim Peacock (vox), Vuyo Sabel (gtr).

THE FLESH MECHANICS

This recently formed group are a Cambridge version of a 'Supergroup'. Zak Justin has already built up a deserved reputation as one of the area's best frontmen from his days of singing with Standpoint; the bespectacled John Varty played bass with Hollow Land, those almost legendary poppygoths of '87; Adrian Paice was the well-known and respected drummer with The Children Of Some Tradition, a former Rock Comp. Best Young Band winner; and you may remember young Garrie Fleet making some interesting guitar sounds in last year's Best Young Band of the Comp., The Bogus Renegades.

AT 10 PACES

The Comp.'s first American band - all members are based at USAF Mildenhall, and will have the support of a large and loud mainly American following. They describe their music as Country Shock Rock, but see Tape Reviews and Gig Reviews for other opinions. Line-up: Jesse J (vox); Peter Gorter (gtr); Dave McDowell (gtr); Kurt Jourden (bass); Paul Johnstone (drums)

GLASS ASYLUM

Also known as Bible John, they had to withdraw at the last minute from their heat in last year's Rock Comp. due to a computer breakdown, thus spoiling Andy Graves' record of having performed in every Rock Comp. (1985 - The Frieze; 1986 - Glass Asylum; 1987 - Halo Of Flies). Read the Tape Review to get an idea of their music. Line-up: Simon Martin (drums); Andy Graves (keys/gtr); Tim Bryce (vox/keys).

UNSTABLE

The only true unknowns in what promises to be a strong and competitive heat, it's Unstable both in name and in nature. Formed just last October by two Selwyn College undergrads., Tim Hodgson (bass/vox) and Nick Johnson (gtr/vox), the line-up may now be enhanced, but there is a possibility that they will have to make do with a drum machine. The music? Well, Tim and Nick are unsure how to describe it, but it may be punkish.

MR MEANER

One of last year's 17 unlucky applicants who failed to draw one of the 42 available places, Mr Meaner have gigged fairly regularly in the area throughout 1988. The line-up of this New Wave-ish outfit is: Mark Bayliss (drums); Adrian Nichols (gtr); Martin Young (gtr); Jonathan Foster (bass); Roger Hostell (vox).

HEAT THREE: 8th February

VAMPCOW

An offshoot of last year's notorious thrash metalists Infernal Death. Should give the moshers in front of the stage the chance to flex their muscles before the real music starts! Line-up: Mark Wretham (vox/bass); Dan Waldman (gtr); Steve Marchant (drums).

EXCESS X DELUXE

Will be playing their first Cambridge gig. Their live outing in nearby Ely was very successful. Playing electronic dance music, the inclusion of ex Double Yellow Line frontman Chris Williams should make them one of the bands to watch out for. Rest of the band: David Bradwell (synth); John Hasleham (gtr); Jane Graham (keys/vox).

THE BROTHERHOOD

One of the bands who failed to get a place in last year's competition. A relatively new band who did very little gigging during 1988 due to line-up changes, they were tipped by ex-Weekly News Rock Scene Columnist Phil Johnson as a band to watch out for in 1988. Play Paul Weller-influenced pop rock. Line-up: Richard Bath (vox/rhythm gtr); Stuart Bath (lead gtr); Andy Ralph (bass); Ian Corney (drums).

THE LONELY

The Lonely return, with a vengeance! The nucleus of their best-known line-up, i.e. Ted Koehorst (gtr/vox), Bob Jakins (bass/vox) and Martin Scott (drums) has been augmented with a vocalist from a previous Comp. winner (Ian Docherty; Spiritwalk), a new keyboard player (Duncan Hopkins) and a former Roaring Boy on sax (Tim May). They'll be challenging for every honour (except, of course, the Best Young Band!).

THIS REPLICA

This gothy/new wave band were a regular attraction at the Burleigh, often playing support to Nutmeg, with whom they share both geographical and family connections. Line-up: Jim Thorby (drums); Chris Scurrah (bass); Darren Walker (gtr/vox); Lyndsey Paxton (keys).

ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND

This pop/rock band, led by former Necromancer frontman Keith Warden (vox/rhythm gtr), return to the Comp. after a year's absence (remember bassist Lee Dunn's multi-coloured hair in the 1987 Comp.?) and with virtually a new line-up: Marty Dickson (bass); Ralph Honey (lead gtr); Brian Butler (Keys); Alastair Cameron (drums).

THE MELTING MEN

Another band who return after a year's absence. They were especially unlucky in 1987, when I for one felt they were the pick of their heat. Their most significant line-up change since then has been the acquisition of Roz Metcalfe, a talented musician who used to play piano at Richard Heeps' first musical outings, who has replaced Iain Collins as vocalist for the band. Rest of the band: Chris Todd (bass); Eca Outhwaite (gtr); Steve Seymour (gtr); Mark Langford (drums).

HEAT FOUR: 15th February

FILTHY RICH

Veteran local heavy rockers, Filthy Rich were rumoured to have split up some months ago, but return to the Competition after an absence of four years. Line-up: Steve 'Chick' Poore (lead gtr); Den Michelson (bass); Trevor 'Abo' Davie (drums); Pete Phillips (vox); Jon Wilson (rhythm gtr).

THE BICYCLE THIEVES

Four Undergrads, and one townie. One of the city's most busy and likeable bands, their indie pop tunes, tinged with African guitar rhythms, are very infectious and danceable. Now in their second year of existence, a significant line-up change occurred last October, when drummer Paul Garner (of Geneva Convention, Herbs, Surfin' Druids and Standpoint fame) stepped into a vacant slot. Rest of the band: Simon Petty (vox/gtr); Simon Ounsworth (gtr); Nigel Hanson (bass); Tim Pritchard (sax).

DIGITALIS

Digitalis are the second of the two Infernal Death offshoots (see also Vampcow in Heat 3) playing in this year's comp., but bassist Chris Cuting's new band won't be thrashy - expect the more acceptable (?) face of heavy rock. Rest of the band: Sim Jon Webb (vox); Steve Bothamley (lead gtr); Andy Murfitt (rhythm gtr); Guy Gee (backing vox); Mark Rowley (drums).

DEJA VU

This progressive rock group impressed in last year's comp. with their technical proficiency. Plans to release a single last year didn't materialise, probably due to enforced line-up changes on drums and guitar. Line-up: Debby-Jayne (vox); Dave Challenger (bass); Mark Radford (gtr); Gordon Reid (Keys); John Harris (drums).

B.o.B.

Although only in existence for a few months, highly offensive and sexist posters advertising their gigs have resulted in a banning of B.o.B. from playing at CCAT. When I tell you that B.o.B. is rumoured to be the abbreviated form of Bend over Bitch, you'll get the drift. Believed to be formed from the remnants of Toytown, a totally shambolic thrash band complete with Jesus & Mary Chain



GLASS ASYLUM (Heat 2)



Lui Di Martino IZA BLUE
(Heat 5)



ARCANA (Heat 5)



O-Zone (Heat 5)



Chris Williams & John Hasleham EXCESS X DELUXE (Heat3)

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feedback, B.o.B.'s music has all the promise of a knee in the groin. Line-up: Peter Hammond (gtr); Tony Hewett (vox); James Miller (gtr); Gilbert (bass); Robert (drums).

RESIDENT ALIENS

A new name on the local rock scene during 1988, although this R & B/reggae band from the Soham area have been together in various forms for almost five years. Rumoured to have some connection with Bob Marley's Wailers. Line-up: John Jellyman (gtr); Tom Gable (drums); Greg Botting (bass); Elaine Lock (vox); Marty Flynn (keys).

THE WELL-WICKED WARRIORS

The second Student band in this heat, WWW also entered last year's comp. under the name of Stone Groove, but were one of the unlucky 17. This blues/rock band gigged extensively on the college circuit last term, so they should be tight, if nothing else. Line-up: Niall Mackay (drums); James Everard (vox/gtr); Mike Hobson (gtr); Mark Venn (bass); John Nicholls (keys).

HEAT FIVE: 22nd February

THE CHERRY ORCHARD

Most S & H readers will be familiar with this band: they appeared on the cover of our last issue both in sound and in vision. On stage, the band have a harder edge than on record: very Lloyd Cole, if they don't mind me saying so. (They probably do!) Line-up: Jason Smith (vox/gtr); Liz Creasey (backing vox); Andrew Roe (percussion); Jamie Sommerville (drums); Robert Miller (bass); Joel White (gtr).

O-ZONE

A melodic rock band, formed in late '87 largely from the remnants of Fragile Skies. The band have gigged regularly in '88, mainly in Newmarket and Peterborough, and have just completed an LP-length tape entitled 'Camera Obscura'. Line-up: Catherine Carr (bass); Paul Gallant (drums); Michael Hardy (keys); Anne Rundle (vox/flute); Mike Whitaker (gtr/keys).

IZA BLUE

They describe their style as 'live sounding pop'. Guitarist/singer Lui Di Martino was previously with Backlash and Family Affair, both also-rans in earlier Rock Comps. He is, however, well capable on his day of providing some originality and inspiration to any band. And the last band I remember who had a drummer with the surname of Starr didn't do too badly, either! Rest of the band: Peter Jones (bass); Kevin Starr (drums); Rob Dix (gtr).

ARCANA

Thrash metal band who've impressed at recent Sea Cadets Hall gigs. Originally formed in 1986, half the band were thrown out for joining Infernal Death. Now up to full strength and about to record a new demo tape at Flightpath next month (February). Line-up: Chris Nunn (drums); John Lander (vox/rhythm gtr); Phil Barry (lead gtr); Neil Harvey (bass).

HIGH TREASON

A dose of heavy metal will be provided by this band, a relatively newly formed outfit, who confess to not yet having found a suitable frontman. Bass player Martin Gowler (ex Filthy Rich) therefore doubles up on vocals. Rest of the band: Kevin Mallia (lead gtr); Russell Milton (Rhythm gtr); David Mackintosh (drums).

THE BURNING

If Nick Che'ale, guitarist with The Burning, is as adept at playing his axe as he is a calligrapher, then his band of "contemporary hard rockers" will take some beating. Rest of the band: James Lanchbury (vox/gtr); Nick Pitman (bass); Ali Patterson (drums).

THE BOGUS RENEGADES

Doing a 'Sardines' by changing their name for the Comp. to 'The Revenge Of The Bogus Renegades' - some sort of reaction to their disappointing performance last year? They still won last year's Best Young Band award, and will probably be all the wiser this time round. Line-up: Richard Turner (vox/gtr); Giles Channon (bass); Jeffery Mayo (lead gtr); Stephen Hill (drums).

HEAT SIX: 1st March

THE NIGHT JARS

Once again, a new name, but familiar faces. It's basically the reformation of Ramsey's Red Over White, minus singer/guitarist Tim Brooks, and plus ex Giant Polar Bear frontman John Lindsell. Just how serious is the commitment of this band (drummer David Fletcher is also bassist with the highly promising Charlottes), only time will tell. Bassist David Wick played with Fields of the Nephilim.... whoops, sorry! I mean Priests of Vengeance, in last year's comp. Rest of the band: Brendon Costello (gtr).

CHOPPER

The return of Oxbridge's finest (well, that's my opinion!) to entertain and, at the same time, attempt to play the greatest number of tunes in the allotted time. Likely to be suffering from a lack of rehearsal (no gigs last term: all are in their hectic final year at University), but then, they often give the impression of being under-rehearsed. Two tracks on their current tape (available from the band) will be included on a forthcoming compilation LP of British hardcore bands, to be released by a Darlington record label; and there's a distinct possibility that Chopper will be releasing their own LP on the same label. Line-up: the Cambridge half - Tom Hodgkinson (bass); James Parker (drums); the Oxford half - Hugo Deadman (vox); O.J. May (gtr).

CROSSLAND

This Ely-based rock/pop group are relatively new, featuring ex-members of Refugee who, you may remember, played in the very first Rock Comp. Line-up: Antony Watson (bass); Tony Pinkerton (vox); Patrick Halls (gtr); Lee Marshall (drums); Richard Taylor (keys).

SENATORS OF SIN

No Rock Comp. would be complete without at least one Hills Road 6th Form College band (the first three Comp. winners - The Detective, Double Yellow Line and Spiritwalk - all had some link with Hills Road). This year, Rosie Lant's proteges are the Senators Of Sin, a post punk/rock group, comprising Nick Giles (vox); Neil McLaughlin (bass); Andrew Botcher (lead gtr); Fraser Gilmour (rhythm gtr); Luke Twentyman (Drums).

THE FLOORSHOW

Expected to do well in the Comp. 'Power pop' perfectly describes their music. Founder members and ex Vigil's Aunty Grant Norris (vox) and Jason Little (gtr) have recruited some quality local musicians, in the shape of John Cornell (drums - ex Stormed and Vanishing Point); Tim Lee (keys - ex Bhagwan Fresh), plus Sunugal's Lydia (backing vox) and Finn (bass).

BLACK CANDY

A Newmarket new wave band who, although not yet one year old, have already released a 7" single (Whipp Jinx Hi) and have done several London gigs. See Band interview for further details. It was something of a shock to hear that Mel Smith, their petite, bubbly singer, had been sacked just before Xmas, because of her "lack of commitment". At the time of writing these notes, local singer Phil Crawford has been rehearsing with the band, and looks likely to take Mel's place in the line-up. Rest of the band: Brian Tolworthy (bass) and Barry Summers (drums).

INFLITE

Regular entrants in the Comp. (but note change of spelling, from 'In Flight' to 'Inflite'), Elvis (gtr), Phil Bryant (drums) and Roger Illsley (vox/gtr) have now been joined by Gavin Langford (bass - ex Vanishing Point) and Quentin Maile (keys - ex In The Pocket). Last year, they divested themselves of their 'heavy/progressive rock' persona: it will be interesting to see if the addition of keyboards has significantly altered their new direction.

RESERVES:

1. THE PUBLISHERS

A new three-piece combo playing 'modern rock'. Line-up: Shekeil Subrati (vox/bass - ex Sound Advice); Pete Harris (gtr); Ian Turner (drums).

2. WASHINGTON BULLETS

The evergreen Strange Brew, under yet another name. Line-up: Gary Brown (vox); Dean (gtr); Parkes (bass); Matt Johnson (drums).

3. BROTHERS TOO

A pop/jazz funk duo, comprising of Geoff Meads (gtr) and Kim Owen Brown (gtr/keys).

SPIN

Even if their stage act doesn't match their name, their interview technique certainly does. No answers are ever finished, and at least four people will be talking at once, almost invariably disagreeing with each other.



Sim (rhythm guitar & part-time Son Of A Nun):

The very fact that we all disagree about everything I think adds to the band. If we all sat around agreeing on everything, it would get very bland. At the same time, none of us are particularly dominant in the band. In other bands it would be a destructive process, but it seems to work for us. It would save time if we agreed on everything, but I don't think the music would be as good.

John (Lead guitar): I'm very fond of the Go Betweens and Orange Juice. I want us to sound like that, but we don't, which is really annoying me. I'm trying to get us a lot more melodic, but at the moment it's taking us a very long time to write songs.

Mark (vox): We're starting to worry about what we want the song to be before we actually write it. We're writing songs specifically for the set, trying to make it as broad as possible, and hopefully get some feedback as to what people like, and then we can take that sort of direction. That's what I want to do.

Howard (bass): I don't necessarily agree with that. I think we should play what we like playing. If it's up to me, we'd sound like the Buzzcocks.

John: Sim calls us a power chord band, which we're trying to get away from.

Mark: I enjoy doing it. It sounds daft, but I find it interesting. That's why I don't argue very much with this lot about what it sounds like and stuff, because I just enjoy doing it. I don't think any of us could call ourselves

musicians in the classic sense. We recorded a demo, and after about 16 hours we got one song down. It sounds daft, but I found it really hard to sing in key. We got a bloke to do the four track on the cheap, and his dad is a singing teacher so I had an hour lesson just getting into key. I'm not having any more lessons.

Howard: The problem's solved now, because we know what key he sings in.

Spin used to be the chaotic mess called The TV Messiahs, but now they've acquired a manager, in the shape of Lydgia.

Lydgia: I'm not so much a manager - I can't stand that word - it's just that they've got no organisation or anything. I pick them up and run them about, organise practices: I just do things like that.

Mark: We respect her opinion. That's why we haven't gigged. Before, we were just gigging because we wanted to, and it didn't matter what it sounded like, because we were having a good time and it didn't matter if anyone else was. When we took on Lydgia we were hoping she had a really big bank balance.

Lydgia: The only reason they wanted me was because I had a car.

Mark: We had Gary Shepherd (ex Hollow Land singer) before her. It was quite worrying; he started making us money. He saw us at one practice and got us a gig with The Charlottes. That night, we walked away with £6 each, which was just amazing.

Sim: I run the Cambridgeshire Branch of the Dr Who

Appreciation Society. I used to make a living at rock'n'roll, but I couldn't handle the speed of the lifestyle, so I sold up and joined this bunch of wasters. It wasn't so much the music, it was the people. I'd been in a lot of bands but they weren't people I really knew. I was in Fires In Arabia for a bit, and I was even in a jazz-funk band for a while, who eventually became Bhagwan Fresh, after I left.

The future of music?

Howard: There's nothing left to look forward to. The music scene is dying, House music is proof of that.

Mark: I think music as a whole is levelling itself out. Ideas are drying up: it seems music can only go as far as the technology will take it.

Sim: Take punk, once they'd stripped it down to the absolute basics of music, they didn't think they could go any further. Now things have become even more simplistic, ironically, it develops even further. House is the ultimate in simplicity, but it's still development. House is progression through regression. It's ironic, but it's true. Simplicity is beauty.

The TV Messiahs days:

Mark: At our first gig we had my cousin on drums, he'd joined that day. A bit later we played Thrapston with a drum machine. We'd never seen one before; I couldn't work out how to switch it on. After three songs we got chased down the road by the people in the pub, a combination of casuals and punks. We entered the Rock Competition last year without a drummer, so we just put in one of our mates: it was lucky, because The Bare Yogis split up

and we got their drummer. This was six days before the heat. He did one gig afterwards and left to do his A Levels. We had three new members join a week before the competition. We played with The Pleasure Heads and had a drummer and a drum machine going at the same time. At the gig supporting Fires In Arabia, our keyboard player played drums.

Howard: At the Competition, in the second song there was a keyboard break and the keyboard player forgot it. I was out of tune and we were halfway through this song anyway, and when the keyboard player didn't come in, we stopped. Fortunately, the drummer counted us back into it, but most people thought we played the song twice. The drum monitor was turned off, and Mark knocked John's guitar out of action. I only want to play the Rock Comp. to stand on the same stage as David Gedge.

Sim: The problem with the Competition is that it's lost so much credibility in the last year or two. It's become a bit of a joke - the fact that we're in it is evidence that the thing has taken a real dive. It's a bit negative slagging off anything. I don't think any of the bands in Cambridge can afford to slag anyone else off because we've got to stick together, as there's hardly anything left.

The most important thing is that we enjoy ourselves. The band started because we had nothing better to do.

Howard: We are trying to live the rock'n'roll lifestyle before we're rock'n'roll stars.

STEVE HARTWELL

"We're a cross between new wave and rock'n'roll", claims Tolly (Brian Tolworthy) - bassist and main spokesperson for Black Candy, a Newmarket band. Like the others, this is his first serious band, although he's "mucked about in others; with a bunch of hippies once, and I've done reggae." The band was formed in March last year, when Barry (Summers - drums) approached Trevor (Kemp - guitar), who was busking outside Budgens, and asked him if he wanted to form a band. Trevor writes all the music for Black Candy's songs, and most of the lyrics; he has been in a few previous bands. Barry is proud of the fact that his drums are made out of "genuine Hawiian otter sperm", apparently, and even prouder of having once been on 'Freetime'. Quickly moving on to Mel (Smith - vocalist) who is at CCAT and doesn't always turn up everywhere she's expected to (like this interview, for instance). "She's a good singer, but she's young, and she's got a lot to learn about rock'n'roll."

They have a mascot: Wizz the dog, who was going to see the dentist - so good luck, Wizz.

How did you get the name 'Black Candy'?

Tolly: We were called Splitz before Mel joined; but it doesn't really suit a female singer, so we sat around, throwing up names, and someone said "Have something with a colour in it." I wanted to be called Blue Crocodile - me myself, not the group! It got to Sticky Black Candy, which was what Mel wanted, so we thought "No."

Trevor: Aaargh, God! We don't want everyone to know that we wanted to call ourselves 'Sticky Black Candy'! I thought of the name, though.

What about music - have you any influences?

Trevor: Yeah, lots; mainly early punk - Buzzcocks, Vibrators, T Rex, X Ray Spex, The Clash...

When the band started, we all had a choice of a cover and Mel's was 'Boys don't cry'; she wanted to do 'Love cats' but 'Boys' was a lot easier to learn, so we did that. But even the Cure fans at the gigs started going "oh, no!", so we scrapped it. Barry chose Eddie & The Hot Rods' 'Do anything you wanna do'. I chose 'Teenage kicks', and Trevor wanted 'The groover' by T Rex.

Gigs?

Tolly: The first one we did was at The Rising Sun in Newmarket, and Mel didn't turn up. We are now banned from playing Thr Rising Sun by a very fat person, for asking why he stopped the disco on a Friday evening - is he thinking of having bands on, instead? Actually, we did a charity gig the same night, which earned him money 'cos he did the bar. The Sun is supposed to be a really happening place soon; well, all they're doing is having a fold-up stage, and sticking foam on the walls.

Trevor: Huntingdon Waterloo is good; so is George Robey Junior. We've played the Tunnel Club twice (the first time with The Mullahs) and we've done the Kings Head, Fulham with Nutmeg. We're progressing to the George Robey soon - the big one!

Tolly: I think we ought to say something about the Cambridge scene, and what we think about it. The audiences are either a really intelligent Fruit Bat-style audience, or a gothic one. When the Burleigh was alive and kicking, it was really good - before the sound machine was in.

The Fruit Bats, and they ripped us off. The Bedford Angel also rips you off severely.

Tolly: It has to be said - we're fed up with people ripping bands off!

What do you think about your position in the Rock Competition (2nd last in the final heat)?

Trevor: Does it make any difference? I don't think it does.

Tolly: 'Cos it's near the end, everyone's starting to get into it; hopefully it'll be a good atmosphere, and we'll get carried along with it.

BLACK CANDY



Barry: I'd love to smash that sound machine!

Tolly: The first time we played there was with This Replica, and we were the guinea pigs for it (the limiter). No-one knew then about standing in front of the mike to lessen the noise.

Barry: I like Clare Cellars, but they ought to paint it black: it's too clinical.

Tolly: And how do they expect people to go there if it's that hard to find?

Barry: The only thing that spoils my night was that we played with

And your chances of winning?

Tolly: If there's so many different styles of music, then how can you really judge it? I mean, how can you judge us against a House band? They're obviously better at doing House music, but are they better than us doing rock?

What's the main aim in life?

Tolly: Basically, I just want a live review in the NME, Melody Maker or Sounds, then I'm quitting! All we want is any label with any distributing power to back us and pay for an album and push it nationally.

Trevor: To be financially secure.

Tolly: We'd also like to be established a bit in London, but we understand it'll be hard.

Barry: Tell them about Grant! You've got to get him in there.

Tolly: Yes, we have a fan, one fan! We did an interview on Radio Cambridgeshire, and they played the single and gave an address to write to for information; and we got a letter from this sweet little chap saying he lives in Croydon and he can't get hold of the record, but he really liked it. So we sent him some tickets for the George Robey Junior, and he came along and brought some friends and ... well, generally, he's a very nice man!

Trevor: And he's a dedicated fan.

Barry: There's Beds too; he plays harp, and he's totally unreliable!

Tolly: He plays on 'The Groover', and makes the song what it is: it used to sound really empty before he turned up.

Beds: That's about it. Just mention that I'm grossly underrated!

Barry: I've got a good question: what would you do if you had a million pounds? Trevor, I put the question to you.

Trevor: I'd buy a beach buggy.

Tolly: He'd also have enough petrol money to get to band practise! I'd buy a Harley Davidson, and a really nice, big, old Chevvy. And I'd give some to some worthy charities, more to animals, I think.

Barry: You always say that; you'd never give to humans.

Tolly: Yes, but we don't like people! Animals haven't got a chance these days.

Are you a vegetarian then?

Tolly: No. I don't eat much ham, 'cos I like pigs, but I'm not too keen on cows. If someone said there's a hundred whales left in the world; eat some whale blubber, or there's a human kidney, I'd have a chomp on it.

Enough of that. The single - Whipp Jinx III / Take Me Anywhere:

Tolly: We went into Flightpath and did ten hours recording, and they're the two that came out best. We didn't want anything that's too slow; we're gradually chucking out anything that could, maybe, one day become a slow song, 'cos you do get gigs in London, and it takes so much to get them going that the worst thing you can do is to bring it all down with a slow song; 'cos they're not gonna bother getting back up again.

Trevor: The record is available at Andy's in Cambridge, on Rabbit In The Rain, our own label. We haven't sold many so far; about 200.

The first time I saw Black Candy was at thr Burleigh the night the limiter went in, and they didn't manage to get through one song uninterrupted. Before then, they were described to me as 'Black' being the music the band played, and 'Candy' being Mel's voice; which was not a bad way of putting it. If you want to get in touch for any reason, particularly if sending original wine gums, candy shrimps or jelly babies, write to Trevor Kemp at 1 Barcham Cottages, Barcham, Soham, Ely, Cambs.

SOPHIE YOUNGE & GRAHAM STEVINSON

DARLING BUDS



Pinch me - I must be dreaming. The New Year has only just reared its ugly head through a drunken haze, and here, lo and behold, is Andrea Bud adorning the cover of the NME, a dainty vision almost hidden by an explosion of flowers. This can't be the same girl who fronted the tinny, ten-a-penny pop band I saw a few years back in Newport and vowed I'd never bother seeing again. Of course it is. And I take it all back. The Darling Buds have flourished over the past year, and the fun has only just begun.

With the Buds' new single already in the top 40, my crystal ball sees the possibility of success in the States. But it's going to take a lot of hard work. Luckily, they are no strangers to hard slog, after a year of tearing themselves from their South Wales roots and bursting headlong into a barrage of gigs and days in the studio, recording their new album 'Pop said'.

The Darling Buds have been helped along by being in the right place at the right time. Pop has turned to pap, thanks to the Kylie Crew, and aceed is about

as much fun as a migraine attack, so the Buddies' pop toons are the perfect antidote - sparkling, simple and sweet. Sometimes, like even the bubbliest champagne, the Buds can fall flat. Their Cambridge gig at CCAT in November wasn't helped by a shoddy-sounding PA, but nobody cared too much. Andrea was still the cutie-pie sex-symbol, bassist Chris the Quiet Man, guitarist Harley the pin-up, and drummer Bloss, obscured somewhere in



a flood of confetti, as good-humoured as ever. A few weeks before, I watched the Buds blossoming triumphantly back on home turf when they popped up at the Poly of Wales in Pontypridd. Andrea gushed and said how nice it was to be home; then suddenly the gig was over too soon. Back in the tiny dressing room, Andrea is out of her mini skirt and into some comfy trousers, and I manage to pluck both her and Bloss from the flood of adoring fans, queuing for autographs. This is unreal! **So, what's it like, Bloss, being a popstar (!)**

His reply is so down-to-earth, he's almost hitting the ground. He's enjoyed it, but he says it could all end tomorrow, and "it's all gone so quick, I'm now cool about it."

What was Wacaday like (the Buds really hit the big time with an appearance on said kiddies show not long before their Valleys gig)?

Absolutely brilliant, apparently. Said Bloss, "I met my hero, Timmy Mallet. All the little kids had these questions on cards, like did we have a teddy bear."

You guys are real Press Darlings at the moment - but isn't that a bit dangerous? After all, they build you up to knock you down.

Bloss admits they are "the darlings of the Melody Maker", but one scribe there "hates us." For the Welsh whizz kids, it's time to take the cascade of conflicting opinions with a pinch of salt. And Bloss says that people get sick of seeing the same bands flaunting themselves on the grubby pages of the music press. He cites the Sugar Cubes as a prime example, hitting you in the face from the pages of the Melody Maker "every week." But the Press has worked well for the fab four so far, latching onto the fact that the band are Welsh, came up the hard way, and have a very photogenic Miss Lewis.

What's it like being a sex symbol, Bloss? (Ha, fooled you!)

Bloss: "I don't think that question applies to me... more to Harley and Andrea." (OK, I'll leave that one out - I'm sure Andrea has had more than her fill of the blonde bombshell accusations.)

So, are you proud of being Welsh?

On reflection, Andrea says she is. Though, first of all, the Buds "never raved about being a Welsh band", it has now worked in their favour. Consider their famous predecessors... The Alarm, Shaky.. things can only get better.

Are your families proud of what you are doing now?

Andrea: "They're really proud, though they warned us we should get a proper job. When something came out of it, they were so much more encouraging."

Bloss reckons the pop business is the most dangerous profession anyone can enter into... the bottom could fall out of this big bubble at any moment. It's not worth thinking too far ahead, he says, "we take it as it comes."

Right now, I'm thinking ahead, and hoping 1989 will spin for this bunch of bright pop roses. Welsh bands have been held back and ignored for far too long. If it's a good year for the roses, who knows, perhaps the floodgates will open for the rest of Wales's talent. You've got to choose, so let the Buds bloom. STEPH McNICHOLAS

VOICE OF THE BEEHIVE

"Voice of the Beehive. Get that scoop" said Phil to me last December.

"Do they know we're coming?"
"We-ell!"

So we strode purposefully through the back stage door, asked for Steve Schultz, tour manager - it's always good to throw a few names around in situations like this.

"Hi, Jenny and Rob, yeah? You're here to do the interview, right?"

"Erm, no. I'm Petra and he's Neil, but we're here to do an interview".

"Oh well, you journalists are all the same"...

Journalists! Pah!

Oh well, don't argue with the man, we got our interview. Next to face the two catty sisters we've all read so much about in the music press.

"Wait a minute, Tracey's on the loo".

We waited a minute.

"Hi, how are you? I'm Melissa, come in. Would you like a beer or something?"

From then on the rigidity of an interview was shaken off. Questions were discarded. Tracey and Melissa chattered non stop for over an hour. It was clear how misrepresented they'd been in the music press.

The story unfolded:

MELISSA: Tracey came over here, she'd been travelling throughout Europe. I came over here on holiday and we made a demo that got interest and I moved over here and joined Tracey who had already been living here, and we found members. The line-up was different when we first started but we formed the Beehive. Woody knew our Manager and he came to see us play in a Pub with Beddars, also from Madness. We needed a rhythm section for our indie single 'It's Just a City'. So he played with us after seeing us gig.

TRACEY: Before we came to England I worked with children in a day school.

MELISSA: And I was waitressing in a hang out - it was a cafe where everyone who was in a band used to work. I was playing in a garage band too.

What was the music scene like when you came over here?

MELISSA: Really dark and goth!

TRACEY: It was kind of cool because Zodiac was just starting and playing places like the Greyhound. Stump, That Petrol Emotion, June Brides - they were all around at that time. All About Eve, The Primitives, Gene Loves Jezebel would all play The Bull and Gate. If you think about all the people who play the Bull and



Gate on one night together, it was really quite amazing. It makes me wonder now if the bands that play the Bull and Gate are going to be heard of in two years. I have an idea there won't be as many. But then again, I'm not as in touch with it as I was before. I'm not so aware of the scene.

The name 'Voice of the Beehive' - why that name?

MELISSA: It was kind of a joke. We were upstairs at Tracey's flat one night drinking - just making up names for the band.

TRACEY: Just taking the piss.

MELISSA: It just happened. I think the name is one of the hardest things to get for a band. Because once you decide you'll probably get sick of it and then you have to live with it for ever. I didn't want anything too jokey, or too trendy - well, not trendy, but dated. But Voice of the Beehive isn't funny ha ha but it conjures up a colourful image. So we thought, well, why not?

A colourful image - quite like the way you dress?

MELISSA: Right

TRACEY: Our mother was really over the top with fashion. I always looked at fashion magazines and when money got short we'd go to thrift stores and this all started from there. Also, I hate going into a store and picking one top from one hundred tops on a rack - I like to be different. It's fun because you can get across an image, you can make your clothes completely unique. It's just a way of expressing your personality.

MELISSA: Also, our mum used to buy us felt and beads and we always used to have art and crafts around the house so we could always make things if we wanted and I think we just transferred it all to clothes.

What kind of changes happened after the release of each single?

MELISSA: Nothing

TRACEY: Nothing - I say nothing, because it flopped. The first two singles got to No 42 - which is only 2 away from the Top 40. There's a big difference between Top 40 and Top 50. But we got to do Top of the Pops.

And?

TRACEY: We did it twice. One of the times it was live and that was really nerve racking, but our friends were there - All About Eve, Fairground Attraction were there and so was Kylie Minogue. There was a lot happening and it was fun and exciting. The second time Morrissey was there and some more friends of ours, The Timelords - so that was fun as well. That wasn't so panicky because it wasn't live.

What's the backstage situation like?

TRACEY: Morrissey kept to himself a lot. He had a floor to himself. He didn't even soundcheck. He just came in, did it, then left.

MELISSA: Actually what he did do was clear the stage but I was hanging around backstage and nobody saw me and I got to watch him - that was really cool.

TRACEY: Things did change after Top of the Pops. You get recognised a little more on the streets and have friends calling to congratulate you.

MELISSA: It wasn't like all of a sudden everything changed. I don't really get harassed.

TRACEY: Occasionally you get a kid or two going, "Alright-hey!" It all depends on the town. I was out here the other day shopping, and there were these girls in the changing room, you know, like a communal changing room, peering around and pointing and going "Beehive!" and I'm standing there naked!

MELISSA: But the live shows have improved with the sale of the singles.

TRACEY: Yeah, more people come. When the "Don't Call Me Baby" tour broke, that was really good because it was really crowded.

MELISSA: And it's changed because we did a tour of Europe and next we're going to America because of Europe. So I guess it does slowly change but it's not drastic.

Your single 'Man in the moon' was really slagged off in the NME for being too serious:

TRACEY: Yeah, I was shocked.

MELISSA: I thought if anything it would be a song that the critics would say "This is a really good song with some humour, it's original, it's relaxed". What I found they wrote though was "What's this then?"

TRACEY: I think on the whole though we're not really bothered with what the critics say anymore.

MELISSA: Yeah, I was going to say that's changed as well.

TRACEY: The first bad review just gutted me, I couldn't even go out of my house, I thought my life was over. But now I've read that review and that's one of my favourite songs - well one of them, and if it bothered me it would have bothered me then; but when I read it a week ago, I sat down and had dinner and just shrugged it off.

When you're on tour and you get a bad review, it's just one spotty journalist, whose a failed musician. Yet we go out on stage and there's hundreds of kids saying "well, we like it". So you've got one person's opinion, even though it seems more important, because it's in ink and it's on paper and everybody reads it. I always tend to listen to the kids more than the Journalists.

What if they say something really personal - how do you take that?

TRACEY: They always come in on the clothes and there's probably been the odd comment on things which are totally lame and irrelevant.

MELISSA: One example was I was talking to a guy who was a friend. I guess he is a friend, a Journalist from Sounds - we played the show, and afterwards we had a drink at the Town and Country, upstairs and he came upstairs and was talking to me and I was hyper and I'd had a few drinks and he said to me, "oh, so you were wearing white tonight" and I said "that's not white, that was yellow, man" and I started laughing, it was a joke. Next thing I know he's put "I would never wear white, what are you - high?" and it comes out as part of the review of the

show, which isn't fair because I was talking to him privately afterwards and I was talking as a friend. I mean I didn't know the show was still being reviewed. Also, there was that time when we played with Salvation Sunday and I was putting on my mascara and ironing my dress.

TRACEY: On the floor of the pub.

MELISSA: But it was closed and the Journalist was sitting there.

TRACEY: And the review came out as "The Beehive girls are frantically primping and ironing their clothes". He wasn't even supposed to be there.

MELISSA: It was like, "oh, those Beehive girls are so cute, they iron their dresses on the floor. Aren't they down to earth?" But it was our time to get ready for the show and he shouldn't even have been there. *I must admit after a lot of interviews I've read about you, you don't strike me as the bitchy, catty girls you're made out to be:*

TRACEY: Yeah, well, that's another thing. You speak to these guys and they say "hey, thanks for a good interview" but it comes out as something totally different.

MELISSA: We did one interview for about three hours and we talked about everything from birth control to religion to

abortion. It was brilliant. But his angle was 'Women in Rock' and he went on about what we think of Debbie Gibson, what we think of Tiffany, what we think of Wendy James.... I mean, I can't stand the girl, I think she's crap but that whole thing was blown up out of proportion. But taking a great interview like that and going for such a cheap, easy sensationalist angle is lazy.

MELISSA: There were so many other things that would have represented the band better, and the lyrics and everything.

Is there anything you like about the way you're represented in the press?

MELISSA: Yeah, we're a good band for girls. I was watching the Bangles video, and I thought they're just a band that appeals to guys. It's just the look and the bodies and the legs; it's got nothing for girls. Girls don't want to watch somebody coming onto them; they don't need that. I think we have as much to offer to girls as we do boys. I think we have something to say for girls, compared with people like Wendy James and The Bangles.

TRACEY: I hope we appeal to everybody, though - younger girls as well.

MELISSA: I mean Samantha Fox sings "touch me, touch me", and we have songs like "what you have is enough", which is

basically a message to girls that you may not have money, big tits or a great body, but what you have is enough. You don't need great looks to get somewhere.

Is where you are at now more fun than hassle?

MELISSA: Well, asking that question just two days before the tour ends, so right now I'd say it's more hassle. But last week I was thinking "hey, life's great": right now I'm at the end of my rope but I'm sure once we end this tour, I'll feel fine.

TRACEY: Well, I'm loving life right now; I could handle this forever - it's no problem. I have found a new herbal remedy, and life's great all the time!

MELISSA: Also the record just went gold, so that was really cool.

When you tour places like Europe, do you get a chance to have a look around?

MELISSA: Sometimes you can get an afternoon free which is great, so you run through the town like crazy.

TRACEY: Usually, you get there about 4pm, soundcheck, do the gig, then go again.

MELISSA: Like Berlin; I wanted to go to Berlin for so long, and I went and time just passed. It was like I hadn't gone. But you have to realise that touring

isn't travel. Playing is a pleasure, but promotion is the worst.

What kind of promotion? Opening supermarkets and things like that?

MELISSA: Opening supermarkets?! I would never do that! Oh my God!

TRACEY: We did adverts when we were kids. Our dad was a director. It was like "you want to be on TV with Tony Tiger?" "Sure, dad", and that was great.

MELISSA: If someone approached us to do a Pepsi ad and they were going to give us a million pounds, there's no way. It's just endorsing a crap product. Maybe, if I found a great stereo or something that I think is really good.

TRACEY: Herbal remedies!

MELISSA: The only place I've ever seen it done really cool is Japan. Madness did a great advert for scooters, and it was fucking brilliant: I'd have done anything to be in it. I thought it was great.

Speaking of Madness, Woody the drummer pops his head round the door - "we're on!". And off they go, in a flurry of net skirts and spangled jackets, out to do one of the best shows I've seen in a long time.

Words: Petra

Pictures: Neil Carter

The Peterborough Effect

The year stumbled to a close in Peterborough with a well-publicised alternative disco cancelled at the eleventh hour and the customary New Year's Eve fights on Cathedral Square, as everyone pledges to forgive and forget.

It was a year which saw debut singles from As It Is (formerly Watt The Fox) and Boysdream, and a long player from The Pleasureheads.

It saw the emergence of Black Sky, who have gigged profusely in the area to good crowds, and Two The Dark, who provided the shock result of the season by winning the 'Battle Of The Bands' competition, and being rewarded with the dubious honour of supporting Erasure in front of 4,000 people during August. Thrash metal hit the city in the form of War Dance and The Cruize Ducks. The former immediately gained a large local following, and look set to make it big; the latter.... well, they're very funny!

There were not as many new bands coming to the fore in '88, at least, not to the gigging stage, but it was certainly rife with personnel changes: The Brides, Boysdream, Big Blue World (formerly Le Tricot Rouge), As It Is, and, most recently, The Pleasureheads all changing their line-up.

Venues, however, did not fare as well. The beginning of the year saw the closure of the Moses alternative club, the brainchild of Antimo Rivetti (of Curiosity Killed The Cat and wheely bin race fame!). The Surf

Drums and The Corn Dollies had been amongst the bands who had played there.

This was followed in April by the closure of The Still, a near mortal blow from which many have yet to recover. The Still was more than a public house - it was a community centre, an oasis in a desert of wine bars and Top Man trousers. Ex patrons are still to be heard crying out for a pint of old bollock twanger or bottom rumbler.

Other well-intentioned initiatives of setting up venues, i.e. Laughing Gravy, Danger Zone and The Sanitarium, suffered similar fates, after difficulties with either local authorities or funding.

This leaves Peterborough with The Glasshouse on Sunday lunchtimes; The Gaslight, which tends to be getting more conventional; and The Peacock, which, despite attracting NME raves Mega City 4, is hardly the most suitable night-time venue for a city of Peterborough's size.

Anyway, enough of Bob's babbling: let's see what the city's bands thought of the year - the highs, the lows, the witty pop anecdotes, and the scandal!

GIZZ BUTT

Singer/Guitarist - War Dance

HIGH: "Better crowds; two songs on a compilation LP 'UK Thrash Assault'; the first European tour; and Andy Frantic's letter in Scene & Heard."

LOW: "Still no record deal; the van blowing up a day before the second

European tour, meaning that the band had to carry their gear around with them, and then when we finally reached the continent, the gigs were cut from 8 to only 3."

JOHN CORKHILL

Drummer - Big Blue World

HIGH: "Not getting electrocuted whilst playing a gig at the Ice Rink."

LOW: "Sleeping in a van on a cold December night, in the middle of Surrey."

SCANDAL: "The Worldies never reveal those sort of secrets." (bet they haven't got any - Bob)

WILL RODGERS

Guitarist - As It Is

HIGH: "Gig at Leicester University in front of thousands, and going down a storm; the Italian connection, with the band Hat Riviera from Rome playing with us at the Woodston Weekend."

LOW: "Not getting a record deal, despite numerous cups of coffee in record companies' offices; the singer Richard's illness."

ANECDOTE: "We played Dingwalls as supposedly the headline act, and should have known the night wasn't going to be a gob smacker when we found a dog turd in the middle of the stage. The gig went downhill from then on, turning into a sort of talent contest, with everybody getting up and having a go. We decided to get our revenge by nicking all the promoter's mike stands. We later found out that this guy had

underworld connections, and feeling quite attached to our kneecaps, decided to return them (The mike stands, not our kneecaps!)."

ANDY 'DONNY' DONOVAN

Guitarist - The Pleasureheads

HIGH: "Finally getting the LP 'Hard To Swallow' released; getting the record company to buy us a drum kit; getting good reviews and interviews in Melody Maker, NME, etc.; John Peel playing the record; getting the new line-up together."

LOW: "Have you got a week? Not getting the promised Peel session; the power going off in our set at The Boston Arms in London; wrecking my guitar in a mad frenzy at The Waterloo in Huntingdon; Thatcher and the Tories!"

SCANDALS: "Never wear them."

JEM SQUIRES

Sonic bassist - The Brides

HIGH: "The Glasshouse goes AWOL gig on the Embankment in September; and being tremendously sexy!?"

LOW: "The gig on 23rd December in Peterborough being cancelled with half a day's notice."

ANECDOTE: "I think that Steve (the guitarist) rode his bike into a fishpond after a heavy night on the Red Dutch lager - although I might be lying there."

So there we have it, readers, the word from the stars. Let's hope this year sees the opening of decent venues all over the area, success for our bands, and positive thinking from everyone.

BOB BOB

TREVOR DANN

The Rock Show started its five year run with Trevor being drafted in because of his experience with a similar show on BBC Radio Nottingham, and with Radio 1 (25 Years Of Rock; Roundtable; Peel Sessions). Originally broadcast on a Saturday lunchtime, it relied heavily on Jon Lewin and Graeme Mackenzie to provide a local input as Trevor was completely new to the scene. When the show was transferred to Sunday evenings, it was still just broadcast to Cambridgeshire, but due to changes at the Beeb, it eventually covered three other counties.

I think we made the best of it, but it was going to happen, whether we liked it or not. It was a vote of confidence, and it was quite flattering to the whole concept of the programme that all the other stations wanted it.

I think at its best, the programme was like a noticeboard in your school or factory: you'd walk past it and most of the time, you don't even look at it, but every now and again something catches your eye, or you want to use it to advertise for a new bass player, etc., so you go and look at it. It did play most of the local bands - it may not have played all of them as often as people wanted, but all of them of any repute have been played, have been interviewed. It did all those things a local radio programme ought to do. I'm a bit worried they'll stop doing it. You can't pretend that every local band is good, or that every local band would be to my or anybody's personal taste, and so there were some bands I liked more than others; but I never really hated doing any interviews because almost all of them were pleasant people and nice to meet. Sometimes it was a case of "personally I don't like the music, but I defend to the death your right to do it". For example, I wouldn't cross the road to see House Grinder as an individual, but I thought what they were doing was really interesting and therefore I thought we should find out about them, talk to them and play their record and all the rest of it. Also, a lot of what we did on the show was meant to be a bit funny, and sometimes people don't get the joke. I found you got the best out of interviews by slightly winding people up, as long as you're not abusive to them.

Trevor stopped doing the programme because he no longer had time to do it:

As soon as I said I'm going, the



first reaction at Cambridgeshire was "oh well, we'll do something completely different". But then the reaction from the other stations was "no, we don't want anything completely different, we want something completely the same". So it turned out that the only thing they could agree on was that they would quite like a big name, and someone suggested Peel. So they approached him, and to their surprise, I think, he agreed to do it. Then Cambridgeshire said, "well, actually, we'd like to do our new show 7 to 8, and we'd like to do Peel 8 to 10, which is why it's been shortened.

The thing that was taking all Trevor's time was his new job as Programme Organiser at Greater London Radio (GLR):

It's my job to listen to the output and make sure it's alright. The station manager's responsible for the station's editorial policy, and I'm responsible for putting it into effect. It's the best fun I've ever had: it's just so exciting to be able, with an almost blank sheet of paper - not enough money, but lots of blank paper - to be told to go set up a new radio station for London.

The Landlord Doesn't Know Yet:

It was my idea, it was entirely my fault. I have always wanted to be a lead guitarist in a pop group, and my life will always be a failure because I haven't achieved this, and indeed never will, because I can't play very well. Maurice (Melbourn Rock Club, RIP) asked me to turn up and play at a charity gig and I said "can I put together a band" and he said yes. It was absurd

at the time, Jon Lewin and I are now really firm friends, but at this time he was in Perfect Vision and I was producer of Whistle Test, and we did not have a great deal in common: certainly on the face of it, our musical tastes were anything but compatible. It seemed as though this might be a fun idea and he knew Martin Scott and we both knew Dave Bragg who said he could play bass - lying through his teeth, I feel, but he could certainly play the bass better than I could play the guitar, so we decided to go for it. The first gig was just the four of us, but from then on, no two gigs had the same line-up: Julian Dawson, Nick Barraclough, Wendy, Andy and Liz Kershaw, Andy Metcalfe, John and Mitch from Colonel Gomez and Paul Garner all went through the Landlord experience. It was just a silly idea based on the fact that it is funny playing in a group. I'm going to try to repeat it here, we're going to have a GLR house band which I'm sure will be just the same - it'll be really funny twice. Tommy Vance is going to be the lead singer - he reckons he can sing like Jon Bon Jovi. Andy Peebles is a drummer, a couple of the engineers play, and Emma Freud, Mary Costello and Wendy can all sing, up to a point, as good as each other I'm sure, so we've got our chick back vox.

Trevor had some musical experience prior to the Landlord, having his own band whilst at university at Cambridge:

It was called Tramp, it lasted from Oct 71 to Jan 73. We were a progressive rock band: I played rhythm guitar, often acoustic, the rest of the band

was flute, bass, drums, and we had a girl singer so we were a bit Fotheringay and a bit Jefferson Airplane. We did lots of long songs with rhythm changes in them. The drummer got hijacked to play in another band, and then the bass player left to form a group with Kimberley Rew. The best gig we did was at Fisher Hall. I was the singer then, by default, but it was a successful gig. We were supporting the Global Village Trucking Company and we went down a storm: we got two encores, which was unheard of for a support band. In those days, you went down well if people carried on sitting down - nobody ever stood up at a gig, not even for Hawkwind.

The Cambridge scene:

I always enjoyed it, but there was a lot of wanky small town attitudes about a lot of things. For instance, why does the Weekly News not write about the radio show? Answer, because they think they're in some way in competition. What we should have been doing was all working together, and I found that a bit depressing. Having said that, the best thing of all was the Rock Group Competition: it's a real market leader, and to get 1500 to the final is brilliant. Its strength as a musical scene was that it always did throw up interesting groups, eg. Perfect Vision, Your Dinner. My favourite local band was Nutmeg, but the band I had the most fun with was Colonel Gomez: they were completely my idea of a band, because they were sheer entertainment and they didn't give a shit. I like bands to have the right attitude.

STEVE HARTWELL

THRILLED SKINNY

When Radio Cambridgeshire's Rock Show 'went regional', one of the positive benefits for followers of local rock music was the gradual introduction to bands from outside the traditional Cambridgeshire area: Them Geezers Over There, from Chelmsford, stood out in what seemed an interminable Essex scene of R'n'B bands; and from Bedfordshire, via a piece of plastic, came.... THRILLED SKINNY.



Piece Of Plastic is, in fact, the title of their debut six track 12" EP: even Trevor Dann, who is not noted for his tolerance of 'noise' music (he usually threw those sort of records in my direction) was reasonably impressed with their effervescent, sparse thrashy pop tunes, which perfectly captured the essence of punk, yet fell comfortably into the mid/late '80's 'noise' music scene.

I was happy enough with what I heard on record, but how did they shape up as a 'live' band? Well, an opportunity to assess them came my way last August, when I went to the Falcon pub in London's Camden Town. Here, in a room no bigger than the one at the Burleigh Arms, Thrilled Skinny were supporting Hull's current no. 1 band, Death By Milkfloat, and, despite the frequency of flying drumsticks and broken guitar strings (which, in fact, turn out to be a regular feature of their gigs), they came over just as exciting 'live' as they are on vinyl. By this time, Thrilled Skinny had released their second record, a standard 7" single, 'Clinging to the shelf' c/w 'So happy to be alive'; a couple of gems, which carried on where a Piece Of Plastic left off.

At the end of November, thanks to local promoter Colin Hazell, Thrilled Skinny made their Cambridge debut at the Sea Cadets Hall. I caught up with them in the Green Dragon, across the Cam in Chesterton, just after they'd completed their soundcheck, and found them, like so many bands who make mindless brain-damage noises, to be quiet (almost to the point of shyness), thoughtful, articulate and willing to pay for their round of drinks. They were also very tired, having just come to the end of a hectic week of non-stop gigging in places as far apart as Middlesbrough and Southampton.

Thrilled Skinny were formed during January 1987, and are: Simon Bishop (vox & bass); Andrew 'Elliot' Smoke (drums); and the brothers Whiting - Andrew (vox & gtr) and Stephen (casio/keys). Like Peterborough's Pleasure Heads, they met at school and showed a remarkable lack of technical proficiency in their early days (even now, they don't claim to have made much progress beyond learning one chord!). Bands who have influenced their musical direction include Swell Maps, early Wire, early Fall, Buzzcocks - basically '70's punk. When I asked them to describe their music (which at times, I think,

verges on hardcore), they came up with "fast, aggressive pop".

Andrew: *We're not easy to listen to: we're not a fashion band. We went down on our first gig the way we do now: people just stand there with their mouths open. You don't know whether they like you or hate you until you leave the stage.*

Although they all live in the Luton area, they don't consider themselves to be a Luton band:

Andrew: *We don't like Luton. In fact, we started looking outside Luton after our first gig. We did a gig a month in Luton for the first three months, then we branched out. We've only played a total of 6 gigs in Luton, out of about 60. We've now got followings in other parts of the country, like Bristol, where we played a few weeks ago - a lot turned up there.*

Thrilled Skinny are a genuine do-it-yourself band: both of their records have been released on their own Hunchback record label (financed from their daytime jobs and distributed through The Cartel), and all their gig bookings are done by Simon - initially, there was a lot of work done in contacting venues all over the country, but now their name is getting known (mainly due to the two records), promoters are now contacting them.

Simon: *We've mainly played pub venues...*

Andrew: *... but the other night, when we played Southampton University, we were treated like stars - unbelievable: well paid, free beer, free food...*

Simon: *Our biggest gig was probably at the Sir George Robey, with Extreme Noise Terror and eight other bands. We find it pointless in hassling venues: we'd rather play in people's front rooms (which we've done on occasions) rather than, say, arrange a gig at the Mean Fiddler, where you have to put down a deposit which is returned only on condition that you sell 50 tickets.*

We've had some good support slots: Death By Milkfloat; TV Personalities; Pussy Galore; and

both Maega City 4 and The Flatmates have supported us. We've combined a few gigs in the north of England by staying at my auntie's one night, then somewhere else another night. We're used to roughing it, and we can always find somewhere to stay. The gigs we play now, they always want us back. It'd be nice to pick up some support tour - that's the only way to pick up a new audience.

Thrilled Skinny are in the fortunate position of having done a Peel session: how did it come about?

Simon: *We were lucky. I phoned John Walters up one night, to see if we were on the short list, and he said someone had pulled out that week, so "you might as well come in and do it." That was it. The session's been broadcast twice.*

Andrew: *It was a good day out. Brilliant studios, free coffee all day.*

Thrilled Skinny have had mixed fortune with local radio. Radio Bedfordshire's Lizzie Downton has been very supportive (Andrew: *She's lovely, our Lizzie!*) but Chiltern Radio have ignored them (Andrew: *I wrote a letter to them about a year and a half ago, and I'm still awaiting a reply.*) They've had a couple of interviews on Radio Cambridgeshire's Rock Show, but their last appearance there ended in them being thrown out of the studio by Trevor Dann. What happened?

Andrew: *We brought in this tape with funny noises (chickens clucking, sound effects). We'd done this on the first occasion, and he found it amusing, but obviously didn't this time.*

Simon: *He didn't say anything to us beforehand, like "give me some straight answers." I don't think we were playing up, really. He didn't take account of our nerves. What he should have done was to put on a record quick, and tell us what he wanted. Instead, he told us to get out quick.*

What's the Luton rock scene like?

Simon: *You're talking to it. There's nothing there, really.*

One or two bands have got record deals, but don't play there. There are very few local bands.

Andrew: *We drink with the guitarist of Click Click (big in Europe, unknown in Britain) down the pub - he's a nice bloke.*

Simon: *There's a band called The Wellington Bootles who play twice a week, every week, in Luton - doing Beatles' songs.*

Andrew: *For a town of its size, Luton is pretty disgusting - there are no venues worth talking about. There must be four serious bands, plus three mucking about in bedrooms.*

Future plans?

Simon: *We'll have another single out in January, then an album soon after. The single will be released on another label - a bloke in Luton wants to put out a 12" record for us, and is putting up the money; but the album will be out on Hunchback - paid for by the money we've got from selling the other two records.*

Stephen: *It's quite strange, but we've had no interest shown from any major or indie label. We must be the only band in the country who's not been approached by somebody.*

Elliot: *We just want to put out loads of records, and do loads of gigs!*

Andrew: *Our music is unfashionable - it's not commercial. We aren't going to get any contracts. We know that. We're never going to attract large audiences. It's getting those people who we do attract to listen to us again.*

Since the interview, the deal with the new single has fell through, but Thrilled Skinny are going ahead with the LP, which should be in the shops in a few weeks. Colin Hazell has promised to bring them back to the Sea Cadets Hall, and there's the possibility of a Glasshouse gig later in the year. See them if you can, and write to them at 22 Claydown Way, Slip End, Luton, Beds. LU1 4DU
PHIL JOHNSON

A - Z of Cambridge Rock

Luke Warm continues to play havoc with the theory 'You can't please any of the people any of the time' and dissects the seamier sides of the Cambridge music scene. This issue : F - M

F is for folklore, fable and fun.

The biggest fable of all, one perpetrated constantly by local radio, was that of The Bible being the ONLY band ever to have come out of Cambridge and create some semblance of public notoriety and hysteria. Unsurprisingly really, given the rapidly reducing venues and rehearsal spaces in and around the city. F is also for fun, again on the decline. For evening entertainment we've got Ronelles, where there's a very narrow line between 'casual' and 'sorry mate, TOO casual'. Still, who wants to dance around handbags at a constant 80 bpm? There's Route 66, all very promising, but where there's the omnipresent threat of walking into a mirror or, worse still, being caught talking to one. There's also the cinema where chances are you'll probably see a film out on video before it arrives on Cambridge's big screens. F is for Fuzz - a small electric device often used by incompetent guitarists to provide a severe overdriven sound effect to cover missed strings and chords. Can be used to great effect in small enclosed rooms and is always extremely therapeutic.

G for Goth, a trend which passed through Cambridge about two years ago, but which has already been mentioned, and still remains prevalent around town. Old habits die hard, as Kurt Waldheim once said, and if all your friends are goths, why not become one yourself? Black is back, and will open up a whole new social dimension of public acceptability, looks of disgust from grandparents who "fought through two World Wars just for you." Some crosses and skulls are your key to a never ending torrent of "Can I borrow your Mish album?", "Have you seen my crimpers?", "What sort of flour does Carl McCoy use? Self raising or what?". Perfect the invisible rope pulling arm movements and the world is your oyster.

H is for Hills Road, a safe middle-class stop-off point for lost souls. Where every other person is in a band which will rehearse solely for the Rock Competition heats and where they are guaranteed an audience made up of every other person not in the band. The Hills Roadies are the FAME of the local music scene - essential, vibrant, pretentious and prone to touting macho drivel. H is for House, still to arrive in great force in Cambridge, but given a headstart via House Grinder. It's an irritating, banal and unattractive art form, devoid of human feeling. H is also

for Hartwell, the genius behind one time Competition winners The Detective, and driving force behind Peeved Records, Cambridgeshire's only street cred tape label. A strange introverted chappie with receding hairline and high fashion anorak, he must incur very large bank charges through a constant mail-out of exceedingly small but efficient royalty cheques to Peeved recording artists. Also for Huntingdon, a humdrum grey town which still remains above average on most counts - above average unemployment, street violence, crime, police patrols, lack of venues, risk of large military aircraft landing unannounced on over-populated housing estates. At one point in time, Huntingdon could boast Children of Some Tradition, Flowershop, Bardots and the Giant Polar Bears amongst its more innovative inhabitants. Times change and add substance to the theory that holes only get bigger. A quick mention to Dennis at the Waterloo for continuing to promote live music. Cheers Dennis.

I is for inexplicable occurrences - a bit of a mouthful but surely something that has affected most people. So how about ... dropping your plectrum at the exact moment the big guitar solo begins. Hiring a 52 - seater coach and only having 6 people turn up. Buying a record which has the correct sleeve, correct inner bag, but somehow, the wrong piece of vinyl. Losing a contact lens and falling off stage. Booking a venue weeks in advance and subsequently being told on the day that there is no bar available. Paying over-inflated admission prices for a charity concert where most of the facilities are provided free of charge. Being the only person to turn up for a pre-planned rehearsal session. Never being happy with a studio demo tape once you've left the studio. Having to visit the lavatory several times before an important gig. Why the majority of PA men are a law unto themselves. Always being drawn as the 43rd band in the Rock Competition. The spare E-string that disappeared. Why J is such a difficult letter to write around.....

J being for journalism, of course! And, as proven here, any fool can put pen to paper and get a proportion of it down in print. For Cambridge rock journalism however there is a well worn formula developed over several years. Modest clothing suffices, for example, jogging gear as favoured by the editor, lulling bands into thinking you're just somebody off the streets "checking the action". Always remember, dirt sells - why do you think so many HM thrash

bands make the covers of the music press. If you're worried about recriminations resulting from some crucial dirt digging, either be nice when you write it up, or back out while the going's good. Whatever the disadvantages, always remember those free singles, tapes, posters, backstage passes and wear your press badge with pride.

K is for Kylie Minogue, who at first glance may be as relevant to the Cambridge music scene as a sudden influx of white tailed eagles onto Midsummer Common. But think for just a moment of the far reaching Aussie soap success. What will happen to already addicted bands required to soundcheck at around 5.30 every Wednesday for the Rock Competition heats? Did Mick Gray take this into consideration? Or were all 42 bands drawn solely on the point that they couldn't give a monkeys about Neighbours anyway? Will we now see the return of trite, shallow, lovey-dovey nonsensical drivel sung by drooling doe-eyed couples in baggy 501's and sensible haircuts? A Principle revival perhaps?

L for lighting - an absolute necessity for the larger scale rock extravaganza. Some bands use lights to great effect to subconsciously distract their audiences from the music. Unfortunately the lighting operation is usually linked direct to the PA chap, and you'll often find yourself at the mercy of an unscrupulous operator whose sole intent is to plunge the stage into darkness during the intricate guitar breaks. The precarious location of side stage lighting stands is also a point to watch for. They have a tendency to follow the laws of gravity when knocked over and can prove quite heavy to prop up during the encore - ask the Sardines!

M Final words this time go to Under the Glass frontman Tim Brooks, on the subject of minor chords, and an extract from his "Timbo Bimbo Brooks Ladybird Book of Guitar Playing". "It is a little known fact that there is only one guitar chord - and that's A minor. It's a very interesting and versatile chord. For example it can be used to bring a melancholy or even solemn feel to a song. It can be strummed vigorously to produce a miserable folkie type sound, or it can be used to torture cats or even provide electricity to remote villages. It can be used in many different forms - by removing and placing fingers on the fretboard to produce a whole set of variations on

A minor such as A minor Sus 4, with the little finger twiddling about on the top string.

There are other variations on A minor - such as C, E, G, D, Dm, Cm - the list is long and exhausting. If played together in sequence or at the same time, one can produce an authentic impression of a zebra trying to get out of your underpants. Indeed, when I play, I often miss out sections of songs and attach a microphone inside my trousers to record the actual sound - which is more pleasing to the ear, and, much more fun than playing the guitar."

FORTHCOMING GIGS

SEA CADETS HALL, CAMBRIDGE

As a result of the success of the gigs put on at the Sea Cadets over the Christmas and New Year period, Tim Cole and Mark Curtis are planning to promote gigs there on a regular basis (which will give those sort of bands who could only get Burleigh gigs a chance to play in the city). Anyone interested in playing there should contact either Tim (0223-352370) or Mark (0223-244825), or, alternatively, send your demo tapes to Mark at 3 Rothleigh Road, Cambridge CB1 4EG.

CCAT BATMAN, CAMBRIDGE

News of some exciting Thursday night gigs promoted by CCAT SU, coming up in the Bar-less Batman, and starting with Mega City 4 and The Milk Monitors on Jan 26. In February, there's The Cherry Orchard and The Melting Men (9th), The Hamsters (Monday, 13th), and Thrilled Skinny and Death By Milkfloat (23rd). The March bookings confirmed to date are The Senseless Things (2nd) and The Pleasure Heads (9th).

THE GLASSHOUSE, PETERBOROUGH

Most of our Peterborough readers will be aware that Anne Johnson, who has been actively involved in promoting the Sunday lunchtime gigs at The Glasshouse (for the uninitiated, that's the foyer of The Key Theatre, on The Embankment) for the past umpteen years, is stepping down, and handing the reins over to the younger hands of Peter Sleigh. Pete, who is well-known on the Peterborough music scene (ex manager of The Brides and current manager of War Dance), is keen to get some of the top alternative bands to the Glasshouse. In the meantime, he's lined up some of the area's top bands for the next few weeks: The Brides (Jan.29); Big Blue World (Feb 5); The Charlottes (Feb 12); The Black Sky (Mar 12). The booking for Mar. 5 has yet to be confirmed, and there'll be no gigs on Feb. 19 and 26, since the Theatre management want the use of the premises. Pete, who is also acting as booking agent for The Peacock's Thursday night New Band / Alternative Disco Nights, can be contacted on 0733-71139.



FACT and FICTION

STOLEN!!!!

This Vox Phantom VI Special lozenge-shaped active guitar (serial no. 74893) was stolen from Sawtry Village College during Christmas, probably on Wednesday, 28th December.

It is an early '60's guitar, but was reconditioned in 1983. It was distinctively repainted red with silver flecks. The 'Vox' logo has been worn away completely from its customary position on the top leading edge of the scratchplate, but is still discernible on the metal bridgeguard. The 'Phantom VI Special' decal on the headstock has been varnished over and flecked with gold. On the back of the headstock has been attached a gold-on-red plastic sticker, advertising 'Better Music' of Lincoln Road, Peterborough; its removal would probably leave a mark. The serial number 74893 is indented on the neck retaining plate on the reverse side of the body. A second metal plate covers the battery needed to operate the guitar and its many built-in effects. When stolen, the guitar had a Fender strap. There

is a reward for its recovery. Contact Andrew Clifton at 9 Church Road, Conington, Peterborough PE7 3QJ, tel. 0487-830778.

COMPETITION TIME!

Mark Curtis is kindly offering a signed copy of Nuclear Assault's 'Survive' LP (signed by Nuclear Assault, not Mark!), to someone who can answer this simple question: which band did John Connelly play for, before he joined Nuclear Assault? Answers to Mark Curtis, 3 Rothleigh Road, Cambridge CB1 4EG, by 1st March.

STRAWBERRY FAYRE

The Strawberry Faire is an important part of the Cambridge music scene, and music, of all kinds, is an important part of the Strawberry Fayre. The Committee frequently receive complaints from local musicians who think that it is not doing enough for them: this will be explored in a future article. The critics should be pleased to learn that the Committee is holding a series of events prior to this year's Fayre. The first took place on 1st

December last year, and featured Sunugal and Bible John; the second is scheduled for 27th January, at the CCAT Batman. These events are being organised because of the often bemoaned lack of gigs in the city, and also to raise funds for this year's Strawberry Fayre. They will be more than just 'gigs': the first featured a fire-eater and videos (courtesy of Bible John), and the Committee is looking for other acts to appear. Anyone who would like to take part in future events - bands, anybody with interesting acts and/or ideas - should call John Chambers on Cambridge 311972.

LETTERS

Dear Scene & Heard,
This is Gizz Butt, the 'unspeaky', only recently developed the craft of writing, and feeling compelled to drop you a lie...
Whilst skipping through your pages (last issue), I couldn't refrain from blinking an eyelid or two at the aforementioned name, which is belonging to myself. On close observation I observed slander and rumour being mentioned, and accidentally dropped the informative rage from my grip in shock. I bent to pick it up and felt something ploppy! "Yikes!!!", I wandered (silly as a walk...) and realised I was clutching a Weedhi of the Trevor variety. A funny creature it was, all brown! I laughed as it


entertained; chuckled at its naivety. Quickly, though, I lost patience and became bored of picking tiny daggers from my ass, so I fed it to my best friend, Franny Frantic. Fran also noted its strange, bitter flavour.

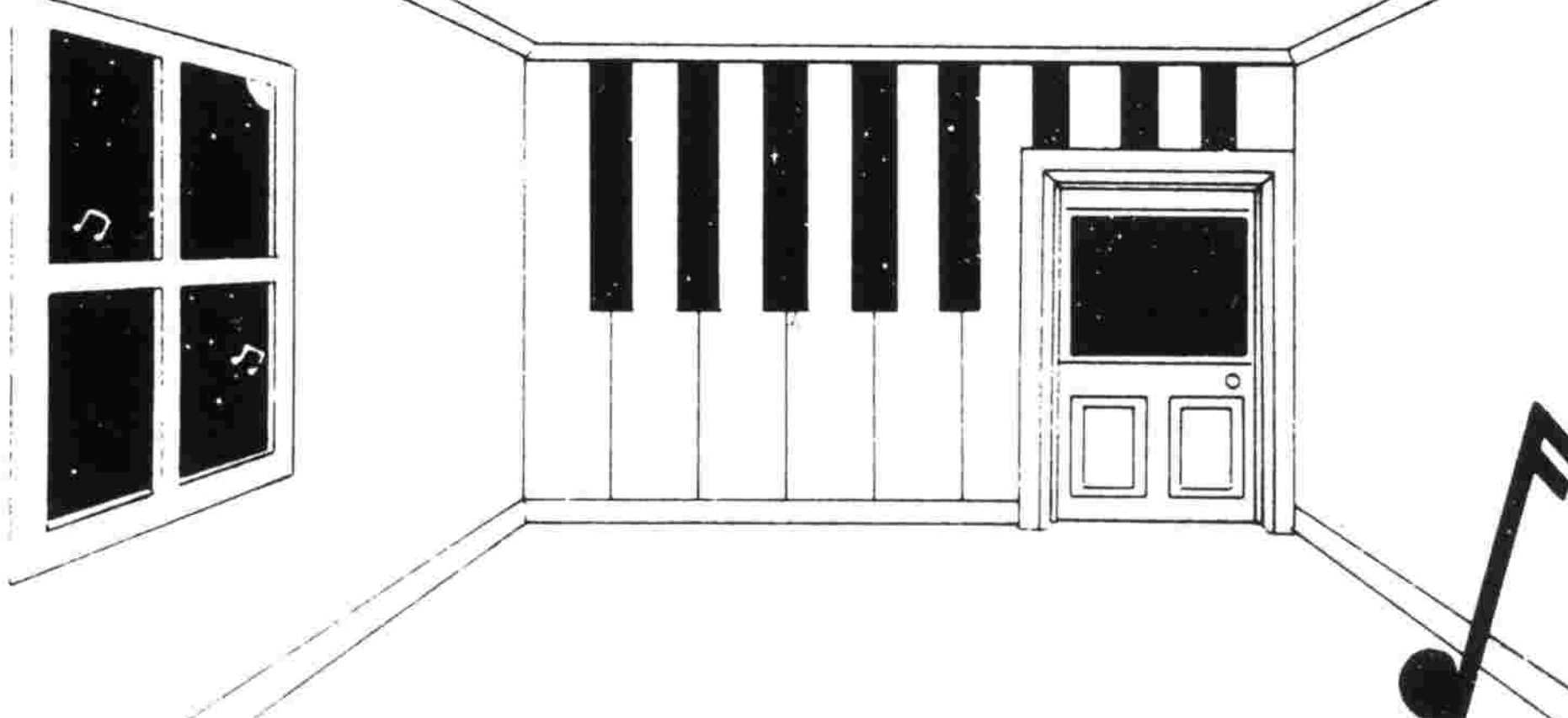
Now concerning the Wheedhi who keeps barking in your magazine. I can completely comprehend the reason for someone of his obviously superior stature becoming upset at my partner's letter, so we are prepared to compromise: when we meet you, Wheedhi, we shall very intelligently, in a civilised manner, TEAR YOU APART!!!

Before I go, I'd like to wish everyone a Merry X-Mess!, especially Mark Hawkins (ex Boysdream), Dave Reid, Cruise Ducks, Black Sky, The Brides, Ian Fransham (ex MFI), Martin Smith, The Pleasureheads and all the other Logs.

Yours lovingly (!!!)
Gizz
WAR DANCE

A little late with the seasonal greetings (due to our publishing date), but let that not detract from the sentiment. Now this War Dance vs Weedhi saga is about as rivetting as watching paint dry, so this is DEFINITELY the last word on the matter.
Ed.





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Metal, Moshin' And Other Matters

Scene & Heard's

Nuclear Assault's

Mark Curtis discusses the State of the Art with John Connelly



Mark: You're touring with your new LP (Survive); with thrash metal's primary live appeal over-riding, for me at least, its forays onto vinyl, was 'Survive' something that you could be proud of?

John: We're really happy with the way this record came out. We hit all the subjects we wanted to hit; lyrically, we were able to branch out a bit. Quite a lot was really positive, and then there's still the same element of like... "this is serious but we're not going to take it too seriously." If we did, we'd probably cut our wrists and throw ourselves off tall buildings!

Mark: Talking of throwing yourself off things, crowd 'problems' are something thrash metal has always seemed to have a bit of an image for: the mosh (God, I hate that word!), the stage diving...

John: There's a certain amount of idiocy involved in metal, it seems; hardcore as well. In metal, for some ungodly reason, spitting at bands is becoming popular... kids are going "oh yeah, folks were doin' it ten years ago, let's pick up on it." It's really stupid. Nobody in any band I know really appreciates it!

Mark: What about when the guy from the crowd appears next to you, and is about to plunge himself off the stage? Do you think to yourself "that's a good reaction; he's really getting into this", or do you just think "Christ, what a dick; he's going to kill himself"?

John: The only time it's a bother is when you've got a kid hopping up on stage, and then diving for the one spot which is totally empty of people: then he lands on the floor and invariably manages to break a limb. It's like... "ah, shit; I don't believe I saw that happen." But

overall, it's fine by me - come and do it! I used to do it myself (manic voice) before I really got badly hurt! But today, it seems like there's too many people going to the hospital after a show.

Mark: Looking at the crowd, I saw a lot of people with all the trappings of punk; swastikas, mohicans, etc., etc. Don't you feel your integrity as an artist is impaired by a lot of critics accusing thrash of merely hanging onto the coat tails of punk?

John: Yeah, but you have to understand that the punk period used the swastika not as a sign of nazi-ism, but just to be offensive, literally. It was the thought like "people get really upset at this, so I'm gonna wear it." What people should be really concerned with is the New Nazi Party which is springing up all over America, which is really disturbing. The beliefs involved are really ludicrous and asinine. I understand that in Britain you're getting like this bizarre wedding of the ENP and the skins.

Mark: Is that why you called yourself 'Nuclear Assault'? As a symbol, to shock?

John: Well, as I recall, we called ourselves 'Nuclear Assault' because Danny (Lilker: bass) and I were getting drunk in a room with a friend of ours, and the three of us were sitting there, getting really plastered on Johnny Walker Red... it was like "what are we gonna call the band?" We were there ages, and then it was like (sniffs) "Nuclear...somethin' Nuclear"... and then I said "What?" Another half hour, and "Nuclear Assault, yeah! That's it, we're gonna call it that!", and I was sitting there going (laughs) "Oh no, that's horrible!" Danny has always thought it was a very offensive name. The nice thing is, it doesn't convey anything silly like satanism or any stupidity along those lines.

Mark: Apart from Black Metal, are you pleased with the way HM is going as a whole?

John: Fuck, no. New HM went from having people cpying Judas Priest, Iron Maiden and Motorhead. For the longest time, you had bands coming out who sounded like Priest, sounded like Iron Maiden. Rob

Halford - he's brilliant. His attitude has always been like the music that Judas Priest do is not to be taken as literally as it might be; that this is a release for the people who come to their shows.

Mark: Something like Orwell's 'Hate Session' in '1984'?

John: It's like a catharsis, but what we've attempted to do is put meaning into the lyrics. Something that I see happening with metal bands is that instead of saying "let's do our own thing and make it work", they are saying "this is the current thing that's popular; we'll do this." Punk went through it, hardcore's going through it: when you had twenty bands that sounded like Crass or Dead Kennedys or Discharge. Same thing is happening to metal; stagnation basically.

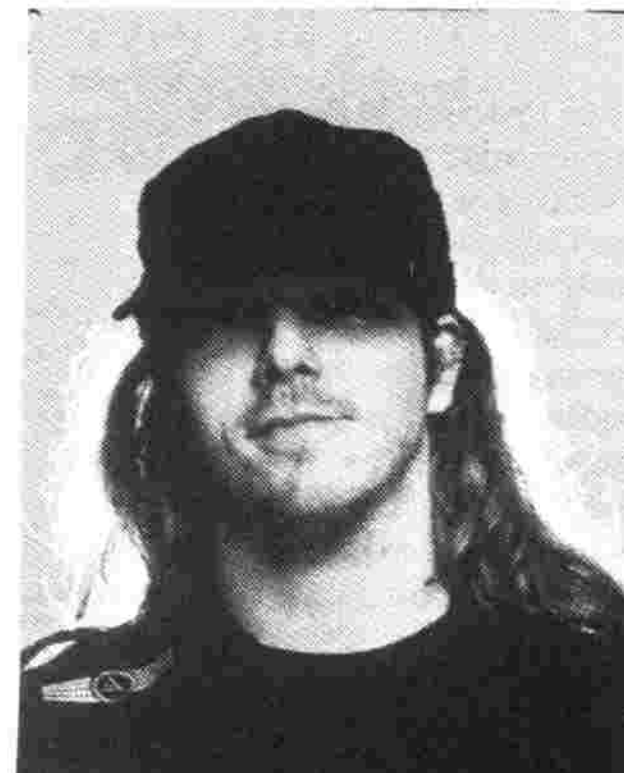
Mark: In the press, we've had news of the Judas Priest 'Stained Class' album where subliminal lyrics allegedly caused the death of two kids. Ozzy's been through it, the whole effect metal is accused of having. Is that something you see yourselves necessarily being associated with? Will people cite you as the seemier side of rock?

John: Well, for a start, I don't think the suicide thing is true. I have never felt the urge to commit suicide after listening to a record; not unless it was particularly bad! If someone's gonna kill himself, he'll do it

because of the way his life is. You can't say "Oh! It's the music he listened to." It's the way he's treated at school, the way he's treated by his parents, the way his brothers and sisters treat him. I mean, I've contemplated suicide, but not in the last fifteen years. This whole thing with suicide pacts being "Oh, this song on this record" and "this line on that song" - it's totally ludicrous! It couldn't possibly be the fact that his parents have been fucking up his mind for the last twenty years: it's the fault of the record (!)

Mark: So music isn't that powerful a medium?

John: I don't believe so. You get this whole thing about rating records, and they say "well, you know, this line describes something graphically violent",



and they don't seem to mind a kid going to a movie and actually seeing the same action taking place, visually instead of lyrically. I personally think that saying "and then a knife tore his bowels open and ripped his spleen out" is less graphic than actually seeing it on the screen. On the screen, there's blood spurting; there's gore. If they could figure out how to do it with a sense of smell thrown in, they'd do it! And there's the books: what about books? And magazines! It's ridiculous. The attitude that "this type of music you listen to is encouraging you to be a bad person". What about The Sun and Sunday Sport, showing women with large breasts; and lead stories about vampires who have nailed their children to the floor and cut their hearts out? (laughs) This is acceptable to 55 million women shopping in supermarkets across the country. Playing a song to maybe 2 - 3 million children is not acceptable. I don't understand the distinction at all.

Mark: So the powers-that-be have got their priorities wrong?

John: I think they have no business setting standards at all, but that's beside the point. If they are going to start saying "this is wrong", then OK, say this is wrong in the fucking papers you read. Don't just single out the kids who are listening to music! I don't like Death Metal - I think it's stupid, redundant and boring - but I'm also not gonna tell a band that they've got no right to do it, because they've obviously got as much right to do what they're doing as we do.

Mark: That sounds like a good ending...

John (laughing and pointing at the tape recorder): Might as well turn that fucking thing off, then!

COUNTY SCENE

HUNTINGDON

Being such a small town, musically speaking, there is, more often than not, nothing more than the Waterloo Friday and Saturday band nights to provide entertainment for anybody in Huntingdon remotely interested in something more than the top 30 dirge pounding out from the trendiest of jukeboxes. Although a little marred by the cynical young theoretical 'musos' (still milking out their small moment of glory in their school groups), the audiences are generally supportive and enthusiastic, and have even been known to actually dance (depending, of course, on the danceability of the various bands).

Established Huntingdon band **The Principle**, have recently released their new 7" single 'Anything you like/Kimberley', and, reluctant though I am to comment on other musicians, I found it to be an immense improvement on their previous work, being both well recorded and stylish. It's a shame, however, that they cannot gag their guitarist, whose supposedly legendary loquacity more often than not bordered on the childishly irritating, rather than the intended controversial. The single is on the Stayclear label (perhaps an unwise choice of moniker?), a professional-sounding label/company set up by the band themselves, and is available through most outlets of Andy's Records. It would seem to be a pointer to what looks like being a good year for the band, with a further 7" and an album in the pipeline.

The Night Jars, Huntingdon's newest concoction, are from the Ramsey/Wistow fen area, and precede their Rock Competition appearance with a few local gigs. Fronted by ex Giant Polar Bear vocalist John Lindsell, the band also include ex Red Over White members, bassist Dave Wick and guitarist Brendan Costello. Sharp eyed observers will also spy a young Dave Fletcher providing percussive support - is there no end to this man's talents?

With the Cambridge Rock Competition imminent, another local band, **Private Jargon**, will be entering, under the name of Boys'll Be Boys. Essentially a synthesiser

pop style group with a girl singer, the band may be a little unfamiliar, no doubt due to their announced intention of avoiding the usual pub gigs in favour of the more plush surroundings of Ramsey Leisure Centre, where they usually get a positive reaction. They do include in their line-up ex Darkness At Noon member Jason Bunting, and ex Blue Mist mainman Adrian Radwell, so the resultant sound should prove interesting.

GRAHAM GARGIULO

As a postscript to the Huntingdon Scene notes, I know that Graham Gargiulo is too modest - or diplomatic - to mention his own band, but **The Charlottes**, like **War Dance**, are very close to getting a record deal. **Martin Whitehead**,



War Dance

guitarist with **The Flatmates** and head of the Bristol-based **Subway Organisation**, is VERY interested in signing up **The Charlottes**, and the band are about to do a 4-track recording session of a sample of their current material for him.

PETERBOROUGH

Within weeks of releasing their debut single, **Boysdream** have split. Two **The Dark**, who won last summer's Peterborough Battle of the Bands contest, are also no more. **Chris Lovell** and **David Cook** of the former and **Ian Holden** of the latter are currently rehearsing material which Chris considers to be much more energetic than **Boysdream's** music. At present, they are using a drum machine, but are seeking a drummer. Chris is also compiling the second edition of his fanzine 'Shine', which will include articles on **Psychic TV**, **Salvation**, **Between Two Worlds** and new **Island** signing **Claytown Troupe**, whom he highly rates. He is also hoping it will include a free cassette. So, if you'd like to drum or read, phone P'boro 40950.

Boysdream's former guitarist **Mark Hawkins** is rehearsing a band "in the English indie tradition" with **Ollie Jones** on bass and **Matt Keys** on drums. Mark sees this as a serious long-term project, and is prepared to rehearse this band for six months to a year, so that they are fully-rounded professionals from their first gig. It will also give him time to be self-critically selective about his compositions. Matt, who also has been a **Boysdreamer**, recently left **War Dance** because he found their touring schedule too hectic. (His replacement, **Martin 'Mungo' Shaw**, has settled in well.)

War Dance's December tour through Holland, Belgium and West Germany was rather disappointing, however; their van broke down, and some of the dates were cancelled. But they are looking forward to a long European tour with **Wehrmacht**, and a British one with **Billy**

Milano's M.O.D. They also plan to have a major concert in Birmingham on March 12th with **Kreator**, and are arranging coaches from Cambridge and Peterborough. Phone P'boro 314703 for details. **War Dance** are presently haggling with a Belgian record company for a possible deal. As if that weren't enough, **War**

Dance guitarist **Glizz Butt** has been working on some compositions with **Mark Hawkins**, and his other venture with **Dave Reid** looks increasingly promising: **Mark Prince**, **Dave's** former colleague from **Indiscipline**, has joined on bass, and they are still looking for a drummer who can play both rock and soul styles. If you fit the bill, contact **Dave** on P'boro 264156.

Dave Reid is also pleased with industry responses to his 'Black Flowers' tape, **RCA** showing especial interest. Not just content with that, **Dave** has another iron in the fire: he has completed an instrumental cassette called 'A & Z' to send to European jazz labels, and he is particularly pleased with its bizarre percussion effects.

Most improved local band, to my mind, has been **Big Blue World**. Their sound is rougher and tougher than in their **Le Tricot Rouge** incarnation. They have completed a string of dates, including several important London venues and support slots to **Glen Matlock**, building up a large coach following, and going down well with the regulars.

Anybody who saw **The Pleasure Heads** headlining their third successive **Glasshouse** Christmas party will know they are still on top form. Paradoxically, **Red Rhino** going into receivership could be to their benefit: the main complaint of bands signed to **Red Rhino's** in-house labels has been lack of promotion. The **Heads** hope to set up their own label for their next release, which is being recorded this month (January). Self-promotion being their forte, 1989 could add commercial success to their critical praise.

ANDREW CLIFTON

THE COMPLEET MOLESWORTH

THE CHARLOTTEs
Are You Happy Now ?/How Can You Say You Really Feel ?
(HUNTS 5-7")

FLOWER SHOP
Ten Foot Tall/Faraway
(HUNTS 4-7")

NUTMEG
And In England They're Going Mental
(HUNTS 3-12" EP)

THE PLEASURE HEADS
Falling Man/Fake It
(HUNTS 2-7")

Molesworth Records are distributed by
Backs/Cartel as any Fule kno

REVIEWS

RECORDS

JOHN WESLEY HARDING

It Happened One Night LP

Demon Records L-FIEND 137

Take a close look at the vinyl and you'll notice that this is no foolish groove, but LISTEN to it and you won't have to look nearly so hard to realise this. Here is an album from one John Wesley Harding recorded one night at the Wheelhouse Club in London. It's over 40 minutes of deep chords beating and melodies running along the strings like little footsteps. One voice and one guitar, pure and simple. His ever-so-English voice from the opening track is occasionally tinged with an American drawl, taking him from being a Tom Robinson soundalike to doing a very good impression of Elvis Costello. It may seem confused, but there is an underlying charm and character to the vocals which is unmistakable. The performance has energy, dynamics and taste, both lyrically and melodically. 'July 13th 1985' is just one example of JWH's rather provocative lyrical insights. The song makes a cynical but amusing observation of Live Aid day, complete with some crude but telling impressions of some of the personalities involved. These are combined with poignant remarks about Paul McCartney's choice of song, for example; "it must be a bit of an irony, cause if you let it be nothing will ever improve". Quite. But if all of this sounds a bit too morose, you've got to at least admire the guy for putting a big question mark next to the ethics of self satisfied Westerners 'doing their bit' for famine relief. I could go on but I won't.

Meanwhile, songs such as 'One Night Only' and 'Careers Service' demonstrate a genuine knack for good tunes, but it is 'Famous Man' which really crowns the album. 'Famous Man' breathes passion and drama, with a skillful nuance of adversity. Take; 'Mother, last night I shot a famous man, ain't it funny the things a man does, cause he knows that he can'. And; 'Mother, now that I know what it means to be heard, I wish I'd put down my gun like he put down his guitar, and I wish I'd swallowed my words'. It Happened One Night is not just a well 'rounded' live album: JWH succeeds because of a rare sense of humour in his music, a sense of humility in himself, and some bloody good songs. And to think that all of this happened on one night...I only wish that I'd been there.

CW

(John Wesley Harding is better known in Cambridge as Wes Stage, currently taking a post-graduate course at Jesus College. In his

undergraduate days, he had his own student band, The Accelerators, who played a few gigs at the Burleigh. The LP is available from all good record shops)

THE NEW BLOOD TRANSMISSION

39 Converts LP

Project I (MP2 ITSC 01)

This LP comes in one of the most indecipherable sleeves I've ever come across but after hours of patient study I think I've sorted it all out. The whole thing is the brainchild of Tim Harding (ex-manager of Stinkhorn), although to add to the confusion, the album was recorded at Flightpath and engineered by another Tim Harding. Virtually every track uses a different line-up and each one is credited with a different name so at first sight it sounds like a compilation LP. Tim appears on all the tracks doing treated spoken vocals (the lyrics are plastered all over the sleeve) and this is clearly the most important element. Tim was responsible for the lyrics and the musicians, mainly drawn from Stinkhorn but also including Nik Turner (ex-Hawkwind), provide the rather spacey music. Nik only appears on one track, 'Catacomb Blues', which is in fact Chopin's Marche Funebre' but his influence is clear on nearly all the tracks. 'I touched Your Skin You Tasted Mine' features one of the most musical metallic orchestras I've ever heard. In between the longer songs are interspersed a number of short pieces, usually with little or no accompaniment. The whole thing was more accessible than I had been led to believe, it's certainly not pop but anyone with an interest in the Hawkwind/noise end of the music should give it a listen. SH (Available from Tim Harding, Matrix Associates, Linden House, London Road, St. Ives, Cambs PE17 4EU, tel. 0480-69301)

CAMBRIDGE FOOTLIGHTS

Silent Night

7" Single

This makes me wish for summer in a big way. I tried convincing myself that 'Mistletoe and wine' was still the slimmest Christmas record I had ever heard, but, no. 'Silent Night' keeps coming back like last night's kebab, with some ding dong ding dong na na na. It started with an uncanny impersonation of Matt Goss on vocals, and after brief spells of sounding like Elaine Page and Tiffany, mutates into a lump of cold damp putty. Musically it's even worse. In its favour the assembled musicians play well enough, it's just that what they play isn't very good. This record is about as festive as an abattoir. Ding dong indeed. CW ("Silent night" is a charity record - although the review is less than charitable - made by the Cambridge

Footlights undergraduates, to raise funds for the Cambridge Drama Centre in Covent Garden (off Mill Road), and is available from the ADC Theatre Bar, Park Street, Cambridge for £1.50)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

UK Thrash Assault LP

CMFT Records

Why is it that I seem to spend all my time writing about Metal for Scene & Heard? Do you think I'm being typecast? Surely not - let me assure you that I am interested in other sorts of music....

This compilation LP, out on CMFT Productions, is quite a neatly packaged affair; nice shiny cover and a medieval (sic) wood cut showing two men on horseback hitting each other with axes. War Dance are the local interest on this LP, and offer two tracks, 'Against the grain' and 'Officially pronounced dead'. Both are well recorded, quite tight, and harken from their 'Short Sharp Shock' tape which was reviewed a couple of issues ago. All the other bands are tight, and the recording quality is generally good. Hydra Vein do their death metal thing quite well, if you like that sort of thing. The question that is always interesting to ask with compilation records like this is "does the band in question (in this case, War Dance) stand out?" The answer, I suppose, is yes: with most of the other bands you get the feeling you've heard it all before, and sometimes you get the feeling that they try to play solos faster than their talents will allow. Snyder sound as though they have a complete retard singing... stick to the bell ringing (hope he doesn't get the hump. Ed.); Llamados Rill have rather a nice line in titles, eg. 'Snow White & the seven mad axemen'; Pandemia meanwhile crosspick their way into insignificance with 'Malignant decay' and 'The drowning'. All in all, there's little I can say, really: time and time again, when I review this sort of thing, I end up saying "if you like thrash, then you'll like this". I'm afraid the same applies again. I don't think that there is anything particularly outstanding enough on this record to make it of interest to a wider audience, but then I don't think that's the point. MC (Distributed by the Cartel and available at record shops or from War Dance. Incidentally, the War Dance tracks have had Radio 1 play, on Tommy Vance's show)

TAPES

CHILL OUT

Switchblade Demo Tape

When Paul Christoforou gave me this tape he was probably taking the rise. He knows I detest jazz funk and all that disco boogie-woogie

rubbish, but I shall try to remain objective although I can't bring myself to say very much. Most of the tape seems preoccupied with cramming in as many of the out-moded but typical cliches of the style.

The good points... 'The Sound of Life' is the best musically structured song and as a result they play it well and it has recorded well (i.e. it's got some go in it). I feel vocalist



Mark Ablewhite, although capable, does not stamp his authority on this song (or any other for that matter) and this should be borne in mind, for, after all, what's a frontman for? He should dominate more, and would find this easier through more meaningful lyrics and a better feeling of conviction. The use of a saxophone is a refreshing change; it does add warmth to the overall sound, but can you use it in every song, and if you don't, can you afford to have a band member doing nothing? Chill Out have thought about track order... all the best efforts come first, but then they descent into a nauseating Spandau Balletesque drivel. This is a band who are assured a degree of Cantabridgian success, but have nothing special to carry them further. A sound reminiscent of Double Yellow Line at their worst, but at least DYL had some BALLS!

IFD

(Tape available from the band)

THIS REPLICA

7 track demo tape

On the first listen, I couldn't help feeling there was something missing. But what? There's bass, guitar, drums, keyboards and vocals - so what was missing? I kept picturing a giant hole with all the musical meanderings dancing around it...strange!

'I need a friend' is the opening track, and is definitely the best choice with which to first greet the ears: it's a catchy melody with some simple but good

guitar work. Some of the other tracks are very effective - 'Today' (taken from their single), 'Dead Can Dance', and 'Cyclone Hit', which I particularly like, except for the keyboards. Lyndsay Paxton's keyboard playing is certainly more prominent than when played live, but a lot of the playing I found irritating. Darren Walker's voice comes over strong and mature - the listener does not miss a lyric. I'm not sure why two live tracks have been included: it's certainly a good idea, but the 'live' feel hasn't been captured (mixing desk job), and this works against the idea. What we have here are seven songs with no frills or complications: nothing awe-inspiring at first listen, but after a few plays that hole began to close. LS

MEL'S KITCHEN

For Goodness Sake demo tape
As Andrew Lindsay's guitar frazzles Chameleon-like, delayed and flanged, soaring and jittery across the intro of 'Clover frame', Mel's Kitchen re-ignite some of the volatile flashpoints that set them apart from much of last year's Rock Comp. dross. 'Clover frame' itself is a breezy, undeniably catchy composition, but lacks the raw frenetic visceralism and rough charm that the band exude in a live situation. Both 'Daisy fly' and 'Grin' are almost over-reliant on too many babbadapbap's, with new vocalist cutting through as an unlikely hybrid of a young Paul Weller and an infinitely more tuneful Tony Hadley! The band's rhythm section provides a solid coercive wash for Lindsay's creative six string cascading importunity. All said and done, it's a superbly packaged tape, and on first hearing it, you're forced into the obviously mistaken assumption that if Mel's Kitchen were ever a flower, they'd be neither daisy or clover; rather a dandelion clock - if you blew too hard, you'd lose much of their lightweight poptones forever, such is their fragility. See them live and then read this review again. LW
(Tape available from the band)

BIBLE JOHN

3 Track Demo Tape
Bible John feature two ex-members of Glass Asylum. Andy Graves and Tim Bryce, with the addition of a drummer, Simon Martin, although the tape appears to feature a drum machine. 'Mid West' is a surprisingly listenable and successful attempt at a Western film theme, something the Monochrome Set would have been proud of. 'Brownstone' and 'Razor Blade' feature Tim's vocals which make the whole thing sound like the Legendary Pink Dots. The whole sound is much more dynamic and accessible than it used to be,

although the lyrics still explore the darker, less obvious side of things. They've reverted to the Glass Asylum name for their entry into the Rock Group Competition and if this tape is representative then they should do well. SH
(Available from Simon, tel. Histon 7112)

NUTMEG

The Polydor Tapes
The Music Room Tapes
Let's bring ourselves up to date with Nutmeg's recordings. The POLYDOR session, in fact, dates back to last May, in the middle of the record company's mad, passionate but brief love affair with the Soham boys. It's obvious what Polydor's A & R Chief, John Williams, saw in Nutmeg - a new, younger version of The Rolling Stones. Production-wise, the session is faultless (the drum sound is particularly impressive), but it's not Nutmeg. The producer has stifled the band's crunchy guitar noises in favour of Tom's piano playing, which comes over very reminiscent of Nicky Hopkins' style (he played on many of the Stones' recordings). Of the four songs recorded at this session, 'You scare away' is probably the most substantial, though 'The black bitch is back' (a strutting, Stones-influenced number) and '20 past 4' (with the prophetic line: "rock'n'roll is gonna take its toll" - welcome back to the land of



the living, Hobbsey) aren't far behind. The fourth track 'We are the band', which sounds like one of those nondescript songs which are written in the studio in about a couple of minutes flat, is best forgotten. On the other hand, the results from their visit to Peterborough's MUSIC ROOM are far more impressive. OK, the quality doesn't begin to compare with the Polydor session, but so what? At least the sound is more representative of the Nutmeg we've come to know and love. The guitars are back in control, featuring some excellent solo instrumentation. 'Baby baby', fast becoming a live favourite, could have been filched from The Greatest Hits Of The Animals LP; 'Guess I'm falling in love' and 'Real live wire' need no introduction - suffice to say that the live feel of what are probably the best two numbers in their set has been captured in the studio (and talking of live numbers, isn't it

about time that Nutmeg dropped 'And in England...?'). 'I need you too' combines tinny organ with piercing guitar to produce a song that would get you wondering "which '60's British R & B group had a hit with that song?". But for me, the highlight of this session has got to be 'Look out, here come the Martians', a pensive (and apparently old) little number, reminiscent of Bowie's early work. This song could add a dimension to Nutmeg in much the same way that 'Ruby Tuesday' did for the Stones. If Polydor play ball, all these recordings should be included on Nutmeg's debut LP, which is being planned for release sometime this year. PJ

UNDER THE GLASS

5 track demo
The month's most surprising release comes from the little gigged acidic Huntingdon combo Under The Glass. Culled from a couple of Polar Bears and fronted by Tim Brooks - still underrated from his days with leading politico agit pop exponents Red Over White. This new band adopt an out-and-out rock stance; blistering guitars to the fore, pinned around Keith Billson's precise uncluttered rhythmic excursions. 'Skating on thin ice' and 'Days like this' are both gloriously addictive anthems, the perfect showcase backing for Brooks' almost elastic vocals and intelligent, classy lyricism. In unexpected contrast, Under The Glass change tack with 'Hermaphrodite Bicycle' (great title) and move into a jazzier vein. An absurd flowing composition carried off superbly with the addition of some authentic jazz piano, it guarantees a total lack of radio airplay. Tim Harding's sparkly Flightpath production job does justice to a brave attempt to experiment with something new. Unfortunately, the band seem content to remain within the

confines of bedroom and Waterloo. It's a real shame, because this tape more than hints at a genuine introspect of what could be. LW
(Available from 4 Ringwood Close, Bury, Huntingdon)

AT 10 PACES

8 Track Demo Tape
Imagine it. The setting is from "The Good The Bad and the Ugly". A dusty hot wind blows, tumbleweed sweeps across the disused streets and unhinged saloon doors creak eerily in this 'one horse town'. Your eyes are stinging from the sweat and grit that clings to your unshaven face, which bears that furrowed Clint Eastwood expression (there is only one). But this is not Texas in the 1880's neither is it a Fields of the Nephilim gig. This is a time where radiation, psychobillies and Jimmy Page guitar solos are a reality. It is the world of Country shock pop, without much of the shock or pop. At 10 Paces perform a breed of agrestic tunes, not unsimilar to groups like The Long Ryders, but sound a whole lot more ... vicious. It's not all death and fear however. You try singing; "The sheriff was a hard man, he didn't die easy, took a lot of pain for him to get queasy" in a very wobbly Bruce Dickinson voice, AND keep a straight face. That said, it must be pointed out that the guitar work and the instrumentation throughout is of a very high standard. Whatever they think of '(She's my) Monarchy', I like it, if only for Peter Gorter's guitar. Shades of REM here. You see this particular track comes with a rather self-deprecatory note, explaining that the song has been dropped, that it's trash, and they know it. Fair enough, but maybe next time they'll shock us with a bit more pop. CW
(Tape available from the band)



AT 10 PACES



THE FREEDOM FACTION

4 track demo tape

Let's face it, The Freedom Faction have never been Cambridge's most subtle band, and before you all jump down my throat, I've followed their fortunes from hesitant debuts, through endless weekends at the Sea Cadets Hall, through dodgy discos at Bury St. Edmunds, through their Faith/Cult period, and through mismatched support with The Man From Delmonte. With Nick and Jim now on secondment to a strangely unstable Stormed line-up, this could be a posthumous release. If this is the case, it's a sad parting gesture. The Freedom Faction have always been essentially a live band - all more than competent musicians, poignantly lyrical, but still basically a contrived muscular macho pose under the swirling uninviting mass of leather, flesh and body odour (a combination unique to the Illness Brothers). The rough edges and urgency that were always an integral part of The Freedom Faction live aural assault package have been hewn and polished under a studio gloss and production. Even Lewis's grating obtuse vocals (for me, always a high point) have been deftly incorporated and tamed under multitrack hi tech paraphernalia. So we get 'The Lever', 'We're all equal' (which would have Orwell turning in his grave), 'Haunted man' and 'Insanity' - all performed effortlessly and without fault, but icy cold and without feeling. And what happened to the 'Omen' intro, lads?? LW (Tape available from Neil, tel. 0223-60126)

TRIBE OF DAN

2 track demo tape

'Tribe': interesting concept methinks.... Cult, perhaps. Nothing like them, thank God: two Spiritwalkers are company, three would be ridiculous. On first hearing, Dan Donovan's unique style is hard to appreciate, and could easily be dismissed as just another weirdo. But after a while, you want to hear more, and perhaps see him live, because you get the feeling that this demo is not wholly representative of his music. So to the tape in hand: 'Learning from you' suffers from a tedious drum machine which sucks any life out of the song, which it otherwise might have had. The acoustic is a nice touch, but the song is too long, and with that many choruses, a little variation would not go amiss. Result

= rather repetitive. 'I just want', on the other hand, is in a class of its own. All the sounds that were struggling to live together now slot neatly into place. The vocals stand out above that bloody annoying drum sound, and illustrate a highly creative lyric talent so rare in local bands. It has a very indie sound, deriving much from that experimental genius, Steve Harley. That's it? Only two songs? If you're only going to put two tracks down, you'd better make them damn good, otherwise you immediately blinker your prospective audience, and find yourself saying "well we are better than that, live!", everytime it gets played. Finally, looking at the



credits, we find that Dan is basically a one-man band. I think he might be better off playing and writing with other people, which would help him to lose his 'jack of all trades' image.

IFD

(Available from Dan Donovan, 45b Philip Gardens, Eynesbury, St. Neots, Cambs. tel. 0480-405972)

GIGS

DEFUNKT

Videotek, Peterborough

At the dawn of the decade, many critics predicted that a key sound of the '80's would be a compound of jazz and funk, performed with punk verve. Pioneered by Ornette Coleman's Prime Time with James Blood Ulmer, and popularised for trendy white audiences by James Chance/White, its most promising exponents were Joseph Bowie's DEFUNKT.

As we near the '90's, it is sad to see the popular conception of jazz has still not progressed beyond Coleman's iconoclastic 1959 quartet, let alone Prime Time. As with most similar bands, Defunkt soon split, but surprisingly Bowie has reformed the same unit (except guitarist, where two are needed to replace the excellent Kelvyn Bell) that recorded the classic Thermo-nuclear Sweat in 1982, released a new LP called 'In America' and gone on tour. At the Videotek, they were pretty impressive. For the first few songs they were painfully loud: "more bass, more bass!", wits in the audience ironically cried. After some sensible adjustments, we could discern some excellent playing, especially by the sexily underrated Kim Annette Clarke on bass guitar. Most emphasis was on rhythmic drive, albeit cleverly arranged. The two frontmen - Joseph on trombone and John Mulkerin on trumpet - made it an even rawer, harsher noise. Unfortunately Bowie didn't play as much as I would have liked. Bizarrely dressed like an Olympic track champion who has only managed to change half his kit in time for the celebration party, he sang much more than previously. He hasn't got much of a voice; he is certainly no soul singer, whereas he is a world-class trombonist. Whether there primarily to dance or to listen though, I'm sure everyone in the packed Videotek enjoyed it.

ANDREW CLIFTON

eat my words. But this wasn't one of their best. The set didn't gel easily, like too-dry pastry falling to bits in your hands. But the band somehow managed to keep things together. Songs from their recent demo emerged with snippets of brilliance, but were swallowed up in a stodgy sound system. 'Build it up' ruled supreme, along with a scorching cover of 'His latest flame', by that Presley guy... the name escapes me. Jason's voice was a little patchy, and he later admitted he was close to losing it. But an electric encore of 'Flame', and I was ready to brave the ravaging rain and long journey back to London. Tonight, Cambridge's smoothest pop outfit were chugging along a bumpy road, rather than cruising - but through no fault of their own. In a more subtle venue, with the right audience, this sort of thing - for The Cherry Orchard - should be plain sailing.

STEPH McNICHOLAS

DARLING BUDS THE TELESCOPES THE CHARLOTTE'S

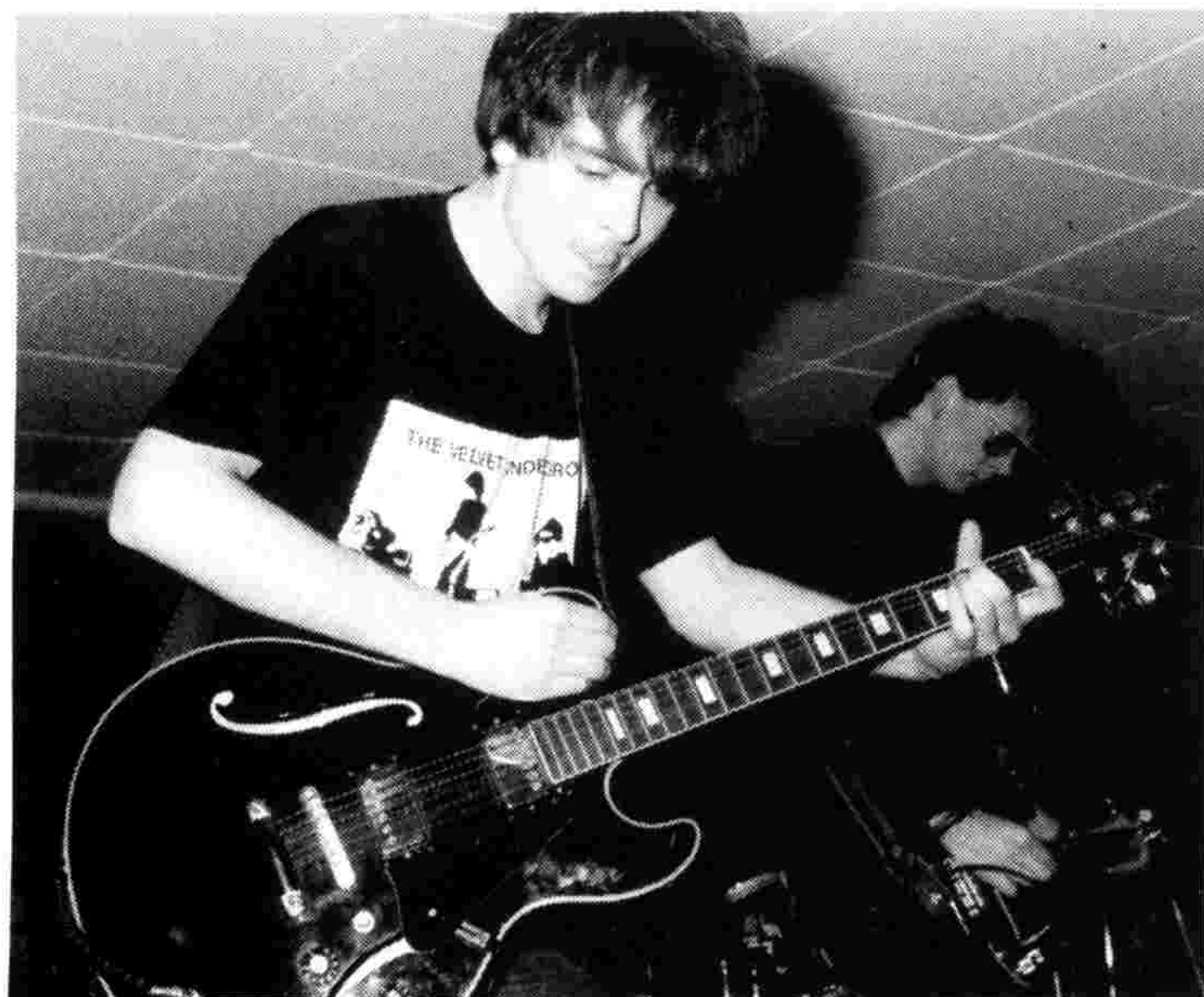
CCAT Canteen, Cambridge
'Are you happy now?' Maybe; maybe not. Tonight, The Charlottes sounded pretty damn good. Fortunately, they haven't fallen too deep into the whirlpool of girlie bands - they've more of a My Bloody



Valentine feel. Petra's voice has certainly grown in confidence since her debut, but the coyness is sometimes overpowering. The highlight of their set for me was their last number, a long psychedelic melody, reminiscent of a mystic Velvet Underground. The Telescopes turned out to be an unbroken wall of loud wailing guitars, fronted by a swaggering singer full of limp-legged aggression: they just don't care! Darling Buds start as they mean to go on, playing with all the sincerity, energy and raw power that so many of their contemporaries lack. Having witnessed such a display, it's hardly surprising why the Buds were voted as one of the most promising bands of '88 by the NME readers' poll, surely

something to take note of? Tonight the one-string bass lines and buzz-saw guitar hit where it hurt, in search for the perfect power pop song. 'It's all up to you' and 'Burst' are carried off brilliantly, as are 'Spin' and 'Pretty Girl' which, it must be said, are wasted as B-sides. Forget Transvision Vamp - as Andrea proves, there's more to being blonde than meets the eye. The

encores are covers: although the Buds' version of Elvis's 'Love Me Tender' is perhaps not a good choice, the Monkees' 'I'm not your steppin' stone' is executed brilliantly. All too soon it's over, but I leave feeling pleased with myself. Andrea Lewis is certainly not a Tracey Prim, or a Wendy James; more a David Gedge in a skirt - now there's a thought!
THE HIT MAN & HER



Graham & Fletch (The Charlottes)

THE PEARL

Route 66, Cambridge

A momentous Cambridge occasion. THE PEARL, the seed of former local cult favourites, The Poppyheads, attract a large crowd of town and gown, huddled together on Route 66's miniscule dancefloor for this, their first public appearance. As with The Poppyheads, the focal points are singer-guitarists Rob Young and David Barbenel: the rest of the band is made up of David's brother Daniel (keys/vox), John Hartley (bass) and Fiona Arnold (drums). True to their pre-gig promise, it's definitely NOT The Poppyheads Mark 2: the emphasis is on noise, not tuneful melody - Sonic Youth being an obvious point of reference.

A combination of mushy sound, barely audible vocals and sloppy drumming took its toll on the set, but sufficient was heard and seen to predict with confidence that, with a few more gigs under their belts, The Pearl will make an impact in 1989.
PHIL JOHNSON

AT 10 PACES

The Tunnel Club, Greenwich, London

Having been persistently pestered by Sharon King, unofficial P.R. person for AT 10 PACES, to get out and see this American Bases band, I decided to catch their gig at The Tunnel Club, and caught the advertised coach in Cambridge. What I didn't realise was that the coach was already full of At 10 Paces'

Mildenhall followers, mainly fellow servicemen from the Base: I felt somewhat a stranger in my own land. But you can't help liking the Yanks - they're so genuine and friendly, and sharing a love of American hardcore/noise music, I had an enjoyable journey to and from the gig (hi to Leroy, Pat and Chad).

And what of At 10 Paces? Well, I'd been suitably impressed with their recent demo (see Chris Williams's review elsewhere): they sounded so...American! However, when they took the stage at The Tunnel Club, my initial impression was one of concern. Wearing stetsons, tassles and cowboy boots, they looked suspiciously like a piss-take of a typical Redneck band, and when they stomped into their hillbilly/psychobilly/rockabilly/whateverbilly beat, well, there was some serious doubt in my mind. But, gradually, I got to grips with what was going on, and really, what we have here is a band of genuine talent. I would personally prefer the guitars to be a little more discordant but there's no denying that they've got a special blend of a wide range of influences, spanning REM-style rock, punk, gothic, psychobilly and blues... you name it, they've got it in there somewhere. And in Jesse, they've a singer who's got one of those unique rock/blues/punk voices, just like Jeffrey Lee Pearce of the Gun Club. Catch them at the Rock Comp., where they intend to kick some serious ass!
PHIL JOHNSON



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As You Like It - Cam. 67566
At 10 Paces - Newmarket 666727
Axis - Thetford 811801
Bible John - Histon 7112
The Bicycle Thieves - Cam. 355053
Big Blue World - P'borough 47294
Black Candy - Newmkt. 664638
The Black Sky - P'borough 238163
Blind Ambition - St. Ives 494004
Blind Mice - Saffron Walden 30645
Bogus Renegades - Cam. 835527
The Brides - Peterborough 71139
Brotherhood - Histon 4253
Camera Shy - Histon 3816
The Charlottes - Huntingdon 412390
The Cherry Orchard - Cam. 243316
Chill Out - Crafts Hill 81882
Chopper - Cambridge 353754
Colonel Gomez - Ely 740900
The Crawthumpers - Cam. 65757
Crossland - Ely 664931
Cri De Coeur - Cambridge 833894
Curious - Chatteris 3010
Deja Vu - Newmarket 720090
The Desmonds - Cambridge 334394
Excess X Deluxe - Cam. 352370
The Flesh Mechanics - Cam. 321807
Floorshow - Cambridge 211068
The Freedom Faction - Cambridge 60733
The Fruit Bats - Fowlmere 578
Gangster - Huntingdon 52951
Geneva Convention - Cambridge 860470
House Grinder - Cambridge 872348
I Thought I Told You - Haverhill 704452
Inflite - Cambridge 65048
Jack The Bear - Royston 61295
Legend - Peterborough 61854
Les Cargo - Cambridge 311356
The Lonely - Cambridge 246670
Mad Hamster - Cambridge 62730
Making Progress - Cambridge 276820
Mel's Kitchen - Cottenham 51255
The Melting Men - Histon 3450
The Moment - Ely 740244
Mr Kite - Cambridge 811220
Mr Meaner - Cambridge 834928
The Mullahs - 01-761-2092
Nutmeg - Ely 721761
On The Brink - Cambridge 263870
The Outworkers - Ashwell 2607
O-Zone - Cambridge 312482
Paradise Street - Cambridge 244825
The Pleasure Heads - Pboro 48805
Pluck This - Cambridge 64965
Possession - Haverhill 702345
The Principle - Swavesey 80150
Quiet Life - Royston 838448
Real Time - Cambridge 352237
Rhythm Method - Hitchin 37587
Rhythm Touch - Cambridge 845283
Sardines - Cambridge 240953
Session 57 - Newmarket 750724

Shades Of Indifference - St. Neots 72145
Shine - Kings Lynn 673760
Spin - Cottenham 50423
Spiritwalk - Cambridge 214852
Stormed - Cambridge 65449
Strike Force - Cambridge 246958
The Sullivans - Harlow 37048
Surfin' Druids - Cambridge 860665
This Replica - Ely 721761
Thrilled Skinny - Luton 453385
Trux - Crafts Hill 31550
Vampcow - Cambridge 880798
The Voice - Haverhill 705371
War Dance - Peterborough 314703
Woolly Mammoth - Cambridge 843211
909's - Cambridge 243144

PA Hire

Chings - Cambridge 315909
Flite Audio - Cambridge 316094
Fuzzy - Cambridge 870651
Music Village - Cambridge 316091
NSD Sound Services - Cam. 245047
Pearce Hire - Peterborough 54950
Silent Running - Cambridge 891206
Skysound - Cambridge 358644
Sound Advice - Huntingdon 56642
Star Hire - Huntingdon 411159

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Boat Race - 313445
CCAT Batman - 460008
Corn Exchange - 357851

Man On The Moon - 350610 (Stan)
Midland Tavern - 311719
The Rock - 249292
Sea Cadets Hall - 352370 (Tim)
Huntingdon
Three Tuns - 53209
Waterloo - 57199

Newmarket

Rising Sun - 661873 (Paul)

Peterborough

Crown - 41366
Gaslight - 314378
Gladstone Arms - 44388
Glasshouse - 71139 (Pete)
Norfolk Inn - 62950
Oxcart - 267414
Peacock - 66293
Sanitarium - 230383 (Gizz)
Wirrina - 64861

St. Ives

Floods Tavern - 67773 (Stan)

St. Neots

Cockney Pride - Hunt. 73551
Kings Head - Hunt. 74094

Sawston

University Arms - Camb 832165

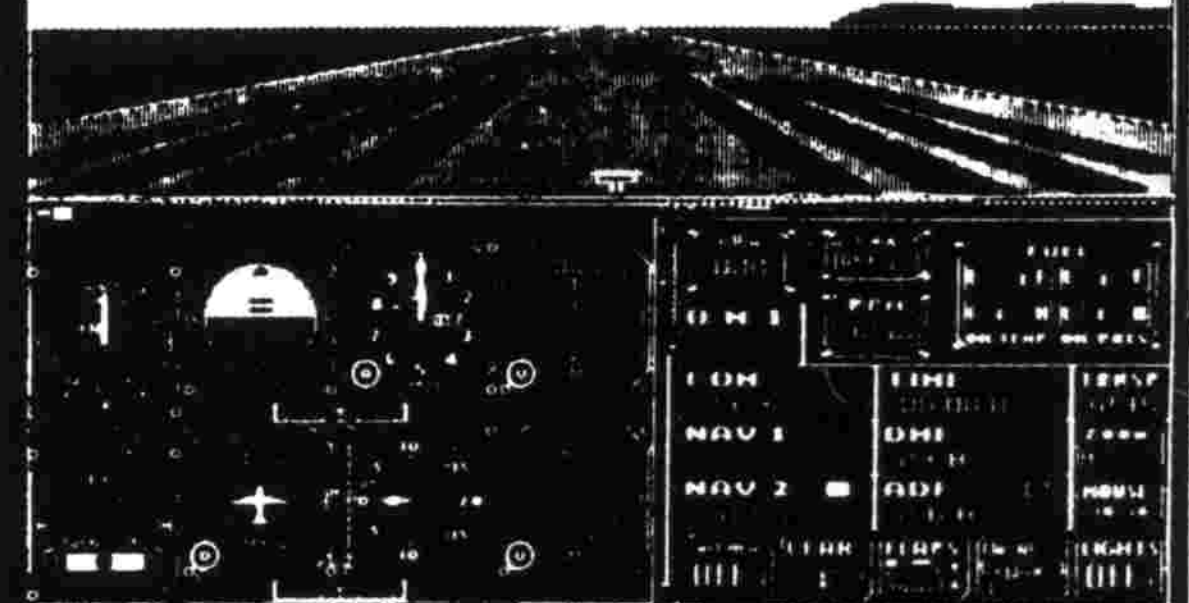
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