

#11
Summer-Autumn
1990

Party Fears

Pay no more than
\$2.40
within Australia

"The Consumer's Friend"

10 12 \$\$\$2.00

Black-Eyed Susans

-- beautiful voice, no dirt

Celibate Rifles

-- Kent Steedman, no dirt

Rabbit's Wedding

-- five pages, a bit of dirt

Martha's Vineyard

-- some more dirt

Ed Kuepper

-- lots of dirt

Greg Dear and the Beautiful Losers

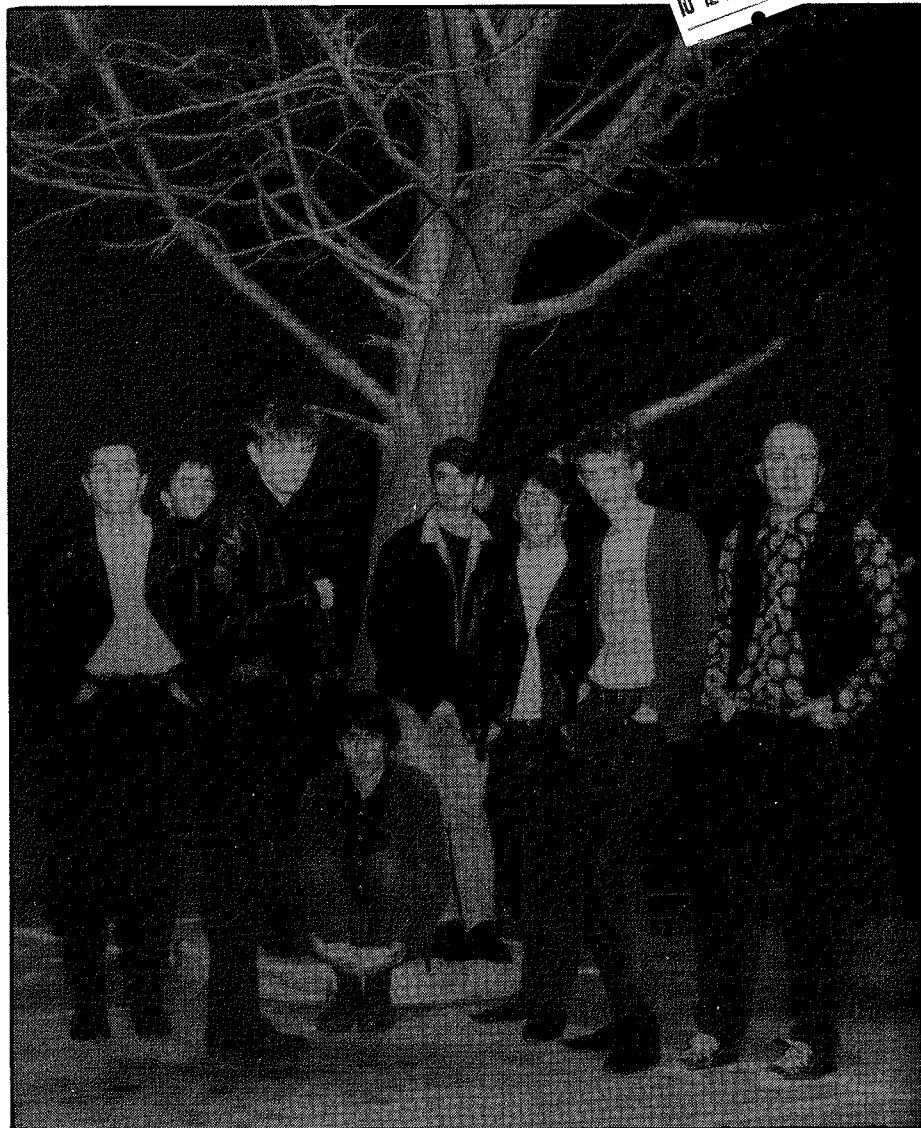
-- with drummer!

This Is Serious Mum

-- league politics
at their dirtiest

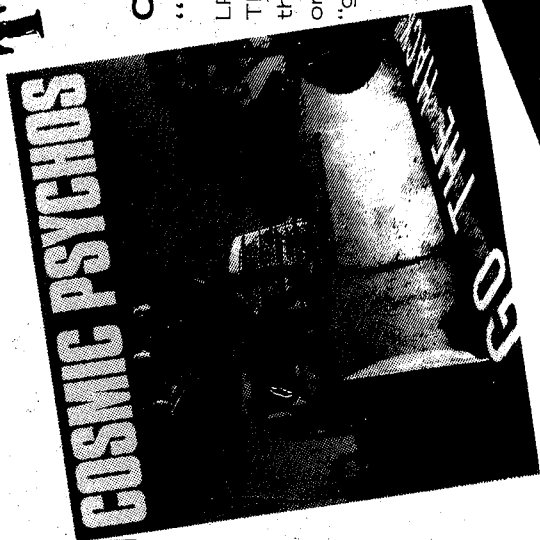
-- plus a ton of reviews of fanzines,
musical books, cool records from
everywhere and live music

-- and reports of life in Brisbane



The SUMMER SUNS with A MONTH OF SUNDAYS -- one of a selection of promotional shots taken to push the double shows last June, but not used by a single Perth media outlet; hence this one's appearance here. L-R: John "Yak" Sherritt, John "Tatt" Dalzell, Jon Stevens, Steve Balbi, Bernie Bremond, Stuart Fraser, Kevin Nicol and Johnny Hubcap. Absent: John Moore. Photo: Justice Blue.

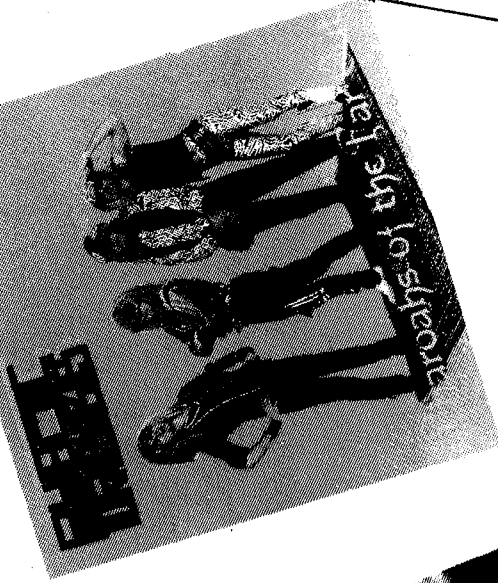
A GOOD REASONS FOR LIVING COSMIC PSYCHOS THIS SUMMER



COSMIC PSYCHOS

"GO THE HACK"

LP-CASS -CD (465782.1/2/4)
The second album from this powerhouse 3 piece - once described as the "grandmasters of grunge".



HITMEN

"U.E.L.A."

EP-CASS (655416.6/4)

Four new tracks from one of Australia's most formidable Rock n Roll bands.

PSYCHOTIC

TURNBUCKLES

"PHAROAHS OF THE FAR OUT"

LP-CASS (465927.1/4)

The intercontinental Rock n Roll tag team champions cut loose on this, their second album - features the singles "Goodtimes" and "Luna Chik".



ADDICTIVE

"PITY OF MAN"

LP-CASS (466041.1/4)

The debut album from Australia's leading thrash metal exponents.

A Those with Uncompromising Tastes

Out now on SURVIVAL thru CBS

Party Fears Number Eleven

This issue was due to come out in August, but the Gods saw fit to punish me for such hubris. Know what they did? Blew up my typewriter, that's what. An IBM Magcard II (read "hideously obsolete example of technological overkill") so out-of-date that every reputable typewriter repair shop in Perth refused to touch it. (IBM themselves were quite willing to fix it, but at \$108 per hour -- yep -- I don't count them amongst the respectable.) Anyway, after much delay I managed to borrow this here Brother EP-41 techno-typer from a truly wondrous, noble young woman of great beauty, soul and moral fibre called Susan Baker. Hip hip, hurray! Hip hip, hurray! Hip hip, hurray! She will be remembered in my will. This device goes through ribbons like nobody's business and will be put out of PF service as soon as possible. Anyway, after searching the entire city I finally found someone willing to even look at the

lumbering old dino-typer, this person being named Merv Morrison and who can be found c/o Riverton Auto Electrics. So if you have a clattering old Magcard, he's your man. Meanwhile, I will be buying some new technology when I can afford it, which probably means another IBM -- though this time I'll get a fixable one. The FM-rock typer has lasted through several years and who knows how many words in PF but will be relegated to doorstep as soon as possible. (I haven't told it yet, y'see.) In the meantime, PF struggles on through this horribly delayed but nevertheless rather lovely issue. That's it, no more dates -- the next issue is 1990 and that's as firm as I'm putting it.

For this issue I've chucked out a lot of old stuff and replaced it with things written in the last month or so, so a few expected things may not be present. Best thing I've ever done.

This issue of Party Fears is dedicated to Pumpkin the cat, the wonderful, wonderful cat.

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Back issues

#1-#4: Not available.
 #5 (Oct '86): Martha's Vineyard, Died Pretty (Frank Brunetti vs. World), Citadel Records, Blue Ruin, Errol H. Tout, Waltons, Flamin' Groovies, Paul Kelly (just before fame), A Company of Angels, Gravy-billies, Sydney punk. \$1 each mail-order or 75¢ distributors.

#6 (Mar '87): Kryptonics #2, Kim Williams history, And An A (five pages), Painters and Dockers, the Homecoming, the Fate, Huxton Creepers, Headonist (now Purple Hearts), Jackals, Die Monster Die, Deadly Hume, Psychotic Turnbuckles, Perth family tree #2 (Victims/Scientists/Manikins/Gurus/Rockets). \$3. EXTREMELY LIMITED.

#7 (Oct '87): Greg Dear, Stu Spasm history/Lubricated Goat, White Cross, Pontiac Conspiracy, Lime Spiders, Rabbit's Wedding, Triffids, Diddywah Hoodaddys, Kansas City Killers, Caterwaul. \$2 single copies, \$1.20 distributors.

#8: Not available.
 #9 (Dec '88): Mick Harvey pt 1 (Bad Seeds), Honeys, Triffids tree, White Cross tree. Small but perfectly formed. \$1 single copies, 72¢ distributors.

#10 (Apr '89): Kim Salmon (Surrealists, Scientists, Beasts of Bourbon -- five pages), Neptunes, Kryptonics, Waterfront Records (including discography to DAMP 94), A Month of Sundays, Summer Suns, Widdershins, Rainyard, Mick Harvey pt 2 (Crime and the City Solution), Purple Hearts, Hunters & Collectors, Sunday's Child, gratuitous '88 roundup and a special explanation of the Universe by Peter Hartley; plus a Marigolds/Neptunes tree and a Love Pump/Waltons one that goes off into the oddest areas. \$2 single copies, \$1.44 distributors.

Note that the "distributor" prices above are for copies direct from PF and do not include shipping.

Postage

Australia: \$1 extra on total.
 O/S SAL: A\$4 extra on total.
 O/S air: A\$5 extra on total.

Payment

CASH (Aust/US/UK) is best, though it's your risk and not mine. Pack it real well. Some envelopes I get make me wonder about the readers a touch.

MONEY ORDERS (Aust. dollars) and BANK CHEQUES (Aust. dollars) are expensive but safest.

PERSONAL CHEQUES are acceptable within Australia but will be ignored from overseas.

*** IMPORTANT *** : any cheque/MO made payable to "Party Fears" will be laughed at at best. The name is DAVID GERARD. Remember it.



"The girl from the hatshop"

(Subiaco Hatters, 4/162 Rokeby Rd, Subiaco)

Edited and Published By: David Gerard, 17 Simper Street, Wembley 6014, W. Australia. Phone (09) 387 6578 a/h Perth time. If I'm not in, always leave your name and number no matter fuckin' what.

Writers: As credited. Uncredited by the Editor.

Non-writers: The late Danny Ruggero, who unfortunately suffered fatal injuries when his entire collection of effects-pedals that he spent all of his time playing with instead of doing writing for ME was accidentally shoved down his throat and packed in using the neck of a Fender Jazzmaster; the foul scumpit that is Rock'n'Roll thus claiming the life of another poor young soul. Rest in peace.

Photos: I'm sure somebody took 'em. See elsewhere.

Contributions: You need: (1) an idea of quality that passes the PF Anti-Bullshit Test (2) the ability to communicate such (dammit) in as clear and straightforward English as you can muster. (I've become a fussy bastard of late.) For God's sake WRITE OR PHONE FIRST before embarking on a major work. Keep a copy of anything you post just in case it gets lost. The Editor reserves the right to hack submitted articles to

death and no appeal will be considered.

Letters to the Editor: Require a stamped, addressed envelope or two (2) International Reply Coupons for a prompt reply. If sufficiently interested I may reply anyway, but it may take an exceedingly long time. For simple enquiries, phoning is usually much better than writing.

Subscriptions: The day this zine goes on a schedule of that sort of regularity is the day that ... well, something anyway. No subscriptions available. I suggest a good mail-order catalogue (eg. Au Go Go) wherein each passing PF is noted as it becomes available. If your good mail-order catalogue doesn't satisfy this requirement, ask them why not, and inform them of the following:

Distribution: Any distributor in the world should be able to get PF from any Australian distributor. Monkey Music (09-227 9449), Waterfront (02-211 0073), Au Go Go (03-509 1484). Or get in touch with PF direct.

Advertising: Starts at A\$50 for a mono full page. Variations thereon are available; phone or write for details. Graphic design: A\$40 per A4 page. Go for it.

Perf News

* The **SOME LOVES** should be up and running in some form when the album, "Something Or Other", is released (April?) with a single, "Melt", preceding it. Darryl Mather has had to go back to Sydney due to work commitments, so the live band will consist of Dom Mariani (g,v), Velo Zupanovich (g), Tony Italiano (b) and Martin Moon (d). Everyone who's heard the single says it's just about the greatest pop single ever made to date. The album was done at Reflection in Charlotte, North Carolina, USA with Mitch Easter. "I'm really happy with this LP," says Dom, "more so than the Stems LP. The way we did it was to consider each song individually; next time, we'll get a sound then just play them." The new Some Loves will be playing songs from the new LP -- no old Stems stuff -- plus various old covers, "everything from Bing Crosby to Black Sabbath." The first official show will be around early April, preceded by a few warmup shows -- look for an obviously odd name.

* The **JJJ** Perth album -- not just one of a bunch, but a specifically Perth project, initiated by the fine upstanding Norbert Roth -- should be out Real Soon Now, on ABC

Records through Polygram. The bands are: the Healers, A Mouth Of Sundays, Kryptonics, Fur Versions, Neptunes, Summer Suns, Beautiful Losers, Errol H. Tout, New Tradition, Steve Letch, Siren, Purple Hearts, Deep In Confusion, Caretakers, Black Salmon and Inquisition. Coming on CD, record and tape.

* The **HEALERS** are being strongly courted by Survival Records, though "no firm decision yet." Their JJJ track is "Goodbye Joe", about a William Faulkner novel whose main character is called Joe Christmas -- hence the band's original name.

* Kim Williams wishes it known that despite erroneous reportage in Freak Zine, both he and the **SUMMER SUNS** are still alive and well. The next recording was gonna be an album, but looks to be another single.

* The **CHELLES** are the new band for world-famous ex-STEM Richard Lane (g,v), with Duane Smith (g,bv, ex-FREUDS), Jeff Hailey (b,bv, ex-KRYPTONICS) and Guy Douglas (d, ex-RACKETT). They sound like Richard's Stems songs, most of which they do. The band is already colloquially known as Dick and the Shovels. They also do "Tears Me In Two" live. Nostalgia, huh.

* In place of David McComb, the next **BLACK-EYED SUSANS** will contain -- get this -- Kim Salmon. Just imagine Rob Snarski doing "Je T'Aime". Hmm. Sir Kim is also planning to release the totally solo project intimated last time as a tape.

* The **VENUS GIRL TRAPS** are Dean Graham (v,g), Craig Weighell (d,v), Mike Fitzgerald (b), Simon Watts (g) and John Bannister (trumpet). Their first show was hyped unbelievably for what was supposed to be a low-key warmup, resulting in millions coming to see 'em whilst undercooked and thus consigning them to the dumpster. Anyway, the band wish to apologise to any potential fans and invite them back for another go. I can say that they've improved considerably and, once the rust creaks out and they're running smoothly, will be hot.

* **ERROL H. TOUT's** third album "The Tilting Room" is selling quite nicely, thank you, and work is in progress on the fourth. He is working on some stuff with Graham Greene -- who is best known for his work with hard-rock covers band Ice Tiger, but Errol reassures us that "he does know what music is." They're putting together some "weird stuff." -- and with Rob Baxter, ex-Big Red Tractor. Terry Preston (A Mouth Of Sundays) and Craig Weighell will be drumming on the next album. Errol also did some session work for Japanese band Kozo Murashita when they were in town recording a while ago. He is currently off in New Zealand for more learning experiences at the hands of Robert Fripp.

* **AND AN A** seem to have ended with a whimper. A single has been recorded ("The World Outside") and presumably will be out sometime.

* **KRYPTONICS** have found their new bass player (Jeff leaving due to a nice new job, the horrors of touring and no wish to move to Sydney), a chap called Greg Brennan of no history that should be admitted to in polite company. All at the K's are very pleased with the selection. The Kryptonics are moving to Sydney come April or so. The album is in preparation.

* Glenn Tomnessen is reforming **CIRCLE OF CONFUSION** in some form or another -- Glenn (g), Caroline Hadwin (v), Ian (b) ex-SEVENTH SEAL and an as yet unconfirmed drummer.

* The **MARS BASTARDS** (duh), composed of Ian Freeman and Jeff Baker with Liam Coffey helping on vocals, have a cassette single out now. Ian Freeman has gone back to Sydney. The Palisades are history.

* Late reports just before press time whisper that **RABBIT'S WEDDING** are ending with a whimper ... that Phil has definitely lost interest, and that Paul and Ken are musically sleazing off with Brett ex-HONEYS.

* **CHARLOTTE'S WEB'S** album coming in "a few months" if money can be obtained. Single selling very well.

Two late extras on the zine front: **FREAK ZINE** and **NEON DOG**. **Freak Zine** has oodles of text and tries to cover the "alternative" scene pretty well. A very good read. \$1.50 shops. Write to one of: 47 Drew St, Ardross 6153; Unit 1/3 Acacia Pl, Lynwood 6155; 36 Clotilde St, Mt Lawley 6050. "Roll a die or something." **Neon Dog** is a revival of Quoo from a while back, going much in the same vein -- a totally indulgent "this is what we damn well like" zine that is given away free and upsets little goth kiddies. Coverage is electro/goth plus a few other things (they liked X at the Ramones). For Neon Dog, write c/o PF with a buck for postage as they have yet to get their PO box together.

Bromides by Vicki Rushan -- thank you.



Genuine Perth zines, in quantity dammit!

BLASTED BANANA #4: At last Rosebud returns from far-off lands (Brazil) for our joy and education. This issue has an epic interview done with John Cook shortly before his death (really good and worth having), Jamie Parry and lotsa live and record reviews in a very hip power-popping vein. Send a large SAE with outsize stamp to 26 Lawler St, Subiaco 6008 for one. The future of BB is currently in doubt ... guess why? ... because the editor can't use the photocopier at her father's work free any more. Such are the trials of zining.

CITEE COMIQUE: A weekly, fortnightly mini-comic with various serials 'n' things and some text features on the meaning of Perth -- good ones, too. Cost is 20¢-50¢ depending on size. I highly recommend this one, and its frequency of issue is a good reason to check the zine racks on a regular basis and perk up yer interest in the running documentation of our culture and our fine city. Available in various comic, SF and record outlets about town or write to editor Ian Scudamore, 230 Walcott St, Mt Lawley 6050 and enclose a coupla bucks for a selection of back issues. Especially recommended is the text bit in #6.

GRAVES IN OUR MINDS #2 (32pp A5): Seems to be shaping up to be the regular local hardcore zine, and the editorial contains a proposal for a compilation cassette and some idle talk of a record label. In content this is a strictly generic HC zine, mainly being composed of bands from around the world that I've never heard of before and never will again that all say exactly the same things in their questionnaire replies (shop assistant when I was buying it: "Y'know, for the most part that zine hits some sorta new height for irrelevance ..."); the zine's saving grace being its local content, eg. the interview with Resolute this time -- though even this is spoilt by the one really interesting question (possible future musical directions) being, after a non-committal answer, explained in the writeup, dammit, rather than pressed at the time of the interview. I mean, jeezus! I shall keep buying this for the local ramblings, but it really needs to KICK ASS a bit more. Real cheap from most stores around town or probably a coupla bucks to Eyanne, 5 Almondbury Road, Adross 6153.

MEAT AND 2 VEG (48pp A5): A collection of cartoons by Alex Manfrin, who did the "Citizen X" strip in X-Press last year and may be seen behind many a lighting desk at shows around Perth. See sample. \$3.95 at, eg. Book Cellar or Dada or write to PO Box 241, Mt Lawley 6050.

SHAME ON YOU: Now, this I like: a good old minimalist "instant" fanzine -- the first issue being one hand-written sheet, the second being four with a staple. The editor sent them to me saying that PF had inspired him to do it. Now, I like that sort of thing. Coverage is the bloody typical Perth power pop line of things, with O/S record reviews in the same line of things (usually UK). I'll give the address if I can find it.

TRASH ZEEN: In the same instant-zine line as the above, with a request to photocopy and spread it as far as possible. I definitely approve. The zine itself is approp-

riately named, but it's still nice to see. All you need to do a zine is a pen and access to a photocopier. If you can bear to spend money the latter is even easier. (Hint: try university copiers -- usually set stunningly cheaply for student use.) Oh yes ... the other thing you need to do a zine is something worth writing about. That's often the hard part. Good old-fashioned subjective opinionation is usually a good start -- none of this silly social analysis rubbish, just your opinion as a PAYING CUSTOMER, dammit. It's got me this far, after all. Remember, you've paid to get into these shows and to buy these records -- if some prima-donna fine fuckin' artist muso wanker should object to a mere pleb like yourself expressing an opinion, you too can tell 'em to fuck off. There are too many bad records and bad shows in the world. And bad records cost the same as good ones. NEVER let up. We need more quality control.

Oh yeah, the address for Trash

Zeen: PO Box 113, Claremont 6010. An SAE should do it.

HYPNOTIZED: Another of the freebie instant zines. Comes with a free dinosaur (actually a snake with the head cut off and a dinosaur's drawn in). Two pages, two live reviews, three records, some news. This one has a problem in the writing (it's trying to have some substance, but the reviews are a recitation of events rather than a sparkling recollection of the magic or lack thereof of a show -- though I did like the one about X with the Ramones), but then I found out just how very young the creators in fact are. They can only be encouraged. Hell, yes! Got mine from the House of Wax. Next one theoretically out January.

Ha, found the Shame On You address: M.J. Williams, 30 Carlyle Crescent, Duncraig 6023. Make sure it's addressed to "M.J. Williams" or Jeremy won't get it. Issue three is on its way.



Kent Steedman interviewed for 6-UVS Drivetime by Ross C. Transcribed by David. Originally broadcast 30/5/89.

What's the press reaction been so far to "Blind Ear"?

"The press reaction? It happens to have been pretty good."

How do the punters like it?

"They like it a lot. We've been getting some good crowds, people are into it. Our crowds are usually reasonably boisterous anyway, but ... yeah, a lot of people have said they like it, they reckon we've done a good one. People who've never liked us before seem to like it, so we've done something right."

Are you getting much radio reaction at all?

"Yeah, I suppose so. JJJ's getting into it. The commercial stations are playing it at night."

Was it generally a good move going from Hot to True Tone?

"Yeah. We would have done it six records ago if we could."

What prevented that?

"People didn't want us. Basically, we had to go out and do everything ourselves; go and do three tours of Europe and America successfully and show that people can, in fact, like us; because the record industry in this country is so unbelievably conservative and narrow-minded, generally speaking."

When did Jim Leone join the band as bass-player? He's new from the last album.

"He joined January or February last year (1988)."

Has he been on an overseas tour yet?

"On our last tour. Rudy, the other guy, bailed out when we got back from the previous tour and so we got Jim, played him in and did a bit of Australia and went to Europe again."

I was looking at the credits on the album, and he appears in a fair few of them. On the last album, most of the songs were by yourself and Damien Lovelock, but now Jim seems to have moved in. What's he doing?

"He's coming up with bits and pieces. A lot of the songs were written jamming, starting with someone's idea; which has happened a lot in the past, just maybe not so much on the last album. But if we're stuck for something, someone might have the odd bit for it."

Since you're on the road a fair bit, do you actually write on the road, or just in the studio?

"Uhh ... it's a bit of both."

Normally when it's time to write you come up with the odd song, but when you have a bit of a break and then start up again you start coming up with ideas.

"I find personally that if I'm just jamming with a couple of guys, we come up with riffs anyway; at the start of a rehearsal."

What's your input? Are you just doing the musical side or do you do lyrics? Early on, you were doing both ...

"I used to write words, but Damien likes to write words; and my way of writing is different to his and he wants to sing his own stuff, which is fine. I just write music, basically."

"The lyrical content is somewhat different, and my way of expressing things is perhaps a little more to the point than Damien's."

"He's got to sing them all the time, so he may as well sing the ones he writes, y'know. It's no skin off my nose."

Some of the material has changed over time; earlier on you



Celibate Rifles

were doing lighter material on the albums and singles, but in recent times you've been concentrating on a heavier sound, rather than having the lighter material as a contrast.

"Yeah, possibly. Hadn't thought about that. I just thought we were pretty rockin' all the time."

In the studio you'd do "Pretty Pictures" or some of the other light pieces, but live you'd just go full tilt.

"Yeah. It's a totally different environment. When you're playing live it's more an emotion of the time; you have that continuous interrelation with the audience. Basically we're a rock'n'roll band; we're known for that and we're bloody good at it. We play some of the lighter songs from the records electrically, but they're still all pretty tough."

"In the studio it's a totally different approach. You've got some space and you can add instruments to it and do all this and that."

What effect has Damien's solo album had? Has it let him sort of concentrate on his different approach, as distinct from the Rifles, and kept them separate?

"Yeah, pretty much. I don't think any of us had any objection to him doing a solo album; especially me, 'cos he's had some of these pieces of music for quite a while."

"He's got this other type of music he likes to write. I'm not particularly into playing that type of music, I can't find a way that I particularly like to play guitar on it."

"So it's a good outlet for him; he gets that out of his system, he gets to show that he can do all that

stuff, he gets his emotional outlet and his ego-boost -- which I'm not saying in a derogatory manner -- and it's cool."

"We get to concentrate on the Rifles as the Rifles and other things as other things."

You do outside productions for various independent bands. How does that fit in with the Rifles? Is that just an outside project for you?

"Oh yeah, that's just me. If I like a band and they ask me and there's time to do it between what the Rifles are doing and between me having a rest, I'm quite happy to. I like muckin' around in the studio and I can hear some things for other bands."

"If I can help them from what I've learnt, just give them a hand, than that's well and good. It helps everyone and I get to have some fun."

How have you felt touring overseas as a small independent Australian band, as opposed to the regular Australian bands that make it big here and then hope they can crack it over there?

"Yeah, and a lot of them seem to stiff. I think it's false expectations of what they can do. They expect it to be the same over there as it is here, which is pretty unreasonable."

"A lot of it is that the big bands are, with only a couple of exceptions, playing this generic ... it's not to my taste ... this music that you've got a million bands in America doing already, so why the hell would they want another band coming over from Australia and doing the same thing anyway? It could be from anywhere."

Do you see yourselves as

particularly Australian? Reading the lyrics there are certain aspects of inner-city Sydney in particular, but it's not even particularly Australian; it could be inner-city anywhere.

"Yeah. It's not that much inner-city, really. It's sorta city; drawing on urban Western civilisation, which happens everywhere.

"But I think we are quite an Australian band because of the nature of the sound. The singing is Australian rather than American and we've got an Australian sound. The nature of the earth in Australia, I think we capture a bit of that, 'cos that's what I miss quite a bit when we leave Australia: the power of the ground rather than the cities. Cities are cities, y'know. The ones in Europe are often more funky. Sydney's a great place to live 'cos you've got water and stuff.

"But I really like the space, I like going to the rainforest, I like deserts, I like natural wilderness and coastlines and water. I think there's a lot of that in our music."

There's certainly a lot in the lyrics.

"It's in the music too. I'm sure a lot of my writing of music comes from those elements: the hardness and toughness of Australian outdoors as well as the tension of the cities.

"I think that affects us and makes us sound Australian. There's also the fact that we're fairly down-to-earth, because a lot of people in bands don't behave that way.

"And we've done everything ourselves. We tour in Europe, we have a good time, we show up and have a game of soccer with the locals, then have our meal and play a good gig. Rather than showing up in big tour buses and being removed from it all, we try to get to know the locals and do our best to play.

"You see a lot of the instances from England; bands, where a lot of English people have this attitude that they're unconquerable and Europe sucks and the people are all just funny little plebs who speak other languages and have no culture and don't know anything. (Why is there so much England-bashing in PF? -- ed.) Whereas we view it totally in reverse: that Europeans have some culture and a sense of fun and England's just a nowhere place. Scotland and Wales and Ireland are cool, and, like, I've got friends in England, but the place is a dump. It's a fallen civilisation that hasn't realised it's entering the third world.

"We've seen English bands come over and it's just instant party -- they get pissed, they sound like shit, they don't try. To us, we're over there to play music, so the gig is the most important thing you do all day."

So it's a business, but it's still a sort of passion at the same time.

"Oh, most definitely. We wouldn't be doing it if we didn't like it. It's nice that we're earning a few bucks and staying alive and managing OK. Which is the reason we go overseas all the time -- a level of playing can only be sustained for a couple of months in Aust Australia before we saturate it, and then you look at North Earth, which has four billion people and Australia has sixteen million. If even the same percentage out of that like us, then we're looking at maybe a hundred thousand people. That means we can earn a living, and cruise

around and have a good time as well."

When's the album being released overseas?

"Good question. Since we're not dealing independently any more, we have to work through the major network, and those people move a whole lot slower.

"We used to record an album and ring a couple of companies, What Goes On or whoever, and say, 'do you want this?' They'd say yes or no, and we'd say, 'right, we're coming over at this time, so if you want this you have to do this, this and this by this date' and they'd say 'yes we can' or 'no we can't' or whatever ... It was always up to us.

"Now, because of the nature of the beast, it has to be negotiated on the major level. And they move more slowly and you have to ... lick the right people (he actually said that -- ed) and do all the right things."

Is there a serious loss of independence? Do you feel that you're losing it in the system?

"A little bit, but not so much, 'cos True Tone's really good. I'm really quite impressed with them. They're sort of halfway. They work from a major headspace, but they do have some conception that we did everything the way we wanted to and that we know how to run ourselves without them and that if we wanted to, we could just use them as a bank. But they're really very good at what they do.

"They understand some of the humanitarian aspects of people in bands actually being people."

Has starting from an independent level and going on from that made you stronger as a band?

"Yeah, I think it must have. We've made all our own mistakes; not that many people have made them for us. We've had a few things that haven't gone our way, but it gives you a sense of determination, we've stuck together ... you can't lose touch with things too much, because the music's always the most important thing; and as for everything else, you just do your best around it."

Now that you've got a market overseas, do you feel any pressure to move over there and base yourselves there for purely economic reasons? This coming back and forth from Australia must be a fair bit of a drain.

"Yeah, it's an expensive business. There may come a time, especially with an overseas release of 'Blind Ear' at some stage, when we will have to go over for a certain amount of time. I think Australia will always be where we want to call our home, but at some stage we may have to go over for a year or eighteen months or something."

What, just touring consistently?

"Not so much that -- though we'd have to be playing a bit -- but perhaps we'd have to be on call and having a rest; a few months here and there and then a festival would come up or something like that. If you're all back in Australia, it costs a lot of money to get back over there.

"Or maybe a couple of months back here a year. I dunno. It all depends how successful we get here, y'know. Australia's really an untapped market for us."

Can you survive over there just on record sales? 'Cos you certainly can't do it here.

"Uuuuhm ... The combination over there helps, I think. At the moment, our record sales, no we couldn't. Our record sales have always just funded making the next

record and getting the airfares together to get over there -- which is no mean feat, really.

"But that's the whole thing about going major. It's an interesting game seeing how everything else works. We've done it all the other way, and now we'll see what happens on the other side of the fence.

"That's what you hope, I suppose -- that you can eventually earn enough from record sales that you can play when you're going to be playing at your peak, when you don't have to play just to earn your weekly rent.

"That's a lot of the stuff we sing about, y'know. It's great to be idealistic and it's great to be concerned with the state of the planet and find the nice bits and be worried about them, but what it all boils down to is the way our capitalist system is set up. You've got to pay the rent and eat as your bottom line every week, 'cos it's not like anyone gives you any of that. In our society it's not anyone's right to have a house, you have to earn that right. Whereas my personal view is that everyone has the right to somewhere to live, and then you do everything else after that."

Why did you do another version of "Wonderful Life", seeing as it was also on the last album?

"'Roman Beach Party' didn't get picked up too well -- I liked the record, but the sales wouldn't set anything on fire -- and True Tone really liked that song. 'Wonderful Life' was originally going to be the first single, and was recorded before we did anything else for the album -- to get the radio stations interested, then we'd do the rest of the record. But by the time we did finish it, True Tone liked other songs on it more.

"That was our concession to the record company, something we've never really made before. We didn't really want to do it, but we thought 'this is a whole new ball game, maybe they know what they're talking about, we'll go along with it and see.' We're fairly open-minded characters."

"I can say personally that I don't know that much about mainstream music because I don't listen to it and don't know much about how things work. We were sort of against it, but we went along with it to see how it went. So maybe the next single will be 'Wonderful Life'."

"It does fit thematically into the album, and it's a good song; that's just how it ended up. There was one song we recorded that didn't work out; if it had then maybe we would have had a bit of a fight on our hands. As it happened, it balanced the album out quite well."

OK, what's the future for the Rifles?

"We're in the middle of a tour at the moment. That's going pretty well. We're going off to Queensland tomorrow to do some shows up there. We've been to Queensland and Melbourne a couple of times. Then we've got Adelaide coming up. We've got a couple of weeks to go.

"Then we'll have a rest 'cos I want to go bush. The physicality of playing four times a week is pretty tough; it's good fun to be playing music, but it's physically and emotionally draining, 'cos we're pretty full-on about it."

In the past you seem to have gone for short blitzkrieg-type tours rather than the long, drawn-out three months on the road sort of thing.

"Oh, we can do three months all right, 'cos by the time this tour finishes it'll have been a three

month one; but we'll need a rest after that, y'know. We're doing fine at the moment, we're sort of into the headspace.

"Europe's intense because you're over there and there's nothing else to do, so you play five times a week. Here we play three or four times a week ... we play longer sets here.

"But yeah, we can cope with it, 'cos it's fun. You play music, it's good. But we always have some time off, get away from each other and away from the music so we can do other things we like.

"After this tour ... it depends on a lot of things. We're looking to get overseas if we can later this year. We haven't quite worked out how yet. It depends if the international organisation wants to put 'Blind Ear' out; if and when someone wants to release it determines when we go, if we go that way. Or maybe we'll just do another independent one."

I've got a quote of yours from some years back, and I was wondering how relevant it still is: that 'the Celibate Rifles are about mucking around and making a lot of noise passionately.' Is that still true?

"Yeah, to a point. We're serious about the music, in that we get the songs together, we spend a lot of effort working them out so that they feel good to us; but once it gets past that stage, performance is an emotional outlet. We do make a lot of noise, and we do have a lot of fun.

"It's like in the gig thing. When you're performing, your personality's coming out as well, so some of our shows are pretty humorous and stuff. So ... yeah, it still holds true to a point. I still view things pretty much that way."

Living for the moment on stage?
"Yeah, definitely. I'm passionate about it. I like doing it. At times it gets in the way of other things I might want to do; but after all, I love playing music, we're all into it and the concert is my favourite thing.

"Making records is good fun, but it can be a bit taxing. Gigs are like, yeah, they're just for the moment; the emotion's there and you do your best at the time and try to share it with people.

"Sometimes I space out totally ... a good gig can be when you play the gig and you don't really know what you're doing or what's happening, and you come off and you feel like it was great; you're just floating around.

"It's nice to have that interaction with people, because you can see a direct result of how you're playing a song at the time and how people react on that particular night. It's interesting. And it's amusing just watching people."

What sort of audience are you drawing?

"Uuuh ... We've always had a cross-section of audiences, with

people from everywhere, 'cos some of the songs are lighter and some are more full-on.

"We've never had a band uniform 'cos that's not our nature; people who are into that sometimes can't relate to us, but then you'll get people from uniform crowds who hear enough of what they like that we get a cross-section of everyone.

"There's a lot of girls now. For a while it got maybe a bit full-on and aggressive, a real macho thing with a lot of guys coming along and slamming and getting ... not all that violent, just tension release; but it could get violent. Now there's girls coming along too, which I like because they're half the world and it's not a good idea to be alienating them. I like female energy. I like male energy, but it's nice to have it all there."

What's your favourite track on the album?



Kent teaches "Extended Vocabulary" to the lads.

"Oh shit, I dunno ... hang on ... that's a toughie. I sorta like them all. There's bits and pieces. I like 'Johnny', I like 'World Keeps Turning'. 'Electravisión Mantra' was fun to do."

Yeah, I thought that one was quite unusual for you, with the sitar and didgeridoo. It starts off fairly light and you know something's going to happen, but you're not quite sure when. Whose idea was it to put in the sitar and didgeridoo?

"I don't remember whose idea. I think it was something that just came along."

Are you likely to do something like that live? Could be a problem.

"Yeah. We tried to find an electric sitar, but they're real hard to track down."

"Live, we just scale things down to the five of us playing, but in the studio you've got the opportunity to get a friend or someone professional along to do it."

"I like 'Electravisión Mantra' because I had lots of fun with guitar parts on that, just little embellishments underneath, which is what I like doing with recording -- put-

ting in little things buried down in the mix that you pick up on headphones and all that kind of stuff. I enjoyed mixing it."

Although you like playing live, there seems to be that big contrast with playing in the studio; you're mucking around and yet playing live.

"The studio's a bit more serious. Live it doesn't matter if you make a mistake as long as it doesn't botch the song or ruin the feel. In the studio you're trying to capture a feel because you've got to listen to it again and again.

"It's still in the moment, the emotion of the song as it's being played, but you've thought about it a lot more at the rehearsal stage and so you work on capturing that feel and the performance and getting it together. On stage, even with a few slipups, if the feel comes through then it's good; on the records, it's not such a good idea to put them out with big glitches and mistakes all over. You've got to get it right, and the tension gets to people. We do still try to enjoy it while we're doing it."

OK, Kent Steedman, thank you very much.

"No probs. Maybe one day we'll see you, I dunno."

Well, that depends when you come over to Perth. I've seen you live and know what you're like ... any plans for coming over?

"We've tried for years. We've been trying for five years to get to Perth and no-one fronts enough money."

"We don't ask for much, just what we do everywhere: cover the costs and pay the wages. But there just doesn't seem to be anyone interested."

"I'm actually interested in coming over ... not even to play; I want to get to Western Australia because I want to go to Monkey Mia and up the Bungle Bungles and all that. Y'know, I haven't even been to the western side of my country and I'd really like to get over there."

"I've never been sure of how much of a market there is for hard rockin' music over there; having heard what comes out of there, I don't know if people are hesitant to book us because they don't know if they can fill their rooms or whatever."

"But we'd like to come. We'll go anywhere. It's just that it's got to the stage where we can spend money going to Perth or we can spend money going to Europe, and we have to pick which one will cover costs."

Maybe this album will be the one to bring you over here. I hope so.

"Yeah, I hope so too, and I'd like to get it out. As I said, it's a part of Australia I haven't been to. I've travelled a lot on the east side."

"It doesn't make sense to me, but it is expensive to get over there. If no-one wants to take the gamble, that's their business."

Here's a little piece of analysis that I found when sorting through the rubble of the PF production room. It was written around Jan '86 for PF#2 (as a followup to "Ignore this:" in PF#1) and dropped for space reasons. For a callow youth who didn't know nuthin', I don't think I did too badly.

Ignore this one even more:-

Music? i) everything works in seven-year cycles ii) this time is. now, instead of the event, we got the boring bit that is usually a prerequisite for the event iii) maybe next time (1990-91) will skip too and we may have to wait for the one after that (1997-98) iv) by this time

surely even YOUR enlightened taste may go rigid and supply the springboard of boredom needed v) though it is more likely that half the world will go boring by 1990 and half won't, and the springboard will go mushy AGAIN vi) r. and r. is going to die of old age around 97-98 and maybe there will be no more new things until that date (end times music, hey?) vii) the main problem is too great a weight of past to draw on and no way to stay on top; just dive in and swim through the lot viii) but it's enough to get lost in and you'll fix to one little detail ix) which is why there will be no 70's revival in the 90's (sim. 60's in 80's) as all those playing it now will be there then, and remember that for them it isn't even a revival x) so why not start a fanzine and document the end times of r. and r. It's easy enough, even I could do it if I really wanted to.

Any opinions, folks?

And bearing in mind the family audience that YTT has nurtured over the years, some career details are better left out -- like the touring days of Johnny and the Kompany in WA in the early 60s, driving from one town to the next with the equipment, and the girls, in tow. From the luxury of the chairman's office at the Sydney-based production company he founded 19 years ago, Johnny Young remembers them as "wild, fun days." "You lived on groups because they fed you, washed your clothes and did all that sort of stuff. Things were innocent then." "There weren't any drugs -- just a few bottles of beer. Groups were real groups -- all they wanted to do was to go to bed with you and in the morning you said goodbye and that was it."

TV EXTRA 11

□ Johnny Young and the YTT team celebrating their 800th show.

(No, I didn't believe it either -- ed.)

The man's got a reputation. He can be cynical, sarcastic and condescending. He's also very sincere -- Edmund Kuepper is possibly Australia's most dedicated musician. When it comes to his music, compromise is a concept that I don't think he knows exists. And I sure as hell don't hear the audience complaining.

But, like the majority of decent Australian musicians that have been slogging it out for years, he doesn't get a look in with the general populace. Well, who gives a damn? Not Ed.

I've noticed that, for your shows here, you've repeatedly been promoted as ex-Saints and ex-Laughing Clowns. Does that faze you at all?

"I think it's a bit ironic, really. It's a little bit sad, but I suppose it's a thing that needs to be done. Perth is a bit of an unknown entity to us; we've only been here once before."

I also noticed one hotel advertising you as Ed Cooper. That disturbed me a bit.

"Were they really? That disturbs me too. That's just pure ignorance."

Whatever happened to the Laughing Clowns' sax player, Louise Elliot? She was great.

"Yeah, she was. Possibly still is (laugh). She's living in London. The last thing she was doing was trying to get together a fifty-piece all-female orchestra, and they were going to do a phenomenally long and involved arrangement of 'Eternally Yours'."

You seem to have had heaps of lineup changes, even post-Clowns.

"Well, there's still one member of the band that's going: Mark Dawson."

You're off to Europe on tour. Has "Everybody's Got To" been released there?

"It's in the process thereof."

Ed Kuepper

That's why we're doing this tour."

Have you had any feedback?

"Just unbelievable."

What exactly do you mean by "unbelievable"?

"It's been phenomenally good. It's just been so positive. They adore me, they adore the band, they can't wait to see us. They want us, they want to keep us." (!)

(Hmmm.) The clip for "Burned My Fingers", where was it filmed?

"It was out in the desert. I can't remember where. I think it was in Kimson's (?? -- ed) desert or something. About five hundred kilometres west of Sydney."

I must say that the old men in the Shenton Park front bar were very impressed with that girl's legs as she was climbing up the sandhill.

"The old men in the pub were? Yes, she's got nice legs. I had nothing to do with her at all, actually, she was a film-maker's creation. I didn't even know she was doing it. She wasn't there when I was; when I saw the clip she was just sort of in it."

Rebecca's been a really big hit, too, actually. Where did you find her?

"Yeah, she's a talented girl. She was singing in a few clubs around Sydney. She was available at the time when I was looking for a female singer for the band."

You left the Saints in 1979 or thereabouts, didn't you?

"No, not exactly right. I'll just clarify it for the six or seven people who don't know the story."

"The Saints actually split up in 1978 -- that is, the original



band that I formed, which did the first three albums, split. Then there was a reformed version of the band after I had given Bailey permission to carry on with the name. That carried on for about a year and

a half.

"I didn't leave, I split the band up."

Another thing that disturbs me is that Chris Bailey and his who-

ever-the-lineup-is Saints can come to Perth and pull a crowd twice the size of yours.

"Well, they're a yobbo band, you see, and I think that they have that sort of appeal. Maybe Perth has a disproportionate number of those people. I'm not putting the place down in any way because I don't particularly have any grudge. But I assume that's the sort of people that go and see them."

The first album, 'Electrical Storm', went quite well on the alternate charts, but 'Rooms Of The Magnificent' didn't seem to get the recognition it deserved.

"It actually sold more. I don't think you can take the independent charts as a gauge of these things, because the independent charts are calculated very differently."

(Minor clarification: the Australian 'independent' charts that used to run in RAM were not necessarily composed of independent product, but were charts of all Australian artists, independent or major distribution, by their sales in the independent shops -- defined as "shops stocking a good range of Australian product," by one definition -- ed.)

The people at these gigs seemed to be hardened Ed Kuepper fans, people that have followed you throughout your career. Does it worry you that you might not be reaching a wider audience?

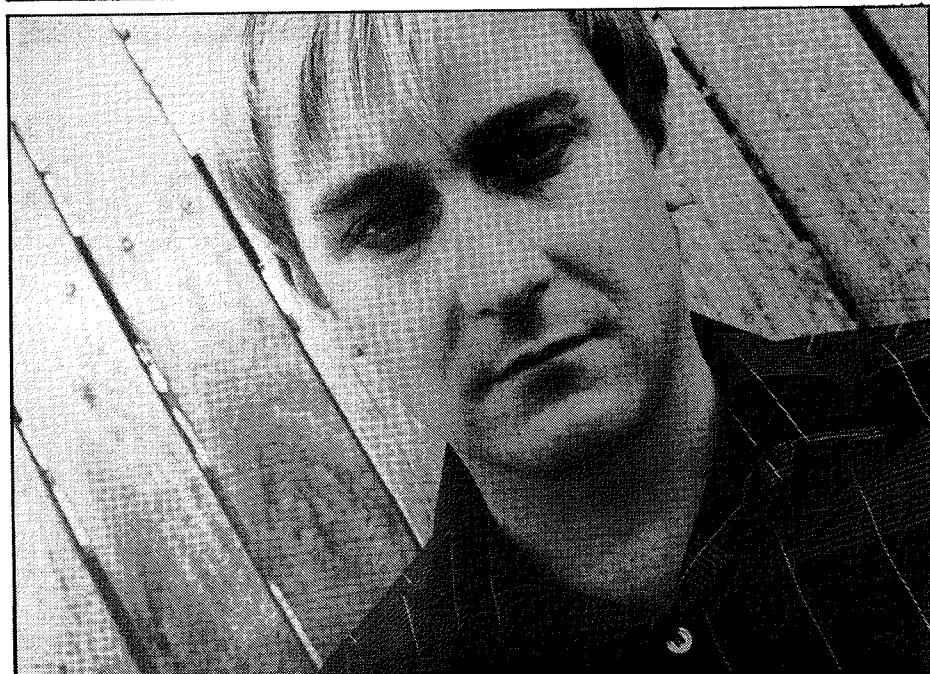
"It's difficult. Perth is probably a difficult market for us because we tended to work Sydney and Melbourne a lot in the last eighteen months. We didn't get a lot of support from radio or the press, but we built up a very strong live following."

"This is only the second time we've been here, and I suppose it just takes some people a lot longer. I mean, this is a fairly isolated city; I'm not incredibly conversant with the way people think over here, if they're any different. I think it's extremely parochial."

"It's not too dissimilar from Brisbane, where I come from. Brisbane has always been difficult for us as well. We could do better if we went to Germany than if we go to the town where I grew up."

"It doesn't overly disturb me. It doesn't worry me at all."

Bronwyn Rust.



NELSON GEORGE: The Death of Rhythm and Blues (Omnibus, \$39.95; distributed by Music Sales, 4th Floor, 72 Bathurst St, Sydney 2000)

Here we have a book which places R'n'B into a proper historical, political and cultural perspective, both with regard to the present disunity and previous (relative) common sense of purpose.

However, this is an approachable, personal approach to a malaise, rather than an unwieldy, sprawling warehouse of accumulated data. In other words, this guy's got a few points to make; and, since he wants his work to be read by as many people as possible, he's given it a deliberately provocative title. So he winds himself up and lets fly with ... a story which is so improbable that we just know it's true.

I cannot attempt to retell that story, but I can touch on some of the themes. The notion of black unity, as distinct from black amalgamation into a soporific white America, is an intensely emotional concept. George points out many areas whereby, through omission, ignorance or white exclusion or exploitation, the blacks have not been able to remain a cultural entity for long enough to sufficiently influence their surroundings and so elicit positive and permanent change.

Within and about this tangle of diversity and stabilisation, the melting-pot of music assembles and disassembles black America's definition of itself. Unfortunately, "the beauty of American capitalism is that it can assimilate anything into its production line, package it and sell it as if it were a new item." Or, he might have added, an essential one.

But the aspect which most appeals is the way that a conglomerate of facts, fiction and misconceptions has been formed into a story with an unclouded sense of perspective. This tale may never have been told, and may have drifted, over decades of misinformation, into some sort of widespread, historically ignorable pulp, unrecognisable from the other airy guff we are duped into accepting.

Although George does not and cannot tell the whole story, he has presented a rare and exciting insight into the foundations of what we all love to listen to and have taken for granted for too long.

CLINTON HEYLIN: Bob Dylan: Stolen Moments -- The Ultimate Reference Book (Omnibus; details as above)

"Stolen Moments" is an index not just to Bob Dylan, but to all the activity he has caused in his wake. A Bob Dylan fan would greet this item as manna from what remains of heaven. If, however, the guy holds any interest for us -- and, of course, he should -- then we'll all benefit from reading this, and be tempted to dig out some of the many associated items which catch the eye and mind's ear -- be they recorded or written work.

This is not a biography but an ordered collection of events and creations, courtesy one short guy who knows that too much publicity will drown out his voice. The amount of sheer hard slog needed to collate this book is staggering to contemplate; from chasing down interviews, concerts and recordings to noting all of Dylan's known public appearances -- even if it happens to be a Big Country gig in November 1983.

The best thing, though, is that we can play God, observing a life of activity. This is better than a bio-

graphy because in a reference book more wide-ranging detail is involved over a period of years; and while the "inside story" is admittedly limited, its presence is not really necessary. Our vicarious thrill is in our unbidden interpretation of what we are presented with. "I bet I know why he ..."; "Surely he intended to ...?"; and the ever-popular "I'll bet he really loved so-and-so." This veritable Dylan's desk diary for his entire life allows us to answer all of these uncertainties with our own sparkling opinion; filling in the juicy bits of a modern mythology which has influenced millions of people's lives is a kind of massive feeling to contemplate. Inspirational.

Here we have a superb reference book, as complete as is humanly possible, and that will probably never be "finished" for that very reason. In some ways it's better than Albert Goldman's masterworks of investigation and opinion. Certainly a labour of fandom; and now publicly available, as fandom should be.

BRIAN JOHNS: Entranced -- The Siouxsie and the Banshees Story (Omnibus, \$19.95)

It is surprising that no-one has really attempted a book like this before; the amount of people familiar with Siouxsie's name and image far exceed those who know the music. Of course, it would be too much to expect the book to have been written with the co-operation of the Banshees; with a few exceptions, they seem as unreachable as their image suggests.

So, despite the (apparent) lack of help from the band, "Entranced" is both quite thorough and highly readable. The simple story of the

Books

Banshees, whilst interesting, does not provide enough meat for either the fan or the curious; Johns overcomes this difficulty by making his own comments on the band's work, be it whether a record was really up to scratch or a commentary on a gig, adding the music press' views (whom he does not emulate) to provide a more complete knowledge of the living history of the band.

"Entranced" achieves a quality, empathic understanding of its subject within a format which prohibits Johns from too much commentary or very much specific analysis of what the band have come to represent. (For example, the way in which Siouxsie has become an eighties icon in certain sectors of the pop world.) But he makes many throwaway comments which I know are well worth investigating.

However, the book describes as much as it informs; which is important, as the Banshees have few followers who have liked everything from the very beginning or who will buy anything they release. Providing a comprehensible link between the band's past and present formats, Johns allows us the possession of a well-written account of a band with none of the creepy "she can do no wrong" attitude of the servile hack. In fact, I get the distinct impression that Johns has pushed more than the odd punch here. His understanding of the Banshees, their past, how they are regarded today and so forth is quite sound overall; he could easily have doubled his output here.

"Entranced" is a view of a band from the mind of a seasoned music lover who will put his reader onto the best music this band have made; concurrently telling what seems at

first to be a suspicious story of the rags to riches pop-star fantasy. But read closer: there are wheels within wheels. I can recommend this one with pleasure.

ANDREW VAUGHAN: Who's Who in New Country Music (Omnibus, \$24.95)

Now this is quite a handy thing. It's well written, well organised and gives a rundown on many prominent and not-quite-prominent modern country artists. The text gives a brief idea of what the artists sound like, what they are trying to do and how they came to be of interest or import.

There's also a useful country classics guide at the back; and although I suspect that this won't be needed by most older buyers, it's essential for the younger country fancier to understand just what impressed K.D. Lang as a music-hungry kid and so on.

Okay, so it's obvious it isn't exactly dictionary length and detailed, but as a general reference and introduction to a sound and a way of life it's pretty good value for money. By no means can it afford the space to incorporate the multitude of crossover country/rock/pop performers, and this is an idea not without its benefits -- sensibly, such well-known folk as Dolly Parton and Kenny Rogers are not included.

Put simply, "Who's Who in New Country Music" represents a gateway into the very best of country's sub-genres. The only better way that I can think of offhand would be to tour the highways of the USA with the radio on full tilt.

ALYN SHIPTON: Fats Waller (Omnibus Press, the Jazz Life and Times series, \$19.95; details as above)

For what at first appears to be another coffee-table jazz book, there's a surprising amount of factual information in here. It is obvious from the first few pages that Shipton has done a fair bit of first-hand research, from checking local newspapers, record company press-releases and even hunting out some of the people that knew Fats himself.

The general approach is the standard history of Waller's career, divided up into specific areas, which leads to some chronological confusion; but the recollections and comments from some of Fats' former compatriots bring a liveliness to the subject.

On the negative side, women seemed to play a large part in Fats' life, and they're only mentioned as background material or in passing; which is a shame, as it seems plausible that his life was profoundly influenced by them. No women appear to have been interviewed by Shipton as the men who associated with Fats were, although I have to say that I cannot tell if this is an oversight or if all the relevant female sources were dead ... surely not the latter?

In fact, we get a very sparse account of Fats' character, and ditto with regard to his humour, which was a prominent feature of Fats in his prime and which no doubt helped make his reputation as much as his swinging piano. His sexual appetite, which seems to have furnished so much of his stage act and his image, is barely alluded to. Perhaps this is due to a lack of documentation or eyewitness accounts; I confess I've no way of knowing.

Perhaps, then, I'm disappointed that this book is too short and not detailed enough. This idea is supported by the descriptions at the

back of his best performances, why they were good and where to get them. A fairly large bibliography is also tacked on the end, which is useful; for this particular work serves only as an introduction to a man who requires more examination than that given here.

In retrospect, Fats Waller seems to have been a trapped entertainer; trapped by his appetites, which eventually wore out the body that they inhabited and parted with, and trapped by what the public and record company expected of him. In a way, it is this dichotomous urge to live to the fullest in the confining circumstances which provided an inspiration born of stoic desperation which is apparent in Fats' discs, rather than a simplistic and no doubt commercially acceptable jollity.

How he will be remembered depends upon the interpretation of his music, and this account opens up several possibilities for further work in this area.

BARRY MACRAE: Dizzy Gillespie (Omnibus Press, the Jazz Life and Times series; details as above)

I confess that I'm stumped by this book. The casual reader would conclude, with disappointment, that they would now have to go out and buy another book on Dizzy to get any idea what the guy is actually like.

After finishing the book myself, I'm impressed with all the information relating to musical history, as well as the semi-technical accounts of the music; but I don't know very much about Gillespie -- just hints. There is remarkably little social background, or, in fact, any of the backing research that would give us an idea of how Dizzy himself developed as an individual; and, as a consequence, I for one am left totally in the dark as to why the guy plays in the first place: what motivates the man?

We now know what he did in historical terms, and a bit about how the rest of the jazz scene developed around him, but, unless the reader is extremely musically-inclined, they are going to be confused as to why his music is so important in the first place.

And although this book may be ideal for the jazz enthusiast, it's a bit dry for the layman. In fact, the tone of the book is written like the reputation that history has had for so many tired schoolkids with a bored teacher; the writing itself gives the unfortunate impression that the writer is writing about someone he's unfamiliar with, but is writing about anyway. This is irritating, if only because the writer is obviously very experienced in the jazz field as an appreciative participant.

In fact, only in the discographical essay at the back of the book does the writer's wretchedly non-judgemental, dry-as-unbuttered-toast opinion of the artist alter, allowing a more excitable spirit to come into play; almost as if he's been too embarrassed to mention it before.

There are few photos of Dizzy himself here, and of those two of him clutching cameras, apparently modern ones for the time the pictures were taken. The obvious conclusion to draw is that the lad is a shutter-bug, a camera buff; and, bearing in mind that taking photos can be a highly creative activity, we might reasonably assume that this pastime of his is an adjunct to his music, and might even shed some light on his motivation, his notions of the way things are, his notions of beauty ... enough, I've made the point. But no mention of this is

made in the text, so we don't know whether we're wrongly grasping at flimsy straws in the firmament in order to grasp the elusive ghost of Gillespie or whether it just hasn't occurred to the writer to mention this hobby.

The constant contrast of Gillespie to each and every (it seems) president of the USA is unsubtle and largely inappropriate; that this man's personal attributes should be qualification enough to lead a nation is absurd, as we're not told in any detail what Dizzy's attributes are. (Then again America now has shrubbery in the White House, which sort of makes a monkey on LSD out of my last comment.)

Not a book to recommend to the curious, as the nature and definition of curiosity is not "wishing to wade determinedly", which is what this book requires most of the time. Read the discographical essay at the back if you're sufficiently intrigued.

CHRISTOPHER HILLMAN: Bunk Johnson (Omnibus Press, the Jazz Life and Times series; details as above)

Hillman begins his work on Bunk Johnson by stating that he has not done any original research, instead relying completely on previously published writings. This makes his book even more remarkable.

Not content with creating a highly readable narrative, in the sense that I feel a sense of regret at being forced to put it down to get a cuppa, Hillman manages to put the much-fragmented and fibbed-about story of Bunk Johnson into a rare and insightful perspective.

Bunk, you see, influenced some very important people in the jazz world, Louis Armstrong among others; and when they went on to become big names, he was unearthed from retired obscurity by some curious buffs ... what followed is a reminder that we humans can do some strange things for some strange reasons.

I should add that any historical difficulties are neatly deflected.

Hillman's account of New Orleans and the popular jazz scene as it developed is a delight and produces a sufficient charge of inquisitiveness in the reader to encourage further listening to and reading about a variety of music, from the 1920s to the 1980s.

This magnetic juxtaposition of a genre and a primary instigator of that genre makes for an involving read. It's not really advisable to try browsing with this book as we'll end up deep into it when the bookshop closes, which is kind of embarrassing.

It's actually difficult to distinguish the real subject of the book, whether it's jazz, Bunk or the jazz scene as it developed, as all are dealt with competently, knowledgeably and empathically. However, it becomes clear that the jazz itself can be followed up on, but Bunk can't be except at second hand.

The guy seems to have been elusive as all hell to catch onto in his early life, and the matter is further complicated by his own fibs. He must have had a ball, basking and playing in a sort of glow of the semi-legendary. An ironic situation for someone to find themselves in after all those years.

A suitably fascinating portrayal of a man and his surroundings; a man who played as he felt he should have, rather than turning into a slick nightclub act with the occasional flash of dignity. A full story.

Effigy.



Yes, that's Chris Spencer. Yes, Ross is jealous.

CHRIS SPENCER: Who's Who of Australian Rock (Five Mile Press, 857pp; \$35.00 rrp; ISBN 0-86788-213-1)

First off, this second edition has a decent distribution and is available in any bookshop you care to name, as well as the record shops.

This book is an A-Z listing of:
-- all bands/solo artists that have issued a vinyl 7" or better;
-- all members of those bands;
-- all bands those members have been in;

-- all members of those bands.
With each entry is a discography (singles and albums), plus session work and production. References used are listed in the front -- various books, music press and fanzines and information supplied by a long list of knowledgeable collectors.

Most of the errors of the first edition (really more of a "beta-test" copy) have been patched up, to the extent that this edition actually functions as a useful and authoritative reference work.

This book is truly an amazing thing, especially considering it's a one-man effort. All bands from the biggest down to the smallest are featured if they meet the basic qualification. You can trace people's secret histories and discover the damndest things about them. Check up on people's real names. I have been finding it vastly useful for checking up on bands I've barely heard of.

The only real problem this time is artistic criteria. The author has decided to make this a "rock" book, and has thus excluded Kylie, Jamie Redfern, etc. because they're not "rock" enough and, being manufactured, have no artistic credibility anyway. But these people are part of the same rock/pop sphere as everything else in this book; and the book also features many equally-manufactured "rock" artists, plus many bands that aren't "rock" at all but nevertheless fall well within the rock/pop sphere the book works in. The point is, information one would have every right to expect to be present has not merely been left out but deliberately excluded, basically out of snobbery. This does nothing for the book's credibility (expected usefulness) and definitely needs to be seen to for the next edition.

This book will be indispensable to anyone with an interest in Australian music for whatever reason -- sometime fan wanting to know more, right through to vinyl junkie; and even professional use for music journalists. Ignore the garish cover and concentrate on the wonders within. Get a copy of this. Thirty-five bucks for something of this size and standard is a bargain. I covered mine in Contact the day I got it in anticipation of the wear and tear it's likely to sustain.

David.

Paul Watling -- vocals, guitar
Matthew Hall -- bass
Kenny Davis, Jr. -- keyboards
David Seaside (Seeney) -- guitar
Phil Rawlinson -- drums.

All except Phil interviewed by Roslyn and David during their world-crushing April '89 tour. The following was recorded on a questionable tape using a dodgy recorder, so misquotes and misattributions are to be expected. Paul mumbles a lot too, especially during the potentially juicy bits.

I've never actually heard much about the early history of Rabbit's Wedding. How did it all happen?

Paul: "It was Richard and I at first -- we were school friends -- with Cathy Webb (later Kryptonics) and Bruce Matthews (King Pig). I dunno what the actual motivation was."

Matthew: "I was in a band with Mandy Haines and Ian Freeman. I joined when I met this guy and he said 'we've got a band too,' and there I was. The other guy who was gonna be there didn't turn up, so I got his place."

Whatever happened to Richard Shallcross?

Paul: "I saw him last night, at a barbecue. He basically left to pursue his architectural degree."

So you got a keyboard instead.
Ken: "No, actually; I came in before he left."

Paul: "Not with a view to staying."

Matthew: "Ken came in on the 'Coming Like Summer' single and did a few shows with us; then Richard left ... though I think Richard would have left even if he hadn't wanted to leave. And we said to Ken, 'why don't you stay.'"

And when did David come in?
Ken: "About two weeks ago."

Matthew: "We really wanted another guitarist. We considered recruiting James Dixon (Pranksters)."

Paul: "We finished mucking around with trumpets and decided that what we really wanted was another guitar."

Matthew: "We had James Dixon for a couple of shows; then, through a mutual acquaintance, we met David and put the hard word on him."

Having heard the records before "Showtime" and having seen Rabbit's Wedding in August '87 ... you sound a bit different now. It sounds like the band's been through a great and beneficial mutation. Also, you don't sound like a Perth band any more.

Ken: "What does a Perth band sound like?"

The sort of band that inspires the adjective "Perthian" in American fanzines. You know how you sounded on the "Perfect Travelling Companion"? That's Perthian. How that whole tape sounds.

Ken: "You mean, we don't sound like the Triffids any more."

Matthew: "We have seen a bit since we were last in Perth."

Paul: "We feel more confident. -- Well, I do."

Matthew: "We used to think that if people didn't like what we were doing, it was our fault. Now we know that what we're doing, we're totally comfortable with."

Paul: "Totally?"

Ken: "Very comfortable."

Matthew: "Reasonably comfortable with what we're doing. If somebody doesn't like it then that's their fault."

Ken: "We really like what we're doing. I wouldn't want to do anything else. It's exactly what we

want to play."

Matthew: "Personally, I like doing other things as well as this. Rabbit's Wedding isn't the end of the musical sphere. We all work on other projects."

"But we have total confidence in what Rabbit's Wedding do. I sleep easily."

When did this confidence come along? You don't sound like a small band any more. It's the way you move, the way you project.

Ken: "We do know what we're doing."

Matthew: "We do like each other. I don't know. It's just happened, you know; nothing conscious at all."

Paul: "I'm of the opinion that it's just a point we've reached where we are quite conversant with what we can do and what we really feel -- some of the things that we want to do with the band. Being able to realise these things is because we're better musicians."

Before, your music sounded really sparse; now it's bursting at the seams with ideas.

Matthew: "Where did you see us, at the Seaview? The Shenton Park was a lot better."

Paul: "I quite liked the Seaview."

Ken: "At the Shenton Park we can all hear ourselves and I can hear what everyone else is doing."

At the Seaview you were foolish enough to ask for foldback. That stage and that whole room is really rotten for keyboards. It's a lovely



venue for the audience, but really awful for the band.

Ken: "I played that whole show by memory alone. I'll get a pair of headphones with a little microphone."

Matthew: "Devo Davis!"

You said you're writing a lot more songs now -- does that mean the whole band, or still just "P. Watling"?

Matthew: "I had half a credit. I only got ten percent, but I got the slash."

Paul: "I'm writing a lot more songs, but the band puts them together."

Ken: "The arrangements are by the band. Paul writes the lyrics, melodies and chord progressions."

Paul: "It doesn't always give a traditional product, but I guess it's a traditional approach to song-writing."

"I loved that Mick Harvey thing (PF#10) about how they wrote songs: about how Simon Bonney would sing along to a click track and then they'd fit in behind it. That was brilliant. An amazing way of working."

And you've chucked out most of your old songs because they don't sound as good as the new ones.

Paul: "Yeah. There's probably a couple we could resurrect. We were thinking of resurrecting 'Anderson.'"

There were a load of people there, the only Rabbit's wedding song they knew was "Rideout."

Ken: "That's amazing."

Matthew: "Poor them."

Can I ask an equipment question? You've got an Ensoniq EPS, haven't you? Is that all you brought?

Ken: "Yeah. It's a very clever machine."

Yeah. It's got a really good piano. It's tiny. I was thinking of the Triffids, who take their Hammond home organ which takes seven people to lift.

Ken: "The first piano I had was a Rhodes, which I got to test free for a while. It's this massive box you've got to hump around. It's like a piano, but instead of strings it's got rods. They sound really good, but they're not portable. You're not going to take them to every show."

You make a good keyboard hero, by the way. Especially when you go off to one side and stand around -- "We are a good band, aren't we! Don't we look good!"

Ken: "Look, I love smoking, and an hour is a long time to do without a cigarette, and that's the only break I get."

(discussion of clothing for outdoor show the next day at UWA)

Ken: "Nobody wears hats over here. It's really ... In Sydney a lot of people wear hats."

Paul: "Ahh, they'll all be wearing them soon. Subiaco Hatters."

David: "Ask us what we think of recording in WA."

What do you think of recording in WA?

Dave: "Well ... uh ... what time of the year?"

Ken: "What's a good time of the year in Perth?"

Matthew: "Not summer and not winter."

When city life is stressing you out and you want to come to somewhere that looks like a city but doesn't act like one. Perth is a really good holiday spot.

Matthew: "Naah, the best time in Perth is spring. I always have the best time in Perth in spring because, it is not a myth, but there's something in the air about spring that always makes me stutter; and it's definitely spring, because it used to happen four or five times in a row."

Ken: "But then again, spring in Sydney is very nice as well."

Matthew: "No, it's not. It's not as good as it is in Perth! No, no, no, no!"

Ken: "After that really cold Sydney winter ... the daffodils are coming up ..."

Matthew: "No, no! Spring in Perth ..."

Ken: "... the jonquils are blooming ..."

Matthew (impassioned): "... you just lie down ... everything is totally ... happy!"

(gales of laughter all round)

Paul: "It's daytura pollen."

Matthew: "Is it really?"

There's lots in Midland and an easterly every morning.

Matthew: "Do you think there's a chemical reason for it? 'Cos in spring, I always have, like, a little smile ..."

(laughter)

Ken: "That's spring, Matt; it doesn't matter where you are, it happens. Except Melbourne. They don't have spring in Melbourne."

Paul: "I smiled in Melbourne. I really enjoyed it. It feels good."

Matthew: "It's interesting. It's cold."

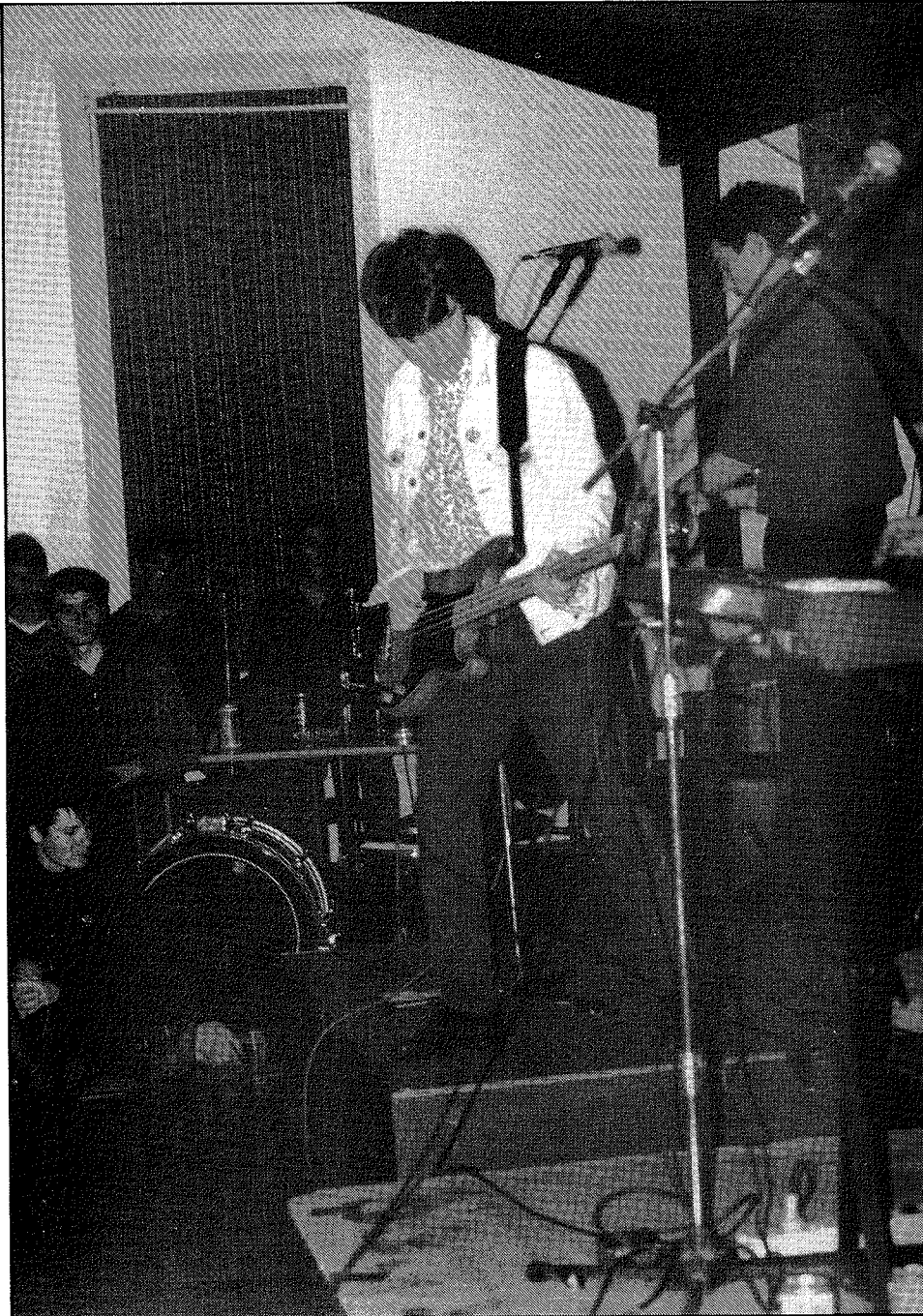
David: "You can wear your jacket in the daytime. You can get up at three o'clock in the afternoon and you haven't missed anything."

Perth's like that.

Paul: "Naah, in Perth you've got to get up."
 Matthew: "In Melbourne there's an atmosphere."
 Ken: "Nobody goes to nightclubs in Sydney. Or no-one you'd want to know, anyway."
 The sort of nightclubs you go to after a gig, you mean?
 Matthew: "We went to the Firm. I enjoyed it. I stayed until six. Perth nightlife is the best."
 Ken: "We're not nightclubbing people."
 Matthew: "I am."
 Ken: "I'm not! I stay at home

OK, tell us the truth about Ken.
 Paul: "He's good value."
 Matthew: "He's a fine upstanding fellow."
 Paul: "He's a big softy."
 What does he do for a day job?
 Paul: "He's a computer analyst. Just got a massive raise."
 Where did he learn to play? Has he studied classical or something, or can he just play like hell?
 Matthew: "No, he hasn't done classical."
 Paul: "Don't you think he's like a preacher sometimes, when he's

going thirty years later."
 How old is he??
 Matthew: "Twenty ... seven? He was in a band called Three Strange Ways (?), with Rob Snarski and Susan Grigg from Chad's Tree and Mark Dawson from Ed Kuepper's band. They did very sporadic shows, but they were really good. Rob was the main man. Then we got him."
 "He's also in the Jackson Code. That's Mark Snarski's new career, apparently. There's a record."
 (Kenny returns)
 David, what bands have you been in?
 David: "Ohhh, several. One or two."
 Matthew: "Cockney Rebel."
 David: "A band called Below Sea Level."
 Matthew: "Were they good?"
 David: "Oh, awesome, Absolutely awesome. And the legendary Snorkels."
 Paul: "Hence the name Seaside."
 David: "And then I was in the Skolars, and then Rabbit's Wedding."
 Paul: "He actually joined in February."
 Ken: "We did two shows in Sydney with David and then went down to Melbourne."
 (Talk of predicted dead audience lunchtime at UWA)
 Matthew: "We never play to the audience any more."
 Paul: "Les (Hinton, promoter) had a word to say about that, actually. Les said we should all -- you (Matt) in particular -- not turn our backs so much."
 I thought it was really good.
 Paul: "You tell Les. Les was talking about when he was in bands. Back in his day, they were there to entertain. He's still in Naughty Fish, that acapella band."
 Matthew: "They've been going about thirty years."
 Back when you started the band and none of you could play, where did you play first?
 Matthew: "It was at the Underground. And we got three hundred people through the door. Huge crowd. Everyone in Perth was there."
 Paul: "Hence we weren't very popular in Perth ever again."
 Matthew: "I don't know why there were so many there."
 Paul: "We were boys about town at that point and got all our friends along."
 And they all faithfully cheered you along?
 Matthew: "No ... there was no cheering."
 Paul: "It wasn't even a weekend."
 Matthew: "It was a Wednesday or Thursday night."
 (pause)
 Paul: "I had to hide for two days."
 What's the future of the band?
 Ken: "If this is coming out in November or December, there'll be an album out by then."
 Matthew: "We might be back in Perth. The future of the band depends exclusively on which label releases our next record; that is, the future is in other people's hands at the moment. Totally and utterly. The record label situation is quite fundamental to our development."
 "There are a number of labels including Waterfront that are interested in putting out our next record."
 Ken: "We want money to record."
 Matthew: "We want all of it."
 Ken: "We don't want to pay for our next recording ... We won't pay for our next recording."
 Matthew: "Unfortunately, Waterfront don't have money."



and read."
 Matthew: "We took him to a nightclub in Melbourne and he was so obviously uncomfortable ... but we got in the social pages. I've had a great time in Perth. I was here last end of '87."
 Ken: "Everyone seems so healthy over here. I went for a walk in the city: lots of young, healthy people. I found it quite disturbing."
 Paul: "I've had an exceptionally good time since we left Sydney, I'm really enjoying myself."
 Ken: "Excuse me, I'm desperate for a cigarette." (Exits.)

not playing and he's just standing there singing?"
 I was just thinking, "this person looks like a keyboard nerd on the surface but he isn't really ... He's too cool. Something malignant in him ... more Thomas Ellard than Thomas Dolby. You expect him to go "graaugh" and blow up a budgie or something."
 Matthew: "About thirty years ago he was in a band in Wollongong called Lizard Dust."
 Paul: "A folk band. He played piano accordion and dulcimer."
 Matthew: "And they're still

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 (pause)
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Whatever happened to Nude Records?

Matthew: "Nude Records became so nude that they just couldn't take any more clothes off."

Ken: "There'll be one more Nude release: the Jackson Code! On Nude through Waterfront."

Matthew: "That's a great career move."

Ken: "Well, look: half the band lives in Sydney, half the band lives in Melbourne and Mark's moving to Spain ..."

Matthew: "For the near future we'll also be doing work on this next album. As in physical work -- notes, demos and hopefully cheques. And then, who knows."

Ken: "Unfortunately, our four-track got run over in Melbourne."

Paul: "Ask Matt or Phil about that."
Matthew: "Well ... we had this van, and we had the doors, and we had the four-track, and the four-track didn't get in the doors but was put behind the wheel. And then I reversed ..."

Paul: "And now we've got two two-tracks."

Matthew: "My dad said he'll fix it. But he's in no hurry."

Paul: "It'll be ready in time for the next album's demos."

Matthew: "It's a fairly open future, but we're fairly confident that it'll be a fairly happy future as well. The band is definitely planning to go overseas next year. But that depends what label the record's on."

Ken: "Everything depends on the record."

Matthew: "Everything depends on the next three or four months."

Ken: "I can't see any point in continuing unless some backing comes."

Matthew: "But in the same breath, we're fairly confident that we'll get the backing that we need."

Do you have a management structure, or is it just the five of you against the world?

Ken: "We have no manager."

Paul: "We're fairly coordinated in that area."

Matthew: "We hate it, it's totally appalling, but I think we do it really well for our own resources and the amount of effort and work that we can put in."

Paul: "Matt and I feel that we can do that sort of thing without losing our dignity." (Looks and sounds like an insurance salesman while saying this.)

Matthew: "But there's no way in my life I could ever be a full-time rock'n'roll manager. That would be the end of the world. There's a whole world out there ... I'd just like to rock up, play and go home."

Ken: "Mmm. But who trusts a manager?"

Matthew: "I do."

Ken: "I don't!"

Matthew: "I'm fairly confident that we could find someone we could trust."

The Jackson Code!

Ken: "The Jackson Code are me, Mark Snarski, Jason Kain and Kathy Wemyss. We recorded an album on an eight-track at a place called the Slaughterhouse in Sydney. It'll come out on Nude through Waterfront and it'll sell lots of copies. It's the only album I've ever recorded that I actually listen to."

(Note: The Jackson Code album has come out and is on Waterfront (DAMP 115) with no mention of Nude to be found on it -- ed.)

Do you think that Rabbit's wedding will ever make a solid living for you, a wage something like your day job?

Matthew: "Yes." Ken: "No." (simultaneously)

Paul: "Oh, I don't think so. It couldn't last very long if it did happen. It's not really a concern."

Ken: "I don't think it's very important."

David: "Live music's dying."

Paul: "Yeah, but it's gonna resurge with us."

Do you have any plans to tour the world?

Ken: "Yep. We're going to Europe next year (1990)."

Matthew: "And two shows at the New Music Seminars."

David: "What about Tasmania?"

Matthew: "Yep, Tasmania first."

playing in front of a thousand people that I couldn't."

You found it easier to find one string than six.

Matthew: "That's the truth. Especially when they're really big. Just being able to sit back and relax and not worry about the melody ..."

Paul: "I'm glad you don't worry about melody. You don't worry much about rhythm either."

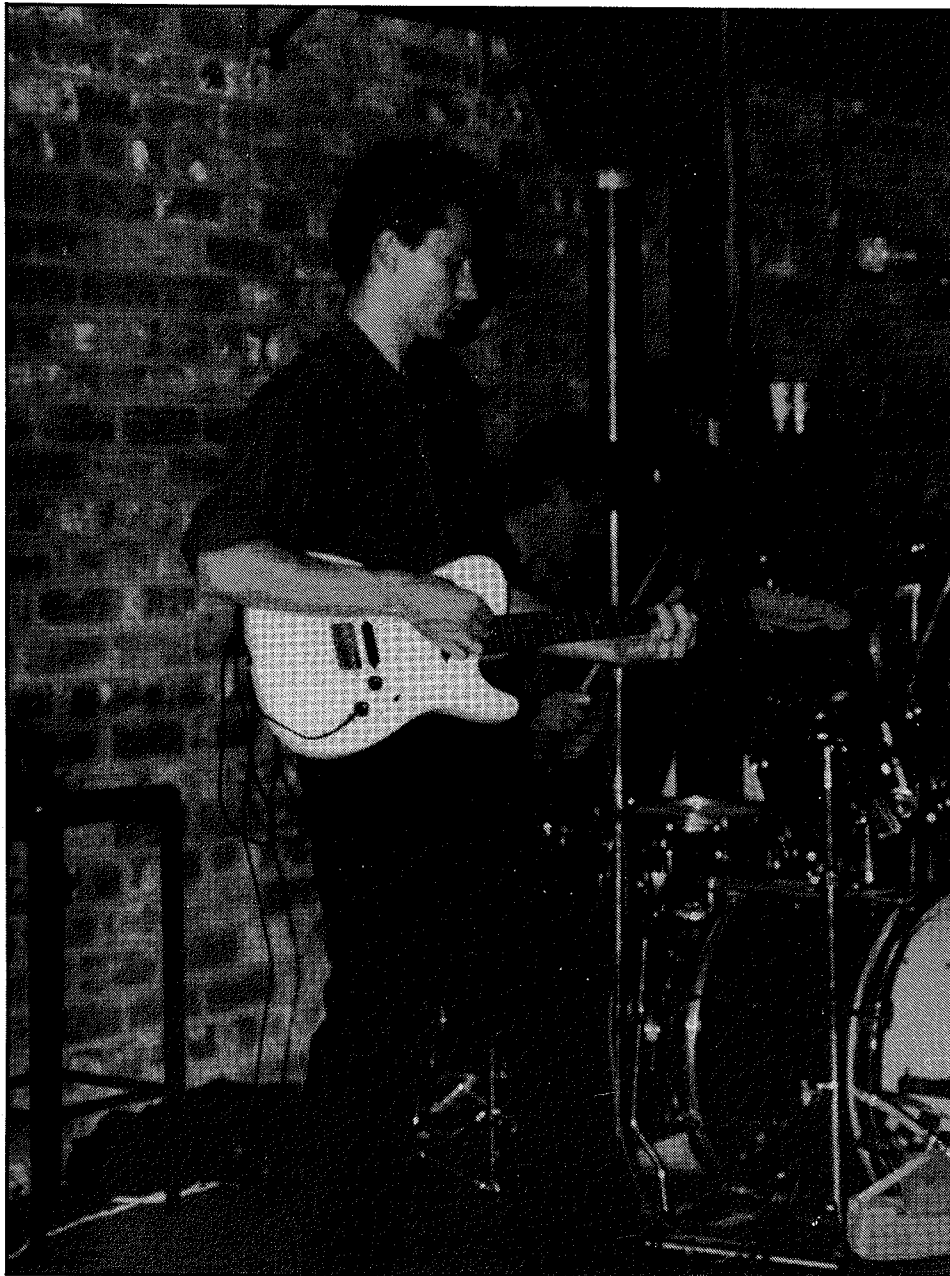
The Simon Bonney of the band?

Ken: "You could put it that way."

By the way, I take back that

Go-Betweens comment (PF#10).

(Massed shouts of protest from all members of the band at its orig-



We've played Orange, New South Wales."

Paul: "We played with Redgum."

Matthew: "And we got autographed and everything. They did 'Roll It On Robbie' and the whole of the town was dancing. We've played the Gold Coast. Most of the people we played to then have moved to Sydney and come to our shows."

Paul: "We played this great show with the Church and it was so packed. We were pretty ... not such a hot band in those days. We supported the Venetians."

Matthew: "That was when I decided I was going to give up the guitar because I was so nervous

(inal presence.)

Matthew: "Can you take it back in print?"

Paul: "I just want to say that no-one in the band has ever been majorly interested in the Go-Betweens, to a large degree."

Matthew: "Not to idolisation.

They were never our rock gurus."

Paul: "Not like the idolisation of Ian Curtis."

Five favourite films?

Ken: "'Rashomon'."

Matthew: "'If'."

Ken: "'If' was great! What a great movie!"

David: "'Rumblefish'. I've got the soundtrack."

Paul: "What's that Werner Herzog film with the person who was kept in a room until they were an adult?"

Ken: "Ahh, yeah ... don't know. 'Wings of Desire' can fit in there too."

David: "'My Mother The Dog'."

Matthew: "There, that's five."

So, tell me, Ken: how old is your leather jacket?

Ken: "It was made in 1962, the same year I was born. It belonged to my uncle. I'm very comfortable with it, I've been wearing it for the past five years. Had it recently renovated, had the rips in the back fixed up and a new zipper put in."

(Discussion of weather at UWA)

Ken: "I'll wear my hat."

Paul: "Courtesy Subiaco Hatters."

Ken: "I can wear my shorts!"

David: "We can play golf!"

What do the rest of you do for your day jobs?

Matthew: "I'm in between jobs."

Ken: "His last job was driving around chemicals for old people. His new job is working for a magazine that writes up the lyrics of records by people like Bros."

Matthew: "Hit Songwords, courtesy of D. Nichols."

Paul, what do you do for a living? Do you work in a hat shop?

Paul: "Nnno. The last thing I did was clerk."

David: "I drive a taxi at night."

Matthew: "Phil builds buildings. All by himself."

Ken: "It's a very solid foundation."

If you sign to a label, do you feel obliged to be a certain band? If they put their money into you ...

Matthew: "No. We just don't sign. We get a contract saying that we do this, this and this and we say yes or no."

Ken: "We recorded 'Showtime' in the way that we did for a reason ... I don't know if I should say this or not. We recorded it very expensively, but over a short period of time. Nick Mainsbridge is great, he's not that expensive. I used to live with him. He really knows what he's doing."

"We recorded a very clear, precise album over three or four days. It was a very stressful period. We demoed everything and everybody walked into the studio and did their part. Nothing interesting happened in the studio. We knew what we were going to do when we went in there."

Matthew: "There was definitely an atmosphere and there was a definite purpose in being there. We spent a lot of money, but it was well worth spending."

Paul: "I'd love to spend a hell of a lot more on the next one."

Ken: "We paid for the recording ourselves. The reason we recorded the album like that was to go on to the next step. We could do much better than that with more money, but the same method."

Paul: "That record needed to be done that way."

Matthew: "And particularly the way we wanted to do it."

I still want to know what happens when someone gives you lots and lots of money and says, "yes, you can do your record your way" but then turns around and says, "we've given you all our money and we want it back, do this and this."

Matthew: "No. I would like a record label to do their utmost to sell Rabbit's Wedding records, but the only things they're going to be selling are Rabbit's Wedding records and the people in Rabbit's Wedding."

And the people in Rabbit's Wedding are always going to be the people in Rabbit's Wedding and the music we're going to make is just going to be the music from Rabbit's Wedding. There's no way in the world that the people in the band are going to change themselves to suit anybody except ourselves."

David: "You're not gonna sing 'My Generation' in twenty years?"

Matthew: "Well, we don't do 'Rideout' after two, so, fuck ... You're not going to go back and do 'Rideout' with Stock/Aitken/Waterman?"

Matthew: "Not in this band. Paul might in fifteen years ... The people in this band are just, like, they're normal people. If we sell thirty million copies in America we'll still be sitting around this table."

You won't be able to look like that to other people.

Ken: "Ah, but that's their problem. It doesn't affect us at all. It has no effect on me how people observe me. I'm not aware of the way they observe me; if they see me in some strange way then I won't be aware of it."

No, I'm saying, would you act a certain way?

Matthew: "I would find it physically impossible to."

Ken: "There is one possible problem in that the music we play is so varied, but there is a definite pop component in the stuff we play; possibly, a record company would want to promote that side of us."

Matthew: "They'd find it intensely difficult. We simply can't do it."

Ken: "I'm getting really, really happy with the noise component of the sound. (laughs all round) I very much enjoy our noisy songs. I'd really like to do a few shows where that's all we do."

Matthew: "I'm sure the rest of the band will be joining Ken in those sections. It could happen when CBS turn up to the gigs."

Are you gonna put up with shit from a record company?

Matthew: "Possibly, but will they put up with us? I think we'd sign for a very big bank balance, but it's more likely that we wouldn't be able to sign to them. I dunno, we haven't been through the mechanics of that. There's no way that the band could change itself."

Ken: "Ah. But. We don't need to record very expensive records. That's the point. It cost us five thousand dollars to record 'Showtime', which is nothing."

Matthew: "Whereas other bands have spent eighty thousand on records that I think are total shit. If we got eighty thousand dollars we'd retire, we'd make a record for five thousand and piss off to the Bahamas!"

(Gossip, from Matt of course, of another band with fifty thousand dollars.)

Matthew: "I'd prefer to spend the money in the Bahamas than fuckin' Planet Sound."

Ken: "We could record a great album for thirty grand at the most, and that includes drinks. The ideal budget for the next record will be around fifteen thousand."

Matthew: "That would be adequate and generous. Now. Now."

(Talk of a Perth band that had to pay its advance back.)

Matthew: "There's no way that we'd be caught like that."

David: "Too much money can be bad for you."

Matthew: "Of course. But we'll be in the Bahamas, man."

"We're fairly intelligent people in a fairly intelligent band, and there's no way we're going to fuck up like that ... touch wood. We won't take more money than we know what to do with. End of story."

Tell us about your record sleeve.

Ken: "It was a striking image, a photo we had already."

So why did you make it so dark green that it can barely be seen?

Ken: "To give it less initial impact."

Matthew: "It relates in a way to the music we make. We're not, 'ka-bam!'"

Ken: "The two textures and the dark colour."

Matthew: "We're a band that has more depth than a simple black-and-white image."

Mmm, the old music was well-suited to black-and-white sleeves. All the songs were sparse, but now they're packed -- not overfilled with silly frills, but they all work. All these frills which could be excessive, but then you listen again and they're there for a purpose.

Matthew: "Oh, definitely. I think all our records have that point in them."

Ken: "The concept of being thoughtful on record is not meant to be elitist, by any means."

Doesn't sound it. Are you a sensible band?

Matthew: "Haha. In some aspects ... I think the main thing in this band is that we trust everybody else in the band. We perform our own role and trust the others to their role as well. We also discuss what everybody else is doing, but there's never any conflict; it's very casual."

Ken: "It's getting easier and easier."

Paul: "It's taken a long time." Matthew: "That's just the personal development."

Ken: "Getting to know the people to work with on stage ... it's taken me at least a year to ... know how people ... think."

Matthew: "Yeah! Knowing how people think and how they react at certain points and how they react to other people communicating is an important part of the band. We're all very comfortable with each other. We know each other's points."

Ken: "It shows in improvisational passages."

Matthew: "I feel that if I'm sufficiently comfortable with someone to start something going, I really enjoy it; whereas before, it was a bit difficult at times. This lineup's so comfortable I could go to bed in it."

Ken: "Well, we did that in Melbourne. Four of us in the same room. It was interesting."

Matthew: "I personally feel very happy with the band at the moment."

How old are each of you?

Ken: "I'm twenty-seven. I didn't actually start playing until about three years ago, so I'm a late bloomer."

Matthew: "You've only been playing three years?"

Ken: "Yeah. It was Mark Snarski's fault."

Matthew: "I turn twenty-two on April 27th."

Paul: "Twenty-two."

Ken: "Phil is twenty-four, he'll be twenty-five soon."

There was one song on Friday that sounded really out-of-tune.

Matthew: "Yeah, that's 'cos I was really out-of-tune."

Ken: "It threw me completely."

It was 'Levitate'. We'll probably be changing 'Levitate' soon, we'll be singing it in Spanish."

(Discussion of senile old folk in old people's homes, to which Matthew used to work delivering drugs.) "Those places are horrible. I hope no-one I know ends up somewhere like that."

Ken: "Well, we've covered what the future holds ..."

Will Rabbit's Wedding still be together when you're old and senile? How long do you plan to keep going in the long term?

Matthew: "Until we're satisfied with what we've done."

Not the next few years, I mean twenty or thirty.

Matthew: "Nope."

Ken: "Why not?"

Will you retire and become insurance salesmen? Will you be rock stars? Will you be solo artists?

Ken: "We'll never be rock stars. What you said before about us being rock stars on stage ... is quite disturbing! That's not what we're trying to do ..."

I know, but you're good at it. I mean as in projecting personality.

Ken: "I've always perceived the band as being fairly close to the audience we're playing to."

You have confidence and you know exactly what you're doing, so you can get up there and still impress your equals.

Ken: "It is quite nice to be liked. One thing that disturbs me is that people don't talk to us after shows."

That's the thing here. People won't go up to even the smallest little bands; and when they do, they're real sycophants. They've got Perth guilt from not being active people themselves as opposed to passive little lumps.

(Looks at notes from gig) Let's see ... "K. Davis had some good pose potential."

Ken: "'Good pose potential?'"

Paul: "He is a pose, you should see him in the photographs. Special look: head to the side."

Ken: "My girlfriend is into photography. I'm used to posing for photographs."

"Don't forget that until these guys got at me I sat down at the piano and played. As soon as you stand up you have to take very strange postures in order to make the right noises. It's a really awkward way to play."

Matthew: "It's 'cos there was no way I was going to be up the front, so we put him there."

Ken: "This way, Matt can run around behind me; and since I can't see him, I can't disapprove."

Notes. "Watling kicks Hall's bum during swelling keyboard bit in the last song." That was cool, you broke your image then.

Paul: "I remember doing it, I don't remember why."

How do you write the songs before you bring them to the band?

Paul: "I just work out chord structures and words. Lately I've gotten into the habit of singing them while I'm walking around and then writing the idea and the music, then the chord structures."

Do you write words and music together or separately?

Paul: "Together is an impossibility. (mumble mumble) ... but words and music work off each other. (mumble.) I generally get songs to a point where they're seventy-five percent finished and we play them for about three years before we work out the other twenty-five percent."

What are your favourite chords?

All: "A minor."

Ken: "We can play A minor for hours."

Is there anything about Rabbit's Wedding we should know that we don't?

Matthew: "Probably, but why should we tell you?"

Ken: "We cheat."

Do you have any message for our readers?

Matthew: "No. Except probably to buy the magazine."

Ken: "We buy the magazine. I bought one."

(Discussion of zines they've been in)

Matthew: "We haven't been in the Eye yet." (Australian investigative magazine that keeps getting sued by the Government for telling the truth -- ed.)

Ken: "We have no real political message of significance."

You don't know where the bodies are buried?

Matthew: "I do."

Ken: "I do have some political

someone had said to me five years ago, 'you are going to be competing, physically, playing against Ed Kuepper' ... I mean, c'mon, the guy's got fourteen years' head start. And we didn't write 'I'm Stranded'."

Ken: "We didn't create a whole new form of music. Or we haven't yet. We're getting pretty close."

How do you feel about the songs on 'Showtime'? Are you sick of them or anything?

Ken: "No, not really. I still love them."

Matthew: "We found it difficult working with (unintelligible), but we're really looking forward to the next one. (Sounds pissed-off here.) I can't wait to do the next one and have it out in the shops."

What, you've got all these songs that you're just burning to put on a record?

Ken: "Oh, absolutely, yeah."

It's sort of really strange for us to promote that album now, because



gossip, but you wouldn't know the people involved anyway. Minor New South Wales politicians."

Matthew: "It's not Mark Snarski?"

Ken: "No."

Paul: "I have been mentioning him a bit. He's a good friend."

Matthew: "Yeah, but do you sleep with him?"

Paul (straight face): "I have."

Matthew: "Oh well, that's all right then."

How's the audience turnout been?

Matthew: "It's been all right."

It's quite an honour having to compete with someone like Ed Kuepper. And Joe Camilleri."

(In their infinite wisdom, Les Hinton and Central Nervous Systems chose the same two weekends to bring over the Rabbits and Kuepper respectively.)

Ken: "Quite an honour?"

Matthew: "Actually, for me it is personally quite an honour. If

we don't sound anything like it."

Matthew: "We'd rather record the next record. We're interested in the future. I'm quite looking forward to the next record. 'S gonna be great."

Ken: "The next album's going to be the one. If it happens. If not the band will sort of self-destruct. There's no in-between. That's as straight as you can get it."

"Everything points to it working, though; that everything will be forthcoming and we'll get to record a really good album."

"If it doesn't work like that then Rabbit's Wedding will disappear."

Matthew: "But that's not an option. It'll happen. There's no way out. That's an ultimatum to the general public. The band feels that it would be the general public's loss."

Ken: "Yeah. Even if they're not aware of it."

Black-Eyed



"They laughed when I sat down to play"

Susans

Rob Snarski -- vocals, guitar
 David McComb -- vocals, guitar,
 Keyboard
 Adrian Wood -- trumpet, keyboard
 Martyn Casey -- bass
 Alsy MacDonald -- drums
 Will Akers -- tambourine, hand-
 claps

So where did the picture of the bear come from?

David: "Marty and I wanted a cartoon representation of Rob. The 'BJ' on the hat stands for Bert Jackson, Mark Snarski's name for Rob which implies he's the eighth member of the Jacksons. Rob gets violently upset at this."

Where did the name of the band originally come from?

"The name's from a long time ago. It was thought of by a guy called Mark Le Page whose concept band it was going to be."

The Triffids-linked spare-time cover band has had various names before -- the Garry Meadows Syndrome, the Bottomless Schooners of Old and now the Black-Eyed Susans. This version of the band (late '89) has a different lineup and different music to that from early '89 -- what makes it still the Black-Eyed Susans?

"It's always going to be called the Black-Eyed Susans from now on. It's like an Olympic baton. The Olympic torch. The spirit."

"Possibly nothing makes it the Black-Eyed Susans. Its main purpose, if anything, is to keep Rob Snarski's voice in the public eye. I'm not going to be in the next version."

"It might go over east 'cos we've done a 12"EP -- two originals by Phil Kakulas and myself, and two covers -- 'Viva Las Vegas' and 'Cripple Creek' -- that Phil wrote new music to."

What, no version of "It Started With A Kiss"??!

"No. We've been trying to do 'You Win Again' and some other Hot Chocolate songs, but there's lots we tried and ditched."

In the UK, the Triffids' "Bury Me Deep In Love" has been reissued with versions of the Pet Shop Boys' "Rent" (as sung by Graham Lee with the Bottomless Schooners of Old) and Madonna's "Into The Groove" on the B-side, in honour of its having been -- ta-daah! -- a Neighbours wedding record. (Well, it worked for V-Capri.)

"Ah. This is a case where Island didn't really properly consult us. We were off on tour at the time. They're just not very good versions. I would really have liked to have had a picture of Harold and Madge on the cover."

The advertising for the recent tour has stressed Triffids associations -- "David McCOMB" in big letters on the handbill and so on. Even given that the band is brilliant and

all, would a lot of these people (eg. the goth contingent a couple nights before, who I can't imagine as putting a Prince record next to their Mission singles) come along and keep coming if not for the link to an international rock star band?

"It's impossible to judge the degree of that. You can take a cynical view of it like that; or you can say that people aren't limited by their haircuts."

"And I think that, in their heart of hearts, everyone loves Hot Chocolate."

I'll second that. (Anyone who disagrees ain't really welcome round at PF Towers.)

Why is the band lineup what it is this time? (ie. Martyn Casey and Adrian Wood in place of Phil Kakulas and Ross Bolleter.)

"It does tend to be what happens at the moment. Ross Bolleter was very committed to Artrage, and Adrian was the first person ..."

Rob: "We thought it would be good to have some person in the band who could play some instrument other than an organ, and a trumpet was good."

David: "Phil was off two-timing and getting rich."

"It's basically whoever can be bothered to do the work learning the set. They're quite fiddly songs, and learning them properly takes a lot of quite pedestrian rehearsal."

OK, now for the sixty-four thousand dollar question: we've seen and heard Robert Snarski and his godlike honeyed vocal chords in the Black-Eyed Susans earlier this year. We've heard him blow his own brother off stage vocally at the last Chad's Tree shows last year, incidentally beating Errol Brown at Errol's own songs. Women turn to pliable jelly every time he opens his mouth. WHEN IS THIS MAN GOING TO FORM A BAND OF HIS OWN?

Rob: "I'm not sure. I have no ambition to form one."

David: "As you can see, Rob's a pretty Gordon Gekko sorta guy."

Rob: "I really only like doing bands on a part-time basis."

David: "When he smells blood, it's like a great white shark -- he just goes for it."

Rob: "Plus, the only songs I like are ballads; and I don't really think anyone in the northern suburbs could put up with one and a half hours of ballads from me." (Some loose talk of Julio Iglesias follows.)

Now this is patently rubbish. Forget the northern suburbs. In a rough survey afterwards, every single person asked expressed a heartfelt desire to hear this man, the Elvis of Perth, sing ballads for one and a half hours. Repeatedly, if possible. (Several even came up with the "Elvis Snarski" comparison quite independently.) He needs to be made aware of his market, kids. Send your votes c/o PF and I'll pass them on. I hope he reads this and it GOES TO HIS HEAD, dammit.

You said that the Black-Eyed Susans was primarily a vehicle for Rob's voice ... what's the future of the band?

David: "Well, I'm leaving for Europe in January, but Rob might have plans."

Do you have plans, Rob?

Martyn: "Think about your children, Rob."

Rob: (pause) "I don't have any children."

David: "Rob likes loser songs, he likes to share his loss. Everyone's a loser, but he likes to share it. Most people just shut up."

Tell us about the Triffids' forthcoming live-in-Stockholm album.

"It's called 'Stockholm'. It was going to be called 'Stockholm L.A.M.F.', but we decided to leave that off."

Why has "Evil" Graham Lee been credited on the live album sleeve as "Teddy Bear"?

"Well, he was manifestly never very evil, and it was becoming a bit of a problem. There was this breakfast cereal in America called 'Teddy Grahams' ... and one bowl and he was it. He's always been very cuddly."

"Hopefully 'Stockholm' will be good. I'm not a fan of live albums, but the versions are very different; more full-blooded. All the songs are either from pre-'Calenture' albums or are covers."

Any message for our readers?

"Free James Brown! ... Jail Zsa Zsa Gabor!"

David and Jenny.





The incredibly lovely Martha's Vineyard came back to Perth a while ago to start their tour of the record shops of Australia in order to promote their newly released album on rooArt. Having incredible amounts of money thrown at them just to make records with hasn't done them any harm at all; quite the opposite, in fact.

The nicest thing about the live band was the way that they've chucked out all their old songs -- all your old small-band favourites -- and replaced them with new ones that are ten times as good. Everything is sharpened up a hundred-fold. They work stunningly well live in a record shop, too.

The lineup for this tour was Peggy van Zalm on vocals, guitar and various shaky things, Anthony Best on guitar, dobro, harmonica and vocals, Phil Kakulas on double bass and the new look plump Aidan d'Ahdemar on drums, tambourine and percussion. Norman Parkhill quit playing with the band (necessitating the recruitment of Phil) in order to manage the band on a full-time basis. "I hate rock'n'roll already. And I hate rock 'n'rollers. They're disorganised, they're always late, you have to run around after them. Gaaah."

This groundbreaking tour commenced at Mills Records, with Marshall Martin giving them the sort of intro for which he is famous -- including a polite word to everyone to SHUT UP while the band are playing. (Peggy, I think, suggested that they should take him on the whole

Martha's V

tour to MC.) The crowd loved it, the band sold a million CDs and cassettes and even a few of those vinyl things, and I got a copy of the single, "Old Beach Road", signed by the whole band and the manager. So suck on that.

After the next show, at Dada on the Saturday morning immediately following, I caught them for a chat to my notebook.

So, tell us some studio stories.

Anthony: "We ran under, actually. 'The budget is an unconfirmed estimate.' The stories were a bit exaggerated, but the gist is true.

"One thing I want you to mention is that Martha's Vineyard are pleased that Countdown Revolution has started. We almost gave up altogether when we thought we couldn't be on it."

(The band has a filmclip for 'Old Beach Road' and it was played on Airplay later that afternoon, along with an interview with Peggy and Phil done by Tod. He'd told them beforehand, "OK, oi'm not gunna ask any sorta deep questions, loike 'tell us about that third track on soide two' or anythin'." "Riiiiiight," they thought. That int was fun. The clip is pretty nice too. Tod Johnston is one of the lower-ranking primates, but he does try.)



Vineyard

How's it going making a living as musicians in a city like Sydney?

"It's OK. We're still not making money, in fact it's harder to make money playing in Sydney. All the gear is more expensive. And there's not that many good gigs anyway. There's about six good pubs. Though I suppose it's better than Perth, where there's two. There's not that many good bands either."

Who came up with the idea for the record shop tour?

"That was Norman's. It's worked so far for these two, though Dada and Mills work like confidence boosters to start us off. Just wait till we get to places like Orange, with Johnny Cash in the top ten."

Where did all the new songs spring from?

"Most of the songs we're playing now are from the album, there's one old one and about half a dozen new ones. Most of the old ones have been changed around so you wouldn't recognise them."

What happened with the great lineup implosion at the end of '87?

"About half way through 1987, Aidan quit. Craig Weighell temped for the rest of the year, but his heart wasn't really in it and neither was ours. Also, there was this tension: some of us wanted to push it really hard and do heaps of practice and work at it, and the others didn't."

"We eventually decided to strip it back. We phoned Aidan in England and begged him, 'please come back!' He arrived a week before the Triffids tour in February '88."

"He'd been bumming around the UK, living in a squat and working in a vegetarian restaurant. He wasn't doing anything musical: just spending most of his time just surviving. Staying alive."

So he welcomed the chance to come back to paradise?

"Yeah, pretty much. Though we then left for Sydney straight after."

How did the deal with rooArt come about?

"Justin van Stom, the boy scout from rooArt, saw us with the Triffids in Sydney. He and Norman chatted, kept chatting, various lawyers chatted for the rest of the year and we put a track on 'Youngblood' and then signed a deal after that."

Any gossip? Gi's some dirt.

"The publicist from rooArt got sacked from CBS for refusing to work on the Collette project."

After working for two years in Perth to develop their own sound and kill off facile comparisons to the Triffids, Martha and co. went over to Sydney and a whole new round started. Not just that, but Tracy Chapman as well. Dear God.

"Actually, we were talking about this with Ross Bolleter. We don't really mind that much -- you know there's not a shred of similarity, I know there's not a shred of similarity, but Joe Blow knows that we sound more like the Triffids or Tracy Chapman than we do Jimmy Barnes or Stryper, and that's good enough for him."

"It's OK, I don't really object."

Norman no longer writes songs for the band. "But Phil's still writing songs and Aidan does too, so we still have four songwriters. Actually, five -- there's a friend of mine called John Dawkins (act-

ually Reeves) that I'm writing with."

How does rooArt work? (For the uninformed, rooArt is a label set up by INXS' management in order to get rid of embarrassingly taxable sums of money; and instead of pouring it into holiday resorts or whatever, they decided to give improbable sums of money to small bands to make records with. Nice of them, huh?)

"INXS won't be earning forever at the rate they are now, so they're putting surplus money into a record company. The money goes out from the company to ten or so bands. If one of those bands should break through, they'll get the money back; and I think it's fairly likely. In the meantime, there's going to be a lot of good records with good production."

"It isn't just a short-term thing. We have a five album deal, which we're taking pretty seriously, and we're thinking about how to approach America at the moment."

Why have you got a beard now?

"It's because I want to be an ape. I don't identify that well with humans."

How long did the guitar sound really take?

"'Twenty hours' comes from the stories of Fleetwood Mac working on 'Tusk'. It really took one hour, and that was only because we were supposed to get a machine from Cosmic and it didn't arrive; so we borrowed Ian Underwood's amp and guitar. We got a really good guitar sound, though the guitar went out of tune every three notes or so."

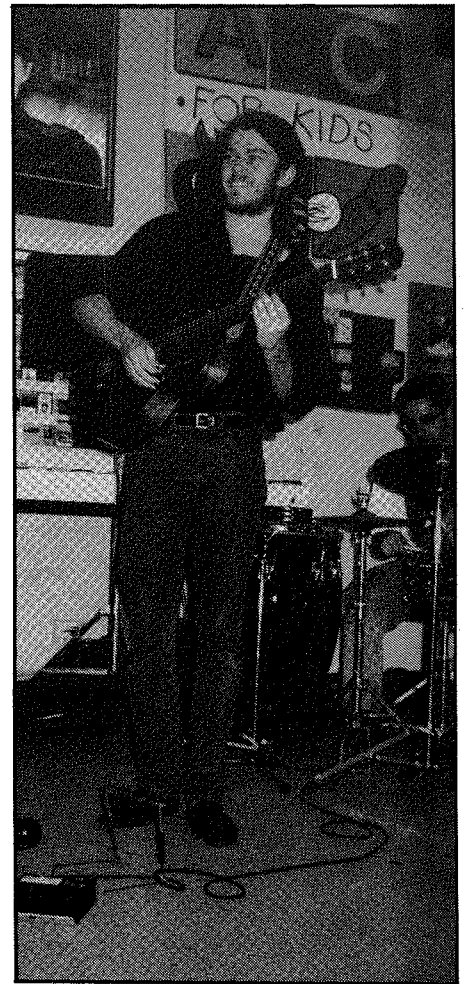
So, Peggy ... how is Sydney?

Peggy: "I think it's a big monster. It's awful. It's loud. It continually assaults your senses. If I had a choice I wouldn't be there."

"But that's where business is. I'm starting to adapt to it. It does sap your energy, though. There's no space to relax. I've been working five days out of seven for the last two months."

So join us plebs. (But then, no-one ever became a rock'n'roller in order to work.) How do you feel coming back to Sleepy Hollow?

"It's amazing coming back here. It's quiet. It smells better. It's not threatening. I used to live in Northbridge, and I thought that was a really on-the-edge, dangerous place. It's nice and lovely and relaxing now."



"I'd rather have moved to Melbourne. When we passed through there I preferred it to Sydney. Sydney's just been really gruelling."

"The people in Sydney are good, the ones I've met. They're really open and friendly. It's just the environment."

When will you be back?

"We're coming back November or December. I need a holiday."

David.



The band returned Perthwards in December and were (again) brilliant, of course. Peggy has lost a lot of weight but is actually in fine health and vocal form. Aidan left

under a cloud just before the tour, so Alys MacDonald temped; a search for a permanent replacement is in progress.

B-SIDE #24 (60pp quarto): Yep, it's alive. #23 didn't reach Perth and this probably won't either. Rob Younger, John Murphy (cover stars), Sonic Youth, Mudhoney, Meat, Toys Went Berserk, etc., up-to-date Sydney news and no Perth report due to my erroneous ETA for it of February or March. Oops. Send \$2 (in fact, send \$4 for #23 as well) to Simon Lonergan, PO Box 166, Broadway 2007. \$8 for four-issue sub.

BLACK TO COMM #14 (28pp A4): An excellently-written and absolutely spot-on zine done by a chap called Chris Stigliano, a pin-sharp and devoted music evangelist. (As opposed to "music journalist". Think about it. The term "music evangelist" is copyright 1990 David Gerard, and due credit must be given for use. Thank you.) This zine was previously called **PHFUDD**, but was renamed in honour of a barely-known MC5 song whose complete history is given on page three.

The reason why EVERY LAST ONE OF YOU MUST OWN A COPY OF THIS ZINE is the five-page **Ron Asheton** interview, a truly noble effort and the most worthy five pages in any zine of the last twelve months at least. Asheton comes across as a fairly average chap of considerable talent though some slight thickness (start of the interview is a funny story about Dennis Thompson pissing in a beer bottle that Wayne Kramer has a drink from and then throws up -- HYUK! HYUK! HYUK! -- Five-al Tap, anyone?), and seems straightforward and dumb enough that he honestly doesn't understand why it is that people got seriously fuckin' upset at his Nazi outfit. But then again, experimental evidence shows that putting a guitar into someone's hands will usually drop their IQ by twenty points instantly, and that repeated exposure can make the effect permanent. (Thirty points for drumsticks.) The Asheton piece should be spread as widely as possible, though in bigger print. And just to round things off, this is only part one of a two-parter. Yeek.

The zine is not so available. I got my copy from Au Go Go, but you'll probably have to write to them with about (at a guess) US\$4 or so. (Or write with IRCs and ask about this and next issue.) As I said above, the Asheton interview makes this a holy relic. You NEED this. (714 Shady Avenue, Sharon PA 16146, USA.)

BTC #15 and **#16** have also come out since the above was written. **#15** has a John Crawford (Baboon Dooley) cover, Ron Asheton pt 2, Twink, Viv. Akauldren, the obligatory Laughner/Rocket From The Tombs stuff and tons 'n' tons of sharp reviews. **#16** has Rudolph Grey, Electric Eels lyrics, reprints of newspaper articles by/about Peter Laughner, Brian Sands, a Jim Backus tribute, a reprint of the Rocket From The Tombs Fan Club newsletter and the usual shitload of reviews. Stigliano's political overtones should probably be mentioned in passing -- he comes across as a rabid near-Nazi a lot of the time, though on careful re-reading I suspect he just likes to piss people off (lame opinions being the target, not just lefty ones; the latter merely being more frequent in alternate-sector song). Though the one thing that definitely comes across is a homophobic streak a mile wide, which especially in **#16** approaches the point of ludicrousness -- the guy seems to have some sort of major problem here.

The zine seems to be making itself regularly available from Au Go Go. Ordering from your shop quoting their name as possible supplier

might work -- Forced Exposure has shown up again so it's definitely worth the attempt in any case.

CHEMICAL IMBALANCE v.2 #1 (140pp quarto): I don't want to talk about this, but feel honour-bound to warn you. Do NOT be tempted to buy this. Not by any name on the cover, nor by any name on the 7"EP that comes with it. All the tracks on the EP are third-rate castoffs or cheap tired covers and all the writing in the zine itself drips. It's basically a case study in what happens when a zine dealing with the sharp end of independent music is edited by someone (a chap called Mike McGonigal) absolutely devoid of any sense of humour or comprehension of the rôle of such in the true passion and humanity of what he thinks he is into. If that sounds even sociologically tempting, I warn you again: don't pay money for this. You'll regret it. Copies show up in Perth from time to time. Stay well fuckin' away. I mean it. I can't believe I paid money for this thing. It depressed me for the whole week thinking about it. Spend the money on fifteen doughnuts instead if you really can't find a cool enough record that week. Anyone still tempted to buy a copy is welcome to borrow mine and see what they're in for. Borrow it for as long as you like, which probably won't be long. Wins the title of World's Worst Fan-zine through dint of sheer effort. This zine was not done out of love. I could go on for hours about this.

Non-Perth zines

LA HERENCIA DE LOS MUNSTER presents THE SCIENTISTS (72pp A5 + 7"): If you don't get this I'll come round and kill you personally. This is mainly for the record, the only official release (I was surprised to learn) of "A Pox On You", live at the Red Parrot Perth 10/4/87 (not 17/4 as stated on the sleeve), plus "Solid Gold Hell" from the same show -- a desk recording, not the audience tape known to exist. (The other side of the record is two poxy Euro-bands killing "Swampland" and "Nitro", but is easily ignored.) The zine itself is pretty nice too -- about half in Spanish (history, up-to-date stuff, complete discography with track listings), the rest being press-clippings in English (including a cute page by Kim Salmon himself) -- nothing from PF, which explains me getting a copy with a letter asking for PF#10. I suggest you send your grandmother, your first-born, a couple of IRC's and a request for a price to Munster Records, PO Box 18107, 28080 Madrid, Spain. The House of Wax is trying to get copies too.

ROCK AUSTRALIA MAGAZINE: The fact of RAM having folded could turn out to have some horrible implications for the quality standards of the Australian music press. For those who don't know the story, RAM has been getting broker and broker for the last two years, despite a loyal and sustained readership, due to lack of advertising, especially from the major record companies. You'd think that even they could recognise the use of twenty-eight thousand readers. But, apparently not. The magazine's final issue was #360, dated 26/7/89; there was to have been an issue #361 to wind up the magazine, but the editor resigned rather than appear to support a magazine that hadn't paid its contributors since November 1988.

The point is that, whilst frequently covering things in a drippy

and industrialised manner, RAM had a continued commitment to reasonable and intelligent analysis of the mainstream of a quality not found anywhere else in the professional music press. Fanzines can only go so far, after all. However, a readership of twenty-eight thousand reasonable and intelligent people could not sustain the advertising the magazine needed to survive.

The probable effect is that standards will plummet elsewhere in a bid to hold on to the advertisers. Fuck intelligence, that doesn't pay the bills. In fact, the example of RAM could be taken to show that it does the opposite. None of this "analysis" stuff for us, leave that to the English-type wankers; we know what's good for us.

Not that RAM was some sort of zenith of music-press quality or anything ... it's the implications of the manner of its death that are worrying.

Perhaps the next musically-connected youth subculture will spring up in Australia, after all ... as a letter in the final RAM said, "are we in for another decade of beer barns and beer Barnes?" The gap between the independent and mainstream sectors is not merely open, it's becoming a touch yawning again. Mind you, in most other ways the 1990's look like being one of the best times for music ever ... the question is, will anyone know about it other than us few?

ps: Danny wanted it mentioned that he wants to know where the hell he's going to read Shane Danielsen now. I think he could have picked a writer with a bit more idea about his subject-matter (even aware that his writing does have a subject-matter), but then again the Love Boat and Diesel pieces were masterworks. Pity about the ideas on music though. **ZZEEEN**: A great zine with the worst title of the last year, if not ever. This may, in some unfortunate cases, deflect the typical reader from the quality of the zine itself -- hilarious and spot-on opinions, written so clearly even I can understand it instantly. Someone's holding the independent torch again, folks! ... a zine that knows and says the difference between "alternative" and "independent" (and the huge wide hairy line between the two.) And anyone who still gives a damn that New Order have gone to pox gets my vote. (Oops, just blown a good rave.) The zine is currently coming out every two to three months. Send about two bucks (inc. post) for #5 to You're Standing On My Hula Hoop Productions, 84 McCartin St, Leon-gatha 3953. This lot have also published the fourth Effigy zine, "Steel Jaw Clenched" -- also get the third, "Bent Elvis Crucifix", available in Perth.

"Hi! I'm doing an international tape-trader's list. Send your list and what you're looking for or a flyer or whatever ... and it will be on the list. This list will be available for US\$1 postpaid anywhere. There will also be a blacklist of those people who ripped you off. Write to: Kris Verreth, Tervuurs-twg 1H, B 3081 Perk, Belgium."

GETTING UGLY #1 (40pp A5): A Perthian I missed. A hardcore zine done by someone who doesn't seem to have worked out just what to put in his zine (needs better rôle models, I suspect) but has the first idea OK: Don't just consume, be silent, die. DO SOMETHING YERSELF. \$1 everywhere or write to Andrew Sheen, 7 Katrina Tce, Kelmscott 6111. A few really nice bits.

The album, "Lover/Saint", is out at last a year after its recording by the old lineup: Greg Dear (vocals, acoustic guitar), Errol H. Tout (electric guitar), Cliff Kent (bass) and Russell Wilson (drums). The current lineup has Errol replaced by Tony Conner on second guitar. Evan Briers replaced Russell on drums for last year, but recently left to join the Push. Nik Kaitse (late of the Summer Suns) is his replacement, and fits in well.

Greg: "The new lineup has settled in and we're doing a lot of new material. The old songs are often a lot tougher. The new lineup's a lot more able to rock out live when it's appropriate.

"The new material is the important thing, though."

The album's release at last is due to a deal for twelve

"Yeah. I don't like the vocals, and I wish we'd had time to work on the vocal sounds; and I would have liked time for backing vocals, which would have lifted the album to a whole new level."

The main difference in sound between this and Greg's first record, the Holy Rollers album, is that this one doesn't sound like a demo-tape. ("Holy Rollers" had oodles of feel, but no production.)

"Well, it was a demo-tape. I mean, it wasn't really, but we spent \$1700 doing it; just a cheap recording done in absolute minimum time. No-one else in the band wanted to spend money on it, so it just came out as it was.

"We originally did 'Stranger', 'Fool', 'Afraid' and 'Too Much' to be released as a 12" single with 'Stranger' as the A-side. Kim didn't think that was cost-effective, so we did 'New Army' and 'Seraphim' as

few unreleased Holy Rollers songs and a few things from the Midnight Choir." (-- the latter being the abortive unit between the Holy Rollers and the Beautiful Losers; see PF#7. You've heard about this compilation idea before ... I advise you not to hold your breath.)

Was the old Beautiful Losers basically between you and Errol?

"It was my band that Errol played in. All the members were crucial elements. It's the same with the new lineup."

Who's Ainsley Crabbe? (trumpet on "This Show.")

"She played in Lots Of Girls Play. She works at Planet as a dubbing editor and so on."

You didn't appear to do much in 1988.

"I did lots; but it was mostly behind-the-scenes stuff."

The future includes a song on the JJJ Perth compilation, demos of

Greg Dear and the Beautiful Losers



Old Losers: Tony, Evan, Lou and Cliff

months' publishing with Hot and management by Graeme Regan of Hot. "We're working on overseas licensing of this album and on getting major recording and publishing deals for the next one. There's a couple of people interested.

"There might be another independent LP or single, but we're planning on recording early next year with a bigger budget. We did this album on \$6000, which these days is a realistic budget for a single."

The record has ten tracks and the first 1000 copies only come in a gold sleeve (looks great), copies 1001 onwards coming in a plain black and white one. (Greg says it looks OK, but I have my doubts -- best get in early.) A video has been done for "This Show".

What's your favourite track?

"Probably 'These Waters'."

Are you pleased with the record?

well; though 'Seraphim' didn't work, and even though I redid the drums it didn't go on the album because the others didn't want it on." (This recording of "Seraphim" has in fact now shown up on the 6-UVS compilation LP.)

One track on the Beautiful Losers LP, "TV", came from an aborted songwriting partnership with Kate Bent, ten songs being recorded for publisher demos. Greg tried cleaning them up for possible release, but has abandoned the project: "They're just not done that well. The recordings are good enough for a cassette, and certainly as good as 'Faith And Fiction' ... probably as good or better than the Holy Rollers LP!

"There's three or four songs that worked well enough to see the light of day, but if they ever do it'll just be as indie 7" B-sides.

"They may appear on a compilation LP I've been thinking of, with a

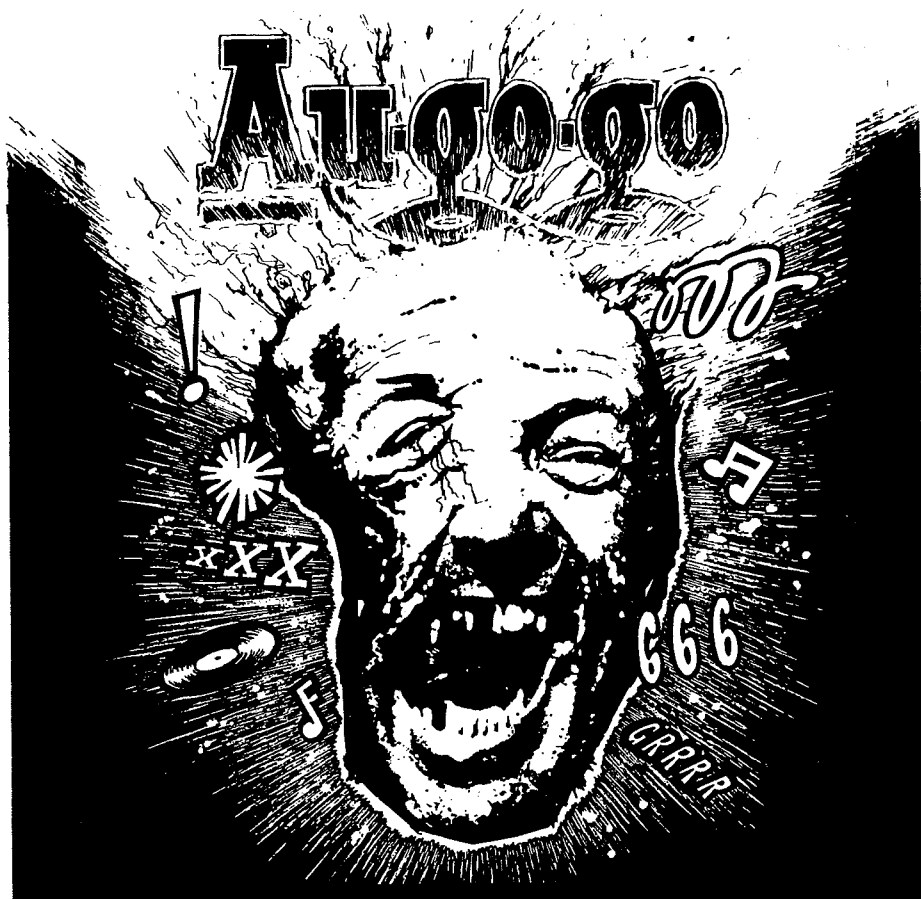
new material and hunting for a major-distributed deal. "We're looking more for publishing at the moment."

There will also be more work on producing Perth bands, like the Month of Sundays single "Faithfully Patient/Those Times Weren't Mine" Greg co-produced with Errol.

"I generally like working with Errol; each catches what the other misses. We're always playing tapes of our new stuff at each other for comment."

The band are currently off on an eastern tour, to help kick along the album and also to follow up on deals and interest generated.

David.



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Rock is special. It exists like a slug under the weight of modern conventional society. Dirty, un-touchable, repulsive to those who choose to ignore the real earth and prefer to exist in a landscape designer world of cut-the-lawn-every-Sunday middle-class convention. And I'm not talking about the sanitised brand of "rock" you get dished out to you on your adult-listening-carefully-market-targeted-higher-disposable-income-group F.M. station. I'm on about passionate, anarchic music that throbs in the sub-cultures of the cities -- groups that lyrically and musically challenge every assumption most people cling to in their limited worlds.

So what motivates an inner-city rock star? We asked coach Nick Cave for an answer.

"Basic guts, and a fierce desire to win," he began, "and never forgetting the basics: tackling, kicking and handball."

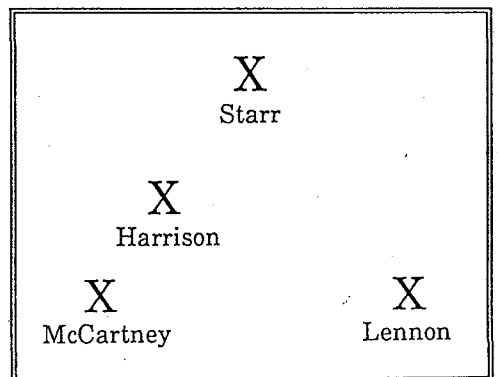
Cave, coach of the BirthDay Party's winning 1979-80 sides, pioneered the inner-city rock star style of play. What does he think of the modern-day ICRS player? "Not as good as the greats. Jim Morrison not only wrote 'L.A. Women', he could drop-kick a ball seventy-five yards. You don't see that any more."

Perhaps Cave was thinking of current ICRS Hugo Race's recent controversial outburst. Being interviewed by the Credibility Show panel, he burst out: "Any poofa with a fragile baby face jaw, wide haunted eyes and a mop of long black

The question has frequently arisen in coaching circles regarding TISM's use of a drum machine. I will attempt to set out the reasons why we find this a most useful defensive method.

It is necessary to begin by examining the changing role of the drummer through history.

In the sixties, many bands preferred the static sweeper method, or catenaccio (see Fig. 1). Note Harrison's slightly withdrawn position behind the front two. His was basically a supporting role, typified by his comment "I'll play what you want



me to play" in the Let It Be movie.

He formed a particularly dangerous right-sided movement with McCartney and favoured an unselfish game, as typified on his "All Things Must Pass" album. Lennon, meanwhile, became an enigmatic and sometimes incisive left-winger, whose career was cut tragically short by injury.

The next development in tactics was the dynamic catenaccio method, more commonly known as "total football", demonstrated here by the Rolling Stones (see Fig. 2). This method was particularly successful until Jones, competing increasingly for space up forward with Jagger and Richard, left the game to take up

Fig. 1. The catenaccio as used by the Beatles.



JON Bon Jovi, Robert Smith, Morrissey and Hugo Race with coach Nick Cave

TISM On The Future Of Rock: "The Dog- gies In Space"

hair comes near me spouting artistic credibility, I'll snap the cocksucker in two. Just give me the fucking money, boyo. I'll play Ted Mulry covers if the price is right."

Many people feel this is why the crowds are staying away. No longer can the ICRS be depended on for loyalty to values held sacred by the fans. Flashy entrepreneurial gimmicks like those seen at This Is Serious Mum home matches sicken ICRS supporters. Worse still, TISM management K. K. Klein have threatened to import players from the unfashionable middle-classes into the sub-culture.

A spokesman for the "Keep Artistic Poverty Rich" action-group complains, "How are we going to keep up our confronting warehouse theatre-spaces and emaciated drug culture viable if we are surrounded by people who haven't even heard of Sam Shepard?"

Klein answers: "I not only know of Shepard, I taught him how to drop-punt."

There seems no end to the gradual dissolution of the ICRS. Cave again: "What if somebody from the middle-classes gets to the Grand Final? Worse still, what if a side like Bon Jovi make it?" This

prospect haunts many a bored, young, rich, private school students' lunch room; it hovers malignantly over Women's Collectives; makes dumb the casual banter of inner-suburban drama groups; stills the brush of the ghetto artist; sends exclusive hair-dressing salons reaching for the Jon Bon Jovi perm booklet. Staggered, people with torn blue denims and smack habits come to a halt and gasp: "Bon Jovi in the finals?"

I leave the last word to the legendary Cave: "What's happened to Art?" he asks. "We might as well be following the fucking football."

Humphrey B. Flaubert Talks Tactics

water polo. He was replaced by Taylor, a gritty slide-tackler. Taylor played in many memorable games, such as that at Altamont, where crowd trouble twice stopped the

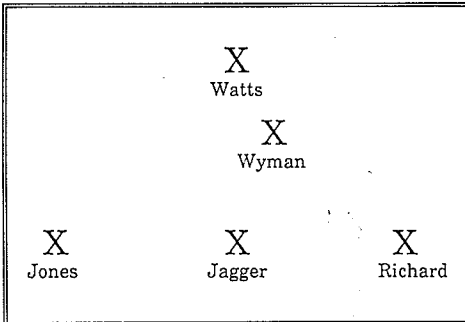


Fig. 2. "Total Football" as used by the Rolling Stones.

game, before, seemingly at the peak of his career, transferring to the Blues.

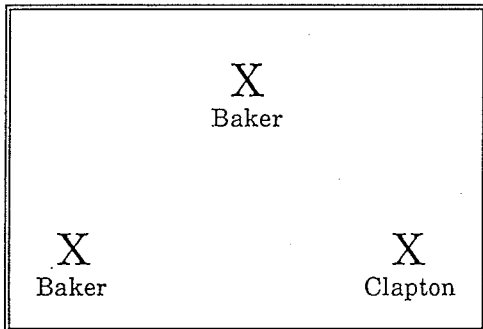


Fig. 3. The "Power Trio" method as used by Cream.

Another popular defensive play was the "Power Trio" method (see Fig. 3). This method relied on technical perfection and little

teamwork. It was popularised by such heavy-duty outfits as Cream, ELP, the Silver Studs, Peter, Paul and Mary and Crosby, Stills and Pelé.

But what has all this to do with TISM's lack of a drummer, you may ask?

Simply put, the common factor in all the previous methods was the extreme distance of the drummer from the front of the stage. If we were to impose these methods on TISM, the result would be untenable for the requirements of the modern player (see Fig. 4).

The sole motivation for my role in the tactical formation of TISM, or indeed for anything else that TISM ever does, is, as demonstrated in Fig. 5, the close proximity of chicks.

Fig. 4. TISM using Flaubert as drummer.

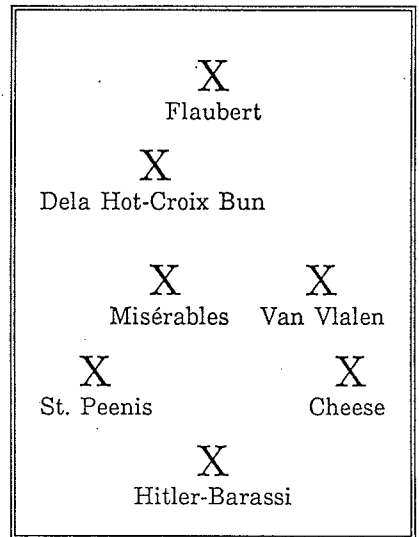
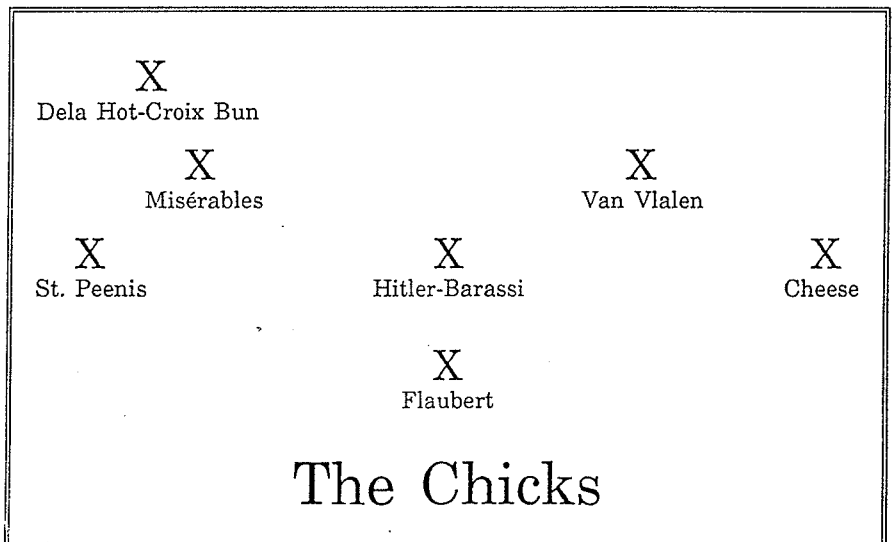


Fig. 5. Flaubert gets the chicks.



The Chicks

Live

RABBIT'S WEDDING -- Old Melbourne, Sat 22/4 -- The support bands remain anonymous, both having declined to identify themselves -- hey, this must be postmodernism! -- So I'll be dispatching footmen to every venue in the kingdom to find the first band. (The second were so boring I can't remember them.) Well, they were a three-piece and sounded a bit like the Clash and a bit like V Spy V Spy, but don't let that put you off. There weren't many people there at this stage and the Strummeresque singer was quite rude and snotty to them all for not clapping hard enough. The bass was good and melodic, there was enough guitar so that the sound was full and the drums were fast but not too loud. Things were going great until the battery in the singer's guitar pedal went flat. They overrode it well enough and the cavernous venue didn't seem to scare them. The singer, by the way, was good-looking enough to be an international pop star. Maybe I was dreaming.

(Maybe you were. Intense research has revealed that the support bands were De Railers and Anonymous, and the band you describe sounds a bit like the latter. But how can the described unit be the same band (now calling themselves Deep In Confusion and referring to themselves by their initials) that I saw supporting the Kryptonics a little while ago? Playing such a good show that not even their girlfriends applauded? Doing Violent Femmes covers? Nah, must have been the De Railers. Must have been. -- ed.)

And onto Rabbit's Wedding, who would undoubtedly have disintegrated had they not moved east. There seems to be absolutely no incentive for bands to stay here. It's not just the weak-kneed excuse of economics, there's a whole jumble of cultural, social and, yes, even political reasons why bands don't stay here. Whatever: Rabbit's Wedding have positively thrived. This is now a Great Band and should be as revered as the Smiths, Pistols, REM, Beatles, Stones, Bros, U2, Kylie and Jason, Elton John, Bruce Springsteen, Simple Minds, Blondie and INXS. Thankfully they're not. They have metamorphosed quite remarkably -- from the cool schoolboys of c. 1985-86 to the quasi-indie-pop-stars who came back for a couple of smiling (it didn't suit them), girl-seducing (ditto) 1987 shows, to the Great Band they are today. No smiles, but no deadening seriousness either. Brilliant sound and great playing, but no muso shit; intelligence and a modicum of preciousness, but no lyrical or musical conceits. They play music that you can really listen to and hear things in. Everything's there. The songs think about themselves; the band just play them.

This was probably the best show they did this time. No problems, unlike the day they played at UWA -- when you couldn't hear the vocals, which are the best part. Paul Watling has a way with incantatory lyrics: "I took my face and I washed in some water/ Refused to mention I was going down", chanted over and over, makes about as much sense as "I should be so lucky/ Lucky, lucky, lucky", but it's far more significant. Very hypnotic and very seductive. He sings about things like (as far as I can make out) cleaning the lounge room, mandarins and bunches of sweet william and makes them sound attractive ... his words are coherent, but the sentences they're arranged in are completely labyrinthine and so convoluted that their sense is lost by the time he finishes a sentence. Like this: "and I

want us to see the same things and the beauty of their unfolding ..." However, the thing that's unusual is that he thinks about how the words sound, which is unlike most pop music. And unlike an incomprehensible lyricist like Steve Kilbey, he doesn't pretend that the words mean anything deep, or indeed anything at all.

Enough about the words: the music's just as rare. There's a great balance between guitar and keyboards. I never thought I'd say this, from the horror-chamber of the synthesizer-plagued early 80's, but there's too much guitar around these days. Not here. Paul's not a guitar-hero and the replacement for the guy who left hardly plays at all, so God knows why he's there. The drumming



TRIFFIDS -- Tivoli Hotel, Adelaide 12/7 -- We hadn't seen the Triffids in four years, and this turned out to be a vast mistake on our part. We now have four years to catch up on.

Our initial impressions were that they're much more together and produce a brilliant emerald of a sound. A few comparisons that occurred to us: a dose of Hunters & Collectors' masculinity and a glass of Aretha Franklin, followed by Marc Almond, Jacques Brel and a skinny-dip with the best of friends in the cool ocean at midnight during February at its ovenmost.

We're getting lyrical here, but it's difficult to restrain ourselves after just seeing such homegrown divas. The similarity which appeared the most obvious, however, was that of Dave McComb to Nick Cave (here we go -- ed) and of the Triffids to the Bad Seeds.

Both front men have a similar sense of humour, dress sense, stylised gestures and sense of public vulnerability. Both bands create similar lush opulent Null-arbor cave networks of sound; a very orchestral arrangement, but the borders of iconic honesty so beloved of the genre are pushed so far that the borders which define "safe" expression and (real) "unsafe" expression become transparent and, finally, only invisible barriers. Very intimate on an epic scale, to the point where certain musical and lyrical themes are echoed like squash balls in play.

Any such neat patterning, of course, collapses when the Triffids do not deliver the start-kick WHUMP which so characterises the Bad Seeds. They provide in its place a sort of open and easy-going humour as found in every ocker pub, which is something only one member of the Bad Seeds at present could be unself-conscious enough to produce. We cannot imagine Cave coming onstage, after leaving it to his mates for a song or two, with his fly down, and responding like this when we told

is completely wonderful, as always, and the bass is melodic with the added attraction of Matthew Hall's dancing. Rabbit's Wedding are really unique; there's no band in the country like them. They played everything from "Showtime", which came across really well in this venue. Regrettably there was nothing older than "Mandarins" -- "Rideout" and "Anderson" would have been welcome. But then again, nothing in the set they did play was dispensable -- a cover of Leonard Cohen's "Stories of the Street", a new song called "Show Me The Effigy" and one called "I Begin To Levitate", which Paul Watling introduced with his normal straight face and then made a self-deprecating joke about. This man would give Michael Stipe a run for his money. World domination is called for.

The Sucking Drip.



Bunnies at Seaview

him to (we told him 'cause no-one else was going to) "Do yer fly up!": McComb looks horrified and crucially embarrassed, spins instantly and very obviously does it up, turns around rapidly and exclaims, "Oh, Jesus Christ, thank you! I must buy you a drink afterwards!"

The Triffids' glorious sense of liberation through excess of expression just ain't the Bad Seeds' territory, altho' the Seeds do skirt it. Strange that two such original bands should court such closely connected areas independently of one another.

All the members of the Triffids got a chance to sing, a healthy and successful attempt to keep the old "lead singer superstar" trap, and, we suspect, McComb's clamouring id, at bay. Songs ranged from the first LP and mini-LP to "In The Pines", a magnificent version of "Wide Open Road", a surprisingly faithful approach to the Velvet Underground's "What Goes On" which was more sinewy and textural than is fashionably foppish at present, and of course the loose sarongs fabricated of tempered steel that described their newer material.

Despite media burble, we always like to make up our minds for ourselves. The Triffids are the band that most "progressive rock" bands wanted to be in the seventies (and still do want to be in the United States) ("progressive rock"? Define your terms -- ed), but couldn't because they lacked essential communication. It struck us four years ago and again on this night -- the Triffids are one hell of a believable live band; they could easily come up with a cabaret act, back up an opera, do film scores and so on, and their future resides in their assurance. Any band that can pull off having plastic tulips with lights inside them affixed to the drumkit without looking like "Complete Nerds III" has got something, agreed?

Effigy.

HE DARK AGE -- Story Bridge, Brisbane 11/4 -- Going to see a band, or Talk It Down, or whatever, at the Story Bridge has always been a pretext for much drinking and idle chatter. This night was no different: maybe the debut performance of He Dark Age attracted a slightly different crowd, but most of those would probably have just as much trouble recalling the details as I. Besides Cooper's, incidentally. Guinness is now on tap. Aside from those who seem to live in the bar, the crowd was mostly friends and family from way back -- not necessarily a bunch of fans, but not people who go see lots of rock bands; not recently.

It's been a while since any of HDA graced a stage. Tony Milner (gtr) last played in public eighteen months ago at the Paint Factory, in Let's Go Naked. Mary Doolan (bass) was in Machines That Walk (as was Tony); they last played in '86. Darren (acc. gtr) has never to my knowledge played the rock live. Though singer Paul Newsome has always been as insistent a performer off the stage as on (it's always -- well, nearly always -- been a pleasure to witness some hapless rager in an ugly nightclub bearing the brunt), Paul hasn't done much in a live sense since Pork, and that was far too long ago to expect it to have any bearing: for better or worse, HDA were in no way an affront to the senses. Much care was taken not to be too imposing -- too much care, perhaps. Whether or not to rock out -- it's a worry.

I arrived late and missed the start of the show, a few short films. Next up was a bracket of instrumentals with a slide show -- two screens placed in front of the band.

ERROL H. TOUT -- "THE TILTING ROOM" ALBUM LAUNCH -- Dolphin Theatre, UWA Fri 17/5 -- Mr. Tout the man and Mr. Tout the musician can immediately impress in two ways: firstly through his virtuosity, agility and pure mastery of the guitar, and secondly through the chosen nature of his expression. It is indeed a gentle and yet commanding and singular music.

Getting specific is difficult; comparisons can be made but are often shallow or lazy. Robert Fripp and Vini Reilly spring to mind only to vanish as Tout swoops to his bank of electronics to touch up, add to or radically alter the direction of a piece. His music is without the fulsome pretensions of a European or the heavy-handed slap of a Statesider. Try beginning to find fault and you're faced with his crushingly frank between-song banter. After the initial embarrassment subsides, you're left with a feeling for his genuine and honest nature.

But into every life a little precipitation must descend. Take this as sour grapes after the edge was taken off a blissful showcase. The support: Rich and Famous -- nope, not in my lifetime and certainly not performing busking favourites. The compere/MC thing: a Port City dick; rambling, incoherent, a veritable faecal geyser of opinionated, sycophantic babble -- unshuttable. (Check the Oxford, straight under "unshitable".) One of those peripheral music scene figures who should all be rounded up and carted off to some remote chain-gang until they consent to their head being removed from their colon.

To more pleasant affairs. The intimate, two hundred seat Dolphin Theatre was a wise choice of venue. It provided the perfect setting and atmosphere for a quite theatrical

The slides looked as though they were taken from 50's/60's science textbooks (lab coats, test tubes, astronomy, etc.) plus some art/architecture shots (... the Bauhaus Institute: is this some kinda joke?). The music was reminiscent of Machines That Walk minus vocals (MTW songs were a bit like instrumentals with words forced to fit): mainly chords on the acoustic guitar, mostly little fiddly bits on the electric (no distortion) but very sparse indeed, emphasising the more interesting chord changes. Unfortunately, apart from a rather upfront drum-machine, the mix was too muddy for the subtle nuances in Milner's songwriting.

Some inaccurate/misleading comparisons: early Cure circa "17 Seconds", perhaps a slowed-down Young Marble Giants, maybe even the Verlaines if Graeme Downes was into Spanish guitar. Atmosphere between sets was flavoured by a cassette playing vintage Wire.

For a second time, Milner enquired as to whether they still had a bassplayer, and Newsome (who had alternated in the first set between drum-machine and Korg MS-20) announced: "We're going to start with a cover, which may or may not be a good idea." If I hadn't been prewarned that they were going to play "Under The Milky Way", I might have dropped my drink. Nevertheless, I was taken aback; it's been a while, but this man once made a regular spectacle of himself abusing anyone foolish enough to pull such a generic rock stunt. On this occasion the only heckling was all very good-natured.

Starting with a cover was possibly too much like putting all eggs in one basket, burning bridges, etc.

As it turned out, their rendition wasn't out of place stylistically, but HDA seemed to be collectively suffering some kind of existential dilemma live onstage. It was as though the band had awoken to find themselves stuck onstage in an ugly pub, trying to recreate the feel of a quiet practice around the kitchen table. I must admit that I expected something harsher; HDA are a lot more laid-back as a "live" band than one might imagine from their not-so-recent recordings. In particular, Newsome seems to have cultivated a more melodic vocal style: a bit tense/frail (cf. Robert Forster, M.E. Smith and anyone from New York when trying to hold down a tune), almost heart-on-sleeve.

Sometimes I was impressed by HDA's almost endearing uncertainty, others I was bored by their apparent lack of conviction (the same reason the suffering Go-Betweens are so often so disappointing -- and I'm sure He Dark Age would prefer not to be mentioned in the same breath).

They only really came out of their shells towards the end of the night, encouraged by increasing levels of "audience participation" and blood-alcohol levels. I'm not sure how many times Paul let his trousers fall during the Pork days, but evidently his Y-fronts still scar a few memories: this time around Peter Pit/Leech emerged from the audience to drop his shorts and hang them on Newsome's head, and yelled "Rock" or "Hell" or something into the microphone. By this time I think both Mary and Tony had retired for the night. What was left of He Dark Age complied to requests for encores of "Wild Thing" and "Delilah" just for the rock-hell of it.

Jan Wadley.

presentation of Tout's new material and a splash of old. Throughout the essentially solo evening he was assisted by various friends who helped out on the album. They augmented his live sound, a subtle complement to the arrangements. I guess it's a sound you could term sparse or minimal, depending on whether you prefer to call a glass half-full or half-empty.

Recorded a good twelve months previous, this third release is available at this stage only on CD and cassette, assuring the buyer of the quality of this contemplative and personal document. I did find out what the "H" middle initial stood for, but I forgot as I tore through the carpark shooting indiscriminately at anyone that remotely resembled the MC. I managed to nail him in a drive-through the very next night. Sure do love a happy ending.

NEIL YOUNG AND THE LOST DOGS

Perth Entertainment Centre April '89
I attended, I relished, I fuck you. Night before: ticket going spare; third row, centre, free. This is stated as a circumstance rather than an excuse. A tall, wool-headed gent in the gents' (logical place for him to be, really) hissed,

"Foils, caps, tabs!"

Kitchen wrap and clothing, openly on sale in our nation's toilets.

"Gargle my piss, southerner!" and it was off to Neil.

First part of the show was a dull nippy excrement fight. Neil took some requests, ignored them and played "Sugar Mountain" about four times, "Heart of Gold" six and "Needle and the Damage Done" a massive eighteen times -- consecutively. I dunno, ganga was fogging the air, I saw red and twisted his fucken harmonica brace around his throat until he squeaked, "Short break, back in twenty

minutes."

Bilious.

Neil returned and rocked. The gap between 'acoustic and 'lectric sets left him plenty of time to explore a richer life through chemistry. That scamp. Sure improved his tone, though. Not even waiting for the band to arrive on stage, he launched into some monster chord and took off. Hard, hard, hard did Neil play. Aably assisted by an interfering road crew, he levitated above the proscenium, killed everyone in the whole joint except me and found favour in his "Burrowing-to-the-centre-of-the-Earth-NOW!!" pedal.

Apparently the PA sound was poo on your picnic blanket. I heard/felt nothing but the onstage wall of amp. Surrounded by corpses, Neil thundered through about eight or ten tunes, of which I recognised only "Mr. Soul", "Down By The River" and "Tonight's The Night" (which turned out to be a slow version of "Mr. Soul" anyway). Caring not a jot, he dragged most of them out for eight or ten minutes or more, the final two (count 'em) songs clocking near half an hour between them. Distortion with a capital "Dead" were the band's orders; they cast worried glances at the Youngster and at each other. Glances that said, "This is definitely my last ... Oh, Jesus!" One was an Apache, one a car salesman and the other two were school-teachers. All of them hated the background slide show.

"Author, author!" I whistled, the sole clapping fool in an eight thousand seat bloodbath.

"There's still one down there," drawled Neil, "can you hit him from the lighting rig, Dennis? No, fuckit, pass me that wheel spanner."

Brett Woodward.

CARETAKERS / CHILDLIKE PRIMITIVES -- Stoned Crow Fri 22/9 -- The Childlike Primitives are a three-piece of twelve-string, bass and drums. Whilst they don't sound like the Smiths, they are in the same ballpark and those that would have a certain inclination (the same one) to the Smiths, Durutti Column, etc. would have a lot of time for the Childlike Primitives. I'm talking about the younger sort of alternative-verging-on-Gothic lovely children -- very nice people to have around. The band and audience match pretty well. A nice quiet night out.

The Caretakers haven't changed much, though they were a lot better than the last time I saw them (the "Out Of The Woodwork" launch, PF#9) The release of the cassette will hopefully induce some active progression.

ps to the above: saw the Childlike Primitives the following week as well and this time they had their keyboard-player/flautist with them. This simple change made them dreadful. Ah well.

ps to the above ps: saw both again a few weeks later. Childlike Primitives now up to a six-piece and totally dissimilar in sound to the first time I saw 'em. Very good. The Caretakers were really quite excellent. Also got my picture taken by a very drunk Leanne Casellas for inclusion in the Daily News "social" pages a couple weeks after. Yup, that's what I look like. Gruesome, ain't it?

... and more: Caretakers' last show Fri 29/12 at Centre Rock. A great show, ending with Mark One throwing his bass to the floor and jumping on it. What a rock god. New Berry Bros. outfit on its way.

THE FISH JOHN WEST REJECT -- Paddington Alehouse, Tue 4/7 -- I went to this show with a good friend called Vanessa, who, about halfway through the show, turned to me and said, "Do they do any originals?" I asked her to explain. "I know every song they've done so far, all obscurities from about 1958 to '63." (Vanessa is intensely knowledgeable about such times and probably has a tape of every rock'n'roll song released within that period.) "They're either doing the song and not saying it's a cover" (they did a pile of somewhat known songs in the first bracket and announced them as covers) "or they're ripping the song off really badly and putting new words to it." I found this quite interesting. In terms of sound they're a bloody typical 80's acoustic pop band, and I'd taken them to be one of that sort of unit with great songwriting skills but little performance value; so Ness' revelation didn't really surprise me all that much. We both had a headache by the end, though these cleared up ten minutes after leaving. Although designer beer is hideously overpriced at the Paddington, if you have the sense to buy normal drinks (VB, dry cider) you'll pay only reasonable amounts. The only other interesting thing was seeing an ageing yuppie (auppie?) with a moustache, a brown leather jacket ... and a Massappeal T-shirt. This didn't help our heads.

ps: have encountered a surprising number of people of taste who have seen the Fish elsewhere and loved 'em. I will concede that it is possible that we just caught the worst night of their lives ...

FUR VERSIONS -- Centre Rock, Dec -- saw 'em in the upstairs room, a place that rivals the Perth Airport Domestic Terminal for desolation and certainly has no business hosting rock'n'roll. Bring your

opera glasses if you want to be able to see the band's faces. The Furies look pop and sound goth (two chord songs, two note bass melodies, two songs in varying proportions) with a female singer doing a sort of gothic yodel over the top -- the overall effect being something like a more pop X-Ray Spex (fairly ordinary music, but with a siren shriek over the top). The band centres around the guitarist, who (thanks Helen) looks like the one in American Frat-pack movies who is always called Blair and who always loses. The band has improved considerably over the past few months -- their two songs sounded excellent and the singer has learnt the art of performance whilst singing, as opposed to merely pogoing and wobbling alternately. Check 'em out. Thirty bored goths gazed into the distance and approved.

HEALERS -- The new band for Craig Hallsworth (v.g) (ex-Bamboos); with Tony Vespoli (g, kazoo) (ex-Jerry-Anne's Plan), Jim Butterworth (b) (ex-Jerry-Anne's Plan, Hunkpapas) and Miles Hitchcock (d) (ex Threads, Hunkpapas; X-Press writer).

You will remember how the Bamboos' first album contained simple, good and together songs, whilst the second album (ill-realised) and final 7" (a mess) were striving towards something a bit more complicated, a bit more developed. Well, the process seems to have completed itself successfully and Craig's songwriting has grown to a new level.

The band has the playing ability, too: although early on things tended to sound like a band with no lead guitarist on stage at the same time as a lead guitarist running through the Bumper Book of 10,000 Guitar Clichés one by one (and still does at their occasional bad show), things have now generally integrated.

The final part is the performance. The Healers are happy to be dickheads in the name of the show, they don't have to be precious about things. Hence the kazoo, Craig's writhings, Craig's Kylie and Jason shirts, the wigs, the masks, etc., etc.

The other thing to keep in mind, should all this tempt you, is that the Healers are VERY LOUD IN-DEED. So take care.

So there you have it: songs, technical ability, performance. And volume. Assuming that apples can in fact be directly compared to oranges, the Healers are probably The Best Band Playing In Perth At The Moment. If you catch a bad set, watch for the effect described above and give 'em another go. You'll regret it otherwise.

KRYPTONICS -- the new lineup being Ian (v, g), Jeff (b, bv), Tony Rushan (g) and Peter Kostic (d). Tony and Peter were in a band called the Ritual late last year. The old "new" drummer, Andy "Bam Bam" Robinson (ex-New Tradition), quit after four weeks (just before the first tour) because -- get this -- his incredibly rich family threatened to disinherit him should he quit his job for rock'n'roll. Apparently he's moved to Melbourne, plays in a band there and has calmed down a lot -- no bad thing. The lineup with Peter recorded the "When It's Over/Oedipus Complex" 7".

So. The K's are not a pop band. They are a rock'n'roll band. Not a rawk band, but purveyors of fine music of a straight-down-the-line sorta style. The band lives up to the mini-LP. Headbangers like them and alternative-scenesters (us) like them and indie types (us) like them and suburban yobs like them and surfies like them and, yes, even

bogans like them. Their good shows are still fuckin' Godlike and their bad shows are competent, which is somehow a touch disconcerting but certainly a lot better than being the pits of embarrassment. They have the organisation, the dedication and a lot of the business sense. This edition really could make it big.

Best songs: "Rejectionville", "A Little Mascara" (Replacements, and pisses on the original), "Valentine", "When It's Over" (which should be re-recorded bigger), "Telephone Line" ...

Obligatory nostalgia section: I guess we'll just never see a sixteen minute version of "The Land That Time Forgot" again ... Though considering everything else that tended to go with that, that might not be such a bad idea. (Put that knife down, Helen!)

RAINYARD -- late '89 -- the band have brilliant melodic pop-songs (having mastered the art of theft -- "Just learn 'Metal Guru' and you'll know how to play this one" -- but doing something individual with what they take -- I still haven't spotted the "Metal Guru" one) and just need to get some technical togetherness and cut with the stage "patter". Get the cassette. Liam now sometimes moves on stage, too.

KIM SALMON / THROMBUS -- Stoned Crow, Fri 15/12 -- The first set was a bit of a historical event, in a way. The day's paper had announced how Salmon was going to play a set of old Scientists songs backed by the three instrumental members of Thrombus. And can you guess what that actually meant? Songs from the first version of the Scientists, that's what ... pink album and "Sweet Corn Sessions" stuff. Songs he hadn't played in eight years. "Teenage Dreamer", "Sorry, Sorry, Sorry", "That Girl", "Frantic Romantic", "Shake (Together Tonight)", "Baby You're Not For Sale" ... done very nicely, with feel to burn. Even a few members of the Obnoxious Over-30's club to lend the final touch to the atmosphere. A gem of an event.

The second set saw Thrombus play average-OK, and all their friends and fans get busted and thrown out when two members of our police force started checking ages. The twenty-odd folk remaining were treated to an hour of Sir Kim solo on guitar (great new song "The Butterfly Effect" -- release this soon!) and one could do nothing but sit there jaw-dropped stunned. It makes one feel good to know that a national resource like this man is around. The bad news is that not only are Kim's clothes getting worse, but he says the style is gonna get popular; an idea of depressing plausibility.

SUMMER SUNS -- This year's Summer Suns have solved one of Ross Chisholm's main problems with the family trees, that of where to put Kim Williams: after this year he gets one of his own, as nowhere else will fit the six distinct lineups (count 'em -- KJRLN, KJRLM, KJRM, KSJRM, KSRM, KSRG) the band has been through this year. Nik Kaitse has left to play his 4x2's in the Beautiful Losers, Liam Coffey has the Rainyard and has dragged Jeff Baker off with him and Martin Moon was only temping anyway. The somewhat surviving lineup is Kim (vocals, guitar), Ross Campbell (bass, backing vocals), Stephen Hird (guitar, backing vocals) and Gary Chambers (drums).

The prevailing factors this year have been (a) brilliant shows and (b) no-one at them. (The three-guitar lineup had gloriously dangerous jangle levels and was one of my

shows of the year. Don't you wish you'd seen it? Loser.) Probably the main problem is that Kim Williams is not a popstar and never will be; he just doesn't have that attitude. Audiences tend to consist of individual fans rather than mass ones, hence the low numbers.

The single "All Away/Mexican Restaurant" is out now and is brilliant. It even has a string section in the middle eight (Cathi Smith (viola) and Vivienne Langham (cello)). (Kim tried using samples, but they didn't work. Thank God!) It's on Waterfront and its lucky number is DAMP 118.

The band's next show is indeterminate, while Kim concentrates on the House of Wax -- shop 4, first floor, Centerway Arcade (near King Street), Perth and possibly the coolest shop in Perth at present. That's for the two or three ignorant souls who haven't been there yet. Bring lots of money or you'll regret it.

X / RAINDOGS -- Grosvenor, Fri 3/11 -- The Raindogs sound pretty cool until you have someone like Danny present calling every one of the Alice, Dolls, etc. obscurities (plus Birdman, Ramones) that make up most of their set. Their originals are quite OK, it's just that there should be more of them, and they announce every one of them with "Uhh, this is one we wrote ..." Real bands don't do that sort of thing.

X also played this night and were pretty fuckin' hot. In fact, they were (are) Godlike. I have been waiting four years to see this band and got everything I expected and more. They even upgraded the Grosvenor PA from two watts to three for them. (They still blew a speaker, though.) A pity about the Ramones spot, though -- those that saw that show and none of the others sure did miss out. I remember seeing Steve Lucas walking up South Terrace, muttering darkly and clenching and unclenching his fists ... X were a touch rock'n'roll dumb, but their musical virtue outshone this thoroughly and Perth was honoured to get them before they quit. A band you could marry.

David.

Thanks to contributor The Sucking Drip, who can write up a storm and I am quite annoyed at my time factor (get in touch so I can hassle you closer to next D-Day), and to Brett Klucznik whose efforts all fell through the net -- unfortunate, even if he does like Devils On Horseback (dear God).

A Very Sad Verse by the Sucking Drip

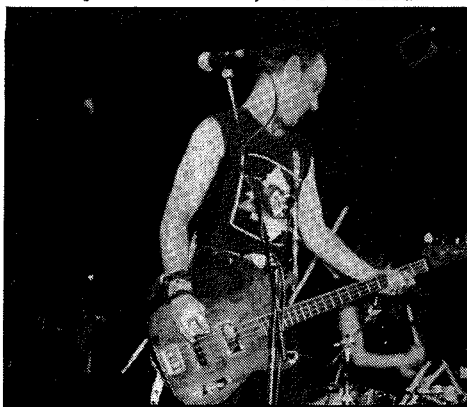
Tonight it's winter.
She sits down to write,
and the sad fact of futures
Lays into her.

"My baby, I wrote you a letter
all about the time we won't be
together. It's all about
the loveless longing, and
the past infractions you can't
tell me of or if we fight ..."
She punched out his lights,
the hate she didn't have
making her rage,
the furious nice winter night
living inside her, and
making him right.

"I love him," she said,
and thought she could see the past.
"To love you," she wrote
and it rankled through
skins of rough earth, and
time, and water, and other people.
"This note's for you ..." she wrote:
Everything she could never say.

RAMONES / X -- Cargo's Nov '89 -- X blew it and knew it. It looked and sounded like technical problems with the guitar, and so most of the set was propelled by Cathy Green's drums and Ian Rilen playing one of the two strings left on the bass, with Steve Lucas singing guitarless over the top of the rhythm. Out of this spartan mire could be heard "Dream Baby", "Halfway 'Round The World", "And More", "You Really Don't Care" and "Suck Suck". Certainly not the gig to catch X at their best, but they get points for perseverance.

The Ramones haven't really progressed since their first album in 1976, one of the most likely reasons being that they are unable to; but then again, that's probably one of their most attractive qualities: no musical pretensions here. It's music that any garage band can play, so why do so few of those bands sound this good? Musically it's buzzsaw



BEASTS OF BOURBON / KING PIG -- Shenton Park Oct '89 -- This was the first time I'd seen King Pig since their return with new guitar slinger Jamie Rogers. In truth, not much has changed musically. I still prefer to listen to them rather than see them on stage, where it's pretty static. If you just close your eyes and listen it seems much better. Bruce Matthews' drums and Alan Hooper's vocals boom over the top; under that is Glenn Tobin's bass holding it together, and beneath that Jamie Rogers' guitar sometimes almost subliminal and other times adding variation and colour via short guitar fills. All suitably early 80's gothic. It's only early days for this lineup, but I hope they keep their shit together, do some recording and go for a visit over east, 'cos if they stay too long in Perth then apathy will stifle them.

What pissed me off about the Beasts of Bourbon was not the band, but the audience -- not the preening, self-important goths down the front, they're essentially harmless; but the slammers behind them. Basically they didn't give a toss about the music, 'cept whether it was fast or slow: the more uptempo, the more they slam. When the band do slower numbers the slammers stand there like stunned mullets with silly vacant looks on their faces, looking to see who they can slam into when the tempo picks up. I'm not sure which is worse, those here to slam or those here to be seen; whatever, the music is wasted on these drop-kicks.

Musically the Beasts are mutant blues with some lighter jazz and country touches and heavier atonal noise thrown in, giving what on the surface appears to be a messy and uncomfortable over-eclecticism, but in practice is an interesting and challenging diversity and variety of sounds -- mix and mismatch. What also adds to the feel is the sequen-

rhym with a wall-of noise approach played very loud. I think Motorhead are the only other band I've heard play louder. At a Ramones gig, you only hear snatches of songs in the blur of the set -- it's sort of like a long medley which blurs into one long song with much the same guitar riff and beat throughout, with occasional breaks for the band and audience to catch their breath.

Onstage these guys don't say much, but then there isn't really much time to say anything before the blitzkrieg starts again. Johnny plays a Mosrite guitar and doesn't look like he's forty; Joey was pretty much inaudible from where I was sandwiched; the new bass-player, C.J., can shout "1, 2, 3, 4" just like Dee Dee used to; and Marky looks like he could fit in with the Psychotic Turnbuckles without the need to buy a fright-wig. For those interested, this is what they played: Intro / Lobotomy / Psycho / Blitzkrieg Bop / Rock'n'Roll Radio / Miracles / Shock Treatment / Rock'n'Roll High School / Sedated / Beat On The Brat / I Wanna Live / Bonzo / Mental / Sheena / Rockaway Beach / Pet Sematary / Don't Bust My Chops / She's The One / Mama's Boy / Animal Boy / Warthog / Surfin' Bird / Cretin Hop / Walk Around With You / Today Your Love / Pinhead // (encore #1) Chinese Rocks / Drink / Let's Dance // (encore #2) Do You Wanna Dance / Palisades Park / Happy Family

This Monday night Perth was Ramoned to death, and it was a lotta fun.

Larry Ramone.

cing of the songs. Best of the night was "Pig", a stomping blues about self-indulgent slovenliness with Tex Perkins down on his knees at the front of the stage shouting in someone's face, "I made this bed of shit/ Now I'm gonna lie in it/ I'm a pig/ And I don't give a shit!" This was followed by a light cabaret jazz piece, so laid-back the rhythm section was almost asleep -- real dancing cheek-to-cheek stuff. Perhaps the only criticism of the band was that occasionally I got the feeling that the rhythm section wasn't exactly called on to do that much.

After repeated audience calls they finally did "Psycho". (After a while you begin to wonder about the limited persistence of some people in an audience!) (Well, at least we were shouting out for "Playground" -- ed.) "Psycho" was so drawn-out, the band must have been trying to send it up or wind the audience up or both. Really they should drop "Psycho" from the set, 'cos it doesn't fit in that well with the rest of the material -- mostly drawn from the "Sour Mash" album plus a couple of obscure covers.

The first lot of encores had "Dropout" (becoming something of a regular encore feature) and "Loving You Again", which is country blues and the only attempt at harmonies tonight, with Tex and Spencer eyeing each other to see if they could actually co-ordinate their harmony singing. The second lot of encores had "Playground", with the very appropriate lines for tonight "I live out in Yobsville/ Ten miles out of town" sung over a white noise background. Last number, "Let's Get Funky", was mindless fun that went on and on and got nowhere, but was obviously never intended to.

Great band, great songs, shame about some of the audience.

Larry Wallis.

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HARD-ONS: Love Is A Battlefield of Wounded Hearts LP (Waterfront) At the risk of saying what's probably been said many times before, the Hard-Ons can't decide if they want to be a power pop band with balls or a hard rock band with occasional pop sensibilities. It's a fine line for sure. Yeah, I know that the Ramones have existed in this musical purgatory for the last fifteen years, but, as that band shows, stagnation begins to set in.

Sometimes, as on "Don't Wanna See You Cry", "Rejected" and "Get Wet", the power chords and the vocal find a balance and the group know where they're going. Other bits and pieces, such as "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" and "Kill Your Mum", sound like reworked and speeded-up early Sabbath riffs, obviously slamming music. The rest falls somewhere in between. The album, like the songs, is hit-and-miss. These guys make good to great singles, and sometimes I think their albums should just be singles collections (just a thought!). Taste before you buy.

NEW CHRISTIS: Distemper LP (Blue Mosque) This record bites hard. It's not an easy listen due to its intensity; it's probably better to listen to a side at a time. Musically it's standard New Christs: guitar/bass/drums/vocals with no one person dominating and with the usual uniformly high standard of songs and performance. Louis Tillet's occasional keyboards widen the scope of the music he plays on. If all parties are agreeable, maybe they could add him to the group; he complements them well.

Because of the high standard it's hard to pick a standout, but for me it's probably "Bed Of Nails" which deals with a less-than-harmonious domestic situation, a relationship going down the tube, similar to "Born Out Of Time" -- yes, it's that good. Sadly you won't hear this on nor a number of other songs on the radio due to the current retarded obscenity laws, but I guess the New Christs don't give a toss about airplay because this album will sell despite the lack of it; though probably not in this town because of their lack of any live profile. Previous single releases have given them an enviable track record and their awesome live reputation should ensure healthy sales in Australia and (more importantly) overseas, which sadly is where their future lies.

So the New Christs' debut album has finally arrived, every bit as good as I hoped and expected, and ... no compromises!

PERE UBU: Cloudland LP (Fontana, UK) I never thought I'd write this about a Pere Ubu record, but the problem with this album is that it's too straight, too conventional, too mainstream.

Way back when, Pere Ubu were one of the most entertaining groups to emerge from middle America (circa late 70's). They were quirky, unpredictable and challenging, both musically and lyrically. I missed their comeback album "The Tenement Years", but by all accounts it was very good. So what went wrong?

What struck me on first listen was the drumming. On the sleeve two people are credited with drums and percussion; hence, methinks, heaps of polyrhythms and a very heavy percussive feel. Then I listen and it's all very straight-down-the-line and conventional, almost clinical. All very competent, you understand, but it could be anybody. (It's hard to believe that

drummer Chris Cutler used to play with English fringe band Henry Cow, who were about as close to mainstream as Motorhead is to Bros.)

Sadly, most of the music's the same, veering towards standard guitar-dominated progressions that lack variation, adventure and challenge. In a word, it lacks character. There are a few numbers, "Why Go It Alone?" and "Flat" being the best, that touch on what they are capable of: the first because the guitars are toned down and there is a lighter, almost jazzy subtlety introduced, and the second because of the subject matter -- one of the first car accidents, in 1904. But for the most part, it goes in one ear and out the other. David Thomas' vocals are always a source of amazement to me, with his high-pitched and lurching delivery coupled with his abstract and tongue-in-cheek lyrical imagery; but they have been tamed, much as the music has. Surely they're not silly enough to try and crack the mainstream radio mentality, heading towards that faceless crap that makes up 95% of mainstream-label releases. It would be easy to blame the rather slick and homogeneous production, but ultimately it's the group's fault. However, there are enough ripples left on this record to show that the spirit's still there, if rather well-hidden; but another record like this and I will have serious reservations that

they've given up the ghost and gone corporate muzak on me.

POI DOG PONDERING: Poi Dog Pondering LP (Texas Hotel Records, US) Well, what can I tell you about the strangely-named Dogs? 1. They come from Texas. 2. Although only a loose amalgamation around chief songwriter and vocalist Frank Orrall, there are a dozen musicians in the group on this record.

On this short album (side one just cracks thirteen minutes, and side two isn't much longer), the sound is crisp and clean enough for you to hear all the little bits and pieces that go into making this such a refreshing album. As you may have guessed, with a dozen musicians, this isn't ver basic guitar-bass-drums setup. The aforementioned Orrall's talent lies in being able to write a catchy and intelligent song with a melody and arrange it so that the rest of those involved can carry the melody whether it be on tin whistle, accordion, mandolin, banjo, recorder, fiddle, trumpet, trombone, congas or any of the myriad instruments involved.

About the only other group I've come across that sound anything like this was David Lindley's old group Kaleidoscope during some of their lighter moments, and I suspect that that's because both have/had musicians with a background in bluegrass. Look, I confess I'm not that knowledgeable about this type of music, but I know what I like.

Ross C.

blowing screams and gung-ho playing give the whole thing a touch of class. A killer.

Kim Williams.

Records

WISHNIKS: Wishful Thinking/Wicked Pygmy Summer 7" (Junk, US) Like a shambolic REM. I like it. Available exclusively at the House of Wax. (PO Box 30084, Philadelphia PA 19103-0404, USA.)

(All the following 7" on Get Hip through Skyklad, 6 Valley Brook Drive, Middlesex NJ 08846, USA.)

HERETICS: Shriveled Up And Die -- Garage my eye! This is sewer rock. The singer sounds like he uses battery acid as a mouthwash. Kinda like George "The Animal" Steele fronting the Stooges. Also worth checking out is their cover of "Search & Destroy", the only version I've heard that rivals the original.

MANUAL SCAN: Lost Sessions EP -- Four 60's covers released as an addendum to the band's original efforts. "I Can Only Give You Everything" is the most familiar track but the standout cut is "Come See Me". Good taste is its own reward. Now to find their other records.

THE TOWN CRYERS: Girl With The Blue Sweater -- Not to be confused with the godlike Australian 60's band of the same name, this US band is pleasant rather than compelling. I prefer the B-side, a more straightforward 60's rave-up.

THE MIRACLE WORKERS: Strange Little Girl -- Unashamedly retro, this band occupy the same authentic recreative area as the Chesterfield Kings, with their droning organ and fuzz-drenched guitar. My copy gets stuck. Stuck in 1967, that is. The B-side is a live version of "Green Fuz" as made famous by Randy Alvey and also some band called the Cramps.

THE JIGSAW SEEN: Jim Is The Devil -- With a sound reminiscent of the Cryan Shames, the Jigsaw Seen sing a sweet and mellifluous tune about Jim (The Devil). Probably about Jim Bakker. Can't wait for the followup: "Tammy Is The Archangel Gabrielle".

THE CYNICS: Get My Way -- Best 60's garage record I've heard since the early Stems singles. The mynd-

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THE BEVIS FROND: The Auntie Winnie Album (Reckless) Sick of that regurgitated jingle-jangle guitar shit? Yeah, me too! It's all very well going back to basics, but without something new to say it's rather pointless simply trying to recreate '66-'67 period Byrds. The Bevis Frond are light-years ahead of this pseudo-born-again-naïveté bullshit.

The Frond have been around a while; check out the article in The Bob #36 for the full story. The band basically revolves around one Nick Salomon who writes and plays most things.

So, what's this sound like? Well, there's a problem if you're after a label to hang from this record. What would you think if I said "psychedelic"? If your idea of psychedelia is limited to an old' copy of "Nuggets", think again. "Nuggets" is mostly a collection of the pretty commercial and accessible side of psychedelia that made it on to seven inches of vinyl. This is more like "heavy acid underground album" stuff. Exhausting my supply of adjectives may give you some idea of the general direction this lot are coming from.

Overall it's got a primitive but adventurous feel, sometimes reminiscent of Hawkwind before they ODED and became studio slaves. The widespread use of effects and distortion gives it a muddy sound, while they tend occasionally to sit on a riff for a whole song (the way Hawkwind used to) but with enough variation, usually from the keyboards (sometimes it sounds like Doug Inge from Iron Butterfly -- honest!) that it doesn't get boring on occasions such as the ten and a half minute "City Of The Sun". The music hangs around for too long, but this is balanced out by the highlights such as the two instrumentals that open each side: "Malvolio's Dream Journey to Pikes" and (my favourite) "The Miz-Maze". The only non-original is easy to pick without having to look at the credits -- it's called "Winter's Blues", and anyone moderately familiar with Johnny Winter's work would be able to pick his songwriting style.

According to the liner notes, this is a collection of unreleased odds and sods. Little of it is all that conventional; it's just that some bits are more accessible than others.

CELIBATE RIFLES: O Salvation/ Fish and Trees 7" (True Tone) "O Salvation" is from one of last year's "must listen to" albums. The song works well both on the album and as a single. It has a heavier sound than the first single, "Johnny", but very catchy.

I've always liked Damien Lovelock's lyrical perspective. Some may call it cynical, but I've always viewed it more as a case of introducing elements of common sense and levity to the lyrics, rather a radical move in this day and age. Wish I could hear this blasting out of a car radio somewhere. Killer riff, great song, turn it up!

"Fish and Trees" is about as much of a contrast as you could get to the A-side. It's semi-acoustic blues pickings, though I don't know if Lovelock's voice suits the style ... a small point as the vocals take a bit of a back seat to Kent's uncharacteristic acoustic guitar work.

CLAWHAMMER: Poor Robert 7" (Grown Up Wrong) A song about long-forgotten LA loony Wild Man Fischer, the song's a lot more accessible than the man himself. Musically it's standard rock fare that grunts and

grinds in all the right places. It's really the lyrics that make this stand out from the regular run of the mill. I particularly like the spoken-word bit in the middle.

Of the two songs on the B-side, "Everybody's Got Something To Hide Except Me And My Monkey" is a Beatles cover that leaves me cold. The second song, "Car Down Again", an original, is much better. It rocks along quite nicely with the vocalist sounding like he's borrowed some of Iggy's phrasing from the song "Tight Pants". Overall, when these guys stick to their original songs they're worth a listen.

CRAWLSPACE: Silent Invisible Conversation 7" EP (Grown Up Wrong) An unusual four-track 7" from a Californian group that have managed an Australian release thanks to Grown Up Wrong Records. The three titles on side one come and go in a flash. The first, "The Void That Slithers", is an atmospheric intro, while "More Noize" and "Teenage Zombie for Jesus" are punk/hard rock crossover (Slaughter And The Dogs spring to mind). The liner notes describe the latter song as "punk rock puke disguised as social comment" -- couldn't put it better myself.

The title of this record comes from the song on side two, "Little Star of Bethlehem". It's a cover of an early Can number; someone's obviously been digging into their record collection. I could never really handle Malcolm Mooney's vocals on the original Can song (I much preferred his successor Damo, who breathed the vocals rather than singing and grunting like Mooney). I really like this interpretation. The seven-minute version on this release is an edited segment from the sixteen-and-a-half-minute monster on Crawlspace's "Gospel Zone" album, which I hunted out and bought after hearing this. In fact, this 7" is pretty representative of the album; with side one having the short and sharp songs and the longer and more complex material being on side two. Trying to describe "Little Star" is pretty hard as it involves a hopeless attempt to describe Can by using mere adjectives. Suffice it to say that no one sounded quite like them. Crawlspace don't attempt to out-weird the original; they rock it up but still keep the feel of the original, though with more listenable vocals.

This release is good as a taster for other Crawlspace material. The three songs on side one are unavailable elsewhere as far as I know. Whether you like it or not depends on whether you're prepared to take a chance -- suck it and see.

DREAM SYNDICATE: It's Too Late To Stop Now LP (Another Cowboy Recording, US) If you stopped listening to the Dream Syndicate about the time Karl Precoda left, as I did, then this album will come as rather an ear-opener. It's basically an odds-and-sods collection of studio outtakes, live-to-air radio material plus other bits and pieces, covering late '84 to late '88 when they finally split. What you get is a whistle-stop tour through electric and acoustic Dream Syndicate which demonstrates that there was life post-Precoda, just that the released studio material was too polished. What those albums probably needed was to be rough around the edges like this one, where the songs themselves stand out, and with the group moving into more musically diverse areas, which they probably could never have done with Precoda in the band.

Given the diversity of sources for the material on the album, the recordings are for the most part pretty good. About the only time it gets rough is on an acoustic medley of "Listen To The Lion/Tell Me When It's Over", with Steve Wynn playing solo. What you can hear sounds great, though.

Overall not just one for the fans, but one for those who lost faith in one of the more interesting groups to emerge from LA in many a year.

KING SNAKE ROOST: Things That Play Themselves LP (Aberrant) Go to your record store, walk up to the counter with this record and ask them to put it on over the speakers. Then casually walk away and pretend to look through the record racks, and check people's reactions when the stylus hits the vinyl -- especially the grimace on the face of the poor bunny you asked to put it on. You may even like to time how long your friendly and helpful shop assistant will allow this racket to stay on the turntable before deciding to take it off in order not to drive everyone from the store. Yep, I like this record a lot!

The band's first record was one of those "OK, but ..." albums. On reflection, it was probably recorded either too early in the band's life or too soon after some lineup changes. It didn't quite geil. As for this one, well, I had a problem when I first heard it because of how the labels are arranged, and I put on side two. As soon as the first song started I knew this was gonna be great. The piece is called "Fried" and combines Adrian Hornblower's off-the-wall sax and Charlie Tolnay's very distinctive guitar noise. The overall feel of the piece reminds me of Grong Grong; not really surprising considering the Tolnay connection, but I didn't think any group could really cover the area they used to own. Now King Snake Roost look as though they may well be the new owners, if not the sole occupants, of this particular musical netherworld -- or is it purgatory?

Part of the band's distinctive sound is that they don't put the lead guitar way down in the mix; rather, they let the bass and occasional rhythm guitar carry the sound. The lyrics are much better than on the first album, but you'll still need the lyric sheet to work out what the hell Peter Hill is singing about. His vocal approach sometimes reminds me of Captain Beefheart, where the music suddenly stops and he keeps going, then he stops and the music starts up again. (He sounds more like Alice Cooper to me -- Danny.) (Sounds more like a vocalised car crash to me -- ed.) Using the word "singing" probably gives the wrong impression as it's more a combination of singing, narration and recital. Like I said, Beefheartish; you're never quite sure when the music will stop or start and the same with the vocals. About the only drawback with this approach is that it numbs your ears and brain after a while. I recommend playing no more than one side at a time so as to ensure maximum aural and neurological damage. (Wimpshit! -- ed.)

It's rather hard to describe their sound without actually listening to it in a record store, because you won't hear it anywhere else; probably not even on one of those oh so hip alternative radio stations, who are too busy looking out for the next big thing from England to recognise homegrown talent. If this lot came from England or the US, they

would be hailed as ground-breaking. Guess them's the breaks.

LAZY COWGIRLS: Third Time's The Charm mini-LP (Grown Up Wrong) This here five-track from the California group is an Oz-only release and mentions some heavy names in the liner notes: Dolls, Stooges, Dictators, Ramones -- get the idea? A lot to live up to. They don't do a bad job, either. Overall there's a very New York feel to it; in fact, the Heartbreakers (Johnny Thunders) springs to mind, but this group's still got its own sound. All the material is straight-ahead rocking stuff -- short, sharp and to the point, with little room for self-indulgence or excess, and the whole lot surprisingly catchy. Sounds like it would be great live. It's refreshing to find something coming out of the US indie scene that isn't brain-dead hardcore/speedmetal or regurgitated guitar-pop.

MUDHONEY: Superfuzz Bigmuff mini-LP (Au Go Go) This one creeps up on you, but you've got to be in the right frame of mind to begin with. The first time I tried to listen to this I played "Sweet Young Thing Ain't Sweet No More" and thought to myself, "if I try this now I'm not gonna like it;" so I tried a week later, and hey presto -- turn it way up and it comes out much better.

What makes this work is that they've kept to basics and not clogged it up with big studio sounds that would make it all sound the same. This puts most neo-heavy rock bands to shame, but has enough light and shade to make you appreciate the heavy bits. In essence this is old-style US hard rock with a thundering rhythm section and with guitars all over the place but mixed to the top rather than from endless overdubs. (Yes, there is a noticeable difference in the sound the two approaches produce!) Some groups sound best stuck in a cheap studio grinding it out; the "less is more" philosophy still holds true, and this is a pretty good example, but like most music you gotta like the style in the first place. For me there are times this is gonna be just what I want to listen to. Enough said.

RATCAT: This Nightmare LP (Waterfront) Another instalment in Simon Day's continuing attempt at world domination, and certainly a more consistent release than the previous 12". It's all rather tacky and for the most part quite catchy, even if the lyrics become too teen-anguish-ridden. Of the nine originals (there's one somewhat redundant Darling Buds cover), virtually all are about girls or lack thereof. I mean, how can you pass up: "I met her at the kindergarten/ She wore her hair in pigtailed/ She had teeth like a rabbit/ And she loved to eat snails" -- "True Lust".

On first listen the album sounds and reads like bubblegum music, but it's rather more enduring than that. Check out "The Killing Joke", probably the highlight of the album, where they break out of their self-imposed lyrical and musical constraints. A more accurate description would be "guitar power-pop". There's nothing going to challenge the intellect, but then it was never intended to -- which is one of its more appealing features.

VARIOUS: Oasis II LP (Greasy Pop) An Adelaide compilation covering some of the new groups emerging from that city during 1987/88. There's not that much greasy stuff here, or, for that matter, that much pop material. Most of it's somewhere in-between. It seems the 60's

revival was quite influential; however, unlike Perth where the scene virtually OD'ed on Rickenbackers and early Byrds/Smiths imitations, I guess in Adelaide it was the "Nuggets" album that most of the young bands were/are listening to. In addition, it sounds like keyboards have obviously come back into fashion which gives the music a fuller sound rather than the repetitive guitar drone which has come to predominate in recent years.

Opening the album, both the Little Assassins and the Chrisalids lack a little in character and personality. They sound like young bands looking for direction. Next is the Morning Glory's "Black Dreams", which has some nice 60's keyboard/organ that opens up the music from the simple guitar stuff on the first two songs. Apparently, Morning Glory spent eighteen months refining their songs, and it shows that some thought has gone into the arrangements. Following are the Handmedowns and "Quarter To Twelve", which is pretty good guitar pop. The Ninth Wave contribute an organ-driven piece that seems to be aiming for a 60's/80's psychedelic sound but isn't really far enough out on the edge for my tastes. Still, I wouldn't mind hearing more of this lot. Closing side one is Dandelion Wing. The opening distorted guitar (very reminiscent of the Exploding White Rodents) continues through most of the song, and keyboards keep resurfacing now and again all through but somehow don't quite fit in with the rest of it. As for the vocals, well, it's not the best of voices, but it's real snotty -- bet it takes a real toll on the singer's throat. The whole lot sounds best when the vocals finish and the tempo picks up at the end.

Side two is a bit of a blur. Contrapunctus play it raw and the vocals remind me of the Psychotic Turnbuckles. The Philisteins have a mini-album out that gives a fuller picture of what they're about than the song on offer here. Probably the best of the punkier-inspired numbers on side two is by the Very Sane who go for an English sound rather than the predominantly American-inspired sound of the album.

The only really greasy song on the album is left till last. It's "Ring My Bell" (by Union Carbide Productions) by the Twenty Second Sect. These people understand how to use a power chord and have a nice prominent bass sound. I'm even getting used to Liz Dealey's vocals, though probably because they're mixed low enough that they don't grate too much. This group has a sound, their sound, that demonstrates individuality and personality that some of the other groups on this album lack; but then, the members of the Sect have all been around for a while and had time to develop their music. For most on this album it's early days.

Nothing on here is bad, it's just that some of the people should stop listening to that old "Nuggets" album and develop their own music. I'll be keeping an ear peeled for the payoff.

X: And More LP (White Label) Why has it taken eighteen-plus months for this record to be released? The group had a near hit with "Dream Baby" back in '87. My guess is that the record company probably feel the group has little cross-over potential to get to the mainstream. It'll be interesting to see how much of a promotional push the label gives this album; given the delays so far, I suspect it won't be much. This band deserve better.

Of the ten songs on this very short album, four have been released previously in one form or another! The album kicks off with "Home Is Where The Floor Is", a statement of lifestyle more than anything. Classic X, hard and fast; or, as Pat Monaghan described it, "it grunts." Next, yet another version of "I Don't Wanna Go Out", with Ian Rilen's bass carrying it along while Steve Lucas puts guitar embellishments on top. I'm not sure if this is re-recorded from the single version (the B-side of "Dream Baby"), but they have certainly added an off-the-wall sax break in there; ditto on "Dream Baby". "Getting Wet" and "Sad Days Girl" are, on first listen, out of character for X. "Getting Wet" is more like Lucas' solo material, while "Days" has a dirge-like feel, courtesy of Eric Gradman's violin which is reminiscent of John Cale's early work ("Venus In Furs" and "We Will Fall"); but, as the previous album "At Home With You" demonstrated, X aren't content just to play one style of music; they leave room for growth.

"El Salvador" is a studio version of the song previously available in live form on a Phantom flexi. This version has great harmonica from the ubiquitous Chris Wilson. "You Say You Love Me" is the X we all know and love from their first album, with Steve Lucas' slide guitar making it sound like early Tatts -- funny, that.

I like this album, but, here it comes, this album is just too fuckin' short -- not even thirty minutes long! Eighteen dollars for an album this short is a ripoff. They should have dropped a song or two and released it as a mini-album or else recorded some more songs. How about "Without You", "Hate City" or "TV Cabaret Roll"? This band deserve better treatment than they've had, and so do their fans.

Larry Wallis.

78 RECORDS



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If you find it hard to find some of the records reviewed here, even after trying PF's other advertisers, PF would like to highly recommend Au.Go.Go Mail-Order (GPO Box 542d, Melbourne 3001 -- see ad). Even though it's come in for a fair bit of stick from the PF Nitpicking Squad in its time (some of the catalogue descriptions are quite silly indeed), it is nevertheless a fine, trustworthy and helpful mail-order outlet that I use and recommend personally. That catalogue arriving every few months is usually the high point of that week. If you're into Aus indie you'll jump with joy at the otherwise unobtainable goodies on offer each time, though your bank manager probably won't. Give 'em a go -- ed.

BENEDICTS: On The Air 7" (Waterfront) A top-class Sydney acoustic guitar pop single that keeps making me play it over and over again, which you must admit is a pretty good criterion for success as a pop single. Flawed, certainly, but it rocks just fine. Get this.

CRENT: A.I.D.S./Extended Vocabulary 7" (Waterfront) Kent Steedman solo and not at all what I was expecting. Thought this would be something in the Rifles mould -- you know, straightforward rock'n'roll that gains its musical distinction from consistently being utterly superior to everything else in its crowded vein, dammit. (Well, most of the time.) It's nothing like that, anyway. What it is, is a sharp and pained one-riff song with hideously distorted voice that gets its point across brilliantly. The B-side is also a thing of true beauty and an even better reason to buy it. Neither side will ever see radio.

EVEN AS WE SPEAK: I Won't Have To Think About You 7" (Big Home Productions); Goes So Slow 7" (Phantom) The first of these is probably my favourite 7" of this year. Released in '88, comes in a paint-stamped sleeve. This has the best lyrics and theme I've heard on a pop 7" in recent memory.

Little girl come back to my room, where I can show you the stars and show you the moon, show you the night by the naked glow of a sixty watt electric light. And if you show me your charms, if you show me a vision, then I won't have to talk to you. Just look submissive, and I won't have to think about you.

Well, let me make your body shiver, let me take your charms and hang them from my rear-view mirror. I can show you love is tragic, let me take you in my arms pretending that you're made of plastic ...

You'll have to buy the record for the rest. GET THIS RECORD or you will die a horrible death at the hands of the PF Art-Nazi Death Squad.

The new 7" is another matter -- the music has been Phantomised. Now, I'm sure that the people at Phantom are as fine and decent as any, but the output of their label's second incarnation (PH-20 on), with the exception of the Deadly Hume and the Hummingbirds, sucks unbelievably -- and not only that, but does so with its own distinctive sound. And this 7" sounds like that -- good music that's been killed. I loved it in time, but it took entirely too much. I don't know who's to blame, but when I find out ...

Incidentally: the first 500 of the new 7" came in red vinyl and a special sleeve. None of these made it to Perth, only black ones. WHY THE FUCK NOT? The same happened with the Crent 7" -- 1000 grey, all Perth ones black. People in Perth apprec-

iate the cumulative aesthetic of the coloured-vinyl pop 7" as well, y'know. C'mon Phantom, Waterfront -- why is this being done? Any explanations? (BHP: 3/69 Read St, Waverley 2024; Phantom, PO Box A566, Sydney South 2000. Waterfront: PO Box A537, Sydney South 2000 -- register your protest.)

GATEKEEPERS: Indoors/Ogre/Silence 12" (HWS) A quiet 12" from Brisbane, which the Label With No Name catalogue accurately describes as "the perfect soundtrack to do nothing to at home on your own this Friday night." The band has apparently been at it since 1982, being a union of Peter Jetnikoff and Greg Wadley with Ian Wadley on drums. "Indoors" is a quiet bass dirge in a major key, "Ogre" is more sprightly and "Silence" is like "Indoors" only even more so. Atmospheric sit-down-and-listen music -- I play it every now and then and find myself nodding in agreement with the music. "I'mmm, yes." (PO Box 1076, Fortitude Valley 4006)

THE GOLDEN DAWN: George Hamilton's Dead/The Sweetest Touch/Let's Build A Dyson Sphere 7" (Sarah, UK) Have you ever heard a Sarah release that is neither deathly fragile, drippingly wet (or at least damp) nor dishwasher-weak? Well, there have been a couple ... this is one. Bought it for the B-side, a simple pop thrasher, a wonderful construction of fine non-trashy non-feedback UK guitar-pop. A song like the Jesus and Mary Chain used to write when they were better. The other two tracks are also brilliant and more or less fit the above description. You'd like it. Trust me.

DAVE GRANNEY AND THE CORAL SNAKES: Dave Granney and the Coral Snakes At His Stone Beach 12" EP (Fire, UK) For the uninformed, Granney was the lead singer with the Moodists. (Go and investigate.) Claire Moore from that band is also herein.

The sound on this EP doesn't bear much direct relation to the jagged slicing noise of the Moodists, though musical continuity is apparent. The idea here seems to be to have a go (dammit) at writing proper songs with lots of attention paid to the fine details and with a more subtle sound -- a piano being used in place of a six-stringed source of hideous distortion, for instance.

Granney seems to be making an attempt at the next stage after primal rock'n'roll -- after the direct full-frontal blast approach, try something more seemingly reserved in order to throw 'em off -- and at being something of a "regular" songwriter. He does pretty well. Excellent and soul-stirring stuff.

HARD-ONS: Don't Wanna See You Cry/Suck'n'Swallow (live) 12" (Waterfront) "Promo Only" of which there are a pile of copies in your favourite shop. The A-side is straight off the album and the B-side is unavailable elsewhere and is pretty good. I suggest you put away a few copies and retire to France in a few years.

HONEYES: Gone Away/Monster 7" (Waterfront) Don't be put off by the horrible new Waterfront "generic" 7" bags, gross though they might be. This is another nice Honeys record, again in a vein more from countryish towards straight guitar-pop. "Gone Away" is a lamenting one from Grant and "Monster" is a more upward-sounding one from Bruce. Neither jumps out to rip your ears off, but I love 'em anyway. This 7" also has the unhappy distinction of being the last-ever Honeys record -- tears, etc.

LOVE RODEO: Love Yodel No 9/ Would You Believe 7" (Timberyard) Rod Radalj being a silly bugger. This is quite surprisingly good, actually -- a "novelty" record that can be played repeatedly and still enjoyed 'cos the music's so good and the performance so sincere. Three-chord pseudo-country, dumb lyrics and oodles of feel -- a live-in-the-studio perfect take, by the sound of it. Great sleeve, too. The B-side is a two-chord grind; OK as such things go, but much like any other. I prefer the A-side because it's individual, dammit, and that's what makes it a first-rater.

SHIVERS: Washaway 7" (Mushroom) The new band for Julian Matthews and Dave Shaw, both ex-Stems, with new members Don Ely and Wendy Morrison, both of unknown pedigree. Vocals by Morrison. The song is (ahh, how do I put this) commercial rubbish pop, but with an element of Stems in there. Others have liked it more than I have -- if interested, give it a go. This song is a second-rater but a first should be possible.

UV's: 89 EP (Greasy Pop) Star-ring Ian List and Doug Thomas of the Spikes, with all four songs by List. Not surprisingly it's somewhat in that vein, with a touch more of a power-pop leaning. Fans of bloody typical Perth power pop would love this, especially "Real World", which took me a few playings but was worth it. Also available as a US 7" on Sympathy, but the Australian 12" has bigger grooves and an extra track. (I failed to realise the two records were the same, until I had purchased both.) Get this one.

The Pop Chart

THE GOLDEN DAWN: Let's Build A Dyson Sphere
STONE ROSES: Going Down
SUMMER SUNS: All Away
PARTICLES: Driving Me
EVEN AS WE SPEAK: I Won't Have To Think About You
HUMMINGBIRDS: Blush
BENEDICTS: On The Air
WIDDERSHINS: Ascension (whole LP)
TOMMY KEENE: Run Now (whole mini-LP)
CANNANES: Love Affair ... (whole LP)

BULLET LAVOLTA: The Gift LP (Waterfront) Starts with a bass solo, which pretty much makes the record for me. (Hints to those wanting a good word in PF: them bass solos are your ticket to stardom. Remember that.) The musical form is loud two-guitar rock'n'roll; not music to advance the frontiers, but they do achieve an excellent hybrid of extant forms: the best musical ideas of hardcore, an idea of AC/DC, the Stones at their best and topped off with an awareness that there are things other than two loud guitars, bass and drums in the world, even if they don't choose to utilise them personally. The record could do with a lot more money in the production (listen to ... well, most of it ... and weep at what could have been), but that's the joy of independence. I guess. Their most important musical faculty is an awareness of the difference between a loud noise and that which actually rocks, which this does.

INDIA BHARTI: To The Blue God LP (Third Eye) This is an odd one. The music is mostly played on the Bhartiophone, a name that Bharti applies to a variety of his home-built instruments. It's a strident, obnoxious and unpalatable noise with a lot of repetition, as in for several minutes at a time -- and I can see all your eyes lighting up at the prospect ... but the problem is that Bharti insists on singing, if that's

the word, all over the top of it; and his "singing" voice reminds me of Ross C.'s radio talking voice (Perth folk know this: high-pitched, nasal, strident -- ideal for on-air communication, not so good for a record) only more so. (Ross himself goes "uh-oh" at the idea.) So we have this strident, unpalatable, obnoxious, etc (oh fuck!) bloody horrible noise, wrapped in a gorgeous outer sleeve (the successful use of garish colours on the outside is a good indicator to the contents) and a nice inner sleeve ... spoiled by this maggoty dogturd of a voice sitting on top. The basic message of the record (assorted Hindu philosophy -- a Hindu gospel record, if you like ... the "All Things Must Pass" of our times? I'll let you decide) would have reached a lot more people had it been left on the inner sleeve (printed in full) and off the soundtrack. Still, its sonic content is apparent under it all ... Hell, I'd kill for an instrumental copy of this.

INTERSTELLAR VILLAINS: Right Out In The Lobster Quadrille mini-LP (Timberyard) Tony Thewlis is the man behind this project, possibly an attempt at collecting together the ugliest rock'n'rollers ever seen in one place at the same time; the idea being to get some really brilliant pop songs down on record, unhampered by considerations of playing in time, singing in tune or using a bass guitar. It does work, though God only knows how.

This is not an easy record to get into, in fact provoking extreme adverse reactions on first listen. I myself was really pissed off at it until urged by someone else to try again. I decided to sit out the whole thing ... and what do you know, I was converted. There you go. Others have not found it so simple. I remember one 6-UVS DJ playing about half of "Twelve Light Years Hence" (the first track, and the sloppiest and most offputting to the unprepared mind), then stopping the record and apologising profusely for having put it to air. (He then proceeded to play some depressive and boring English independent record instead.)

Despite this being in fact one of the classics of '89, it takes determination and at least one complete playing. If you have any interest in it, try starting at the last track on side two and working backwards.

NO: Once We Were Scum, Now We Are God LP (Au Go Go) Live LP. The only other No record I have is the 12"EP and this doesn't hit as hard as that; in fact, this is downright pleasant at times. The songs are better, though: four long good ones ("Loss", "Glory", "Skin", "Slave") and two not so good but mercifully short ones ("Where Are We Going", "Bartok").*

The No sound is Ollie Olsen hollering and screaming his guts out over a background of drum-machine, shit-hot screaming guitar solos and a world of weird samples. In fact, No are one of the two bands in the world (Thug the other) that are truly righteous and Godlike rockin' bands and yet use a sampler in a way that doesn't deserve summary execution for crimes against music. (No's way of coping with hecklers live is to sample them and play it back at them. "Come on mate play some real music Come on mate play some real music Come on mate play Come on mate" etc.)

This is a good LP to play each morning immediately upon waking in order to put you in a healthy and positive (I mean that sincerely) frame of mind and arm your brain

against the many trivialities of the world. For this is truly strong, healthy, together and righteous music.

The red-walleted special pack (containing the LP and a one-sided 7") would be nice to have, but Ross C. says that missing the 7" isn't anything to lose sleep over unless you're a No, Olsen or Au Go Go completist.

* though I will credit "Where Are We Going" for the shouted command of "Thrash 'Til Death!!" halfway through.

PRAY.TV: Sure mini-LP (Mr. Spaceman) This record sounds a touch premature, in that the songs are a bit of an interchangeable mishmash with not much really standing out. The sound is generally melodic with a touch of noise thrown in to taste. That the band clearly have the potential for great things once they grow a bit is shown by "No More", by far the best track, which wins for the chorus (though it's about a minute too short and I would have loved it to go another verse). I'd love to hear the record they make in a year or so's time. Have a listen to "No More" and see what I mean.

Note: an extract from the accompanying letter from Mario Borelli: "Planning to end Mr. S. as a record label next year. Still plenty of releases to come though. Just getting tired of the whole thing -- especially money that people owe me." That's a buy-or-die alert, all you fans of cool rock'n'roll. Help pay all monies owed Mario and we might even get him to change his mind. (PO Box 548, Pascoe Vale 3044.)

KIM SALMON AND THE SURREALISTS: Just Because You Can't See It ... LP (Black Eye) This has suffered facile comparison to the last Scientists LP, "Human Jukebox". Although there is obviously going to be similarity in the songwriting -- and, indeed, many of the songs from either LP would fit in on the other perfectly -- the feel, the particular magic that music is meant to evoke, is totally different on each.

The threatening tone of the Scientists was distilled to the finest degree on that last LP; the Surrealists carry the accessible, friendly good-naturedness of the band's members. Whereas "Human Jukebox" says "You listen up good, you crawlin' scum, I've got a few things to say to you," "Just Because You Can't See It ..." says "Hi, come on in, sit down, get yerself a drink and have a listen to these songs of ours ..."

The songs themselves are getting more towards melodies, both regular and twisted -- the old covers (here "Sundown, Sundown" and "Je l'Aime") are fitting in better and better. "Sunday Drive" is a beautiful story. "Weren't We Bad" might well be the "When We Was Fab" of our time. "Your Viscous Omnipresence" is beautiful to sing in the shower, for example. Etc ... This record is so damn FRIENDLY that, with the right push, it could be a major alternative hit. Should be interesting ...

SMELLY TONGUES: Pickle mini-LP (Waterfront) The Smelly Tongues have an influence list that includes 70's rock, Zappa, soft jazz, hardcore, all sorts a trash, and focus it through a basic three-piece (guitar, bass, drums) and somehow make consistent sense of it all.

Making "Five Minute Drive To" the first thing on side one is the most incredibly obtuse thing I've ever heard on a record -- designed to put as many unprepared minds off as quickly as possible. Make sure you skip it or keep going despite it

if testing. Personal faves are "Bloodsport" and "Your Mistakes": the former having a really weird (and good) melody that flows very nicely until the chorus jumps out and bashes the living shit out of it and the latter being a very normal and standard rock'n'roll song in an intelligent and non-excessive pre-punk vein that yet managed to make me play it twice again IMMEDIATELY after first listen -- the remainder of the record being a matter of forcing myself to get on with the job. This song alone is worth the money. Incredibly highly recommended.

VIOLINDA: And The Electric String Quartet LP (Third Eye) Progressive rock with violin that makes all the mistakes the worst of that form did fifteen years ago: an awe of the very idea of intellectualism and an attempt to use such as a substitute for soul in the music rather than as a way to amplify and emphasise such; the idea that, since technique -- any technique -- was applied to the music, it must surely be better than the "basic" stuff. For example (the usual trouble in the present case), putting a basic melody of fairly low grade through a series of senseless mathematical changes. The stuff was usually a way for those with no musical soul to feel elite; and, as long as they got the sound (as distinct from the musical content) nice enough, it sold. I'm talking about part of the inspiration for the invention of punk rock here. You knew there was a reason, didn't you?

Violinda's LP isn't really fuckin' horrible or anything; realising why those strings of changes are there (no good reason) makes them doubly tedious, but the sounds are nice and the tunes are catchy, though I'm not so sure how good the words or voice are. But I'll tell you again: Fuck That Weak Shit. THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR SOUL. Without that you might as well not bother getting up. Got that?

WIDDERSHINS: Ascension LP (Waterfront) "Ascension" consists for the most part of songs that those who saw the band on the October '88 tour will remember -- that is to say, I remembered them all on hearing the album. Acoustic-based "psycho-kinetic rock" seems a reasonable description of the band's output: music that can go from extreme subtlety to extreme power and take in a million changes in style and form whilst remaining true to its essential character.

The album is a hell of a lot stronger than either the "Dishwashing Liquid" 7" or "Bottle Man's Wife" mini-LP might have led you to expect. It's ten strong songs that should probably have been released as ten singles, a contender for Album of the Year and will save your worthless soul. Also includes "The Ascension of Bottle Man", the continuation of the story in the mini-LP. The single "Return of the King" is on the album but you need it anyway for the B-side "Bugle Call", a number which dates back to the Lighthouse Keepers.

Juliet's voice sounds great and Greg's songwriting is better than it ever has been before. If you loved the tour then this is the record for you. If you didn't then get yourself some culture, you ignorant cretin.

VARIOUS: Xpressway Pile-up cass (Xpressway, NZ) Xpressway is a Dunedin cassette label, run by Bruce Russell of the Dead C., that has taken the role of supplier of absolutely Godlike shoebox recordings of NZ music over from Flying Nun ever since the latter moved to Auckland and went MOR. And not only

this, but -- and I do not know how, I just thank the good Lord -- the things are actually available in Perth. (Look in the tape rack at Rob's for anything with X/WAY on the back.) A miracle, a true golden opportunity.

The Pile-Up is a C-60 sampler tape and ranges from good to wonderful. The recordings are of various qualities and date from '83 to '88. It's quite difficult for me to pick just a few personal faves as "best tracks" -- all the people here are independently-minded folk (and not only that, but they understand how precious that is) who have something to say musically. Though "3 Years" (Dead C.), "Big Fat Elvis" and "I Don't Wanna See You Again" (Double Happs), "Cul De Sac" (Terminals), "Walk In A Straight Line" (Nocturnal Projections) and "Blackout" (Plagal Grind) all hit home for various reasons. By some miracle the tape is well-sequenced and highly listenable as well.

Many tape compilations are garbage, but this is a gem and is destined to be a collector's piece. If you neither rush down to Rob's RIGHT NOW nor even send off a couple of IRC's for a catalogue then you are not an aesthete and aren't really welcome on my doorstep. (16 Bernicia St. Port Chalmers, Otago NZ)

WIRE: It's Beginning To And Back Again (Mute, UK) I don't actually own this album -- it's a tape belonging to a friend who was given it by someone else, who had also been given it in his turn. (The current owner tried to donate it to me, but I politely declined.) Presumably the original person who actually paid money for the thing has meanwhile committed honourable suicide.

This is a live-with-dubs album by the new Wire, and my first exposure to the revival of the band. Everything you've heard about the new Wire is true -- I would never have believed how bad they are if I hadn't heard for myself.

The sound is American college-radio electro-pop as inspired by early 80's English electro-pop. (The difference is that the American version is dumber -- they have less background and don't really understand the stuff anyway -- and has RAWK-sense as opposed to pop-sense. Gruesome picture, ain't it? The music is typically bought by drippy American middle-class high-school girls who should all be shot in the interest of aesthetics.) That's at its best. The rest is drivelsome doodling that recalls Mike Oldfield, Vangelis, Yes ... a collection of pointless little squiggles with no (musical) reference to any emotion whatsoever, drawn out over countless aching minutes. More late 80's progressive rock. Surplus.

The best song on the entire tape is "Eardrum Buzz", in live and 12" versions. This sounds like one of OMD's better pop songs and is the only place where this album comes even close to not achieving total disposability.

I can still barely believe how this band, four of the world's all-time first raters, proven geniuses dammit, can get up again and put the same name on this churned-out drivel. It is drivel and it is churned. Hell, it's too late now even to kill them in order to save their good name.

David.

The Rock Chart

SPIKES: Six Sharp Cuts mini-LP
KIM SALMON: Just Because ... LP
SCIENTISTS: The Human Jukebox LP
UV'S: '89 12"EP

Brissy News!

Friday 6-10-89

Dear David,

Much time has passed since I received your letter, but somehow this morning (well ... afternoon) seemed the right time to reply. Over the last week or so a litany of "hmm, David should/might like to hear of this"-type things have been going on here. And how were you to know? so perhaps this letter arrives as a bit of a surprise, but if your attitude to the formalities of postal communication are at all in line with some of mine, you're probably thinking "Hm, about time, the slack bastard." Well, all I can say is, I have to live with the fact that I'm a slack bastard who ...

You know how coffee winds you up, but nothing seems to present itself as the task at hand. I feel as though large portions of my time pass in this frame of mind, which is not to say this is necessarily the case, but it is interesting insofar as Bris. is entering into Spring, which doesn't really exist, if you know what I mean. The passing of time will for the next four months at least be defined by the sheer slothfulness of the in/activity slotted therein. Actually this is all lies: I was about to wax on memories of last summer (much consumption of chili beans and beer on the verandah, probably not as much as my memory says, watching the cars go slow) but I cast my mind to that winter just gone. We pitched in and got a load of wood, and spent four hours (at least!) per night talking to the fire and each other. This would tend to suggest that the major difference between summer and winter is, the day is about to become the lazy part and the night is to do things in. Maybe the rotting hopeless rock scene here will be revived by people actually leaving their houses to drink.

I cannot remember whether Perth summer is dry like Melbourne or humid like Bris. Also: I cannot remember whether Perth drinking is done in pubs like Melbourne or at home (byo/bottleshop) like over here. If you have the answers, feel free to expound (esp. possible irrelevant sociological consequences).

One thing for certain: I have been reading much more than usual of late. I won't bore you with details. Your brief description of exam side-effects sounds like hell (tell me more!) and I suppose you are approaching another phase of it. Good luck. Fruit for breakfast, eat your greens. I am considering studying next year; what and why I'm not sure, but a contender is "music", strictly so as to have access to facilities of course. To do so would be breaking a promise I made to myself at least ten years ago, so I might do something else ...

What do you think of "All You Wanted" by the Apartments? It has been getting played once a day for about a month in this house by Michael, who is an oddbod in his approach to music: very much a non-record buyer who picks at the collections of those who actually have records, taking everything at face value, minimal preconceptions (genre-based, anyway). I feel as though the words to this song will intrigue

me forever. It's like when I moved to Melb., suddenly the L. Clowns' "Law Of Nature" album assumed scriptural proportions. Erm ... it would seem appropriate, having already set the pace in this paragraph (and I'm talking generic-based preconceptions, which I am obsessed by), to mention: did you hear, about six months back, Peter Walsh, having abandoned UK efforts with the Apartments, whoever they were/are by this time, was back in Sydney, the Harold Park to be precise, playing duo with Dan Wallace-Crabbe on piano. I wept in the absence of bus money.

Another duo story: Evil Graham Lee and Marko Halstead (who, if you have studied your rock book you were telling me about, is the guy who took my place as gitterspieler in the Dum Dums, though his best work in my opinion was 81-ish in a band called the Hostages) have been playing in Melbourne. Marko actually lives up here, and has been in a band and everything lately. Let me tell you about this ...

One of the few bands/things doing things worth doing here are called He Dark Age. They are Paul Newsome (Pork-ex) and Tony Milner (Swell Guys, No-V-Bleed, Machines That Walk, Let's Go Naked, Plug Uglies, etc) and he is the Best Guitarist In The World. When they're not doing arty/fiddly bits, or the 3/4 piece HDA "rock band" attempt, they have a set they play with Marko singing, under the name He Smooth Age: old Bacharach and James Bond theme stuff. Tuxedos. And HDA have an album coming out so you're bound to hear more.

More rock news: There are three other decent bands here. The Small World Experience, of which I was once part but now am not, is the vehicle of Pat who was in Dog Fish Ca Bird w/me, and is about to release their first single. It is a Milestone. 4-track, no reverb. Raw prod'n. "No bullshit". Imagine early Fall with Kuepper/Bailey-esque vocals, doing "songwriter", "well-crafted" material. The guy is a genius. (b) Wordroux Fair are releasing a C-90 of stuff "produced" by my good self. This means I recorded it on four-track, got depressed for a week about what a waste of effort/time, then mixed it down (no effects) and was overjoyed at how good it was compared to my expectations. (c) The Holy Ghosts (we) might also be slipping a C-90 out the back door. Crappy cassette in bedroom and live 4-track stuff, just for the friends who mock us at not ever having put anything out, and other understanding enthusiasts. I'll send you one, no doubt.

Hmm ... just re-read yr letter.

1. Yes, it's Vulture Street. Unfortunately for me it is a streetname I have known since I was but a hideous child in sandals/gymbots. You are, believe it or not, the first person ever to raise the issue in my mind that it is an odd name for a street. Similarly Fortitude Valley as a suburb name, though others from out of town have commented before on zis one. The latter is my spiritual home, site of a childhood paradise of thriving dept. stores now by no means economically viable, just tax dodges for Southern-based shop chains. Also site of most of the FitzG enquiry finger-pointing (note: did I not warn you of current white-wash/red-tape backlash). Also site of the Best Coffee Shop In Australia. True.

2. The letterhead on which you wrote is dangerous: in the wrong hands, word could leak out that you, or I, or anyone else you might write to on such a letterhead.

NEW CHRISTIS: Distemper LP
SCIENTISTS: A Pox On You 7"
INTERSTELLAR VILLAINS: Lost Cause 7"
KING SNAKE ROOST: Things ... LP
NO: "Glory" (off "Scum")

was actually "working for ROCK" as it so clearly states at the bottom of the page, Perish the thought. In fact, at the moment (anecdote time) the "Old Rock Awards" are in the throes of their deathly existence. I'm sure you have such horrors in the West: horrendous Coke-ad bands battle it out for prizes and a mention in Time Off/X-Prizes in front of "Industry People". The other night a group of friends of mine who play in a loose line-up "noise" outfit called Grunt played it. Usually it is Glenn (ex-Pork, Torso) and Joe (not his real name) who are responsible for a radio show called "Give Em Heaps" which is basically all sources going to air at once. Crazy records, tape-loops, etc. And Michael Elliot who was (just for the record, to be perfectly pedantic) in a couple of early lineups of TinyTown (Mute 44, the Birds Of Tin). This time it was Glenn on trumpet, voice, cassette player (tape-loops, noise) and a chinese flute-thing with a reed; Joe on a completely stoved-in semi-acc. gtr played through a Korg MS-20, someone called Mark on gtr (he is also in an extremely part-time thrash/art band called the Mutant Shitbags); Peter also on the other (of two) chinese thing, and, at the last moment (well, 4pm that day was the phone call), having never even played with them before, was myself on trumpet, gtr and the occasional "Check, One, Two"; and Julian, who also lives in this house, and who I do a shift with on the radio, on gtr and clarinet. The result was an all-time success. To a certain extent the "Awards" were disrupted, we stole three leads, blew up a bass amp (I presume square waves from the Korg) and actually sounded great! if a little jazzy, which I didn't mind, but I suspect was a bit disconcerting to the Grunt central committee.

3. Have not yet heard the Greg Dear album, except for grabbing it in a hurry to play "track one, side one" when I can't think of anything to go after J. Richman on the shift ... will make a mental note to plug it.

4. Is your band yet extant? I do hope you are doing something, seeing between you and your friend who plays gtr whose name eludes me presently there is enough good taste to inspire something of value, at least. By the way, he of the remarkably spot-on opinions for '88 (everything on it was either a fave of Eugene's -- he in the H. Ghosts -- or mine or Julian's) would probably like the H.G.'s, if I get around to enclosing a copy of the cassette with this letter. Also any of the other stuff, etc. By the way, does anyone over there like the Gatekeepers, or did it bomb as severely as it did here? Not much "chart action" in these parts. Jed ...

Just remembered another exciting (?) newsflash: a fortnight ago was the Venom P. Stinger tour of these parts. Loads of fun ...

Sunday 5-11-89

... hmmm: never did finish that sentence. I never cease to amaze/appal myself with my ability to start a letter and not finish it, but not want to send it until it's "finished" either. Well, here goes.

Things that have happened in the last month dept.: well, I got yr letter and I've p'copied the stuff worth printing and will be slipping that in the mail this aarrghhvo. Dinosaur Jr played; loads of fun, though loud. The very last song, during which I was placed in front of the basspieler, caused something inside to click, reminiscent of al-

most every song when the Rollins Band played. Friday night was the Headless Chickens (don't think for a moment that I'm going to write actual reviews of these things, but ... then again miracles do happen), though my faves for the night were He Dark Age, predictably. The 6'2" band, that's what a chap in the HC's said. Said chap was wandering down our street at 5:30 yesterday morning, walked in front of a car and demanded to be told where Browning St is, where their hotel is (incidentally this is the same hotel where it seems all the rock tourers stay). Apparently he had been wandering for hours and no taxis would pick him up, trying to traverse what we later told him is actually about half a mile. God knows what circles he walked in. Anyway, we live on the cnr of Vulture and Browning; we got home (pissed ...) on Friday night to find two (female) friends who live a mile up the road (also Vulture street, incidentally) sitting in the TV room, demanding that we dose up on coffee seeing as they'd partaken of some speed ... so we were all out on the verandah at dawn, Rollins and Swell Maps long since having vacated my turntable and the neighbours' collective ear, with crackers and chocolate, witnessing some lunatic walk in front of a car ... incidentally he was the singer, the one who doesn't also play guitar, not the one in the "Gaskrankenstation" video. And he came in for a cup of tea. But the consequence of the Coffee till Dawn escapade, the real consequence, is that I spent much of yesterday in bed, either trying to read but falling asleep or trying to sleep but settling for book and music. The book, I hereby recommend, is a rare gem in that it is eminently enjoyable, easy to read and yet most meaningful (I'm not very good at talking about books): "Journey To The End Of The Night" by Celine. The music is something I've liked in the back of my mind for a while, but specifically had a cassette of for a little over a year now, but it got buried in the pile of shit I surround myself with six months ago and last night I found it again: Mark Stewart and the Maffia. Two albums: "Learning To Cope With Cowardice" is just pure genius, and the other I think was his next, called "Survival", maybe. Almost as good, but a bit too rock.

By the way, when you get this letter I will have enclosed a copy of the SWE e.p. There are two things you should be informed of if you are to get the full picture: I am credited for being a former member, occasional mixer, etc., though the accreditation does not make its raison d'etre clear; and the cover comes in three (3) colour combinations -- red/black, blue/black and red/blue. Now you can listen with a cluttered mind. Hope you like it.

What else is there? The weather's wonderful, because it's past 5pm (4pm was the pre-daylight saving curfew, prior to which leaving the house is a hellish experience). I'm broke as usual (broker than ...). Now that I have a record player, there seems little reason to leave my room, as I gaze out at our overgrown yard. Last week I "cracked the code" of my chinese solitaire game. (I need a new challenge?) Oh ... news: the Valley got another mall last week: but this and other attempts at gentrification look like going the way of all fish. Fortitude Valley defies human intervention, and will punish those who offend ... Or will for now, Adios.

Ian W., PO Box 1076, Fortitude Valley 4006.

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Die, collector, die!

As announced last issue, next issue will contain what may well turn into a running series of articles defending us lovers of fine music against them collectorscum who drive prices through the roof on what are often dodgy items anyway.

The idea is to review any and all extra-limited (giveaway or otherwise) compilation singles/EPs/albums, all "gig-only" giveaways, all fanzine freebie records etc., etc. of Australian stuff so that when those of us who buy records because we actually want hot music get a chance, we will have some idea of what we're getting into.

All music-fan vinyl-gatherers are hereby asked to go through their collections, give each goody a spin as if new and write something down to guide others. (All contributors will get a copy of the article a month in advance.) Any record from the past ten years (or whatever, really) is acceptable.

We urge you to please help us in this charitable and worthy task. Thank you.

Photos: Julia by Mia. Cover shot by Justine. Rabbit's Wedding courtesy of the Watling family collection. Obsolete Beautiful Losers courtesy Leanne Casellas/Daily News. X by Larry. Black-Eyed Susans, Martha's Vineyard by me. All others supplied, nicked or God knows what.

I did this "reviews" issue in the hope that it would prove easier than a regular one. How wrong I was. Never mind, I'm sure it was vastly entertaining.

Next issue will be out in 1990 and has a number of cool things lined up for it already. In any case, remember: tell all your friends about Party Fears and get them to buy it and its back-issues; preferably via retail sales outlets, as this will help keep the distribution lines healthy and active. Remember: you can order back PF from wherever you bought this. Catch you later.



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