

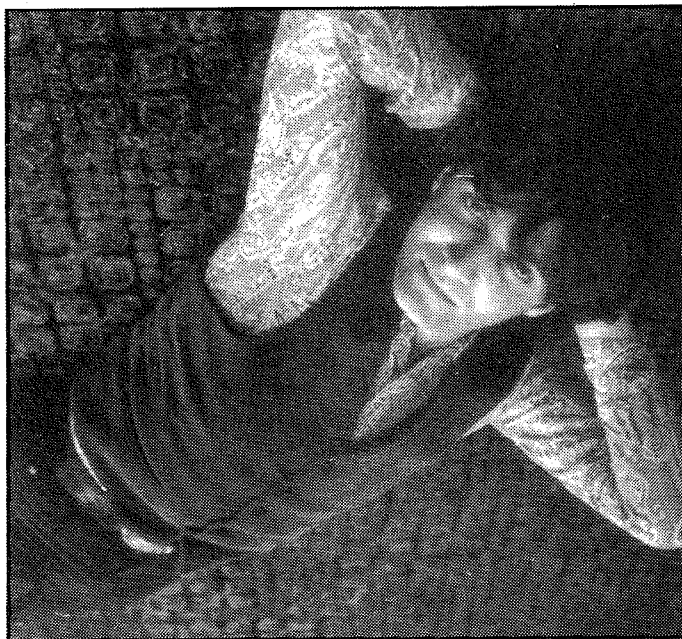
"I regret that I have but one life to give for a cheaper gallon of petrol for the Americans."

# Party Fears

Number Twelve

FREE

February-March 1991



Dom Mariani, the human fly.

Crabstick	p6
Chevelles	p7
Charlotte's Web	p10
Someloves	p17
Reviews	p20

## Perth News

As usual, beware of the difference between fact and opinion. Hoo-ee, beware of opinion.

• The ACCELERATED MEN have a new programmer/bassist, Adrian Greener, Jamie McParlane having left as last issue was at the printer. The album *Dead Names* will be out on tape in February, with vinyl to follow. "Now we want a major record contract."

The comeback show was at the Firm on Wednesday 16th January, with Jay, Shane and a tape deck (for the bass and drum parts). Not an awesomely hot show (though not totally dismal), but boy, does Jay do a good gothic-cheekbones-and-rotted-fangs look. (I was wishing I had a camera there.) Should be much better when they work out how to proof an eight thousand dollar computer (a.k.a. drum machine and synthesizer) against the Firm smoke machine. The dancers (yes, dancers) before the show went down well with the crowd and made it a finer event in total as well. (clo PO Box 274, South Perth 6151)

• AND AN A's third single will in fact be coming out some time. "The record was totally dependent on the cover being finished, and Brett's in Melbourne so we can't hassle him ... it should have been out last February ... but it'll be out one day. No rush." — David Kelsall. The record will be a 12" of "The World Outside/The History Of Disco"; you may know the latter track better as "Goon Squad".

• ROB BAXTER was in a pile of bands in the early '80s — the Plants (before their mini-LP); Confessions ('81-'82); Big Red Tractor ('82-'83; vocals, songwriter), leaving when they went to Sydney — and did nothing musical for a while before coming back in December with a new tape, 80-90. "Basically, it represents me getting back into it. I've been in bands for ten years and just thought that it was now or never, time to get something out." Future plans are "to see how the tape goes and, hopefully, to do a few gigs at the end of the year." (4 George Street, South Perth 6151)

• The BEEKEEPERS are Mick Sim (v,elec g), Darren Leitch (b,bv), Mal Secourable (acc g,bv), Bernice Smith (violin,bv) and Shaun Lohoar (d). The band has a 12" EP, *Beefarm Road*, just out on Zero Hour — *There's A Way / This City // That Girl / The Drug* — and are presently touring Sydney (end of January) and Melbourne (early February). Mick and Darren will be staying in Sydney to "survey the situation" (Mark, manager), Mal will be going to South Australia for a while and Shaun and Bernice will be back to Perth straight away. (clo 113 Anzac Road, Mount Hawthorn 6016)

• The BLACK-EYED SUSANS album is two-thirds done, and has Rob Snarski singing on every track! (Millions gasp and start camping outside their record shop.) The final third is to be done in Sydney by Rob and Phil Kakulas. The album has new songs by Mark Snarski, David McComb, Phil Kakulas and the first song of Will Akers' to be recorded, "Will's Blues". "Needless to say, it's an all-ballad

album" — David McComb. The band has a live lineup in Sydney at present with Phil Kakulas, which is "basically the Jackson Code with Rob singing."

• The BLACK ORCHIDS finally played a show of sorts at ten hours' notice on November 22nd (a ten-minute spot, guitar and bass only ... we survived ... even had a skinhead heckler, which is what every band needs to make its first show complete). We are David Gerard (b), Danny Ruggero (g) and Sue Baker (no, the other one) (d), plus our faithful roadie Larry. It's loud and has something resembling melodies and is getting better as we speak. (clo PF)

• BLUE JESUS have a new drummer, Paul Watts, replacing Maree Mestechell, who has "gone to India and the world" — Kevin. James Rogers left after three shows. The band will be playing again "as soon as Paul's ready; it should be within a month or so." The band is recording a demo which probably won't be released, "but who knows." (41 Letchworth Centre Avenue, Manning 6152)

• The BRAUTIGANS have lost vocalist Sophie Moleta, who has gone to India. "She's disillusioned with first-world culture. I've now got Kevin singing, and he loves it!" — Laura. (162 Grosvenor Street, North Perth 6006)

• DEAR OCTOPUS are Nick Tweedie (g,v), Mark Van Brakel (l-g), Matthew Benson (b) and Alan Belmont (d). Matt, Nick and Alan were in Crazy Jane And The Bishops and Nick was also previously lead guitarist with the Beekeepers. The band played its first show in the Campus Band Competition in May last year and got to the final. "Melodic guitar indie pop ... you can dance to it ... We've matured a bit from Crazy Jane." — Matt. Nick writes most of the lyrics and the band writes the music. Nick is currently off in Thailand on holiday, but the band should be back and playing in early March. (4 Smythe Road, Shenton Park 6008)

• EPONINE'S TOWER is the vehicle of James Coleman (all instruments). "All my influences are loosely in the experimental vein — Brian Eno, John Cage, Stockhausen; then there are SPK and Graeme Revell, the Hafler Trio. So what my trip is, is that I look at the experimental field from a classical view, and then from the rock'n'roll, or, even more, the punk, tradition. So, theoretically, what I'm offering is a fusion of the two — minimalist ambient music with a sinister, biting edge."

"I've got really basic equipment, but I've just got a job, so I can get more. I'm having an instrument built for me at the moment — one with great theatrical potential. I won't say much more about it."

"I want to get people involved; take experimental music out of the realm of the cerebral and into the realm of the active for the audience, so that people can participate."

Eponine's Tower has a self-titled cassette out with three tracks, featuring assistance from Jason Ward and Mark Taylor of Janco's Mask — a long title track and two others. I like it, but I'm not sure what to actually say about it ... it's on nice chrome tape and is very good for filling an empty house with sound. "Soundtracks for altered states; chaotic religious ecstasy." The cassette was used for a fashion parade at Exit on Thursday 17th January (!).

"It's possible that, if the instrument is built in time, I might make a brief appearance at the Gethsemane show on February 1st, though I'm not actually a scheduled act that night. I might get up with this new-fangled thing."

"My present goals are to do a bit of gigging wherever I can pick it up, to buy

**AD**

**CRABSTICK**  
"STUD OR HOUSEBOY"  
24-song LP

**FUNGUS BRAINS**  
8-song LP "THAT'S RIGHT"

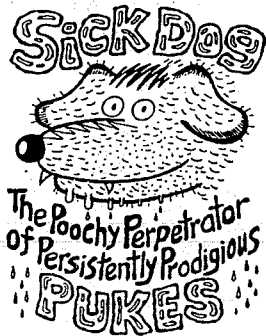
forthcoming:  
**NICE LP/ CANNANES LP/CD**  
+ 7" single  
**HESSIAN SAX CD** + **CRABSTICK 7"**



**HESSIAN SAX + FUNGUS BRAINS**  
7" single

write to **FROCK** (+ send stamp or IRC)  
**P.O. BOX 219 NEWTOWN**  
**N.S.W. 2042 AUSTRALIA**

★ **HEY KIDS!** ★  
**MAKE YOUR LIFE COMPLETE**  
**WITH A ...**  
**Sick Dog T-Shirt**



AVAILABLE IN 2 GULLET-GRABBING DESIGNS!  
**WOW!!!**

**YES, YOU CAN HAVE PERTH'S BASTION**  
**OF BARFING BARKERS EMBLAZONED**  
**ACROSS THAT SEXY LITTLE CHEST OF YOURS!**

**ON SALE NOW AT BEDLAM (55 KINGS ST) & DADA'S!**  
**BE HAPPY! BE GLAD! BE AT PEACE WITH YOURSELF**  
**IN GENERAL WITH A Sick Dog T-Shirt!**



BOOKS CARDS CLOTHES  
 COMICS COMIX  
**KING ST.**  
**PERTH**  
 322 6597

some more equipment, to do some more recording ... all hopefully working towards a solo live performance at the end of the year." James will be working on recordings through the year. (McNess Apartment, 6 Pier Street, Perth 6000)

• The FARADAYS started at the beginning of last year. The band started as the LANTERN STALKS in 1985, playing two gigs and then splitting, re-uniting to play parties very infrequently. The first Lantern Stalks was David Chadwick (g,v), Digby Scott (l-g), Martin Tunley (b,v) and David Price (d). The band split and David Chadwick and Digby Scott continued, with Adam Richardson joining on drums. "We mainly did parties then, until we got sick of it and Digby finally left at the end of 1989" — David. Ross Chadwick (b) joined at the start of 1990, though not playing until they played with the Rainyard, Orange and the Five Alive.

"Usually I just tell people that we play guitar-pop. I can't really think of anything else. There's nothing fancy about it, we're real amateur musicians ..." Their future plans are to get gigs and record. Um, what else ... Dom Mariani and Samantha Wilson think they're pretty cool. "Recording is what I'd like to do."

• THE FAT are supporting the Waiters when they come to Perth, March-ish. "We're also talking of recording a three-track single, one song of which may well be 'The Child'. The BEAT BONGO MANIACS are definitely off the boil!" — Trevor Hilton. (44 Kingsway, Nedlands 6009)

• FAVOURITE GAME are Phil Natt (b), Peter Quinlan (d) and Dan O'Halloran (g,v). The band has around in a low-key fashion for three years ... "Our first show was a Brownies' Surf Parade in 1987 when we were in year eleven. We played for three hours straight and ripped out the Ramones and Joy Division covers 'cos we didn't know what else to play. We've progressed since then. I'd say we sound a bit like REM and that, but it's not really that now. We've been getting into the Pixies and Sonic Youth of late. Not as pop. We're trying to get the, uh, rock credibility" — Dan. (74 Louise Street, Nedlands 6009)

• The FEENDS are Kent Turlich (v), Henry Willoughby (b), Adrian MacMillan (d), Stephen Hird (g) and Ian Hope (g). "Me and Kent have been talking about it for years and years, and everything came together in just the last couple of months" — Henry. Their first show was with Five Alive on December 22nd. The idea is a sort of '60s/B-movie concept band. "A horror concept band. It's taking the piss out of '60s horror beach movies. Hey, Kent blew up a foldback speaker at the Shents with his screaming." (8 Tandara Place, Wembley Downs 6019)

• INQUISITION are Declan Barry (v), John May (d), Steve Bagshaw (g), Brad Gill (l-g) and Tony King (b,g). The band started five years ago in some form or other and has had a series of vocalists, Declan having joined a year ago and debuting at the 6-UVS Hardcore Benefit last year. "We've progressed a lot from the old death-metal thrash. We're trying a lot of stuff at the moment. I don't want to call it speed-metal ... the nearest to it might be progressive techno-thrash" — Declan. The band has a four-song tape, *To Be Sure*, out now. Steve is leaving for Melbourne and his date of return is uncertain ... "We haven't been able to go for it in the last year the way we've wanted to because of our academic studies, but this year will be it."

• Bruce Matthews has left KING PIG, a shock after their very good December comeback show ... still King Pig, but with some cool new songs and Caleb's screaming guitar heroics lending a fine rockist flavour to the proceedings. "I'm going to Europe for a couple of years in June or July ... and six years of playing in a band in Perth just took its toll on me" — Bruce. Alan Hooper, Glenn Tobin and Caleb Merrey will be sticking together. "We'll probably change the name of the band, 'cos Bruce's beats were such a part of the band. It's still up in the air. We've got a few ideas we're keen to pursue. So we're looking for a drummer ... not necessarily one that's into King Pig" — Glenn. Call Glenn on 367 7795 if you're

interested. The tape is still selling well. (12/5 Clarence Street, South Perth 6151)

• The KRYPTONICS came back to Perth for a whirlwind tour. The band has tightened up amazingly ... not a technical foulup in hearing-range (quickest guitar-changeover in history ... Ian Underwood still has his, ah, magic touch with guitar strings, but it didn't get in the way) ... all the songs were whipped up into a splurge played 50% too fast, but every single person who came along told them of the problem individually, making the last show (Ozone, January 4th) a good night out.

The single "Bad September" is out on Seaside Records (a new offshoot of Waterfront, the Kryptonics having been asked to launch the label), the first 500 in yellow. A great song. The band also has "The Land That Time Forgot" on Waterfront's *7 Could've Been A Contender* compilation, a version of the song done at the same time as the JJJ album version of "Baby".

The live album has been canned. "I still like the idea of a live album, and I think the idea we aimed for was a worthy one, but it didn't happen. I'd like to do one on sixteen-track for Europe — do a live album instead of a compilation of old singles or something" — Ian.

The band intends to "spend the entire year of 1991 travelling up and down the Hume Highway. Things are starting to pay off now. If it weren't for our booking agent, Simon, we wouldn't be playing at all. We're looking for management — you don't play in Sydney if you don't have good management and a good booking agent, and then you play once a week, it's so tough there. It's easier to get a gig for a new band in Perth than Sydney."

The Kryptonics are very tight now, but too flat. The band (including Ian) doesn't play Ian's songs as well as they should be played. The tightness really has come at the expense of the creativity — I suspect it's a case of choosing to play something that's easier to keep tight rather than something that's risky, though more interesting. (Of course, they did come from the opposite extreme ...) An example is the song "Bad September", which is a fantastically good song and one I love. I have a tape of the July 25th Ozone show, which was apparently the second time they had played the song. And it was jaw-dropping. The single is good, but not great — not as good as it could have been. The song seems to have been flattened out for the sake of tight and efficient playing. Another example is their version of the Healers' "You're In My Blood" (to have been their side of the split single). It's too fast and has half the chords removed (to facilitate its playing by anyone who does not have Craig Hallsworth's left hand). It still shows through as a great song, but it's gone through the same flattening process.

Ian writes great songs and can arrange a song damn well (compare his rearrangement of the Replacements' "A Little Mascara" to the original sometime), and I enjoyed myself at the tour shows (especially the last one) ... but it wasn't as good as it could have and should have been. Loosen up, slow down, take a risk ...

"Rejectionville" will be the next single, Chris Dunn of Waterfront wants them to get on with the killer studio album and the band will be back in Perth in April. (PO Box A537, Sydney South 2000)

• The MARS BASTARDS launched their new cassette, *Six*, at the Ozone on Wednesday 16th January. They were pretty damned good, too. The live band was a bit sloppy from under-rehearsal, but, basically, a band that actually has a great deal of songwriting talent can overcome such trivial and secondary considerations easily enough. Mark Scarporolo (b) and Shaun Lohar (d) will be touring soon, with A Month Of Sundays and the Beekeepers respectively, so the band will be laying low for a while and considering various options. (43/59 Malcolm Street, West Perth 6005)

• M.M.T. have their tape, "Burning Witch/Shaman's On The Rise", in the shops. "I also want to do a solo thing emphasising the bass guitar. It'll be called This Pagan Bass" — John McNair. (134 Westminster Street, East Victoria Park 6101)

• The NEPTUNES will have finished their second mini-LP by the time you read this, to be released on Citadel. The tentative title is *Godfish*, and tracks are *Girl*

From Another World / Love Sign / Black Rain // Wait For The Sun / Going Down South / Endless Summer, with a CD version containing all of *Hydrophobia* plus extra tracks *Searching / Jump In The Water / Heartbreak Beach / She Makes Me Dream*, recorded at the ABC for the JJJ album ("Searching" being on that LP). "Side one is the psychedelic garage band side, and side two is the surf side, like *Hydrophobia*" — Rob. The lineup for the live shows is still **JAMIE PARRY** (v), **GREG HITCHCOCK** (g,bv), **RICKY MASON** (g,bv), **ROB FINDLAY** (correct spelling) (b,bv) and **DAVE SHAW** (d,v), though **MARTIN MOON** drums on the mini-LP for some reason. The band may be touring again mid-year.

This is as good a place as any to mention the **ANDELUSIAN DOGS** (not "Andillusion" as every ad had it), who were **RICKY MASON** (g), **CARL STEP** (b), **ANDREW McLELLAN** (Andy Mack) (d) and **TIM MAY** (v), started in March '90 and stopped in October '90. "The things that stopped us were that Carl got a job, a full-commitment career, so he didn't have any time, and musical differences between myself and the singer. Guitar based... melodic... songs... in a pop idiom... I don't

lia, and the band will be recording soon for a split LP with a German "noise-grindcore" band called **BELCHING BEET**, to be out March or so on Ecocentric Records, Germany. "We still want the split LP with *Opposition Party* (Singapore) to happen, but it's been pushed back. Possibly one for the end of the year" — Matt Weiland.

"If you can, don't call us a hardcore band. Call us a nihilist-core band." The band will be gigging again soon. "We plan to launch a full-scale war against happycore."

Matt has put out a compilation tape, *Yuppyfy Or Die* — "ninety minutes of Perth stuff in the punk/hardcore vein from '78 to '90." The tape is \$5 in the shops or \$6 by post. (Matt, 58 Mallock Street, Mount Hawthorn 6016; Resistance Productions, PO Box 426, 8026 Zürich, Switzerland; Ecocentric, Dresdner Str. 30, 5400 Koblenz, Germany)

• **RUST** have a new bass-player, **ROD EWAN**, and should be playing by the time you read this. Rust are a useful and (very) loud three-piece, now with Matt singing properly (Coronado, December 12th — it made the show), and you must see them. The tape is back in the shops. (PO Box 71,

with the **KRYPTONICS** late '89), **WAYNE HARRIS** (g) and **ADRIAN ALLEN** (g) (also **Diehards**), Wayne and Adrian temping until permanent replacements can be found for old guitarists **GAVIN SMITH** and **VINIE**. The band started around March last year. The last show with the old lineup was January 4th at the Ozone with the **KRYPTONICS** and the next will be at the Firm on February 20th. The band was previously known as **GAMMA GAMMA** — "I liked the old name, but the majority of the guys wanted a change."

The band plans to record "when we have a little more money in the band. I don't like it when people call us a thrash band or a pop band. We're a rock'n'roll band. Guitars!" — John.

• The **SOMELOVES** look like playing the Roskelda Festival in Denmark in late June! This long-remoured event now looks to be solid enough to put in here as news. "We're currently working it all out, if it's workable and worthwhile" — Dom. There is also the possibility of some other shows in various bits of Europe — PF's European readers should start planning their summer right now. The second **SomeLoves** album has been budgeted and **Dom** and **Darryl** are awaiting word from the label. **ORANGE** will be doing its final shows in March, as **Tony** is going to Melbourne to live. The **FIVE ALIVE** has been consigned to its GSI bin and will never be revived. "We do have some social conscience, you know." (16 Chester Street, South Fremantle 6162)

• The **SUGAR BEATS** are **Craig Weighell** (v), **Andrew Graham** (g), **Simon Watts** (g), **Mike Fitzgerald** (b) and **Andy Mack** (d), and will be playing by the time you read this. "We just got together to play a lot of our favourite songs, with a few originals. There's no theme. It's more '80s than '60s or '70s... just good songs you might hear at a party rather than on greatest-hits radio" — Simon. Bloody cover bands.

• The **SUNBEAMS** are alive and well — **Paula Belcastro** (v,g), **Andrew Graham** (g,v), **Dan Tarrant** (b) and **Ross Philpot** (d). Their first show was early-mid-last year. The same band, with the exception of **Danielle Hemery** (v), did a track on the **96fm Homegrown Tapes LP**. They didn't play for a long while due to illness in **Ross's** family, but "we've subsequently got a demo grant for \$1500, so we're looking at doing some recording mid-February and then gigging" — Ross. (319 Marmion Street, Cottesloe 6011)

• **Billy Gibson** has left **T'ROLL** to go back to New Zealand and study Law and Maori Studies. The album is on its way fantastically soon. The band will be touring in February — Adelaide around the 15th, Melbourne the next week. (PO Box 113, Claremont 6010)

• A **TERMINAL POSTURE** are working on a four-song cassette, to come out within a couple of months. They are also looking to a guitarist and a drummer to assist live, and should play again within the next month. The band played December 13th at the Actor's Centre as the two-piece — **Darren** concentrating on vocals only and **Ray** working a pile of tapes, programs and a keyboard. A fine show. The **Biological Nuclear/Chemical** tape is still high on the **Party Fears Buy Or Die** list, and a spot check will be taken of all our readers to ascertain who owns one and who is destined for the next world in short order. There are vague plans to make a record... tapes are being sent off as we speak. (39 Marmion Street, North Perth 6006)

• **THOU GIDEON** have their new cassingle "Runt" available from most shops, and have a new drummer, **Cameron Potis** of the **Goon Gut Babies** and **Baron Vermin**, **Val Cat** having left due to a wish not to tour. **Gareth Edwards** (g) also has another band on the boil... Another tape is due out some time or other. The band also has a pile of shows scheduled at some of the nicest places. (22 Charles Street, South Fremantle 6162)

• **THROMBUS** will have their double 7" recorded and mixed by the time you read this — tracks done so far are "Berserkus Maximus", "Water", "Burn The DJ" (thanks, mates), "Primary", "Intensive Care" and "maybe a couple of others", with a video clip finished for "Berserkus Maximus". The record will be released by the band, and a new single is already

planned, possibly to be produced by **Dom Mariani**. The planned video tape is slowly progressing, "one song at a time! The last song cost us \$1200, and we got most of it free — it would have been eight thousand otherwise! Money's tight." — Anthony. (c/o 26 Karimba Street, Wanneroo 6065)

• The **TRIFFIDS** have been on an extended break, but are making plans to get together in the middle of the year. "At least some of the **Triffids** will be playing in Perth at that time. **Marty** (Casey) is off recording with **Nick Cave** and **the Bad Seeds** in Brazil. Everyone is very happy that we've had a break. This is the first time I've lived in one place for a year in the last twelve years. I've been living in London doing demos, writing and recording, just working on things by myself for the whole year."

"I've got twenty-three songs demoed at the moment, but I don't really know if they'll be on a (rumoured) solo album or on the next **Triffids** album. At the moment, they're just demos. I honestly don't know where they're going."

"I've started writing a flamenco opera with **Mark Snarski** in Madrid, where he lives now. I don't know if it'll see the light of day."

"I've got a track on a **Leonard Cohen** compilation LP, on a French label I forget. I'm doing 'Don't Go Home With Your Hard-On'. It's also got **Ian MacCulloch**, **Lloyd Cole**, the **Jesus And Mary Chain** and some French people."

"I'm just leading a very quiet, industrious life and hope to make a lot of noise this year to make up for how quiet I was last year." — David McComb.

• The **VENUS GIRL TRAPS** record was due out in July last year... "If you want to advise anyone never to go to **Modern Records**, **FEEL FREE!**" — Simon. For the record, the band was **Simon Watts** (g), **Craig Weighell** (d), **Mike Fitzgerald** (b), **Dean Graham** (g,v) and **John Bannister** (trumpet).

• **ZITBASTARD** are **Richard Holway** (v), **Aidan Loveday** (bv), **Andrew Sheen** (g), **Mark Palazzolo** (correct spelling) (g,v) and **Mouse** (d), "though the last two demos we used a drum machine 'cos he wasn't available. Bass optional. We've been through numerous lineup changes, but anyone who's met **Zitbastard** and hates him is welcome to join" — Mark.

The band has been around for four years and has never played a show. "The whole point is that we refuse to play a gig unless **Zitbastard** himself is there. We almost played one three years ago at the **Stoned Crow**, but no-one was motivated enough to get up on stage" — Mark. "The four demos we've done are dedicated to the physical and mental denigration of one individual. We're out to undermine his dignity and humility" — Aidan. "We believe we're justified" — Mark.

At last a tape is going to come out. "The last demo we did was sort of comparable to **Big Black** or the **Butthole Surfers**, but we want to get back to the sort of noise-hardcore mayhem. The actual style of the music isn't as important as the lyrics. The purpose of the band is to destroy this guy's super-ego, and I think we're on the way. We're not sure what the tape's final title will be, but at the moment it's **The Poor Man's Four-Track**. Hey, we're Perth's oldest active hardcore band" — Mark. "Semi-active" — Aidan. "We've outlived **Memento Mori**" — Mark. The tape is due out in a month or two. (Mark, 12 Gernsarna Crescent, Kelmcoot 6111)

## Errata

• **APRA**, the Australian Performing Right Association, has moved to 6/123 Colin Street, West Perth 6005; phone (09) 322 4108.

• **Crimson Boy** have a cool song on their tape called "I Will Sacrifice", not "I Will Surrender".

• **Rupture's** demo tape was not self-titled, but called *Mass Slaughter Permit*.

• The house at 162 Grosvenor Street is actually in North Perth 6006, not Highgate 6000. Also, **Spring Fever's** guitarist is called **Daniel Palmer**, not **David Palmer**.

• The **Sugardaddies'** bass-player is **Kyle Neaves**, not **Kyle Knieves**. (It's all **Dave Brockwell's** fault.)



Vivienne Bud. "Edwyn! Oh, Edwyn!"

know, lots of different things" — Rick. Rick wrote most of the songs, but none are carrying over to anything else. "There's some idea to form something else this year, but I don't think it's going to have much to do with the **Andelusian Dogs**."

• **PANEL VAN** are **Gavin Douglas** (b), **Paul** (v,g), **Jeremy Parnell** (l,g) and **Kurt** (d), and should be gigging sometime soon. "We're trying to make it pretty heavy, not too fast; not hardcore, more grungy stuff. We're into **Mudhoney**, **Black Sabbath**, **SubPop**, but not really... heavier than that, hopefully. We're trying to get a different sound" — Gavin. (21 Pannell Road, Bateman 6155)

• The **RAINYARD** are playing "soon, probably in February. Should be good. The songs are better, they're a little harder. I think it'll impress a few people" — David Chadwick. The "Technicolour Blind" single is coming, but the band isn't sure when. (14/216 Cambridge Street, Wembley 6014)

• **RUPTURE** have two records on the way — an eight track EP called *Forceps*, "very soon, a couple of months," on Resistance Productions, Switzerland, with a hundred copies being sent over to Australia,

Doubleview 6018)

• **KIM SALMON** and **THE SURREALISTS'** LP *Essence* will be out around May or June, with the single actually yet to be decided ("I love them all" — Kim). "Lightning Scary" is not a hit yet, though "I still haven't met one person who doesn't like it... oh, **Tony Thewlis** doesn't like it..."

Before the **Surrealists'** album, however, is a biggie — a **SCIENTISTS** compilation, starting with "Swampland" and going up to "Human Jukebox". "It's the best examples of what we were doing at each time." This should be out on **Red Eye/Polydor** in late April or so. Start queuing outside the shops right now.

Also, the **BEASTS OF BOURBON** will be playing on the 8th and 9th of March. And **KIM SALMON'S HUMAN JUKEBOX** (Kim Salmon, Kim Williams, Tony Pola) still have a few shows to go. (c/o GPO Box 211, Sydney 2001)

• **SATURN CRISIS** are **John Phatouros** (v), **Simon Newey** (d) (ex-**Diehards**), **Ken Bland** (ex-**Neighbourhood Threat**, Adelaide, and temp

.Changing .Wrecking Yard .Steel Ships



.DESOLATION .FLIGHT .FIRE BIRD

RUST  
SEVEN SONG CASSETTE  
\$7 INCLUDING POSTAGE  
P.O BOX 71 DOUBLEVIEW 6018 W.A.

Visit

# HOUSE OF WAX RECORDS

and find out why members of  
The Hummingbirds, Someloves, Summer Suns,  
Chevelles, Marigolds, A Month Of Sundays,  
Feends, Brother Fetch Me An Axe, Charlotte's  
Web, Kryptonics, Neptunes, Human Jukebox, the  
Rainyard, Mars Bastards, Beautiful Losers and  
Karen Knowles  
all shop there!

\*\* The House Of Wax: VINYL TO THE STARS. \*\*

Shop 4, First Floor, Centerway Arcade  
797 Hay Street, Perth 6000, Western Australia  
Phone (09) 481 0267

# CASSETTES

ACCELERATED MEN Dead Names THPC-008

12 song cassalbum Alternative / Dance / Gothic

\$12

MARS BASTARDS Six

GLO-3

6 song cass-E.P Guitar based indie pop

\$6

THE RAINYARD Icecream Overdrive THPC-002

8 song cass-mini-album Guitar and vocal harmony based indie pop \$10

\$2 pack and post

Wholesale enquiries welcome

8 TRACK RECORDING AND MUSIC PRODUCTION  
CASSETTE COPYING, LABELLING & COVERING  
CASSETTE DISTRIBUTION AND PROMOTION

# THUNDERING HEART PRODUCTIONS

P.O. BOX 274

SOUTH PERTH

6151 W.A.

**•6-UVS UPDATE:** While last issue was at the printer, the University of Western Australia decided to shut down their radio station. After having the idea quietly put to them ten days before by Universities Radio, Ltd. (the management), the Senate then put through the station's closure in nine and one-half minutes (total) before going to lunch.

The reason? To save \$150,000. (How the station lost \$150,000 in the first place is a matter of much rumour and conjecture, but I don't feel like a lawsuit so I won't go into it. Ask someone.) If the fascists don't get you, the accountants will.

The volunteers immediately got together to see what could be done. The University doesn't want a radio station right now, it just bloody doesn't. Of course, shutting the station off (ceasing transmission) got them into some serious trouble with the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal ... seems you have to broadcast until your licence runs out, or risk massive fines and (the goody) barring from holding a licence for a long, long time, perhaps forever. Since a university is the sort of organisation that can exist continuously for centuries, "forever" is really pretty damn serious.

In a bid to get out of the poo with the ABT — and also to deflect considerable negative publicity (Vice-Chancellor Fay Gale's phone being just about jammed for the first two weeks) — the University is working with the volunteer committee to hand the licence (and, very possibly, most of the station's operating equipment!) over to the newly-formed Arts Radio Broadcasters, Ltd., a collection of volunteers who are now "negotiating wildly" with UWA and the ABT (who are very supportive of the move) to get the station up again.

"It's all on track so far; the station looks like being back on air late March or early April; it's just a matter of legalities." — Bernard Langham. The call-sign will be changed, probably to 6-HOT, and the station will be volunteer-run as far as possible.

Please note that the record library is still operating, so don't stop sending records to the station — they'll get played in due course.

In the meantime, there will be a large number of benefit shows (go to all of them, damn you), culminating in a Neon Picnic projected for March — to be held outdoors, but not at the Somerville Auditorium. "It'll run all day, start with classical, move through some silly stuff and end with the biggest local indie bands. A whole heap of venues and bands have been offering their support, for which we're very grateful."

(Y'know, it's pretty damn awesome ... these people are digging in and running the local public station. They know that every form of bloody petty radio-station personal power politics is going to afflict them — obnoxious political-heads who seem to find the joy of going through a political process more important than getting an end result; good people leaving because of or being forced out by useless fuckers who feel threatened; rotten people whose world has the dimensions of a point trying to put the dim focus of their tiny existence out on air twenty-four hours a day, never mind anyone else ... etcetera, etcetera, ad nauseum. You can think of others, and you can bet that every single one will happen. Look at any other volunteer-run public station in Australia. Look at some of the history of 4-ZZZ, to pick one example. The fact that the 6-UVS people know all this is going to happen, will not be resolved for at least five years (see the five-year rule, *Nature Of Perth* in this issue) and still want to dig in and carry through with it shows them to be fine folk of resolution indeed.)

More news as we get it.

**•HOW TO GET YOUR BAND ON JJJ:** A secret that has evaded many a Perth band. Thankfully, the Perth ABC staff are actually (i) music fans, (ii) very helpful and (iii) trying very hard indeed to make JJJ listenable to those of us that don't live in Sydney.

The basic secret is that you don't send your record or tape directly to Sydney. If you do, it will fall down a deep black hole and never be seen again. What you do is give it to the Perth office. They then send it on to Sydney with a recommendation. Then you might stand a chance.

The station requires quarter-inch reel, broadcast quality, at 7.5 or 15 ips. DAT is OK as they can transfer it. They also need a written thing signed by one of the band giving permission for the tape to be put to air.

"Don't expect the world. In fact, don't expect anything. We won't play anything that isn't good enough. However, if it does get through, it'll be played on Liz Green's show (Saturday, 7-10pm — your three hours a week of local content) and then sent off to Sydney, where it may or may not get on. It only stands a small chance, but it's better than the no chance at all if you try sending anything directly to Sydney."

Call the Perth office on 220 2653 (JJJ answering machine) or call Bret Watson on 220 2767 for more information.

**•GETHEMANE CO-OP:** "A collective idea working between different artists in Perth, not just bands; the idea being that we'll be able to achieve more by working collectively, rather than separately, and present something that's different."

"Also, we're trying to improve what we're doing — like getting spoken-word people heard properly with bands."

"Ultimately, we'd like to do something at, perhaps, PICA, and have a band in one room, slides in another, street-theatre in the

middle of the audience ..." — Laura MacFarlane.

Gethemane is holding an all-ages show at the Actor's Centre on February first, starting at 6:00 sharp (the earliest they were allowed to start) and going to 11pm (so that kids can catch buses home). Scheduled are The Hindus, the Town Crier, Snakes Alive, Janco's Mask, Kym Bidstrup, The Stone Poses (Iain MacIntyre (b.v), John Young (g.v), Sarah Wilmot (d) — "basically do pissstake. It should be entertaining and interesting."), the Brautigans, The Mad Bad Bitch Witch Girl, Paul Castaire ("video stuff"), street theatre, clowns ... What's more, this undoubtedly Godlike event will cost only three dollars concession. **THREE DOLLARS.** Go, you fools.

Those wanting to be involved with the co-op should ring Laura on 443 1198.

**•FREAKZINE** now has a new address: PO Box 330, North Perth 6006.

•James Nagy was wildly enthusiastic for PF to mention the World Music section

of the Festival of Perth — a bunch of South African (Soul Brothers, Malombo) and Zairean (Kanda Bongo Man) pop-stars.

The Soul Brothers, "the biggest recording artists in South African history", playing a combination of mbaqanga (Zulu jive) and pop-music (as you know it), will be at Perth Concert Hall on March 8th and at Belvoir Valley Amphitheatre, Upper Swan on March 9th.

Malombo (guitar, flute, drums, percussion) — "liquid, litting, with a pastoral feel, more complex than mbaqanga tunes" — are at the Ozone for six nights from February 25th through to March 2nd, plus one at Garden City Shopping Centre on February 23rd.

Kanda Bongo Man plays soukous (wild Zairean dance music ... sounds good from this expansive press-kit) and is at Exit on February 18th-20th and 22nd and Belvoir Valley Amphitheatre on February 23rd, plus a couple at Garden City Shopping Centre on February 21st.

For general information, call the Festival office on 386 7977.



MORE MAYHEM WITH MAYHEB NEXT ISSUE!

I asked Michael of Crabstick what was important to him.

"A healthy respect for history is essential, otherwise all life before us is irrelevant. This is a condensation of a very long spiel I gave to James in the pub last Saturday. It sounded a bit more inspiring at the time. I think riding a bicycle is quite important. And so is tofu because it is a very rich source of protein. Hell, I love life."

Crabstick are a very down-to-earth type of band ... and they like to experiment with what sounds they can make. This means that, instead of the twaddle we associate with 'experimental' bands, we end up with songs that sound very polished, no matter

## Crabstick

how badly produced they might be. Full songs. Ones with texture, wit, verve and bite as well as bounce. As it happens, Crabstick remind me of the Beatles, though, of course, they sound nothing like them. Crabstick are a strange product of circumstance and time; they sound like no other band in Australia right now. Or any other band, if you want the truth.

I asked James just what he's trying to do with this music.

"Being perfectly honest, my sole,

original, irresistible, driving ambition as regards Crabstick is simply to retain my sanity for as long as possible. Whenever I'm writing songs, playing my or Michael's songs or listening to them on tape, I'm happy. I don't want for much else."

To the outsider, a comment like this might lead us to conclude that James is an unhappy, lonely kinda guy — c'mon, the only satisfaction he gets is from some bloody songs? How lame! Well, it's not as simple as that. The attitude that allows such painstakingly engaging music to be made must, by nature, be isolated. That doesn't mean that James is necessarily one of these po-faced 'artists' we hear so much about. If

anything, James derives great personal satisfaction from his achievement. Sure, it's a small achievement, but, in context, a lot of what we commonly regard as a *real* achievement is as substantial as fairy floss in terms of providing us with a personal pleasure or satisfaction.

Crabstick are a congregation of intimate human spirituality; the equivalent of a decent pub, if you like. A friendly, relaxing place to which we can always repair without fear of being ostracised or bored — which modern music does in quantity these days. Lester Bangs was right: Lou Reed is an arsehole; and, of course, Lester would have liked Crabstick. And we all know how far ahead of the times Lester was, even if he was fairly unstable about it.

*"Oh, doctor, please,*

*Some more of these ...*

*What a drag it is getting old."*

The web of sonic familiarity that Crabstick heave is astonishing. There's a welcoming rush of personal recognition and recall in this band which I've felt in few other bands recently. (Although Peter Gutteridge and Cats' Miaow spring readily to the keyboard.)

Crabstick have a feel which is instantly appealing, like an exciting folk band. (Which is not a contradiction in terms, it's just that much folk music is not for and of the folk themselves.) A thrill, a dense and powerful throb, of any country and any nation.

One of my favourite moments is when they overload the microphone on "Goodbye", which would sound totally stupid and inappropriate in any other band, totally crap; but here it works brilliantly, fitting in perfectly with the tone, flow, subject matter. Modern classics at a reasonable price.

"We sing about ourselves, our friends and whatever ridiculous stories we concoct in our addled little minds."

Crabstick have an album of twenty-four songs and a cassette called *A Month Of Saturdays*, both available through Frock Records: PO Box 219, Newtown 2042.

Brokenmouth.



# ANARAK JONES GROOVY CLOTHING

Designer Originals  
Made To Measure  
Hats

Station Street Markets  
Subiaco  
Saturdays, Sundays, Public Holidays

Richard Lane — vocals, guitar  
 Duane Smith — guitar, vocals  
 Jeff Halley — bass, vocals  
 Guy Douglas — drums.

**Let's start at the end of 1987.**

Richard: "Well, at the end of '87, the Stems broke up. For that bit, getting the book would probably be the best idea. Although that's not very accurate either."

"I think the main reason we broke up was that we'd just grown apart from each other, musically and as people. We did a lot of touring and shit, and it just got to the stage where we couldn't really carry on together."

"I think the band was pretty much at its limit; the whole idea was getting a bit ... we'd locked ourselves into a '60s trip that we couldn't get out of, and Dom was doing the Someloves because, I think, as an artist, he found that he couldn't get out of the Stems bit. He couldn't do what he wanted to do in the Stems. Julian and I had lost a lot of interest, and Dom was looking for a new vehicle, it being essentially his band. Julian wanted to do other things, he was writing a lot on his own."

"There were a thousand reasons at the time, but when it comes down to it, that's what happens to all bands. I think the main reasons were that the Stems were Dom's vehicle, and he wanted a new one, and that the band was pretty restricted. I don't think he was really very interested in playing 'She's A Monster' for the rest of his life."

"I'd lost a lot of interest altogether; I was at a stage where I was going to chuck the whole thing, just pack up music and start a new career. Which has taken me two or three years to find; I think I was a pretty restless person at that stage. I virtually gave up music for a while."

**You were about to do a European tour, and split instead.**

Richard: "Yeah, what a bummer, eh? I think we were really lucky ... It would have been nice to do a tour, but we weren't getting along, we weren't friends any more. The whole band started out just like a party thing, I don't think it was really that serious, then it just dissipated."

"Business ... Financially, the band was about bankrupt. We were earning a lot of money, but we were spending a hell of a lot of money. That put a lot of pressure on. The point is that, to earn *this* much, you've got to spend *this* much, and they're not proportional. To keep a band on the road in the eastern states on the scale we were costs twelve to thirteen thousand dollars a week, and we were averaging ten and a half on the last tour. We were really behind the eight ball by the time we got back to Perth; those shows in September '87 just paid off some of the existing debt ... and then created more debt themselves. We never broke even. We all ended up paying bits and pieces, avoided paying as much as we possibly could ..."

"The biggest tragedy about the album was that we never really promoted it as an album. I think it could have done more, but that was the only tour we did for it. That's all in the book. We did a small four-week tour, then a big eight-week tour, then it just died."

"I went down south and worked as a builder's labourer, then I moved to Sydney in January '88 and worked as a courier for a year. I tried to get a new band together, but I just found I didn't have the commitment and wasn't really interested in it, so I gave up."

"I came back to Perth February '89. I bummed around for a while, worked for my father for a while and then got a job with a real estate agent, which was pretty exciting stuff. I still do a bit of work for my folks and sell a bit of property and stuff. Not exactly going to break any records, I think. It's quite a good career, I really enjoy it. Bit of a contrast from rock'n'roll. Although people probably perceive it as one of the most sleazy professions, so maybe it was ironic. A lot less adulation, that's for sure."

"I also didn't have any songs, so I started writing with Duane around September '89. — Well, actually, all we did was get together once a week, get drunk, talk about music and listen to *Led Zeppelin III*. It was quite good fun. Then we'd make up songs. We were just mucking around, writing a couple of lines here, a couple of lines there, writing about the same old things — girls, girls and girls — but we were more just getting to know each

other, 'cos I didn't know him personally at that stage. I was going to start a band with Andy Mack and met Duane through him."

"We got Jeff and started writing a few songs, but we didn't actually do anything until November, when we got Guy. We had bits and pieces and about two completed songs, and we went into the rehearsal studio and completed a set in a period of about four weeks. It was pretty rushed. Then we just threw ourselves on stage in December."

**And you pulled out all your old Stems songs.**

Richard: "We didn't have enough songs, actually. We didn't have a direction for the band, you see; we were just looking for a starting point. But we chose to do it in public because if we'd just sat in the rehearsal room, we'd never have got it out. I know I wouldn't have done it, I'd have been too stage-frightened. I mean, shit, I

rehearsed. So now we're trying to reverse that."

"The Church support was good, I really enjoyed that. It's great playing on a big stage with a good sound system and everything; it makes a lot of difference. Good foldback and everything. Good crowd, too. We supported Melissa Etheridge and I think we just offended them. We got a lot of complaints! Although Melissa Etheridge really liked us, she thought we were great. She's pretty raunchy, though, old Melissa."

Jeff: "The Chevelles supported the Sugarclubes at the Palladium. Fuckin' hated it."

Richard: "My gear kept fucking up on me. The goths loved us. Or they loved one of our songs — 'Sweet Love'. A song that Julian (*Matthews*) wrote, actually. It's got a sort of gothic beat. And a gothic tune."

**What is a "gothic beat" and what is a**

**What did you think of the Someloves? Any comparisons?**

Richard: "They were good, I liked them. Thought they were great. They were virtually playing more as a touring act for the album than as a local band. They had a lot more responsibility than us 'cos everyone had already heard their songs, whereas we didn't have any recordings out."

"I wouldn't compare the two, though it's only natural for people to. I think we're pretty embryonic in terms of establishing what we want to do."

(*Housemate Paul wanders in*)

"Oh, right. Paul named the band."

**So, what's your image so far? Cars and girls? (*The first two handbills — see record.*)**

Richard: "Ahh, yeah. Um. Everything is Ian's fault, basically. Everything we don't like is the fault of Ian Underwood. From *The Kryptonics*. Great handbills, actually. There's no real image yet. OK, I suppose it's cars and girls ..."

"Those gigs were booked on the run and we didn't have a handbill, so we went into a bookshop and photocopies a picture of a car and used that. The girl one was good. I guess you could say that Ian Underwood has masterminded our public image."

"Basically, we're trying to come up with a good set of songs, some good rock'n'roll to entertain people with, that we can enjoy."

(*Idle chatter leading to discussion of America, of all things.*)

"Somehow, I don't think we're in a position to go to America. Not yet, anyway. Maybe when we write our big rock ballad. Actually, Duane wrote one, but we decided it was too much like Bad English."

**The single!**

Richard: "The single's come out with a funny red cover and a purple record and a box and a little booklet. The only thing missing is a badge. It was really well-presented, we're very happy with it."

"We got a really good response. We thought it came out quite good, 'cos it was recorded at Poons Head on a really limited budget — eight songs in one night for \$250. We did eight songs 'cos we didn't know what would turn out well. George (*Matzkov, Zero Hour*) picked two songs he thought would be good on a record. He felt the others weren't up to scratch. But those two came up really well, and I think they work well together too, so it's a good first single."

"We did the single launch at the Coronado to about 250 people, then Duane went to Indonesia to seek solace in the stars and ponder Bali girls or something like that and catch tubes and write songs, so we're doing a Balinese surf compilation next year. Guy's just back from Sydney; he's in the band that won the WA section of the Campus Band Competition and went to Sydney on a trip and lost."

"So we did shows for the single, then went into the studio and recorded rhythm tracks for five songs — 'Show Me Your Love', 'First Time', 'Hold On', 'The Kids Ain't Hip' and 'Tracey-Lee' — at Planet with James Hewgill."

Jeff: "It's really poppy, a lot poppier than the first single, without a doubt. The first hundred singles in Sydney came with a glow-in-the-dark condom. 'Be my friend.'"

**Any response from overseas?**

Jeff: "We're releasing a track in Denmark, a hard-vinyl single with a fanzine. We'll have 'Find My Way Out' and there'll be some other band on the back. Also one for an Italian or Spanish one. The mini-LP will be released in Europe for sure. We'll be touring February or March. We definitely have to tour on the EP."

Richard: "We're getting a good response at the gigs. People are getting to know the songs and singing along. Our sound's shaping up."

**You're the only band I feel old in the audience of these days — all the young girls ...**

Jeff: (*big grin*) "God bless 'em."

Guy: "God bless 'em"

Jeff: "God bless their little hearts."

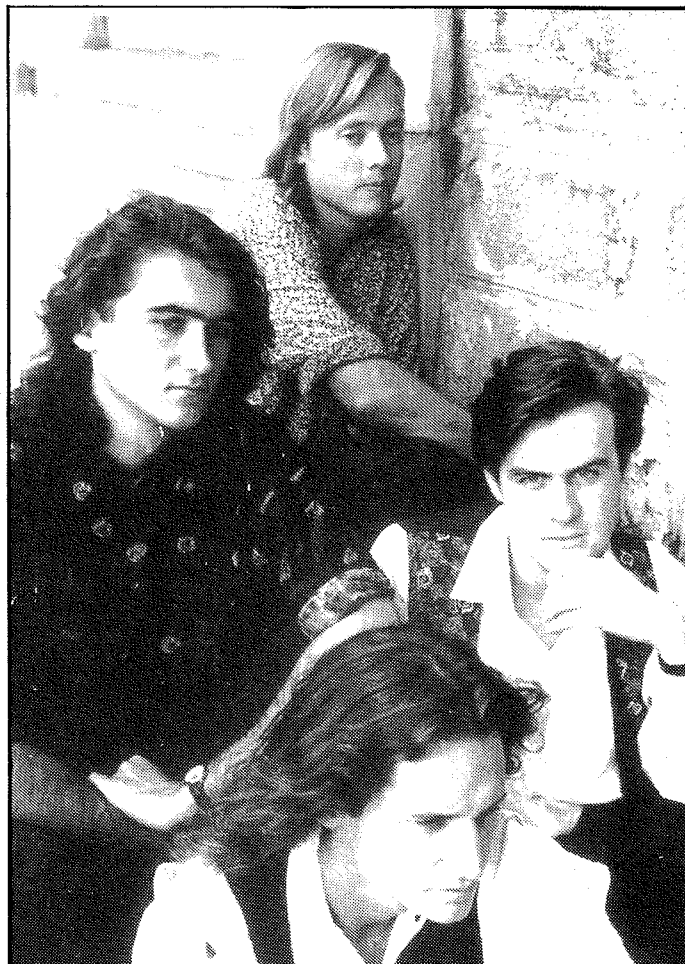
**Watch it, they'll be reading this.**

Jeff: "That's all right, good on 'em. Some kids have got to be hip again. A lot of the kids coming along are the younger kids, which is good 'cos they don't call out for Stems stuff. They still love 'Turn The Clock Back', but they like others just as much. It's pop, y'know."

Richard: "I think we're playing

# Chevelles

The Chevelles: Guy Douglas, Jeff Halley, Duane Smith and Richard Lane.



hadn't played for two years. It was a matter of testing the songs, seeing what they were like, testing the band."

"That was the problem with the band I tried to do in Sydney, the Matadors — we worked really hard in rehearsal, but never actually threw it on stage."

"That band was me, Terry Clavey of the Lincolns, Gary Chambers for a while, then another drummer called Ross whose last name I can't remember — he played in a lot of Perth blues bands and lives in Sydney now — and Brad Fitzpatrick from the Hexbreakers, a sort of psychedelic band. He was a great guitar player, he played some good Chris Masuak riffs (*laughs*).

"So that's what we decided to do with the Chevelles. We didn't know where we were going, we didn't have many songs, but we felt that, to get any direction and identity to the band, we had to go out and be a band. It was pretty fucked when it first started ... As young Duane pointed out today, we've played more than we've

**"gothic tune"?**

Richard: "One that goes 'gong, gong, gong, gong, gong.' And the lyrics aren't too dissimilar. They really got off on it. They were either clapping at us or laughing at us, but it was a response."

Jeff: "We got paid heaps of bucks for it, so fuck it!"

(*Idle chatter of wine casks*)

"Keep well stocked. I'm the Goonie King. Ask Jeff, he'll tell you."

**What's your history before the Stems? Did you have one?**

Richard: "Ahh ... not really (*laughs*). I think I tried three or four educational systems in a period of about twelve months when I was eighteen, in 1983, and actually started playing with Dom around November of that year. That was the first Stems. We had this really wild drummer who had lots of roto-toms and wore a funny cap. I can't even remember his name. Terry Clavey was on bass before John Shuttleworth. Terry left us to join Murrur."

together a little bit more as a band."

Why, what were you before, solo artists? What about your solo shows?

Richard: "I did four of them, at the Coronado."

Jeff: "We live at the Coronado. We're the resident Coronado band."

Richard: "We've done a lot of shows. We're going to start rehearsing now, honest. I think we've got a tough pop sound that's starting to develop a bit."

"The A-side is 'Be My Friend', and 'She Don't Come Around' is the B-side. A pop ballad and a rock ballad. One for the blue rinse set. We'll probably get featured on the Ray Martin show after this one."

Well, the Shivers' first single got on the Eagle.

Richard: "Did it? I'm surprised that song wasn't actually bigger. I thought it would have done a lot more than it did. Programmers might not have liked the production."

"The Stems had a hell of a time getting our stuff played on the radio, especially the early records. I remember how we'd go into Triple-M or one of those big FM stations and sit in the foyer with our EP or single, and they'd keep you waiting there for about three hours, so you'd sit there and drink coffees, then some hyped-up American-style guy would take you into an office, you'd sit down, John Needham would introduce himself as the guy from Citadel, they'd take the record, say "great!!", be really hyped up, be really excited about it and then you'd never hear from them again. You'd certainly never hear it on their station unless they squeezed it into their token Australian show ... We found it really hard even with the singles on the album."

How was Countdown?

Richard: "That was great. That was one of my lifelong ambitions, to get on Countdown. I remember when I was ten years old, sitting in front of the telly and watching the Ferrets or one of those bands doing 'Don't Fall In Love' around about 1975 and saying to my mum, 'that's what I want to do, Mum! I want to go on telly!' I think my mum suggested I should be a priest or something. Or a fireman."

Is that how you started off in music?

Richard: "Yeah. I played the clarinet as a kid, played in school orchestras and bands and things like that, playing the Hogan's Heroes theme and so on."

"My mother bought me a guitar and I had a couple of lessons and gave it up, but then, when I was sixteen, I'd go to all these parties and all these guys would play Bob Dylan and Beatles songs, and I thought, 'that's what I'll do, that'd be a good idea. Learn the guitar! How to win friends and influence people! Get a girlfriend!' So then I started taking a sort of couch interest in the guitar, just playing at home and stuff, then I bought an amp and guitar and would jam with friends at the end of high school ... playing Bob Dylan covers and Beatles ... a bit of AC/DC ... pretty embarrassing."

"Then I had a couple of little jam bands I used to muck around with, but didn't really play with — it was really just for fun on a Saturday afternoon with nothing to do. We were totally woeful. I think it was more in our imaginations than anything else. Julian and I thought we had a band called the Flying Ducks for a while, which never really got to the ... rehearsal stage. I think we used a couple of acoustic guitars, with ice-cream cartons for drums."

"The Stems were my first band, that's how I got started. The Stems was my rock'n'roll learning process, you might say. That was a good education. I don't think I could have picked a better band to have started out in."

You went through the mill from the bottom to the top.

Richard: "Well, I guess a lot of it was premeditated on Dom's part, because, by that stage, when the Stems started, he'd been in rock'n'roll for ten years or something. For me and Julian, I think it was ... luck had more to do with it than anything else. We certainly would never have ... got out of the rehearsal room if it hadn't been for playing with Dom, that's for sure. 'Cos we didn't know much. We didn't even know what sort of amps to buy, y'know. Domenic bought our amps for us."

"I learnt all about recording and arranging songs, and harmonies, and guitar parts, and ... performing, and gigs, and presenting yourself to the public ... I think image was more of a passion than a learning process — we liked going out and collecting

clothes that no-one else wanted.

"I don't think I'll ever go into rock'n'roll full time as a career. I think that I was lucky enough to be able to tour and do things like that and get a bit of success out of the Stems, but this is really just a hobby now."

"We did the Stems for a living, but I think we were lucky to be able to do that. I think it's pretty hard to do it at the moment in Australia. The east coast has become more of a concert circuit than a small-gig situation, and we were lucky enough to get in there just in time to do all those small gigs. You've got to be pretty big now."

How big were the Stems in popularity in the east? Anything at all like in Perth?

Richard: "I dunno ... the Stems is ... I dunno ... it's a weird phenomenon in Perth. I can't understand how much interest people take in it. I can't understand why anybody would want to put a book together on us. It's a huge phenomenon, it's astounding."

too. And we were starting out.

"I started out virtually learning guitar with the Stems. I couldn't play a note of keyboards. Still can't. It was just an illusion. Hey, neither could Frank Brunetti (Died Pretty). I ran rings round him ... There's various stages of not being able to play."

"I don't play keyboards any more, I don't play harmonica any more. I just do a bit of singing and a bit of guitar. I played a lot of guitar when I was in Sydney, but I played pretty standard stuff. Find a note that sounds good and persist in it. It's all I can play anyway, so it's either that or the kazoo, and I don't think people want to hear a kazoo these days."

Oh, the Healers do all right.

Richard: "Yes, they've certainly redefined the kazoo, haven't they? I'm an all right guitar player, I get away with it. Most of my songs are based around simple styles of picking and strumming. Anybody can do it. It certainly doesn't take a great deal of

book, a requiem mass or something. I dunno ... it's nice, but it's not *uplifting*."

"The interview harps on about the breakup of the Stems ... y'know, the band broke up. Big deal. Thousands of bands break up. It treats it like it's some major Rolling Stones breakup. I think there should have been more documentation of the success. The breakup wasn't as important as what we had, which was the ultimate gift in rock'n'roll: a bit of success!"

"A lot of shit's gone down, and people want to know the muck, but it doesn't matter any more. How it lived was more important than how it died."

"What it came down to was that we all went our own ways. A band is a very emotional thing. When you're touring and living with people, you become very close. It's like a relationship. All the little things magnify. Business decisions becoming personal problems. I think that's the main thing."

"I'm not grievous about it at all. Of course it's disappointing; but, looking back on it now, the band ending was the most logical thing that could possibly have happened, it was perfect. We'd gone as far as we could musically. I couldn't contribute anything more to the Stems musically, I think Domenic was after different things, a different style, and wanted to do it with the Someloves and not tour. I thought it was a bummer we didn't go to Europe ..."

(Switch off recorder for some detailed muck, and no, I'm not telling you.)

"I don't want to go into the business details, because that's not rock'n'roll. It was the fact that we were losing money and were under pressure. And it was an enormous pressure, it was something we weren't quite aware of until it hit us in the face. But that's like anything, isn't it — financial pressure has a way of destroying anything. The real reason behind things is undermined by the monetary side of it, especially in rock'n'roll."

You need solid business sense to know exactly where you are.

Richard: "That's something we never had, and that's what fucked us up."

"But it was wonderful. I do believe that we were very, very lucky. I consider myself privileged to have been in the Stems and to have worked with those guys. Now it's just fond memories."

"It's just good that it all happened. It's also a good laugh, y'know, we did a lot of funny things."

Your wild youth.

Richard: "Oh, yeah (laughs). Certainly had a fair crack at it. We had some great parties, that's for sure. Good fun nights out. Got to meet a lot of interesting people. Do a lot of silly things. Wheels, deals and demos."

"I remember one really wild gig we did at the Tivoli in Sydney ..." (goes to get scrapbook)

Wow, what a great poster! "Chaos In Gotham City ... Jazz Productions, A Night Of Independent Excellence. Stems, Crystal Set, Deadly Hume ... Tuesday 12th November '85."

Richard: "It was sponsored by Stiletto, and we were the headline act. They had all these fashion people there. And I remember sharing a band room with about thirty beautiful models, all of whom were removing their clothing ..."

I can see how that would fluster a young boy.

Richard: "And I remember a mate of mine, this French guy, came to see us play, and came up to the band room upstairs, and it was just full of chicks changing their clothes. And we sat down on the couch and had a beer, and he just couldn't believe it, he thought we were really big stars. 'This is rock'n'roll, man, this is real rock'n'roll! I love Australia!'"

"That was quite an amazing gig, it was an incredible gig. A lot of record company people came to see us, and everybody just rocked out, and Dom smashed his guitar and Gary smashed up his drumkit. The last song was 'Make You Mine', with about forty fans dancing on stage, Laurie's lights going berko, people going sick ... it was pretty wild. It was a great year, actually."

It's 1991 now ... have you calmed down any?

Richard: "Ah, yeah, I think so. Getting old, hey, ripe old age of twenty-six. I think I've sort of calmed down. Haven't had the opportunity to party every night, anyway. Back to the real world."

It's 'cos the Stems were a band that came from the old Perth chip-on-the-shoulder original, i.e. alternative, scene that were actually really entertaining, didn't mind being and acting like pop stars, were fun, had lots of fans and sold records, but still had cred.

Richard: "I guess it is a bit of a social phenomenon. To me, it's just part of history. I can't even remember a lot of it now. I just can't understand how people take so much interest in it."

"It was big in Perth and it was pretty big over east, too; but the thing is, there's not that many bands having success from Perth, so the ones that gain a little bit of success tend to be thrown up as idols and legends."

"I think the main reason was that people could see themselves doing it. People could see themselves in us. At the time, the scene and everything like that was going on and we were just lucky. We were the top band in the scene. We were pretty average guys,

musical prowess ... Although I guess it does take a certain amount of musical persistence."

What did you think of the Stems book and record?

Richard: "I'm glad that 'Let Your Head Rest' got on record, 'cos I always liked that song. I didn't really care whether the book came out or not; it's not important to me, 'cos I've got my own little scrapbook. It is a nice thing to have, I guess; lots of fun pictures to look at. The sort of thing I can look at twice and give to my grandchildren."

"The interview was done a long time ago. It just wasn't actually what I sent in, I don't think. There's a level of inaccuracy in it I was disappointed in it."

"I have serious doubts about whether people would be that interested in reading it; I think they'd buy it for the record and the pictures."

"It's not a happy book. It doesn't reflect the happiness of the band. It's like a death-



Now you stay at home and drink cask wine in the kitchen and rot your liver. (look through *Stems scrapbook*) You should really have just reprinted the scrapbook as the *Stems* book. Anything else to say about the *Stems*?

Richard: "Like I say, I think that we were fortunate enough as a band to receive the ultimate reward from rock 'n' roll, and that is a bit of recognition. And we were also very lucky, especially Julian and I, because we were young musicians playing in our first band, learning our instruments and having a great time. I think that was the most important thing that came out of it for me: the experience of it all. And I certainly believe that if I hadn't been in it, I would probably never have done anything in rock 'n' roll. I'd probably have stayed on my couch singing Bob Dylan and Beatles. I'd have been in the crowd watching them. It was a good apprenticeship."

"I think that I could probably have taken it further if I'd had the commitment, but I just didn't have the discipline. So I came back to Perth ... and now I'm a Shovel. That's embarrassing! *'Dick And The Shovels'*! Shit! Why don't we just call ourselves the Dorksticks or something? Fuck!"

How do you get along with the other ex-*Stems* now?

Richard: "I don't really see any of them. I think it's kind of like a relationship, we all just ... part. We were all doing different things, with the one thing bonding us together being the common interest in the band and the music, so, once that ends, you tend to go your own way. I don't keep in touch."

"I had the fortunate experience of getting to play with Julian one night when he came back to Perth at Christmas ('89). He played with the *Chevelles* at the Old Melbourne. Got up, did a really wailing lead break, rocked us all out. That was supporting *Painters & Dockers*."

How's the structure of the band now?

Richard: "We don't need a manager, since Jeff books gigs for us. (Jeff works at the *Rock Exchange*.) There's no mechanical support system, it's just the members. I can't really see us needing a manager in the near future."

Any ideas of flirting with majors?

Richard: "No, it'll be an independent for sure. I don't think I'll be flirting with majors in the future! There's no need for it, the style of band we are. We're not 1927. We don't need it ... They don't need us."

How fast do you turn over songs these days?

Jeff: "He writes a new one every three point five minutes."

Guy: "We chuck 'em out as soon as he writes new ones."

Jeff: "That's 'cos we're pure artists, it's never good enough."

Richard: "I write songs on Saturday nights after twelve; that's really my only songwriting time these days. I usually sit down mildly inebriated and play with my guitar for a couple of hours. I'm usually motivated by something, like a girl. I take a fairly winding little personal issue and work a song around it."

Guy: "No, I write a drum part and he works a song around it."

Jeff: "That's true, actually, we do things in a funny way. We're an artistic band. Thou *Chevelles*. That's what we do."

Have you written your millstone yet? Your "Tears Me In Two", your "Slave Girl", your "Wild Thing"?

Richard: "Uh, no. No, no, we haven't given birth to a millstone. But we're trying hard."

Jeff: "Did you think 'Tears Me In Two' would become one?"

Richard: "No, not until you get it to the band and test it on the crowd; that's the true answer. And the second process is putting it out. It's got to have something. 'Tears Me In Two' has this incredible riff and beat."

"I think that, if we keep working on doing some good pop songs and work on our arrangements and so on, then, eventually, with time and effort, we'll come up with ... a millstone."

Jeff: "'The *Chevelles*: In Search Of A Millstone.'"

Richard: "Hey, Jeff used to be the lead singer of *Infa Red*."

Jeff: "Don't put that in."

Don't worry.

Richard: "They've, ah, progressed

now." (Now dedicated to paying tribute to the fine works of *AC/DC* and the *Angels* — ed.)

Time for the silly interview. What are your favourite colours?

Jeff: "My favourite's beer. Gold."

Richard: "Amber."

Jeff: "Oh, is that what the colour amber is? ... Oh, that's why they call it amber fluid ..."

(hoots of derision)

Richard: "I usually drink goon, mate. Rosé."

Richard: "I'm not the King of Goon any more. I'm on the wagon."

Jeff: "He's lost it, he's on the goon wagon. He's down to two a day."

Richard: "Well, you can't taste 'em after a couple of glasses, anyway."

Jeff: "No vegetarians or non-alcoholics in this band, mate."

Richard: "What's your favourite colour, Guy?"

Guy: "Puce."

Richard: "Which is?"

Guy: "It's a sort of greeny colour ..."

No it isn't, it's reddish-purplish-pinkish ...

Guy: "It's a reddish-purplish-pinkish-greenish colour."

Richard: "Well, we've just established that the drummer is colour-blind ..."

Guy: "Would I wear this shirt if I could distinguish colours? Come on!"

Richard: "True. It's a bit puce, really, isn't it? ... Hey, wake up, Guy. Guy's gone to sleep."

Jeff: "Guy's just pissed, mate."

Richard: "Guy is a perfect specimen of a *Chevelle*. So, what do you do all day, Guy?"

Guy: "I'm a full-time student. I'm a third-year philosophy student."

Jeff: "Takes a lot out of you, as you can see. He's been philosophising all day."

What's your rock'n'roll history?

Guy: "Erm ... I played in year ten in a band called the *69ers*, doing originals, *Clash* and *Ramones*. That kind of became *Bits Of Kids* after a while, then the *Rackett*. At one stage we were 75% covers, that was the worst. *Can you play three sets of*

*forty-five?* 'Ohhh, we'll give it a shot ...'"

Jeff: "The *Freuds* did that once in *Dunborough*. Church covers, all of *Stone-age Romeos*, all of *The Romantics*, all our originals. We used to do 'Wipeout', that'd really kill 'em in *Dunborough*." (Starts singing "Like Wow — Wipeout")

Richard: "And how did you join the *Chevelles*?"

Guy: "I joined the *Freuds*. Except for you, we're the *Freuds*. We kicked *Bruce (Abbott)* out and got *Rich*. The *Freuds* finally died October last year. We never played a gig with me as drummer."

Jeff: "That was about two weeks before the *Chevelles* started. We just had different musical opinions to *Bruce*."

Richard: "You hated each other like brothers."

"We're going to put out the mini-LP, do this incredible whirlwind tour of the east, then, at some time, go to Europe. And after that, we'll do another record."

I heard that someone had been trying to get together a *Stems* reunion show ...

Richard: "Yeah. *Alan Brown (Stems manager)* asked me if we'd be interested in doing it, and I rang *Dorn* to see if he'd be interested; but he had the *Someloves*, and the other guys were in *Melbourne*, so I didn't pursue it and *Alan* didn't pursue it. Now that the book's come out, I think that's enough (look of distaste on face). Once you go back and play again, it takes away all the specialness. It'd be a kick-arse band, but it's just in the past. The *Rockets* did it ... four times ... the *Boys* did it ..."

"For me, the *Stems* was special, it was a pet band. I love my dog, but if he died, I wouldn't fuckin' dig him up and take him for a drag for old times' sake ..."

David.



## ROB'S RECORD BAR

Station Street Markets

◆ SUBIACO ◆

SAT./SUN. & PUBLIC HOL.

## MONKEY MUSIC

406 WILLIAM ST. NORTHBRIDGE

WEEKDAYS

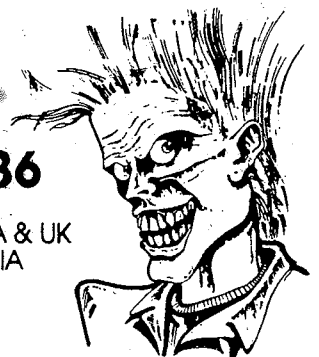
10 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Phone 227 9449

Fax (09) 227 8236

WEEKLY SHIPMENTS FROM USA & UK  
BEST PRICES IN AUSTRALIA

TRADE-INS WELCOME  
AT MONKEY MUSIC



Jeff Lowe — vocals, guitar  
Laurie Mansell — guitar  
Michael Zampogna — bass  
Kym Skipworth — cello, tambourine  
Flick Dear — drums  
Mark Rettig — trumpet.

Jeff Lowe and Flick Dear interviewed by David.

### What happened to John Bannister?

Jeff: "John was always something of a free agent, he just came and went as he pleased; and this time he's decided to go and not come back. He doesn't feel there's an awful lot of scope for trumpet playing in Charlotte's Web. Which, to an extent, is probably true."

Flick: "Yeah. He wants to join a band with a brass section, like the Venus Girl Traps, who he's playing with now." (or was until they split — ed.)

Jeff: "It's very hard to write a lot of songs that suit trumpet, really."

### How's "Heart Trouble" sold?

Jeff: "I don't ask about such things. I was told it was 'doing OK,' which could mean anything. Mighty Boy apparently say 'it's picking up,' so that means they're happy with it too, but I'm not sure what the exact figures are."

"But I'm happy with it. It's definitely served its purpose. It's got a lot of airplay, which was the main reason for releasing it. Not to make money, certainly."

You timed it well — JJJ picking it as their token Perth record.

Flick: "Other bands from Perth, like King Pig, sent records which they didn't play at all."

Jeff: "Well, I'm glad it was us and not someone else! It was good timing; we didn't know it was going to happen that way. They've been very good to us."

### Tell us about the mini-album.

Jeff: "The album took so long because we've only just actually got out of the red for the single. The album was started several times; it was started on thirty-two-track, it was also started on sixteen-track, and every time we had a change of members and there didn't really seem any point in keeping what was already there, because we couldn't get the agreement of ex-members to use it. And it didn't really fit in with what the new members were doing. We now have a permanent lineup, so the mini-album is a going concern."

*Flies In The Face Of ...* was originally going to be the album, wasn't it?

Flick: "Money again! I don't know if there's any sugar daddies out there who need a tax dodge or something ..."

Jeff: "Because it was such a limited release, we could still use those songs on an album."

Flick: "We did a couple of hundred copies."

Jeff: "We have lots of people asking for more, but we don't want to do any more. Mighty Boy want some for the eastern states, Waterfront want some, but we don't want to re-run them, so we'll just let it go."

OK, now for the epic history. Jeff, you've been around a bit. What was your first proper band?

Jeff: "My first actual genuine dinky-di band was a band called the Royal Family, and they played twice. I can't remember where the first show was, but the second was at the Wizbah. And we folded up on our second gig live on stage in a punch-up. That was Aidan d'Aldemarr from Martha's Vineyard; Cavan McCann, a good friend of mine, who hasn't played in a band since — he became so disillusioned with music in two gigs that he hasn't played live since then! I think the boy is very sensible. Mark Coddington, or Mark One, who played with the Caretakers; and me."

"The breakup ... erm ... (pause) ... It's probably quite personal, but let's just say that one particular person was having a lot of problems, and I had no sympathy whatsoever for his problems. I turned around and said, er, something quite cruel at the time, and it had been a very bad day for him and he decided to punch me. And then the PA stack fell on top of us and the curtain came down. It must have looked quite good. Apparently, you could see silhouettes of all these people having a scuffle behind the curtain. And that was the rather dubious end of the Royal Family."

### How many people were there?

Jeff: "I didn't know at the time, I just went and got out of there as quickly as possible, but I was surprised at how many

people must have been there, because a lot of people know about this. Certainly more than I ever told, I can tell you that."

"It was just a combination of factors. We were all very young. Basically, people with problems in bands who don't leave them at home. Which is one of the good things about this band — we all leave our problems at home, because our time is precious. We don't go around moaning about our bad day. A bit of mutual respect. Professionalism, that's what it's called. We didn't have any of that, so that's why we had a fight."

It sounds like the sort of band that was all set to last one gig. What was the band like musically?

Jeff: "Well, actually, Cavan played me a tape of the band, and it's not as far removed from what I'm doing now as I thought it would be. There was a large bit in the middle which was quite different, but I can see comparisons with what I'm trying to do now. It was a bit heavier with Aidan on drums. Keyboards, saxophones, all sorts of things."

What did you do between that and the Russians?

Jeff: "I went straight back into it pretty quickly, because that was a rather traumatic experience and I thought, 'if I stop now, I'll never get up on a stage again.' So I met Darryl Edwards and very quickly went back into it."

"The Russians was myself, Darryl and Richard Galli, who has since disappeared, and I think we went for a year before Tim Underwood joined. So Tim was with us for about a year, until we broke up. That band didn't break, it was just that I said one day, 'I don't want to do this any more.'"

"When I started the Russians, I had no set ideas of what I wanted to do musically; I was just a songwriter and I hadn't ever had to think about which way a band ... you know, 'what is this band doing? What does it sound like?' I just wanted to play some songs and learn how to get up on a stage. So after this amount of time I could see myself wanting to go a certain way, and

real business, but it got to people who said they liked it, and there's people in Sydney I know who remembered it, so it must have sold at least three copies."

"I actually feel quite good about that single, regardless of how it sold. It has a certain innocence about it. It was also very cheap."

Then you came back to Perth and did "Servant Of Your Lahr" on the 6-UVS Hometown Farewell Kiss album.

Jeff: "No, I did that in Sydney. I actually did that the night I left to come home."

Flick: "Who was the guy with the long hair you stayed with?"

Jeff: "There was James Dixon, a fantastic drummer called Andrew and a bass player whose name I don't remember, Paul, and he went on to play in a band called the Labradogs. A real drug head. But a very good bass-player. And they literally heard that track twice and played it that night, so they're very good musicians."

Do you like the way it turned out, after all these years?

Jeff: "Considering how quickly it was done, yeah. Don't think it has a lot of bearing on that 6-UVS thing any longer ... it came out so long after it was recorded, it's pretty pointless."

Flick: "When the new Charlotte's Web was recording *Flies In The Face Of ...* at Poons Head, Jeff asked them if we could use it, and they said we wouldn't have time!"

Jeff: "The people organising it changed so many times, it was a bit of a mess, wasn't it? Which is a pretty big pity. I'd question the point in releasing things like that if they're more than a year old, because bands change so quickly."

Flick: "I think a part of the reason they ended up still releasing it was that certain bands were quite cross, because they'd not included the tracks on their own albums or cassettes. We had room to put the Holy Rollers' one ('Seraphim') on the Holy Rollers album, but we'd saved it for them."

OK. And then you got together the new Charlotte's Web.

## Charlotte's Web

Darryl was obviously into much heavier bands; and that was becoming a problem for both of us."

And then you went off and did the first Charlotte's Web, which also played drummerless as the Catherine Wheels.

Jeff: "That's right — once or twice, I'm not sure. I continued with Tim Underwood. I said, 'look, I want to do this,' and it was along the lines of what he wanted to do."

"For me, at the time, it was a reaction to all the heavier guitar bands that were around; I wanted to do something that was incredibly fragile, and I probably suffered for it. But I still stuck with it, because at the time it was what I wanted to do."

"That was Tim Underwood, Gretta Little, Chad Hedley and me. It played here infrequently for about a year, then went to Sydney and broke up as such in Sydney. 'Personality clashes.' Just the usual."

Then they went off to become the Northern Lights, and you got together another Charlotte's Web.

Jeff: "Mmm. I had no intention of letting go of the name. I think too many bands lack a sense of identity, because they start a band, and if the band doesn't work straight away they break it up and start another band, and all you get is a group of people who've been in so many different bands it becomes totally confusing. There's no history. I think it's important to try to keep a name, even if your membership changes, because then people can look back ... there's something there, you can actually grow."

"I just know so many musicians who've been in twenty bands and they still haven't finished. There's not much point."

How did the Charlotte's Web "Big Letdown" and Russians "New Recruits" singles sell?

Jeff: "I wouldn't know how the Russians single sold, because that would have meant discussing things with Dennis Rice (*Cherrytop*), and, quite frankly, no-one ever discussed anything with Dennis Rice. So I tended to stay away."

"I don't think 'Big Letdown' did any

Jeff: "Mandy got indoctrinated in Mount Newman." (mining town — ed)

Flick: "The poor girl! They got really confused when there were two girls on the stage. Will did half the set and then Mandy came on, and they were shouting, 'which one's Charlotte?' They'd decided it must have been me. Yeah, Mount Newman was quite an experience."

Jeff: "We actually went down quite well. We went there expecting death. We were being paid for it, it was contractual. Death for money."

Flick: "But they didn't really dislike us."

Jeff: "They were probably puzzled more than anything else."

Flick: "They were! They sat there just staring at us, and they'd give these quiet claps and just look like, 'what are these people?' Then this girl came up to me from a big table during the break, and they'd all been talking, and she said to me, 'we think you're really good musicians, and it's really good seeing a chick in the band, but are you trying to be clever?' I asked her what she meant. She said, 'I've never not playing songs we know. Do you go out of your way to choose the most unknown songs or something?' I said, we wrote them! She said, 'well, can't you play some Aussie music, like Jimmy Barnes or something?' I told her it was West Aussie music. I think she understood then."

"They're used to getting Perth cover bands come up there and play top 40, Jimmy Barnes, Angels, and they just tap their feet along. When we did 'Boys Don't Cry', the dancefloor was packed because they knew it. They'd never seen an original band and they'd never heard what an original band was like."

Jeff: "So since then, when we've been up against a support that might be difficult or something, our motto's been: 'if we can play Mount Newman, we can play anything. Heh.'"

"That was just before the tape was recorded, 'cos the money from Mount Newman paid for the tape."

Flick: "That was the end of '87, 'cos it was done over the Christmas holidays. We tend to do a lot of things in the school holidays because of me (Flick is a school teacher) and Uni and things like that."

I remember you used to have all these other people who'd jump on stage for two or three songs.

Jeff: "That was just people asking at the time. It seemed like not such a bad idea. It's not good for continuity — you'd get lots of ten-minute breaks while people trundled on stage — but it was fun. We were happy. Sandra Morgan played keyboards with us for a small amount of time and did some backing vocals."

Flick: "Yeah, Alyson (Furey) wants to do 'Toytown' again! Alyson used to come and see us all the time; it was just fun for her to jump up. Gil (Bradley) played e-bow on the tape, so after that he'd sometimes jump up and play live with us. Annalisa Spence, who's in Italy now, got up about three or four times. She sang backup with me on 'Too Much, Too Unkind' on the tape."

Jeff: "We got fairly indulgent for a while there, but it's hard to keep it going over a period of time because the organisation is just impossible."

And that version of Charlotte's Web played happily until September 1988.

Flick: "Yeah. Then the Palisades went to Sydney."

Jeff: "Mandy expressed a desire to go to Sydney quicker than we ever wanted to, so she took her chances with the Palisades. She was putting some pressure on us, and we didn't want to go, so we parted company. Craig wanted to go to Europe and, at the time, was saying things like 'I'm not sure if I'm ever coming back.' So we made a decision to get another guitarist."

"Mandy knew Michael Zampogna, so he took over on bass, and we met Laurie Mansell, who originally auditioned as a bass-player, but said that he could play guitar and would rather do that anyway. Laurie used to be in I Hear An Army and Michael was in Circle Of Confusion."

"Don't ask me how we met John Bannister. He was just here one day."

Flick: "He got up at the Stoned Crow one night and just played. We were playing with the Northern Lights and there was one song he'd heard the week before which he'd thought of something he could play on, so he got up and did it."

Jeff: "He's very good like that, he has an ability to play things quite quickly. He'd come back after a rehearsal and have something ready down pat. Which may be a talent that all trumpeters have, I don't know, but he certainly has it. In which case it's a good instrument to have in a band."

"We met Kym Skipworth, our cello player, who's fitted in wonderfully well. She's a full-time member of the band. As soon as we can get her a keyboard, she'll do that too. She has a keyboard, but it's so small that she reckons she can't actually touch the keys properly and she gets very embarrassed taking it on stage. She's sort of weaseled out of using it."

Flick: "It hasn't got the sounds she wants. She wants a good piano sound."

Jeff: "And unless the band can cough up for a Steinway, I don't think she's gonna bother."

Flick: "Then Mark Rettig approached us about trumpet."

Jeff: "That's just for the sake of the songs that had a trumpet. It's a bit hard to play without one, trumpet being such a different instrument to guitar soundwise — the bright brassiness. But we did OK. Which is a credit to the songs and the way we play them. But trumpet certainly does

Flick: "Generally you come in with the song, you strum it on guitar and sing along and we listen to it, then we just start playing. Laurie and Jeff talk about chord bits."

"The thing I like about Jeff's songs and music, compared to other bands I watch, is that I don't feel like I'm doing the same beat every song. It gives me a bit of scope."

Jeff: "So I just bring a bare song, chords and a tune, and they flesh it out themselves without any real prompting from me."

Flick: "That's probably why the songs have changed whenever you've had changes in band members, 'cos you don't dictate what people play."

Jeff: "I've never done that. Anyone who's ever played with me will say that I don't dictate what they play, 'cos it's too much like hard work. I've got my own problems, y'know. Playing three chords in succession myself."

Flick: "Plus, I think you'd go through musicians more if you told them exactly what they had to play."

Jeff: "Well, you would! I'm amazed that some people do that. I do know that there are bands in Perth where the leaders dictate literally note for note what everybody else plays. That's weird. That's

for *Charlotte's Web* and cleared the room for the *Kryptonics*, leaving ten fans up the front and an empty house otherwise). It's a rock'n'roll band, we can kick ass (short 'a'). We have found rock'n'roll and I think we're learning how to use it. But we can still do the other very fragile stuff, which is good."

That was the thing about the first band — it had no rock'n'roll whatsoever.

Jeff: "That was, as I said, a deliberate reaction. And we did suffer for it. Even when we played with the Stems, we'd still do that. We wouldn't even play on the stage at the Old Melbourne, we played down on the floor! And Squasher never used us again. *You guys are complete idiots!*" We used to just cut our own throats all the time. It was interesting. I mean, people remember it."

"I just thought at the time that everyone was taking their songs and clothing them with the same thing, using the same sound. It was an allergic reaction which almost killed me."

"The thing is, now we can do both. Which I suppose you've got to give people if you're playing in a pub, haven't you? — you've got to have something people can tap their toes to. And we can play to quite

Wide World', has always stuck in my mind as such a silly song. It's one of the worst-recorded records. It's just a complete mess, it's great. The chords. We tend to choose our covers as songs that don't take long to learn, 'cos we don't see the point in spending ten thousand years learning someone else's song. And that was perfect. And it really is indulgent rock'n'roll, we can really look as though we were rock'n'rollers when we play that song."

Flick: "If you're going to do covers, they should be fun or something that you really like."

Jeff: "'Ain't No Sunshine' (*Bill Withers*) was a throwover from when we had double bass with Gretta Little. People have been starting to ask when we're going to get some other covers. We're working on some at the moment."

How fast do you chuck out your songs?

Flick: "Well, we've dropped some of them, like 'Toytown', but we still like them and we're thinking of bringing back some of them."

Jeff: "There's only three songs we still play off the tape."

Flick: "We started playing them mechanically. You think, 'oh, this again,'

Top: Mark, Jeff, Laurie, Michael. Bottom: Flick, Kym.



add something to them.

"OK, we've been through all the history and personnel. Now ask some other questions!"

Jeff, you're thirty now. What made you jump out at twenty-four, married with two children, and start a rock'n'roll band?

Jeff: "I was really retarded, I think. I was just such a slow person at doing things. I knew I was eventually going to do that, and I said so when I was a high school ... I'm just so lazy, basically. I started writing songs ... I think my first song was at twenty-something. A late developer. I hit puberty at twenty and my testosterone levels increased at twenty-two."

How does the band do the songs? Do you bring the songs in with every note set out?

Flick: "No, he doesn't know half the chords he plays!"

Jeff: "I don't have the time to do anything like that. It's certainly not that didactic. I've always played with people I thought had good taste. I've never played with anyone who was musically awful. They play something and I say, 'that's right.' Especially this band, who are very, very good people to play with."

a lot of stress, doing it that way."

How do you write the songs?

Jeff: "Usually I'm just sitting in a car or something, traveling, and a chain of words comes into my head. And the words always have a tune with them. Then I have to hum the tune for the next four hundred kilometres. I've been known to be humming tunes in K-Mart and stuff, 'cos I've got a terrible memory so I lose it very quickly if I don't. So I hum the tune until I get to a tape machine."

"So it comes in bits like that, then there might be a gap where I have to actually sit down and work and do a bit to link a bit together. It's usually quite organic."

How do you think your music has changed with time?

Jeff: "Well, I regard myself as having only ever played in two bands, and I regard this as the first band where I'm actually achieving something that is correct; that I feel quite confident is going well."

"Compared with the last *Charlotte's Web*, it's harder, heavier. It's got the drums which the first one didn't have. It's nowhere near as fragile. I think we could play with just about any band now, even the *Kryptonics* (*a wonderful show at the Newport, where the yuppies stuck around*

yuppie audiences, and they can be as satisfied as the more hard core original-band audiences."

Flick: "Then we've played in coffee shops in the south-west; brushes, all-acoustic. They've loved it."

Jeff: "We can do it, it's great."

Flick: "I think if we went back to Mount Newman, we'd do a few more covers."

What music do you like? Where are all these songs coming from?

Jeff: "I don't know for the last year or so, because I haven't got access to electricity. I just have an acoustic guitar and play on my bed, that's all. What do I listen to? ... Lots and lots of things."

Flick: "He doesn't listen to much at the moment, because he lives in a tent."

How do you pick your covers? Why do you do "Heaven" by Talking Heads?

Jeff: "Because I saw it on TV when they played *Stop Making Sense* one night on MTV, and I actually hadn't ever heard it before that. I was quite ignorant of Talking Heads. I thought, 'hey, that's a good song,' so we did it."

Flick: "I'm a big early Talking Heads fan."

Jeff: "The Wreckless Eric song, 'Whole

because you've played it every week for the past two years."

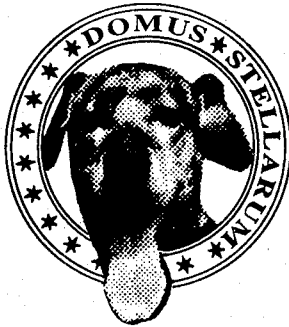
Jeff: "That's one of the disadvantages of Perth, and the fact that records take so long to get out from here — you play a song for six months before you decide it's a good song to record, then six months to record it, then six months to get back the records, and by that time you've been playing the song for nigh on two years and you're thoroughly pissed off with it; and people are looking to you to play it for at least another year and a half. We've got to go to Sydney and play 'Heart Trouble', I suppose. But, oddly enough, I can still play the first single on stage and not feel that's really old. And I'm not sick of 'Heart Trouble' yet."

Flick: "I was for about a week after we did the video. I think videos are very good at making you sick of a song."

Dom Mariani produced your mini-album — how did you hook up with him?

Jeff: (*hums Twilight Zone theme*) "It's really strange. We were discussing producers — the need to have a producer — and there was no-one in Perth we could think of who actually had any experience. And there isn't, really. So we went through people who'd actually had experience in

# POONS HEAD



QUALITY RECORDING

(09) 339 4791

# Mars's Bastards VI Six

THE NEW CASSETTE BY THOSE SILLY SPACE DEVILS!!  
Available from all discrete record stores

On CANDLESTICK RECORDS: GLO-3

contact (09) 481 1231

*Recorded by*

# THUNDERING HEART

the eastern states or overseas, and the only person we could think of was Dom Mariani. And we sort of dismissed that, thinking that he probably wouldn't be interested in what we were doing, so we just left it.

"The next day, Michael said that he had heard an interview on 6-UVS Drivetime where Dom had said he was interested in producing bands, and they asked if he'd heard any bands he'd be interested in producing. And he said, 'Charlotte's Web.' So we phoned him up."

Flick: "He was really keen. Super-keen, actually. He said he was excited about it, and he liked Jeff's songwriting, and he liked the band ... He said he didn't want to make us into the Stems or Someloves."

Jeff: "He seemed like he had enough intelligence not to do that. When we met to discuss it, he mentioned bands I was thinking of myself, that I thought had certain sounds I was after. He's thinking along the same lines as us. I'd like to do something that's sure at least to get FM airplay other than JJJ."

What was the story with Robert Forster producing the LP?

Jeff: "This was from the last time the Go-Betweens toured Perth, February '89. I was introduced to him by Pat Monaghan, and he said he was interested and we briefly discussed it. We tentatively arranged months when he could come over."

"It was fine, everything was OK, and then they went back to Sydney and he disappeared. We had conflicting reports that he was in Australia, that he was in Germany, that he was in America, touring with Fleetwood Mac and all sorts of stuff. We could never ever contact him. We know people who are quite good friends of his, and they didn't know where he was. So we never heard from him again."

Who's paying for the recording of the album? Flick said you were trying to get bucks out of Mighty Boy for it.

Jeff: "We are. I can understand Mighty Boy's position: they've got this band that they haven't seen — they don't know if we're any good or not, I suppose — and all they've got is the record and a few photographs we sent them. So I can see why they're being cautious."

"The latest is that they'll pay for the

"We just became aware that, to do it properly, you need to take your time. Sydney's still going to be there next year, isn't it? So at least one single, maybe two, and the mini-album, then a tour that's worked out so that we go over there for gigs that are arranged beforehand as much as possible."

What, you mean that, last time, you went over and then asked for gigs?

Jeff: "Yeah. Which a lot of bands do. So we'll try and arrange it as well as possible. And we've heard from friends in Sydney that the single has been played quite a bit and so people are talking about us and know the name at least. But we're not going to live in Sydney, that's not one of our plans."

In fact, you've moved from Perth to the country.

Jeff: (laughs) "Yeah, decentralising. Domenic Mariani thinks the same way: there's got to be a way of doing this from Perth. There's no point in people going to live in Sydney, it's too expensive and it's not very nice anyway. It smells funny and you have to take three showers a day."

"No, I like Sydney, but it's just impossible, it's too much stress in the band. How are the band going to survive when they haven't got a recording contract, they play infrequently and you're also asking them to go and live in the place? It's so expensive. So there has to be a way of doing it from Perth. Videos or a well-organised distribution network."

"Maybe there isn't a way, but we're going to try to find one. A more mature way, for people who aren't that young anymore and can't go traipsing off all over the universe and live in fleapits. I'm not in that position. No-one in this band is. So we need to be able to do it in a much more relaxed and sensible manner. Dignified."

How long do you think this band will last?

Jeff: "As long as it wants to. I plan for it to last a while, 'cos we're not pushing ourselves. We've got well-defined goals at the moment, which are to get an album out and do a minimal amount of touring and just get known slowly over a period of time; not to go over to Sydney and bang our heads against a wall. Having done it

I mean, I can see myself being seventy and playing at the Hyde Park on my drumkit ... I like playing."

(*Cue arcane image of the Perth Rock Club at the Hyde Park Hotel in the year 2030: Dom Mariani shuffles in with walking stick, Greg Dear in his wheelchair, Ian Underwood in Ramones shorts, David bopping around and writing a review for PF#211 ...*)

Jeff: "I think there's quite a few people around at the moment who are looking for a different sort of fame; I mean, they're all well over twenty and they have family commitments, so they're not prepared to go and sell their souls all over the world ... they're not that hungry for the top. Dom's not doing that, he's got a wife and child, he's not going to go and live anywhere in the world just to become that big. Laurie and his wife have a baby. There must be a way of still being an artist and a musician and getting your stuff out."

Flick: "I'd like to have kids one day. Maureen Tucker drummed until three weeks before she had one baby, and played standing up for four weeks before that ... All the members are very positive about the band and very positive about the songs and playing."

Jeff: "I think we can go quite a way just from the very fact that we're gonna survive and we're just being very cautious. And I think I'm writing some good songs at the moment."

Why are you doing all this?

Jeff: "Because — I don't know if you've noticed, 'cos you said at one stage that you fell asleep watching me play — at that stage, for me, I used to play on stage and I knew there was something I could communicate to an audience, but I didn't know how to get it out. I was, like, stuck there with this guitar."

"I'm much more natural on stage now, I don't know what my message is, but I can go out there and have a good time. I never used to have a good time on stage, it was an incredibly traumatic experience for me."

Do you rock out in your soul now?

Jeff: "Do I? Yeah, I think so. On certain occasions. Yeah, I have a good time."

Is there anything else about Char-

lotte's Web that the world needs to know?

Flick: "Come and see us play! There's lots of people out there I know would like us if only we could get them all to come!"

Jeff: "I'm not at all sure how many people are still out there thinking that Charlotte's Web are like Charlotte's Web but there, three years ago. I find that Perth audiences expect a lot of their bands. They expect the band to play for a year, to get a big following in the first two months, by the end of the year that band had better go to Sydney, and after that get a record out and start going some place."

They'd better be both fulfilling and disposable.

Jeff: "We've had people come up to us and say, 'You guys have been going for two years, we reckon you should break up.' And we go, 'why?' Fuck! Why would anyone say something like that? What's the timescale on this? Why should we do that?"

"I think people who haven't seen us would be surprised. I know some people have been. This is a very different band to the Charlotte's Web they may have seen three years ago. I'm a very different player on stage."

Flick: "One of the things people complain of is that when they see original bands, they don't know the songs and can't dance along to them. One way to get over that is to persist and see a band a few times; and if you don't like them after a few times, then give up. Band do have off nights, as I know from playing in one. I've been to see bands I like and it sounded awful, and it is the mix, not the band's playing."

Jeff: "The good thing about this band is that, at times, it's even strong enough to get over bad nights that way. Before, if it was a bad night then it was a bad night; I needed everything in my favour to get away with it. With this band, even with a shit mix, we can say, 'fuck you, we're having a good time,' and it comes across as well."

Flick: "The same as that guy who wrote the letter to X-Press about original bands — quite often, it is the mix. And foldback. The other night, when I was singing on 'Frederick', I didn't know if the mike was on 'cos I couldn't hear one sound. I nearly stopped singing until Aurelie (Lowe, Jeff's wife) nodded at me."

"People who haven't played in bands or had a bit to do with music don't realise this — how important the foldback and mix is. I never used to realise it. Some nights you'll come off and people will say, 'You were sooo loud tonight!' or 'All we could hear was Jeff's guitar, it was so loud,' and yet I could barely hear Jeff's guitar in the foldback. The band can't know."

"We'd love to be able to afford a pet mixer, but then there's the difficulty that a lot of pubs have their house PA, which isn't a good one. Mixers cannot get a good sound because of PA problems. You need money to bring in your own PA, and if you're trying to save up to do an album, you can't. We could do that and never record."

"There's all sorts of factors it depends on."

Jeff: "There's not a lot of point getting pissed-off about this stuff, it's just lack of money. You can't control things till you've got some money behind you. Be polite. Be a gentleman. Keep it to yourself. No-one



pressing if we pay for the recordings. It's very loose, they haven't sent anything contractual.

"At the moment, I'm not that much interested in money. It's more of a promotional exercise. I don't think you should try to do that for your first couple of albums, especially if you're in Perth. If you can, great, but ..."

No-one ever got rich out of doing a record in Australia.

Jeff: "It's not the reason for doing it. It's promotion, so that, when we go to the eastern states, someone knows what they're hearing."

"We've got a video that hasn't been played yet, and that looks like it could become a waste of money if it sits on the shelf any longer. We played it at our single launch, but apart from that it hasn't been played. You may or may not see it on television at some ungodly hour."

Any plans to tour again?

Jeff: "Yes, but not in such a way as to cause a band breakup. Without any stress. Or as little of that sort of stress as possible."

myself and seen the death rate amongst Perth bands ..."

(*Discussion of a few: Palisades, Kryptonics ...*)

"Ian Underwood is one of the only people I can see who's done the same thing — he's been through numerous lineup changes, but kept the name."

Because he is The Kryptonics.

Jeff: "It works. Although I cannot say that I am The Charlotte's Web, apart from being the writer and singer, because it's a strong band. This band would lose if ... certainly it would lose if Flick left. It has quite a bit of personality at the moment. A stage aura."

"We have a game plan, as the Americans would say, but it's not one of those make-or-break ones. We'll take our time. A nice cult status would do nicely, thank you. If I can just get enough money to make the next record, that's fine."

Flick: "I'm very positive about the future of the band. But I take the attitude that, well ... I'd really like to become famous! But if I do, I do, if I don't, I don't."

lotte's Web that the world needs to know?

Flick: "Come and see us play! There's lots of people out there I know would like us if only we could get them all to come!"

Jeff: "I'm not at all sure how many people are still out there thinking that Charlotte's Web are like Charlotte's Web but there, three years ago. I find that Perth audiences expect a lot of their bands. They expect the band to play for a year, to get a big following in the first two months, by the end of the year that band had better go to Sydney, and after that get a record out and start going some place."

They'd better be both fulfilling and disposable.

Jeff: "We've had people come up to us and say, 'You guys have been going for two years, we reckon you should break up.' And we go, 'why?' Fuck! Why would anyone say something like that? What's the timescale on this? Why should we do that?"

"I think people who haven't seen us would be surprised. I know some people have been. This is a very different band to the Charlotte's Web they may have seen

INNER CITY  
**FIRM**

---

**WEDNESDAY**

8-2AM  
**ALTERNATIVE**

---

**THURSDAY**

9-LATE  
**THE  
TIME  
TUNNEL**

---



---

**FRIDAY**

9-LATE  
**WORLD  
BEAT**

---

**SATURDAY**

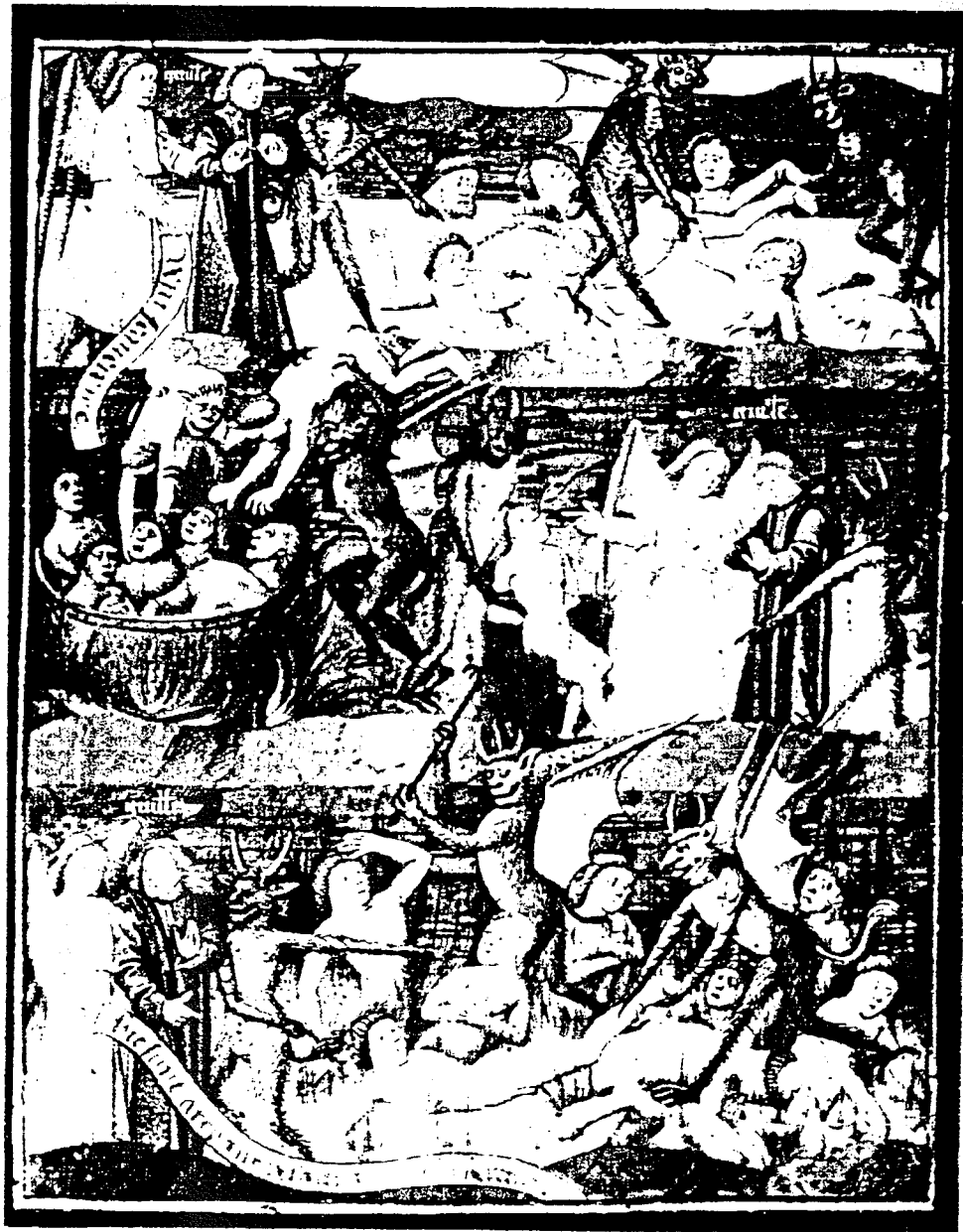
9-LATE  
**DANCE  
TREK**

---

**NIGHT CLUB**

**MILLIGAN STREET CITY**

# ASSYLUM



**FREE ENTRY TO FIRM INCLUDED  
DOORS OPEN 10PM FRIDAY &  
SATURDAY**

**UPSTAIRS MELBOURNE HOTEL  
(EX TIFFANYS)**

**DRINK SPECIALS**

# "BEWARE OVERHEAD LIVE GOD"

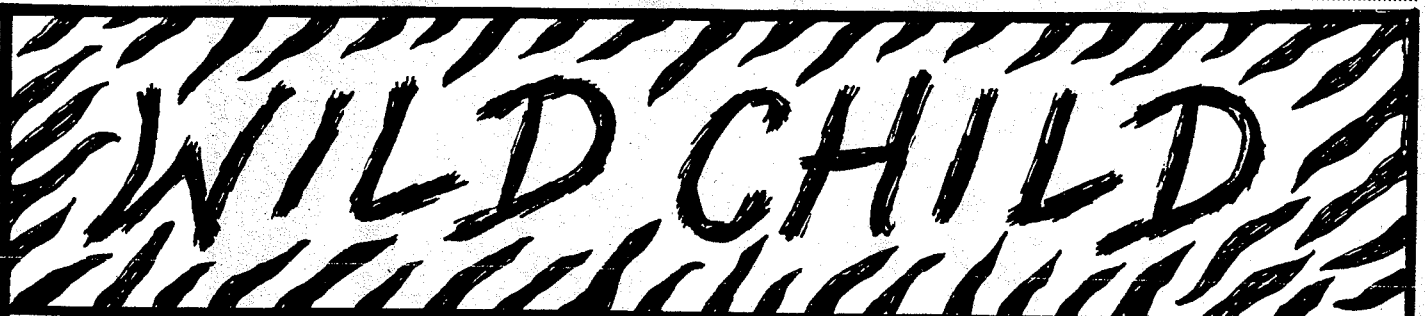
DEBUT ALBUM FROM TROLL

OUT SOON

PERTH ALBUM LAUNCH  
IN MARCH

LAST PERTH GIGS  
BEFORE EASTERN STATES  
TOUR

LIMBOS February 1  
OLD MELBOURNE February 9



incorporating Candelo Pty Ltd (Retailers & Wholesalers)

## Specialising In

Alternative Music and Original T-Shirt Designs

Leather Mini-Skirts and Jackets

Keyrings, Jewelry, Posters, Badges, Patches and more ...

**Entertainers:** Studded Concho Belts, Bootbands, Armbands, Hatbands, Guitar Straps ...

Artwork and Printing service available (T-shirts and Backdrops at reasonable rates)

**Shop 10-11, New Wanneroo Markets**

(underneath the yellow big top)

Prindiville Drive, Wangara

**Saturday/Sunday/Public Holidays**

a/h tel: (09) 271 1416

37 Broun Avenue, Morley 6062

Catalogue available for mail-order and wholesale enquiries.



Dom Mariani interviewed by David.

Tell us about the "Sunshine's Glove" 12".

"It's cut a lot louder than the album, which is the joy of a 12" EP — you can really push. 'Sunshine's Glove' is straight off the album, as is 'Girl Soul', the other A-side. 'She's A Better Lover' is a song we've been playing live.

"For The Very Last Time' is an out-take from the first time we went to America to mix 'Know You Now' with Mitch — we'd originally had a four-track EP planned, then we ended up doing three and released two!

"It's a slow song with brilliant Hammond organ by Steve Harris. The guy came in with his new Chilean wife — hadn't seen him for a year or so — because he'd done some work with the Stems, he just came in, had a listen to the song and went into his own little world and put that fantastic organ into it. He's brilliant, absolutely.

"Jack Robinson" and 'Don't Have To Try', the B-sides of the last two, will be on there. What we tried to do was to release everything the Someloves have ever done, except for the first single, which is on Citadel."

Who paid for the trips to America?

"The first trip, for 'Know You Now', we paid half and Mushroom paid half. They paid for the recording, but tickets and spending money were ours."

OK, let's get on with the dirt. You said you had some things to say about the Stems?

"Yeah ... we were a four-piece band. (laughter) I think there's a lot of mystery about why the band broke up and all. Basically, what killed the Stems was complacency and wrong management. We had a manager that I don't think really liked the band, but liked being a part of it because we were stars or so that he could get to meet everybody and boost his ego a little bit. But he did such a bad job and was such a wimp.

"Richard and the manager were very close, and I just felt like this band that I had created, the Stems, I was losing grip on because Richard and the manager were making a lot of the decisions. I felt like I wasn't being heard any more. I decided that I just couldn't get on with the band the way it was.

"I found it very hard to go out there and do the show every night. We'd do thirty-six shows in thirty-eight days, and every night we'd be out there doing our hour and fifteen minutes of Stems classics. I got a little disillusioned about the complacency — we're in this band, we're really popular, we're getting lots of girls, making money ... although we didn't see a lot of money ... it sort of flowed all around ... someone made a lot of money ...

"It became very complacent. I wanted to keep writing songs, keep the band moving upwards, but we'd reached a plane where I couldn't really spur the other people in the band to do that with me. Some of them had never been in bands before the Stems.

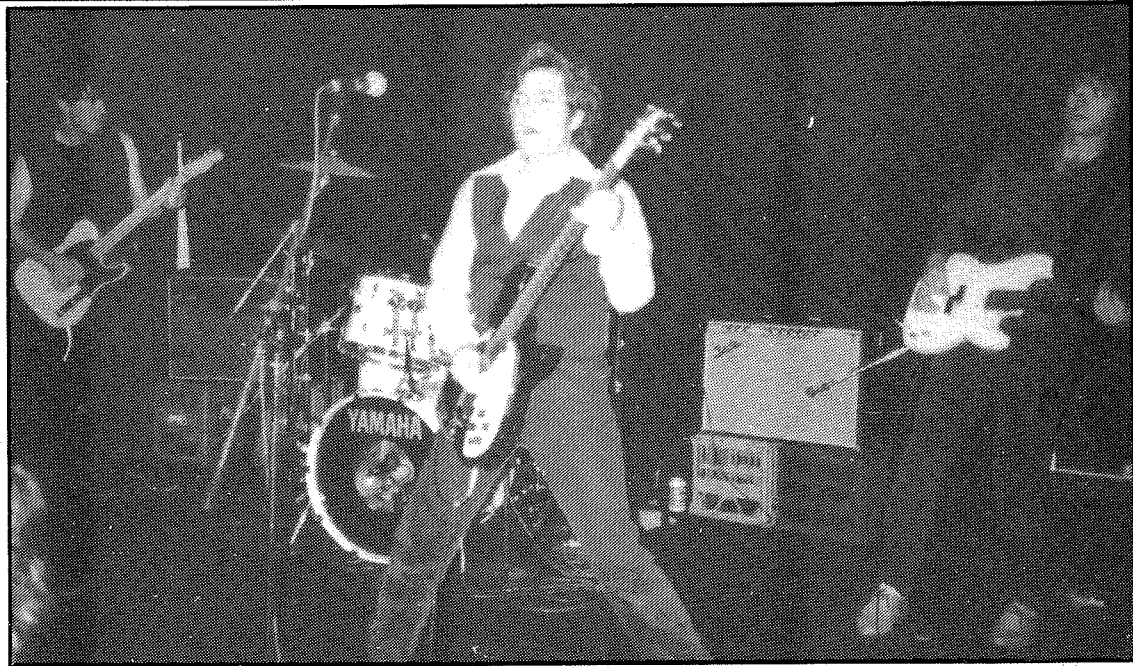
"Also, everyone else was younger than me. I'd been in bands where I'd played to five people and had the odd drunk heckle to play 'Smoke On The Water', but the Stems were basically successful from day one."

Why did you can the trip to Europe?

"I just felt the band wasn't up to it. I wasn't going to go to Europe with a band that was in that state. We weren't communicating, we weren't playing like a real band on stage, and I wasn't prepared to blow what we'd built up in Europe, because if we fucked up we wouldn't get asked to come back again; and everything we'd done up to that stage, we'd done right.

"That was how the band started to break up. I wanted to fix it up by bringing in some new members, but Richard wasn't

# The Someloves



really interested, so there were about four weeks of limbo. Mushroom were ringing us up saying, 'you've got to fix things up, you're stupid to break the band up now, it's going so well ...'

"... especially right now, because we want our money back!"

"And then I decided that I'd form a new band and strike out on my own, because it wouldn't be the same, there would be too many problems associated with it.

"Julian had had enough at that stage and decided, 'I don't want any more of this,' and went to Melbourne to make a new career for himself.

"I got together with Julian at Christmas time and we had a drink and talked about old times. He's a lovely fellow, Julian. It's just sad that it ended up the way it did at the time.

"Speaking from my point of view, I wanted the band to stay together as a musical unit, and maybe I'd chosen the wrong people in the beginning, because I felt that we may have rushed into things too hastily. And people change along the way.

"I felt like I was severely stabbed in the back."

What did the Stems album cost?

"The Stems album ended up costing seventy or eighty thousand, including videos, because we re-recorded about two thirds of it. We sacked Alan Thorne halfway through because we were unhappy with the guitar sounds, and he'd created a bit of a bad vibe in the studio. The album should have been finished before Christmas '86 because we went in in October, but what we did was ring Mushroom and told them that we weren't very happy with the way things were going, and so ended up getting Guy Gray, who was really good.

"So, with the help of John Villani, we re-recorded two-thirds of the album. All except the drums, which I think are the poorest part; if the drums had been recorded properly and really given the raw sound they should have had — if we'd scrapped the lot, which maybe we should have done — then I think that album would really have socked a lot more.

"That was a criticism from a lot of people: that the album wasn't as gutsy or as rock'n'roll as they'd known the band to be. But then, I thought it had a lot of strong songs on it, and that's what carried it through. There was a lot of diversity, there were some pretty pop songs and some garage gutsy ones; it was a real cross-section, and carried through what we were at the time. We were a pop band that sang about girls, and I think it succeeded in that way.

"Richard played hardly anything on the album. He didn't play any guitar, he played

about half the keyboards and he sang on his songs. He was credited with playing guitar on the album because we didn't want to take that away from him, but that's what happened. I believed that the band had been going long enough and that we had to improve from our last recordings.

"For the Someloves album we went to America, used Mitch Easter, we went and mastered the album in New York at Stirling Sound, where they do all the Rolling Stones albums and a lot of the really big American and English albums, we had an expense account so we could live in a hotel and eat the food we liked, mixed the album down at Reflection Studios in North Carolina, where REM, Guadalcanal Diary, the Connells and so on have recorded ... all for that money. And the Stems, we spent the same amount in Perth! Living at home, no hotel bills to pay ..."

You didn't feel like you were going on a rock'n'roll assault, so you got fat.

"Yeah, you might say that. It's just inexperience, y'know. We didn't know how much an album was going to cost."

How much did the Citadel stuff cost?

"I think the EP ended up costing about two grand."

Having done things on an independent level, you were a bit shocked when it got to major money.

"Sure. We went to a fairly expensive studio, paid for producers, the hire of gear ... we got a bit more ambitious, too, and wanted to have keyboards and brass and so on. We recorded this saxophone player, but he was so bad we wiped it ..."

Let's go through the Stems album. The subtitles are:

"Paul Fraser. He did the album and two of the single covers: 'Sad Girl' and 'At First Sight'."

I liked the 'Sad Girl' sleeve except that, at first glance, the ashtray looked like a dog dish.

"Yeah, people have said that before. Maybe it is one. You can look at it two ways, can't you?"

"Special thanks to Darryl Mather." Was he involved?

"That was just from me, really. Darryl was there for the first three weeks of recording. Darryl was like a mentor, I guess. He and I talk the same language musically, and he offered to come over and be involved in the album as someone I could throw ideas to and ask if everything was going well; just someone to talk to, basically. And I thank him very much for that, because he was a great help. He's very keen."

Who's the PO box listed on the sleeve?

"That was the Stems Fan Club box. We

had a fan club and everything, about two or three hundred members. It was still getting letters up until about twelve months ago; I actually know the guy who took over the box, and he's been passing these letters on to me. Letters from Norway and Greece and Finland ...

"That was left in a real shambles when the band split. A lot of people had sent money for T-shirts and posters, and I sent them all their stuff, plus more — 'sorry, there's no more band, but I hope you like the extra poster ...' Just gave them everything, basically.

"Darryl's set up a box in Sydney (PO Box A1087, Sydney South 2000) for the Someloves."

Who's the photo on the inner sleeve, behind the words?

"Oh, shit ... he's an actor. Montgomery Clift, in the movie Freud."

Who's the girl on the cover?

"I'm not sure who that is. Some actress or something like that."

Do you have any outtakes from the Stems album?

"No. We had songs that we put forward for it but didn't actually record. The decision was made to get away from that garage '60s punk sound and become more of a pop band. 'All You Want Me For', 'Don't Let Me' ... they were really good songs, and I think now that we should have recorded them.

"Sad Girl" was getting back to that sound. It didn't get one bit of airplay, I think, it was too noisy or something. It freaked some people out."

God, no. It might catch their attention.

How many did the album end up selling?

"I couldn't really say. Over twenty thousand. Still sells overseas, from what I can gather."

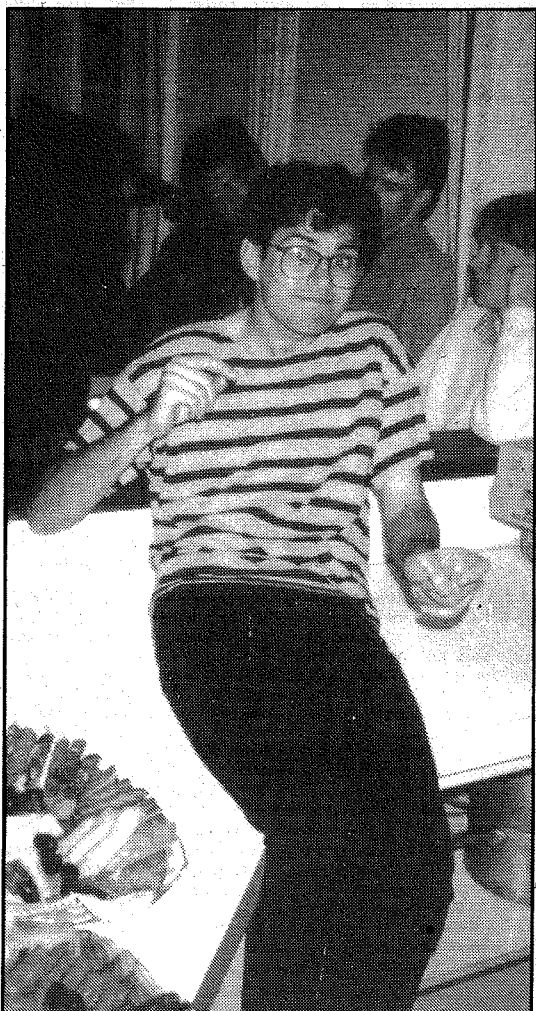
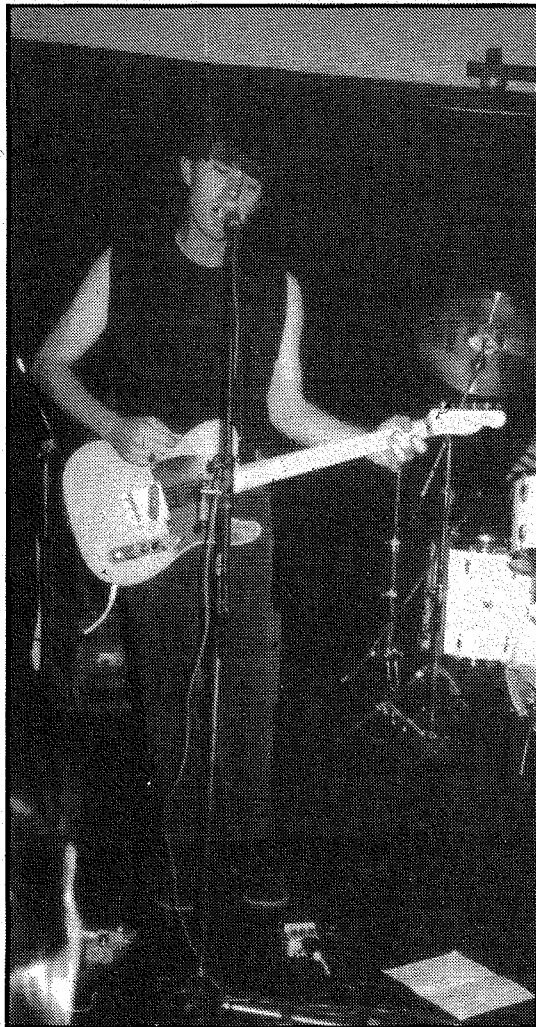
You recorded a single of "She's Fine" and "For Always", which was going to be your last Citadel release. What happened with that?

"I was very unhappy with the way it turned out, the way the band put it down. I think they both sucked. 'For Always' was shithouse. The album version is much, much better. It's got more of a feel to it, with the nice organ."

That was my favourite album track. Those keyboards were the best.

"That was Steve Harris going in and putting his second take down, just going 'OK' and closing his eyes, just feeling it."

"I thought the original single was awful. 'For Always' was going to be the A-side, but it really came out fast. We recorded it at a speed that just stuffed the song totally. We were going to release it anyway, but it



could have been the end of the band. Then we signed to Mushroom and they wanted to release it, but I knocked it on the head.

"She's Fine" was OK, but I recommend that no-one chase it up, 'cos it's not worth it. 'Girl Soul' is 'She's Fine' reworked — I tightened up the lyrics, put a middle eight into it ... it's a more intelligent pop song. The other one was just three chords. It was half a song. 'Girl Soul' is much better."

**Would you have stuck with Citadel if they'd got Blue Mosque together in time?**

"Probably, yeah. We just wanted to record an album and Mushroom had more to offer at that time."

**How are you getting along with Mushroom?**

"Quite well, I think. I think they're a good label, I really do. We're signed for one album with two options; so we've done our one album and the two options are up to them."

**Early '88, you got back together with Kim Williams to do the Summer Suns.**

"Mmm, that's right. A refreshing change. I was more of a guitar player than a front-man. Then I started singing some songs and it looked more like Kim and I. But I have always had time for Kim's songs, he's a very good songwriter. I like his lyrics. Y'know, soulful."

"I enjoyed it, but the thing was that it wasn't going to be my main commitment — I had to do something on my own — and I don't think Kim really accepted it when I left, he wasn't really happy. I never told him I was going to be in it forever, that it was going to be my band."

"I don't think 'All Away' came up as well as it could have on record. It's a great song, though. Dunno if it was too fast or what."

"I enjoyed it, y'know, I really did. And I am glad for the opportunity to have played in a band like that. It has some classic pop songs, that's for sure."

"Kim has a few fans. I've got this magazine ... *Contrast*, a really classy magazine from Los Angeles. I have a friend there who sends me these things. Here we go, the Summer Suns, reviewed by Pat Fish, a.k.a. The Jazz Butcher. Good review. Kim'd probably like that."

#### SUMMER SUNS

"All Away"  
Waterfront (Australia)

PF: Oh yeah. Ha ha ha! Excellent! I should send a copy of this to Primal Scream, they'd be delighted. Look, to tell the truth, I'm a complete sucker for this kind of thing. I look at this and I laugh because I thought this was truthfully an English disease, you know. Like put the wistful teen dolly bird on the front and have names like this on. It's sort of like Sarah (Records) or this stereotypical idea of what Creation (Records) is supposed to be, which is miles from this really. This is kind of affecting. It's nice; it's pretty; they've got nice vocal harmonies. I suppose they're never gonna do very much, but I think it's kinda cute and lovable. It's not huge, but if you're in a nightclub waiting for a band to come on and that song played, you'd probably sway around to it. C'mon, offend me! Play me some shit!

**What else — your daughter Ruby had just been born, you were doing up your house, your job ...**

"Yeah, all those things were happening at the same time."

"Darryl Mather had been in contact and was trying his hardest to persuade me to do the Someloves. I didn't want to do it, because the record he was talking about making — Mitch Easter, great production — was something you really had to take a lot of time out for and rehearse; and we weren't a band that had been playing a year or two and got all these songs together. We had our own songs written — I had sixteen and Darryl had ten — but we had to get to know each other's songs and work them over and sift through the songs and come up with the arrangements and everything."

"Darryl said, 'we could do it like this and this,' and I said, 'well, that basically means I have to take a lot of time off work and make no money and can't survive to make this record.' I wasn't interested. 'If you want to make this record, you have to give up your job for a time, we both just totally engross ourselves in music as the Someloves, and then we can make the record we want to make.'"

"I asked for eighteen months, and he came back and gave me nine. He originally said, 'three months,' and I said, 'three months? It's not long enough, you can't do anything in three months. It'll come out OK, but not really good; and the next record I do has got to be a progression from the *Stiems* album, there are so many things I didn't get right on that that I want to get right on the next one. I've thought about how to approach it, and we really need time to work on the songs.' We finally agreed on nine months. So I made the decision around November, December '88."

"We were still haggling over the commitment to be made to this album, and I got Mushroom interested in doing it, and then it was just a matter of coming up with the plan of attack and the budget so Mushroom wouldn't freak out. We were very sensible about it and cut a lot of fat out of the budget. It ended up costing about sixty thousand in the end."

"We locked ourselves away in a rehearsal studio in Northbridge in early '89 and started working on the

songs. There's a lot of things we had to compromise on. In hindsight you can always do better with certain things, but I think we did OK. I look back now and think, 'yeah, these guys that played on the album did a really fine job,' but when we were looking for people to play on the album ..."

**Tell us the story of how you grabbed Tony Italiano.**

"We were conducting our bass and drum auditions at SSL, which Tony runs, and we had three drummers and one bass player. There was another guy who I'd seen in some horrible cover band at the Newport who was very good, and we approached him and he seemed very interested, but the day that we held the auditions he phoned and said he wasn't interested in coming down and had decided to stay with his cover band. Then the other one played and was pretty good ... then this cover-band guy hadn't shown, so we had to fill in some time, and we had to have a bass player to play with the three drummers. So Tony played."

**You were a bit sceptical at first.**

"Yeah. I had, ah, preconceived ideas of what Tony was like, and Tony said, 'why don't you give me a go, I can play bass,' and we went, 'oh, sure, Tony, sure you can play bass.' And he started playing ... and our jaws dropped. He was great. He was playing really, really well. We hadn't decided on him at this time, but then Mark decided he didn't want it, so we decided on Tony. And he worked out really, really well."

"He's a real character, Tony. He's one of these guys that hasn't been spoilt by playing in bands or anything, so he's a real rough diamond. He played guitar before that."

"I think Tony's greatest asset is that he has a good musical ear. Even though he may not have listened to the music that you and I like or have been into that kind of thing, he just has a very good understanding of what music is, and came up with the right basslines. And it's really weird, y'know, I've never met anyone like that. I've always had this opinion that the guy's got to have the right musical background and come from the same breeding, you might say, before you can play in a band with him; but it's really opened my eyes and ears."

**What does he like? What's he into?**

"Ohhhh ... We had a dinner party the other night — Les Hinton took us out to dinner, 'thanks, guys, for making me lots of money' — and we had a real laugh. We were talking about who we liked and that, and Tony goes, 'Y'know, one band that I really, really like, that I really get into, is ...' Everybody stopped and listened. I thought he was going to say the Beatles or something like that. '... is ... Supertramp.' And we just looked blank for a moment, then ...' (desperately straight face, eventually erupting into volcanic sniggering)

**That's mean.**

"I know it is. He didn't sulk, he's got a thick skin. He was brought up on Kiss, I think. Maybe Supertramp's bass player is someone to listen to, I don't know ..."

**You decided on Rob Scorer for drums for the album. Did you consider Gary Chambers?**

"We didn't approach Gary. I know Gary was interested in the job — he came around a couple of times and I gave him some demos and everything — but we decided we didn't want to use Gary. Just personal reasons."

**What's the "Hab" in Tony "Hab" Italiano from?**

"I don't know. That's just something he wanted us to put in. That's his nickname, calls himself that."

**Bobby Sutliff, backing vocals:**

"Bobby from the Windbreakers. Darryl had actually gone to meet him in Jackson, Mississippi the first time we went over there and struck up a really good friendship and offered him a chance to sing on the album if we ever did one. He enjoyed doing it. He's got a fantastic voice, it's got a real quality about it. Have you heard his solo album, *Only Ghosts Remain*? It's really good. 'All That Stuff' — a really good one off the Windbreakers' album."

**Lynn Blakey, backing vocals:**

"Lynn Blakey was in early Let's Active as a bass player or drummer, I'm not sure. She did backing vocals on four tracks. She has a lovely voice."

**Jamie Hoover, backing vocals:**

"Jamie Hoover's the original guitarist for the Spongetones, a Beatles cover band from Charlotte who did some songs in their own right, very Beatle-esque material. What a singer. He's one of these guys, just went in and picked the harmony straight away and just sang it really well."

**It's very easy to record an album, you just get geniuses.**

"Yeah, you just get guys that know what they're doing and have their own style as well. It's great to capture people's vocal qualities as well."

**Boyd Wilson, backing vocals:**

"Yeah, he's a local guy. We've known each other for quite a long time. He's a good singer, a good musician. Asked him to come down."

**Lisa Hill, backing vocals:**

"She did backing vocals on 'Know You Now'. She wasn't in Perth when we recorded the album, else we would have called her up to do more."

**Deanna Blacher, castanets:**

"A castanet player, from the Spanish school of ... castanets." (laughs)

### Nik Kaltse, percussion:

"Yeah, Nik came in and did a tambourine solo on 'Know You Now'. We didn't credit him on the single. He was a friend of a friend, Terry Clavey. Terry and I were going to do something after the Stems split up, and we actually got together for a jam, and he called up this guy Nik. I thought he was an OK drummer."

### Who was the Underdog who played the given instruments at the time?

"I played the autoharp and the electric sitar credited. It should have included a lot of other things, like glockenspiels and dog barks."

"The Underdog' is a mixture of people — myself, Darryl, Mitch and whoever else was around. We came up with that name because we call what we do, and pop bands that we like, underdog bands, because they never make it — they'll get a really great contract with a label and get to do a great album or two albums and then get dropped because they didn't sell anything. We see ourselves in that situation. Also, Mitch had so many dogs hanging around the studio that when we were trying to put the vocals down, you could hear the barks on the tape. Mitch has this huge dog, a big furry thing called Memphis."

### Who drew the picture of the dog?

"I did. Awful, isn't it? It wasn't supposed to be on the sleeve! I told the guy to get a picture of a dog and put it there. I wrote out all the credits so they could do the album artwork, and I said, 'could you please find a dog,' and they actually used the one I drew."

### "Dedicated to Geoff Selby." Who was Geoff Selby?

"Geoff Selby was a rugby league player for St George in Sydney, Darryl's favourite team. While Darryl was in Perth and we were rehearsing for this album, Geoff Selby died in a car accident. I think Darryl's girlfriend Cindy knew Geoff. It's a personal thing for Darryl."

### "Dom Mariani: ... assorted stringed beauties, courtesy of Mitch Easter."

"He had the most incredible collection of guitars. An electric sitar, a Dan Electro — those things you hear on Boxtops and Temptations records. Used them quite a bit

chords, then, pwooh! (*high whoop*) just spreads, y'know, and catches people straight away. That's what I'm good at: writing catchy pop songs."

"Melt" was different. Darryl came up with the original idea for 'Melt' and I heard it, and he was saying, 'listen, I've got this one ...' It was the last song written for the album. He said, 'I've got this new song, I want to make it really different; not such an obvious melody, just a real breezy pop song with odd chords at the start and everything.' So he played it, and I said, 'maybe not, Darryl, we've got enough songs for the album, we don't need another one, I don't like it.' And then this song was rolling around in my head for about two weeks, and I told Darryl, 'We've got to do this song, 'Melt'!' People had the same response to it: it wouldn't grab them, but after five or six listens ... It has that kind of effect where it grows on you."

So you recorded a pile of stuff and some of it just didn't get on the album.

"Yeah. There were also songs like 'TV Sound' and 'One Time Two Times Devastation'. We recorded those with Martin Moon on drums. We had sixteen or seventeen songs to mix, put millions of overdubs on, guitar solos, backing vocals, some lead vocals, keyboards, sitars — and we just decided that we weren't going to make it, so we had to leave two songs out. Which I didn't even do vocals and lead guitar for."

"We saw those as two less important B-sides, but I really wish we'd finished them, because they're really good songs. They're a lot better now that we've been playing them live, so we'll probably re-record them."

### Have the other songs benefited greatly from being played live?

"I reckon the new ones I've written definitely have. I think 'Girl Soul' is one song that comes across really well live — when we come out of the second verse and we do that harmony bit where Tony and I go, 'oh, whoah.' I really wanted to put that down on the record, it was like an afterthought just before the mixdown, but Mitch didn't like the idea, so we didn't do it. But we do it live and I think it works really well."

"The songs are a lot tougher live. The band's a lot tougher. I kind of like having two sides to a band, where a band goes in and records as a recording band, and when it plays live, it's really rough and ready, the way rock'n'roll should be. I think really slick, polished, perfect sounds can be a little boring sometimes; it's good to sorta roughen them up."

### How did you get Velo Zupanovich and Martin Moon for the live band?

"Martin played in the Summer Suns, and I've always enjoyed his drumming. And I like him on stage; he's very visual, he's very enthusiastic and his presence really injects a lot into the band. He's a big part of the live factor. Rob Scorer was committed to playing in cabaret bands, although he's left cabaret now and is coming back into rock, which is great. He really wanted to play in the Someloves/Orange, but the seat's been taken."

"Velo was going to play bass, because we didn't think Tony was interested and we couldn't find a guitar player. We auditioned a few, but then we thought that if we could talk Tony into playing bass, we could get Velo to play guitar. And it's turned out really well. Velo's enjoying his rôle as guitarist. He's been playing bass for a very long time."

### What's the immediate future?

"We hope to have another album. We've written quite a few songs and been playing a few live. Darryl's got a heap of new songs that he thinks are the best songs he's written to date. The next album's going to be better than this one, I think. It'll certainly be a lot rockier."

Yeah. This album's very nice and pop, but the live band ...

"Darryl and I had never played live, you see, and it was like a studio project. Darryl hasn't played since he left the Lime Spiders in 1983. It was an album that we jammed in a rehearsal room and then built in the studio. We had one sound in the rehearsal room, but then, when we went into the studio, we started putting it down, and that's the way it turned out."

"I guess we tried to make it a perfect pop album, where you bring the songs in rough and then build them — 'that'd sound great with strings or a keyboard line here, do a lead break there ...' The arrangements were together before we went into the studio, but the actual instrumentation came

together in the studio — Mitch's ideas and some of our ideas. That's why working with Mitch was fantastic. Just excellent."

### Who named the album?

"Darryl."

### Is the band name two words, Some Loves, or one word, Someloves?

"I dunno. I thought it was one, but I think Darryl came up with it as two words. I want to break away from bands starting with S. The Snails (*the Someloves' secret warmup name*) was Martin's. I had Brontosaurus, but no-one else liked it. Stems, Stonefish, Someloves, Summer Suns ... Slugs, Shovels ... It's time to change the letter. Now it's O. The next band will be Orgasmatron."

(*Tape switchover, during which Dom comes up with an immaculate quote along the lines of, 'The Someloves is a pop band, but you want to do other things.' But I missed it. Oh well.*)

"I'm just keen on playing on my own terms; if no-one likes what I do, well, it's cool. I'm not going to get pissed-off about that. I've been very happy with my musical career to date, anyway. I don't know that I'll be able to do much more success-wise. I've enjoyed the amount of success I've had and I'm not really keen to have any more. Strange, isn't it?"

"I've liked it as it happens. I'd like to go out there and see it happen, rather than formulate it all and hope for success and really strive for it. I'm just into being accepted for what I do, and hopefully there's a few people out there that like it. I write really dumb songs, and there must be a few people out there that like really dumb songs."

I like your songs 'cos you're a brilliant thief.

"I'm not conscious of that, but it's gotta come from somewhere. I think I've evolved my own sound."

You can pick who wrote which songs on the Stems album without looking at the credits.

"It's music that's come from the '60s — the classic pop stuff that I listened to on the radio and the records I bought. People keep harping on about this '60s thing, though; I felt that the Someloves album is not a '60s record."

It's an utter '80s-'90s record. "60s" is a code-word for "song with blues progression and a tune." No-one calls the Church a '60s band any more. The Stems had the cute trappings — the haircuts, the pointy boots ...

"And we couldn't break out of that, funnily enough. I'm one of these guys that gets bored quickly. I did the '60s thing, I loved it, I really enjoyed it, did it the way it should have been done, and then I've just felt like, 'hey, wish I could do that as well.' That's why the Summer Suns was like an outlet for me."

"I've got these great reviews, actually. I'll read you one, it's a beauty. (*goes off in search*) Here we go. "The Someloves: Melt. With old REM producer Mitch Easter at the console, the Someloves attempt to usurp the sound of Georgia's finest. Not only derivative, also the possessor of a truly awful wah-wah solo." I've gotta send that to Mitch. That was from *Beat* in Melbourne. Someone else there then goes on to call the album "one of the best albums of the year." 99% are good reviews."

"It's funny that all the bands I've been in always seem to get much better reviews in Sydney and Melbourne. In Perth, I get some good reviews, but the others are lukewarm, always looking for the angle to dismiss it as "60s" ... maybe it's just me." (*Talk of Young Einstein soundtrack*)

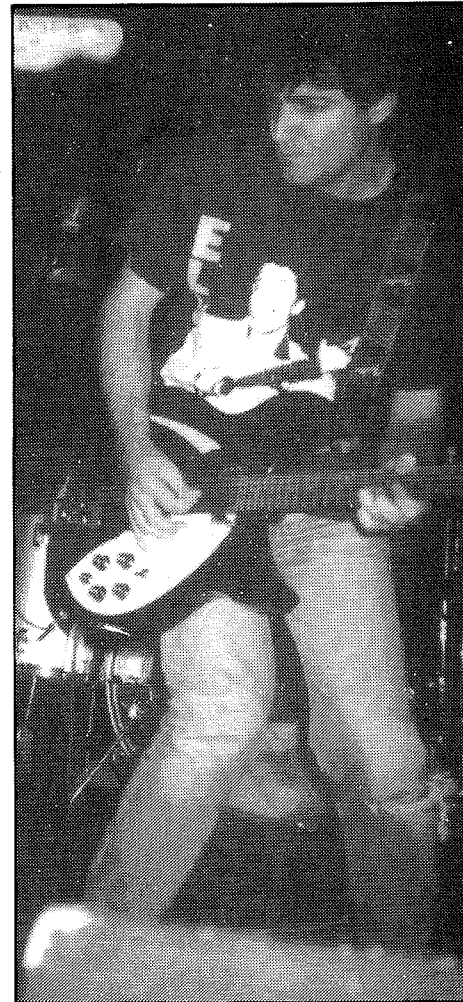
"They asked the Stems to put a track on there, so we sent them a rough demo of 'At First Sight' and it got on the soundtrack and they paid us six hundred dollars. The

only other song I really liked was Chris Bailey's version of 'The Music Goes Round My Head'."

"Weirdo Libido' by the Lime Spiders was OK. Darryl co-wrote that one. I went to see the movie when it came out, and I told him, 'Listen, Darryl ... when the credits came up at the end, your name wasn't on the song — all it said was "M. Blood" ...' He was really pissed off, he was going to sue somebody. Virgin (*Lime Spiders' label*) apparently got it wrong. His name was on the record, just not the film. He was telling everyone that his song was on this movie, and they all went, 'Darryl, he's a bloody liar, he's spinning us a yarn!' Heh. He has a few bitter tales of woe ... we both do. We both got bitten by the same snake."

### Do you have any comment on the Stems fanzine?

"I think it's dumb. I think it could have been a lot better. It's from Richard's point of view. I was approached, but I was a bit lazy about the whole thing. I don't begrudge George (*Matzkov*) for doing it. George used to be our photographer as well as roadie."



### Do you think now, looking at it, that you'd rather have had something to do with it?

"No, I don't really give a stuff. I really don't. It's something that George wanted to do ... The Stems were not a huge band, and I find it hard to accept why someone would go and write a book about it."

"I think some of the true facts about why the band split weren't brought up. Not the whole truth. In some cases."

"I think the song 'Let Your Head Rest' is probably the worst Stems song ever done. It's awful. It's got these classic opening lines: 'Oh, once, my life was swell ...' 'Swell' is an American term. 'Swell'? I don't know anyone that says 'swell.' (*goes into high rant*) Like Richie Cunningham on *Happy Days*. 'Oh, swell, guys! That's really swell! Gee, that's swell!' And the next line is, 'Till it went all downhill.' 'Downhill'? ... And at the front of the book it says, 'Thanks to — the manager — for twenty-four hours of trying to keep the whole thing together.' That made me laugh. Probably twenty-four hours over the course of two years ...' (*etc., bitch, etc. ...*)

At the age of two, Domenic Desio Mariani discovered his true calling.



at Motown. It's an incredible-looking thing, the shape of a sitar, about this big (*holds arms about a metre apart*) and has little Indian patterns painted on it. Amazing Rickenbackers and old Gibsons ... he's a guitar collector. It just blew our minds."

### "This is a real pop recording."

"That's what Darryl comes out with. He's always trying to make people see the difference between the pop we do and, say, the Kylie Minogue pop."

And you made the album forty-eight minutes long.

"I think we did too many songs."

You retitled "Lights Of Downtown" as "Jack Robinson" for the single.

"Yeah, I thought 'Lights Of Downtown' was a boring title, so I changed it. I fought for that one to be on the album, actually, but Darryl didn't think so. A lot of people have come up to me and said that they like that song better than 'Melt'."

"Melt" is too subtle to be a single. "Jack Robinson" hits you over the head.

"I've never done a song like that, a song that grows on people. The stuff I write is heavily melodic and goes for the throat with a melodic verse, then an ultra-melodic

# Records

Jeez, there's a lot of the buggers to get through. Oh well, let's dive in.

## DAVE GRANEY AND THE WHITE BUFFALOES: My Life On The Plains (Fire, UK LP)

First of all, buy the CD as (a) it has the EP on it and (b) the LP pressings might be warped (my copy jumped everywhere).

The fact that I loved the Moodists more than I could say and the fact that I love Dave Graney's solo stuff is really pretty coincidental. As you probably know by now, he's swapped that old bassy rockin' stomp thing for some sort of bizarre personal mindscape of MOR countryish rock wherein he insists he is a Melbourne cowboy. (Interesting fact: "Listen To Her Lovers Sing" is an old Moodists song circa 1986.)

Anyway, Dave Graney is a mad genius (the album sleeve unfortunately does not capture his current Colonel Sanders look) and he has that old MOR guitar rock by the throat here. I was once told he only wrote songs about Claire (his wife) or being on tour. Now he's expanded to the Wild West, which means he's exactly like the mad genius Doc Emmett in *Back To The Future* who set the controls for the late 1800s — "my favourite historical period." What a guy.

His other favourite period is apparently 1969. Good twosome — lots of sideburns in both. Personally, I'd go for 1971, 1979-80 and 1910-11, but we're not here to talk about me.

I guess if you've read this far you might want to hear about the music. Well, heck, matey, if you've read this far you can consider yourself sufficiently motivated to go out and listen to the damned thing yourself.

Or, better still, catch Dave live. He has many good stories to tell about pox-infected dicks, etc. Actually, I resented that one.

John Fuck.

## BIG CHIEF: Brake Torque/Superstupid (Get Hip, US 7")

From Ann Arbor, Michigan, another group trying to fuse funk and hard rock. "Brake Torque" has got a big sound that booms out; it's catchy, with a nice bass intro, but ends up being more hard rock than funk. Nice try, though. "Superstupid" (a George Clinton cover) has one long effects-laden guitar solo with ye standard rock vocal either side; it could be okay live, but it doesn't work that well on vinyl.

## CRENT: 9.K.7/F.S.W. (Waterfront 7")

YAGE: Unlighted Street (Crime mini-LP)

Two recent releases, both with heavy involvement from Kent Steedman of the Celibate Rifles. It looks like this is about as close to Kent going solo as you're likely to get.

Crent's "9.K.7" is edited from their mini-album. It's an atmospheric piece, superficially repetitive, almost monotonous, but dig deeper and you can hear a fair bit more going on — though it does require you to take time and listen. Even clocking in at over five minutes, it seems strangely incomplete; perhaps the full version will offer a complete realisation of what they're on about. The vocals are mixed down, and, unlike "F.S.W." (or "A.I.D.S.", or "Extended Vocabulary"), give it at least a chance of airplay.

"F.S.W." (Fuckin' Stupid World) is a semi-drone type piece using a distorted guitar and some primitive drumming, with the full song title repeated over and over for the first half, before it stops and restarts as an instrumental. Sort of hypnotic in a fuckin' stupid way. On limited pink vinyl.

The Yage mini-album was recorded in Italy with Kent on guitar and vocals, Romano Pasquini on bass and Pippo Pasquini on drums and piano. Kent wrote or co-wrote everything. This is not Crent revisited, but nor is it an album of endless guitar wanks. Sure, his guitar dominates proceedings as it usually does, and he has overdubbed a number of guitar lines to fill out the sound, but, unlike far too many contemporary guitarists, he can write a song.

A few things are immediately apparent from listening to this. The first is what a

large part of the Rifles' sound comes from him. The second is his very obvious commitment to the environment; but, before you begin to worry, this is not the usual self-righteous and patronisingly cynical approach adopted by many in the last few years. Kent does all the vocals, and yes, he can carry a tune. He has a broader accent than Damien Loveclock, but one realises, listening to the vocals and lyrics, that, while the phrasing may be different — not the usual slightly detached perspective the Rifles have — the concerns and message are much the same.

Beware: this little beast may (1) be hard to get hold of (2) cost a small fortune, as it's an Italian pressing; and neither this nor the Crent single will be for everyone, including some Rifles fans. New starters should perhaps pass these over and go for the Rifles' *Blind Ear*, following it with some of the earlier releases. For those who have been there and done that, these are interesting and enjoyable asides — but now it's time for the next Rifles album!

## GREEN PAJAMAS: Book Of Hours (Au Go Go LP)

A strange one, this — quite an English sound for this American quarter. Overall, there is an early '70s progressive art-rock feel — not the Yes/ELP techno approach, it's a lighter and more obscure feel; say, early Gentle Giant or Frapp with a certain poppy feel and the use of acoustic guitars and cellos to fill out the sound. There was, and still is, a certain skill in putting this type of music together, but in retrospect I think it's a bit of a dead end.

Soundwise, it's an extension of the late '60s psych-pop, but not as interesting; in part due to having a crisp, clear sound rather than the collage of sound which characterised the best psych-pop. In fact, there is a general unwillingness to take chances with sound, to use sounds, which would have added a lot to the music and the album as a whole. I suppose it's symptomatic of the musical times we live in. Still, it will probably go down well with college radio in the US.

As an album, this hasn't got the killer elements in the songs which grab you by the throat and scream LISTEN TO ME. It's more subtle. The trouble is that such subtlety requires a degree of feeling and sophistication in the songwriting that is missing for the most part. That said, there are some songs which cut it: "Kim The Waitress" is memorable power-pop, while "Red Balloon" is a pretty good stab at (neo) punky psych pop.

One can appreciate this album while listening to it, but after it's finished there is little aftertaste. It's music for the moment, but there's not enough to draw you back that often.

## GROWNUPS: Grownups (Musicland mini-LP)

These guys know what they're after; they have a musical vision that many groups lack. They have obviously taken quite some time to get the arrangements right, particularly the vocal arrangements, that many groups simply don't worry about. Acoustic guitars are used on occasion, but it doesn't degenerate into simple jingle-jangle. "Storm" is one such number, but has some simple orchestration that varies the sound. At other times the song structures evoke memories of the much-underrated Nikki Sudden/Dave Kusworth group the Jacobites, but with a full electric band behind them and much better vocals. I can't think of anyone else doing this sort of thing as well at the moment. Only four songs here, but I'm left wanting more.

## HELLMENN: Mourning Of The Earth (Waterfront LP)

These guys finally seem to have realised that playing everything at full throttle doesn't necessarily equate with power or commitment.

The "Daydreaming" 7" from last year, included here in remixed form, showed that there was more to them than their previous surf-and-destroy releases showed. Since that single, they have shed a guitarist and have uncluttered their sound somewhat. Don't get me wrong, they haven't wimped out — there's only one song on this album that has much of a crossover potential, and that's the latest single, "Anyone" — it's just that, by restraining their previous desire to thrash everything, the dynamics of the individual songs emerge, and it's these songs that work best.

## PLUNDERERS: Sarah's Not Falling In Love (Citadel 10" mini-LP)

It's taken these guys a while to get going; but, now that they have, watch out! Things seem to have picked up when former Eastern Dark drummer Geoff Milne joined.

Their first Citadel single, "I Didn't Even See Them At All", showed things were on the move; the first side of this 10" is similar to the single, with three short, sharp and catchy songs. The title song is really quite poppy, while "Eye To Eye" and "Lonely" are harder-edged and more guitar.

Turn the disc over and things really start to happen. First up is "Round Up", which has a long drum and dinosaur guitar noise intro before it kicks in with a sonic crunch, much heavier than anything they've released before. Next up is "The Shining", which, for me, is worth the price of the record on its own. It's eight and a half minutes of full-on acid rock; "head-music" by any other name. It sounds best with the volume way up on headphones — that way, you can hear everything that's been put into it. It's probably the most fully-realised piece of psychedelic music recorded and released in Australia. I won't try to describe it, 'cos mere words won't suffice.

The group's previous material has given no hint of this development. I really didn't think anyone in Australia was into making this sort of music; I'm real glad they are. Both the songs on side two were written by the group, as opposed to being by one individual as in the past. It is this any guide as to where they're going. I certainly hope they continue the collaborative writing. In addition to the writing, they have also co-produced everything bar the title track, and they show more adventure than many name producers have demonstrated.

I've always thought a good record was one you went back to again and again because you continued to get something out of listening to it. It looks like side two of this one is in for quite a lot of wear and tear.

## LINK PROTRUDI AND THE JAY-MEN: Missing Links (Skyklad, US mini-LP)

They could well have subtitled this "Rudi Protrudi and company play the music of Link Wray." This mini-album (side one plays at 33, side two at 45) is a run-through of late '50s-mid '60s instrumental music, all played by a simple guitar/bass/drums lineup. The band was fronted by Rudi Protrudi (guitar — naturally!), former and current member of the Fuzztones. This was recorded between the Fuzztones splitting in New York and their subsequent reformation in LA. These guys are mining an earlier period than the Fuzztones usually do, perhaps in an attempt to get back to their roots, and without the noise element.

Of the six tracks on side one, three are Link Wray numbers, one a Paul Revere and the Raiders cover and two are originals. Of the latter, "Psychclone" is a pretty neat surfing number, while "Pistop" covers the same sort of ground that Melbourne's Corpse Grinders used to cover (remember "Hey Herman"?). The Link Wray covers stay fairly faithful to the originals; they haven't tried to update the sound, which is for the best, 'cos Link Wray had/had a real knack of coming up with some killer riffs, the sort some people would kill for. Because the instrumentation has been kept to a bare minimum, it's the riffs that stand out and carry the music.

Side two is a cover of the *Batman* theme recorded live in lovely downtown Berne, with some semi-humorous (*I would a said 'semi-human' myself. — ed*) dialogue thrown in; mildly amusing the first couple of times you hear it.

Overall a pretty good record, though a shame about the cheapo cover.

## SPLATTERHEADS: Ink Of A Madman's Pen (Waterfront mini-LP)

As far as I can tell, these guys are regulars on the Sydney hard rock scene; and it shows. This is simple riff-rock, which would be okay if the riffs were good; but here, for the most part, they're only okay. The situation isn't helped by the lead vocals, done for the most part by Big Guy (that's what it says) and sounding somewhere between Rob Tyner of the MCS and Angry Anderson, having a pretty gravelly and hoarse quality about them that grates a



bit after a while. Putting the lyrics on the inner sleeve might have been considered a good idea (so you could work out what the hell they're singing about), but the lyrics don't cut it for the most part because they have nothing to say.

The group overall sounds best when they leave their usual workmanlike sound behind and stretch out a bit musically, "Destroyer" being the best example, with its sax work (reminiscent of the sax on Iggy's *Kill City*), extended instrumentation and slower tempo making it work best on the album. The trouble is, there need to be more moments like this.

#### VARIOUS: Hard To Believe (A Kiss Covers Compilation) (Waterfront 2x12")

As a general rule, I dislike the idea of tribute/cover albums; not only does the whole concept grate, but it's really very lazy. It's funny how the people who have raved about the plethora of recent such albums (Byrds, Beefheart, Barrett, etc.) look down their noses at "tribute" bands.

The material covered here is drawn from all over the Kiss catalogue, plus one Ace Frehley solo song. There is very little of the early stuff, which is a bit surprising to me, because I had always thought that, although it was their most non-musical period, it was also when they were most influential.

Like Grand Funk before them, Kiss were never a critic's band, but appealed to the masses — with little or no radio support, funnily enough. They were good fun, loud and noisy with nothing too deep to say — which is part of the problem: the group may have had the image and the theatrics, but rarely had the songwriting talent to match. Their songs weren't on a par with most of their New York contemporaries (the Dolls, the Dictators, the Blue Oyster Cult). "Destroyer" is probably the most musical they have ever managed. The trouble was when they started to take themselves a little bit more seriously and lost some of their appeal, because they forgot that — to paraphrase Mr. Eastwood — "a band's got to know its limitations."

Unlike the Stooges compilation of a few years back, this one has some American as well as Australian input, but it's mostly the Australian stuff that comes across best, probably because they seem to have put a bit of thought into their selection of material.

I suspect part of the appeal of this album on an individual basis will be the listener's familiarity with the originals. Few of the groups stick that close to the originals — they mostly try and mutilate them — but it's usually those that have tried to maintain the feel for the material as well as a sense of humour that work best: Smelly Tongues ("Parasite"), King Snake Roost ("I Want You"), Bullet LaVolta ("Detroit Rock City") and the Whipper-snappers ("Sure Know Something").

The early Kiss were always good for a bit of a giggle, and that's how I like to remember them. If you approach this album like that, you won't go far wrong.

Larry W.

#### BLUE RUIN: I'm Gonna Smile (MDS LP)

Really, this is the album they should have brought out instead of the live one. In fact, the version of "Lighthouse Girl" on this album, an earlier version than the one on the Dutch 12" single, was recorded at about the same time as the live album. The rest of the album was recorded in December 1989, after their return from their English "vacation," some three years on from their last studio album; and, as would (should?) be expected with that sort of time lapse, things have changed.

The thing that's most obvious is that the music has less of the hard-edged blues feel of the past, which in part, I think, goes hand-in-hand with Mulaim Vela's guitar playing not being as prominent as previously. As the *Flame* album showed, however, the move to diversify the sound was already underway a while ago. Elements of jazz and acoustic blues plus other less definable styles have been incorporated, allowing space and contrast in the music. With the hard edges taken out, however, it sometimes sounds like it lacks the necessary bite. The band produced the album themselves this time, whereas in the past they have had outsiders help; methinks an outside pair of ears might not be such a bad idea, as it allows for some objectivity.

The sound is a bit too nice, a bit too produced. A bit of both would have enhanced the overall feel.

This being said, this is a lot more consistent as an album than their last couple. Reservations aside, I've been playing this album quite a bit of late.

#### TIM BUCKLEY: Dream Letter (Demon, UK 2xLP)

After many years of rumour and denials of there being any live Tim Buckley, this little gem arrives with little, if any, fanfare.

Without wishing to write an abridged history of Tim Buckley, let's just say that he had one of the best and most unique voices to emerge in the '60s. This album was recorded at a time when "rock" music was expanding and incorporating elements of jazz; this is a few years before they merged into that turgid mess known as "jazz-rock" or, later, "fusion".

This album was recorded in July '68 in London on Buckley's first visit from his native LA, just after he had recorded his third studio album, *HappySad*. He had more or less left his folkie beginnings behind by this stage. This recording is early on in his trip into the musical unknown; still in the future were the albums *Lorca*, *Blue Afternoon* and *Starsailor*, delving into uncharted musical areas that I don't think anyone has made a successful attempt to traverse since. Buckley mostly plays with his band, including long-time cohort Lee Underwood, but on a few pieces he plays solo with just his twelve-string and that amazing voice.

This album is not simply live versions of studio material — there are a number of previously unreleased songs, while the previously released material is expanded upon and given a new freshness. Highlights are too numerous to mention, in part because there is so much of it (just under two hours); every time you listen, you hear something new.

I've heard via the grapevine (thanks, Steve!) that Lee Underwood says that there is quite a lot of unreleased Buckley material, both live and studio, that remains locked away. Apparently, former manager Herb Cohen has the rights to it, and, after trying and failing to get it released just after Buckley's death, has been sitting on it. Hopefully, the release of this album will encourage the future release of some more material — some live recordings from, say, the *Starsailor* period, with luck.

Will this album appeal to anyone other than Tim Buckley fans? I'm not sure if there is an audience out there, as there is really nothing around at the moment which one could use as a suitable reference point. But, what the hell, I'm real glad it's been released.

This record goes to show just what you can do with a six-string, a twelve-string, double bass, vibes, a voice, some imagination ... and no bloody drums!

#### PHILISTINES: Some Kind Of Philistines (Greasy Pop mini-LP)

No farting around with subtlety here, the stylus hits the vinyl and BANG, it's straight into it. I suppose the place to start is "Outside", one of the two covers on this six song mini-album. It's got some real snotty vocals over a '60s R & B structure, a style which suits the band's sound. In fact, the band tend overall to use English R & B as the basis of about half their sound, and overlay that with some heavy guitar sounds. That may sound a bit derivative, but when it works it doesn't sound it. It's basic hard-edged rock pumped out by a standard four-piece, two-guitar band.

However, it's got to be said that they tend to sound best when they mix in other instruments which break up the music's over-reliance on the guitars to do all the work; and it's songs such as "Dissatisfied", with its pretty neat harmonica, and "Madman", with its organ and Sonics-type shouted vocals, plus the aforementioned "Outside", which come off best.

#### THE PINEAPPLES FROM THE DAWN OF TIME: Shocker (Pineapples LP)

Confession time: I thought these guys' "Too Much Acid?/Sa-Ha" single released some years back was great, one of the best singles of the late '80s. It managed to balance '60s-early '70s acid/psych-pop music and humour on "Too Much Acid?" — the sort of song Dave Faulkner used to be able to write, but more so! — and they backed this with "Sa-Ha", a great power pop song

#### THE CYNICS: Rock'n'Roll (Get Hip LP)

The Cynics have always been a band whose attitude and intentions I've admired more than I've really liked the music they've made. Until now, that is. The band's two previous LPs and countless singles could not have prepared anybody for the sheer brilliance of this record. Many bands begin with their best record, but the Cynics have worked their way up to it. And this is their masterpiece.

The band bases its act on the '60s punk movement; and, having digested a truckload of garage grunge and matched it with a modern production that's clear but still bone-crunchingly raw, they have made an LP of awesome power and blistering intensity. The songwriting is true to its roots and every cut is a killer. This, coupled with the blood-curdling screams of Michael Kastelic and the driving fuzz guitar of Gregg Kostelich, makes this the best '60s-influenced garage LP of all time.

Maybe it's too much to talk about LP of the Year, but the only way I'm gonna like an LP more than this is if the Cynics release another one this year.

#### DELMONAS: Do The Uncle Willy (Skyclad LP)

To anyone still immune to the Delmonas' "Dangerous Charms", this band is sort of a female counterpart to the Milkshakes and their music is an intoxicating blend of '60s beat and girl-group pop. Like the Milkshakes, whose Billy Chudish wrote most of the songs herein, the Delmonas opt for a willfully primitive production sound. This is one band that go for the most beat-up '60s instruments they can find, not so much because they look good, but because they're the only thing that'll give you the real stoneage sound. This is an LP that's charming in its naiveté and alluring in its primitivism.

#### M-80s: You've Been Told (Get Hip 7")

Fab Yardbirds-inspired rave-up. The harmonica-playing gives it a touch of class. I defy you to stay still while this is playing.

#### MIRACLE WORKERS: Moxie's Revenge (Get Hip, US LP)

The "Workers explore similar territory to '60s purists such as the Chesterfield Kings, the Cynics et al. With fuzz pedal flat

with substance and feel.

Well, they've finally managed to release an album, which pretty much sticks to the single format stylistically, alternating between the distinctive styles. "Sa-Ha" is as per the single, while "Too Much Acid?" is an earlier and drastically different recording, very reminiscent of Snakefinger. It's almost hard to believe it's the same song. While not as catchy as the single, this version is growing on me. Most of the rest takes the tongue-in-cheek psych-pop approach. Of the songs that don't fall into this bag: "Charlie" is a really catchy song about Charlie Manson's incarceration which has managed to etch itself on my memory. "Doing Some Time" uses a spoken-word approach à la Lou Reed, and again mentions Manson, but more as an update on the man than the original song; while "The Sad And Lonesome Death Of Don West" is for all those who get off on watching those *Lost In Space* repeats on TV.

I'm not sure if they're playing strictly for laughs or not, but does it really matter? There are bits I'm not going to want to play a lot, but that's not the case for all of it. Time will tell. Best bet if you're unsure is to track down the single and have a listen first.

Note: The record indicates it came out quite some time back, but it seems to have only been available in Perth in the last couple of months!

(And where in God's name are we going to find the single, Ross? — ed.)

#### THRUST: Getting Closer/Just Kick It (Thrust 7")

In the musical restaurant of life, this piece of vinyl is served up still bleeding. Thrust are your basic guitar-dominated power trio and this could have been recorded any time in the last twenty-plus years. (Hmm ... — ed.) (Oh yes indeed — Ross.) The songs and playing are very much in the classic power trio mould, played fast but without slipping into thrash. Primitive as hell, but there's something

to the boards, these guys accelerate to the essence of the Nuggets/Pebbles aesthetic. This LP is a collection of early stuff recorded for the now apparently defunct Moxie label. If y' dig '60s garage, check these guys out and discover why some of my best customers rate them as their favourite US garage band.

#### SEX CLARK FIVE: Battle Of Sex Clark Five (Bloodmoney/Skyclad, US LP)

Any dBs fans out there? Too right! And if, like me, you lament the demise of the band worth at least five REMs, you can at least rejoice that the Sex Clark Five are here to fly the flag. Several tracks on this LP recall the dBs at their most oddball. The high-pitched vocal and great pop compositions, the fearlessness in redefining concepts. This is a great record, but it may take a little getting used to if you like your pop music straight. Repeated listens give rise to increased delights.

#### THE STUMP WIZARDS: Smoke-stack (Get Hip LP)

This band is a bit different for Get Hip. They're more of a seventies-influenced band with a heavy guitar sound in riff-based mid-tempo songs. Can't help feeling this LP would be more at home on the Sub-Pop label. This is something of a grunge-fest and should appeal to fans of the Gun Club, Spikes, Mudhoney, etc.

#### THE WICKED ONES: The Devil's In My Pants (Get Hip 7")

These guys have the sound and the attitude, but they don't yet have the songs to lift 'em above the pack of other garage-based bands. Not saying it's bad, but after "Get My Way" by the Cynics everything else is just toothpaste.

#### WISHNIAKS: Catch 33 (Bloodmoney/Skyclad, US LP)

The Wishniaks are kinda like a sham-bolic version of REM. They've got some good pop songs, but, unlike REM (these days, at least), they aren't afraid to leave 'em as diamonds in the rough. Among the gems on this LP are a song paying tribute to Flying Nun bands and a neat cover of the Scientists' "Frantic Romantic". Nice one!

Kim Williams.

more. Probably too raw and rough for most people, but it'll be worth keeping an ear open for future releases.

Ross C.

#### IGGY POP: Brick By Brick (Virgin LP)

Despite many foaming reviews, this LP ranks alongside the dud of *Party* — an average and pleasant LP by anyone's standards, but by Iggy's? — and *Zombie Birdhouse*. It's even worse than *Blah Blah Blah* — and I liked that LP, although it sure isn't one of my favourites.

But, unlike *Party*, which was sort of graceful in its commerciality, this thing sees Pop lost among the iconoclastic webel clones, like a classical portrait-by-numbers slotted in amongst the sludge of street-chalk 'artists' — those who doggedly reproduce such cutting or incisive social comments as *Chalk Replica of Famous Picture of James Dean*. I guess everybody has to eat. (Some, perhaps, deserve to starve more.)

The album does have some good-ish tracks on it — "Home" (where the hell is the bass, I'd like to know?), "Starry Night" (lots of fun and quite loose) and "Candy" (where you can tell Kate Pierson (B-52s) has a great voice, but not half the extent of it). But these tracks are merely 'okay' to 'good'. The rest is standard rawk fare, which I once learned to loathe in favour of Iggy — I never thought he'd lose that dynamic charge. He may not have lost it forever, but it ain't much in evidence here, no sir.

The whole stink recalls frightened pop stars, cowering in the face of their publicity, sure that they could never equal what they once did without even thinking about it — self-consciously, they try for a modern approach and fluff it up completely. Name one such figure, you've named thirty.

Ig's previous record, *Instinct*, was such a delight because it was a return to grit-

formula and gentle tension; yet this thing is largely bereft of sincerity, vocabulary and reflection — the best Ig LPs all have large swathes of all three, especially such gems as the first two Stooges LPs and his two 1977 LPs. Ranging giants of incision and self-cognition, these are the hallmarks of Iggy quality. I'm sure he's still capable of feats such as these, but he ain't getting the human chemistry he needs to squeeze out effortless sparks ... there's all the signs of inherent quality here without the actual quality. A bit like discovering that a Mars bar is entirely composed of its wrapper and TV advertising. Celluloid and plastic aren't really all that tasty, y'know?

If he really didn't have the project together, why the hell didn't he just release a live album, or a bunch of reorganised outtakes, or even do a Frank Sinatra covers album ... anything but this mush. I just don't like being treated like I'm brain-dead by someone who knows a lot better. I hope he doesn't get the Stooges back together in any format, because if the interaction is gone from that set-up, like it was never vibrantly present here, then he'll destroy the only thing which gives him the initial rep he's got.

But shit, who do you blame — the frothing media hypewagon, the dihard puritan knuckleheads who maintain that his best years are gone, or the biz itself which loathed and was bemused by the Stooges anyway and who now want some sort of tame Stooze like the Californian She Creatures wanted their tame Stooze.

You don't have to go overboard with the chemical abuse to make good music, but a chemistry of sorts is necessary. If this is the best he can do, I hope he stops soon, before he slips into something more comfortable.

This wasn't easy to write.

Robert Brokenmouth & May Sharpe.

#### THE INTERSTELLAR VILLAINS: Revolver (Timberyard LP)

The guitar is the supreme instrument of rock'n'roll, with bass being — although admittedly sometimes quite groovy — secondary and often incidental. (*Listen to more X records — ed.*) The Interstellar Villains, like the Cramps and early Hoodoo Gurus before them, prove this most conclusively on their bassless *Revolver* LP. The two guitars are downright intergalactic — just listen to "If I Happen By" — it's an absolute outer-space trip!

In fact, several songs on the record could be described similarly — and not necessarily because of the geez sound. "Bed Full Of Dreams" goes straight to one's head, a flipped-out vision of "heliotrope-heaven women," amongst other things, which ends in a wailing, echoing chaos. The vocals are irresistibly off-key and the contrast they form with some of the melodies is exquisite; this is especially evident on the bittersweet "The World We Knew Was Not That Hot". The song really hits a nerve. Narrogin's most famous son, Tony Thewlis — and his two celestial cohorts, for that matter — is clearly scarred for life by his involvement with the Scientists; not a bad thing under any circumstances, but made better by the fact that this legacy does not fester in derivation, but has actually evolved. (It's interesting to compare the different directions the various members of that godly band have gone in, but I won't just now, because the Interstellar Villains are indeed the "complete and separate planet" they declare themselves to be and should be looked at as such.)

The more I listen to *Revolver*, the more its intrinsic greatness unfolds. Whereas a band like Jane's Addiction knock you out immediately with their dazzling brilliance (and continue to do so), the genius of the Interstellar Villains is more fungoid in its effect — a definite grower, slinking subtly into the listener's appreciation. There is endless fascination provided by the juxtaposition between the rough and obnoxious elements one comes to expect from Australian inner-city independent bands, and some innocent and catchy tunes reminiscent of some of the shining stars of the '60s and '70s. (Alex Chilton is a popular comparison.)

And the record's appeal to the mind as well as the rock'n'roll nerve ("Serfdom City", for instance) is one to be cherished and explored. There is one particularly inspired moment at the close of "Bored Out" in which the Villains lift the cacophonous

finale of "A Day In The Life"! "Subterfuge Consortium Inc. (Here Come The Vulturnes)" is a dark piece of music, atmospheric as all hell. In fact, most of the songs are rather evocative. Try remaining unaffected as "The Interstellar Vision" assaults your imagination at maximum volume. But then, there is also the more upbeat "Hamburg", which is arguably the only song to get a good satisfying boogie out of!

Rock'n'roll can be more than groin-related and can inspire meaningful misbehaviour and succeed without compromise. *Revolver* reminds us of this. It may even become as seminal as *Revolver*.

Samantha.

#### BOYS FROM NOWHERE: Hired And Fired (Rubber mini-LP)

An American band centred around a rock'n'roll pop genius called Mick Divens, who apparently puts out records at a rate of about one per century. This mini is a collection of single tracks. (I bought one of the singles on it at an outlandish price in an auction just before receiving this. Oh well, at least I own the actual object.) What can I say, all the songs are really good and I play it (and its co-released 7", "No Reason To Live") a whole lot. Erm, '60s-ish, but not jangle-pop by any means.

I'd love to show you the promotional photo (it'd explain everything), but it's so bloody big and would have cost too much to get photo-reduced on its own. (They're too ugly, too. Tho' the skewed sunnies are cute.) The band look like the sort of long-haired, greasy rock'n'rollers that you wouldn't want to bump into on a dark night; unless you knew them, of course, in which case you'd all immediately go and have a damn great night out. (PO Box 32, Hawksburn 3142)

#### CANNANES: A Love Affair With Nature (Cannanes LP)

The Cannanes are unable to play or sing, but write jaw-droppingly brilliant pop-songs about their lives, their friends, other pop stars and so on, and bash them out with power and feeling.

A vague comparison is the wimpier variety of English indie-pop that acts like it wishes it were aged ten or fourteen or something; except that this sounds like it has in fact grown up and discovered beer and sex and so on and successfully struck a bargain with suburban life. It's got lyrics, it's got tunes, it's got structure and power and it's so homey you could just sit there lovin' it forever.

It works because the lyrics are intensely personal and virtually universal (or if they aren't, they should be), the music is brilliant pop music and the playing is loaded with feel, even if timing is an alien concept. I desperately wish this record had a lyric sheet, so I could sing along with it really loud and wander about singing "Take Me To The Hotel, Johanna (And Let's Trash The Joint)". Hey, all you pop stars out there, put bloody lyric sheets in your records. You may find it embarrassing and fear being perceived as pretentious, but singing along to this month's favourite is one of life's greater pleasures. Chad's Tree had the right idea on *Buckle In The Rail*. The most annoying thing in the world is getting to the line you don't know and having to mumble it. C'mon, have a heart. (PO Box 219, Newtown 2042)

#### CRACKED JAFFERS: Hip Pocket Nerve (Honk mLP)

"The Cracked Jaffers are a rock'n'roll guitar based band, incorporating a flavour of rhythm (sic) and blues." The songs range from indifferent ("Love Apart" is almost OK, though; sorta early Stonesh) to awful, the finest representation being the first track, for which they have seen fit to rip "Beautiful People" by the great Australian Crawl. They apparently had a decent single on Kavern 7 two years ago, but this EP is brown cardboard paper maché. Sound like they might be cool live, though ... and this was recorded before Greg Hitchcock joined. (PO Box 1356, Collingwood 3066)

#### CRENT: Crent (Waterfront mini-LP)

A positive example of combining social and environmental concerns with a lovingly vicious and twisted sense of humour. Side one goes through a number of cool Crened ideas ("Loser", a litany of the dead; "Save The", saving every bloody thing; "Greiner Is A Crent", self-explanatory; plus instrumentals "Batory

Rap" — hip-hop beats and chook noises — and "Intestine Beanies") and side two, ah, side two is the real prize here — an eighteen minute version of the second single, "9.K.?", an awesome thing to use as 100dB background noise for all your household activities. I disagree wholeheartedly with Larry's contention that the uninitiated should start with the *Celibate Rifles* — grab this while you can. Both singles, too. Your mutated grandchildren will venerate you.

#### CROW: Sunburnt Throats and Happy Thunderclouds (Phantom mini-LP)

This is frustrating and highly dissatisfying. Crow could well become true first-raters, but this mini-LP sounds badly underdone; so much so, in fact, that it left me feeling like I'd rather listen to a well-done second-rater than a possible first-rater as ill-realised as this.

The basic problem is that they have strong ideas, and probably know what a strong idea is when they come up with one, but the songs aren't coherent enough — reasonably strong ideas thrown together in a weak arrangement. That is to say, there is a starting point A and a (fairly) clear capability for power and motion, but no point B in evidence and not much hint as to what it is (beyond, perhaps, the level of "something really cool"). This record sounds like they're not yet sure what they're about. Note that "not yet" — a year or two too early is my guess. More direction, guys, more ruthless song-chucking.

Look, the basic problem is that someone, somewhere, has said those magic words "good enough." Good enough is not good enough. (PO Box AS66, Sydney South 2000)

#### THE GORIES: Houserockin' (Wanghead, US LP)

Indie blues-rock which bears the same relation to their blues-rock (take your sludgy pick) as our heavy metal (e.g. Rollins Band, let's say) does to their "heavy" metal (take your sludgy pick). That is to say, this stuff screams and yells and hollers and whoops and kicks ass and is the sort of thing that reassures you what "rock'n'roll" means. These folk (three youngsters who decided to form the band, then learnt how to play instruments ... possibly the only way to go) know both their history and its practical application to the present. Look, you really have no excuse for ignoring this one. "Dedicated to any blues band that ever made a crowd of white people vanish." (Gories Information Service: 20427 Picadilly, Detroit MI 48221, USA; Wanghead: 19620 Wahrman Rd, New Boston MI 48164, USA. Get writing.)

ps: Negotiations are apparently under way for limited 45s, both in Australia (Au Go Go) and with a Californian label. Watch out.

#### GREEN: White Soul (Megadisc, Holland LP)

A Dutch release of an American band. Their starting point is the pop end of the Buzzcocks, progressing through most other somewhat listenable '70s mainstream pop. The problem with this LP is a lack of definition — I couldn't remember a single tune after playing it twice. (Green are probably a better live band than the Hummingbirds — mind you, I am probably a better live band than the Hummingbirds — but at least H'birdies songs have hooks, dammit. And they're more Buzzcockian.) And I really wanted to like it, too — the killer version of "Away From The Pulsebeat" on the *Away From The Pulsebeat* zine's *Mondostereo* compilation LP indicates they're far from being talentless oiks and makes me wonder if someone didn't just slip a Mogadon in their cocoa whilst in the studio. Yeah, that's probably what happened. (Pampuslaan 45, 1382 JM Weesp, Holland)

#### THE HEALERS: Secret Show (Rattlesnake LP)

Needless to say, if you love the band live then this is medically necessary to your existence. Those who know Craig Halls-worth from the Bamboos will be very pleased with this indeed — the songwriting has advanced successfully to a higher level. Not sure what I could compare it to ... it's loud rock'n'roll with two guitars, but not what you would expect from that description. Craig and Tony's individual guitar styles make a lot of the difference from everything else in the world.

Personal favourites are "Secret Show"

(next single), "You're In My Blood" (the version here makes it a good thing the Healers/Kryptonics split single never came off), "Goodbye Joe" (amazing version, way better than either the JJJ compilation or live) and "Gutterward Angel" (my favourite Healers song, though I think the bass should go higher up at the end). "Wildfire" doesn't really give the depth of the album; it's a bit of an obvious single.

This review was based on the one and only advance tape and is a bit rushed, but I hope you get the idea. (53/61 Marlborough Street, Surry Hills 2010)

#### THE HE DARK AGE: The Dog's Breakfast (ind LP)

It's The HIDA 'cos fands kept getting it wrong. Oh well. The band is basically a two-piece, most of the record being guitar and vocals over synthesized bass and drum-machine. Most of the songs are one riff repeated. The vocals sound like talking even when singing. It takes a few listens to get into (to notice some cool bits in the lyrics, for example), but is worth it. Comes in a lovely package and would look just dandy in your collection. (GPO Box 2854, Brisbane 4001; available via *Spill mail-order*)

#### PETER HOLSAPPLE: Live Melbourne 1989 (Fast Fictions cass)

A tape of Holsapple on 3-RRR playing acoustic versions of various things, plus smatches of interview. (Holsapple has the oddest accent.) This tape is sheer magic. "Soul Kiss" by Stamey, the whistled solo on "Storm Warning", "Bonneville" at all, everything else. A little-known wonder that everyone should have. (A\$10 Australia, US\$10 elsewhere from PO Box 32, Hawksburn 3142)

#### VARIOUS: Hometown Farewell Kiss (6-UVS DriveTime LP)

Sure, this review should have been in last time, but I didn't even get a copy until just recently — which fits in well with the record's main (and obvious) problem. It's just been *too long*. Five of the twelve bands/artists were still active at the time of its release (October '89). And that's counting Charlotte's Web and the Kryptonics, neither of whose present lineups remotely resemble those herein.

So, how does it fare as an archive piece? Well, it's got some *great* stuff on it like the Stolen Picassos' "Nobody Heard" (a contender for best track on the record, and possibly just cause alone for purchase). All of the others are at least passable (tho' an unfortunate number are only that), and in total the record really does do a reasonable job of recalling the feel of the Perth scene of a few years ago.

If you were there, of course. If not, it's gonna suffer appraisal by the cold light of temporal objectivity — kids who are quite bright and perceptive but are just getting into music will be perfectly justified in saying, "yeah, but so what?" A horrible percentage of this stuff is simply past its use-by date. I remember how lame much of the *Last Gasp* compilation (1982) sounded to someone (me) who hadn't been present. And a lot of the people who were seeing bands a few years ago have given up and retreated to the suburbs since most of the bands playing the ol' scene are OK, but hardly something to fall in love with. (And it isn't just me getting old and cranky — seeing the Someloves' first show made that clear. Merely OK isn't good enough to keep people around.) This accounts, of course, for the lack of hysteria surrounding the album's release.

However, some of this record is not stale and the rest may be of historical interest. Probably. However, the *Picassos' track is worth killing for*. Get in quick and you can still obtain a copy of this LP with the original dedication (before his lawyers saw it) to Steve Phillips on the inner sleeve.

#### WANNABEES: Vacation LP (Gaga Goodies, Finland LP)

Recorded during an Australian holiday in April 1989 (a photo on the back taking in the Sydney Opera House and Harbour Bridge) using the Hummingbirds' equipment and with Alannah H'birdie on backing vocals. Again, it's fairly straight R'n'R pop, a lot more together than the last LP; it won't change the world, but you could do a lot worse. Highly recommended is "(So I Say To You) Goodbye", which would make a fine and lovely single. (PO Box 361, 00121 Helsinki, Finland)

BORED!: Electrophonic Tonic/

**WHITE ELEPHANTS: Jason (Destroyer 7")**

The White Elephants track doesn't do anything for me, but the Bored! side is an old Sonic's Rendezvous Band number that is so damn good that I can't believe I've never heard it before this ... a simple, powerful and brilliant rock'n'roll song. Both bands are on the Dog Meat label, if that gives you any idea. This record is one to kill for, got that? Or a version of "Electro-Phonic Tonic", at least. Start searching right now.

**BUGHOUSE: V For Vendetta/Burn It Back (Ursula 7"); Tax Stamp/One More Thing/Salad Days/Bruce's Song (Ursula 12" EP)**

For some reason, both of these records activated my "smash immediately" button. (Restraint, restraint!) I maintain that a Do Re Mi comparison is not a facile one: the same sort of music (indie MOR pop with a tune), a powerful female singer and, most of all, an affectation of "edge" to the lyrics. I suspect they'd like to be flies located directly in the middle of the mainstream ointment. A sort of pop-band version of Midnight Oil. Hey, maybe that's why I wanted to smash these.

The 7" isn't too bad (the Louis Tillett piano is cool) and is certainly a catchy little bugger, as is "Tax Stamp". But I dunno ... produced by Damien Lovecock. Possibly for the collection. (via Waterfront)

**BUSHPIG: Felching The Cat/Grunt/Rorting About/Like A Bushpig (Amphetamine Reptile, US 7")**

A collection of King Snake Roost, feedtime and Thrown-Ups folk apparently bashing things together on the spot. More conventionally musical than I thought it would be ... fucked if I actually know what it sounds like (the best records are always the ones that are beyond your capability to describe. Sure, it can be annoying when you read someone's failed attempt at a description in a fanzine, but it really is the only way to live), but those with an interest in KSR or feedtime would do well to get this. (2541 Nicollet Ave. S., Minneapolis MN 55404, USA)

**DUMB & THE UGLY: Dumb & The**

**Ugly (Doctor Jim's Records 12" EP)**

A sticker on the front says "NOISE with MAX Q members", which specifically means Michael Sheridan of No (guitars) and John Murphy (drums), the third member being David Brown (bass). The record is four extended slabs of guitar and drum repetition with lots of power. I found the record hideously boring on first and second plays, but it all clicked on the third. If your head is in need of a slab of this sort of noise, this'll do just fine. My No records were on the verge of wearing right the way through. (PO Box 45, Clifton Hill 3068)

**THE EVOLUTION REVOLUTION: E/Bone (Get Hip, US 7")**

Obviously recorded after Lancelot Link split from the band, though at least the gist looks like he could have been in the previous lineup. This takes the '60s predilection of your typical Get Hipper and sets all knobs to eleven. Good noise. The sides are theoretically distinguishable. If you have been heavily into '60s-oidal stuff in your time but have since developed noise-mutant tendencies, this'll be just your bag.

**GODBOTHERERS: Jesus Christ - It's... (Phantom 12" EP)**

Daniel Morphett, lead singer of the Craven Fops, backed by all of Living With Robert; all songs by Morphett. At first listen, it sounds like a slab of well-meaning, sincere, factory-woven trad rock, but, at the second, it becomes apparent that the lyrics (and what they do to the music) make all the difference - a bit much bash, somewhat off-centre, dragging the music along behind it much too fast, the crooning that turns into yelling ... Perhaps Paul Kelly at his best, but on tainted Ecstasy when he wrote the words.

**HELLMENN: Homegrown/Sleep (Waterfront 7")**

Third single from *Mourning Of The Earth*, remixed for the seven-inch - the guitar's been turned way up. A melodic thrashy pop song about mull, very nice. "Sleep" is in a similar vein. A good one.

**JOLLY JUMPERS: On The Stamp (Gaga Goodies, Finland 7")**

This is a bouncy number that sounds really pretty damn good. (Hah, just got it -

what the Triffids' "Rosevel" would sound like done by a big-band, then take away the tune. I came up with this whilst doing the final layout for this issue, so don't hold me to it too tightly.) Reminds me of something that doesn't quite come to mind at present. Good use of squawking brass things is what really makes the sound. One to get. (PO Box 361, 00121 Helsinki, Finland)

**THE LIZARD TRAIN: She Gets Me (Greasy Pop 12" EP)**

"She Gets Me" basically sounds like it should have come out on Citadel in 1985 or so - a four-minute rock'n'roll pop song with a standard structure, "aah-ahh-ahh" bloke backing vocals on the chorus, a great three-piece sound ... an excellently-executed single that's been a fixture on the PF turntable since I got it. The other three tracks are also winners. (Though I prefer the version of "Two Hour Hole" on the American 7", but never mind that.) On red vinyl. (PO Box 136, Rundle Mall Adelaide 5000)

**PRAY TV: Spent/She Fell (Au Go Go 7")**

This suffers a touch from the Dinosaur/S. Youth Mishmashes, a disease afflicting young bands and involving the use of melody and noise to make up for each other's deficiencies rather than to achieve the synergy that is best obtained when both are at full strength. It's not bad, it's just that there are lots better. I'm still waiting on that killer. (GPO Box 542D, Melbourne 3001)

**RIPE: Spacesuit 42 (PolyEster 7")**

Indie novelty, but surprisingly playable and catchy. If you hear it on the radio, you should be tempted to buy. Dull B-side. (330 Brunswick St, Fitzroy 3065)

**THIS PICTURE: Naked Rain/Rape The Hillside (Rough Trade/Festival 7")**

What the Go-Betweens might have sounded like had they been American. A bit of an epic. Melodic with a big but not too big drum sound. A good one.

**SWERVEDRIVER: Rave Down (Creation/Shock 12" EP)**

I've listened to this a pile of times and thought something different about it just

about every time. They have a pile of American influences; indeed, they bring to mind the habit the English have of doing whatever the Americans do, but better, then selling it back to them. This American post-hardcore or whatever-you-might-call-it noise has gone on long enough without a comeback. (This is not to try to take credit away from A.C. Temple, who tried it a few years ago. But, y'know, they just didn't cut it. Swervedriver [who don't sound a damn thing like A.C. Temple, by the way] do.)

Swervedriver do a sort of powerfully rockin' noise with tunes, a great deal of distortion and incredibly intricate structure if you listen closely. There's a rock sense, a noise sense and a melodic sense. No-one in the world could dance to this stuff ... Imagine the Jesus and Mary Chain listening to REM instead of surf music. They have English ideas of structure, reference and so on, and the urge to noise seems to come from a wish to break that mould.

Swervedriver seem to be everyone's trendy rave band this month, but it's certainly not unfounded. This band will be a force to reckon with. Look out for the other 12", "Son Of Mustang Ford". *The devil must've sculpted your beautiful mesmeric green marble eyes.*

**THE ZEROS: The Zeros (Munster, Spain 7" EP)**

I've never heard of this band, nor pretend to have, but I'll try anyway. The Zeros were a Ramones-ish punk/new-wave band (back when 'new-wave' wasn't an insult) around 1977, all aged seventeen or so. The insert has the text of an article from *Bomp!* magazine (the near-legendary bible of cool music at the time) which has the quote from the band: "Punk ... is just the way you feel when you're young." All this should give you some idea of time, place and style.

The music is pretty OK; wouldn't win any prizes if released as new in 1991, but sounds pretty damn cool in its time and context despite appallingly sexist lyrics (presumably the product of adolescent male hormones and the sexism of the times). But good soundwise, and may well be of powerful historical interest for some. (PO Box 18107, 28080 Madrid, Spain)

- The PF List For 1990:**  
 ABC: "All Of My Heart" 7"  
 Blue Orchids: *The Greatest Hit (Money Mountain) LP*  
 Birthday Party: *Junkyard LP*  
 Bored!: "Electro-Phonic Tonic" 7"  
 Glenn Branca: *Symphony No. 1 (Tonal Plexus) cass*  
 Cannanes: "Blue Skies Over The Ocean", "Take Me To The Hotel Johanna (And Let's Trash The Joint)" off *A Love Affair With Nature LP*  
 Chills: "Heavenly Pop Hit" 7"  
 Club Hoy: "On And On" 7"  
 Dumb & The Ugly: "Rude Mechanical"  
 The Fall: *Perverted By Language LP*; *Perverted By Language /bis video*; "Kicker Conspiracy" 2x7"  
 Feedtime: *Suction LP*  
 Gorles: *Houserockin' LP*  
 Healers: "Gutterward Angel" (live)  
 Interstellar Villains: *Revolver LP*  
 ISpartacus: "Part Of The Art Of Eve" off *The Greats LP*  
 Ed Kuepper: *Happy As Hell 12" EP*  
 Pep Lester And His Pals: *Jack O'Lantern Moon 7" EP*  
 Ian List and the UV's: GPR-152  
 Lizard Train: "Damn That Aeroplane", "Two Hour Hole" off US 7"; "She Gets Me" 12"  
 Mars Bastards: "Ricky Dixon", "Sun On The Suburbs", "This Windy City", "That Was My First Mistake"  
 New Order: "Cries And Whispers" (off "Everything's Gone Green" Belgian 12")  
 No: *Glory For The Shit For Brains LP*; "200 Years" 7"  
 Prisonshake: "Gaslight" (off *A Girl Named Yes LP*)  
 Reels: "Eagle Rock" (off *Neighbors LP*)  
 Severed Heads: *Rotund For Success LP* (especially "Greater Reward")  
 Someloves: "Sunshine's Glove" 12"  
 Spacemen 3: *Taking Drugs To Make Music To Take Drugs To LP*  
 Surrenders: "Loaded Dice" 7"  
 Swervedriver: "Rave Down" 12" EP  
 A Terminal Posture: *Biological/Nuclear! Chemical cass*  
 The Triffids: "The Long Fidelity" (off *Born Sandy Devotional LP*)  
 Robert Wyatt: *Nothing Can Stop Us LP*

20/5/90  
I've just bought myself a replacement Walkman-thingy. Two years after number one broke. Took me far too long. Now I can listen to whatever I want to, from traffic noises to blaring, impossibly raucous rock'n'roll to Renaissance music. I've really missed not being able to catch up with my tapes and so on of late, and I can now do so in the comfort of my bed or on the bus. Music is only a fraction of my life, and if I were to indulge in it during most of my spare time I would be impoverished indeed. After all, music is only a by-product of our lives; surely, to exclude life for the sake of the admittedly wonderfully varied selection of sounds available these days would be an almost criminal offense. Truly anti-social behaviour. If Anthony Burgess had thought of 'personal stereos', he would have portrayed his horrorshow hero Alex as wearing a brand-name box and rejoicing in Ludwig Van as he trashed old people's homes. And shoplifting of Ludwig Van would escalate, and the usual "astoundingly large" amount of copycat violence would follow. British soccer ho-



liganism receives a positive boost every time the mayhem is depicted on television. "Look, fellers, that's me putting the boot into that little girl!" We're all heroes in our minds' TV these days. A mid-European woman stopped me and asked for directions. I turned the stereo off and helped her as best I could - I hope she understood me, I'm rotten with accents and I bet she was too.  
'Rediscovering' music which has had a profound spiritual effect upon me at various times is a joy I cannot fully express, yet there are many experiences more pleasing and essentially rewarding. At the moment, as I write this, my cat, Dude, is sleeping on my lap, thus making this writing extremely wobbly. Although this is more than slightly uncomfortable for me, I relish this animal's selfish pleasure, his dignity and poise as he demands what he perceives as his undeniable right to sleep on my lap no matter how I feel about it. Obviously, he's in no position to physically threaten me; perhaps it is his ignorance/uncomprehension of the concept of 'another individual with differing needs' which appeals to me, as I see it expressed in much more vitriolic terms by my fellow man. All he wants to do is sleep and I'm twisted into an extremely awkward position in order not to disturb him. Also, his evident acceptance and contentment is something I envy; he derives great spiritual satisfaction from something so simple and everyday, which is a trait I fear we have all but lost. I guess I need reminding of my basic animalistic experience every now and again - whether it be a deliberate dousing of an immoderate temperature, or the contrast of my cat's contentment and my continued suffering. An interesting conflict of moral conduct and reflexive spirituality, all enmeshed in something so ordinary as to be generally unmentioned, yet I find such a conundrum of experience and emotional conflict to be profoundly crucial. In a way I am content, despite my awkward position and indecision. And, of course, music can only hint at this sort of essential reflection of both the everyday and the exotic.  
Is that all music is, then? A simple reflection? Not a grand illusion, nor a



refraction into another world, nor an introduction to the super-real? Well, it can be, I suppose. It depends on how deluded you are, or, alternately, how sheltered your life has been. Because in reality, in (the ever elusive) perspective, music can only whisper suggestions to our world, and it is up to us to make use of them. We can alter our lives to fit into one of the many musical ghettos, or just alter our clothes - often it's the same thing anyway - clothes and makeup and appearance affecting a lifestyle. Preposterous, but if your blood quickens at the thought of belonging (never mind to what), then there is a host of cliches available. Sad it is that we cannot be led by music into exploring ourselves, rather than be led by music into a masquerade of follow the leader. We're a sad race, to need such gross comfort in simple acceptance. Why can't we accept ourselves? We don't have to 'know our place', we can invent it. Or did that manner of thinking get chased out by adult laughter pre-puberty?  
Whether it be raucous or mellow-dramatic, we are lost in a finite structure of plastics, discs and machinistic hum. We demonstrate our loss of self in our search for a purchasable one - it will never be bought, however.  
Brokenmouth.

**PATRICK HUMPHRIES:** Small Change: A Life Of Tom Waits (*Omnibus*)

A warm, witty and fondly-researched approach to one of the most difficult-to-pin-down characters of the rock'n'roll circus. Humphries doesn't try to pin Waits down overmuch, to my relief; instead, he traces Waits' career and allows Waits most of the comments on himself.

Bearing in mind that it's a lot easier to misunderstand the abstruse and verbose Waits than the majority of the bubbles bursting on FMRAAAWWK, it's a real treat to read an intimate account of a man whose performances and music are themselves so alluring for that very reason.

Humphries displays an astonishing understanding of Waits' music and intentions; granted, he's a fan, but of that rare variety: articulate. Where Waits has been simply dismissed or panned, Humphries demonstrates his intelligence by, instead of defending to the death, simply explaining, 'yeah, this LP was a mistake, for these reasons,' before going on to express his own, often quite personal, opinion of the record.

Rarer still, this book has an honest perspective. Anything written about, say, the Beatles would sidestep the reality that it's probably a good thing that they can never get back together again, and probably even better that they never did while they could. Look at the Rolling Stones.

In Waits' case, the guy's been on an artistic upswing, consolidating and maintaining an equilibrium of his own crafting. This development and expansion is not the central core of the book, as a lesser attempt would have it ... the core of the book is Waits himself, or, rather, how he would have us perceive him. It is to Humphries' considerable credit that he has located the more revealing quotations, along with some of the funniest, to bring Waits into my home once again.

A highly entertaining mixture of a book; worth a read even if the name Tom Waits is about as familiar as that of Tim Buckley.

Effigy.

A quick note on a couple received from Chris Spencer, of the *Who's Who of Australian Rock*.

An *Australian Rock Discography* (216pp A4; ISBN 0-7316-8343-9) is a list of every album or single by every Australian or New Zealand band on Chris's list up to that time, listing Artist, Title (all tracks of singles and EPs), Label, Catalogue Number and release date (month where known). It has those first-edition woes (a lot of holes and typos, some errors), but is quite fine and useful. Subsequent editions (I think one is due soon ... both books are being done in runs of a few hundred) will

include cassettes, videos and CDs, as well as notes on coloured vinyl, special packs and other collectorish trivia (some in this one) and possibly full track listings. Collectors need this book.

*The Various Artists In Australia* (190pp A4; ISBN 0-7316-8348-X) covers all Australian various artist and soundtrack LPs released in Australia between 1960 and 1989, plus some mention of known overseas ones. Each entry has the data above, full track listing and a few paragraphs of commentary on each record, mainly quotes from reviews; that is to say, this is a book to be read. It is (again) plagued with typos and Chris isn't particularly talented as a writer of text, but is interesting and is something you can actually sit down with and read as well as get data from. In the back are listings of all artists on records in the book (and the tracks) and of all songs on records in the book (and the artist and record each version is on). Collectors will want this to track down artists, but those with a passing interest would also enjoy it.

Each book is \$15 plus post: \$2.50 Australia, \$3 overseas surface, \$9 overseas air (each). "Trade enquiries welcome."

In the pipeline is *Various Artists On*



*Cassette*, which should be fun to compile, but will be a goldmine for those looking for obscurities by their favourites. The third *Who's Who* is due late 1991 — get your additions and corrections to the second edition in as soon as possible. (*Moonlight Publishing, PO Box 5, Golden Square 3555*)

David.

**ROGER WATKINS:** When The Rock Got Rolling — The Wellington Scene, 1958-1970 (*Hazard Press, NZ, 1989; NZ\$30*)

It is a coincidence that, within twelve months, two fine rock books should surface from New Zealand, and yet the books be so different in their scope. It is expected that the two will be compared, and perhaps this is not a bad thing, but really the books fulfill different roles. John Dix's *Stranded In Paradise* is more useful to Australians trying to work out where New Zealand's musical influences differed from ours and why so many NZ bands from the '60s were producing better records than most Australian bands at the same time. Dix also takes a wider overview, taking into account the social conditions and analysing their effect on the industry, viewing everything in perspective.

Roger Watkins takes a shorter period of time, a distinct era, a specific place and concentrates on the bands. The layout is totally different: Watkins chooses to enter bands under their own titles in alphabetical order, similar to McGrath's *Encyclopaedia of Rock & Pop*, but each band has a lineup listed, membership changes, a photo of almost every band, a description of its music rather than its achievements (e.g. awards or chart positions) and a brief summary of where the members ended up later in life. This latter content gives the book a homely, friendly appeal. There is also a discography of each group, but dates of release are not included. For collectors, the discographies also include the catalogue numbers and at the end of the book there is a complete listing of releases from Wellington-based labels.

As an Australian, it is

difficult for me to judge whether the book is complete. Are there any bands neglected in this book? If so, which bands? Were they influential bands in any way? In the preface, the author lists 150 bands that, I assume, existed or played in Wellington during the period studied; but only 75 bands are described in detail, which means Watkins has used some criteria to discern between bands.

Other sections of the book deal with the local scene as it existed at the time, giving an almost scrapbook-style look at the period of time in question. One chapter lists all the happenings, events and 'occasions' in a diary format, listed by month for the fourteen years covered; Watkins calls this chapter 'Jottings from the Wellington Scene'. Most of this section has been researched from the local newspapers. There's a map of Wellington which illustrates where all the major venues existed, photos, posters, memorabilia and paraphernalia from the era. Another section deals with the soloists who were associated with the bands, but were not permanent members. (Obviously, they would be backed by different bands depending on the dance at which they performed).

Ray Columbus writes the foreword to the book, and attempts to explain why the music industry developed so well in Wellington. Columbus, who is regarded in New Zealand as highly as Australians view Johnny O'Keefe, suggests that the construction of a major recording studio with talented producers had a large part in fostering the 'hit' records which flowed out of Wellington. To some extent there are similar rivalries between Wellington, Auckland and Christchurch as was experienced between Melbourne and Sydney. Thus any advantage over other centres of music was considered, seized upon and utilized: which band had electric guitars first, who had the loudest amps, which band had access to overseas records to cover first, which band dressed first in the international fashions, which band had coordinated uniforms and movements on stage. Sound familiar?

A similarity with our local music scene that Columbus points out is the lack of serious media coverage, particularly by the print media. The book thus serves as one of the few historical references of an era in Wellington. Which begs the question: "why would non-Wellington people buy the book?" Well, they wouldn't unless they had an interest in musicians who originated from Wellington and had an impact on our national Australian music industry, including Barry Leef (not widely recognised as one of the nation's premier vocalists, more widely recognised for his commercials in the Sydney media), Steve Gilpin (Mi-Sex), Bruno Lawrence and Brian Peacock (previously Executive Director of WARMIA, now General Manager of Ausmusic). Many other bands have featured musicians who later ventured to Australia as part of other well known bands which toured and had commercial success in Australia.

I have sought two opinions of this book from fellow music historians, and their views are diametric. One says that the book is an excellent overview of the Wellington music scene during an explosion of interest in pop music, when people were exposed to rock and roll from the UK and America. His interest is in the composition of the bands, the more obscure, the better. The other says that the writing style, while being friendly and casual, is obviously not written by a person who has great skill in the use of words, and thus the book does not read as well as other books which relate to the emotion of rock and roll.

One of the weaknesses of the book is that there is no index for musicians listed in the book. There is, however, a list of Wellington musicians who have died and an epilogue which attempts to gauge the impact of the music on the Wellington community, its size, its influence and why it waned over the ensuing decades. Watkins closes with the comment that "they were really the good old days. Naive, yes. Innocent, certainly. Creative, undoubtedly. Most of all they were exciting times."

Recommended only for highly motivated music-junkies of the '60s.

A small statistical note: Wellington's population in 1966, was 131,000, compared with Newcastle 250,000, Geelong 100,000 and Wollongong 160,000.

Chris Spencer.

**ED KUEPPER AND MARK DAWSON / DAVE GRANEY AND DAVE LAST** — Somewhere in Melbourne, Friday 23/3/90

My last Friday night in tedious detail. Driving down to Melbourne, the traffic was bumper-to-bumper, I ran up the ase of the car in front. No damage to either car, just had me a bit rattled.

Went round to a friend's, had a cup of tea, listened to some ambient twaddle, still felt edgy. Wasn't in the mood, but I went and saw Mr. Kuepper.

Supported by Dave Graneley and Dave Last. Picture it: sitting on stools, little table between with a bottle of claret and an ash-tray with smoke rising. These two swapping an acoustic guitar back and forth. Not exactly great music, but very funny. Dave Graneley doing Kris Kristofferson songs? Ha.

(Dave Graneley and the White Buffalos, the week before: Brilliant is too small a word. Easing into some great cowboy stuff, Evil Graham Lee playing with them. Dave Graneley has a moustache and beard like Buffalo Bill now. A better man than me said, "He's the King," as if it was like saying water is wet.)

Ed Kuepper and his twelve-string acoustic through a flash digital effects unit. Dawson had a snare drum and two little cymbals — that's all. Sounded great. Nearly all new songs, except "Eternally Yours", "If I Were A Carpenter" and something off the second solo album. Yeah, one of the better nights I've had this year.

I hate cymbals.

Bart.

**BLACK-EYED SUSANS** — *Coronado, March '90*

*Je T'Aime / Spinout / Feel / You're No Good / Devil In Disguise / Kiss And Say / Accused / Cool Fire / Don't Expect / Burning Love / When You Were Mine / Knock On Wood / Angel / The Cross / Rubberneckin' / It Hurts Me*

The third and shortest-lived Susans lineup in just over a year, with each lineup having had a different feel while retaining the "easy-going" continuity.

On stage, from the left: *Marty Casey* (bass, vocals), *Kim Salmon* (guitar, vocals), *Aly Macdonald* (drums, vocals), *Rob Snarski* (guitar, vocals) and *Adrian Wood* (trumpet, keyboards). I wasn't quite sure what to expect: maybe an evening of Rob Snarski's favourite ballads, or perhaps a head-to-head confrontation between Snarski's ballads and Kim Salmon's more jagged approach. Whatever, the evening started with Salmon displaying his usual sartorial taste in a rose-pink shirt with frills down the front, heavy-breathing his way through "Je T'Aime". The reception that received showed that there were quite a few people here (myself included) because Salmon was in the band.

Kim Salmon and Rob Snarski sort of took it in turns to sing lead vocals. When it was Snarski's turn, he often dispensed with the guitar and adopted his best cabaret crooning pose, while Salmon stood at the side of the stage playing quietly and surveying the scene. He adds that *oomph* that's been missing in the past. The band may well be short of originals, which were the ones David McComb used to sing, but this is probably the best-balanced lineup yet seen — in part due to the group actually having a lead guitarist this time.

"Cool Fire", with Salmon on vocals, had some surprisingly jazzy piano from Adrian Wood, which overall bodes well for Salmon's forthcoming solo recording. Some nice slide on "Burning Love", but best cover of the night was "The Cross" (Prince), which Died Pretty had played at the Melbourne the previous Friday, and which demonstrated a sense of dynamics in the playing of the group as a whole — rather than simply as a backing band for whoever was singing.

"Rubberneckin'" saw Will Akers up on stage supplying back-up vocals and hand-claps. It's nice to see Will back on the scene, but I'm getting sick of the song itself; it really should be pensioned off. The last song of the night, "It Hurts Me", started off slow, but you just knew it wouldn't stay at this tempo; and, sure enough, about two minutes in it kicks in for a minute or two of rather appealing (to these ears) guitar noise, before returning to the softer and more mellow tempo for the fadeout; at which point the band trooped off the stage and out the door.

Larry W.

## TAROT CONSULTATION



PHONE JOHN McNAIR  
ON  
362 3205



## BJÖRN AGAIN / BLACK VELVET — Ozone Bar, Thursday 7/6

Perth completely lacking any local bands worth seeing, unless you're into thrash or reductive punk, I decided to see Björn Again, the Abba concept band. The beginning of the evening sucks, as the audience (on the whole made up of people with taste and innate style) suffer the iniquity of a classic rock cover band. They are named after an FM hit; they contain an "extroverted" girl singer, a "quiet" guitarist and a "wacky" bass player; they exhort people to dance to their vile renditions of execrable Pat Benatar and Fleetwood Mac songs ... Humorless, jumped-up individuals (? — ed) who might as well be miming to 96fm, these fuckers labour under the illusion that they're a band.

Well, they're not. Abba was a band, and Björn Again reincarnate their image with dignity, reverence, insight, taste and humour. They're acceptable where other "concept" bands are not because they're a concept band of a band that was sort of a concept band itself. Also, they have wonderful material to work with. Björn Again come on stage heralded by the epic "Arrival", which has everybody swaying and smiling; they start with the very stupid "Waterloo". First impression is that they don't manage to recapture the visual glory of Abba (to see this you have to watch Abba's videos): no spew-green giant-lapelled plunge-necked FLARED sequinned and spangled catsuit; no hotpants with FLARED-sleeved top and silver thigh-boots; no star-shaped guitar teamed with chestless bodysuit and SUPERHERO CAPE! ... etc. I can't see if they're wearing platforms, but their costumes are uniformly white. At first they're way too choreographed and look too good (younger, better movers, more believable than the original Abba), but they do loosen up.

How do they sound? At least they have some respect for Abba's songs, although some fall short. "Fernando" lacks soul, "Ring Ring" has no idiocy to speak of and "Dancing Queen" is nowhere near as profoundly groovy as it should be. But they play a varied set chosen from a potentially vast repertoire, covering Abba's whole career, not just the silly songs and giant hits. For the record: "Honey Honey", "Money Money Money", "I Do I Do I Do I Do I Do", "Mamma Mia", "Bang A Boomerang", "SOS". From Abba's Blue Period (that's *Voulez-Vous*, where the daggly Swedes discovered disco) there's "Does Your Mother Know"; pre-"Waterloo", there's a relative obscurity, "Hey Helen", and, post-*Arrival*, "Take A Chance On Me" (brilliant). *Arrival* itself, their hugest, greatest record, is represented not only by the mega (unbelievably consistent, perfect, singable) singles and title track, but also by "Why Did It Have To Be Me?", "When I Kissed The Teacher" and "Tiger", which has the distinction of being Abba's stupidest song. (Which puts it in the running for the status of Stupidest Song Ever.) Generally, they sound OK; it's just that the harmonies aren't lush enough and the piano doesn't sound like it's being played by a middle-aged Swede with a beard. None of that really matters, because the idea of Björn Again is good enough to compensate for the actual deficiencies.

Classics they don't play tonight but might on other nights: "Intermezzo No. 1" (a prog-rock abomination), "Name Of The Game", "Tropical Loveland", "He Is Your Brother", "My Love, My Life" and the world-beating "Knowing Me, Knowing You". The last, however, is a song so true, great and perfect that only Abba themselves and Elvis Costello do it properly, so I leave very happy not to have heard it tonight.

Black Velvet: worse than V-Capri.

Björn Again: almost as good as Abba, and definitely better than the Bollocks Brothers.

Lisa Jooste.

In the interests of service to the public, we present to you the fax number of one Robert James Lee Hawke — (06) 273 4130 — and the Parliamentary phone number — (06) 277 7111. Should you perhaps have some matter or other you would like to express a strong opinion on, this would be the go. (Information from ABC Radio.)

## NOT DROWING, WAVING — Ozone, Saturday 28/7

What am I doing here? I don't even like Not Drizzling, Boring. I've (almost) always considered them new-agey aural masturbation with frail, hip-suburban, precious, eunuch lyrics. They also have a worsening case of (I haven't got three words for this, so I'll define it long-windedly — if anyone can do better, write in to PF and the best suggestion will win something awful from the review bag) the Goanna/Gondwanaland disease: a born-again Australian-soil-ism from self-righteous suburbanites appropriating Aboriginal motifs for new-agey, with some of what Americans mean by the word "liberal". (If you see what I mean.) I do actually own one of their records: the first single, "Moving Around" from 1984. Seven minutes of Catholic schoolboy angst. I really loved that record when I was seventeen. I even wrote to Rampant with an SAE asking for info and got sent the press-kit in return. (Still have it.) But not a note since then has held my attention. I only came tonight because a friend's long-planned European holiday clashed with the short-notice NDW shows and she begged me to tape it for her. Knew I should never have told anyone about getting the Walkman fixed.

As it happened, Not Drowning, Waving weren't that bad at all. The ten million instruments in perfect sound let them cross the fine line between esoteric and sheer wank rather too often (especially on the "atmospheric" instrumentals — a pity, 'cos they can write decent lyrics when they try ... I was particularly impressed with the line about "blood-stains on every pool table" or whatever it was), but they're on the right side often enough. In any case, being at the side next to the drums helped add enough noise to the otherwise pristine proceedings to give things a decent flavour. I also dug the cello and the fretless bass. The backing films worked OK, too. And they played nearly two hours, it was OK value as a show.

Heck, they've got some decent songs; rocking out more would be nice, but they do have some of the raw materials. The playing and sound is about two levels above the quality of the actual music, but I wouldn't call them hopeless. I really didn't mind this and even had a slight urge to seek out their records. Is something wrong with me?

## THE FISH JOHN WEST REJECT — Ozone, Thursday 9/8

Yet another drag-to show, this one prompted by extreme indignation on Vivienne Langham's part over last issue's Fish review. Apparently, that one was just the worst show of their lives.

The Fish's originals were OK (didn't move me especially, but certainly didn't revolt me), but they made my night tonight from one song they did: "Bad Education" by the Blue Orchids. This was going to be the place to cue frothing onwards in the general manner of announcing the revival/unearthing of "Lost Classic" by Unknown and the Obscurians or whatever,

but I recently discovered that Aztec Camera, of all people, did it as a B-side a few years ago (flip of "Deep And Wide And Tall"), and the Fish follow that version pretty faithfully. But whatever, heck, I was going to do that song one day. The Fish have earned themselves 1,000 points on the PF Cred Scale and are assured of goodwill henceforth. Mark Narcowicz is apparently a frothing Blue Orchids freak as well. Bramah's the man, mate. Don't let anyone tell you differently.

Incidentally, tonight the Fish caused the *lame to walk* — get up, throw off their crutches and dance! I actually saw this happen. Through a great deal of Corona assisted her, and I think she regretted it later. But hey.

## THE ADVENTURES OF FORD FAIRLANE

A movie, starring Andrew Dice Clay.  
Andrew Dice Clay is best known for being a racist, sexist, homophobic asshole under the guise of "comedian". "Hey, guys, it's only a joke!" I wasn't going to see this film until a friend told me of how (i) Fairlane (Dice Clay) hates Australia and Australians, especially koalas and INXS ("Ain't that the sorta place they use to test nuclear weapons on?") and (ii) in the end, he gets the girl, the money and the koala. So how could I resist.

Ford Fairlane is a Rock 'n' Roll Detective, working in Los Angeles. (His car is an early '60s red and white two-door Fairlane convertible — cue screams of car-lust.) The script contains no racism and only one passing queer joke, and not only does Fairlane's sexism actually do work as being "in character", but he grows out of it a bit. He remains strongly anti-cretin, however, and still says "fuck" every second word.

The plot is merely a basic functional detective plot; not even an honest mystery plot, just a wide-screen action comic book, though fine for what it is. The setting, however, is truly marvellous. I implore any of you who have the misfortune of being in the music industry, or even having suffered the unpleasantness of brushing close by, to see the *bloody thing*. It gets the business at the top end precisely right — plastic, utterly fake, lifeless, contrived ... the only way they could have got it wrong would be underdoing it. (Apart from Hendrix, the soundtrack fits too ... aargh!) I'm not saying this is *Spinal Tap*, but it does more than well enough to deserve attention.

Really cool bits abound — the exploding television; Ford lighting his cigarette nearest the end (heh heh); the funeral and especially the coffin; the death of the DJ (hanging's too good for 'em!); the plastic pop star; the thugs looking like the Cult, or perhaps Fields of the Nephilim; the crook chewing up three compact discs ...

Best of all, Andrew Dice Clay actually has a brain and personality and could start making a decent living for himself.

(Now out on video and highly recommended.)

David.



"If you want to print the Nice photo, just print it and say Fran used to be in Big Knitted Cardie, Randall used to be in the Cannanes, Jo used to be in Disband and Suzannah used to be in Rewind On The Paranoid Side. That'll fox 'em" — David Nichols.

## Live (dead)

## NICK CAVE AND THE BAD SEEDS — Sydney and Melbourne, July 1990

At first I thought he'd lost it. That emotional whump which always took me by surprise and knocked me back on my heels. Well, I figured, he was tired and he had a cold ... an off night?

The whole band had this strange, friendly attitude about them, which is of course no bad thing in itself, and would no doubt work in some of Cave's material; but not in most of it, no way at all. Far too hokey, hollow a set for my liking.

His gestures seemed insipid, directionless, floppy, even. But that was the first gig. I guess it was my misinterpretation — coupled with a very strange feeling of goodwill within the band itself. They took a little-seen aspect of themselves and wore it onstage.

The second gig, Nick was struggling, knocking his bloody guts out in defiance of a cold which threatened to silence his voice completely.

Something of the overall attitude had changed as well: more intimacy and emotional contact with the audience, as opposed to the previous night's obligatory stances — and let's face it, it didn't seem to the audience that there was any great difference between the nights ... hell, a crowd are easy to please. A few familiar numbers and they're dancing. Or, in this case, stumbling, as the venue had opted to leave all the seats in. This is the future of rock 'n' roll!

The two Sydney gigs were enjoyable. It struck me that there was still something missing, but, although the sound was less crisp and precise the second night, the

## Nature of Perth part two

Many years of intense research have revealed the following as the Fundamental Physical Laws of the Perth Scene. I defy anyone to contradict me on these.

If you feel that these rules do not apply to you personally, they you are obviously not a part of the Perth Scene and should thank your lucky stars.

1. Everyone you know now, you will know in twenty years' time. Learn to get along with them. No-one ever really leaves Perth, 'cos they're all back for Christmas. (The population of Perth increases by one hundred thousand every December and January.) Stay or go, you're going to see them.

2. To become an unassailable part of the Perth scene, be around and active for five years. That's it. That's all it takes. Defecting to the suburbs at twenty-one just doesn't cut it. All the unsuccessful crooks in Perth have failed to understand this rule.

3. Everyone in Perth is your second or third cousin. You are no more than three people away from anyone. Not even three friends, but three dear friends. Not only can you not pick your relatives, you can't pick your acquaintances. (It gets claustrophobic, yes.)

4. Everyone in Perth sleeps with everyone else. Anyone claiming otherwise is lying. After a while, no combination whatsoever comes as a surprise.

(In fact, we at Party Fears have drawn up a complete 'who-bonked-who' chart for Perth, containing all relevant names, with solid lines connecting known couplings and dotted lines connecting strong suspicions. Some judicious information-gathering has turned most of the dotted lines into solid ones. This object actually exists and is available from the Party Fears office for \$5,000.00 a copy. Cash or cash cheque only, please.)

Finally, combining rules 3 and 4, we have:

5. Perth is really incestuous. Thank you.

performance was far better. I came away quite reasonably content — I'd seen who I'd come to see.

It still bugged me, though — was he holding back? The older songs still burned ice-hot, molten lyrics and hauled-out sensibility. The newer songs were intense in flashes only. After a while, I thought I'd worked it out: he's adjusting to some sort of "new direction" — his style or whatever is altering in a fairly major way. Hence the lack of grotesque pelvis pumping, the lack of microphone masturbation and so on. The way he's heading right now, he seems to be trimming a lot of extraneous distraction from the essential core of his music.

It's going to be interesting to see the results, especially when the set itself is brought into consideration. He almost seems to be presenting what the crowd wants. The two tracks featured in *Wings Of Desire*. The current single, plus four tracks from the album. The last two singles. "Tupelo", "Black Betty", a couple of favourites from *Kicking Against The Pricks* and a version of "Long Time Man". And an R'n'B pub-rock style stomper, as yet unreleased, called "Cindy". Throughout the four gigs, the set largely remained the same, with the beginning, end and encores being shuffled around. Apparently, they've been doing much the same set across Europe and all through Japan. Nothing wrong with that, really, it's just that the Bad Seeds generally tend to throw a few more wayward cards into the mixture.

The crowds seem composed for the most part of people who have never seen him before or only seen him once. So where are all the people who were into the Birthday Party, or who saw him in 1984 or 1985? They've drifted off to other things, I guess. This is one reason why it's going to be interesting to see how he develops — he's got a whole new audience now. The expectations he faces are so different.

The Melbourne gigs were much better. The first night, someone gives him a red rose; the second night, someone gives him a dead branch. The first night, his family are there, and he plays to them and they are happy, bopping along with big, bright grins; quite charming, really. He mentions his mother — "It's really hard, Mum." — what a beautiful thing to say, and his mother looks so proud of him. Kind of embarrassing, really. The band seem to get more and more involved in the music as the gigs progress, which can only be a good thing.

There's Martyr Casey on bass, who seems to play a basic sort of instrument, a fairly no-frills approach and a magnificent rumbly sound. Conway Savage on piano and organ, who is quite good; for once, the piano isn't buried in the mix. Blixa on guitar, who I'm not all that impressed with as he seems fairly out of it on this tour rather than putting any real effort into it. The rest of the band you know, I guess.

The crowd were more lively, the sound was bigger and badder, Nick got into it more and all of the crowd-baiting was back, if in a different carton this time.

The music grew tough sinew and stark muscle, the impact grew in scope and bulk to a size I wouldn't have believed from the first night in Sydney. By the last night I am lost in the music, caught in its trap, buffeted by the rolls and coils thrown down like so many challenges.

Brilliant. I could leave it there, say I was swept away and Cave just can't put a foot wrong. He's really in transit at the moment, so I guess it'd be unfair of me to criticise adversely; after all, for him it must be like purging and capitalising on a whole decade or so of his past ... why the hell shouldn't he? Everyone else has, it seems.

What the next album will be like is anyone's guess. It may roar and smoke like no tomorrow — it's obvious from these shows that, although the pumping pelvis is probably long gone from Cave's repertoire of gestures, there's still a lot of bizarre and fuming stuff to come out of what a friend of mine described as "a really nice guy, but with a few weirdy bits."

Brokenmouth.

## Letters

21/11/90

Hi David,

I got a copy of PF no. 11 (Summer 1990) from a friend who got a xerox copy from another friend ... anyway, I got a PF and immediately fell in love with it. The same way I had fallen in love with the Triffids and Ed Kuepper a couple of years ago. So I was most enchanted to read about the Blackeyed Susans and Ed and Dave McComb's fly-that-was-not-up and ... I write myself for a German zine called *Strangeways* that is published in Bremen. Yesterday I did an interview with Ed Kuepper when he played Frankfurt, and it was gorgeous. So, if you are interested in some stuff on Ed (i.e. an article from my interview), just tell me and I do it for you. There should be the next *Strangeways* before Xmas, with a nice long story on Ed, too.

Have you got any idea what the Triffids are doing at the moment? And — PLEEEASE — could you do a copy of the Triffids tree (PF#9) and the truff article in PF#7 for me, just one page each, otherwise it's too expensive?! Hope to hear from you soon see ya, Cristina, somewhere in Germany.

*This letter has many fine things about it, but a few glaring deficiencies. I have a pile of back issues here that is nowhere near running out. If you want one, you can damn well buy it. There is no such thing as a free lunch and I've been paying so far. Home-taping indie records is bad enough (unless they're deleted), but xeroxing indie zines? Argh! No, you can't have free copies. Especially with not even postage included. (Copying the free issues of PF is fine, but not the expensive ones. This might seem niggly, but if you lived with the boxes of zines I do ...) Especially since your address wasn't on the letter, only on the envelope, and I threw it away before noticing ... If anyone knows the address of Strangeways, please send Cristina a copy of this. A photocopy. Ha.*

Editor: David Gerard.

Address: 17 Simper Street, Wembley 6014, Western Australia; phone (09) 387 6578 much of the time. Not too early, please. Always, but always, leave your name and number should I not be in.

Writers: The usual bunch of cretins. Larry Wallis, Ross Chisholm, Effigy, Robert Brokenmouth, May Sharpe, Chris Spencer, Bart Z, David Nichols, Kim Williams, Lisa Joeste, Samantha and David. Uncredited things were probably put there by God, so make damn sure you take notice.

Photos: A different bunch of cretins. Someloves live by Vicki Walmsley and/or myself, except the guitar hero by Jack da Silva; Viv by me; Nice by M. M. Cannane. Young Dominic courtesy Mrs J. Mariani. All others supplied or stolen.

Contributions: Welcome from young music heads of fine and upstanding nature, but only if they understand. Be warned that PF is edited with a blunt axe, space is drastically limited and there is no appeal from the editorial tribunal's decision, so please get in touch before undertaking anything major.

Letters: require an SAE or two IRCs to get a reply instantly. Others may or may not get a reply. Phoning is often much better. I like feedback.

Subscriptions: Not available as yet, but keep watching ...

Distribution: Monkey Music (09-227 9449), Waterfront (02-211 0073), Au Go Go (03-509 1484) or get in touch with PF directly.

Advertising: Advertising in PF is cheap and available.

Full page: \$100 (184h x 271v);

Half page: \$50 (184h x 134v)

or 90h x 271v);

One-quarter page: \$25 (90h x 134v

or 44h x 271v);

One-eighth page: \$15 (44h x 134v).

Spot colour is not presently available. Contra deals are, unfortunately, not presently possible. I frequently wish they were, but cash is tight.

Basic typesetting can be done by me, just don't expect me to design your whole ad for you.

Dear David,

After reading your sad story I had a quick whip around for the cause and raised zlich. Next time I won't ask a bunch of illiterates.

We did come up with a solution to your financial crisis: join the Public Service. This will give you:—

(A) Lots of free time to do P.F.

(B) Lots of money

(C) and bring you into contact with heaps of people in local bands.

Enclosed is a donation to help you get by till then.

I don't remember seeing you at many gigs but perhaps you've been so depressed you spend all night crying into your jug. I'm the drunkest person on the dancefloor, dancing out of time and very fast.

See you 'round

Johnny Dole, somewhere in Perth.

*The above letter came with an honest-to-God ten dollar money order, which fair warmed the old heart. Send us your address and some proof of identity (e.g. what post-office the money order came from) and I'll send you something nice from the PF Pile. Same goes for the person with the great taste in Christmas cards — tell us what colour envelope you sent the ten bucks in. I LOVE YOU ALL.*

*I dunno, some people do anything you tell 'em. Hey, next time make it twenty. All for the cause.*

"Goth dancing: the Hokey-Pokey on downers." — Danny Ruggero, Assylum member #13 and an incorruptible, dyed-in-the-wool rockist.

Two goths are having sex. (Strange, I know, but true.) Suddenly, the girl goth comes.

"Darling, darling!" says the boy goth. "What's wrong?"

"Nothing," says the girl goth, "nothing at all. Why do you ask?"

"You moved."

Q. Why did the goth cross the road?

A. It didn't, it was dead.

(alt: It didn't, it just shuffled back and forth across the middle.)

Q. How many goths does it take to change a light bulb?

A. None.

Q. What's black and knock on the window?

A. A goth in a microwave.

"He's such a goth ..."

"How much of a goth?"

"He's such a goth that when he hangs around the house ... he hangs around the house!"

"Say, who was that goth I saw you with last night?"

"That was no goth, I'm a necrophiliac!"

"Take my goth ... Please!"

Q. Why did the rockist cross the road?

A. To eat the vomit on the other side. (alt: To buy the latest generic Sub Pop release on the other side. To fail to chat up the jangle-popper on the other side.)

Q. How many rockists does it take to change a light bulb?

A. Two: one to change the bulb and one to eat the old one.

Q. A goth, a rockist and a jangle-popper all jump off the top of a tall building at the same time. Who hits the ground first?

A. Who cares?

*This issue is dedicated to Leanne Pamela Casellas, the person who introduced the Neptunes to the arcane delights of the evil drug known as Red Cordial. Red cordial is the best thing to drink at a show ever — it's cheap and no-one ever believes that you're really drinking only sugar, colouring and water. In this one stroke, Leanne has contributed immeasurably to our civilisation. Perth pop music: that which goes equally well with chemical beer, whisky or red cordial. Sounds good.*

Australia, US\$2 overseas).

Special deal for overseas readers: get the lot above for US\$10.

Postage: Australia: \$1.00 extra on total. Overseas SAL: A\$4.00 extra on total. Overseas airmail: A\$5.00 extra on total.

Payment: Cash is best; Aust/US/UK preferred, but any reasonable currency is fine. Please note that sending cash through the mails is a risk, and, more to the point, it's your risk and not mine. Hide it well. Money orders or bank cheques (Aust. dollars, else a huge chunk goes in exchange) are expensive but safest. Personal cheques are OK in Australia, but will be ignored from elsewhere.

Make everything payable to DAVID GERARD.

## Deadlines

The deadline for advertising and news is MONDAY 11th MARCH, 1991. This is earlier than you might have expected, but I'm trying to give myself the leeway to get the thing out in beautiful and polished form Before The End Of The Month.

Ad bookings after that time may well make it in (I'll do my best), but may get held over. (Don't be afraid to ask ... this magazine doesn't run on air.)

Payment up-front for ads is a wonderful idea I think you should all implement forthwith, as it helps a lot in getting the cash together for the printer.

(Anyone cancelling ads two days before the printer will be cursed forevermore and suffer every misfortune and Arista promo I can conjure up for them. Don't let this happen to you!)

News after that time will probably make it in, and you should definitely call and tell of anything you have going.

If outside Perth, please send the artwork and payment. Calling ahead and saying what you've sent is a good idea (a slight booking). If it arrives after the deadline, I'll do my level best to fit it in, but it may get held over. Overseas advertisers: US cash equivalent is fine.

## Back Issues

Slightly water-soiled PF#9 are still available, free with other back issues or postage. Pristine copies available for sale.

#1-#4, #6, #8: not available.

#5 (October '86): Martha's Vineyard, Died Pretty, Errol H. Tout, Citadel Records, Waltons, Blue Ruin, Flamin' Groovies, Paul Kelly, Gravybillys, A Company Of Angels, Sydney punk. \$1 mail-order, 75¢ distributors.

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

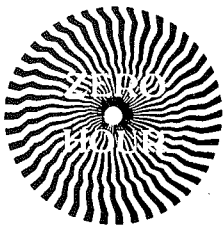
#9 (December '88): Mick Harvey pt 1 (Bad Seeds), Honeys, Triffids family tree, White Cross family tree. Small but perfectly formed. \$1 mail, 75¢ distributors.

#10 (April '89): Kim Salmon (five pages), Neptunes, Widdershins, Kryptonics, Waterfront Records interview and discography, Summer Suns, Rainyard, A Month Of Sundays, Mick Harvey pt 2 (Crime And The City Solution), Purple Hearts, Hunters & Collectors, Sunday's Child, '88 roundup, Peter Hartley philosophy, Waltons/Love Pump family tree, Marigolds/Neptunes family tree. \$2 mail, \$1.44 distributors.

#11 (February '90): Black-Eyed Susans, Celibate Rifles, Ed Kuepper, Rabbit's Wedding (five pages), Martha's Vineyard, Greg Dear and the Beautiful Losers, TISM and Brisbane, fourteen pages of news & reviews. \$2 mail, \$1.44 distributors.

#11½ (November '90): Major comeback issue. News on seventy different Perth bands (I bet you didn't think there were seventy bands in Perth); all the info. Plus zine reviews and why creative types should join APRA. Free to mail-order folk when getting back issues, or send postage (\$1

# *the chevelles*



## **The Kids Ain't Hip!**

**NEW 12" MINI-LP**

**Out Soon**

**RECORD LAUNCH**  
Saturday 16th February  
**Coronado**

Write to the Chevelles c/o 42 Denis St, Subiaco 6008, Western Australia

# HEALERS



Debut LP **“SECRET SHOW”**  
**OUT NOW**  
ON RATTLESNAKE / NORMAL RECORDS