

BLUE SUEDE NEWS

CAMBRIDGE'S
ROCK RAG

Issue No.2

October 15

1983

30p

Inside:

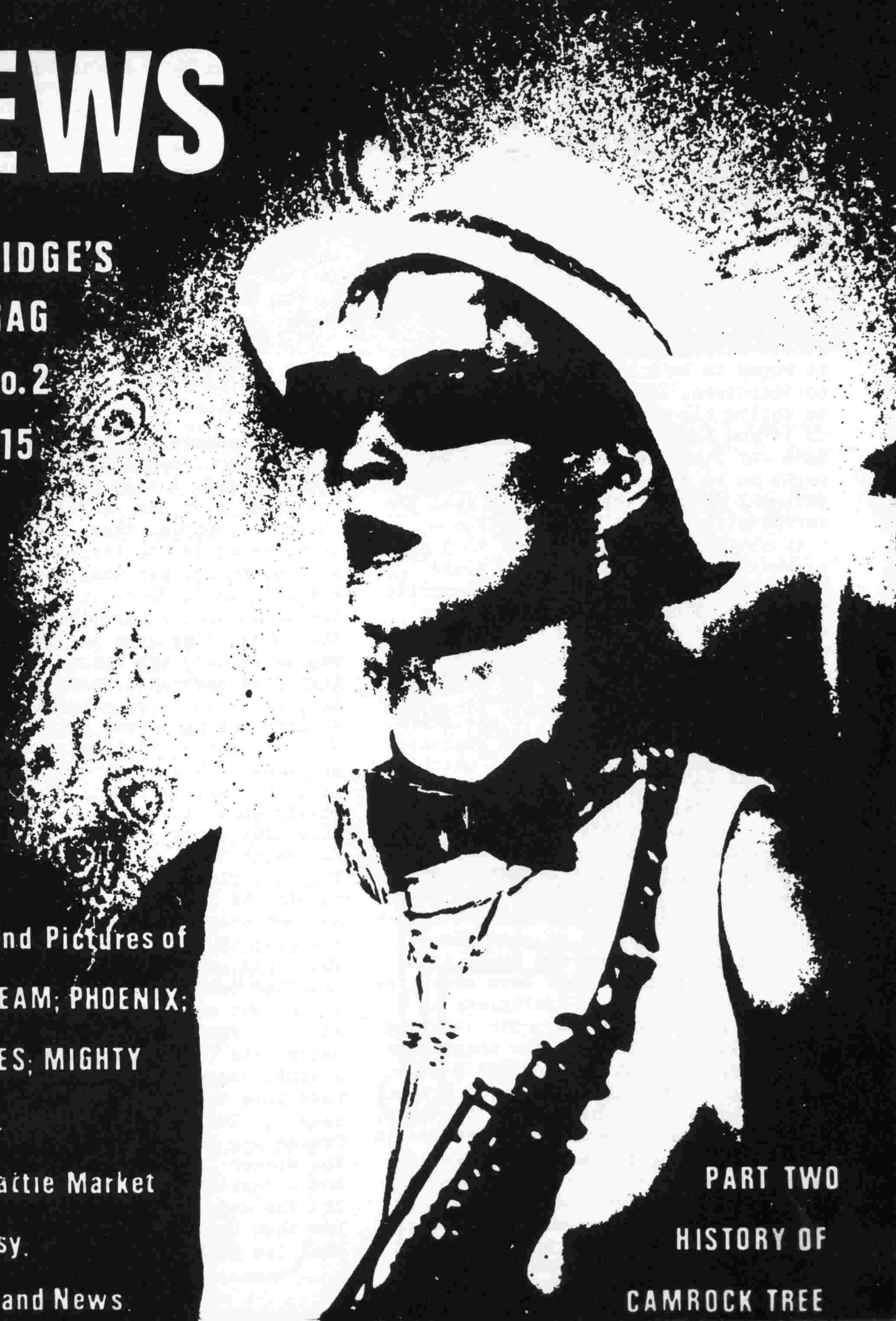
Reviews and Pictures of
FINAL SCREAM; PHOENIX;
FRIGIDAIRES; MIGHTY
INVADERS.

Plus The Cattie Market
Controversy.

Gig Guide and News

PART TWO
HISTORY OF

CAMROCK TREE



NEWS AND COMMENT

Well, only Issue 2 and the brickbats have already been flying. "Conservative, even reactionary" said Jon Lewin in his notorious column in that organ of chic radicalism, Broadsheet. Fair enough - if it wasn't for the suspicion that it all stems from my inability greatly to enjoy the (revolutionary?) music of Perfect Vision - despite my admiration for their efforts to extend the musical horizons of the city. I find it rather difficult to continue being upset at Jon's comments however since I appreciate what he is trying to achieve in his writing (which I admire too)- even if I do not always agree with him. Besides which I like him too much to wish to pursue arguments with him here.

One thing I do agree with is his statement that the tone of the magazine is bound to be a reflection of its contributors. It is up to you therefore to follow his example, and to write for us if you agree with him - or if you have any other ideas as to where we ought to be going. While I have certain things I wish to achieve in it (see the introduction in the pilot edition - back numbers from me) none of that will prevent you from getting your ideas aired in it. Profiles of your favourite bands (local or national), albums or varieties of music would all be welcome. And if you disagree with a review then write a letter to us or write your own review - don't wait to be asked.

While I don't guarantee to use every article I get, one thing I do guarantee is not to censor other views - which brings us to brickbat number 2 - cast in my direction with great verbal violence by The Face's Patrick Chamberlain as I walked into Fisher Hall the other night. As it happens I don't agree, either, with Heather's views on The Face; but I am not going to stop her expressing her opinion on them. As to my own mini-profile of the band, if I was wrong to suggest that Dave wrote the songs; for that I will apologise, as an error of fact. But for concentrating my very limited space on his singing as the strongest point of the band I do not. I did not intend to - nor do I think I did - write down the rest of the band, but you are going to have to get used to the fact that he is the greatest asset in the band. If you are lucky enough to achieve national music media coverage not only will they say the same thing, but they will hardly do it with the same affection for the band as I do.

It is a viciously hard world you are entering, and you had better harden your skins now before you leave the little local pond for the ocean and the big fishes - many of them sharks - in it.

Having exposed my own vulnerability to criticism by answering at such length (which I shall try to avoid in future) let us get on to the news.

First the good: the Great Northern will reopen for regular gigs on Sat. Oct 29. See the next issue for details - but it should be good, as Mitch has been ripping out the central bars to create space, and to install PA and lights.

The bad is that Mitch and Ray are not likely to be promoting much more at Fisher Hall; and no one is sure what Reg is doing, either there or at the Burleigh. I did however see staging in the pub as I passed the other day, so maybe all is not lost there.

Congratulations to CCATSU and CSU on the gig at Tech. canteen the other night. Though I didn't stay to see Eddie and the Hot Rods, even when I left there were plenty of people there - enough I hope to cover costs, so there will be more such ventures. And what about Lady Mitchell Hall, CSU?

The Orson Family were thrilled to know the local press were in attendance (that was us folks!) and since the editor was trying to have an evening enjoying the gig, rather than reviewing it, they had to give the rehearsed patter to James when he went up to take pictures of them. Apparently it went something along the lines of "We are trying to do for rockabilly what Status Quo did for rock". Nice line - but what exactly did Quo do for rock? Since their other line is that they are playing 'Punkabilly,' it adds up to play it loud and play it fast. Which is what they tried to do. No bass player either that I could see. Other excuses? The sound was not wonderful. But, nor were the band - far from it in fact. Anyone who wants to see Rockabilly played fast and furious could I suppose see the Stray Cats (~~are they not punkabilly~~) but I would suggest they catch the Blasters next time they are over here - quite amazing. The only amazing thing about the Orsons was how perfectly 1950s/early 60s the singer looked in his tuxedo and string bow - just like Billy Fury. And the Rods? Storming stuff says James - but then they are old pros now, and know what the punters love.

BLACK SLATE; MIGHTY INVADERS; YOUR DINNER

Jon Lewin

In a way it was like being at a wedding - all that iced-blue cakey neo-classical columnry (bit like my pieces in the Weekly News), not to mention the huge pipe organ behind the stage - very Westminster Abbey. And the bridegroom was late too....

Black Slate went on stage at 1.10am, so I make no apologies for having missed the majority of their set; if they had arrived before 8.30 it is feasible they might have played earlier - on time. But they didn't.

Still I was quite happy with the fare provided by the Mighty Invaders (from Chelmsford) - with friends,

Still I was quite happy with the fare provided by the Mighty Invaders (from Chelmsford) and their various assistants, including the genuinely mighty Jah Roots. Perhaps the geographical circumstance (mighty invaders from Chelmsford!) has vested them with a sense of humour; but last Friday was the first time I had ever heard the melody from "Summer Holiday" used as a horn riff in a reggae song.

Full-sounding and melodic, somewhat reminiscent of the Mighty Diamonds, the Invaders are further proof (if any were needed) that this country is perfectly capable of producing its own excellent reggae bands. Even Chelmsford.

Cambridge itself has spawned Your Dinner. They went on far too long for a support band at the bottom of a triple bill; but before they descended into monotony,



Mighty Invaders

occasional moments of interest sparked through the aural miasma of the painfully inadequate P.A.

Demi, Your Dinner's vocalist, is the chief attraction - he moves in a most peculiar way, and sings like a cross between Andy Partridge of XTC and Ari Up of the Slits. The Slits are the nearest musical bed-partners to Your Dinner, and it seems they share the former's social pre-occupations: whites, dreadlocked, and clad in a very down-market Oxfam chic.

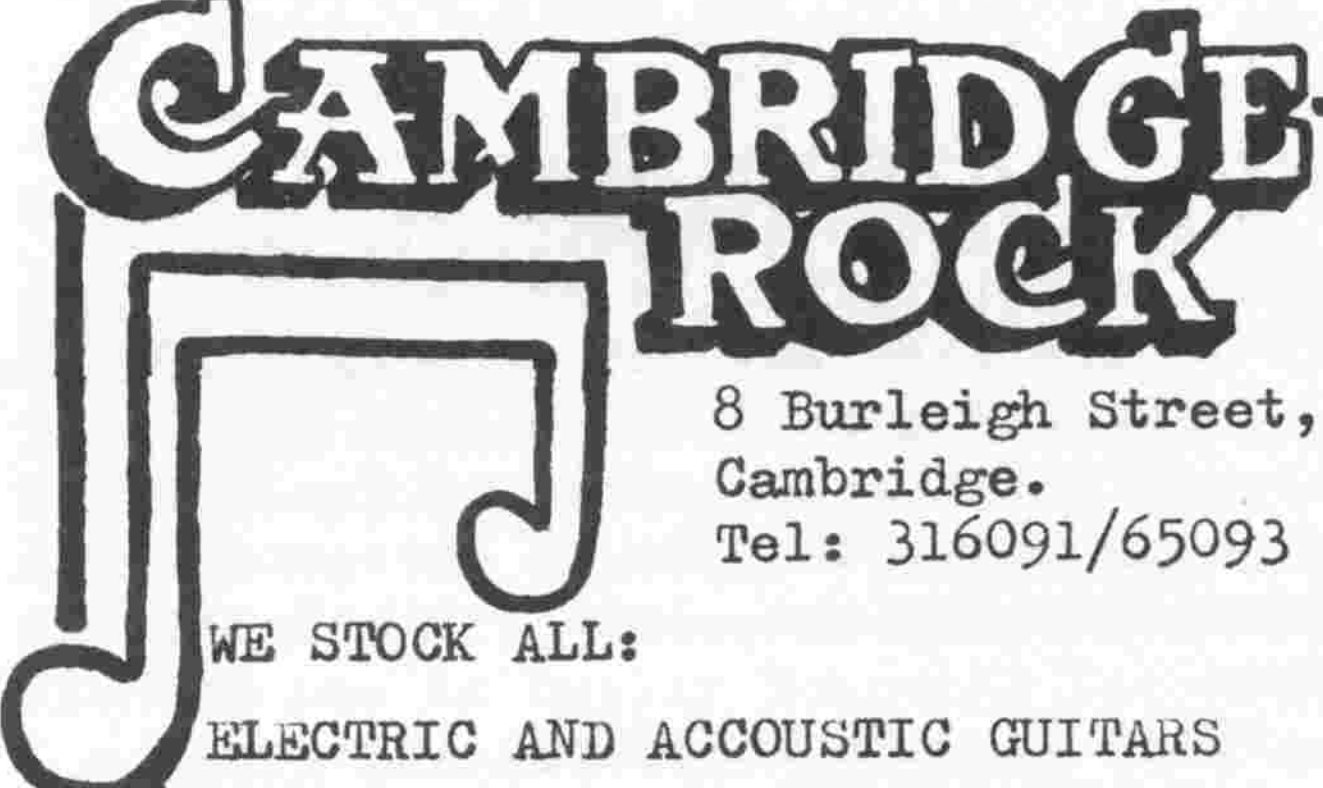
Despite the tardiness of the main band, the whole evening passed off very well - the Guildhall's appalling acoustics didn't seem to matter, as the atmosphere was right. I got the feeling that this is what Town Halls should be used for; after all, everybody likes a nice wedding.



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BRONZE; PHOENIX**James Hall**

Too late to see Force 9, I was glad to catch new band Phoenix, who looked rather promising - as did the whole evening for those rock fans who like the heavier sort.

Phoenix are: Mary Hannigan, vocals; Lee Adams, guitar; Steve Webb, rhythm guitar; Reg Rose, bass; and Gary Cates on drums. All have been in other local bands - except Lee (only 15) for whom this is the first gigging band. Ms. Hannigan in particular has a solid background in session work; singing backing vocals for the Police, and has, she assured me, done Rod Stewart's laundry!

All the numbers they did were classic covers - although they will gradually be introducing their own material into the set as they go on. Wising Well, Cocaine, Heartbreaker and Sweet Home Alabama were all done with plenty of enthusiasm, and not a little competence, with Mary belting out the vocals in great style - and providing a good looking and focussed front for the band.

As top band of the evening I found Bronze a bit of an anti-climax. They did deserve the slot - looking good, playing well and certainly being enjoyed by the audience. This was perhaps the trouble, everything about them was competent as expected - but where were the touches of individuality that provide the magic in a band and would have saved Bronze from being just another HM clone? Original numbers are not enough in themselves. Perhaps dedicated followers could spot something I couldn't.

GREAT DIVIDE; FACE**Philippa Hughes**

Upon arrival at Fisher Hall, I was immediately approached by the Record Company heavies (or in this case Wimps) who made it clear that any attempt to sound clever or patronising in this review would not be taken lightly.

Resisting the temptation to slam the band in retaliation - or indeed because it is the easy way out in rock journalism - I devoted myself to as fair an appreciation as possible of two very popular bands that it so happened I had never seen before. And, I liked what I saw.

First on were The Face. A group consisting of five "chickens", as one member of the audience prefers to describe the more delicately featured amongst us. They exude confidence and enjoyment, which in itself is a good start. The only thing that spoiled it for me were the somewhat indistinct lyrics.

I suspect this problem is apparent to the band itself (the rotten sound did not help) and it could account for the misquote in a previous review; I stress "The Crime Game" - please no tears.

"Paradise" is to be the single release on Wimp Records later this month. At the time I thought the choice unwise, but I was assured afterwards that the recorded version would in fact sound quite different. Despite the "Confusion" of the song titles, The Face sound nothing like New Order, and their funky beat is one to move the audience once it has warmed up.

However, if popularity is to be judged by the percentage of the fans dancing, then perhaps inevitably the Great Divide won handsomely. I found the band a little confusing at first, with the use of three singers who swop mikes,

CONTD. ON PAGE 9

NEWS etc CONTD

As for the Editor - well I left to go and see The Face at St. Johns (you see I really do like them) and they were good. Unlike Wednesday at Fisher Hall, no big band to compete with, and the sound was excellent (full marks to Roger Chatterton); most enjoyable. And they were able to wave the single cover at the audience, which Ted Koehorst had just finished designing.

Talking of the legend himself, The Lonely are in temporary retreat while the Willies (a Flock of, with Trevor Vincent and others) are prepared for launching on an all too suspecting public. Ted is also going to be applying his graphic talents to this rag in the near future - so watch out.

The Great Divide single is out - 7" or 12". It's called 'Whispered In Heaven' with 'Sweat' and a remixed and extended 'Love Bank' on the flip. You mean to say you did not hear it on the Radio Cambs. Saturday rockshow? How dare you miss it. Not only do you get me and the History of Cambridge Rock, and Trevor Dann of Radio One, but also my good friend Jon Lewin and his legendary listings. (See I meant it Jon!) A show not to be missed. Saturday 12 mid-day to 2pm every week.

And talking of the Hon. Jon (as Trevor insists on calling him - for reasons you can find out for yourselves) he arrived in the studio last Saturday feeling a little worse for wear; saying it had nothing to do with his lovely new girlfriend, but that he had been savaged by a stuffed squirrel. Honest; and he has got the scars to prove it. Meantime the band; my favourites - no that is going too far - that is to say Perfect Vision, may be appearing on an independant label compilation in the near future. I can't remember the name just now, but congratulations to them anyway.

Comiserations on the other hand to The Storm and Final Scream who had to cancel their Fisher Hall gig the other night when the PA blew up, irreparably. I was rather impressed with Final Scream at the Cat Club, even though I could not hear one word they sang. On Sat. 15th they are playing at Peterborough with no less than four other bands - sounds like good value.

Also on Saturday, Sindy And the Action Men are playing in Manchester - though exactly where I know not. Later in the

autumn they are off to Holland for a mini tour - maybe with the Face.

The Face meantime will be playing at John Peel's Roadshow in Leicester Poly on the 29th Oct.

The Dolly Mixture, as announced on John Peel's Tuesday show, have a hastily arranged gig at the Hope and Anchor on Sat. 15.

More exiles' news. Come Dancing (Kevin Byrd - who was Barber - and Ian Newman) had a horrible experience at a hitherto unheard of London Club called the Val Bon on Saturday last. This place charges £6 to enter and charges £1.80 for a HALF of Lager; and for entertainment puts on six acts in the night. Fair enough for that sort of money - but it meant that the band were pulled off after only 4 numbers, just as they were warming up. Better luck this Saturday at the Embassy Club where they have played before - and did very well by all accounts.

Also on the club front, but nearer to home, I have heard good reports of the Icon, on Monday nights at the Last Resort. It is Racks transferred, and gone to rock instead of disco. Just what we need by the sound of it - bound to attract the attention of the Highset crowd before long though in that case.

Nick Barraclough has been gently returning to gigging by playing accoustically at places like the Last Resort. Word is that he is recruiting Andy Metcalfe and Steve Brooks to form a regular accoustic band. Watch out for another silly name. In the meantime listen out for Nick's series on the BBC Radio World Service about the development of Bluegrass music. Its called "Picking Up Bluegrass" and is broadcast on Monday at 05.30GMT, and on Tuesday at 09.45GMT and 20.30GMT. Note the GMT; but don't worry the clocks change soon. And if you want to hear a bit of bluegrass, the excellent Holders Heroes are busily rehearsing for the autumn season and should be on at the Alma before long.

The other members of the defunct Telephone Bill are also keeping busy. Tony Shepherd is now, again, a Wobbly Jelly - but alas no longer a Milestone, as they have split. Richard Lee is busily Bouncing Czechs, and I believe is also still playing with Anne Baker and Gerry Hale in something called the Boons Of Gloom (I think that is right - I hope so; great name). Gerry of course is on and off T.V. and always in demand on the C'n'W circuit.

You may have noticed that we have had

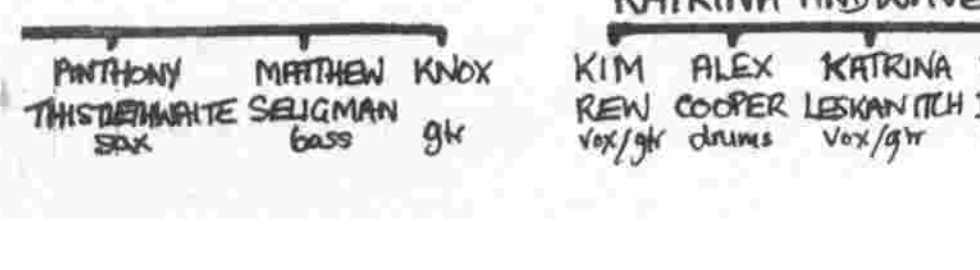
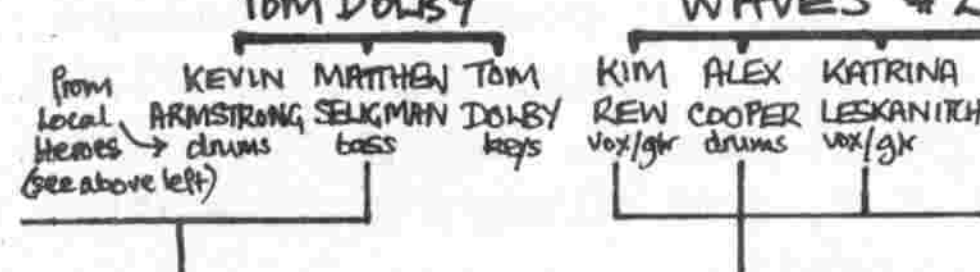
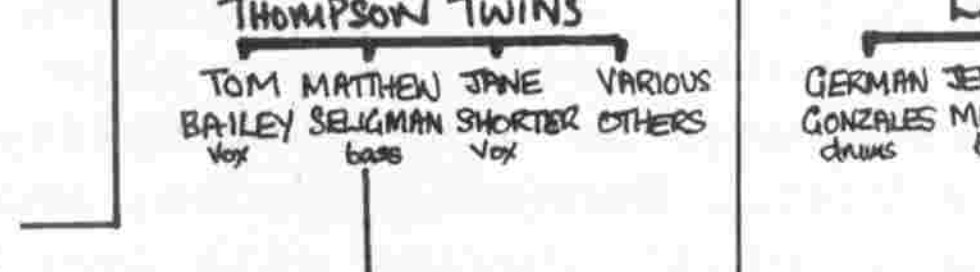
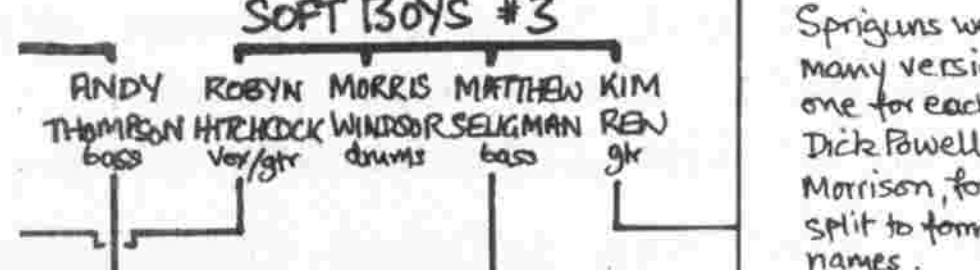
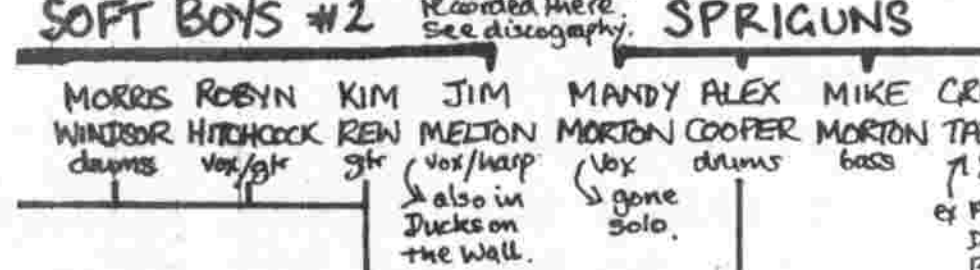
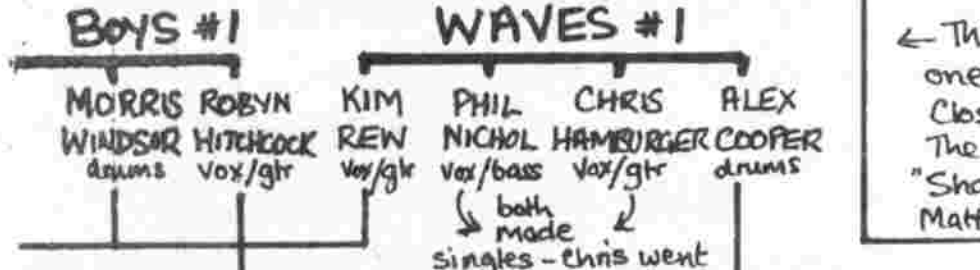
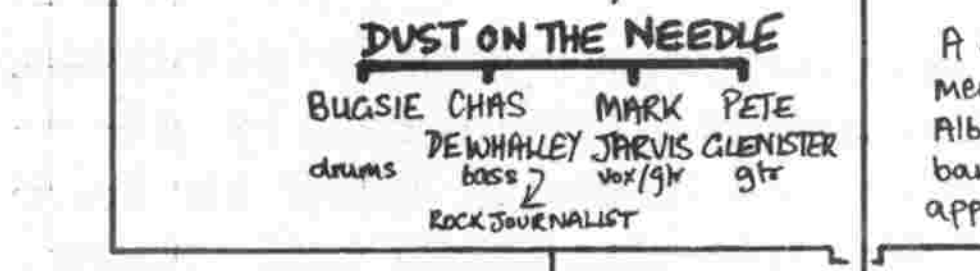
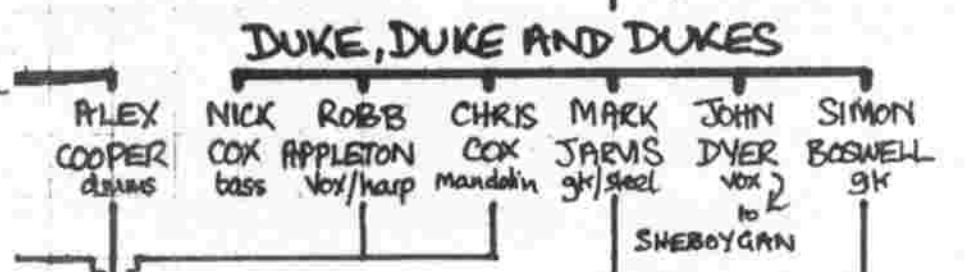
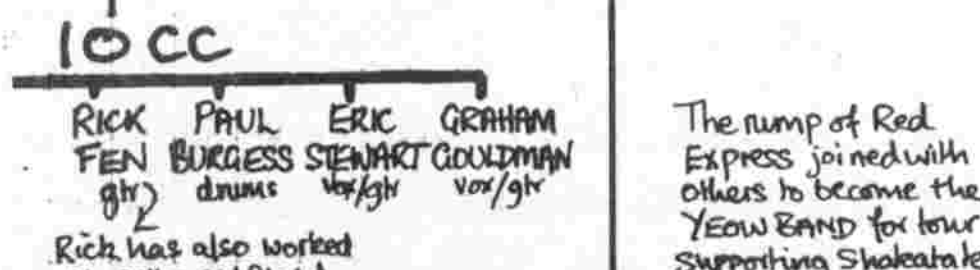
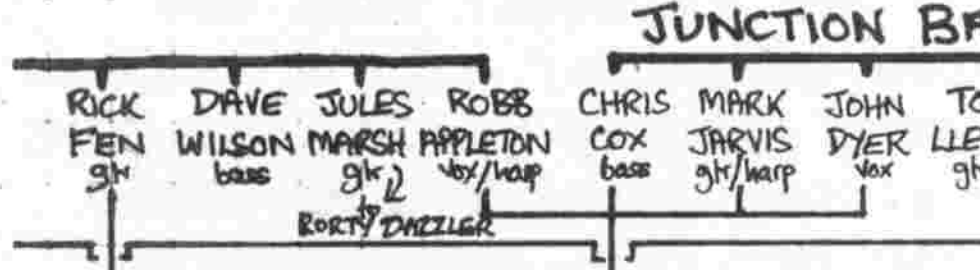
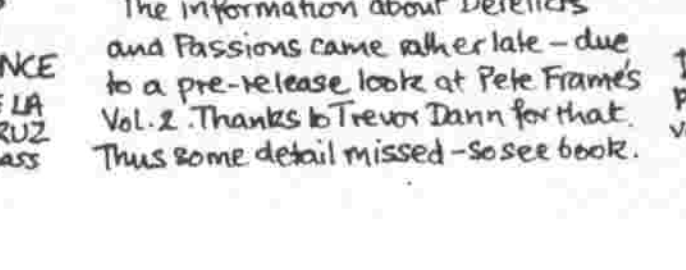
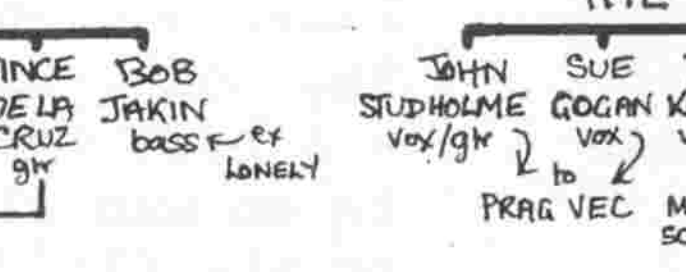
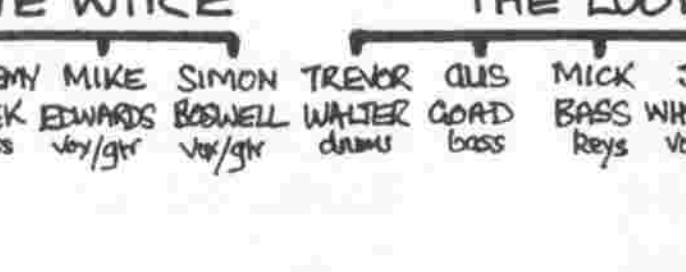
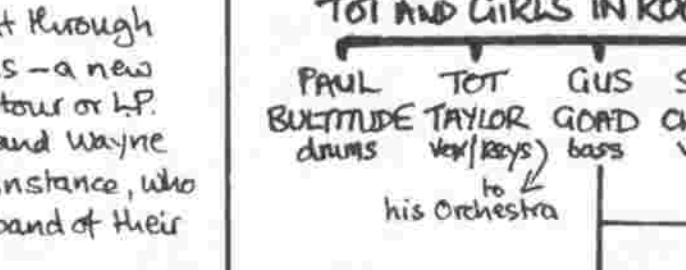
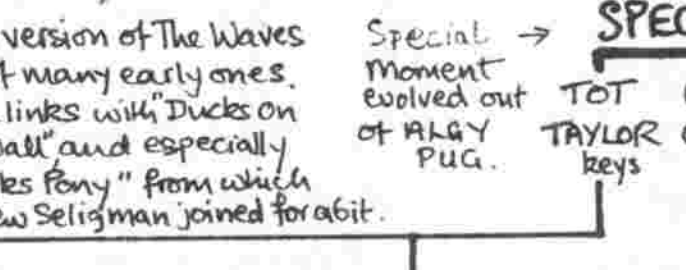
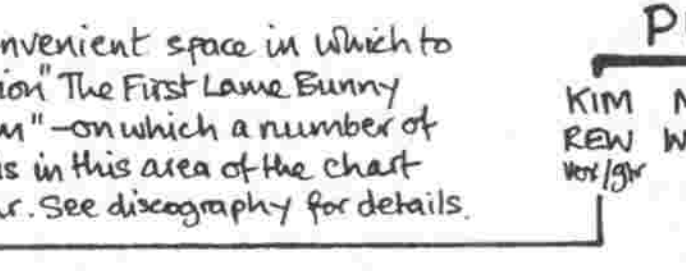
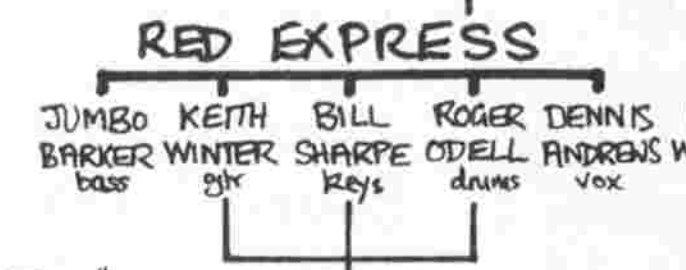
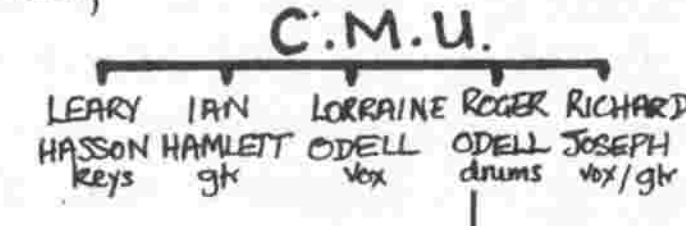
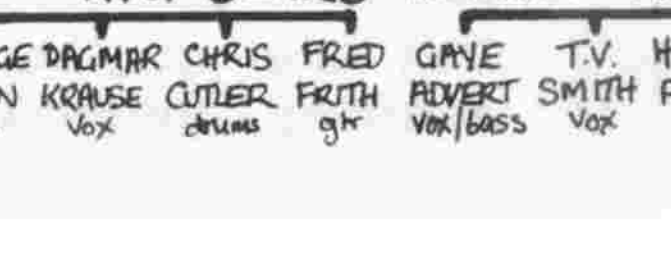
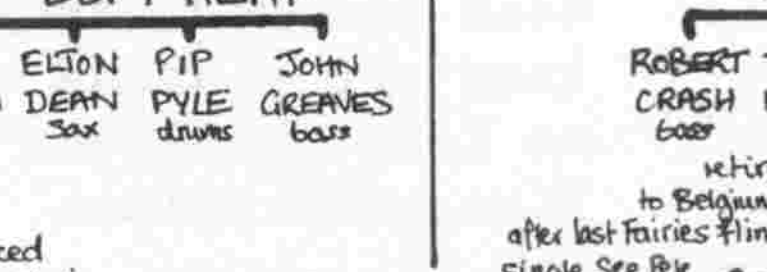
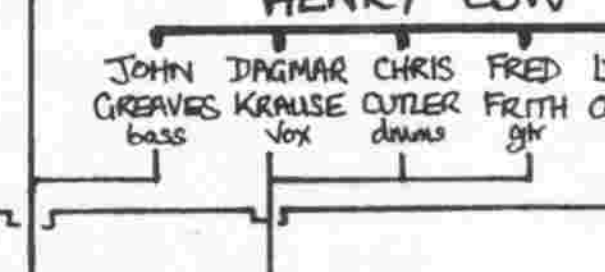
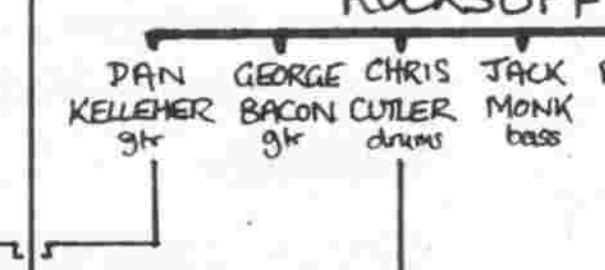
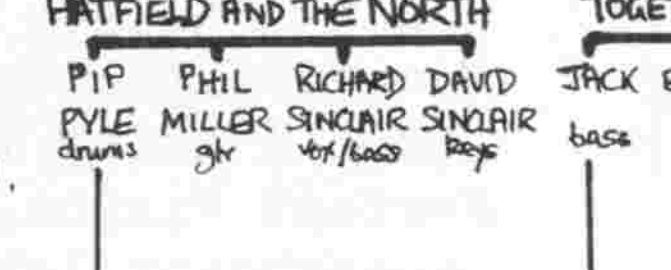
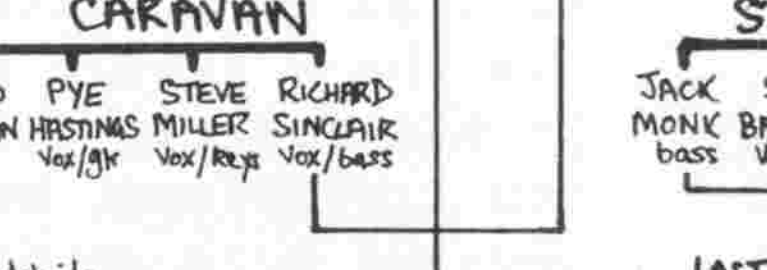
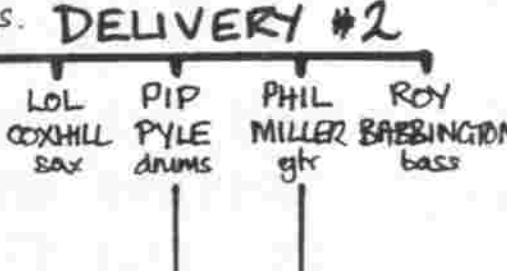
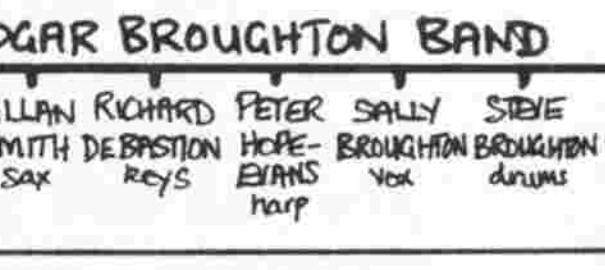
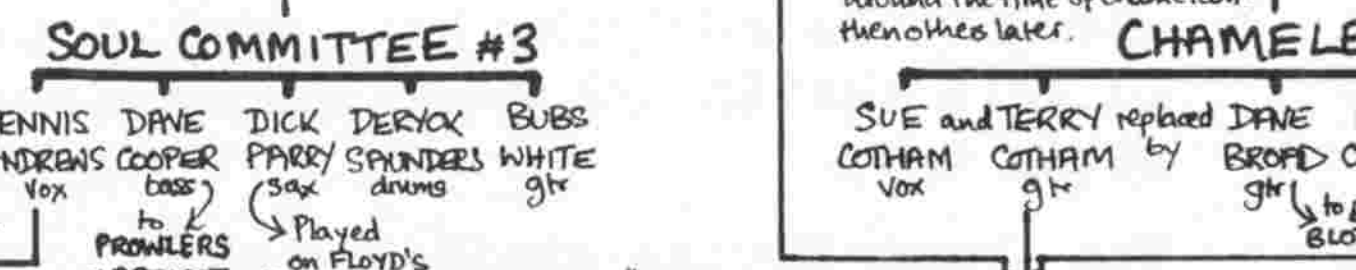
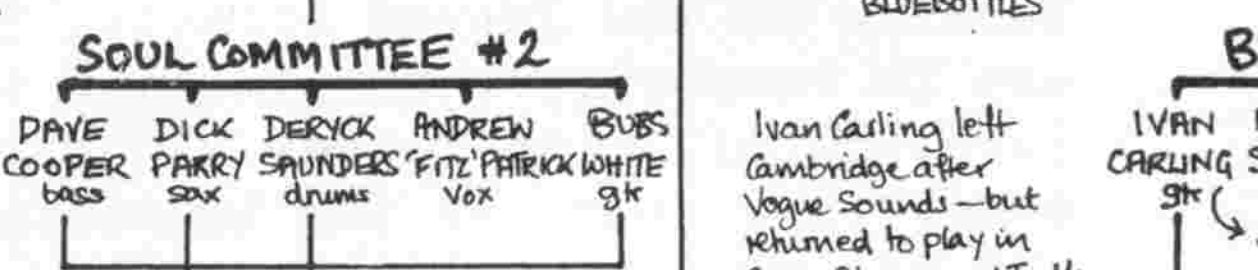
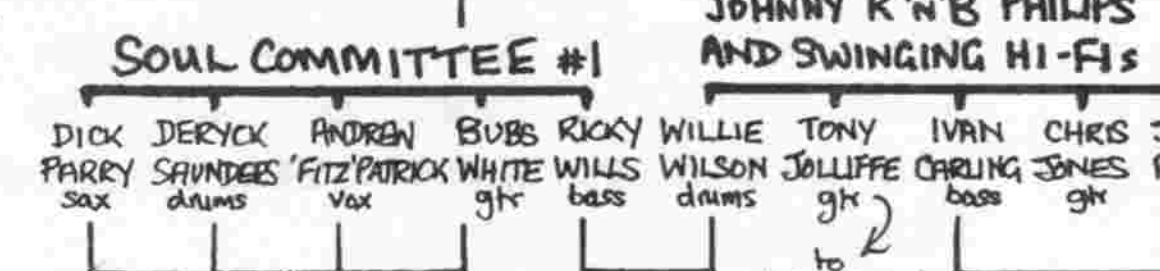
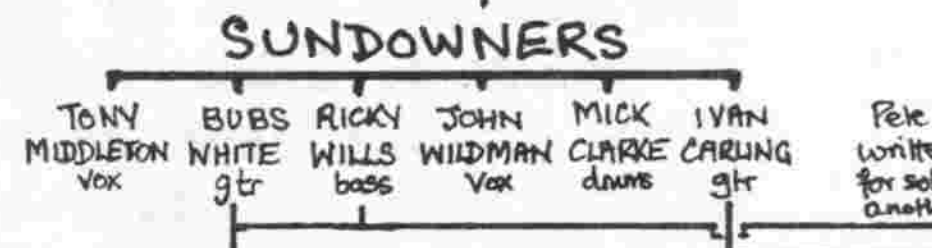
This is Part 2 of the Cambridge Connections Family Tree; the first part of which was published in the first issue of Blue Suede News. So if you have not yet got your copy of that you will need to rush out and get it quick while it is still available. The two bits fit side-by-side quite obviously.

The same conditions attach to this tree as regards who is in and who is out - through I have tried to include all the leading musicians I have come across in one band or another. Obviously young bands are at a disadvantage since they may not yet have swapped members enough to get a connection - don't worry it will happen soon enough.

Thanks are obviously due to everyone who has supplied information, but there are a few who must be mentioned as particular mines of information. So, in no particular order, thanks to:

Dave Jones; Dave Bragg; Ted Koehorst; Max Noel-Johnson; Duncande Bondt; Andy Metcalfe; Nick Barra; Clive Welham; Dave Barker; Dave Cooper; Kim Rew; Phil Nichol; Ivan Carling; Dave Broad; Steve Barker; Alan Taylor; Dave Beal; Robb Appleton; Mike Lewis; Boo; Paul Weston and all the others on here.

This chart has suddenly become very muddled following an influx of new information. For most of that, thanks are due to Jimmy Olsen. Apologies therefore for consequent chaos. A clearer version will appear soon. It also means a delay in producing discography. Coming soon though.



The Junction started life as a three piece - Made, John and Tony.

The rump of Red Express joined with others to become the YEOW BAND for tour Supporting Shakatake + minor hit 45 - "Is Dennis There".

A convenient space in which to mention "The First Lane Bunny Album" - on which a number of bands in this area of the chart appear. See discography for details.

← This version of The Waves one of many early ones. Close links with "Ducks on The Wall" and especially "Shankes Pony" from which Matthew Seligman joined for a bit.

Special Moment evolved out of ALBY PUG.

The earliest version of Advertising had Nick Cox (from the Dukes) on bass instead of Dennis.

Spriguns went through many versions - a new one for each tour or LP. Dick Powell and Wayne Morrison, for instance, who split to form band of their names.

The information about Derelicts and Passions came rather late - due to a pre-release look at Pete Frame's Vol. 2. Thanks to Trevor Dann for that. Thus some detail missed - so see book.

Dennis played in some versions of ELEPHANT between these two bands.

Famous BBC Radio Personality!

Chris Woodcock also played in the Graham Hart Band (as did Dave Broad) from whence Johnny Mayo went to Feelgoods.

to GLOBAL VILLAGE TRUCKING COMP.

For full details of the Caravan story and the connections with the SOFT MACHINE see Pete Frame, Vol. 1, Page 16.

Clive replaced in Passions by Kevin Armstrong (see left).

retired to Belgium/G after last Fairies thing + single See Pete Frame Vol. 2.

to THE CLASH

to MARTIAN SCHOOLGIRLS

to PRAG VEC

THE CATTLE MARKET SCHEME

Graeme Mackenzie

The Council's idea to convert a factory unit for a concert venue at the Cattle Market did not at first sound very attractive. But if it is done properly it could be a very successful scheme, hailed in the future as an example of Council enterprise and ingenuity. If, on the other hand, the Council cop out, or allow political infighting to emasculate the plans, it will prove to be nothing but a huge white elephant.

The original suggestion - that the venue would be a temporary replacement for the Corn Exchange - was rather contradicted by the size of the proposed unit. A hall for 200 people would clearly only be of use to local bands - for whom indeed it was made clear the Council intended it. The Corn Exchange, on the other hand, was a large venue used primarily for visiting national bands; so clearly such a small hall could not be a replacement for the large one, even temporarily.

To be fair to the promoters of the idea, it sprang up when, not only was the Corn Exchange out of action, but there were no smaller venues for rock music going regularly either. This followed the closure of the Great Northern and the Sound Cellar, so there was then a need for a small hall for local bands. Since its inception, however, the situation has changed and now, even if the Burleigh Arms does not re-open for bands, the Great Northern will, while Fisher Hall is already providing regular gigs. In addition the Sea Cadets Hall is still available, and the Guildhall(s) can also be used.

As a result of this activity by local publicans and promoters - showing there is a market to serve - local bands are once again finding places to play, and fans have some live rock music to entertain them. That is not to say, however, that another venue would not be welcome for local bands - of course it would; especially if it was purpose designed and provided the sort of acoustics, stage, lighting, toilet and catering facilities that the other venues are often deficient in. But, given the availability of cheap local entertainment in the centre of town, will enough people be prepared to trek out to Cherryhinton Road to see bands they can see the next day closer to home - especially if the same night another local band is playing in the centre of town? I doubt it.

What people will be prepared to travel to see, is a name band that they would not otherwise see. It is by providing for larger visiting bands that the Cattle Market scheme could work - and it is certainly only by providing such a venue that it can in any way be seen as a replacement for the Corn Exchange. Obviously the Council cannot afford to build a 1500 capacity hall (which is what we understand the completed Corn Exchange would hold), or even the 1000 that it may previously have held. The figure of 500 that the Cat Club committee recommended to Councillors Gawthrop and Todd was not therefore the ideal figure. It was the minimum figure that would work. It was indeed our recognition of the need to compromise, given the limited financial resources of the Council. It cannot be stressed too often that anything below 400 simply will not work; so Councillors looking for a political compromise must forget the whole idea if they cannot find the money for that sort of size.

This point has been well made to the Council by Ray Northfield, one of the local promoters, who has said that if they aim for 500 he will be able to bring in bands from London and use the facility; if it is only 200 he will probably not be interested; nor will anyone else. And, given the Council's unwillingness to promote rock themselves, the words of such promoters ought to carry weight.

At this point it might be appropriate to say a word about how the politics of it all appear to the outside observer. The genuine proponents of the scheme within the ruling Labour group appear to have a formidable task before them. They seem to be a minority faced with indifference, and even hostility on the part of some leading Labour Councillors to the provision of rock facilities for young people - even though they promised them in their manifesto.

It is that hostility that weakens the force of the otherwise understandable reluctance to spend scarce resources on entertainment when it is needed for the basic necessities of life - such as houses, education and welfare. Thus the Councillors who argue political priorities about the Corn Exchange will receive some sympathy - especially given the government's rules on borrowing by local

CONTD ON PAGE 11

GREAT DIVIDE/FACE contd

and generally leap about all over the place - visually, therefore, a very exciting band. They are also a very professional outfit - only right now being a signed commodity - and although not exactly commercial, their experience shows through in comparison to The Face.

A classification of their music escapes me, but their originality is probably one of their strong points - along with the presence of particularly strong vocals (helped by an improvement in the quality of the sound at the gig). The atmosphere during the Divide's set was the most involved that I have witnessed at Fisher Hall, despite its hailed inadequacy as a venue.

Hard work has put the Great Divide on their way, and hard work could do the same for The Face. So, although neither band personified my taste in music, for a 'philistine' I was suitably impressed.

**CAMBRIDGE
MODERN
JAZZ**
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Admission £1.50 to £2.00 for members; non-members + 50p.
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FRIDAY 21st OCT :- IAN CARR'S "NUCLEUS".

SUNDAY 23rd OCT at CLARE COLLEGE J.C.R. :-
JULIAN BAHULA'S "JAZZ AFRICA".
8.00pm. Admission £2.50 (£2.00 Clare Students)

FRIDAY 28th OCT :- The BURDON / AMIS QUINTET.

FRIDAY 4th NOV :- The DANNY THOMPSON QUARTET.

SUNDAY 6th NOV at CLARE COLLEGE J.C.R. :-
DICK MORRISEY with The TONY LEE TRIO
8.00pm. Admission £2.50 (£2.00 Clare Students)

FRIDAY 11th NOV :- The EDDIE HARVEY QUINTET.

PERFECT VISION; FINAL SCREAM

David Bragg

Arriving late I only caught a bit of the Final Scream set - but I was instantly struck by the fact that they are, well, different. They appear to be Cambridge's answer to The Virgin Prunes, Southern Death Cult or other bands of that ilk. It was a little difficult to judge their performance as the sound was pretty terrible; but I would like to see them again - on a night when there was less distortion and feedback.

It has been a long time since I last saw Perfect Vision - in fact it was when they still had a drummer. Suffice to say

they have altered considerably - indeed beyond all recognition. I'd like to suggest some reference points to explain how they sound, but no relevant bands spring to mind - except perhaps Pere Ubu, Magic Band or some of those new industrial German bands. The sound is very stark and basic with a pulsating rhythmic backing. It does take some getting used to - and one comes away remembering little else than the overall effect, and odd things like the famous baking tray. Nevertheless try to see Perfect Vision - it is quite an experience.

Streetlights

Stage Lighting

Bob. 151 Catharine St.,
Cambridge. Tel: 249594



FINAL SCREAM

FRIGIDAIRE; TENNIS

Dick Page

On Tuesday the 28th of September at Fisher Hall R'n'B came back to Cambridge and made its presence felt. This was, though rather underattended, a good gig. Reg has resurfaced from the building work at the Burleigh Arms to give us what we need - i.e. an evening away from robotics.

No. 1. Tennis: I sometimes wish they would change their name to give your average punter a better idea of the music in store. For potential a regular 10; for confidence, somewhere in the higher 8's, and for sound quality - enough said.

Should they find a man to take over the sharp end of the desk then the new cleanliness should carry them through. "Inside Every Dreamer" shows a healthy direction by dint of its honesty, whilst "Hey Babe" (not J.J.Cale, but home grown) cuts with a back slippin' rhythm that's hard to neglect. They're good to watch (if that's what you're into) but better to listen to with pint and friends.

No. 2. Frigidaires. I must confess to preferring Chicago/Country Blues to any other kind of music; so from here on in I am 100% biased. It's music with feel, emotion and style, and these guys do it with a zealously and an eye to detail that no one else in Cambridge can do, or even attempt.

They have now got the line-up stable to the extent that it's no longer a succession of solos. Marten Rae's presence is more than a positive contribution, and gives them the front-man they need. Jon (guitar), Andy (bass), and Rid (drums) are so obviously having the proverbial whale of a time that the enthusiasm is contagious. No particular number stood out simply because it was all good. It's Feelgood; it's Willy Dixon; it's full tilt R'n'B. It's good time Friday night, just-got-paid, happy drinkin' music.

They're gettin' out and about, away from the cloistered confines of Cambridge these days, so I heartily recommend you grab 'em next time round. Goodbye to roboticism and off to bed, suitably relaxed as a happy man should be.



THE FRIGIDAIRE

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THE CATTLE MARKET SCHEME CONTD

authorities (not to mention the cock-up over the roof!). But it is absurd to give up that scheme having spent so much on it already; especially when a substantial proportion of it - perhaps £300,000 out of £1million, as I have heard it - is simply preparatory work (foundations etc) for the next stages. That really would be wasting money. And what about the apparently doctrinaire refusal to get round the problem by bringing private money into a partnership with the Council to complete it.

It is against that admittedly difficult political and financial background that one has to view the manoeuvres now afoot to cope with these problems - and with the election pledge.

In so far as the Cattle Market scheme can be seen as a replacement for the Corn Exchange (which as I have argued it can not really be) it is perhaps being presented in two ways. To those who favour the completion of the Corn Exchange conversion, it will be a temporary replacement; while to those opposed to the conversion, it will be a possible, cheap, permanent alternative. There may even be some Labour Councillors, anxious to get off their election hook, for whom it is enough to appear to champion the scheme - in any form - knowing that it is likely to founder on the rocks of the contradictions built into the scheme as presented by some of them. Or, are they waiting for it to sink under the weight of public apathy.

This admittedly cynical view is not greatly altered - indeed the true cynic would find it convincing him further - by the sudden Council eagerness to ask young people to become involved in its planning, and thus show the demand for some sort of facility. The fact that rock fans are not the most articulate and politically sophisticated part of the electorate (and indeed many of them are not even old enough to vote at all) will not have escaped the notice of those who might be happy to see the scheme fail - so long as they can write in the next manifesto that at least they tried.

While the Council may not expect a flood of response from the fans - so I hope you will all get in touch with your local city councillor now - they have already had some detailed responses from interested promoters and potential users. Ray Northfield, who I mentioned before, would be joined by Mitch from the Great Northern, who has contacts in London enabling him to get some big name groups

at very reasonable prices - if the venue is there to put them on.

Others have suggested the hall be used when free of gigs, as a recording and video studio; while clearly it would have potential as a rehearsal hall, and for non-musical events, such as community theatre and films etc. It is however the idea of equipping it with recording and video equipment that has perhaps caught the imagination of some councillors in particular. But if anything is going to put up the capital cost of the project it is that sort of permanent installation - which would in any case take up so much space that the concert capacity of the hall would be drastically reduced (and the smaller the hall, the greater the problem). And, of course, we already have a major recording studio on our doorstep and smaller studios in the city - so the need is not clear.

The idea, however, of a hall that can be used for rehearsal and recording, both sound and video, is good. If it is correctly designed it will be ideal for bands to do live recording and pre-tour warm up shows, for which they will bring their own equipment. The equipment is after all no problem for them to obtain; the reason they will choose to come to Cambridge is because we will be providing one of the very, very, few halls acoustically designed for rock music.

Even purpose-built concert halls are usually designed for classical music, and while obviously better than gymnasiums or school halls (or unconverted corn exchanges) they are not ideal for rock music, which demands different sorts of acoustic qualities. If this hall is properly designed and converted, even though it starts out as a standard factory shell, it would be almost unique in East Anglia; and if promoted properly could be in constant demand by all sorts of big names and organisations. In that way it would be made, not only to pay for itself, but eventually to make a profit for the Council, even if they do not promote gigs in it themselves.

And that brings us back to the original idea, which it is easy to forget the more ambitious the plans become, but which must remain the first object of the exercise. The initially unattractive idea of a factory being used as a concert hall turns out to be a particularly good idea. The standard factory unit is very suitable for such a conversion, with easy access to the stage, and split level floors over half its length. It is also very flexible

and all the necessary acoustic work can easily be incorporated - so long as it is planned and built in from the start. I happen to know that plans have already been given to the Council, drawn up by architects with interests in the music business - and after consultation with one of the most prominent acoustic engineers in the country - to illustrate how it can be done. Again, though, there is no point in doing it if you don't do it thoroughly, and the Council might as well abort it if they are not prepared to spend the money so to do it.

To sum up. Firstly it must be big enough (and pleasant enough - to avoid trouble and vandalism) to attract the fans, from inside and outside the city. There seems to be an argument used by some that to attract fans - indeed even bands - from outside the city is to be providing facilities for other than city ratepayers. As if city people would not go to such a place; as if they would be able to see big name bands in the city if there is not such a place, that is big enough, and therefore economic enough precisely because it draws on a wider area. It is one of the most absurd arguments I have yet heard - and one that fuels one's cynicism about the motives of some of the protagonists.

It should be 500-600 capacity; it must

be no smaller than 400.

Secondly it must be designed and built as a rock venue - to be a unique facility that will make money outside of gigs.

Thirdly, if it is to be a temporary replacement for the Corn Exchange, it must be done quickly. I would hope that when it is done, and it works, it would be kept as a going concern. After all it would be too small to offer competition to the larger hall; and the larger hall would not be acoustically designed for rock alone, and would not therefore be in competition for the lucrative recording and rehearsal work. In any case the Corn Exchange seems so doubtful that we must have ~~the~~ alternative; and of course it will remain a factory unit that could be re-converted at any time.

In conclusion let me appeal to all concerned to cut the chat and get on with it. To the Councillors who genuinely support the idea, thank you - especially Liz Gard who has already lost one job through outspoken support for the Corn Exchange conversion - carry on the good work. Above all I appeal to you the fans to support the likes of Liz Gard and contact your councillors to get their support. Let them know you want it; you want it soon; and you want it done properly. Then maybe, just maybe, it will happen. It certainly will not otherwise.

BLACK SYMBOL; MIGHTY STRYPES

Keith Legoy

Having been disappointed with the Black Slate gig the previous Friday, I approached the Fisher Hall with some trepidation. However I was to be pleasantly surprised by the night's bands - the Mighty Strypes from Slough, and Black Symbol from Handsworth (home of Steel Pulse) - who both proved more entertaining than had the much better known Black Slate. Admittedly, other factors came into play. The atmosphere at Fisher Hall was more conducive to intimacy between band and audience; and the lighting and sound were both good.

The Mighty Strypes are a multiracial five piece - drums, bass, guitar, vocals and keyboards. Driven on by an excellent drummer and rock steady rhythm section, abetted by tasteful keyboard playing and sugary backing vocals, they delivered a set full of very catchy, immediate tunes - notably "Physical Fitness" and (at a guess) "My Day". Moreover, the ability of the singer and guitarist to play other instruments (sax, flute and harmelodian) made for a good variation of sounds. "Dub

Odyssey" for example featured a smooth harmony between flute and guitar. However the odyssey proved often to be more of a tourist excursion into the well-worked cliches of dub, reminding me occasionally of UB40. Nevertheless, the playing was spot on, and the group went down well with the hundred or so people who had turned up.

Black Symbol - the official headliners - ambled on stage looking more like a commune than a band. With three guitarists, two percussionists and a man rocking entranced at the back of the stage, there may have been superfluous musicians, but they looked great and skanked boldly. Their music was fairly rootsy, delivered in a heavyweight style by their allegedly 19½ stone singer, whose voice sounded too much like Burning Spear for his own good. The rhythm section - although very large - were tight, and kept proceedings going in a very relaxed way. However, some of the material was rather unoriginal, and they were even reduced to the sacrilegious

act of covering "Get Up, Stand Up" none too well.

Indeed, this has become a general problem amongst contemporary reggae bands who seem content to regurgitate the glories of past masters, repeating the same tired catchphrases, rather than drawing on the soul and calypso influences which were so crucial for the Wailers, Maytals, Dennis Brown and Burning Spear in the early to mid '70s. The current scene appears to focus much more on gimmickry - be it that of the DJ double acts, or of electronic dub wizardry - and this indicates a general lack of content. Another related trend

is the chat between songs; why Black British bands should insist on talking in assumed Jamaican accents defeats me. It also defeats those - including the bands themselves - who proclaim our Black British identity.

Nevertheless, I did enjoy myself at the gig - as did the assembled gig-goers. The only pity was that there were not more of them, and that a few of those that were there had to spoil things with a slight scuffle. This aside, it was a good night with two bands - especially the Mighty Strypes - to watch out for in the future.

GIG GUIDE

Sat.15: PITTS WINE BAR - SU LYN

OCT. Greenham Common, USAF - Trux
Peterborough, The Focus - Final
Scream + Destructors + others
Peterborough, Cresset - Shakatak
St. Ives, Ivo Centre - Dumpy's
Rusty Nuts + Caroline Roadshow
Colchester, Essex Univ. - Misty
In Roots

Sun.16: Hemel Hemstead, Pavilion - Shakatak
Dunstable, Queensway - Respond
Posse with Tracie, Questions etc
Ipswich, Gaumont - Sky

Mon.17: Northampton, Derngate - Smokey
Robinson (and Miracles?)
Watford, Baileys - K.C. and the
Sunshine Band. Until 22 Oct.

Tue.18: Ipswich, Gaumont - Shakin' Stevens
Norwich, UEA - Paul Young + Passion
Puppets

Wed.19: CCAT BATMAN - ?

Thu.20: CCAT MUMFORD - WORLDS END BAND +
Waiting For Sod All (A Play)
FISHER HALL - SITFO + WORKMEN
ALMA - STRING SWING

Fri.21: Dunstable, Queensway - Paul Young
Colchester, Woods Leisure Centre -
Hanoi Rocks

Sat.22: St.Albans, City Hall - Hanoi Rocks
Northampton, Derngate - Paul Young
Norwich, UEA - Joboxers
Colchester, Essex Univ. - John Foxx

Sun.23: Ipswich, Gaumont - UB40
Peterborough, Key - The Enid

Wed.26: Northampton, Derngate - Shakatak

Thu.27: Norwich, UEA - Paul Haig and the
Rhythm of Life

Fri.28: TERRITORIAL ARMY HALL - TRUX
Ipswich, Gaumont - Michael Schenker
Norwich, Gala - Lords Of The New
Church
Hitchin, Regal - Bernie Torme's
Electric Gypsies

NEWS etc CONTD

nothing "From Our Own Correspondent" this week; that is because he has been too busy with his shopping of late. When they played Emma on Sunday, the place was so full that there was no room for a certain distinguished graduate of that college to get in. He returned to his typewriter philosophically, having heard the band describe how chaotic the rehearsal had been, in the expectation of having missed little - only to be told later that it was one of the best gigs that Marc Noel-Johnson, for instance, has ever played! And he has played a few, believe me. When not shopping, Andy is busy writing silly playlets for BBC Radio Cambs - also to be heard on Saturdays, but earlier on.

For those of you who missed them over the last few months, they are to reappear in a late night show at the ADC towards the end of November.

And I nearly forgot. Also at the ADC in November, a week of Harvey and The Wall-bangers. It may not exactly be rock, but it is great entertainment; and they do the funniest Elvis (Presley, that is) impersonation you will ever see. You can also see them on television - on Channel 4's Celebration programme on Sunday 23rd October.

Anyone who goes to see the Respond tour show at Dunstable on Sunday 16th Oct. will see at the bottom of the bill a band called "A CRAZE"; which apparently is Lucy Barron (ex Hearthrobs) and Chris Free (ex Users). More exiles making good.

VENUES

Great Northern
Burleigh Arms
Fisher Hall
Guildhall
Kelsey Kerridge Sports Hall
Sea Cadet Hall
Coleridge Community Centre
Arbury Road Baptist Church Hall
St. Mathew's School, East Road
Arts Theatre
ADC Theatre
CCAT Mumford Theatre
CCAT Canteen
CCAT Batman
Man On The Moon - Jazz
Golden Hind - Folk
Rob Roy - Folk
Alma
Last Resort - Home of The Icon Disco
Pickerel
Flambards
Empress
Champion Of The Thames
UNIVERSITY HALLS:
Catz Refectory and Octagon
Christs New Theatre and Wine Bar
Churchill Main Hall and JCR
Clare JCR
Emmanuel JCR
Fitz Reddaway Room
Graduate Centre
Harvey Court
Homerton Main Hall and Bar/Drawing Room
Kings Keynes Hall
Pembroke JCR
Queens Bar
Robinson Party Room
St. Johns Cellars and School of Pythagoras
Selwyn Bar and Diamond
Sidney JCR
Union Society Cellars

SERVICES

LIGHTS HIRE:

Streetlights - 249594
Just Lites - (0954) 50851
Theatre Lights
Sunshine Lighting
Clare JCR

P.A. HIRE:

Stavros - 245047
Roger Chatterton - 313250
Dave Gonut - 032876394
F.M. Sound - 8263875
Skysound - 358644
Cheops - 249889
Cambridge Rock - 316091

VIDEO RECORDING:

Neil Roberts - 210320

RECORDING STUDIOS:

Spaceward - 9889 600
Kite Studios - 313250
Cheops - 249889

BANDS

Katrina and the Waves - Alex 314857
Dolly Mixture - Hester 35514
Great Divide - Ed Royston 60027
Tranzista - Ray 247802
Hondo - 211371
The Face - Mark or Trevor 350272
Sindy and the Action Men - Dave 8263875
Trux - Sue 93 31550
Subculture - 18, Holbrook Rd.
Wobbly Jellies - Keith 352125
Perfect Vision - Jon 313564
Fridgidares - Rid 355568
Andy Goes Shopping - Marc 316091
Toby Jug and Washboard - Trevor 68184
The Lonely - Ted 351708
Holder's Heroes - Nick 211424
Your Dinner - 211371
So What - 211371
S.I.T.F.O. - Mark 314366
Tennis - Roddy 840608
Zoom - Chris 355806
Pure Thought - Robb 68442
Phoenix - Steve 354917
Final Scream - Robin 323249
Worlds End Band - John 212029
Safety Valve - Dave Huntingdon 51490
Su Lyn - Roger 313250
Misbehaviour - Pete 351947
Rendez Vous - Murray 245455
Sahara - Quentin 68975
Neutral Vision - 0480 66088
Dr. Skull - Viv 322438
Storm (the Dorms) - Mike 521885
20th Century
Ex-Direktry
Talos
Force 9
Beat About The Bush
Rockin 50s
Tutch
Racing Heart
Sax Appeal
13th Chime
Final Frontier
Allergy
Clay Dolz
Self Righteous Brothers
Roaring Boys (ex-Models/Way Up) 01 435 0843
Fox 'n' Sox
Come Dancing - Kevin 01 348 7276
Boons Of Gloom
The Code - Box 729 Kings
Colonel Garcia