

# BLUE SUEDE NEWS

CAMBRIDGE'S ROCK RAG

Issue No 4

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30p

Inside:

Profile - Perfect Vision

Camrock Tree - Soft Boys Waves Users

Reviews and Pictures of SLAPKATS

SUPREMES; GYMSLIPS;

ANDY GOES SHOPPING

Plus ....

News, Gossip, Gig Guide,

Bragg's Baffler, Photo-Comp,

and much more ....





## NEWS AND COMMENT

**CORN EXCHANGE:** Two cheers for the City Council for passing Phase 2 of the conversion plan, even if they did balk at going all the way. A typical nonsensical political compromise in fact, since the remaining half a phase is relatively cheap, and is concerned with the provision of the entertainment facilities necessary to turn an expensively converted shell into more than just a conference centre. In other words the permanent stage, with lift; the backstage facilities, and storage areas. It seems inconceivable that the Labour group, who are so in favour of the provision of entertainment facilities, although dubious about conference facilities - or so they say - could refuse to complete the job when it comes down to it. The problem may be eased, I'm told, by the likelihood of grants from the Arts Council, the Tourist Board and maybe, but only maybe, the South Cambs Council. So get on to your County Councillors as well.

Phase 2 will provide the extra 500 seats, on the balconies to be built, that will take the hall up to the desired 1500 capacity. The acoustic improvements should be built into this phase, including the provision of an acoustic baffle that will enable the big hall to be divided into two smaller halls. There will also be another small hall/room upstairs capable of holding about 150 people that could be used for local band gigs.

The hire charge for the big hall - for concerts - is projected at £350. Inflation may put it up in the meantime but even so it sounds very reasonable. Let's start looking forward to the return of big name acts to Cambridge in...well, Autumn 1985 is the best guess at the moment.

**CATTLE MARKET** plans to plug that meantime have died a death so far as the Council are concerned. How surprising! Too expensive, naturally. But Liz Gard still thinks it is a good idea - though more as a community video and recording centre, than a venue for gigs - and she hopes that private plans, like that of Mark Graham and Chris Crutchley, will be able to go ahead. The Council will provide whatever help and encouragement they can, since the site seems so uniquely suitable. It will be interesting to see what comes of it now.

**TIM MAY** guested with the Wobbly Jellies at Fisher Hall the other day (see review). He told me that that the Roaring Boys went down well at the Venue's halloween party, and that the band have two more London dates upcoming: The Moonlight on 23rd, and The Embassy on the 24th of November.

**BLUE SUEDE NEWS** will in future be published on alternate Tuesdays. Copy should be in the previous Monday (no, not the day before) though news items phoned to me will be able to get in from Wednesday evening.

**CHRIS HEATH** (ex Three For The Girl) makes a welcome appearance in these pages as a writer - twice indeed in the one issue. He is also getting two new bands together at the same time. One - Americans On Heat, with ex Fridge Freezers Julia and Andy Graves - he describes as New Wavey; and the other - The Man Who Suddenly Fell Over - he says will be more experimental, and probably semi-acoustic. He is still looking for musicians to join him in the latter project - imagination and ideas more important than instrumental virtuosity. Ring Chris on 314038 if you are interested.

**GIGGLESTICKS AND THE LOVE TRUNCHEONS** are in fact one band. Thanks to their manager for giving me a ring to tell me all about them - sounds like they are worth checking out.

**GOTHIQUE**, in the person of one Chris Hall, who must also be a manager or someone similar, keep bombarding me with reviews of themselves - the latest of which opens with a few sarcastic comments about the rag, designed no doubt to spur me into publishing their self-praise. Aware as I am of its deficiencies, and ever happy to receive - and even publish - criticism of the mag, there is a limit, particularly in tone to what even I will tolerate. This is a Cambridge magazine so Gothique can hardly expect us to chase them all over the region to review them - any more than they can expect us to publish reviews of themselves. When you play in Cambridge we will review you, until then I am happy to pass on basic information about the band. They are: Colin Molloy - gtr; Simon Lee - vocals and gtr; Andy Scalino - drums; Chris Smith - bass; Ken Gascoyne - keys. They play what I have seen elsewhere described as 'classical rock' - and I think the name probably says it all. They are a busy band with lots of gigs in and around the Hertford area. For more details phone Chris Hall on Histon 3707.

**ROBYN HITCHCOCK**, the power behind Dolly Mixtures' friend Captain Sensible on his latest single (he wrote it, plays on it - with the Dollies - and even did the cover) couldn't make it to Radio Cambs. **SATURDAY ROCKSHOW** on the 5th, so he is coming on the 19th instead. Now it so happens that the night before, guess who is playing at Robinson College? Ask our own correspondent.



# LETTERS

Dear Acid Andy,

Thanks for the free publicity in your column in Issue 3. Just to correct a couple of points.

The 'diminutive' Su Lyn does not always play on vast expansive stages, but has been known to have quietly crept down to 'Pitts Wine Bar' on several occasions. If you've ever been down there you'd realise they do not even possess a stage. Other enormous venues include St. Johns' cellars, the 'Station' at Great Chesterford, the 'Man On The Moon', and, one of your favourite haunts, Robinson College.

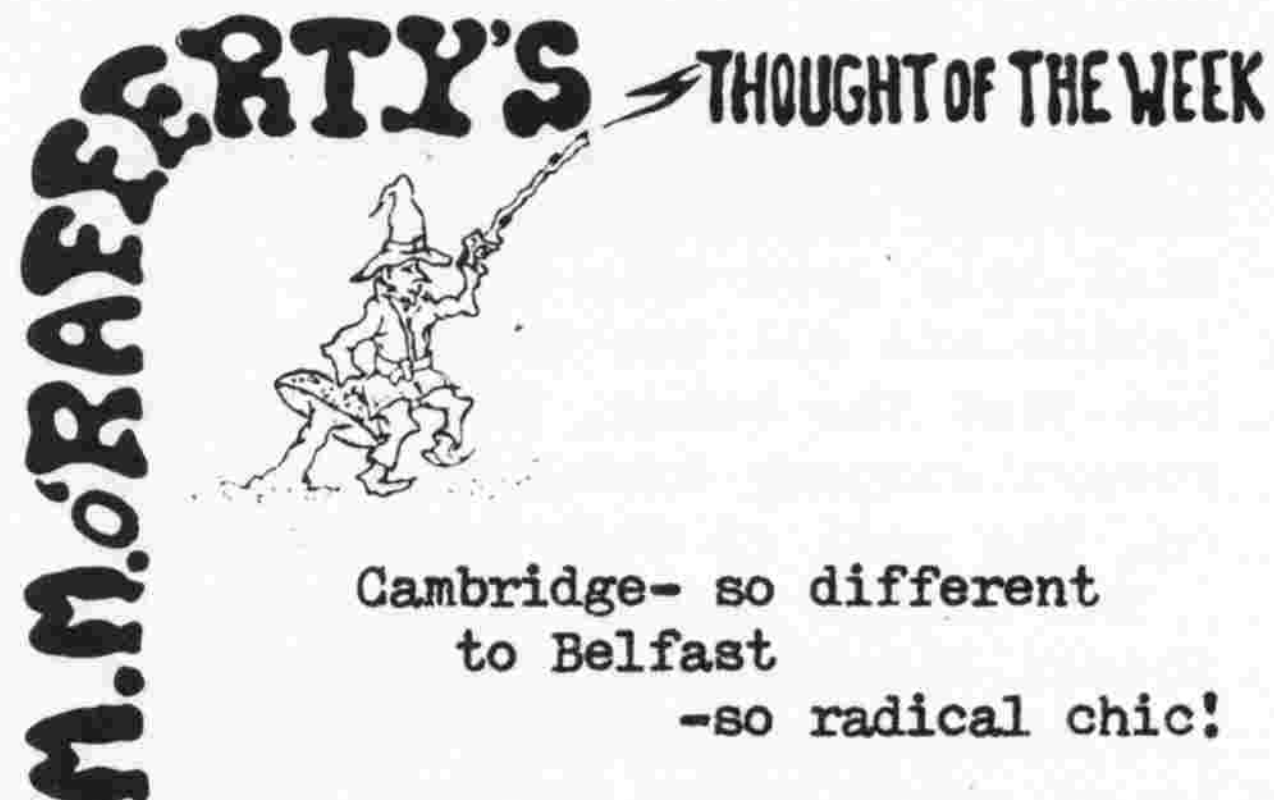
I do regard playing small venues (and sometimes in front of smaller audiences) as part of a musician's apprenticeship. However, please allow me the freedom to choose exactly which venue without being castigated in your column.

By the way; a rumour reached my ears that a certain keyboard player with the Frigidaires was unable to be accommodated on the stage at the opening night at 'City Limits'.

Hugs 'n' Kisses,  
Su

No doubt Su is in fact aware that Andy left the Frigidaires some time ago; but I am sure he takes your point.

Letters will be very welcome, but please let's not have them confined to musicians' bitching - however diverting that is to the rest of us!



If I hear an explosion I know  
it's just work being done on  
the Corn Exchange!

## City Limits

Station Road Corner, Cambridge.

**sat. nov. 12 RENDEZ-VOUS (rock)**

**wed. 16 TUTCH (prog. rock)**

**fri. 18 LLOYD WATSON BAND**

**sat. nov. 19 SLAPKAT (r'billy)**

**wed. 23 SINDY & ACTION MEN**

**fri. 25 TALOS (heavy rock)**

**sat. nov. 26 32 - 20 (blues/ rock)**

**forthcoming: marz, hondo, samurai,  
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LLOYD WATSON BAND-THE STORY SO FAR

Support act (as solo artist) for Bowie, Status Quo, Procul Harum, New York Dolls, Stealer's Wheel, etc. British and European tours with Roxy Music and King Crimson.

T.V. appearance on the Old Grey Whistle Test and a former winner of the Melody Maker Folk/Rock Contest.

Recorded work:- close working link with Roxy Music, playing on Eno's "Here Come The Warm Jets", Andy Mackay's "In Search of Eddie Riff", and "801 Live" - a band featuring Phil Manzanera, Eno and Simon Phillips, amongst others. This band played the Reading Festival, and "801 Live" was recorded at The Queen Elizabeth Hall, London.

Currently working with bass/drums back up, The Lloyd Watson Band play "Tight Rock and Loose Blues" - come see them on 18th. November at City Limits.....



## From Our Own Correspondent

Sometime around now, what I imagine will be the last retrospective Soft Boys album is being released. An appropriate moment to ask why the band never made it in the first place?

I'm still so much a part of the Soft Boys that even with the benefit of hindsight it is hard to sort out the facts. So, instead, I shall draw a little analogy. The "music business" is usually seen as a ladder to climb, rung by rung, until you reach the top. I think it is more like this. Imagine a beautiful walled garden with a gate that only goes out. You are outside. Inside are all the successful people - not just the bands, but journalists, record company executives, DJs and so on. The wall is very hard to climb.

The useful points of this analogy are these: Firstly, no one inside can see you climbing the wall. They have built it of solid brick so they take nothing in, ignore your phone calls and letters. You struggle madly. You play all your local gigs, you go down well, you make a good demo. If you're lucky, one day someone sees your head because they happen to look in the right direction at the right time. They tell a couple of friends. It could be any of the above list of successfulls. And they give you a hand onto the wall. Not over it. So to the second point.

You are precariously balanced on the wall. You could fall either way. And that depends on YOU; mostly. You may be unlucky and slip because it's raining. More likely you're too scared to jump, you wore the wrong shoes and fall off the wrong side; and sometimes it even happens that someone else outside who thinks there isn't room for you both (usually a journalist) pulls you off. Usually, though often subconsciously, you are too scared to jump.

The Soft Boys signed a huge deal, did all the big gigs, met the stars, saw what happened in the garden and were even brought a tray of food and drink, but teetered around too long and fell off outside. Only one thing gets you in, and that is to show a potential ability to make money. Nothing else. You can impress any number of outside people from half way up the wall, or even on it, but nothing really impresses the people inside except other people inside. And they have control, don't forget, over a door which only opens out.

Most Cambridge musicians are at the bottom of the wall outside. The Great Divide have just got on top of the wall, and I wish them every success in falling in, not out. The Models, now the Roaring Boys, never really got up there, and have fallen half way back.

I have been on that wall twice, and half way up it once since. I've hung up my climbing boots. For those of you who **think** this sounds jaded, it's not. I admire people who get in, and I admire people who try (I do Jon, even if I don't always like them), but those who are trying should spare a thought for those at the bottom and not use their heads as a means of support. I have a steel plate in mine; a lot of people do not.

A few people inside remember the time when the Soft Boys stood on the wall fondly, for which I am pleased, and periodically throw us ex-members a bag of goodies labelled Soft Boys Food Parcel in the shape of a retrospective album - "love the music bizz." Well - thanks for the Xmas present.

ANDY METCALFE

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The Method

This interview was constructed from written expositions on a number of topics from each member of Perfect Vision. As they are uncommonly articulate about their concerns I have largely allowed them to speak for themselves; only interrupting to expand or criticise. The band are James Daniel(bass), Jon Lewin (guitar and vocals), Giles Thomas(guitar), and Steve Xerri(synth and vocals) - their individual contributions to the text are indicated by surname initials. (B) is a quote from their interview with John Bowers in the May '83 issue of the Ipswich fanzine "The Boiler".

Setting The Scene

I strongly believe that Cambridge music is unhealthily obsessed with the past; most bands are feeble copyists selling pale echoes of exhausted traditions. And that's why Perfect Vision seem so odd and marginal here. They appear as the only Cambridge band seriously attempting to be relevant and original, both in words and music. (Whether they succeed or not is a separate question.) What is strange here is that they are isolated in this approach - nationally and historically this has been the predominant

concern of serious artists (and 'serious' has more to do with respect for oneself and one's audience than looking glum).

It is clear throughout the interview that Perfect Vision are highly conscious of their marginal status here, and I'd argue that their constant labelling as unusual, odd and different has persuaded them to believe themselves that they are far more esoteric musically than is the case. I'd place them squarely in the mainstream of modern pop. They would hate the comparison, but they are as much Depeche Mode as they are D.A.F. or New Order - and I see that as a positive thing; there's no point unnecessarily sacrificing accessibility.

Being In Cambridge

"Being in Cambridge is bad news. There are so many people in Cambridge who are looking for a band to fulfil their stereotypes, and not interested in bands they need to listen to."(D). "Those in this town who have difficulty understanding what we are 'going on about' are closing their minds to the possibilities of external stimuli"(L); "Cambridge has too much music which is warm and easy, and...such music tends -



## P V contd

in expectations, and especially in lyrical content - to reproduce the dominant ideologies about the performer and his/her relations with the audience: in other words soothing, bland - technically expert, but unchallenging - pop pap. I name no names: they know who they are."(X)

"We don't want May Balls: playing to Rupert and Fiona times 300 is not my idea of heaven. I'd rather take a grenade.."(B)

"Find me another band in Cambridge with an original idea."(T)

### Work: The Act of Creation and the Art of Performance

"PV's typical attitude is to find something 'nice' and destroy it."(T)

"Technique is a means to an end, not an end in itself. I don't want anyone to like us because we play flashy parts. If they don't like the whole they might as well not like any of it."(D)"We try to avoid the traditions and conventions of 'rock' music."(L)"We make no bones about using tapes...the very last thing we've done has a backing vocal on the tape and if people think that's cheating they can fuck off."(B)

"Getting a drum machine was the best move we ever made. The laborious way we have to write down parts fits with our modus operandi."(D)"Inspiration, as commonly conceived seems not to occur. Creativity is a long process of studying detail and making improvements."(D)"PV functions as a sort of democracy in which four dictators continually struggle for ascendancy."(L)

"It is undeniable that drums (or any percussion) can add excitement to a sound, and we have not ruled them out. Having said that, the notion that precise playing is colder than rough 'rock and roll' playing goes back to some romantic notion of the performer as wild, spontaneous, inspired etc. etc. - a fiction to which I'm happy to contribute a kick in the balls."(X)

### Politics and Relevance

"Why is singing about relevant things supposed to be boring? Surely it is more interesting to be relevant - don't tell me that politics isn't relevant!"(D)

"We encourage our audience to think about what they are hearing, lyrically and musically. We don't tell people, we trouble them."(T)"The songs aren't simply slogans but nor do they evade what I feel are important things, questions whose

absence seems to me a glaring omission from too much pop."(X)

"A Difficult Band To Enjoy...." (BSN No.1)

"We're not difficult."(L)"As for difficult, I'd rather be challenging than vapid. The main thing it - abstract music - misses out on is the kind of bodily release which rhythmic, danceable music possesses....Of late we've become more conscious of, and I think better at, providing more physical music....It's not a dilution of our music, but a reparation of imbalance."(X)"Why shouldn't we be serious?"(L)"Thinking doesn't have to rule out pleasure."(X)

Perfect Vision are a remarkably easy band to enjoy In the last month I ha seen Andy Goes Shopping, Steeve Breeze, Exploding Hamsters, The Face, Final Scream, Great Divide, Indians In Moscow, Henry Shukman, Somewhere In The Foreign Office, The Supremes, The Workmen and the Wobbly Jellies. The most rewarding gig though that I have been to, and also the one at which there was most dancing, was Perfect Vision at the Cat Club.

"Come and dance."(X)

### Saying Things

"I write, obviously about matters which concern me."(L)

Perfect Vision continually stress the importance of their lyrics, which they see as an essential part of their music. Until recently their songs focussed on more or less conventional political concerns - "Worksong" is a powerful condemnation of the Protestant ethic - but often in their attempt to be simultaneously political, profound and poetic they sacrifice the songs' meanings to obscurity. Lon says of "Dwindling Party": "The notion that civic statues always look stern - a whimsical idea in itself - was extended to pursu the idea that the government's Youth Opportunities Scheme was in some way immoral;" which is both lucid and commendable. But I'd challenge the band to find someone who realised that was the song's core, so abstract and obtuse the actual lyrics are."At least you'll realise it's not a love song "(B); indeed true, but only in the negative sense that it's difficult to realise that it's about anything in particular. So it's encouraging that they have recently discovered that they can write love songs, of a sort, to great effect - "Impossible Blue" and

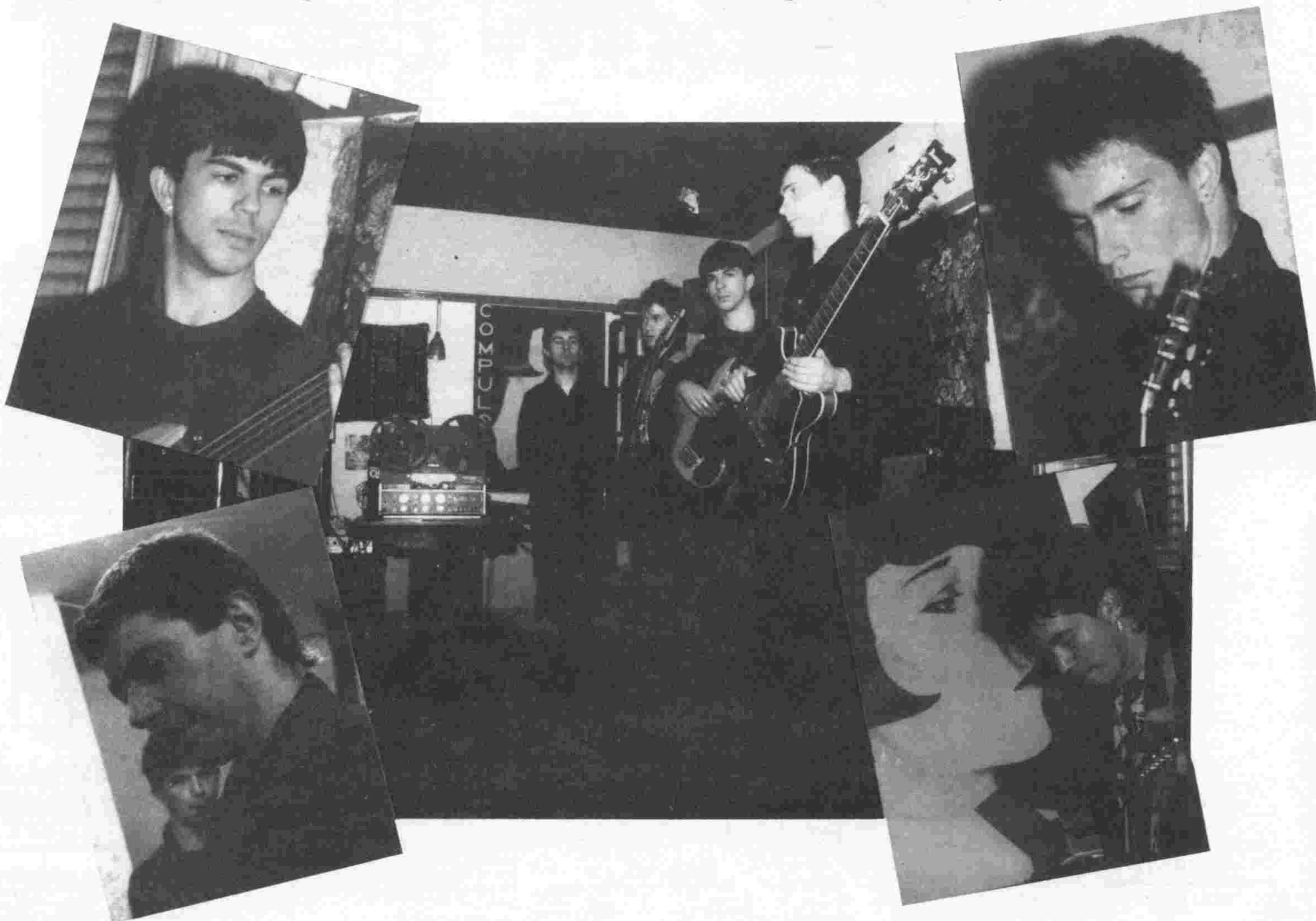
"Somersault of Love" are the two moments in the current set when Perfect Vision



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come closest to being thrilling. Love is important: the love song should be rescued from misuse, not neglected.

"We still don't sing boy-meets-girl lyrics, because to do so is, once more, to reproduce well-worn sexist attitudes unless one is very careful. The argument that to worry about sexual politics in rock is to dignify rock with a greater degree of seriousness than it merits...is not a line of thought that need detain us

for long: it removes all the potential bite from pop. For example 'Somersault of Love' celebrates the excitement of love, but it is not addressed as from a man to, or even about, a woman. 'When Desire Strikes' dramatises the predatory male as being in crisis....'This Hook' is written from the point of view of a man wondering how to deal with desire and scruple: a kind of interrogation of the standard boy-meets-girl episode."(X)



#### The Criticism

Perfect Vision are not (yet) a great band. Their songs are still cluttered with unnecessary noises; they still make too much of a virtue of complexity, and perhaps due to their dislike of bland pop they still instill their tunes with an unnecessary anti-commercialism (simplicity and directness need not be sins). They are steadily improving, but they still have a long way to go.

But though they haven't found quite the right answers yet, I believe they are asking the right questions. While I can see other Cambridge bands with (more) potential to become successful - the Great Divide, perhaps even the Face eventually - Perfect Vision are at present my sole hope of a band who might become successful and significant.

#### The Advert

Perfect Vision have a 7-track tape available. Already sounding slightly dated it loses some of the energy of their live performance, but is a fair indication of their talents. £1 (£1.50 by post) from Jon Lewin, 121A Newmarket Road, Tel 313564

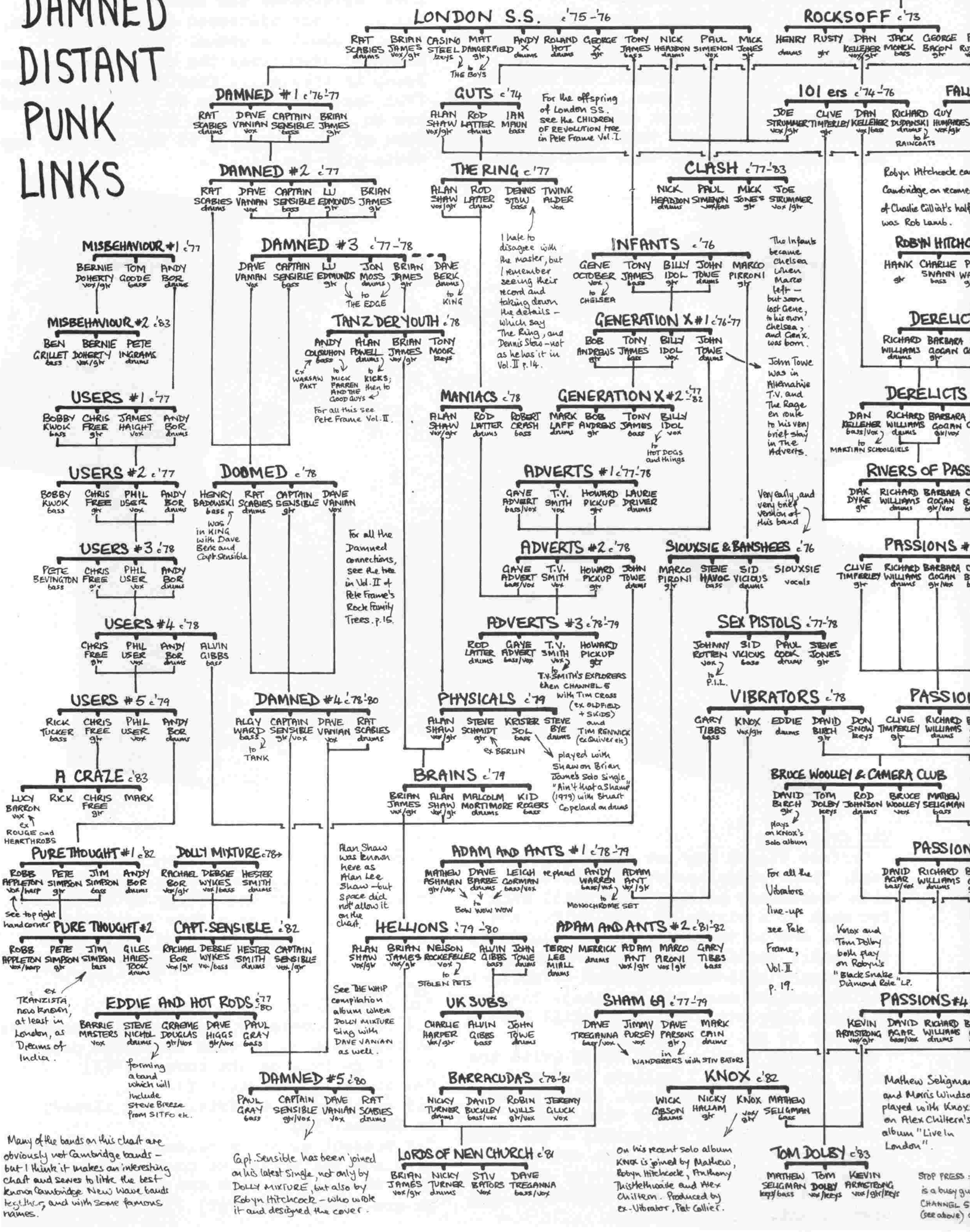
#### Last Words

"We have ideas, not a message."(T)  
"If this concern is deemed to be excessive to pop, then it is time to change pop, not to go back on the concern."(X)  
"We are all...fickle."(T)  
"If we lived in Sheffield we'd already be famous."(D)  
"At present we are a colour band playing in black and white. We could be so good. Give us a little time and lots of money. We are never happy."(T)



# SOFT BOYS; WAVES; USERS AND

## DAMNED DISTANT PUNK LINKS



Many of the bands on this chart are obviously not Cambridge bands - but I think it makes an interesting chart and serves to link the best-known Cambridge New Wave bands together, and with some famous names.

Capt. Sensible has been joined on his latest single, not only by Dolly Mixture, but also by Robyn Hitchcock - who wrote it and designed the cover.

On his recent solo album Knox is joined by Mathew, Robyn Hitchcock, Anthony Thisthwaite and Alex Chiltern. Produced by ex-Vibrator, Pat Collier.

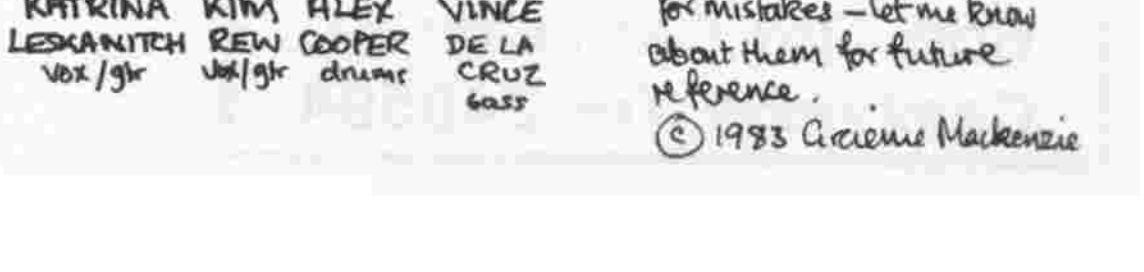
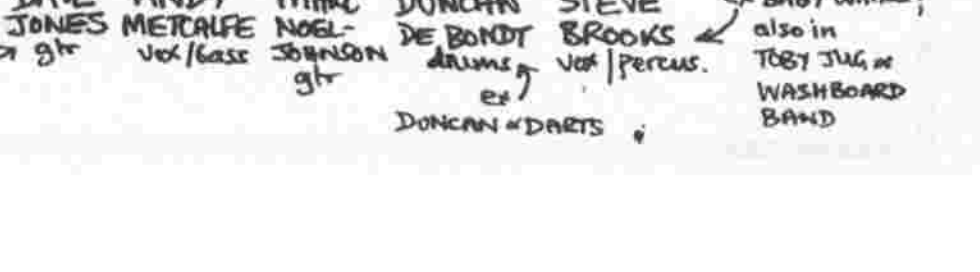
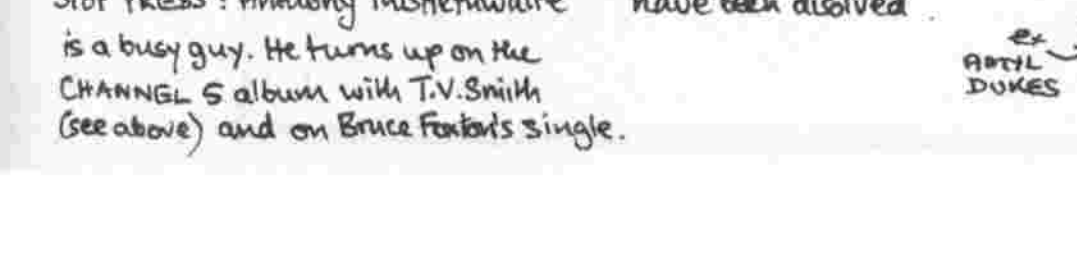
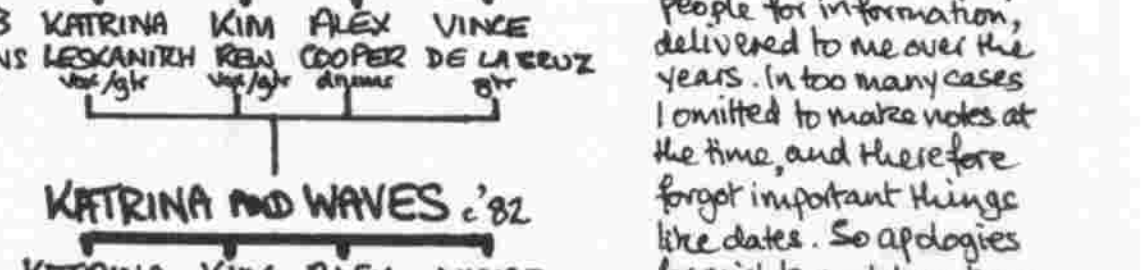
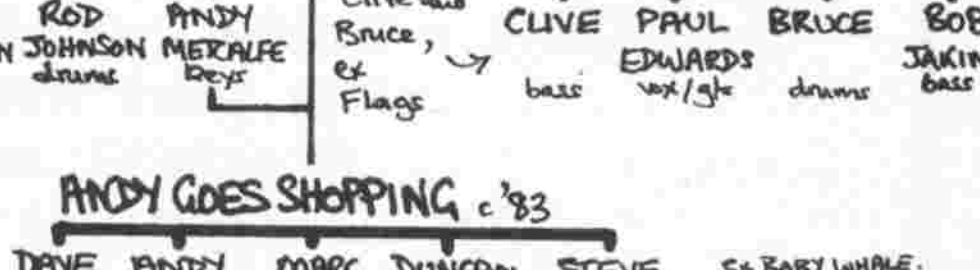
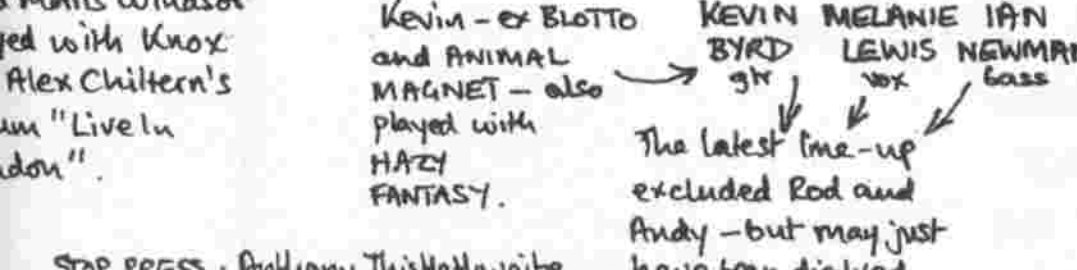
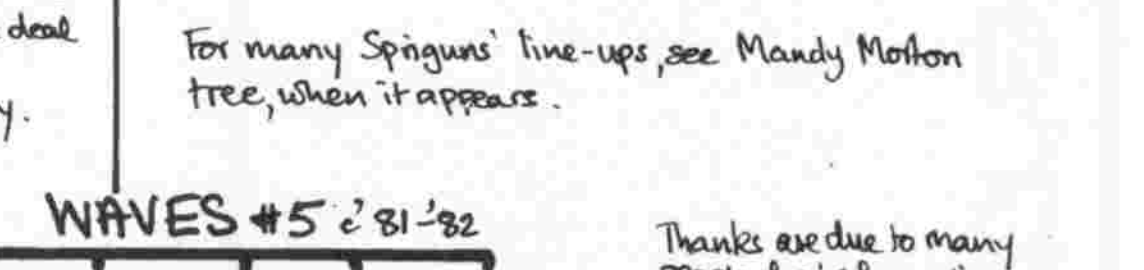
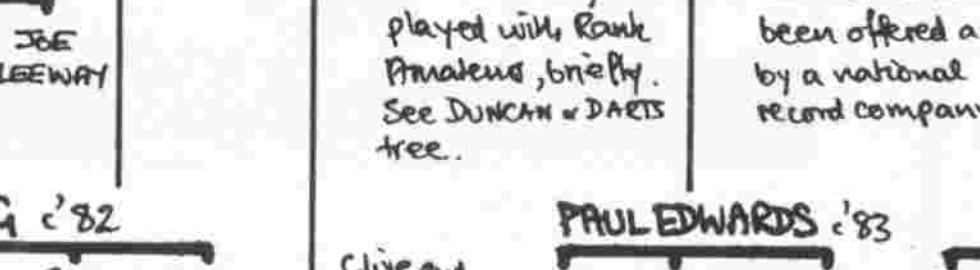
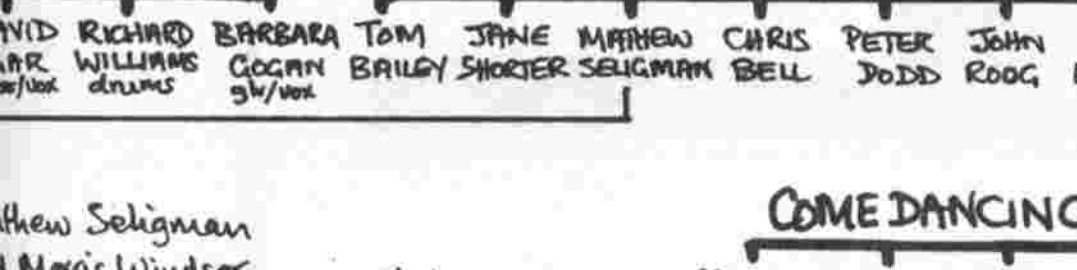
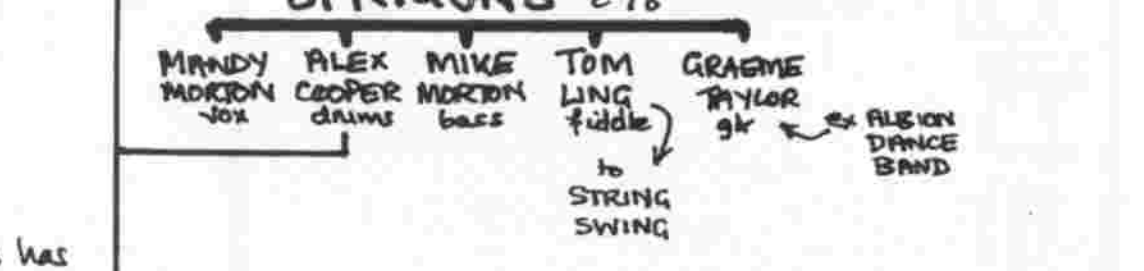
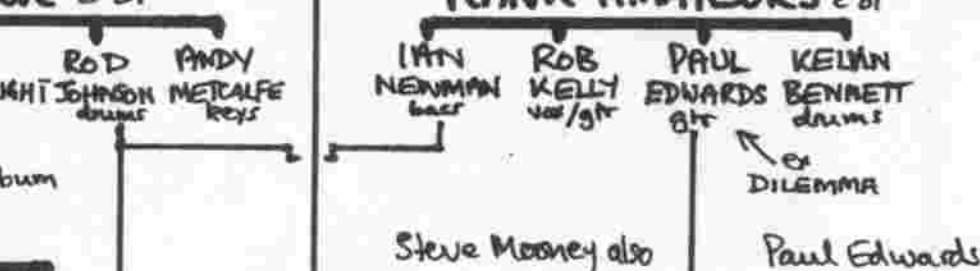
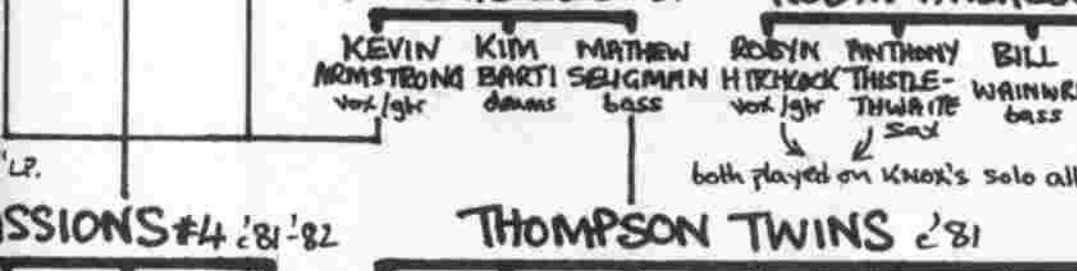
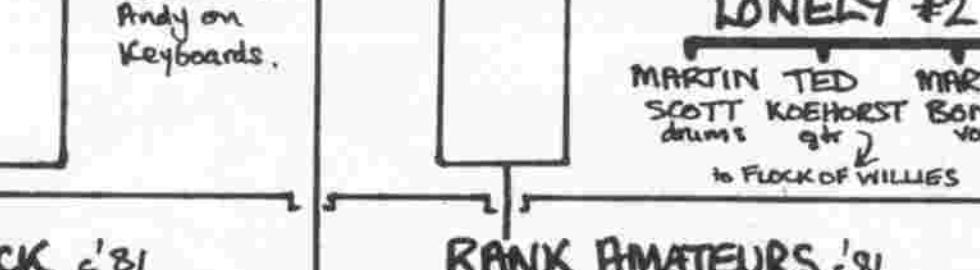
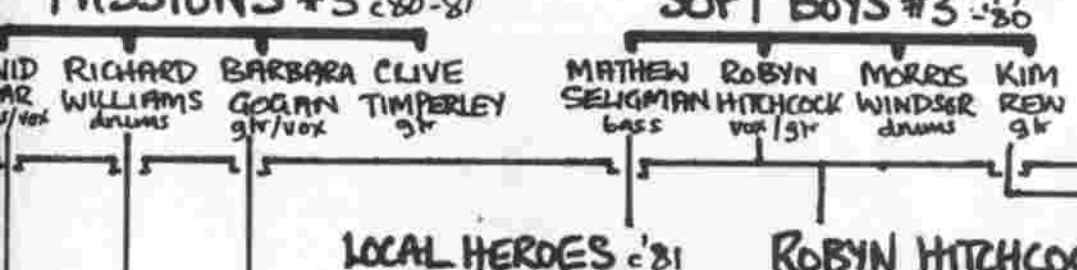
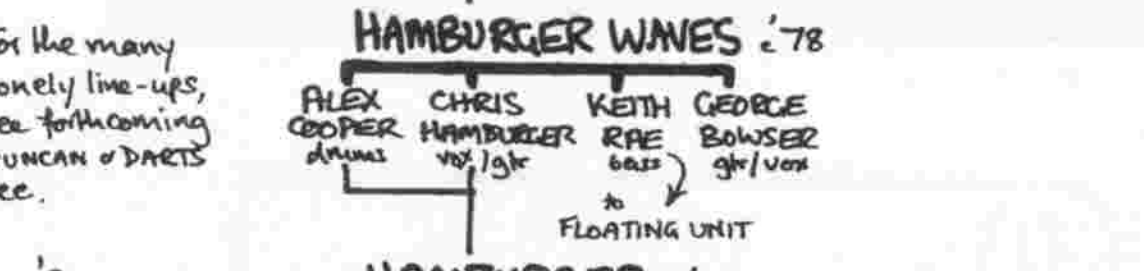
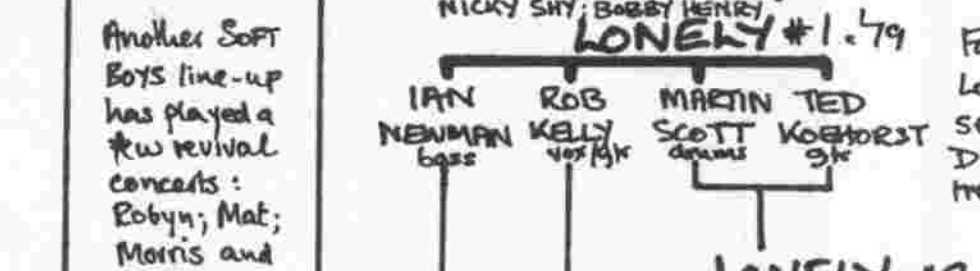
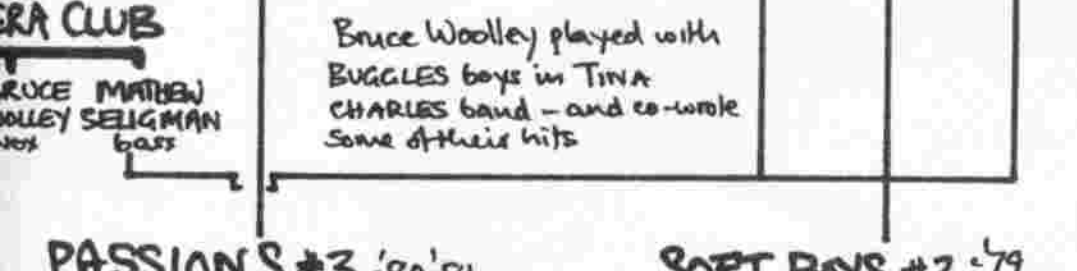
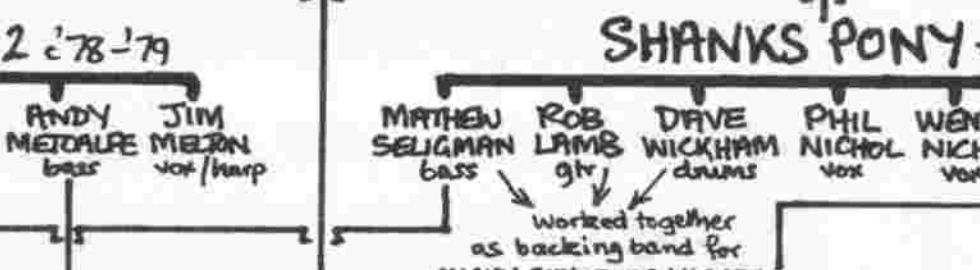
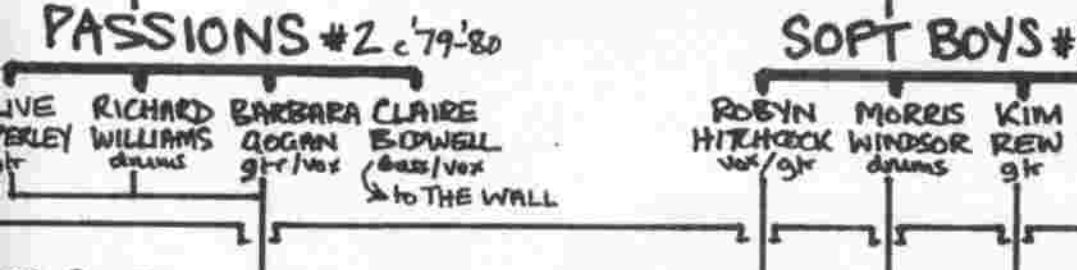
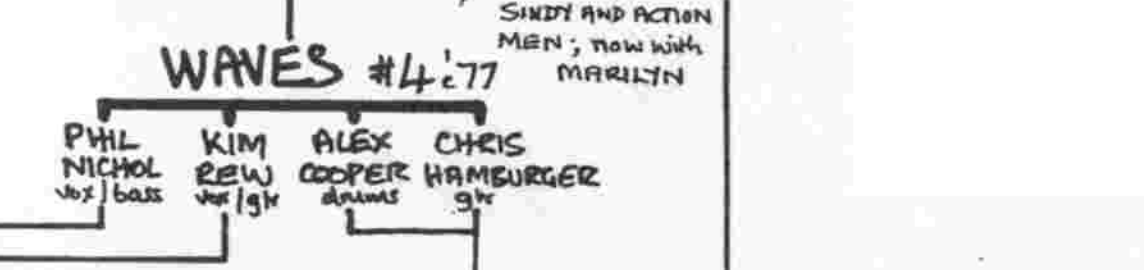
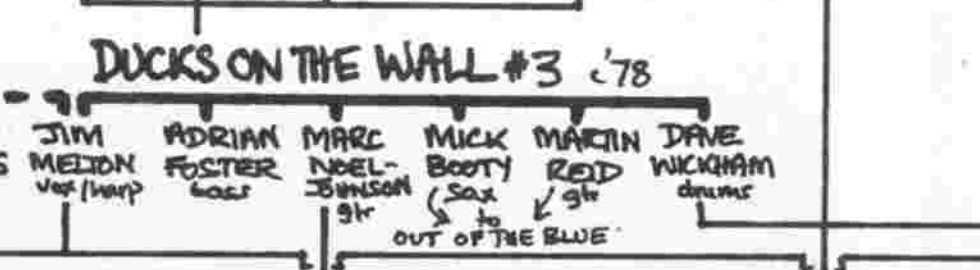
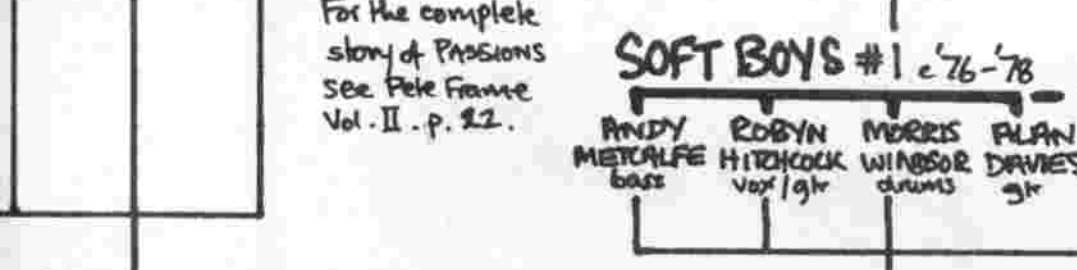
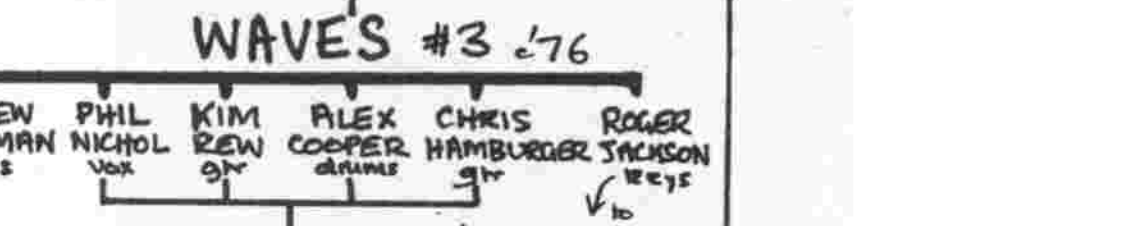
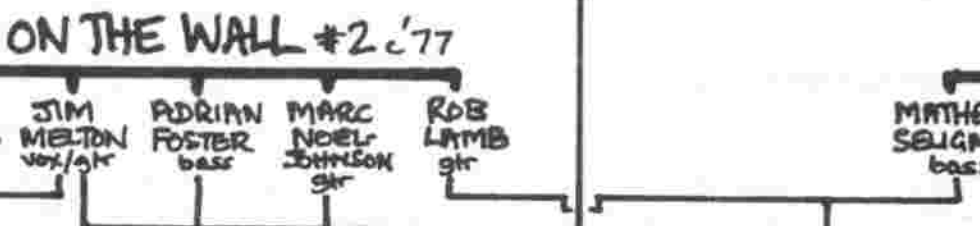
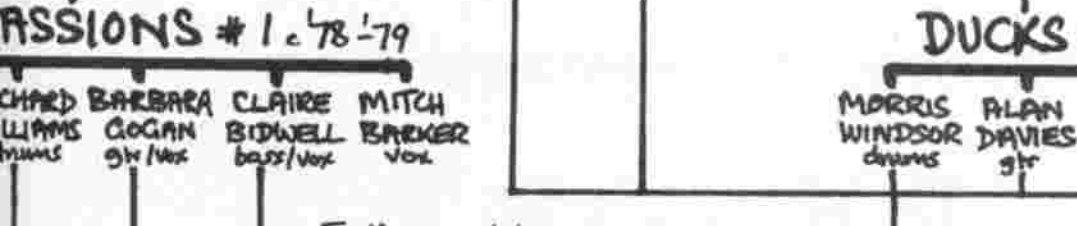
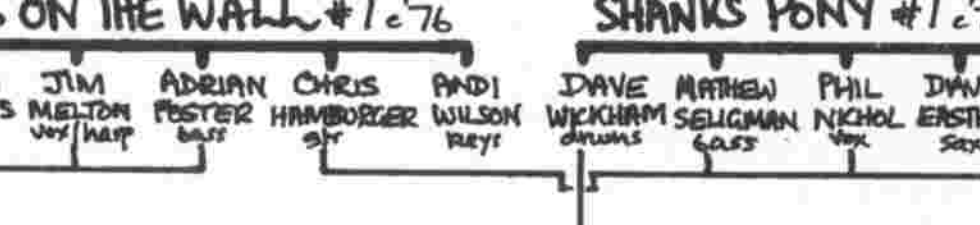
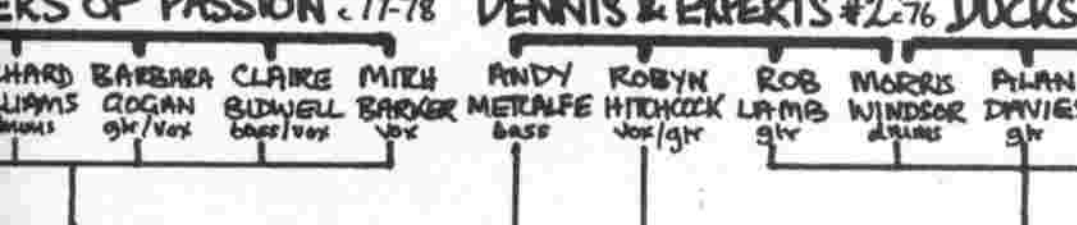
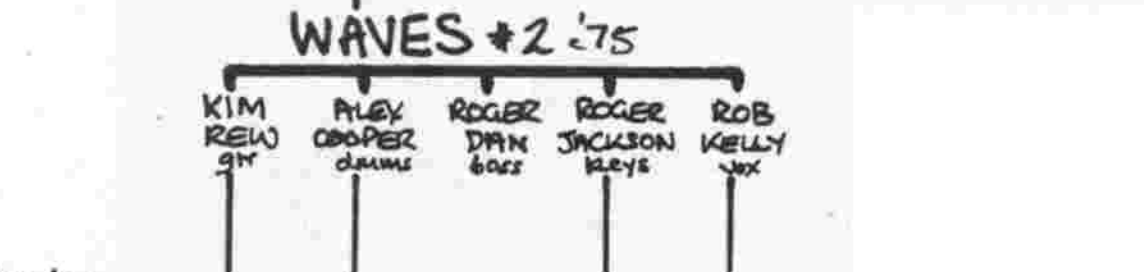
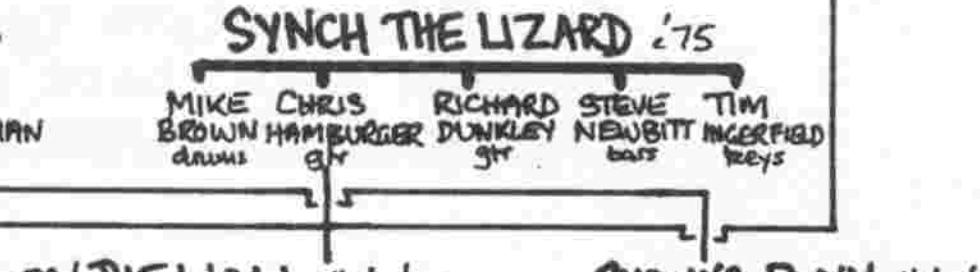
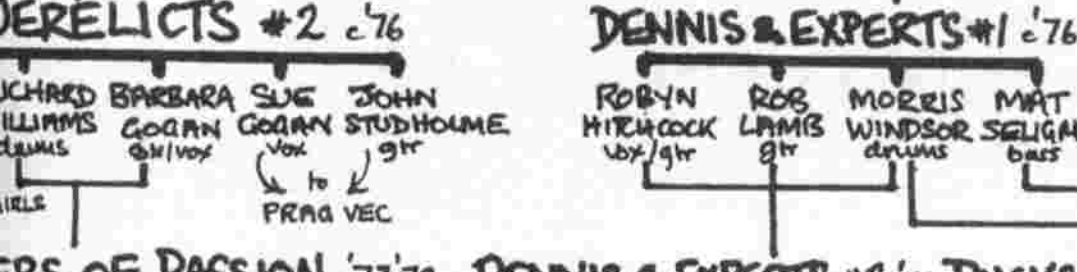
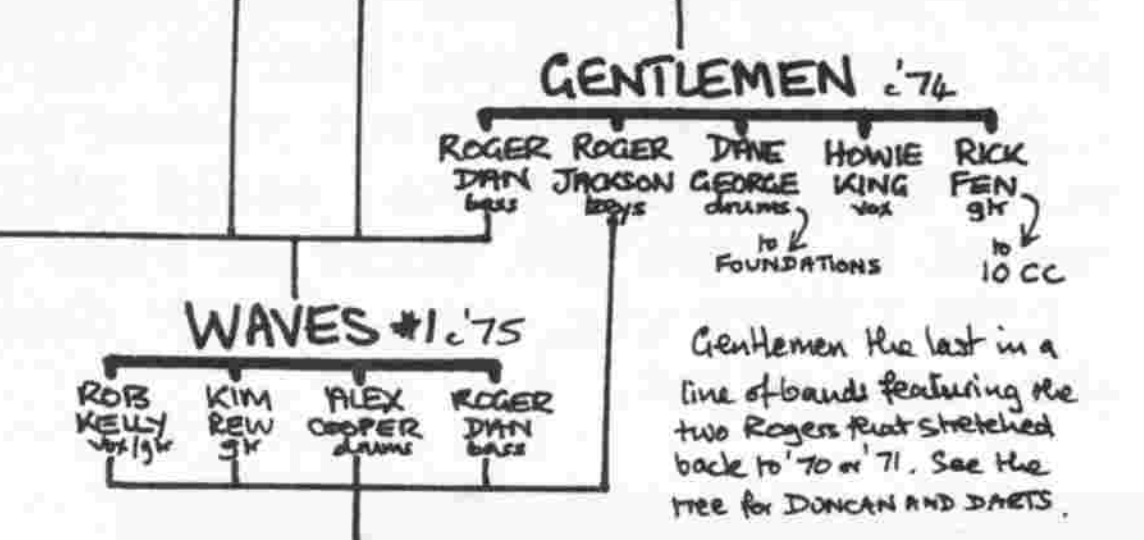
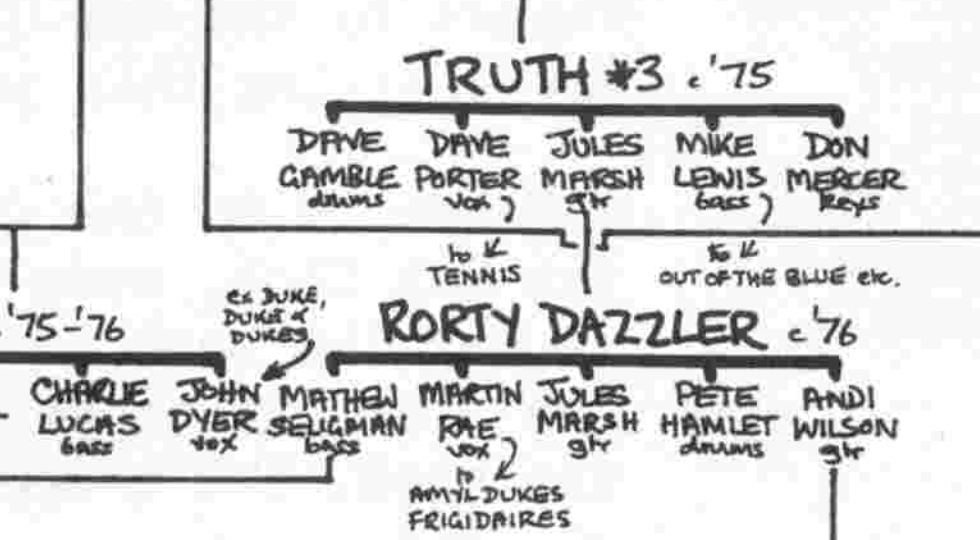
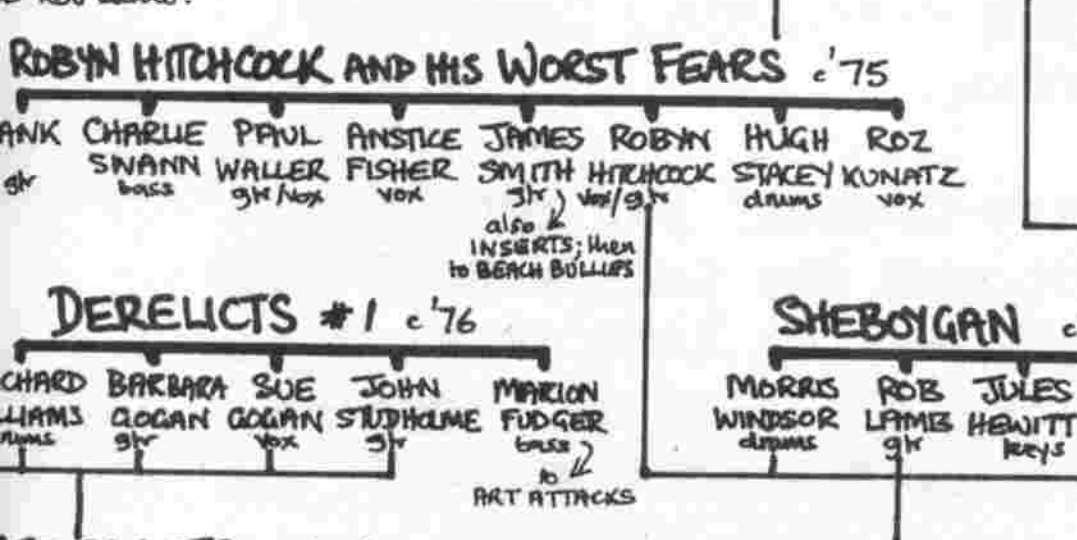
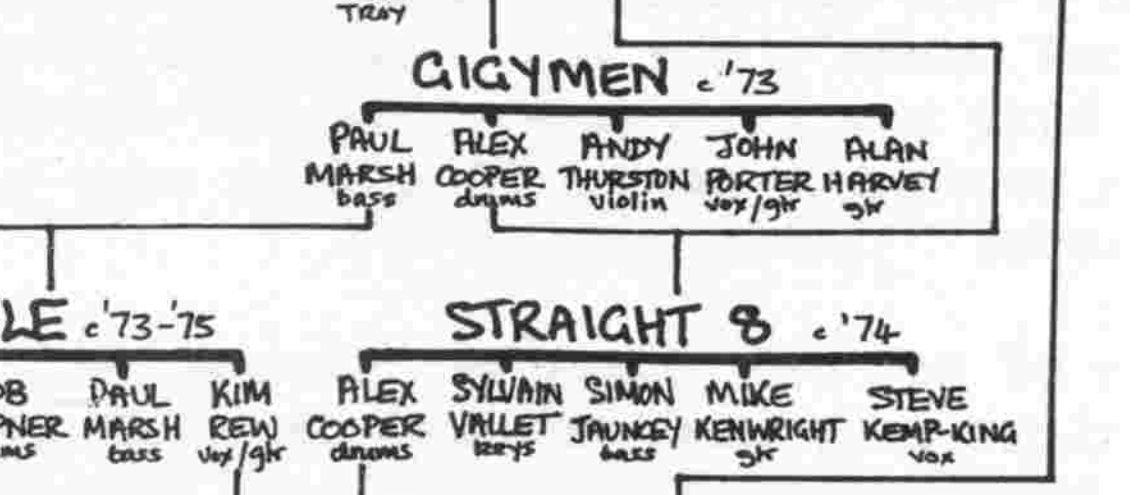
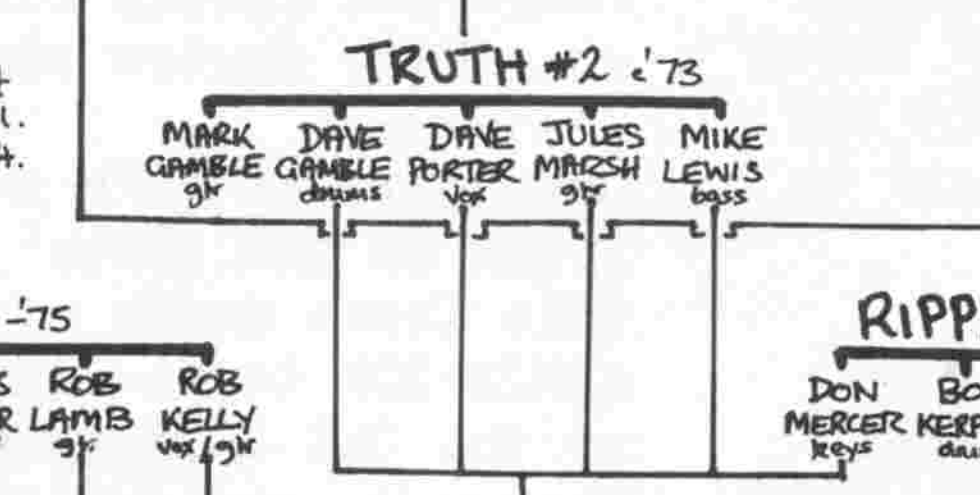
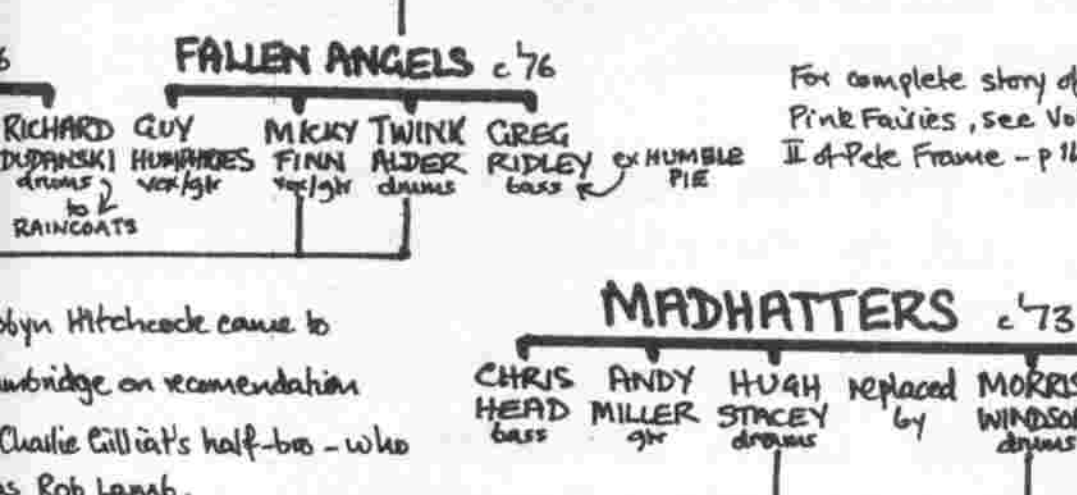
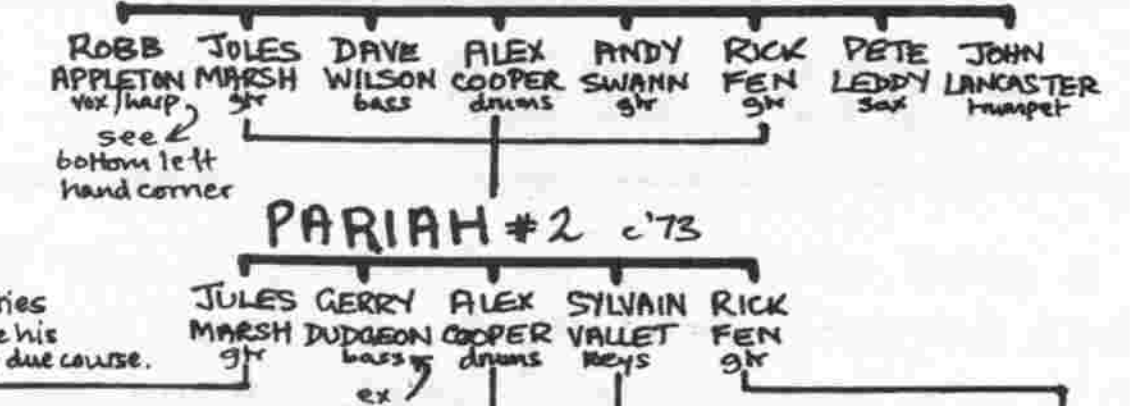
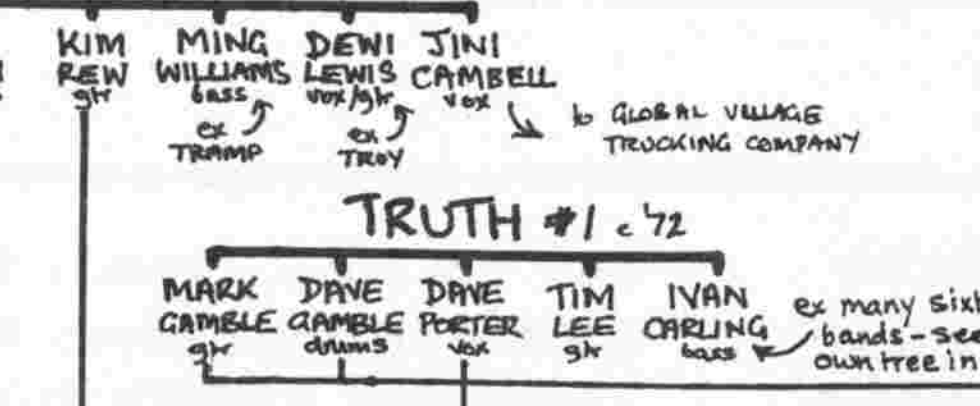
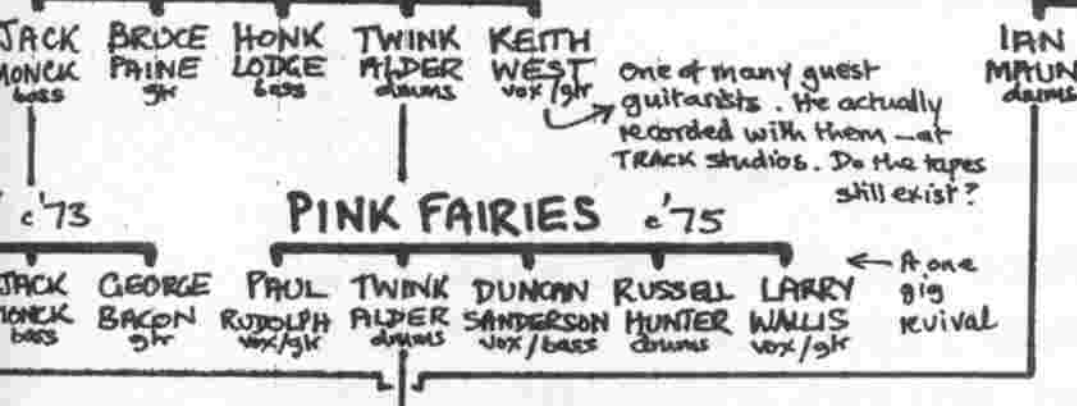
STOP PRESS: is a busy guy CHANNEL 5 (see above)



L.M.P.T.B.B. '71-'72

PUZZLE c'73

PARIAH #1 c'72-'73



Thanks are due to many people for information, delivered to me over the years. In too many cases I omitted to make notes at the time, and therefore forgot important things like dates. So apologies for mistakes - let me know about them for future reference.  
 © 1983 Cecile Mackenzie



## PHOTO COMP

Not a good start to photo-comp - our first winner never turned up to collect her prize! Didn't she see herself made famous in these pages? Doesn't she buy Blue Suede News? Doesn't she have any friends who buy it? Doesn't any-one recognise her? I find this very hard to believe!

Each of you out there in Camrock Land must straight away rush out and persuade everyone you know to buy a copy of their own and, with it held open before them, peer at all they meet just in case. Our first winner must be found! I'm sure that Mitch could still be persuaded to award the prize of FREE ENTRY to a CITY LIMITS gig, even though claimed on the wrong night.



Now to this issue's face in the audience. The gaze you see above was fixed upon a certain large and lively band whilst all about bopped at a City Centre venue last week.

Remember, if it's you, you can claim a free print of the photo', and by turning up with this issue under you arm you will gain FREE ADMISSION to see 13TH CHIME and PURE THOUGHT at the CAT CLUB on Monday 21st. November. Thanks to the Cat Club organising Committee for donating this prize.

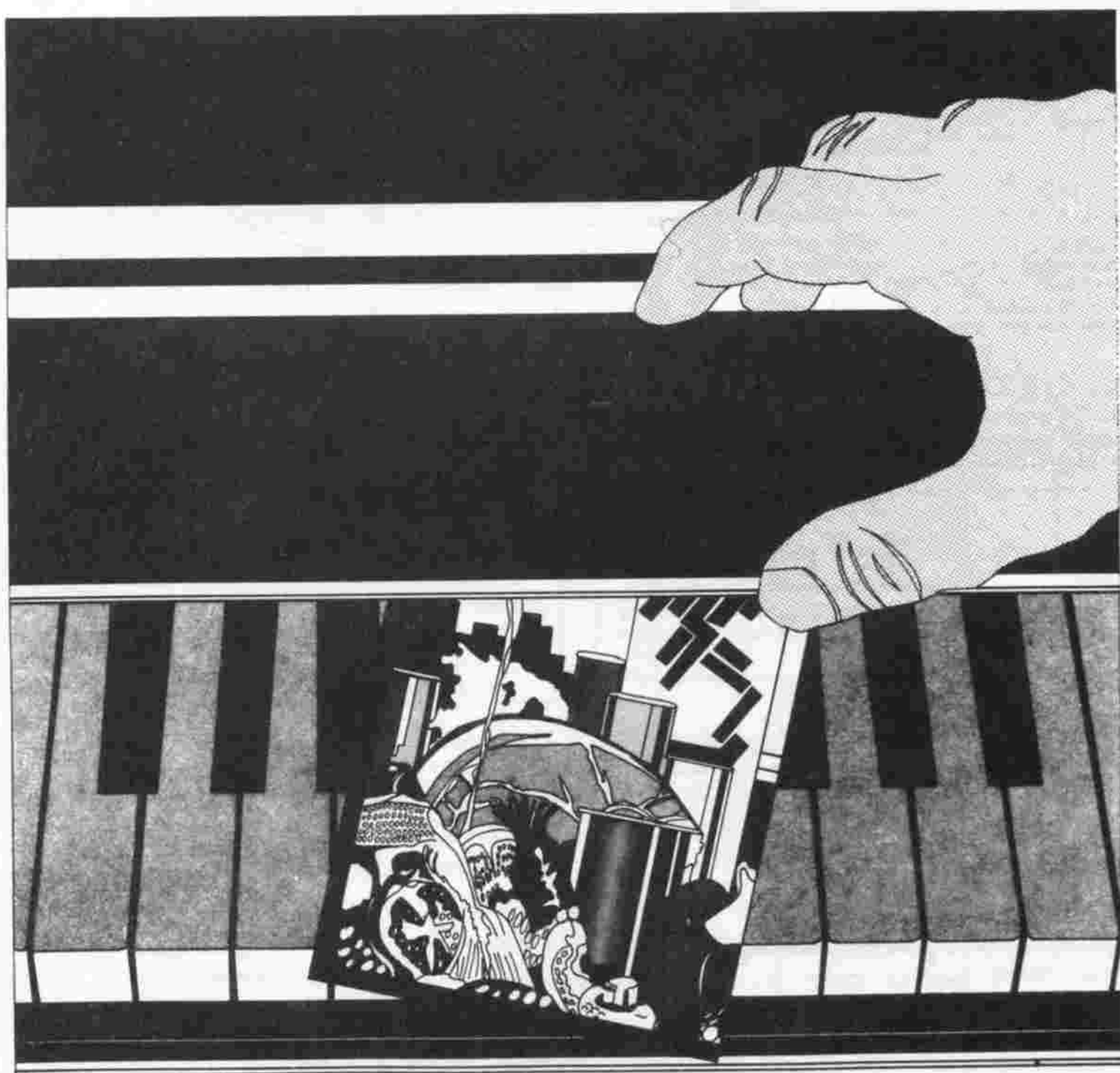
All credit to the City Council for providing the Cat Club, even though the Guild-small-Hall is not the best of venues for live rock, nor the evenings chosen for the gigs the best of the week. Let's see a little more support for this venture in future, it will all help to show that there really is a demand for LIVE ROCK IN CAMBRIDGE.

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## THE LAST RESORT



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## SUPREMES

Chris Heath

I brought with me to Kelsey Kerridge two firm prejudices. Firstly that elderly artistes extracting a living from people's nostalgia for times which cannot be honestly recreated are a bad thing; secondly that Motown is in essence a recorded dance music, that it relies on the precision and production of a studio to deliver a physical response. On the second point I remain fairly resolute, but the Supremes on Monday night presented a spirited, if ultimately futile, argument against the first.

After Mick Miller, the forgettable comedian (tonight's target for humour were the Chinese, Irish, Jews, blacks, gays, women, police, fat people, bald people and handicapped people - all in the best possible taste, I'm sure), the Supremes bounded on stage singing "We Can Work It Out" and I immediately feared the worst - dry ice spurted feebly out of the wings, the guitarist played two solos and the song was destroyed in a terrible Las Vegas arrangement.

"we're going to sing some of those old Supremes songs for all you old teenagers, and try to bring back memories of when you were young and crazy and in love" Mary Wilson announced, and I cringed; but to my surprise soon found myself sucked into a genuinely entertaining charade. Mary Wilson was the show's focus and played her role far better than I would have believed the ravages of time could have allowed (this was, she proudly announced, her 23rd year of being a Supreme). Her voice, though lacking the distinctiveness or quality of Diana Ross is still strong and versatile, and her enormous enthusiasm for performing instilled the show with a vitality I'd assumed it would have lost years ago.

Of course there were expected faults. The old Supremes catalogue was stripped of meaning by being fragmented in endless medleys. This, however, hardly seemed to matter - the show relies on the audience's memories of the records; the music on stage was only a reminder. After the inauspicious start the band thankfully provided a surprisingly restrained and unobtrusive backdrop, refraining from intruding on the audience's recollections.

The inbetween song chatter went from the embarrassing ("what we need is more love in the world today"- almost certainly true, but unlikely to be provided by the sugary satin spectacle



of the Supremes) to the sadly offensive ("girls, don't you just love those gorgeous creatures - men"). It was even sadder to learn that the Supremes' version of sexual equality involves one of the backing singers being in love, and the other being pregnant.

There's a lot more I could find to complain about. The dubious pantomime of a man being cajoled onto the stage to be propositioned with thinly disguised innuendo was hilarious - but mainly because everyone likes to see someone else make a fool of themselves; and the Supremes' bizarre ploy of finishing with "She works hard for the money", with the 'she' replaced by 'we' seemed a tauntingly blunt statement, if an honest one.

Nevertheless, when Mary Wilson asked "Did you have a good time?" most of the thousand people screamed "Yeeaaaah" and it was easy to see why. But even the Supremes don't try to hide that this is primarily aimed at rekindling memories of the past. As I left I passed a group of aggressively-clad adolescent punkettes discussing how "great" it had been - I find that vaguely worrying.

## THE ALMA

**LIVE ! LIVE! LIVE!**

EVERY THURSDAY & TUESDAY (ROCK NIGHT)

THE ALMA BREWERY, RUSSELL COURT  
(OFF PANTON STREET)



## SLAP KAT

Peter Ingrams

And lo, after many years of gentle slumber, that most humble of ale-houses known in these parts as the Alma, hath flung open its doors to the multitude of wandering minstrels which hath for so long been sadly and mournfully lost. Many a month of gentle persuasion, and quiet reassurance in the direction of the goodly folk of the region - as well as such brickwork and double glazing as were deemed necessary - hath supplied the tenant of the house, one Nick Winnington, with that much prized and strangely elusive of documents, the music license. Now read on.

I arrived at the Alma at about 9.45, and in my usual manner I walked up to the door and opened it. Heading straight to the bar without so much as a sideways glance proved to be a mistake. I found myself in the midst of several flat headed youths playfully attempting to push each other over. This was Slap Kat's first number, and was rapidly terminated by the landlord. After a brief reading of the riot act, the set was re-started and all was well.

Slap Kat are a three piece rockabilly outfit, with Olli Prime standing by his double bass, Lewis Williams draped over his guitar, and Razz playing his drum - sorry, drums. After a shaky start, they played a series of covers - Eddie Cochran and the like - with sufficient enthusiasm to cover the odd slip up. Very danceable - but without the dancing! I know the feeling.

Olli was most impressive, being able to sing, play, and have several articles of clothing removed - by what one assumes was his girlfriend/roadcrew/press girl - at the same time. He has something of a voice, but this was unfortunately masked by the liberal use of his echo machine.

The sound was good, but it was a pity about not being able to hear the lyrics too well. Lewis on guitar was reasonable - far too reasonable for my taste; but that's just me. Razz seemed to get a bit confused at times, but otherwise held down the beat, which when all is said and done is all that is required from a drummer.

As for the audience, it was a nice change to see lots of young, unpretentious, but most of all, happy faces.

Future attractions at the Alma include



Viva on Tues. 15th, String Swing on Thurs. 17th (and every other Thurs) and, of course, the Mighty Misbehaviour Brothers on Tuesday 22nd. (The same!) Prospective bands should ring Nick on Cambridge 64965, or go and see him. But remember, not too loud.

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Tel. Messages - 248341  
EDITOR: Graeme Mackenzie  
PHOTOGRAPHY: James Hall

Thanks to Liz for advertising help  
and of course to all contributors.



# DIARY

The fortnight Monday 31st October to Sunday 13th November must be creating some kind of record in Cambridge. A gig EVERY night, and more than one on many of them. All open to the public too; no doubt there were other closed college gigs as well. A surfeit? Well certainly too much even for a dedicated ligger like myself - after all one has to have some time to commune with the typewriter. But here, for what it is worth, is my diary of a weeks rocking(?).

**SATURDAY:** The Frigidaires at the Great Northern, or as it is now City Limits. Talk about pack 'em in fair 'n' square the band were hot, but the punters were hotter still. Sardine time taken to the limits of the bearable. The overbearing P.A. didn't help either. Ditch it Mitch, and get a little Bose system to hang on the wall and give yourself a little more valuable space. Then ... well, move the door, move the bar; buy up that shop next door - do whatever it takes, but give the poor punters a little room to breathe. And dance, even - especially when the Frigidaires are blowin' up a storm like that. Quite an opening.

**SUNDAY:** A day of rest - or is that recovery - but Robinson College was putting on the music for those that still needed it.

**MONDAY:** The Supremes at Kelsey Kerridge. Well I suppose having grown up with Motown I expected more than Chris, and was consequently even more embarrassed and disappointed. But just how much was it the venue, and how much the act. One suspects that in the more intimate confines of a club it would have worked better - indeed as the cabaret act they have become. The Motown band behind the girls were excellent - except that they had forgotten to bring any brass over from the States and had to hire them in London. But where were they? You simply couldn't hear them - and for that sort of music that's criminal, even in a sports hanger.

**TUESDAY:** Tennis and Storm at Fisher Hall. Another benefit disaster - partly the organisers' own fault again. Not enough publicity; but also neither band is well enough known to attract a big crowd on a Tuesday night. Which is a pity, because they are both good in their own

contrasting ways. Storm are the third good punk band in the city - and different from both Subculture and the Final Scream. And Tennis recovered very well from having to follow something as totally unlike them as the punks. I hope both bands get the chance to perform to more people in better circumstances.

**WEDNESDAY:** Fax at City Limits.

Luxuriating in the space and ability to get to the bar, I was nevertheless pleased for the band that they had a loyal troop of their own followers to provide an audience for them. As for the band; well they can play alright, but the problem is what they play. It is not that the material is bad either - just that it is totally stuck in a time warp. If it is Genesis, it is the Genesis of the mid-seventies - but really it is Wishbone Ash, of that era, and with a guitarist who can play the solos really well. Maybe there is still a market for that stuff, if so I hope they find it, for they're a charming bunch - but if I may presume to advise, if you can't change the material at least work on your presentation; it is not a business for the modest and self-effacing, you must project yourselves.

**THURSDAY:** Wobblies and Andy Goes Shopping at Fisher Hall. Dick says it all about the Jellies elsewhere, so what about Andy and the lads. They were the first to suggest it was not one of their best gigs; but I have always found them short of what they ought to be achieving. In fact they sometimes infuriate me because they could be so good....yet why aren't they. It's Andy's band, and I fear the fault does lie with him - and I hope he will not mind what he knows to be a friendly word of admonition. Hand over the vocals - or most of them - to Steve; get your keyboards out - again not necessarily for all the numbers - and stop trying to be Nick in between numbers it merely interrupts the flow and build up of the set. With the assets you've got - your own and Steve's energy, Dave and Duncan's enjoyment at playing, and above all Marc's brilliance on the guitar - you ought to be in a position to blow the likes of Lewin and his comments out of court. In the meantime when somebody not unsympathetic to the band said to me "maybe they are past it" one had to wonder. I'm not convinced either way, yet




## DIARY contd

FRIDAY, SATURDAY and SUNDAY saw the great music show rolling on at Robinson and City Limits - not to mention St. Johns. Our review of the Gymslips there never materialised - for which apologies - but I heard say they were pretty dire, which may explain why I never received anything about them. For myself, the typewriter called over the weekend - which brings us, finally, to:

MONDAY: The Cat Club, with the Code and Su Lyn, and not many people. Obviously Monday nights are going to have to be looked at for this venue - but that is another story. Suffice to say the Code looked promising and Su Lyn was very enjoyable indeed. She may never set the rock world on fire, but she does entertain.

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## WOBBLY JELLIES

Dick Page

There are certain times when Cambridge life pulls its butt out of the 18th century and joins the modern world. November 3rd was such an occasion. A prime feature of the night was people - a regular tour-de-force of the town's illiteratti massed their combined weight to fill a hall that has been notoriously empty of late. Could it be that live music has suddenly become popular? Possibly, but I am more tempted to speculate that it was mostly to do with the pulling power attributable to an all too rarely seen bunch of Cambridge mobsters called the Wobblies.

In case you've never seen them, let me try and give you some background gen.

Here's a parts list:

Vox: 3 off lovely girls  
Sax: 2 off + Tim May guesting (RoaringBoy)  
Horn: 1 off  
Guitar: 1 off  
Bass: 1 off  
Perc: 3 off, including 1 dread-locked gaffer doubling on vox.

The music is possibly best described as high energy salza with stacks of South American polyrhythm stabbed with the fattest brass sound heard since Out Of The Blue (who dem?). Visually the set is a veritable joy to behold centering, as it does, on more jumping around than is seen on the average Olympic track.

Emma's, Lindsay's and Sahah's front line

choreography and vocal finesse make for genuine entertainment alone, but more so when multiplexed with Steve's, Stuart's and Jo's tastefully executed horn hook riffs. Backing this is an up-market rhythm section who really burn. It's Phil (percus.) and Tony - undoubtedly the best skin-wiper to be seen locally - who nail the set down whilst Keith (vox, percussion and aforementioned dreadlocks) seems to be everywhere all the time. The outriders of the band are Chris (bass - all right so I should have included him in the rhythm section) and Callum (guitar) who make the band spectrally intact.

But what has all this talk of audio to do with visuals? The answer, a lot; because these kiddies provide a complete A/V deal whereby the one cannot be divorced from the other. I've already mentioned salza - so be it. Also include jazz funk, Afro and Stax and you have a fair topography - although I'm open to argument. The tricky thing in writing about the W's is that parallels are hard to draw - you really have to go and find out for yourselves.

All in all the night didn't seem like Cambridge at all. Maybe a touch too slick? Or maybe there's so much live rock now, in what used to be a desert, that high-flyin' gigs like this make you think you're living in a different town. Thankfully I suspect the latter.



## GIG GUIDE

- TUE.15: ALMA - VIVA  
Ipswich, Gaumont - Hot Chocolate
- WED.16: CITY LIMITS - TUTCH  
CCAT BATMAN - GLASS TIES
- THU.17: FISHER HALL - METEORS  
St. Ives, Floods - Su Lyn
- FRI.18: ROBINSON - ANDY GOES SHOPPING  
HARVEY COURT - WOBBLIES + CODE  
Ipswich, Gaumont - Shakin' Stevens  
Peterborough, Postillion - Rendez  
Vous  
CITY LIMITS - LLOYD WATSON BAND
- SAT.19: CITY LIMITS - SLAP KAT  
St.Albans, City Hall - Death Cult
- SUN.20: ROBINSON - RHYTHM METHOD  
Peterborough, Key - Canada  
Norwich, UEA - P.I.L.
- MON.21: CAT CLUB - PURE THOUGHT  
+ 13TH CHIME
- TUE.22: ALMA - MISBEHAVIOUR
- WED.23: CITY LIMITS - SINDY AND ACTION MEN  
CCAT BATMAN - SAMURAI
- THU.24: ALMA -
- FRI.25: CITY LIMITS - TALOS  
Melbourne Sports & Soc. Club - Trux  
St. Ives, Manchester Arms -  
Rendevous
- SAT.26: CITY LIMITS - 32-20
- SUN.27: Peterborough, Key - The Citizens
- MON.28: Ipswich, Gaumont - Toyah

## and another thing..... Lash LeJam

.....in which the rag gets a looking over,  
and other things may follow....

B.S.N's best review so far has to be Dick Page on Frigidaires at Fisher Hall - no learned piece this on the technical merits of the band, objective comment on the set, and so forth - in essence it was just 'I liked them, they did it good, you could have a couple of drinks and a whopping good time there'. Other reviewers please note, even his style was infectious with times good, no rip-off of N.M.E. prose for our Dick, or over-concern with the clever beauty of his literary efforts.

How right he was too. Frige's opening night bash at City Limits last week must be one of the most enjoyable local rock experiences in recent history. What an atmosphere!, how the band hammered it out!, how unlucky were those late arrivals who couldn't get in! The band have to take a place firmly in the Cambridge front rank on the basis of this performance, as does the venue itself.

Our Own Correspondent takes time off from his shopping to pass some good sounding comment in Issue No.3 - we're all supposed to be having a good time, bands and punters, neither is there just to do the other a big favour. Which, ironically, brings me to a great big grouse about the Shopping/Wobbly gig down at Fisher Hall last week. How come the posters indicate an 8.30 start, and we have to wait until 10'ish before a thing happens? I'm told that a very late arrival by Wobbly skin banger delayed the sound check - hence everything else (and, incidentally denied Shopping enough time to get properly psyched up before their set).

May be this was all due to good and unavoid-able reasons (in which case due apology), but too many bands come on late, too often. The punter who's paid good money to see a band which then treats him or her in such an arrogant manner should leave them in no doubt that it isn't appreciated!

Frige's gave us such a treat the other night partly because of the kick for them of having a crowd which was so obviously enjoying itself. A good attitude....we all fed each other and were firmly in it together. More power to all our elbows, which is more than I'd wish the pratts who're already ripping up the gent's loo at City Limits!

And another thing while I'm at it - but hang on, what's this? The bottom of the page already.....oh well!

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32 - 20  
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ADC Theatre  
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