

BLUE SUEDE NEWS



THE
CAMBRIDGE
ROCK RAG
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Featuring
DEPECHE MODE
Interview

Reviews of:
Andy Goes Shopping
Pure Thought

NEWS AND COMMENT

MAKING THE WAVES

"A&R men have been chasing Cambridge rock band Katrina and The Waves following Radio One play of a demo album on the Richard Skinner show. The band have now signed to an IDS label, Silvertown, which rush-releases a single, *Que Te Quiero*." So said Music Week, the weekly bible and barometer of the music 'biz', on page 4 and with a photo of the band with the IDS executives, having just signed on the dotted line. Read on and there a couple of pages later is a half page ad for the single. IDS mean business, and that's good news for Katrina and The Waves.

As yet the deal is only for the single, but the band are talking to IDS about putting out the album (nip into Andy's and buy a copy quick - the original version is going to be a valuable rarity soon); and other big name companies are interested enough to be offering "pretty tempting" sums of money. Alex, the band's drummer, will say no more than that - on the advice of his lawyer. It's good to know that the band are taking the matter seriously, and acting cautiously. But, of course, decisions have to be made soon and the momentum started by Skinner kept up.

Apparently there are already mutterings at Radio One about a form of Cambridge mafia exercising some sort of influence on Richard Skinner. I suppose it doesn't occur to rival disc-jocks who feel left out of this action that Skinner may have actually discovered something we all knew already - that Katrina and The Waves are good; very good in fact. Indeed Skinner liked them so much that he apparently made cassettes of the album to pass on to the (then) disinterested record companies when Nick Barraclough first gave him a copy of the album. He then bided his time to unleash them on the air to an unsuspecting business and public - when he was on the more widely listened to Simon Bates show. The response was, and is, phenomenal.

It only goes to show what I have always thought, that luck is the key to success (and of course the power of Radio One). But if you think further, it is not only luck - the band have to be good in the first place to make the Richard Skinners of this world sit up and take note of that particular album in preference to all the others they get given at parties. Then of course the band have to have the organisation and business sense to handle the break

when it comes. I am very happy to report that in Alex and his wife, Carmina who is managing the band, there is a fund of experience (built up over the many frustrating years when they were working so hard without reward), common sense, and indeed confidence that they will not only make it - but make it on their terms, musically and in the business side too. And one great asset they have over all the rest of the bands talking to record companies just now is that Katrina and The Waves come complete with an album ready for instant release - and another just completed. So the record companies have no problem in wondering what the result would be if they handed over vast sums to record albums - they simply have to buy the product ready made, if they like it; and they do.

The next question is, who are IDS? Neither I, nor indeed the band, had heard of them before this blew up. They are in fact a distribution company formed by a couple of guys who split from a major (very major) record company to go it alone - intent on applying the marketing techniques of the majors to the selling of Indie records.

Read the section on them in the Indie labels chapter in the Virgin Rock Yearbook Vol.4 and see how they have stirred up the business. The problem is that they don't have the resources, yet, to promote all the records they are distributing - which is of course precisely the same problem with a major, although they can handle so many more at any one time. Obviously from the point of view of the Waves the determination and ambition of IDS are to be weighed in the scales against the big money of a major. But since IDS have put them on their own label, clearly they will be one of the lucky few projects that get the full weight of an operation that has already succeeded in re-launching Tom Robinson (IDS promoted *War Baby* into the charts), and helped push forward *Aztec Camera* to a point where they could launch their present successful assault on the heights. If they stick with them, then what is good for IDS will be good for The Waves - and vice versa. With a major, well there's always that other band...and another.... Meantime IDS are already talking about expensive videos - with a man who often works for BBC TV, and was previously one of the mainmen behind TV's most exciting rockshow ever - the late and much lamented "Revolver". Keep tuned.

BLUE SUEDE NEWS. Late again. Apologies, but so much is happening just now it's difficult to get it all together at any one time. Bearing this in mind let me say now that the next edition will be the last before Christmas and the New Year (when we will take a couple of weeks off, before returning regularly again in the New Year). The next edition will therefore be a bumper Christmas edition - 20 pages plus - with reviews of the year and all the usual sort of festive fun. It too will probably be a little late - so watch out for it around the 16th of Dec.

TOT TAYLOR, ex-local lad now director of Compact Records and manager of their star Mari Wilson tells me that they are under attack from a greedy major record company who would like to get their hands on Mari - well her product anyway. They are trying to bankrupt Compact. I don't think they will succeed though, since Tot and his partner seem very capable of handling the pressure - and the Compact Organisation is like a family concern, so that all the artists are aware of what is going on, and will all rally round if the going gets tough. Tot's tales of the business are fascinating - and pretty scandalous at times - and we will be doing a series on the 'biz' in the New Year which will feature his story, and his advice to bands about how to make it; and then how to survive.

FRESHLY WHIPPED CHINAMEN are the latest new student band to be brought to my notice. Are they a beat group I ask myself! Whatever they are they include Hugh Levinson of CSU - that's a student union, not a band - and Emmanuel College; and that is where he can be contacted.

DUM DUM BOYS; RHYTHM METHOD; DIRTY MAC AND THE OVERCOATS; GRANT CHEQUE AND THE OVERDRAFTS are also student bands about who I know little, but would like to hear more - if they are anything more than a one-off silly name jam session.

MAD are not a band; they are outfit providing PA and lights hire, operating out of Peterborough. They do the sound for the Glasshouse gigs at the Key Theatre over there - and according to Tranzista and the Frigidaires who both played there they are very good at it. Ring Paul 0733 41276 or Andy 0733 222914.

BURLEIGH ARMS is going to re-open for bands fairly soon. This news comes from Katrina and The Waves who are booked to play there in the near future, so that is something to look out for.

TREVOR DANN, famous BBC personality and presenter of Radio Cambs' very own Rockshow (Sat. 12 midday to 2pm) is joining the team producing the "Whistle Test" for the new series starting in the new year. In the meantime the Rockshow starts traveling on Sat. 10th when we go to Spaceward Studios for a live broadcast from there. See you fen fans there.

METEORS fans who haven't heard the full story yet will be relieved to hear that their non-appearance at Fisher Hall (as reported inside by Chris Heath) was not their fault. According to the manager, who told this to Sue Moulton in person, the promoter was informed on the previous Saturday that the guitarist was injured and would not be able to play on the Thursday of the gig. When friends of the band who knew this turned up on the night and asked why the band were still down to play, the promoter's representatives told them to shut up in no uncertain terms. The promoter himself, of course, was not there to offer explanations - he said later his Porsche had broken down en route!

City Limits

Station Road Corner, Cambridge.

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| Wed. Nov. 30 | <u>GLASS TIES</u> (electronic pop - similar to A Flock of Seagulls - 2 single releases on E.M.I.) |
| Fri. Dec. 2 | <u>MARZ</u> (blues/rock band from the West Midlands) |
| Sat. Dec. 3 | <u>THE FACE</u> (funk/rock sound from this popular local band - recent single released on Wimp) |
| Wed. Dec. 7 | <u>THE ANIMAL ASYLUM</u> (4 piece rockabilly/psychobilly band from the Royston area) |
| Fri. Dec. 9 | <u>DUMPY'S RUSTY NUTS</u> (X-Cert. heavy blues/rock - recently toured supporting The Blues Band) |
| Sat. Dec. 10 | <u>A FLOCK OF WILLIES</u> (rock/pop from familiar local faces) |

LIVE MUSIC EVERY WEDNESDAY, FRIDAY, SATURDAY

From Our Own Correspondent

A weekend with a Soft Boys get together brought with it all the inevitable questions about re-forming, not only the Soft Boys but also Telephone Bill. It is inevitable that one should look back at the past through out-of-focus, rose-tinted, spectacles; particularly when talking to interviewers and fans of the bands. You don't want to shatter their illusions anymore than your own. However....

One Friday in September 1979, Telephone Bill set out at 2.30 to do a series of 3 gigs over the weekend. One in Rochester (Kent), one in Weston-super-Mare (Somerset), one in the Isle Of Man (just off Lancashire - oh, get a map out). The plan was to drive to London after the Friday gig, have a lazy day, scoot down the M4 to Weston, and then go to Manchester and on to catch the ferry from Liverpool on Sunday.

First thing was, no ferries from Liverpool on Sunday, so it had to be Morecombe - which is a fair haul from Manchester. The M11 not being finished at that time, there were the usual traffic jams before, during and after the Dartford tunnel and along the M2 to Rochester - a place best known for being in the opening sequence of "Softly Softly". As the van juddered to a halt by the venue, all the heater hoses blew, surrounding us in water and steam. We called the AA. We set up and sound-checked. No AA. We went for a meal. No AA. We discovered we were doing two spots - one starting just after midnight. Thanks God. The AA arrived during the first spot - making their presence felt both because their van's radio was breaking through on the PA, and because they wouldn't fix the van without a band-member present. Gerry left the stage; two numbers later he returned. They couldn't fix it anyway. Someone knew a mechanic - so Gerry disappeared again. We watched a film in the hotel lounge. Gerry returned at 11.30 - with a mechanic. We went on stage just before the denouement of the film; the audience were asleep. We finished the set; packed up; the rest of the band went, as arranged, to London, while Gerry and I went off to spend the night with a mad Russian folkie who's eyes point in two different directions - and who insisted on playing us all 24 tunes on his new doorbell before bed, at 3am.

Saturday. Wake up in twin kids bedroom in short beds which smell of piss, and go to collect supposedly mended van at 8.30am. Drive to London in traffic. Pick up band. Reach M4 at 2.30. Heater hoses break again! (£50 down the drain) Limp to Weston along M4/M5 via houses and service stations stopping for water. Arrive at gig at 6.30. Eat. Play. Pack up. Leave for Manchester at 12.15am. Arrive Manchester at 4.30am after stopping at every service station for water. By this time the entire band had caught Chris Cox's cold, and the van was knee-deep in used tissues, and the newspapers soaking up the leaks from the heater hoses. We crawled into sleeping bags, spent 3 hours not sleeping on the floor of a friends house - and then up again at 7.30am. Limp up the M6 to Morecombe, arriving just (only just) in time for the four hour ferry journey to the Isle of Man which brought us to Douglas at 3pm.

Nobody bothered to tell us it was a 2000 seater theatre! 4 Boses and two eliminators was hardly going to reach the front half of the stalls, let alone the back of the upper circle. Of course, it turned out that only 300 tickets had been sold, luckily for us (ha!) so the PA only had to reach the front half of the stalls. It also turned out that Anne had lost her purse with £35 in it. We did the only thing possible in the circumstances; we got drunk. We slept well after that, of course, and since the ferry didn't leave until 7pm on Monday, we got up late and looked round Douglas. Well, alright, I looked at the inside of all the cafes and chemists, along with Gerry and Chris, swopping cough mixtures and throat sweets and inhalers, while Nick and Anne spent the day at Douglas Police Station vainly trying to get Anne's purse back.

At 7pm we caught the ferry. At 11pm the ferry got to Morcambe. The ambulance limped, via every service station (for water - remember), down the M6, M1, A45 to Cambridge where we arrived at 6am on Tuesday. Most of the gig money went on mending the van. I'm not trying to put anyone off, but that's what it's really like.

ANDY METCALFE

COVER PHOTO: Geoff Woods of STORM. Taken by James, as all photos in this issue - except those of Tranzista; and Depeche Mode (Alan Ballard).

The cat got the cream on Monday night, at last. Over a hundred turned out on a cold night to enjoy the best Guildhall gig since Boo and friends divided the honours with their Wimp successors The Face. Here at last were enough punters to provide some incentive to the bands; and two bands well matched with each other - and strangely enough, with the venue too. For once the cavernous corners and echoing vault of the small hall came alive with atmosphere. It helps, of course, if it's dark overhead when there is a glass ceiling - and Bob's Streetlites skills have come on in leaps and bounds of late, as the work pours in. All praise to him for filling the gloom with as little of the right light as was required at the right time.

Pure Thought have been bidding their time before returning to the fray with their new drummer - but their patience has been well rewarded. Right from the first beat they, and drummer Giles Hales-Took, were right on the spot. The wait has been well worthwhile; and the lesson is there for many new bands who rush straight into gigging - there is no way round the need for adequate rehearsal. And another lesson I think Pure Thought have learnt is to keep the set only as long as their strongest material will permit. In the past they have tended to play a succession of similar sounding songs, a couple of which stood out - like their track on the Wimp compilation album, "Caught In The Middle, which it was nice to hear again, albeit re-arranged - but the rest of which dragged interminably. Now all

but perhaps one of the set stood up to scrutiny on their own - and there was more variety. Especially striking was the slow song that allowed Robb Appleton to use his marvellous voice to full effect. It, and the occasional bursts of harp reminded us - not that we had forgotten - of Robb's past brilliance as a blues singer; and it's nice to see that he has at last found some songs and a band in which his vocal talents can be properly used in contemporary fashion.

Flanking Robb in the band were the Simpson brothers; Jim on bass, and Pete on guitar. As his old band, Tranzista, go through bass players almost as quickly as they change names, it is nice to see that Jim has also found a band where he appears to be at home. Big brother Pete looms across the other side of the stage, wrapped in a black overcoat - looking not unlike Robyn Hitchcock on an especially menacing night - churning out the continuous stream of nerve-tingling chords that provide the aural atmosphere and the real bite of the band. While he now eschews the heavy solos that, while impressive, never quite fitted the band's place in the music spectrum, he is still the vital presence in the band brooding over the whole performance - and on this showing registering, I trust, somewhere behind his impassive mask of a face quiet satisfaction at this very impressive re-incarnation of Pure Thought.

And talking of face-masks, 13th Chime burst on stage in various shades of

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PURE THOUGHT

black and leather, each with a glittering demons mask - in front of a mini-sheaf of corn attached to the drum kit. I suspect black magic and fertility rites. What is to be sacrificed tonight? Well, their lyrics for a start - the vocalist had no chance against the blast of sound that swept the Guildhall as the band erupted into action. I suspect Mick the vocalist has quite a good voice, given the chance - and he certainly looks the part. So does the guitarist, Gary, but surprisingly enough even he was more often than not inaudible. The sound was totally dominated by the rhythm section, and above all by the bass playing of Terry Taylor. Ricky kept him company on the drums solidly enough, but Terry was the dominating force, not only aurally, but visually too. A shock of blonde hair atop a young but gaunt face, he strode the stage with all the style of a star in the making - and he played like one too. In fact he played like one or two in particular. Like Roger Waters on the early Floyd albums; or like Lemmy with Hawkwind, or Duncan Sanderson of the Pink Fairies. This may now be "positive punk" - as I've been told - but not so long ago it was psychedelic heavy rock. I just closed my eyes and let the time-warp operate - and, as the band went into interstellar overdrive (not literally, but at least one of Terry's bass lines was straight out of Piper At The Gates Of Dawn) again the echo and the atmosphere of that perverse little hall were right, and even the volume was not wrong. There were few subtleties to be lost, or delicate instrumental techniques to be distorted by excessive noise. Instead it was once again time to revel

in the feedback, stare at the stone dancers at the front and shake our heads like we used to do when we had all that hair to fling about - like the heavy metal bands, and Status Quo, still do.

Let me not suggest for a moment, however, that the Chime are just another heavy metal mob churning out the same old tired licks and laughable (if not downright offensive) lyrics. 13th Chime are a genuine flashback to the days before "metal" took over "heavy" music. They are young, fresh and fun to watch - and most of those coming to watch them are young too. They are also mostly of a punkish description, not metal men.

As I have always suspected, there is a branch of the punk tree that leads straight back to psychedelia - which is doubtless why old freaks mutate more easily into second-hand punks than anything else. But the branches of punk are legion now, and if 13th Chime and Pure Thought are both "positive punk" bands, then it's a branch in Cambridge with a fertile future - even if it probably lies more with the contemporary sound (not to mention the experience and hard work) as represented by Pure Thought, than with the freaky fantasies of 13th Chime. All hail to both bands though for a thoroughly enjoyable evening - and a Monday too! When will it happen again?

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Out of the woodwork and into Fisher Hall poured Cambridgeshire's psychobillies last Thursday. I hid in the shadows at the back, alone without the regulation haircut, feeling very conspicuous. But any prospects of the audience being whipped into a frenzy were shattered by the announcement of the non-appearance of the main attraction; for the rest of the evening most of those present stood or sat around, glum and despondent, wondering why they were wasting their time.

Cambridge's 3-piece rockabilly band SLAPKAT took the opportunity to play a hastily arranged support slot. Like Restless who followed they play fairly traditional rockabilly and showed themselves to be perfectly competent but devastatingly unoriginal. Their guitarist stood centre stage, detirminedly watching his guitar as if undergoing instrumental tuition; the stand-up drummer thumped away with welcome simplicity, and the singer/bass player crooned from the left in a voice which is really too pure and nice for this sort of music.

RESTLESS provided similar fare. They attacked a slightly more diverse set of covers (Baby please don't go, Money Honey, Shake your moneymaker) with a little more energy and a few hints of individuality; but not even the committed in the audience could get excited. A typical eternal support band they were quite unable to capitalise on the prospect of headlining.

The audience itself seemed quite bemused by the proceedings; their homage to commune with psychobilly having uncovered only two rockabilly bands and a disco that played nothing more radical than the Polecats. The only compensation offered for the Meteors' absence were tickets supposedly valid if they play in Cambridge again.

Still a group of about 15 fans decided to make the best of a bad job and, more despite the bands than because of them, careered up and down and hurled themselves aimlessly into each other in a celebration of young male toughness. That may not sound like fun, but it was the nearest anyone got to it.

— A NEW SORT OF KICK —

A consolation of sorts at the Meteors fiasco was discovering the first issue of a new Cambridge fanzine "A New Kind Of Kick". A mixture of the best and the

worst that this format can offer it contains 7 pages of interviews with Crass, Charlie Harper (Urban Dogs, UK Subs), Paralysis and Final Scream - held together by a single staple. The wilfully amateur graphics are scrappy, following a well-trodden punk press aesthetic and only rarely surprising the reader. The record reviews ("Nu Vinyl") have little to say, but the interviews, especially the fairly probing and critical Crass one, do attempt to transcend the Sounds-style "What do you drink? What colour underwear have you got on? punk interviews.

The fanzine takes a perhaps not undeserved jibe at Blue Suede News with its minimalist "definitve Cattle Market article" - BSN could learn from its youthful enthusiasm and spontaneity. (Youthful and spontaneous writers please step forward - you will be very welcome in BSN. Ed.) "A New Kind Of Kick" often goes too far the other way in trivialising its subject matter - music is worth being serious about; nevertheless, being serious can and should be enjoyable, interesting and fun.

The editors not only need to learn the difference between attractive spontaneity and infuriating shoddiness, but also need to get more substance both into each article and the magazine as a whole to justify the present 30p cost, and to build up a worthwhile readership. Issue 1 is available from 103 High St. Balsham, Cambs. CB1 6EP; and perhaps from The Beat Goes On. Issue 2 (featuring among others The Sex Gang Children) will be out, typically, "as soon as we can be bothered."



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DEPECHE MODE

This text was extracted almost verbatim from an interview conducted in the bowels of Broadcasting House by Uncle Trevor Dann - presenter of the Radio Cambridgeshire ROCKSHOW (Saturdays at 12 noon), on which it was previously broadcast. He was speaking to Martin and Dave from Depeche Mode; and before the talk was aired, Trevor played the single "Love In Itself 2", following it up with a question about the numbering of the song....

Dave: It's mainly down to mixing, because the one on the LP was obviously the first we mixed - we mixed it all together, then we lifted the single from the LP, went back to Berlin, mixed it again, cut it around a bit, sort of made it a bit brighter. Things that we weren't too happy with on the first mix, we changed on the second...then there's the 12" mix, which was chopped around and made longer - drums up - more of a dance thing, so that was no. 3, and then 4 was the version that we recorded live in the studio, just with piano, guitar and vocals, which was quite funny.

Uncle Trevor Dann: Is that something you like doing, playing around with a piece of music in the studio? Do you enjoy that as much as playing live?

D: Yeah, when you can do things like that in the studio, it's a bit more fun. When we done the live version, it was just a bit of fun. We just wanted to go in and put it straight down; we didn't want to do loads of overdubs and get it right, we just went straight in and Martin played the guitar, Alan was playing the piano, and I was singing; we just shoved it down. And it was quite good, so that was an extra track on the 12".

UTD: Martin, you've just finished your British tour; I think one of the things that has taken a lot of people by surprise is...I don't think we've ever seen you as a teeny-bop group, yet there was a lot of people at those gigs screaming and treating you like Duran Duran....

Martin: We've not been told we're a teeny-bop group? We've always been told that, every tour. I think if you'd come to any of the previous tours, you'd have had an even more shocking experience. This tour was probably the least teeny-bop of all.

UTD: As far as that teeny-bop audience is concerned, what do you think it is they like about you? I've always thought your songs are a bit glum....

M: Yeah, I suppose so...I think it's just the way we're portrayed in the press, and in the girls' magazines, things like that.

D: Andy's good looks come into it quite a lot! But on the last tour we had a lot wider audience; it was very varied; more like 50/50 boys and girls, whereas on previous tours it was more like 70% girls.

UTD: But Martin, your lyrics are not happy-go-lucky Bay City Rollers type lyrics - they're quite serious....

M: I think most people don't even listen to lyrics though; most people are just interested in the 'chunes'. There's quite a lot of melody in them (I think) so the kids just sort of pick up on that.

D: The Kids!

Here the interview broke for another piece of music, and your interpreter breaks in. It's obvious from the grammar of our young popstars that I have not corrected their speech to any great extent. I have refrained from interfering in this way not so as to show them up as illiterate - which they are not - but to help demonstrate Martin and Dave's perfectly ordinary Basildon voices.

UTD: Dave, the synthesizer revolution seems to be being taken over somewhat by guitars coming back. Do you think that "synthesizers" have come to an end, or is there still a lot more ground you can tread with them?

D: I think mainly it's not just synths, all these groups with guitars are coming back; but you'll probably find about 70% of the top 40 have electronic instruments in there somewhere... electronic gadgets, drum machines, synthesized bass...in disco records, for instance, usually the whole thing is electronic, and has been for years. People say drum machines are really bad, but funk music uses drum machines nearly always.

UTD: It was always customary when tedious rock stars in the 70s were interviewed to ask them their influences,



"man"....Do you two listen to electronic music at home, and if so, whom?

M: Of course we listen to electronic music - quite a lot - but not only electronic music; we like a lot of guitar-based bands as well...There's no-one really that you could say influences our musical direction.

UTD: Out of the synth bands, who do you rate?

M: All kinds of bands; obviously Kraftwerk, DAF

D: A lot of them are not all electronic, most of them...pop groups that have come over the last three years like Soft Cell, Human League, and bands like that are not all electronic. On Soft Cell records there's guitars and acoustic instruments; on Human League records there's bass guitars, and probably other instruments in there as well - real instruments. For instance, on our last LP we used a lot of acoustic instruments as well. We're more interested in the sound than the type of instrument.

UTD: By the time everybody hears this interview, you'll have been on Top Of The Pops again this week - you're here now getting ready for it. It seems rather a boring day... when did you get here this morning?

D: Our camera call was eleven o'clock - that's pretty bad karma - that's probably one of the worst calls you can get.

M: And we get it every time! We have been lucky: I think we had a 2 o'clock once.

D: Once. We were trying to work it out today. We seem to do TOPP abnormally more times live than any other bands. We worked out today that we'd done it 20 times, and every time we've had an early call, the earliest possible call, except for that one time at 2pm.

M: You get here, do your thing at 11, then you're not needed until 4, when you do a dress rehearsal, then you go away again till you come back and do the real thing around 7.30; so the time in between you're just sitting in your

dressing room reading papers and generally getting very depressed and bored....

UTD: You've got a single in the charts at the moment; you've got an LP out and doing well; you've just finished a tour ...what are you doing in the immediate future?

D: Next is Germany. In Germany, we've suddenly become very successful. It's been building over the last few years, right from the start really; and now this LP's done extremely well, and is still in the Top 10 over there as well,

so we've got an extensive tour that lasts all of December. That's the next real tour or anything; until then the boys are going to be doing a bit of writing, hopefully, and we're just doing things like TV abroad - if things come up, we'll just fly out and do them. Other than that, we'll just be getting the business straight....

Thanks to Trevor Dann for permission to use this interview, the copyright of which I presume belongs to the BBC. It would have been interesting to hear the bits Trevor himself edited out; do Depeche Mode swear?
JON LEWIN

COLLECTING RECORDS

Carl Tweed

This article is for the benefit of the novice collector who wonders how anyone can afford to build up a massive stockpile of records. With singles costing more than £1 and albums £5, how do you avoid bankruptcy? The answer is to search for bargains, and then either sell them at a profit or add them to your collection.

Your first stop in Cambridge should be The Beat Goes On in Regent Street. It has an impressive range of new and secondhand records. It is especially useful for obtaining independent and foreign labels. At first sight the vast number of secondhand albums looks promising. On closer examination you will find that many of the covers are tatty from being squashed in the racks; the price being charged may be exorbitant, as the value of the record will have seriously depreciated.

The shop's strength lies in picture sleeve singles from post-1976. Many are displayed on the wall in protective plastic covers. The records are usually in excellent condition and most will cost you less than a new single. You can quickly collect the back catalogue of new wave artists like Elvis Costello and the Jam. Older singles tend to be given eccentric prices. This means you might come accross a good buy. On the other hand, it also means that soul singles and EPs, for example, are ludicrously overpriced.

Andy's stall on the market sells secondhand albums. Unfortunately, you will find the same problem with the covers. It also has a bargain section of deletions and American cut-outs (US deletions which have a small cut in the corner of the cover to signify that they are no longer to be sold at full-price).

It is a good place to pick up albums by American artists from the 1970s; the prices are as low as 99p. These records are also available from Andy's shop in Mill Road.

Probably the best shop in Cambridge for bargains is Cambridge Resale in Mill Road. In addition to records, they sell such items as radios, televisions, typewriters, binoculars and air weapons. They have plenty of singles at 5p, including unplayed old stock from the Record Bar next door. There are even more singles at around 25p. A lot are scratched but quite a few are in very good condition. Most come from the 1970s and a sizeable proportion are soul singles. There are also albums, including deletions, at £1.

And briefly, a look at a few other places that provide good value for the record collector. Another shop in Mill Road selling secondhand goods, Raytone, has a small selection of albums; they are generally in better condition than those at Cambridge Resale. Our Price and Parrotts have deletions at under £2. Jays and Millers often have sales. Also don't forget the charity shops; I bought a mint copy of the Walls Ice Cream EP, on the Apple label, in one of these shops.

If you make regular visits to the places I have mentioned, you will be sure to find some interesting items at prices which aren't prohibitive.

BLUE SUEDE NEWS, 109 KING STREET.
Tel. Messages - 248341
EDITOR: Graeme Mackenzie
PHOTOGRAPHY: James Hall

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



There are in Cambridge two types of rock band. Firstly there are those who try to be radically nouveau; and amongst them, some run the risk of becoming as sharp as the currently available Beaujolais, ending up strung somewhere between a world they used to know and one they would like to. For these a positive helping hand is required, to allow them the chance of overcoming endemic cynicism. Others fall spectacularly by the wayside, or gently retire hurt. Either which way, the aspect of their sets that normally suffers first is entertainment value. This is, presumably, because so much energy has to be dissipated in writing, arranging, playing and being your own manager that there's precious little left for anything else.

Secondly, there are those who prefer to leave their politics at home - safely hidden from harsh criticism - and concentrate on getting gig-goers out of it and dancing, by doing mostly covers. Some of these too can bomb out in the most atrocious way, whereby a healthy percentage of the crowd end up playing back the original in their own minds. God knows, I've seen enough of those to put me off cheap music for the rest of

my all too short life. Andy Goes Shopping fall into the second category with a larger-than-life thump; but whereabouts? In search of an answer I hauled my weary carcass into two gigs - one town, one gown - to see what they could accomplish with two distinct cliques.

The Town Gig - City Limits

For this little number I arrived somewhat late and hence ran straight into a wall of sound and people. And were these people standing idly by re-running albums in their heads? No, they were not. They weren't given the chance. The PA, although a little less than crystal clear, was more than compensated for by the line-up of gear that looked and sounded like a promo deal for a music shop. It helps to buy the best. It also helps if you can play what you've bought. The pedigree and experience of the Shoppers dictate that they should at least have half a chance. The pedigree may perhaps be the subject of debate, but the experience comes accross clear as a ringin' bell; and this is the real reason why we didn't have a chance to crash land on boredom.

The music was hammered into us, body and soul. If we, in spending land, are the Draculas of music - bleeding musos

to purgatory for our own satisfaction - then Andy et al are a Van Helsing collective, with a neat line in wooden stakes, and plenty of writhing bodies to aim at among the dancing crowds. Yes, you read it, dancing - at a town gig! But dancing to what, you may be asking? Well, topically enough, "Werewolves of London" for a kick-off. "I Wanna See the Bright Lights Tonight" to continue the mood; "Move It On", "Black Friday", "Rain", "Brother John" etc, etc, etc. It would be a heinous lie to suggest that they stick to only one type of music. It's better to tell you that it was somewhat like living inside a high-class sampler. The townies liked the taste of it all.

The Gown Gig - Churchill Bar

Not exactly gown in the truest sense of the word; but May Ball Sec's take note of the fact that if the reception accorded these guys is anything to go by, then there is a demand to have them before they have you. The same set again seemingly unchanged, except for the advantage of having been played one more time. A larger stage, however - at floor level, to bring them down to our level, which seemed to make them work harder, and allowed us a closer judgement. The band got caught in a (virtuous) vicious circle bounded by themselves and the

bobbing heads who wouldn't let them go - and then there was the dancing again; but so much more intense than us mere townies can provide. As the humidity crept inexorably upward so the band had to stamp it out even harder to get it out and accross - it's at times like this that Marc's fire-brand slide playing really cuts.

Besides the Cambridge Rock Guitarist Extraordinaire your Shopping expedition will yield a driving drummer in Duncan, sadly underused since his Darts dissolved; an array of other percussion that seems to take up most of an average size stage by itself, played by a hypnotist (Steve) who could double as a sprinter; demon Dave, the rhythm player who gives them a setting gel; and of course, Andy himself, who is the vocal focal point and the chief cook. There is no point in singling out any one particular entertainer because I'd be up all night swopping pros and cons. Quite a lot of pro. Absolutely no con.

As for town and gown, what's the difference? None as far as this band's outlook, and the audiences' reactions are concerned. Where do they fall in the world of cover versions? At the front-running pointed end, where they are more than content to stay.

WIMP REPORT

David Gowar

A Wimp column! Designed to appear once a month to keep you up to date with the doings of your local label, now two years and eight releases old.

The two new singles - "Paradise/Tell Me Why" by The Face (double A), and "Who's She?" from Sindy And Tha Action Men - went on national release on 11th November. This means that around 200 record shops up and down the country will have one or two copies of each. What happens next depends almost entirely on airplay. No official returns yet; but local stations, especially in Scotland and the South-West, seem once again to like the product. Unofficial score, 7 days since mailout - The Face 16 plays on 7 stations (plus playlisting on Hereward); Sindy 19 on 9. Nothing on Radio One yet, not even friend Plee, who has been heard to say very nice things about both bands. If you like either single, write to a DJ.

The "Who's She?" video is now on a master destined for a national chain of video jukeboxes....

Occasional Action Man Roger Jackson (he's played on all the Sindy records) is now MARILYN'S musical director, and could be spotted behind a grand piano, disguised as a Ted on T.O.T.P. a couple of weeks ago....

The Face went down a storm at Leicester Poly at the end of last month, and even got the van surrounded by excitable young ladies - could this happen in Cambridge?

Face gigs: 29th Nov. - Newnham Ball
30th Nov. - New Hall
3rd Dec. - City Limits

Sindy gigs: 3rd Dec. - Canterbury

THE ALMA

LIVE! LIVE! LIVE!

EVERY THURSDAY & TUESDAY (ROCK NIGHT)

THE ALMA BREWERY, RUSSELL COURT
(OFF PANTON STREET)

FREE ADMISSION

.....another look at the mag, more muddled meanderings, and finally the hint of a tasty treat.....

Any of you in danger of running out of stamina before the end of the page (I'm assuming that you have managed to make it this little way at least) are strongly advised to go straight to somewhere about the final paragraph. I can't be more exact in my directions to you simply because I haven't yet got that far myself. Why, you may ask, should we do this? Because, in my reply, that is where you will find the above mentioned hint, and I would hate you to miss out on a good thing. Intriguing, innit!

How nice it was to see a letter published in the last issue. Surely Sultry Sue is not the only person to have something to say in response to the entire contents of five issues. Come on, overwhelm us with your comment, replies, criticism, whatever.

More seriously, I have had my ear considerably chewed over the last couple of weeks by those few sufficiently privileged to know the dark secret of my connection with the rag. 'Why don't we have more of this, less of that, I want to read such and such,' they say. I usually quite genuinely agree with them. Unfortunately, however, my answer has to be that all concerned with getting the beast together are already working flat out, and simply don't have the time to contribute a wider bill of fare.

I for one greatly appreciate any feedback from our readers, without it how can we know what you do or don't like about our efforts. Hopefully you'll see from this issue that some of your comment has been well noted, and acted upon. Nevertheless, if the 'staff' of B.S.N. is not to become an exclusive group, and more importantly, if we're to represent a wider range of views, interests, and tastes we need more contributions from more people. You don't need to be a mate of Graeme's to grace these pages, nor one of the 'elder statesmen of Cambridge rock' - a term that I heard last week in this respect.

Perhaps there's something in the local water that turns rockfans into globs of pathetic jelly, just about able to whimper about how bad things are, but certainly it would seem, without the nous to do

anything for themselves unless spoonfed or dragged by the nose. Even you, dear reader, are branded thus, although of course nowhere near as bad as the fools who don't even buy the rag.

In case you haven't realised what's going on, there's a grouse coming at you. I can recall a lot of complaint about the lack of live rock venues in this town, and in consequence of the live rock itself. Yet recently much more has been happening - but with what outcome? I'll tell you. Pathetically underattended gigs, that's what, and at least one regular venue shut down in the last week for lack of support.

So you do once in a while make it to a gig because you've heard of the band, or liked them last time. Great! Well let me tell you what you missed last week (all but a very few of you that is). You missed two really excellent bands, namely Dave Kelly at Homerton, and Lloyd Watson at City Limits. Both should have been a 'must' for all rock lovers, and turned in superb sets, but you weren't there were you! Can the promoters be blamed if they begin to ask themselves whether Cambridge is worth the bother of arranging a good band? Wake up now before it's too late.

I arrived at Fisher Hall last Thursday to find a large and unhappy crowd hanging about muttering that the Meteors had failed to turn up for the gig. A big black mark for them - but a hefty slap on the wrist for the promoter who was nowhere to be found - no doubt by then on his way back to Colchester in his roller, cash box on lap. His minions on the door had been told to offer substitute tickets for the next Meteors gig, no consolation for them wot had come a long way, even supposing that the band might make it. Someone in the know had told me some days beforehand that this would happen - seems to add up to one great big RIP-OFF.

While on the subject, I felt considerably ripped off the next night to be charged 50p to get into the Robinson Party Room, only to find the band half-way through their last number. The organiser, who is indeed charming, presented some very lame excuses which made me feel no better at all.

As I love you all really, here it is. This week tickets will be going on sale for a gig in the New Year featuring no less than four of the town's top bands for the bargain price of £2.00, plus a host of other entertaining goodies. GET YOURS

PHOTO COMP

THE FACE: Very well known.

THE PLACE: An excellent gig by an out of town band last week-end.

THE PRIZE: A free entry to any of the CITY LIMITS gigs advertised in this issue

PLUS

a free print of the photo.

TO CLAIM IT: Just turn up with this issue.

THANKS: To Mitch for donating the prize.

NO MORE TO BE SAID



PREVIEWS

GLASS TIES at City Limits 30 Nov - one of them is the son of one of The Shadows.

ZOOM at Fisher Hall 1 Dec - young jazz rockers experimenting with new singers and a string section this time.

KATRINA AND WAVES at Fisher Hall 2 Dec - in aid of Legal Aid. Likely to be crowded with Record Company types as well as local fans come to see all too rare a local gig by potential Cambridge superstars.

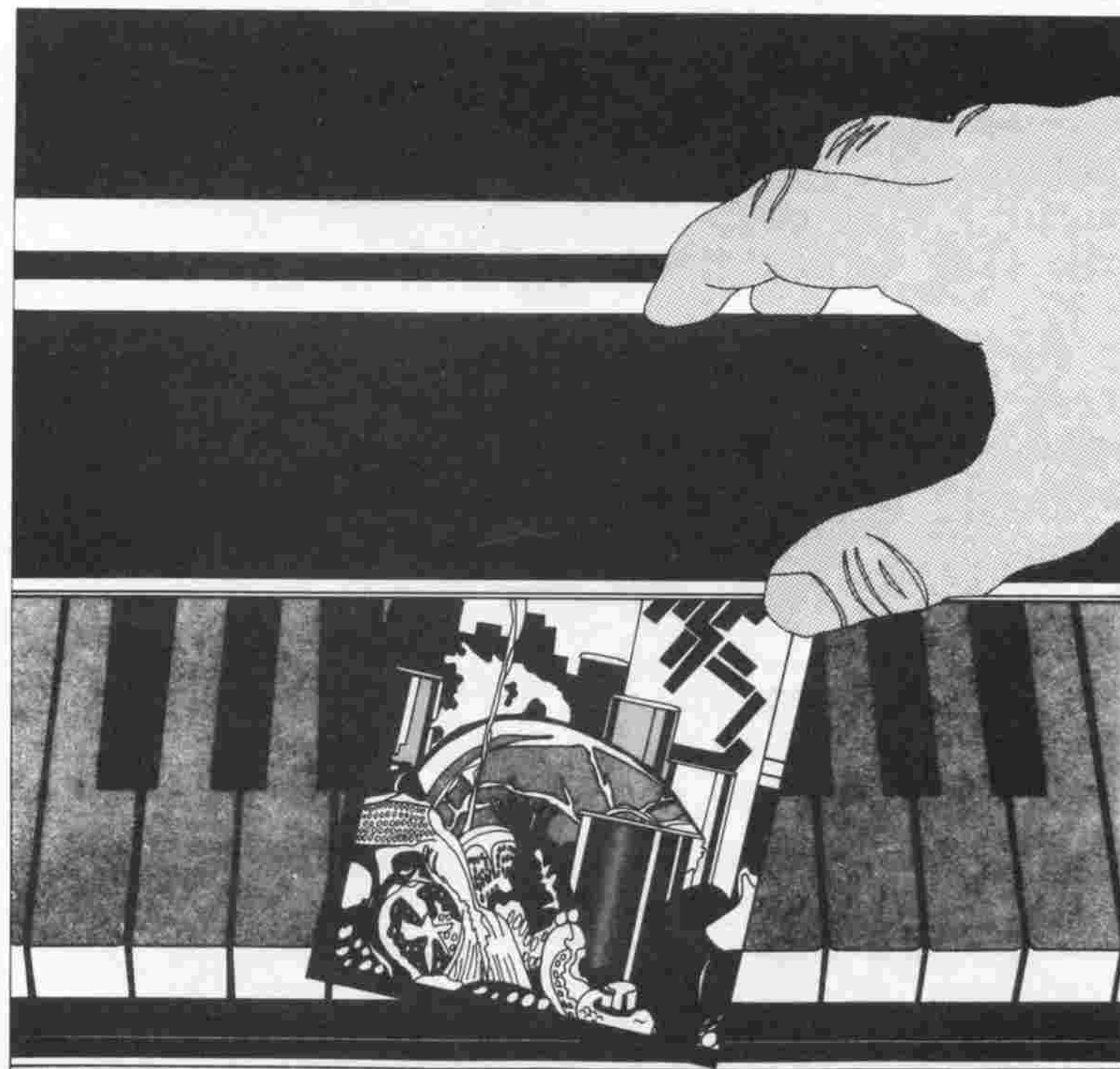
McRAFFERTY'S THOUGHT OF THE WEEK



IT'S A BAD SCENE,
MAN.

1. We can play the instruments.
2. We have mastered the technology.
3. We even take all the right drugs.
4.Now we need somewhere to come out to play.....

THE LAST RESORT



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The Last Straw
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PREVIEWS

AQUA DANCE (aka **TRANZISTA**) at **CCAT** 3 Dec - more local stars making a rare appearance at home. They're apparently going funky with brass and added percussion players. It will be fascinating to see what they are like now. Should be a great gig as the support band are **Red Guitars** whose first single "Good Technology" was excellent and got a lot of airplay from Peel&Jenson.

DUMPYS RUSTY NUTS at **City Limits** 9 Dec - from the reviews I have read of them, this is a motor-bike fixated r'n'b band with a looney for a singer and front man. He, Dumpy himself, is said to be very funny, but the band have the reputation for providing some very hard driving rock in between the lunacy. Sounds like some show.

THE OPPOSITION at **City Limits** 14 Dec - they are already superstars in France, and their album was chosen by Paul Strange of **Melody Maker** as his favourite of last year. It was also liked by Robin Denselow of the **Guardian**, who said they would appeal to fans of **The Cure** and **The Doors**. Check them out "In Concert" on **Radio 1**, Sat. 10th Dec.

GIG GUIDE

- Wed.30: **CITY LIMITS - GLASS TIES**
NEW HALL - THE FACE
London S.U. (Malet St) - Aqua Dance
Dunstable, Queensway Hall - Toyah
Ipswich, Gaumont - Imagination
- Thu.1: **FISHER HALL - ZOOM**
 DEC. **CHRISTS COLLEGE - WOBBLY JELLIES**
KINGS MINGLE - SINDY AND THE
ACTION MEN + ?
ALMA - RONNIE THOMPSON'S WASP
CLUB (r'n'b)
- Fri.2: **FISHER HALL - KATRINA AND THE**
WAVES
CITY LIMITS - MARZ
Melbourne S.S.C. - Samurai
Embassy Club, London - Aqua Dance
Norwich, U.E.A. - Tears For Fear
Norwich, Gala - UK Subs + Actified
- Sat.3: **CCAT XMAS BALL - AQUA DANCE +**
RED GUITARS
CITY LIMITS - THE FACE
Ramsey, The Angel - Samurai
Norwich, U.E.A. - Slade
- Sun.4: **Peterborough, Glasshouse (lunch) -**
Lloyd Watson Band
Hertford, Woolpack - Gothique
- Mon.5:
- Tue.6: **ALMA - TENNIS**
- Wed.7: **CITY LIMITS - ANIMAL ASYLUM**
Ipswich, Gaumont - Robert Plant
- Thu.8: **FISHER HALL - TRUX**
ALMA - STRING SWING
KELSEY KERRIDGE - SOUNDS OF 60s
- Fri.9: **CITY LIMITS - DUMPYS RUSTY NUTS**
Melbourne S.S.C. - RT's Wasp Club
Middlesex Poly - Aqua Dance
Ipswich, Gaumont - Culture Club
- Sat.10: **CITY LIMITS - FLOCK OF WILLIES**
Peterborough, Heron - Gothique
St. Albans, City Hall - Killing
Joke
- Sun.11: **Peterborough, Glasshouse (lunch) -**
Plastic Heroes
Dunstable, Queensway - Revillos
- Mon.12:
- Tue.13: **ALMA - ?**
Central London Poly - Aqua Dance
- Wed.14: **CITY LIMITS - THE OPPOSITION**
- Thu.15: **Letchworth, Plinston H. - Gothique**
- Fri.16: **CITY LIMITS - TWELTH NIGHT**
Melbourne S.S.C. - Phoenix
Dunstable, Queensway - Level 42

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FRIDAY 16th DEC: - XMAS PARTY GIG

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BANDS

Katrina and the Waves - Alex 314857
Dolly Mixture - Hester 355114
Great Divide - Ed Royston 60027
Tranzista - Ray 247802
Hondo - 211371
The Face - Paddy and Mark 313520
Sindy and the Action Men - Dave 8263875
Trux - Sue 93 31550
Subculture - Phil 242611
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
32 - 20
Vital Disorders
Talos
Waso
The Point - Philip Hartigan, Clare
Rockin 50s
Tutch
Energy
Sax Appeal
13th Chime
Ronnie Thompson's Wasp Club - Steve 357495
Allergy
Clay Dolz
Self Righteous Brothers
Roaring Boys (ex-Models/Way Up) 01 435 0843
Fox 'n' Sox
Come Dancing - Kevin 01 348 7276
The Code - Box 729 Kings
Fax - Martin 68850
Exploding Hamsters
Personal Touch
Gothique - Chris 93 80926
Vanishing Point - Gavin 829725
Slap Kat - Olli 355702
String Swing - Hugh 351455
Precious Little Idols
Senior Service
Horizon - Tim Fanning, Rm.514 YMCA 356998

20th Century - Jonathan Code, 1 Selwyn Gdns
Racing Heart - Nick 313292
Gigglesticks A.T.L.T. - Barry Prince, Fitz
Americans On Heat - Chris 314038 - also:
The Man Who Suddenly Fell Over
Force 9 - Nigel Pink, Fulbourn

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P.T.V. Productions - Eddie 0480 61900

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VENUES

City Limits
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

UNIVERSITY HALLS: Not usually open to the public. For details see the article and list in Issue No. 1.