

Blue Suede

CAMBRIDGE'S

ROCK RAG

News

No. 8



40p

NEWS AND COMMENT

BLUE SUEDE NEWS would like to express its immense gratitude to Mitch and Linda of CITY LIMITS for hosting the Benefit Bop for BSN which made a lot of money, to please our printers and others to whom we are indebted. Thanks also to the bands who donated their services - the Frigidaires, Phoenix and Andy Goes Shopping - not to mention assorted Radio Stars who guested. The survival of the mag is assured for a little longer. If we survived on written contributions we could go on for ever, since they are flowing in fast and furious. Thanks a lot. I will try to use everything I am sent, but you will appreciate that it is not always possible to get the stuff in right away when there is so much. Reviews and news must take priority over features that can be saved for future use. That is one reason why the Frigidaires tree could not be fitted in this time round. Fear not lads, it will appear soon - in the meantime if Graham Buxton would let me know the line-up of CAMERA SHY I could get the tree completed.

GAYE HOLDER gets a very special thank you for designing the mag's very own logo which you see adorning the front cover. Thanks, you're my Holder Heroine! The cover picture incidentally is of Penny De Waal, otherwise known as the Action Mens' Sindy.

CITY LIMITS are to be congratulated on the number of up and coming new bands from out of town that they are booking. There is plenty of room in Cambridge for two rock pubs, especially if they pursue complimentary booking policies; with the one concentrating on giving local bands (especially new ones) their chance, and the other getting acts in from outside. Mike Biggs, the booking agent for City Limits is doing a good job - as I'm sure Billy Bragg fans will be queueing to endorse our thanks to Mike on Saturday. Let's hope people will continue coming for the less well known names.

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Pete Ingram

THURSDAY MARCH 8 is a date for your diaries. The first gig in the big Guildhall sees the City Council putting on THE CREAM OF THE CAT CLUB. To overcome the notoriously bad acoustics in that hall the sophisticated PA that will eventually be the house PA in the completed Corn Exchange will be used. KATRINA AND THE WAVES will top the bill along with the first live appearance of THE GREAT DIVIDE since Steve Bone left. This should coincide with the release of their new single. Supporting will be THE FACE, who are also working on new recordings for a follow up single, and THE WOBBLY JELLIES who are going in the studio to record their first single soon. The show will be compered by Radio One's RICHARD SKINNER and his old rhythm pal TREVOR DANN. Radio One will be telling the world about the show on the Monday before (5th March) when we are visited by THE RADIO ONE ROADSHOW. It will without doubt be the biggest rock event in the city for a long time. Starting at 8.00pm and going through to 12.00, with a bar in the small hall, it is a bargain even at £3.50 (tickets on sale at the Lion Yard Box Office or The Beat Goes On - or on the door, if there's any left). If all goes well the big hall will be made available regularly for rock gigs; and in addition to other multi-band local spectaculars, it is hoped to get some name bands up from London as well. So go get your tickets now.

PETER POWELL and MIKE SMITH are the two Radio One types actually presenting the Roadshow from Cambridge on March 5th. After the touring caravan has wound its way through the city to announce its arrival in the morning - heaven help the already dreadful traffic situation - they will set up on Parkers Piece, by the Hobbs Pavilion, and while the one DJ presents his usual show from the mobile studio, the other will be put on his bike (literally, I'm told) and sent out to interesting locations in the city to do inserts into the programme. Fitzbillies, Sinclairs, The Corn Exchange and Clare College are amongst the places being singled out for these honours. How do I know? Well modesty forbids that I go into great detail about who is being interviewed in the Corn Exchange at about 6.10pm, shortly before Katrina; but if you don't already listen to the Radio Cambs Rockshow (why not? Sat. 12.00 mid-day to 2.00pm) then by tuning in to

NEWS etc

Wonderful Radio you might get to hear what BSN sounds like. In the meantime I gave copies of the mag to the producers of the said Radio One shows, and I think they are going to have great fun with the list of band names on the back - once they recover from the shock of how many there are. A Flock Of Fame at last?

RENDEVOUS have been working hard, and following the example of Katrina And The Waves, they have devoted the fruits of their labours to making a self-financed demo album. It should be available at their gigs, and in local shops by the beginning of March. It was recorded in an Ipswich studio, with the help of Dave Hoser - who has worked with Jimmy Page and Cosy Powell in the past - and will probably be called "For Crying Out Loud".

FAST FRIENDS - who are you?

STATE OF MIND have finally sent me a good copy of their tape - and it does sound good. Apologies therefore to CHEOPS if I gave the impression that the dire sound quality of the tape I was originally given had anything to do with the studio. The fault lay with whoever in the band copied the tape. The original is as clear as a bell - Cheops have done a good job; let's hope the band don't let them down again in the same way. And of course the band let themselves down even worse, because the music is quite good, of its (rather heavy) type. As for Cheops, well I reckon Steve Harley can take care of himself - and as you will see from the insert to the mag, he does have plenty of satisfied customers to back him up.

IAN NEWMAN, now of SPORT as I mentioned last time has written to me with more details of the band. The rest of the band are: Ginny Clee, vocals (ex-Bowles Brothers, where she played alongside Telephone Bill's Richard Lee); Stuart Whitcombe, keyboards; Chris Bayliss, guitars (ex-Siam); and Nick Trevisick, drums (ex-TRB and The Dukes, but also played on the Kinks "Misfit" album). Sport have signed a publishing deal with Island USA, and are currently negotiating a record deal with Warner Brothers USA. In the meantime the album they are recording in anticipation is being produced by Hugh Murphy - who was responsible for Gerry Raffert's "Baker Street".

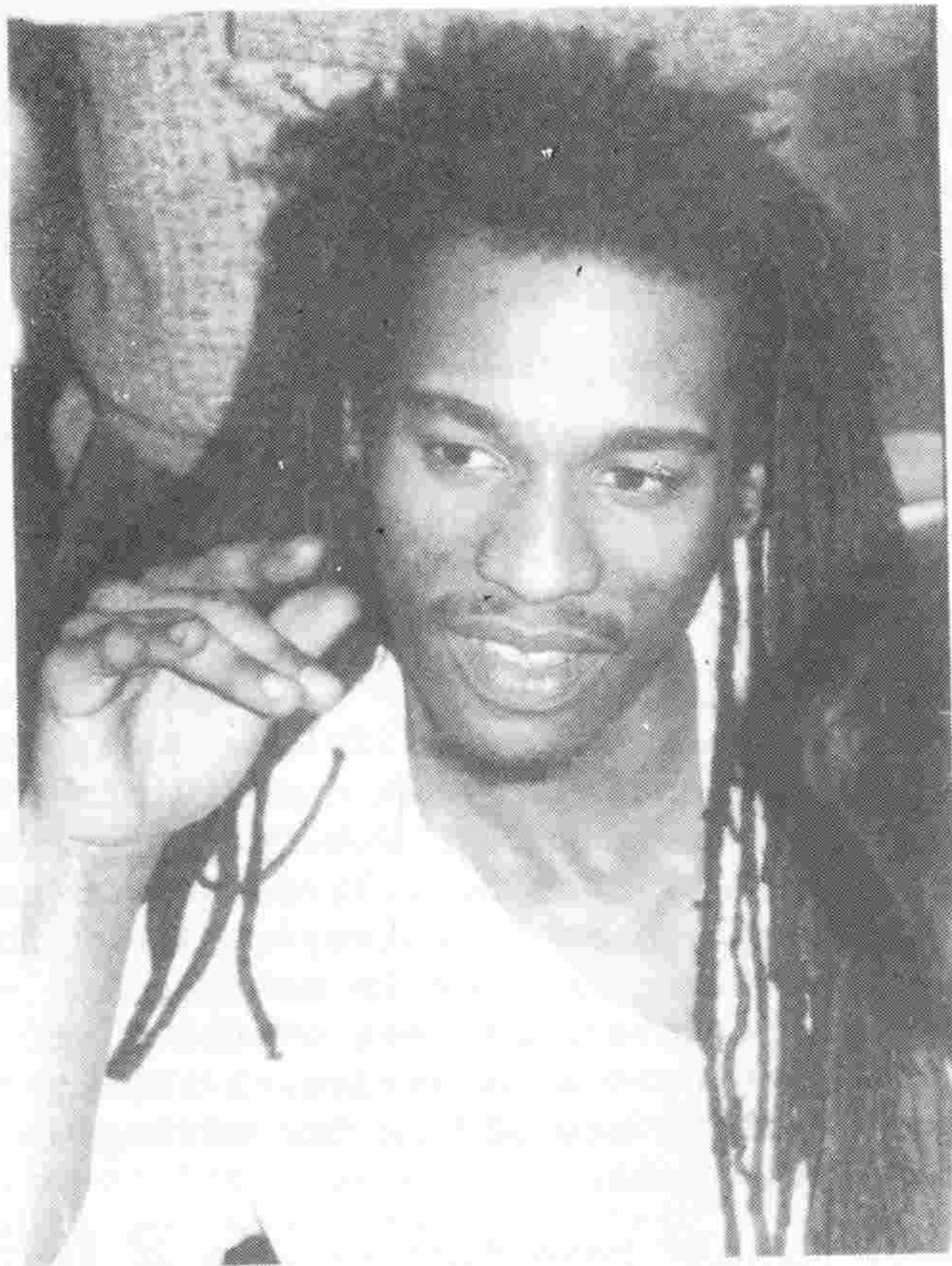
CLARE JAZZ CLUB have been kind enough to send me a note about their activities this term. On Sunday 12th February they were "putting the soul back into salsa" with Cayenne - who I see feature on bass Durban Lavarde, who used to play with Cambridge exiles The Movies. On Sunday 26th February Clare host the GUEST STARS, who Spare Rib describe as "a welcome and rare phenomenon - a woman's jazz band whose music is both joyful and accessible ...opening a door into a free and exciting form of music from which women have been excluded for too long."

SINDY AND THE ACTION MEN follow up their Alma gig of the 18th with a mini-tour of Holland. On Friday 23rd Feb they play in Breda; on 24th they do a live session on Hildersham's Radio Veronica; on the 25th they play two gigs, one in Rotterdam, and one in Amsterdam; then on the 26th they do another in Amsterdam. I think there's also a new 12" in the offing - watch this space.

WOBBLY JELLIES have discovered a 24 track studio in Harlow called Stable Studios. It is quite a bit cheaper than many of its competitors - 1 10 hour day at £85; 2 at £150; 5 at £300 - let's hope that the product sounds as good as its competitors. If it does the band may be doing a deal with Wimp Records to get some vinyl out of it. In the meantime the band's line-up has changed yet again. Sarah Harris, who graced our cover on Issue No. 6, is setting up her own business and therefore departing - to be replaced by Jane Edwards, who will as a result be singing in no less than three bands at once (AGS and SITFO are the others). Incidentally Stable Studios can be reached on Harlow (0920) 871090 or 870520. Oh yes I almost forgot - the Jellies have also recruited a trombone player, Henry Shukman; he used to play with Beat About The Bush.

HONDO live. I never really believed that they wouldn't. Neville and Paul, the original core of the band, have been down in London recruiting new members, and have come up with: Steve Keen on drums; Ross Ramsay, bass; and Chris Smart, guitar. Now they are going to set about promoting their single, "Fallout/Can't Turn You Round", which is to be distributed by Jetstar. You'll be able to catch them at City Limits in the middle of March

REVIEWS



BENJAMIN ZEPHANIAH - CCAT: Father Steps Out

I had popped into my daughter's room with coffee. Lyn, who writes for this mag, was watching a Rastafarian poet on colour T.V. Intrigued and having only black and white, I stayed to watch. In reply to the inevitable "wot jer think?" I admitted to being impressed and intrigued. When I learned, via Jon Lewin's column, that the said Rasta poet was booked to appear at the Tech, this old fella had to put his money where his mouth is, and buy a ticket.

And what did I get for my £1.50? A closer look - though not too close since I sat at the back of the audience, who stood (ah, the energy of youth!) - at one Benjamin Zephaniah, poet and performer extraordinary. When I did heave the aged bones into the perpendicular, the dreadlocked owner of those mellow tones could be seen prowling to and fro, a tiger on the leash of the hand-mike. The voice and persona come across well; clear, warm and humorous, sharp as a Caribbean sprinter.

This man has the ear of a musician and the rhythm-feeling of a Burundi talking-drummer. The highly percussive words with their sometimes audacious rhymes are rapped out in anger, humour and controlled emotion. He hits his targets more often than not. Mrs T, police brutality, social

attitudes all come under his idiosyncratic scrutiny. But Benjamin Zephaniah is not simply lashing out. The wrongs are genuine. However he is no counsellor of using violence to overcome the deficiencies in the system. "We got to stop this fighting" he says, and the statement embraces small and large issues.

Holding his audience skillfully, the poet recalled the day Princess Di visited Brixton. He showed that he can handle a laugh-line; "No birds in the sky - they were all on her hat!" There was a thought-provoking piece on his sister who refuses to parade her attractiveness in Miss World contests:

"You can't tell beauty by numbers,
You don't judge her heart by looking
at her breast."

Surprisingly, this drew general applause.

Mock nostalgia pervaded a poem concerning "my friend Leroy" - running buddy of rorty youthful struggles. No idea if it's true - we were told that Leroy has opted out and become Eddy Grant! A gag which meant more to the youthful audience than it did to me.

But generally I could see where the man is at. For example, a powerful offering early in the set described how Zephaniah became conscious of his heritage. "I like my African head" he declares, and rhythmically his head is very African. If the blues and jazz are rooted in tribal musical traditions then this man also carries echoes.

All in all a broadening evening, made more pleasant by the goodnatured attentive audience. This old fella felt quite at home in the company. Final thought - Benjamin Zephaniah connects - perhaps the Folk Festival will book him.

JOHN GUY

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REVIEWS

TWELFTH NIGHT - CITY LIMITS

"If music be the food of love, play on...."(Shakespeare - Twelfth Night - Act 1, Scene 1, Line 1.) So said Andy Sears (vocalist) at the end of Twelfth Night's first set. The band take their name from the said play which is very appropriate as they are a 'Classic Rock' band. Twelfth Night are a five piece outfit featuring Andy Revell on lead guitar; Brian Devoil on drums; Clive Mitten on guitar, bass and keys; Rick Battersby on keyboards and the aforementioned Andy on vocals. They are based in Reading and were formed whilst studying at Reading University.

So to the concert itself. City Limits was packed, and people were being turned away. After hearing the band I am not at all surprised. Twelfth Night are heavy, but they still make extensive use of melody; the keyboards particularly are put to good use for this purpose. By the end of the concert I had the impression that the lead guitar and keyboards were central, and the bass and drums purely incidental. Also Andy Sears has an excellent voice with good clarity and range.

Their songs are all quite long so we did not hear many different numbers. Highlights of the first set were "The End Of The Endless Majority" and "We Are Sane". The former was an instrumental featuring lead guitar and guitar; it was slow and melodic and very refreshing amongst all the melodrama of the songs. "We Are Sane" was about bureaucrats and used Andy's vocal range to the full. It also showed that the band have a definite sense of humour; the song being punctuated with the use of a bowler hat and umbrella - the umbrella very nearly ending up in the audience, so many hands were grabbing at it.

The second set was quite melodramatic. Unfortunately the size of the stage caused problems - Andy Sears was quite obviously restricted in his movements (being a bit of a poseur!), and had to change on stage in full view of the audience. They started off with a song called "Welcome To The Creep Show" which, having a moral to it, made one think too. The song was preceded by quite a long story, which is a feature of the band's set - every piece has its story. Andy Sears was masked and his singing was very emphatic at times. Chimes were also used by Brian which

lent an eerie feel to the number. It is worth noting that Twelfth Night are a very visual band, their gestures and expressions match the mood of the songs, and until Andy Sears changed they were all in black. There was also a very interesting number called "Fact And Fiction" which featured repartee between Andy and Clive in American and Russian respectively. "Sequences" was a song about a man unwillingly going to war; in style it was very jerky and military, probably the heaviest song of the concert. You can see that Twelfth Night are a very socially conscious band.

Throughout the evening they had the audience with them all the way; clapping, waving arms and jumping up and down, so an encore was unavoidable, and for me it was the best part of the gig. The first number was a beautiful ballad called "A Song Of Love" in which the guitars were most prominent. They finished with a real boogie down type song called "Art, Illusion And East Of Eden". It was about magic and all things abstract, so Twelfth Night finished off their first concert in Cambridge in a rather whimsical fashion.

My only moan is that I thought the lead guitar sounded far too metallic at times, though Andy Revell plays it very well, and some of his solos were quite wonderful. Overall Twelfth Night are a very polished and professional band. They have a new album out called "Live And Let Live" on Music For Nations (MFN 18) which is definitely worth checking out if you missed them.

LYN GUY

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From Our Ovine Correspondent

Pop music is a funny thing. It has so many different uses. You can dance to it; you can watch it in pubs or concerts; you can do the housework to it; get pissed to it; write about it; slag it off; talk about it, over it, or all the way through it. Some of it, however, you can actually listen to, sober, whilst not doing anything else. At this time of the year, when it's not so pleasant to go out in the evenings, there's no plays on the radio and the usual rubbish is on the TV, this can actually be quite a pleasant thing to do. Just soak it up in front of the fire.

So there I was listening to "Hearts And Bones" (Paul Simon) with both ears actually 100% tuned in, when I heard this sheep. I got up and listened again, and sure enough there it was, all over the beginning of the fourth track on side one. The various sheep icons in my room (I have many) seemed to wink at each other, and suddenly it hit me - a huge and insidious concept, which has been taking shape for years. Let me explain.

My memory of A-Level History is dim, but I seem to remember that sheep were regarded as a jolly good thing until about the early 1700s when someone noticed that there were more sheep than people in Great Britain. Somebody in Parliament said "sheep shall eat up men" (though I forget who exactly), and the enclosure laws were invented; since when being a sheep has been NOT A GOOD IDEA (Look at how many were deported to Australia and the Falklands).

Sheep may appear to be stupid, but this is a ploy. They realised that a lot of cows - and for that matter other animals, but mainly cows - were finding their way into songs and films in America (from whence pop music began), and they decided to redress the balance, subtly.

Cole Porter was the first to be subverted when he wrote "I got ewe under my skin", but this slipped by almost unnoticed, and it wasn't until the 50s that the campaign really got under way. Seeing the human interest in cows was so large, the sheep struck at the very heart of the matter - in cowboy songs.

"A swinging door, a juke box and a baa stool", "I'm a rambling man", "She(e)played upon her fiddle", and so on; even "Go(a)to bed my darling" - all subtle infiltrations. Then came rock and roll with "Ram-a-Lamb-a-ding-dong". A major success for the sheep, but it

rather blew their cover; and when Brian Wilson wrote "Baa, baa, baa - baa goes the sheep", he was asked politely to make it "Baa-baa-baa-baa-Baa-bra-Ann." The Lennon/McCartney partnership produced no sheep songs at all, Lennon being more interested in piggies, walrus and cold turkey; but McCartney put it straight with "Mary had a little lamb". He also countered a move to make cows prominent on album sleeves. Pink Floyd's "Atom Heart Mother" appeared in 1970 and was answered with McCartney's "Ram". The Floyd themselves were of course finally brought into line, and a song actually called "Sheep" appeared on their "Animals" album.

This sort of blatant mention is, however, uncommon. For every "High on a hill was a lonely goatherd" there are a dozen passing references elsewhere which are more difficult to shake off. Robin Williamson of the Incredible String Band actually pointed the way to subtlety on the album "Wee Tam" - "rather I did hide my sheep and goats under the bags of oatmeal". And so we see "Woolly Bully", "This pullover", and Hendrix' "The wind cried Mary(who, remember, had a little lamb); not to mention Dan Hicks with "O'Reilly at the baa" and "By hook or by crook"; and Randy Vanwarmer's lament "Ewe left me just when I needed you most!"

All this has led to a greater understanding of ovine needs, and when the Argentines threatened, Maggie spent billions on Fortress Falklands to protect the sheep population, as we all know. So much for the enclosure acts.

The various sheep icons in my room like the Paul Simon album. Funny thing pop music.

ANDY METCALFE



Contemporary musical entertainment has never ranked highly amongst the hedonistic delights of downtown Newmarket. The only regular venue - the Variety Club - presents an unvarying mixture of racist comedians and pop singers who were past their prime years ago. The prospect of former stars performing bastardised versions of their handful of hits for an audience of nostalgic and drunken middle aged couples isn't likely to get the adrenalin flowing. So you can imagine my surprise when I discovered that my favourite young band - namely The Prisoners - were to be playing in the prosaic setting of Newmarket Memorial Hall.

The young man who organised the gig was Gary Malby, an enterprising seventeen year old mod from Moulton, a small village just outside Newmarket. I had a chat with Gary on the night of the Prisoners' gig, and we discussed his other activities which BSN readers should find interesting.

First of all, Biff! Bang! Pow! Records, a mail order company specialising in mod music: "Biff! Bang! Pow! has been going about a year now. That was done when I had some money left over from holiday; so I bought a load of Squire records at wholesale price and sold them. And then I put the money back and I haven't looked back since. I've got about fifteen titles on offer now...and about 400 customers all over England, some in the USA, Belgium. I don't make any money out of it for myself. I just plough it back into the company."

Then, a few months ago, the Patterns Mod Club was started at Foley House. "I just thought that as I've got all the records - the sixties soul, r'n'b, and stuff like that - I'd start a good dance club with a good atmosphere and create a sort of style in Newmarket....When we first started it up it didn't go too well. I'm giving it a break now and everyone says keep on doing it. A lot of people come down from Cambridge, Sudbury, Haverhill, Ely, Bury." Patterns will be reopening on May 18th and will take place on every second Friday. If there's a good response, bands will be booked on a regular basis.

In the meantime, the Scene and the Moment will be appearing at Foley House youth club on February 3rd. The debut single by the Scene is "Looking For Love c/w Let Me Know"(Diamond Records).

Apparently, they have recently auditioned for the role of The Who in a £5 million feature film, "Hope I Die Before I Get Old", based on the life of Who manager Kit Lambert.

The Moment, who are a new band from Haverhill, are managed by Gary Malby. "They're really into the sixties lifestyle and atmosphere. They're well into pop art and that sort of stuff." The band line up is: Adrian Holder(lead guitar, vocals), Michael Raper(rhythm guitar, vocals), Robert Moore(bass guitar, harpsichord, vocals) and Anthony Lambden(drums, percussion). They are all nineteen years old. A live review in "Shadows and Reflections" said they played "a very enjoyable set". If you want to book them, write to Biff! Bang! Pow! Records, 12 Dalham Road, Moulton, Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 8SB, enclosing a s.a.e. Alternatively, phone Newmarket (0638) 750997.



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FUN FUN FUN AT FITZ

Remember those days not so long ago when Saturday night was NOT music night? And nor was any other night. Live music in Cambridge was dead. The bands played to themselves not to the punters (as some still do, the presence of punters notwithstanding) because never the twain should meet. Nowhere to play, nowhere to go - unless you were one of the privileged few; a student with access to closed college bops, or a punk prepared to brave the confines of the Sea Cadet Hall. It was easy then of course, just sit back and contemplate the conspiracy of authority against youth from the comfort of your armchair in front of The Tube.

Now suddenly it's all happening. Two or three gigs every Friday and Saturday; colleges throwing open their doors to townfolk (well, one or two of them), and name bands coming up from London. The Saturday problem has been transformed from a lack of live music to a plethora, and the consequent question of choice - made more difficult if, as on Saturday the 28th of February, the three headline bands playing in the city are all rhythm and blues bands. The difficulty was resolved for me when the manager (get them - a new student band, and a manager already!) of Gigglesticks And The Love Truncheons rang me up to ask me to go to the gig at Fitzwilliam where they were playing with the Frigidaires and the Exploding Hamsters. As I had never seen GATLT at all, and the Hamsters only briefly (and always enjoy seeing the Fridges) I was happy to accept the invitation. I didn't regret making the long trek up the hill - not at least until I left to go home and found the rain pouring down.

The Reddaway Room in Fitz is a fine place for a gig. A stage, fair acoustics and a lot of room to dance - and a nice bar downstairs, with even nicer bar prices. The only problem on the night was a (rare) breakdown in Roger Chatterton's PA. Being an experienced operator this was not a permanent problem but it did rather delay the setting up and sound checking of the bands, which meant an eventual cut in the last set of the night. That was a shame because the Frigidaires were just building up their usual head of steam when they had to stop. Gigglesticks, by contrast were the lucky ones who went on first and played a full set. This was a little

selfish in the circumstances - especially as the band took ages to prepare to hit the stage after the sound checks were complete. Had they gone on straight away the evening would still have been roughly on schedule. Perhaps I should shoulder some of the blame for telling the band that James would be there to take their photos - since this meant a change into best ball frocks and shirts. I don't blame the band anyway; it's up to the organisers to chase up bands and see that the programme runs in such a way that it is fair to all bands - and to the punters who have paid good money to come and see full sets by their favourite bands. The force of my complaint is doubtless diminished by the fact that this punter didn't have to pay, and certainly by the fact that it was still an enjoyable event.

As to the music. Well, GATLT appealed to me straight away - during the sound check in fact. They play an infectious blend of the new wave, and sixties rock 'n' roll, in a style obviously heavily influenced by one of my favourite bands, the Rezillos. The guitarist, something of a Jon Lewin lookalike (strangely the trumpet player of the Hamsters looked like an unshaven James Daniel to me - maybe my vision is less than perfect these days), was having problems with his amp and the drummer was very new, so it would be unfair to say too much about their performance on the night - and in any case I always prefer to wait and see a band two or three times before coming to any firm conclusions - and I look forward to seeing GATLT again soon. In the meantime two thoughts struck me. Firstly they look very strange. The contrast between Lou Reed leather look of guitarist and bassman and, on the one hand the party befrooked girl singer and, on the other hand, the bearded somewhat aged-hippy look of the drummer was wierd. Secondly the slower songs sounded better than the fast ones. This is partly because they suit the girl singer's voice better (which is rather good in fact), and because they appear to be rather good songs. Indeed this is a band whose own material is probably good enough, and accessible enough for them not to have to rely too much on covers to get the audience going. Strange how it is the bands with the most inaccessible material who are so inflexibly against doing the covers that would help the audience to

Graeme Mackenzie



appreciate the band so much better - but then it is usually such bands that are so contemptuous of their audiences that they end up without any - and serve them right too. It's not as if covers is an easy way out - and I think GATLT proved the point on this occasion - since we have all heard these famous songs done well, it takes a good band to reproduce the original as well; and to be honest Gigglesticks fairly murdered one or two rock 'n' roll classics on the night. It's then that the lack of rehearsal shows up. The band need lots of work put in, and I hope they stick together long enough to do it and reap the benefits, because they will be good if they do.

The Exploding Hamsters obviously have been working hard. They were very tight, quite slick and good fun. Again with a girl singer (so fashionable these days), they also boasted a brass section and ambitions to follow the Wobbly Jellies as the best dance band around the colleges. Unfortunately the girl singer, while quite good, is no match for Emma Hall; and she also lacks the vocal support and visual excitement that the hordes of singers provide in the Jellies. Having said that, I don't suppose that the band are trying to emulate the Jellies and it would be unfair to pursue

GIGGLESTICKS AND THE LOVE TRUNCHEONS

the comparisons too far. Apart from anything else, the Hamsters incline to the Latin side of funk in preference to the Jellies Afro/Calypso style. But there is one field where I feel they really could learn from the Jellies - and indeed from Out Of The Blue, were any of them around a few years ago to remember that great jazz/rock, Latin/funk monstrosity (even bigger than the Jellies) - and that is in the percussion department. Extra percussion may not always be necessary for this sort of music, but unfortunately the Hamsters greatest problem is that the very tight rhythm section was also very leaden footed and unimaginative. It's mostly down to the drummer I feel, but having seen the bass man playing pretty near heavy metal guitar on the encore (while one of the brass section took over bass) I suspect the responsibility to be shared. That apart, a fun band, and obviously already a great favourite on the college circuit.

The Frigidaires are also a fun band now becoming well established in the colleges as well as the town from which they hail. They have been well praised in these pages before, so I will simply say that they were going down a storm -

as usual - when the curtain came down (in the form of the porters), leaving a lot of frustrated fans dance-crazy for more. Straight down the line r'n'b may not be your cup of tea, but if it is, the Fridges are the band for you. No pretensions to trendiness or originality (though in "Cars And Bars" they do have at least one song of their own that is worthy of recording - even if it is solidly in the Dr. Feelgood/Stones/Berry mould), just working hard at enjoying themselves as they entertain the punters. I just wish I could say half as much about some of the 'original' bands in the city.



EXPLODING HAMSTERS

BRAGG'S BOOKS AND RECORDS

THE NEW ROCK 'N' ROLL: STUART COUPE & GLENN A BAKER. OMNIBUS PRESS. £5.95. Thank god somebody's at last had the guts to write an accurate encyclopaedia of new wave bands without relying on the big names so they can shift copies. Stuart Coupe and Glenn Baker are Australian music writers who do know what they're writing about. The book does have a natural antipodean bias and is lacking in European bands; however the essays on Japan and Australia make up for that.

Alphabetically arranged, it covers bands/musicians that are around now, for instance PIL, but not the Sex Pistols - because they are defunct. Contains a useful cross-index at the back, and it's cheap - just under £6 for a book with this much information is an absolute bargain. Go and get yours today - I got mine yesterday.

GIRL GROUPS (THE STORY OF A SOUND): ALAN BETROCK. OMNIBUS PRESS.

Dedicated to the sound of an era, this book is an historical essay on American female vocal groups of the early 60s. There's the Chiffons, Supremes, Shangri-Las, Carole King, Cynthia Weill, the Ronettes - then there's more. As well as covering the groups, there's also information on the writers, producers and labels. The only drawback to the book is the lack of an index, so it's difficult to find the person or group you're looking for. That aside, this book is worthwhile, useful, interesting and should be on everybody's bookshelves.

JOHNNY THUNDERS: HURT ME (NEW ROSE ROSE36) Forget the fag-rock of the New York Dolls, the pill-head pop of the Heartbreakers, because with this album Johnny Thunders turns singer-songwriter. A mixture of songs from his past bands and collaborations, with two Dylan songs, Eve of Destruction, and some new ones thrown in for good measure. After all that, it is a listenable, there's some good songs on it, such as "Hurt Me", "Illegitimate Song Of Segovia" or even the acoustic version of "You Can't Put Your Arms Around A Memory". OK so the drugs, or lack of, seem to have made his voice regress through puberty. The question is - si he permanently wiggled out, or is it a temporary phase? Only time and another album will tell.



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TOBY JUG
AND
WASHBOARD
BAND.
THE
ALMA.



'Tis but on very rare occasions that a body can escape the rigours and claustrophobia of being slammed to the other side of the kingdom-come of rock in all its myriad guises. On all too many occasions what should have turned out to be a pleasant evening of gentle lilt and lyricism actually becomes a confusion of "what the hell am I doing here"; "which way is up?"; "jeez, but I'm bored" - coupled with hernia of the wallet and and irrepressible desire to take up macrame as a relaxing hobby. It's all down to a lack of being entertained you see.

I normally feel that I'm not being played to, but at; mown down by gun-slinging musos in the twilight of my bank-balance. This might sound like the winge of a dove, but I can assure you it's all very pertinent - because, you see, I like to be entertained. Honest, I do. I like laughing and watching people gladly being clowns. I loved T.J. & W.B. for these very reasons. And so, dear friends, did a lot of other people.

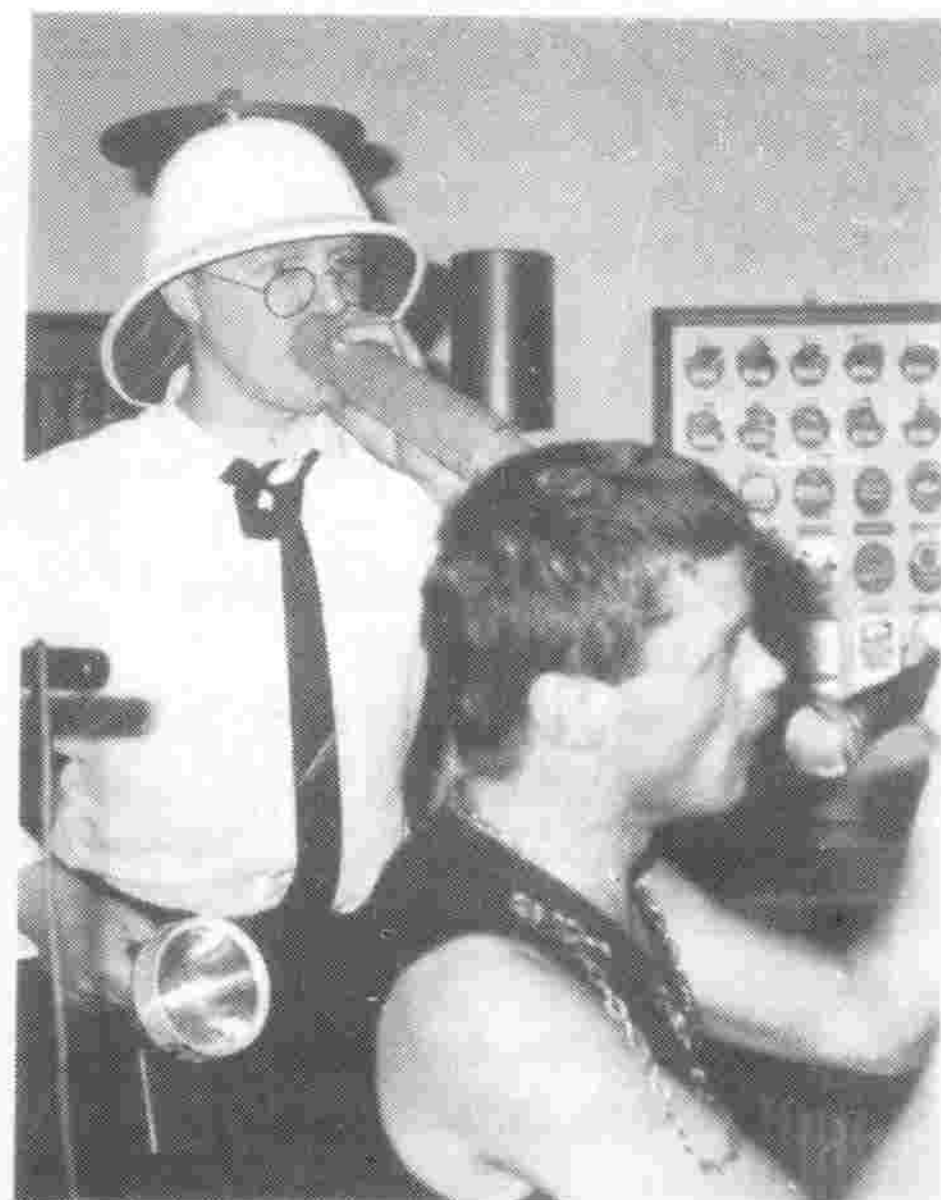
Rock, Jazz, Latin, Afro-Funk it certainly isn't; though these idioms do come in for a transitory hammering. It is precisely what is contained in the name, a jug and washboard band. For those of you in the musical hinterland who don't know what that means, ask around. Essentially, they're a three-piece: jug(s), washboard/drum (yes, just the one) and acoustic guitar with kazoos. However, anything that can possibly be used to make a noise could be drafted in.

Not for these guys the expense of multi-memory synthesizers, searing amplifiers, heavily doctored effects or mega-kits that are currently deemed to be "common sense" in most bands' armoury. The heaviest piece of gear, in more ways than one, is probably the electric drill

which mine host, the landlord, espied with a certain amount of apprehension, not to say outright panic. Second in the league of obscure and overlooked instrumentia is a pith helmet-mounted splash cymbal. If this conjures up a vision of musical perversion, don't worry - it gets more disjointed; so I won't mention the gorilla suit, wigs and, star of the show, a tou-tou befrocked percussion man with off-the-body vest and SAS balaclava.

And so to the music, because they do find time to play some of that inbetween bouts of lunacy. Jug music is not easily described. I suppose the nearest analogue would be Mungo Jerry's "In The Summertime"; but even that is not right because it was used then to underwrite a less than viable lyric. Anarchist-folk married to a revue company with a cash flow problem is closer. I warmed to "The Girl From Ipanema" (don't bring along any pre-conceptions about the treatment this song should have - it's rude); I laughed to "Two Pound Ten", a heartfelt cry from a lonely carrot-top. I admired the dexterity of the only instrumental, a moving piece of thigh and body slapping performed without the sound-insulating distraction of trousers. Most of all, "Momma Don't Allow No...", a more than visual description of some of the heinous acts that Moma definitely won't allow in her house (though you might). Don't try to analyse all this musical nonsense. I did, and look where it got me.

If our fair city's musical facilities are leaving you feeling tired and worn out, go see Toby Jug and let yourself go. I leave you with a word of advice; get to where you can see them, otherwise all you'll hear is laughter and that's only half the fun.



DICK
PAGE



SERIOUS DRINKING (above) + RED CARTOON (below) - CCAT

Serious Drinking - an aptly named band. The best thing to do at this gig was to find the bar, get down to just that and have an unintelligible conversation with the resident nutter - much more entertaining.

Looks can be deceptive, as I found out when the six 1984 looking types bounded on stage to produce a tame 1978 sound - i.e. punk. What is going on I asked myself. I was under the impression that punk was dead - sorry, had gone underground - but here it was alive and kicking (literally) in Cambridge of all places.

Their numbers were short, sharp and to the point - whatever that was. The whole set was pretty tight, mainly due to ex-Gymslips drummer Caren who has joined the band recently. She is not alone in her claim to fame. Pete, on keyboards, was with the Damned before they made it; Dexys; and wrote the new Carmel single - which proves he is capable of more creative music.

After hearing their two singles - "Love On The Terraces" and "Hangover" - I can see why they haven't achieved the recognition they seem to think is theirs. But if John Peel thinks they are worth airplay, they must be OK. Watch out for their new single - "Country Girl Becomes Drugs And Sex Punk" - no joke.

Now down to the real music. Red Cartoon played support - and played well. Their music is pretty difficult to pigeon-hole, which is a good sign for a start. They are the sort of band who could pull off a support with any number of differing headliners, and live to fight another day. The only weak point in the band is the drums; the bass was very competent; and Anita, the singer - well eat your heart out Joe Jackson.

Those of you who were at the gig may have thought they were a bit timid. But bear in mind that two out of the four live in Birmingham; that they only rehearsed twice in the week leading up to the gig; and that it was their first appearance with this new line-up. You must admit then that they pulled it off rather well.

JEFF SQUIRE



REVIEWS

THE SCENE/THE MOMENT - NEWMARKET FOLEY H.

The gig took place in a small room situated in the bowels of Foley House. The austere and cramped conditions augured well for the night's entertainment, as it is in such intimate surroundings that the most inspired rock 'n' roll is usually produced. The only drawback was the low stage, but thankfully the sound was clear and not too loud.

First on were the Moment. They were formed in January 1983 from the remnants of two Haverhill r'n'b bands - the Poptarts and Cloud 9. Despite having played only a handful of gigs they were very together. Some of their material was a little unadventurous but the line up of lead and rhythm guitar suggests a promising future. Already, one or two of the jangling guitar solos brought to mind the work of bands like the Searchers and the Byrds. Also, all the front line up sings, so perhaps they might concentrate on developing striking three-part harmonies. Some of their own material got an enthusiastic response which is always a pleasing sign. They played two covers - "I'll Keep Holding On", an old soul song which was covered by the Action and the Chords (on the B-side of "In My Street") and "Runaway", the latter transforming the audience into a pogoing mass. I look forward to hearing the Moment on record. They hope to be included on the Great British Beat Vol. 3 tape, now firmly established as the major outlet for new sixties influenced groups. Apparently a representative from the 100 Club was present - I should think he was suitably impressed.

In fact, I thought the Moment were better than the Scene who regularly gig in London, and are generally regarded as being one of the best mod bands around. They started off well, but quickly deteriorated. "Stop Go" and "Gimme Some Lovin'" were quite impressive, but after that it all got rather repetitive. I can, however, wholeheartedly recommend their self-produced debut single - "Looking For Love/Let Me Know" - which features gorgeous trebly guitar, a crisp drum sound and girl backing vocalists.

"On The Soul Side", which describes itself as "a fanzine for mod/scooterists everywhere", was on sale at the gig. Issue 1 (Jan/Feb '84) includes an interview with the Moment. Send 45p and s.a.e. to Paul Sheehan, The Flat, Dalham Hall, Dalham, Newmarket. CARL TWEED

THE POINT - ROBINSON COLLEGE

After an immensely enjoyable hour looking for the Robinson Party Room, (you'd think that they would signpost it since the gig was open to the public) I found it - only to discover that the support band, The Man Who Suddenly Fell Over, weren't playing. Apparently they had split up - maybe they'll reappear as "The Men Who Suddenly Fell Apart". Having got over the disappointment of not seeing them I settled down to enjoy The Point. As the band started their first song they outnumbered the audience (only two people having turned up), but undeterred the band played on, and by the end of the set had dragged another fifteen people in.

The Point were unable to use all their equipment as there weren't enough channels on the (hurriedly borrowed) mixer-amp; slapped wrist for the organisers who didn't provide a PA. Despite these limitations the band managed to produce some interesting songs which, dare I say it in Cambridge, were ORIGINAL. I know it shouldn't be such a revelation, but after six months in Cambridge I've only seen four bands doing their own material. The Point's sound is dominated by their synthesisers; one is used to provide the melody, and the other to provide sound effects and other noises. The rhythmical basis is a drum machine, and the whole is topped with vocals and guitar. All the songs suffered from having extended endings as the band all peered myopically at the set list. An interesting, if not inspiring, gig - but I'd like to see them again with a PA before I make my mind up. Why don't YOU go next time?

MARK MELON

THE ALMA LIVE! LIVE! LIVE!

EVERY THURSDAY & TUESDAY (ROCK NIGHT)

THE ALMA BREWERY, RUSSELL COURT
(OFF PANTON STREET)

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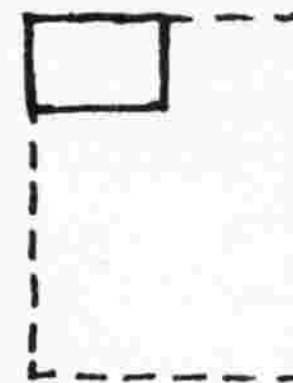
This page illustrates the various rates for which advertising space can be bought in BSN. You, dear readers, can help ensure the survival of the mag by showing this to anyone that you think might be interested in advertising; and of course doing your best to convince them of the wisdom of so doing.

Local record, musical instrument or electrical goods shops are obviously likely to be interested. Also clothes shops that cater for the tastes of rock music fans - in other words all the shops YOU go into. Tell them how little time we have been going - and what indispensable reading we already are for everyone interested in the local music scene. Tell them about how our circulation has already doubled from 200 to 400 even though as yet we are mostly sold through the record shops, music pubs and colleges.

We are about to organise distribution through newsagents, which will further boost sales. (Help us too, please, by asking for us in newsagents - to make them aware of us and the demand for us.) CONTACT Graeme on Cam. 248341.

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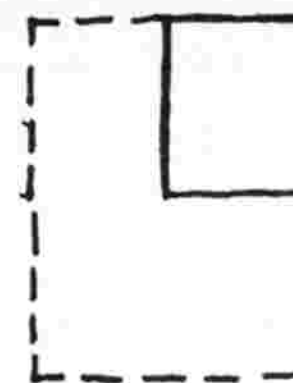
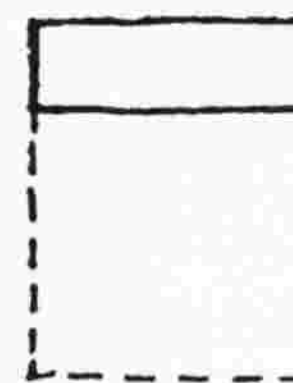
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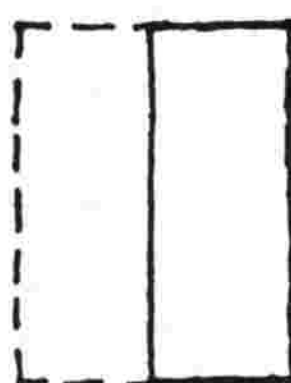
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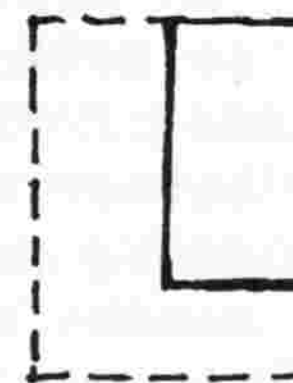
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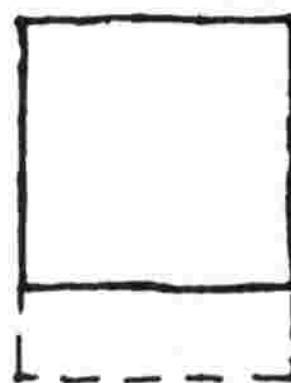
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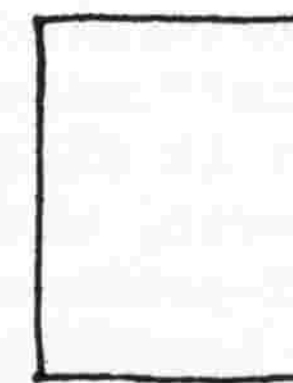
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NEWS etc

WORLDS END BAND, in the person of John Cook, have written to me. Apologies to them for not getting down to see them in person at the Alma the other night, but Pete Ingram was there with camera and notebook on behalf of BSN. I note with particular interest that the bass player with the band is one David Cooke who was a member of a band called The Phantoms way back in 1962, or thereabouts. They were one of the first two Cambridge rock 'n' roll bands to make a record, having been discovered by a student called Paul Williams. He is now a very senior producer at Radio One - the Mike Read show at the moment. See BSN No.2 for the tree with the Phantoms in it - and future issues for the full story of Cambridge rock 'n' roll in the early sixties. The rest of the Worlds End Band are: Jani Altomante, rhythm guitar and vocals; Tino Baressi, percussion and John Cook himself on lead guitar, vocals and songs (the writing thereof I presume). John describes the band as "a thinking-man's Aztec Camera. The material - no covers - is varied; prog rock, ballads, rock 'n' roll, jink funk, jass and knees-up." Sounds fascinating.

NEW ELECTRIC SEX DWARFS are one of the new bands to come to my notice lately. I never got to see them last week, so please let me know where your next gig is lads. Also new to my ears were SPOONS and the LOAN SHARKS on the same bill as NESD at Robinson. Who are you?

VOCALIST REQUIRED URGENTLY

Must be talented
and ambitious

CONTACT: Darren Upton
729 Kings College

THE NEXT BLUE SUEDE NEWS will be out on Wednesday March 7th - definitely, in time for the big gig on Thursday 8th. It will contain a special feature on the Great Divide, to celebrate their return to gigging and their new single. There will also be more information about Peeved Records - which it turns out is entirely Cambridge based - and details of their catalogue, as well as "Stick It In Your Ear Tapes" which they distribute locally. News too of the Peterborough music scene, courtesy of Janine Booth who runs the local mag "Blaze". Copy by Wednesday 29 please.

GIG GUIDE

- Tue 21: ALMA - ZOOM
FEB P'boro, Norfolk Inn - Legend
- Wed 22: CITY LIMITS - ANDY GOES SHOPPING
- Thu 23: CCAT - YOUR DINNER
ALMA - BUZZARD
Huntingdon, Lord Protector - Trux
- Fri 24: CITY LIMITS - DUMPY'S RUSTY NUTS
SELWYN DIAMOND - EXPLODING
HAMSTERS
CLARE CELLARS - BIG SOUND ASSOC.
ANDY TALKING +
GHOST OF ELECTRIC.
Melbourne SSC - 13th Chime + Jozo
Stamford, Scotgate - Rendez Vous
Colchester, Woods - One The
Juggler + Mercenary Skank
London, Dingwalls - Katrina And
The Waves
- Sat 25: CITY LIMITS - FRIGIDAIRES
ALMA - R.T.'S WASP CLUB
ROBINSON PARTY ROOM - EXPLODING
HAMSTERS
London, Dingwalls - Websters
- Sun 26: Dunstable, Queensway - Magnum
- Mon 27:
- Tue 28: ALMA - PURE THOUGHT
- Wed 29: CITY LIMITS - TALOS
- Thu 1: ALMA - STRING SWING
MARCH
- Fri 2: CITY LIMITS - THE INLINE
BELL SCHOOL - WOBBLY JELLIES
Melbourne SSC - Rendez Vous or
Talos
- Sat 3: CITY LIMITS - WILD WILLY BARRETT
ALMA - PHOENIX
CCAT - PURE THOUGHT
Ely Rugby Club - Katrina And
The Waves
Welwyn, Peartree - Trux
St. Albans, City Hall - Manowar
- Sun 4: Stevenage, Bowes Lyons - Ligotage
- Mon 5: London, Ruskin Arms - Samurai
- Tue 6: ALMA - RECORD COMPANY
Norwich, Penny's - Fiat Lux
- Wed 7: CITY LIMITS - 1000 MEXICANS
Norwich UEA - Carmel
London, Venue - Katrina And The
Waves + Fiction Factory
Ipswich, Gaumont - Klaus
Wunderlich
- THU 8: GUILDHALL - CREAM OF CAT CLUB:
KATRINA AND WAVES
GREAT DIVIDE
+ THE FACE & WOBBLY JELLIES

BANDS

Katrina and the Waves - Alex 314857
Dolly Mixture - Hester 355114
Great Divide - Ed Royston 60027
Aquadance - 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 - John 860638
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 246327
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
Ronnie Thompsons Wasp Club - Steve 357495
Roaring Boys - Paul 01 435 0843
Fax - Martin 68850
Gothique - Chris 93 80926
Vanishing Point - Gavin 829725
Slap Kat - Olli 355702
String Swing - Hugh 351455
Horizon - Tim Fanning Rm.514 YMCA 356998
Racing Heart - Nick 313292
Man Who Suddenly Fell Over - Chris 314038
Americans On Heat - Chris 314038
Chinamen - Hugh 350285
Flock Of Willies - Trevor 68184
The Light Blues - Nick 211424
Gigglesticks A.T.L.T. - Barry Prince, Fitz
20th Century - Mathew Lefroy, Trinity
The Code - Box 729 Kings
The Point - Philip Hartigan, Clare
Force 9 - Nigel Pink, Fulbourn
State Of Mind - Martyn 316211
Habit Of Perfection
The Lovely
32/20 - Eddy, Oundle 72118
Talos
Samurai - Phil 314772
Rockin 50s
Tutch
Energy

Sax Appeal - Alan, Ely 5236
13th Chime
Clay Dolz
Self Righteous Brothers
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Alma - 64965
Burleigh Arms - 357021
Fisher Hall - 350018
Guildhall - 358977
Kelsey Kerridge Sports Hall
Sea Cadet Hall
Coleridge Community Centre
Arbury Road Baptist Church Hall
St. Mathews School, East Road
CCAT Canteen, Batman, Mumford Theatre
Man On The Moon - Jazz
Golden Hind - Folk
Rob Roy - Folk
Last Resort - Home of the Icon Disco
Pickerel
Flambards
UNIVERSITY HALLS - See article in BSN No.1