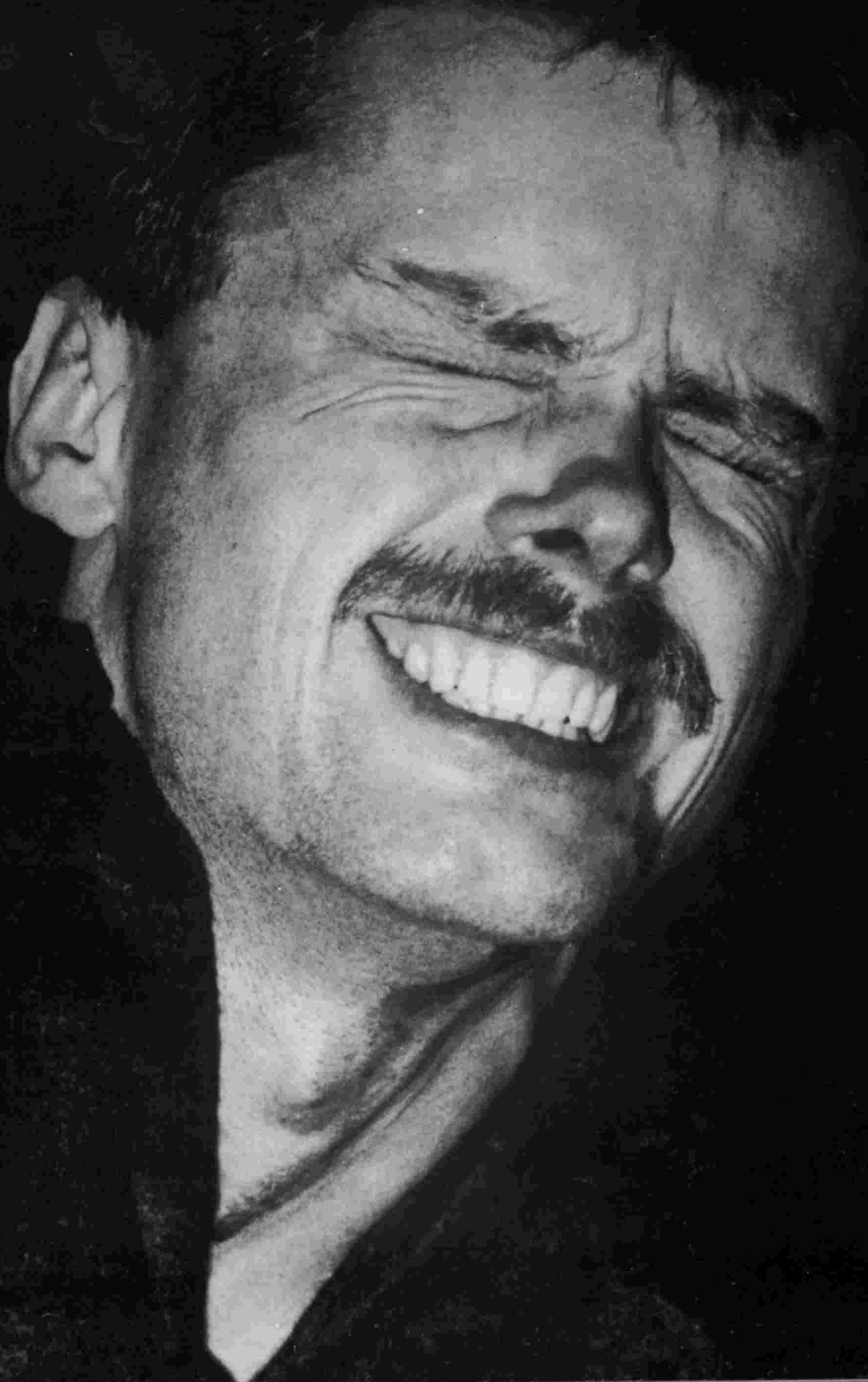


*Blue Suede*  
CAMBRIDGE'S ROCK RAG *News*

No.10



40p

# Blue Suede News

CAMBRIDGE'S ROCK RAG

5, Beaumont Road,  
Cambridge.

CB1 4PU.

Tel. 248341

Editor: Graeme Mackenzie  
Photography: James Hall  
Peter Ingram

Contributors: Chris Heath  
Lyn Guy  
Dave Bragg  
Carl Tweed  
Andy Metcalfe  
Keith Legoy  
Simon Rouse  
Steve Wenn

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COVER PHOTO: Steve Brooks of Andy Goes Shopping and the Toby Jug And Washboard Band - taken by Peter Ingram.

BSN ADDRESS has changed, as you may have noticed. It's not, unfortunately, a new office - can't afford that yet, useful as it would be - it's home, from where the mag is produced. Stuff can still be dropped into 109, King Street if you can't afford the stamp to send it out to the suburbs - but it may take a day or two to find its way to me, so send urgent material to the above address.



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LOWLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY is the firm being started up by ace lensman James Hall. Though he only started photography seriously when BSN started James has already become expert in the art of rock photography, as you all know. He has been asked by many local bands to do sessions for them, to produce publicity shots. Indeed Birmingham band Red Cartoon were so impressed with his work that they too got him to do some work for them. Janice Long broadcast her admiration for the cover pic on Issue 5 on Radio One, and James has recently done some work for new national rock mag "One Two Testing", to go with Jon Lewin's work for them. Though he has thus far tended to specialise in rock photography he will be available for any, and all, sorts of photography - and with his own darkroom and full range of equipment he can offer a complete and competitive service. Phone James Hall on Cambridge 321260.

KEVIN BIRD may not be about to re-emerge with a band called Koo Koo that includes a witch as reported in BSN a few issues ago - but if not, it appears to be because he is going to be working with Kate Garner. Haysi Fantaysi have split, according to her interview in Melody Maker last week, and she is getting a new band together called either Juice Dog or Dog Solo. It's not clear from what she says whether Kevin will be one of the couple of new musicians in the band - but clearly they will be using his songs, which Kate describes as swamp music, like Dr John. Obviously the new band will continue to do her own material as well, but the possible debut single is Kevin's "Let's Walk On The Fire", which she describes as sort of voodoo-ey (so it looks as if the witchcraft elements that Kevin told me about remain). The whole venture is to be guided by the masterminds that launched Marilyn, and about whom Andy Metcalfe was writing in his column last week - that is to say Paul Caplin, the business brain (who was behind Haysi anyway); and Roger Jackson, the music mastermind. Let's hope with all these Cambridge connections that we get to see the new band when they go out live.



KATRINA AND THE WAVES (above, at the Guildhall on 8th of March) have their second single on Silvertown released on March 23rd. It is "Plastic Man" c/w "Going Down To Liverpool". The band play Nene College, Northampton on 30th of March and The Marquee, London on April 7th.

PHOENIX are no more - but doubtless something will rise from the ashes.

HYPERION STUDIOS at Clare, in Suffolk, have asked me to bring their existence to your notice. Formerly The Lodge they recorded Kim Wilde and Fashion's first albums, and have also been used by Bernie Torme and Marie Wilson to name but a few. They are residential, and can offer anything up to, and including, 24-track equipment of the highest quality. They reckon they have one of the best desks available; they can provide any sort of outboard equipment required and they have very experienced engineers. Phone Clare (0787) 278111 or write to Claret Hall Farm, Near Clare, Sudbury, Suffolk. Fans of the band will recognise the address of The Enid, whose studio it is - and anyone familiar with their records will know the excellence of the recordings that the studio produces for them. The Enid incidentally will be playing Cambridge on May 1st - at the Sea Cadet Hall, with Double Yellow Line.

MANDY MORTON BAND are off on tour to Scandinavia next week. When they return Mandy will be looking for a new bass player to join the band on a permanent basis. The band aim to be doing a lot of work in Britain promoting their album (now in local record shops, it's called "Valley Of Light" on their own Banshee label) so they need somebody prepared to work hard; somebody who is in to their sort of "melodic rock" but at the same time is young enough to fit in with the rest of the band who are between 18 and 24. Anybody interested can check out the record while the band are away, and if they think they are suitable give Mandy a ring when the band return, after April 10. The number is Cambridge 351033.

JIM MELTON, ex-Soft Boy and Duck On The Wall, is returning to Cambridge - if he can find a house to purchase - and already the bands are queueing up to get him to sing for them. Anyone who remembers the Ducks will appreciate why. R'n'B/Soul singers with the voice and technique to do the job properly are few and far between, and Jim was one of the best. One band that would suit him is a new soul band being put together by Out Of The Blue veterans Mike Lewis, Theo Slood, Jo Dunne and John Lancaster, along with Jon Ward of the Frigidaires and various others.

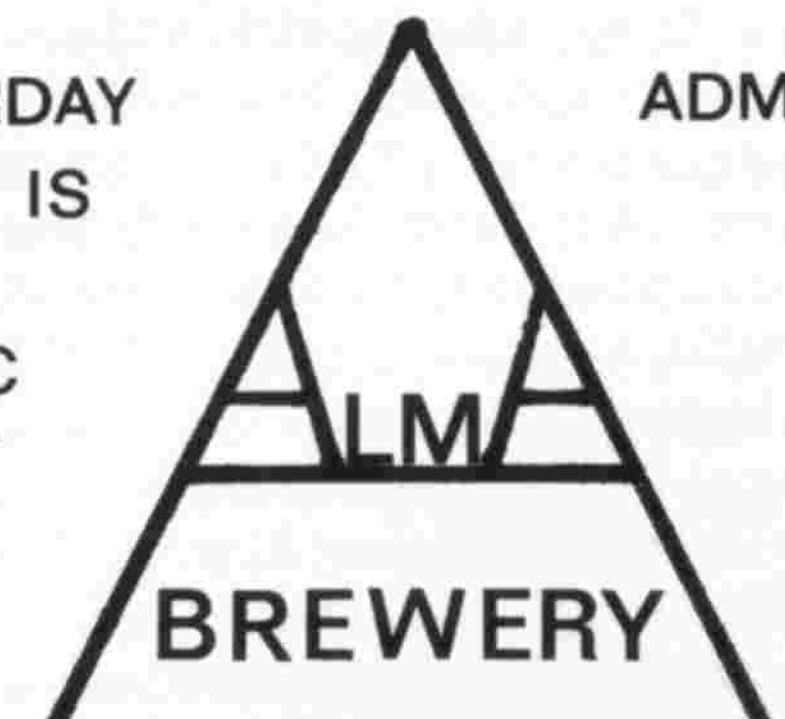
STRAWBERRY FAIR were somewhat taken aback by the suggestion that the rock music might be presented differently this year (and that is putting it mildly!). Consequently they will be organising it themselves along the usual lines, though BSN will be giving them such publicity as they desire. Bands interested can attend the Band Meeting on April 11th at 8.00pm in the hut at the Argyle Street Housing Coop. Also anybody who would like to help in the general organisation of the Fair - which is much more than just the music - can attend the fortnightly open meetings in the same place (28th March, 25th April and so on). Any non-rock acts interested in performing during the afternoon - particularly if they are the sort of acts that appeal to children, and are particularly visual - please get in touch with Gaynor Griffiths on Cambridge 60730 and tell her where she can come and see you perform. No tapes though, since the visual is as important as the sounds.

PINK FLOYD may be no more, but the component parts continue to make music. Dave Gilmour's new solo album and single came out a couple of weeks ago and are climbing the charts. Rick Wright meanwhile has teamed up with Dave 'Dee' Harris of Fashion to form a new outfit called Zee. Their single is just out, and the album follows very shortly. All these endeavours are still on the Harvest label, and I doubt if there are many new bands being signed by EMI to that particular branch of the empire. Pink Floyd fans may like to note that I am currently telling the Floyd story on the Radio Cambs Rockshow (Sat 12.00 to 2.00pm). Trevor Dann is busy trying to get the odd Floyd member in for a chat sometime in April - after he has had a couple of weeks off to recover from his exertions at the Whistle Test. Pity that he has only been doing the show every other week, since last week's shambles would surely never have got past T. Dann producing. Meantime in Cambridge the Rockshow will be left in the hands of his capable(?) pupils - the dynamic duo, Lewin and Mackenzie. You've heard of the Read and Wright show - yes they started on local radio doing a show together (and the mind boggles at the thought of guitar playing geese and the like) - well we promise not to be in the least similar to that. It will be exactly the same Rockshow - with the same catholic choice of music; but more so with the variety of taste we exhibit between us.

32/20 have secured a publishing contract and a deal with Skyline Records of Essex to put out a couple of tracks on a 7" compilation EP to be released in five weeks time. The record will also contain 2 tracks each from a London band, and a Birmingham band, and will retail for £1.45. Further details nearer to release. 32/20 meanwhile continue to gig - they play the Comet, Peterborough on Friday 23rd March, and have dates lined up through to June; watch the Gig Guide.

SAMURAI are in the process of changing their name - so as not to clash with the Welsh outfit of that ilk. Finding a name always seems to be a band's greatest problem; should it be? Do names really matter that much? Somehow I doubt it - so long as you don't choose a name that appears to give the wrong impression about the band's music. HM is of course one of the fields where names do usually indicate the sort of music, so it will be interesting to see what the lads come up with - read BSN to find out.

CSAWZA are a peripatetic cinema who have sent me a note to announce their existence. They are releasing 5 films (on Super 8) this month, with soundtracks available on Silent Pocket Records. One of the films is "JFK 1917-1963" and includes parts of the famous home movie footage of John Kennedy's assassination that has never been shown on TV - or so the note assures us, which comes from Barry. He says that Csawza is available for gigs, Barmitzvahs, dentist appointments etc! If you need to know more - and get a newsletter and free sticker - write to Csawza, 4 Needham Road, Stanwick, Wellingborough, Northants. NN9 6QU.

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# PETERBOROUGH

# Janine Booth

## PLACES TO BE SEEN AROUND TOWN:

THE GLASSHOUSE is a Sunday lunchtime club in the upstairs bar at the Key Theatre. Membership is a nominal 25p, and admission is 50p (accompanied children free). It features mainly local bands, one or two at a time; but sometimes 'foreign' groups play, notably Billy Bragg, John Otway, Testcard F and Dolly Mixture in the past.

THE KEY THEATRE AUDITORIUM houses monthly events, usually featuring three local groups, promoted by Glasshouse promoter Andy Bellwood.

Pubs that have live bands include THE NORFOLK INN (Lincoln Road); THE POSTILLION and THE DANISH INVADER in Stamford.

## SOME GOOD LOCAL GROUPS (and a few others)

CARE FOR A WALTZ are a brilliant six-piece based in Rutland, consisting of: Dave - vocals; Ratty - drums (& lyrics); Chandra - percussion; Nick - lead gtr; Roland - rhythm gtr/trumpet; Albert - bass. Having played around Peterborough for the past year or so, they had their first London gig at Dingwall's on Jan 22. Waltz? defy description, but the nearest anyone has ever come is "progressive new wave/dance." They do a very good live set, including songs like "Armageddon", "Refugee", "Conspiracy" (probably their best), "Story So Far", "God", "Money Talk", "Just For This" and "Put It Down".

PERPETUAL EMOTION are a group from Stamford, who are very good, but occasionally sound too much like The

Cure. Songs include "Don't Talk To Me", "Distant Horizon", "See No Sound", "008", "Dogs", "Last Goodbye" and the excellent "Turn And Face The Wall".

METHODS OF EXECUTION were formed by Allen Adams, formerly bassist with the Destructors, and two ex-Name members, Dave Coltom and Joe Macoll. Allen claims to have put punk behind him now, and wants MOE to be the Iggy Pop and the Stooges of the 80s!!

SHAKE 424 are a 4-piece Peterborough band, featuring cult figure Joe Maplestone on bass.

THE CITIZENS, featuring ex-Tender Moments In Modern History big-head David Allen, really are very crap, stunningly pretentious and with the most dire set of boring lyrics imaginable.

STUDIO ROCKERS are a 9-piece reggae band, who have drawn comparisons to UB40 and Aswad. Their repertoire mixes very funky instrumentals (eg "Peace Of Mind") and strong songs, eg "I Blame Society", "The Social And Poverty Times". THE PLASTIC HEROES are an interminably boring futurist band, whose 'songs' all sound the same, and have such thrilling imaginative titles as "Rumours", "Echoes" and "Girls Will Be Boys" (or was it "Boys Will Be Girls"?).

Some good up-and-coming bands are: SO WHAT? ; THE CIRCLE and DEATH IN MEMPHIS.

All the other local groups are boring R'n'B/Rock bands such as LLOYD WATSON BAND, DAVISON WOODS, CANADA, WOOLLIE PYG, MINOR ARCANA, ENERGY and 32/20.

## From Our Own Correspondent

My brain has turned to putty during a nasty bout of flu, and try as I might an article will not come. Heaven knows I've tried. You nearly got one on why hit records are hit records, until my fuddled mind realised that if I solved that one, not only would I be a millionaire but I'd be stupid to give away the secret.

Then you almost got one which said that if you went to the Guildhall for the Guitarists Night you wouldn't be seeing any of the performers at their best because they are at their best with their bands; but then I realised that BSN wouldn't be out till after the event, and anyway if you don't go to the

Guildhall the Wobbly Jellies will be too full and I won't be able to see anything.

So I'm going to give up and say that due to illness you'll have to wait till the next issue for this column. Andy Goes Shopping have a 7-song cassette now available from 109 King Street or Cambridge Rock, price £2. Oops, it just slipped out. It's jolly good; it's got some original material on it (somebody revive Jon Lewin) and if you don't like the songs, there's a whole blank side on which to store computer programmes - or dictate your shopping lists. Pass the tissues.

ANDY METCALFE

## BENJAMIN ZEPHANIAH

"My life? Born in Jamaica; came over here when I was 7 (for some reason my mother thought the streets were paved with gold); lived in Handsworth, Birmingham, until I was about 11; then I went to approved school, then borstal, then prison, then prison, then prison. I came out, moved to London to write a book; I wrote the book and started doing poetry...."

"for two years one time I lived in  
a cell  
and I really mean it that cell was  
hell"

"I am no hero, I am no star  
just a human being, saying 'stop the  
war'"

Benjamin Zephaniah is now 27. For the last two years he has taken his poetry of personal experience fused with an intense political commitment around the country - to rock gigs, poetry readings, hospitals, asylums, the streets, and anywhere else that people would listen.

Last year he released an album of his words set to a self-composed reggae backing entitled "Rasta". Although he plans to tour with a band this summer he prefers appearing alone, feeling that other musicians detract from his stage authority and distract attention from his message. On stage he performs with command, teasing and playfully taunting his audience between works; and then, as his delivery begins, weaving his body forcefully to the rhythm of his spoken words. How does he describe what he does?

"I call it dub ranting - it's unlike poetry, more like shouting. Anti-poetry. Poetry at 100mph."

As such he falls between the rantings of Seething Wells or Attila The Stockbroker and the more considered approach exemplified by Linton Kwesi Johnson. At his best he takes from the former their aggression and spontaneity, while (nearly) ridding himself of the juvenile bum'n'fart humour; from the latter he takes the coherent expression of an angry black experience, but discards LKJ's almost academic restraint:

"wicked Thatcher, bastard Thatcher,  
how I hate you so.  
everytime that you say 'stop' be  
sure that I will go."

His motivation is clear.

"Entertainment is secondary. If I had my way I'd talk politics all the time,

but people can't accept that."

Most of his targets are the obvious ones - the government ("I Want To Play Football With The Government"), the monarchy ("The Day I Met Lady Di"), the police ("Dis Policeman Is Kicking Me to Death"), and the general stigmatisation and subordination of blacks in Britain ("Who Killed Colin Roach?"; "13 Dead And Nothing Said"). Slightly less predictable are his continual put-downs of Eddy Grant. He explains:

"He told everybody he was going to do this and that in his studio in Brixton, and as soon as he got a number one he left..."

"hope your guilt now burn inside  
have you lost your ghetto pride?  
one time Leroy was my star  
Leroy is now...Eddy Grant."

He's adamant that Grant's example need not be followed - given the same opportunities he would not make the same mistakes.

"I can't be rich without the people being rich around me. I know I'd do good with it. I can only exploit money like I exploit a radio station or a stage - to get the message over or to pull people together more."

"I always wanted a house of my own... when I got it, I wanted a bigger house to move in other people." And that's exactly what he's done - by moving in other musicians and setting up an office there he's turned it into a community group as well as simply a place for people to live.

"I don't like President Reagan  
what a dirty fuckin' man  
I hate that bloody bastard  
and that's all I understand."

There's no denying Benjamin Zephaniah's sincerity and determination, but I still harbour some reservations about how successful his work is at converting disbelievers. On personal issues he wields an undeniable power:

"Show me another art that can actually move the way I move. One guy said to me that I made him cry because I did "Man Woman Come Together" and he'd been beating up his wife for 15 years."

"how you a talk about life and justice  
when you can't handle domestic crisis?  
how you a talk about burn Rome  
when you don't have the liberty at  
home?"

But I wonder whether his directly


**Chris Heath**

political works are actually as effective as he claims. At the gig I went to he was largely preaching to the converted - and I fear that the few in opposition to his messages could too easily accept his fiery rhythms and bold slogans as a striking spectacle while dismissing his actual words as entertaining but superficial rhetoric. I hope I am wrong. He certainly dismisses these doubts, and in so doing

exudes an infectious optimism that may prove to be the most powerful weapon of all.

"no more fighting, why can't we stop this fighting?  
this fighting hurting me, time come to start uniting."

"I know it has an effect...I'm basically on a venture of unity, of peace, which I don't think is impossible. I think it's realistic. It only takes people and I'm only a person. We're all only people."



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#### FLACO JIMENEZ/PETER ROWAN - Fisher Hall

Gigs of this calibre are few and far between in Cambridge, so it was nice to see an almost full Fisher Hall on a cold March evening giving a very warm reception to these fine musicians. Although not widely known outside the folk and country music circles, their musical pedigrees go back a long way.

Flaco Jimenez is known for his mid-seventies work with Ry Cooder, most notably on the "Chicken Skin Music" album and accompanying tour which also spawned the live "Showtime" album, and a few records under his own name on various labels - all admirably showing off his prowess on the accordion to fine effect.

Peter Rowan has been making good records now for over ten years with a host of impressive sidemen, such as Jerry Garcia, Mike Auldridge and of course Flaco Jimenez himself, and has been a regular crowd puller on the live circuit.

On Tuesday night they were backed by Flaco's three-piece San Antonio Tex-Mex Band, a less powerful and aggressive aggregation than the Free Mexican Airforce which appeared with the duo and Tex Logan at last year's Folk Festival. A simple line-up of guitar, bass and drums provided a nice "loosely tight" backing which complimented the songs perfectly and allowed both Flaco

and Peter Rowan, on mandolin, plenty of room upfront to solo.

Coming on stage at half past eight with the announcement that they had an extension to play until five in the morning, it was obvious that they enjoy bringing their very special brand of Tex-Mex music to the people. Right from the start the band got into a nice warm groove and took the audience along with them; Flaco's stage presence and slight stumbling English turning it into one big party.

After an hour or so of mostly accordion-led instrumentals they took a short break, Peter Rowan then returning to the stage to do a few solo numbers on guitar, including the sad and evocative "River Of Stone". It's a measure of this man's talent that he seems comfortably at home in either a solo setting such as this; as part of a small country or bluegrass group; or in a high-powered electric band like the Free Mexican Airforce.

Flaco joined him on stage for a couple of numbers and showed that the accordion is also quite a sensitive instrument, providing a nicely understated backing to Peter's vocals and guitar. The band were then brought out again, and from there on it was party time all the way, including short and precise solos, until they finally finished at around midnight. A lot of the old favourites



were in the set, among them "He'll Have A Go", "The Free Mexican Airforce" and finishing with a singalong "Goodnight Irene". The audience were sorry to see it end, most people ready and willing to carry on until 5am.

What with this and the exciting prospect of the Guitarists' Night at the Guildhall on March 23rd featuring Rory Gallagher, David Lindley, Juan Martin and Richard Thompson, it looks like Cambridge hopefully will be playing host to a lot more fine concerts in the future than they have been of late.

SIMON ROUSE



1000 MEXICANS - CITY LIMITS

Keyboards on an ironing board next to the toy bongos. Three manic musicians swapping instruments including trumpet, violin, mouth organ, kazoo, oboe, bass, guitar, keyboards, drum, hubcap...you've heard all of this before, haven't you? Another wacky troupe of avant-gardists who think that being different is being better; and think that if you can't play something you might as well hit it anyway.

There's a catch though. 1000 Mexicans are simply very good. Only occasionally do they fall prey to the temptations of instrumental excess; for most of their set they scuttle around the stage with purpose, every movement and every sound with a reason. And despite all their accessories their most powerful tools are their voices; the three of them tearing the use of harmonies from the Great American school of dirge-mania (Crosby, Stills, Seals, Nash, Ronstadt and Croft), and perverting them to their own ends.

Nor are they just a band for performance - the songs themselves were memorable. They dispensed with their current indie hit "The Last Pop Song", and their first single "The Art Of Love" early in the set; but the later songs were just as good, and performed with convincing intensity, until during the final "Music While You Work" one of them repeatedly viciously attacked the nearby snare drum as if threatened by an encircling silence, pounding it again and again with his whole body weight, seemingly oblivious to his surroundings.

The small audience, a bizarre mixture of trendies, hippies and students, loved them - the soundman didn't, and so demands for an encore were drowned by the blissful chords of "Hold Back The Rain" by Duran Duran (not one of their greatest numbers in any case). Hopefully the next time Duran Duran play City Limits they'll be playing 1000 Mexicans through the PA.

CHRIS HEATH

## REVIEWS

### KATRINA AND THE WAVES - ELY RUGBY CLUB

#### The Club

There have been four gigs at the Rugby Club in Ely; three by the Waves, and one by Power Curve - a jazz/junk band from Watford. Several more gigs are promised by the club, and names such as Hollywood Killers, World Series, Great Divide and London Cowboys (Glen Matlock's latest) have been rumoured.

So far the club's venture into concerts have been quite successful, with the Waves gaining support with each appearance, and Power Curve, although not breaking any attendance records, being highly enjoyed by those there. Unfortunately I missed that one, but have managed to get to the Waves' gigs.

One thing that strikes you about the club is that the audience, with a few exceptions, are not the normal crowd that see local bands. Most of them are regulars at the club, and usually there to enjoy discos - so for bands, such as the Waves and Power Curve, to go down well is quite an achievement.

#### The Waves

Having seen most of their local gigs in the last year, I would rate the three at the Rugby Club as their best - with the possible exception of the Media attended Fisher Hall event. The latest of their appearances, on Saturday 3rd of March, was really good - the best of the three.

The Waves stuck to their better known songs; "Game Of Love", "Brown Eyed Son" etc. The only one that I had not heard before being the forthcoming single "Plastic Man", which if the performance here was anything to go by must be destined for the top forty.

The highlight of the show was a great singalong version of Gary Glitter's "Rock And Roll Part 2" - if you enjoyed it at Fisher Hall, then you'd have loved it on this occasion. Katrina has a great knack of getting a crowd to join in, and everybody really let go with the chorus while Katrina did her usual rapping over the top. After this the band went straight into Watusi as a final number, with Alex as great as ever on the drums.

The band came on for one encore, "Do You Love Me", before finishing with the crowd almost too exhausted to yell for more.

If you at Cambridge want a good night out, come to the next Rugby Club gig - Ely isn't that far; I've travelled to gigs in Cambridge often enough.

STEVE WENN

### NATURAL ROOTS - CITY LIMITS

I don't like to lump bands of a musical style together, but when the bands themselves thrust comparisons in my face, then I find it difficult to avoid them. Natural Roots were very much a case in point. Advertised beforehand as "Natural Roots - Ex-Misty In Roots", and starting their set with the declaration "Live and direct - Natural Roots", they were but a pale imitation of Misty In Roots, Aswad or any band in reggae's rather threadbare tapestry.

The set which followed was yet another exercise in going through the motions of reggae - a ritual in which once meaningful phrases become familiar and vacuous catchphrases; an automatic call-and-response not dissimilar to the worst excesses of heavy metal. Such a process cheapens and weakens the underlying force of the lyrics - rather like the "Free Nelson Mandela" single by Special AKA, which, while admirable in its intentions, reduces the whole struggle into a convenient hook which soon loses all significance.

Moreover the musicians, while quite tight, failed to provide any backbone to the weeping, wailing and (doubtless) gnashing of teeth of the three singers. Bass and drums lacked the sharpness required to move feet; the two guitars were practically inaudible, and only the keyboards occasionally poked through the general morass. To mention individual songs would be impossible, as none stood out; the only memorable thing was the percussionist's utterances (he doubled as a DJ) of 'wicked' inna soprano stylee. Another gimmick.

While it was nice to see a reggae band at City Limits, and a full venue (a good omen for the upcoming Hondo gig there), Natural Roots were like hundreds of other current UK reggae outfits - lacking any individuality, or indeed any involvement in their performance. They looked as if they couldn't wait to get everything over and go home - which, after a reluctant encore, they eventually did.

KEITH LEGOY

## REVIEWS

### THE INLINE - CITY LIMITS

Acting on a certain Mr. Lewin's judgement that the Inline are "rock", I went along to City Limits to see them, and found that even after 9pm there were very few people in. The band were sitting at the bar drinking, and their appearance was definitely not in keeping with the usual rock stance. Maybe Jon's idea of "rock" is different from mine; but the Inline are not what I consider to be "rock" - and nor do they consider themselves to be; their vocalist says they are New Wave. Certainly their style is very modern, and they have that carefully studied look of extreme casualness about them.



The Inline are a four piece band hailing from Corby. Featured are John Ferguson, drums; Terry Mullan, guitar; John Peterson, bass; and Andy McShane, vocals and occasional guitar. By the time they started playing the audience had swollen somewhat, and by the end of the evening City Limits was fairly full. Straightaway I decided that the Inline sound like U2, and as the evening went on I heard other people saying the same thing. The songs were their own, every single one was good; and, after the initial shock of realising what I was hearing, I loved it and was unable to keep still.

Maybe it is the smallness of City Limits, but as always seems to be the case the drums were quite loud in relation to everything else. The guitar work was very interesting, with jangling metallic sounds and special effects which often gave the illusion of

keyboards. Unfortunately the vocals were not clear enough to do justice to Andy's voice, though he sounded pretty good anyway. He is a real frontman, dominating the stage as he is constantly on the move - almost dancing to the songs. My favourite songs were "Visions" and "Seventh Heaven"; the former just sounded good, and the latter was really strong and got people moving. They did do a headbanging song called "Jig" which was really rhythmic rather than "heavy". Also the Inline were found to have a social conscience, as was heard in "When The Screaming Stops" - about the nuclear holocaust to come - and "Love On The Dole", which was ironically

dedicated to everyone who voted for Mrs T! Unfortunately the final number was a cover version of T. Rex's "20th Century Boy" which, though played well, was very out of place. Right through the second set people were dancing and enjoying themselves, and continued to do so until the end; but that final number left me cold and standing still for the first time. The interesting thing was that, when I talked to Andy, I was told The Inline are thinking of dropping "20th Century Boy".

So, in spite of everything, it turned out to be a worthwhile evening. I enjoyed myself and enjoyed seeing others doing so too. For those of you who stick doggedly to what you know, it really is worth chancing your arm once in a while. Cambridge now often boasts untold musical treasures just waiting to be uncovered.

LYN GUY

## MORE SOFT BOYS

Carl Tweed

I consider Robyn Hitchcock to be one of pop's great lost talents. However, my respect for him as a musician has always been tempered by what I felt was his tendency to attitudinize. Whilst the handful of exceptional writers are able to reveal their innermost thoughts without the end results sounding pretentious or sentimental, Hitchcock relied all too often on eccentric lyrical content that told us nothing except that he was prone to affectation.

Lacking the authentic LSD-induced nursery rhyme nightmare quality of Syd Barrett, Hitchcock's songs worked best when he conjured up amusing, surrealistic comic strip yarns and welded them to a guitar-dominated, singalong pop tune; "Kingdom Of Love" is a good example.

He also seemed to crave a cozy, second division cult status. His opportunities to become a contender, most notably when the Soft Boys signed to Radar, were never taken advantage of and the Soft Boys split. Robyn's eventual 'retirement' from the music business, and his authorisation of the release of old tapes on small, hard-to-get independent labels compounded the impression. No doubt he is pleased by the mystique that has been built up around the name of the Soft Boys. The truth is that the band were under-achievers - competent pub rockers who had a chance to rise out of the mire and blew it. If I sound at all bitter, it is only because they had the potential to seriously challenge the crap produced by careerists with a get-rich-quick mentality and no real love for popular music.

My reason for writing about the Soft Boys at this time is that yet another record has recently arrived in the shops. "Wading Through A Ventilator" (Delorean Record Co. SOFT ONE) is a six-track mini-album which includes three previously unreleased songs, together with the three songs that were on their debut Raw single. For a change, the master tapes did not originate from Robyn Hitchcock. Instead, they were acquired from Lee Wood, who was the boss of Raw Records, and by all accounts a thoroughly disreputable character. He was comprehensively lambasted by ex-Soft Boy Andy Metcalfe in issue 7 of Blue Suede News.

If you have never heard anything by the Soft Boys, don't be put off by the utterly appalling cover shots which make them look like wallies completely lacking in style and charisma. The music, which was recorded at Spaceward Studios

in the halcyon days of 1977 with the line up of Hitchcock, Davies, Metcalfe and Windsor, is mostly fascinating and certainly of more than just historical interest.

Apart from an effective quiet passage in the middle, "Wading Through A Ventilator" is an obstinate and unwavering bombardment of archetypal punk thrash which renders most of the lyrics incomprehensible. "The Face Of Death" is reminiscent of 1967 Pink Floyd, with the repetitive guitar and bass like "Lucifer Sam". Hitchcock sings in a more subdued and, at times, deeper voice, presumably in an attempt to mimic Syd Barrett. A marvellously inept psychedelic guitar solo adds to the overall sixties ambience. The finished product is little more than pastiche, but irresistible because it is done so well. A special mention must be made of Andy Metcalfe's vocal arrangements which add a polished sixties harmony group feel to many of the songs. His arrangement on "Hear My Brane", for example, manages to transform a basically aimless and tuneless dirge into something that is at least listenable.

As for the previously unreleased songs, "Yodelling Hoover" is as stupid as you might expect. The lyrics will make you cringe, sounding as if they were cobbled together about five minutes before recording. "Give It To The Soft Boys" is a nice surprise. Although on the short side, the blues feel and echoey vocals are quite intriguing. "Vyrna Knowl Is A Headbanger" turns out to be "Ventilator" with alternate lyrics and a slightly rougher instrumental sound. In conclusion then, a bit of a rip off if you already have the first single, but still a fascinating artifact. The Soft Boys revival continues unabated. Somehow I doubt that we have yet heard the last of this band.

## Streetlights

Stage Lighting

Bob. 151 Catharine St.  
Cambridge. Tel: 249594



Recently arrived in Cambridge to work is one half of the Peeved Records conglomerate, Steve Hartwell. A quiet shy man, he has, with his partner Peter Skelley, quickly established an evergrowing catalogue of product, with ten releases already.

The first release was a tape by Southampton band The Gestalt, which documents themselves painfully shedding themselves of their progressive rock stance and turning into a normal pop band. The culmination of this was their name change to The Primary, and the production of Peeved's first and only record release, the single "Radio Silence/Responding" - not a bad record by any standards, but as Steve acknowledges it's neither unusual enough to pick up independent sales, nor special enough to crash the insurmountable barriers to the charts.

Subsequently they have taken on sales of Perfect Vision's "Demonstration" tape - a good document of how the band sounded 9 months ago - have released Martin Baxter's collection of eccentricities "Because It Was There", and have licenced 5 deleted tapes from the Unlikely Records catalogue. These 5 all feature different incarnations of a Robert Cox, and range from the abysmal to the pleasingly ambient - the best being The Same's "Sync or Swim" and Rimarimba's "Below The Horizon". Total sales of this series so far number one copy.

Steve modestly describes overall sales so far as "slow" - he hopes a prospective distribution deal through Backs will help. He eschews any ambitions to be Richard Branston; he runs Peeved "just out of interest", and to enable people "to hear things they might want to hear."

I suggested to him that he might just be providing a service that no one wants; flooding the market with unlistenable tapes that have no audience anyway. Music is not just commercial or uncommercial - it can also be good

or bad. His response is reasonable: "Who's to say what people want to hear? It comes down to my personal taste. I have to listen to them everytime I make a copy! I have turned down at least one tape...."

What will the future bring for Peeved? "Selling a few more copies" Steve says hopefully. It will also bring at least 4 new Peeved tapes. The Detective are a London-based band with Cambridge origins - the first side of their "Behind Wires" reminds me of the quirky pop sensibility of "Taking Tiger Mountain" period Eno, and is rather good. The second side features two terrible unnecessary 'experimental' synth pieces.

Americans On Heat will posthumously release a tape "if they ever get it together", and Peeved also hope to release a tape by an unknown London band whose demo has strayed into their hands. Steve suggested to me that it sounded like Echo And The Bunnymen - one listen confirmed that in fact it sounds rather more like Echo and The Bunnymen than they themselves do. They even have a song called "(This time we'll do it) Nice And Clean."

Finally Peeved expect eventually to release Martin Baxter's "True Confessions Part 1". Intrigued by the combination of the atrocious, ambitious, adventurous and amusing on his first tape, I wandered Cambridge in search of Martin Baxter....

In the next edition of Blue Suede News THE TRUE CONFESSIONS OF MARTIN BAXTER, as revealed to our intrepid reporter Chris Heath.

#### THE PEEVED CATALOGUE

- PV 001 The Gestalt - Funeral Party Fashions
- PV 002 The Primary - Radio Silence c/w Responding
- PV 003 Perfect Vision - Demonstration
- PV 004 Martin Baxter - Because It Was There
- PV 005 The Same - Sync Or Swim
- PV 006 General Motors - I.O.W. 76/7
- PV 007 Rimarimba - Below The Horizons
- PV 008 Felixstowe Rocks Compilation
- PV 009 Robert Cox - Random Musics
- PV 010 The Detective - Behind Wires

All tapes £1.50 (single £1.40) from Peeved Records, c/o Steve Hartwell, 46 Kimberley Road, Cambridge. Tel. (0223) 352612

**Chris Heath**

**PHOTO COMP**

I can already hear the howls of delight with which you are greeting RETURN OF PHOTO-COMP.

As usual the winner simply has to spot their pic', and present themselves with a copy of the magazine containing it at CITY LIMITS on a night of their choice. They'll get in for free - and if I ever manage to get myself together I'll present them with a souvenir copy of the print.

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**BRAGG'S RECORDS**

**THE LEFT BANKE AND SUDDENLY IT'S BAM  
CARUSO RECORDS**

Originally recording for Smash Records in the USA, the Left Banke were part of America's answer to the British invasion of the mid-sixties. The other end of the spectrum to the Electric Prunes or Standells, they took their inspiration from the Beatles' more subdued orchestral songs rather than the raunch of the Stones, Who or Yardbirds.

The Left Banke split in twain in 1969 amidst wranglings and lawsuits, leaving behind two albums and a handful of classic singles. Remember "Walk Away Renee"; well that's one of theirs, and the original far eclipses any copy, even the Four Tops.

Meanwhile here in 1984 Bam Caruso Records have gathered a selection of tracks from the two albums and assorted singles and released an album and EP, so you can again thrill to the baroque harmonies and strings of such minor epics as "Desiree", "Barterers and their Wives", "Pretty Ballerina" and "I've Got Something On My Mind". Accompanied by an informative info booklet too.

And on to Bam Caruso Records. Run by a group of people in St. Albans - at least that's where their postal address is - their aim is to re-release classic US and UK psychedelic bands from the original masters or tapes. The albums will also have 4 page info sheets - and certainly if they follow the standard of "And Suddenly It's The Left Banke" they will be added to a list of essential purchases along with labels like Eva and Edsel.

The catalogue at present is:

KIRI 021 The Left Banke - And Suddenly  
It's...

NRIC 022 The Left Banke - Walk Away Renee  
(EP, no tracks from album)

Projected for February were:

KIRI 028 The Eyes - Blink

KIRI 024 The Psychedelic Snarl (compilation)

KIRI 027 The Technicolour Dream (ditto)

Future releases should include a further Left Banke single ("Foggie Waterfall"); Best of LPs from The Blues Magoos, HP Lovecraft, Pretty Things, Eyes Of Blue, Kaleidoscope and...a Scott Walker album which includes a very rare track. Can't wait huh?

## NEWS etc

TRUX have recruited 'Ant' Ellerton (ex-Amyl Dukes) and Marc Noel-Johnson (of Andy Goes Shopping, Holder's Heroes and many past bands). They join Eddie Allen and Roger Newell and the band continue to gig busily at the bases and around the region. On April 1st they play the Glasshouse, Peterborough (at lunchtime), and on March 29th they open THE COW AND HARE, LODE - a new venue!! With the possibility of a bar to midnight, and a rehearsal facility available to be hired as well, this is somewhere for bands to check out. The promoter hopes to have weekly gigs to start with - maybe more if all goes well - and the bands will be paid the major percentage of the door money. Check it out by ringing: John Morgan 812405

RAZOR'S EDGE who are you?

GOTHIQUE who are currently busy touring the North East of England have a new bass player. Andy Day, formerly of the Bedfordshire band Osla, replaces Chris Blackman who has left the band to pursue other priorities. The band's new tape, "Kristiana", is nearly sold out according to my usual correspondent, Chris Hall. Apparently it was recorded at Blomberg Studio, Ely - somewhere new to me; perhaps they will let me have a telephone number and some info about themselves if they wish to be more widely known. Future local Gothique gigs include Letchworth, Youth Centre March 31; Dunstable, Wheatsheaf, April 4; Stevenage, College Of Further Education 6th; Wealdstone, Queens Arms 7th; Melbourne SSC 27th.

# CAMBRIDGE ROCK

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## GIG GUIDE

- Wed 28: CITY LIMITS - THE RAZOR'S EDGE
- Thu 29: ALMA - SAFETY VALVE  
Lode, Cow'n'Hare - Trux  
Ipswich, Gaumont - Spider
- Fri 29: CITY LIMITS - CARE FOR A WALTZ  
Melborne SSC - Rendez Vous  
Northampton, Nene College -  
Katrina And Waves
- Sat 31: CITY LIMITS - FRIGIDAIRE + 1926  
ALMA - LIGHT BLUES  
SEA CADET HALL - DOUBLE YELLOW  
LINE + PLAZA  
Peterborough, Gables - Samurai  
Letchworth, Youth Ctre - Gothique  
Hatfield, Poly - Re-Flex  
Ipswich, Gaumont - Jah Warriors
- Sun 1: Peterborough, Glasshouse - Trux  
Stevenage, Bowes Lyons - Peter  
And The Test Tube Babies
- Wed 4: CITY LIMITS - SLAPKAT  
Dunstable, Wheatsheaf - Gothique
- Thu 5:
- Fri 6: CITY LIMITS - IQ  
Melbourne SSC - Samurai  
Stevenage Further Education  
College - Gothique
- Sat 7: CITY LIMITS - GLASS TIES + PURE  
THOUGHT  
ALMA - ?  
London, Marquee - Katrina & Waves
- Sun 8: Peterborough, Glasshouse - 1926  
Dunstable, Queensway - Pallas
- Tue 10: Ipswich, Gaumont - Dr. Hook
- Wed 11: CITY LIMITS - TREDEGAR
- Fri 13: CITY LIMITS - YOUR DINNER
- Sat 14: CITY LIMITS - KISSING BANDITS  
SEA CADET HALL - 13TH CHIME +  
VERDICT  
ALMA - ?

Two points emerge from the gig guide: Firstly you will notice that the Alma is restricted to providing only one days amplified music a week after April 1st, following the unfair decision of the Council licensing panel (which has nothing to do with the music, but in effect penalises Nick for running a successful pub). But look out for the acoustic stuff on other evenings. Secondly you will notice that the gig guide covers 3 weeks - which means the next BSN will be out, I hope, on Friday 13th! Unlucky for some - but knowing mine, we'll succeed this time.

## BANDS

Katrina And The Waves - Alex 314857  
Dolly Mixture - Hester 355114  
Great Divide - Ed 9582 578  
Aquadance - Ray 247802  
Hondo - 211371  
The Face - Paddy & Mark 313520  
Sindy And Action Men - Dave 8263875  
Trux - Sue 93 31550  
Wobbly Jellies - Keith 352125  
Perfect Vision - Jon 313564  
Frigidaires - Rid 355568  
Andy Goes Shopping - Marc 316091  
Toby Jug And Washboard - Trevor 240996  
The Lonely - Ted 351708  
Holders Heroes - John 860638  
Your Dinner - 211371  
So What - 211371  
S.I.T.F.O. - Mark 314366  
Zoom - Chris 355806  
Pure Thought - Robb 68442  
Mandy Morton Band - 351033  
Final Scream - Robin 323249  
Worlds End Band - John 246327  
Safety Valve - Dave 0480 51490  
Su Lyn - Roger 313250  
Misbehaviour - Pete 351947  
Rendez Vous - Murray 245455  
Sahara - Quentin 68975  
Neutral Vision - 0480 66088  
Dr. Skull - Viv 322438  
Stormed - Mike 321885  
R.T.'s Wasp Club - Steve 357495  
Roaring Boys - Paul 01 435 0843  
Fax - Martin 68850  
Gothique - Chris 93 80926  
Vanishing Point - John, Histon 4504  
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 240996  
The Light Blues - Nick 211424  
Gigglesticks ATLT - Barry Prince, Fitz.  
20th Century - Mathew Lefroy, Trinity  
The Point - Philip Hartigan, Clare  
Force 9 - Nigel Pink, Fulbourn  
State Of Mind - Martyn 316211  
32/20 - Eddy, Oundle 72118  
Samurai - Phil 314772  
Sax Appeal - Alan, Ely 5236  
Habit Of Perfection  
The Lovely  
Talos - Olaf 0480 69747  
Tutch  
Energy  
13th Chime - Tim Cole 93 50405  
Clay Dolz  
Self Righteous Brothers  
Andy Talking And The Ghost Of  
Electricity - 65925

Exploding Hamsters - Fish 315495  
Personal Touch  
Precious Little Idols  
Senior Service  
Dum Dum Boys  
Rhythm Method  
Dirty Mac And The Kerbcrawlers  
Hall Of Mirrors  
De Gulpa Twins - Andy 276408  
Total Onslaught - Jim Barrell, 9 Field Way  
Double Yellow Line  
New Electric Sex Dwarfs  
Spoons  
Loan Sharks  
Fast Friends - Darren 841420  
Poet Painter - Richard, Histon 4073  
Adverse FX  
The Brink  
Plaza  
TBA - Nick 63885  
The Catch - Trevor 0440 704278

## LIGHTS HIRE

Streetlights - Bob 249594  
Just Lites - 0954 50851  
Softspot - 244639  
Mad - Peterborough 222914/41276  
D. Lights Design - 834212  
Clare JCR

## P.A. HIRE

Stavros - 245047  
Roger Chatterton - 313250  
Dave Gonut - 0328 76394  
Skysound - 358644  
Cheops - 249889  
Cambridge Rock - 316091  
Mad - Peterborough 222914/41276

## RECORDING STUDIOS

Spaceward - 9889 600  
Kite Studios - 313250  
Cheops - 249889  
Skysound - 358644  
School Hse.Studios - Bury St.Eds. 810723  
Stable Studios - Harlow 871090/870520  
Hyperion Studios - Clare (0787) 278111

## VIDEO RECORDING

Neil Roberts - 210320  
P.T.V. Productions - 0480 61900  
Spaceward - 9889 600

## BARS

Outside Bars - Tim 9889 607  
Cam Bars - Mitch 60340

## PHOTOGRAPHY

Lowlife Photography - James 321260

## VENUES

City Limits - 60340  
The Alma - 64965  
Fisher Hall - 350018  
Guildhall - 358977  
Kelsey Kerridge Sports Hall - 358977  
Sea Cadet Hall - 353172 (evenings)  
CCAT Canteen, Batman, Theatre - 312518  
Man On The Moon - Jazz  
Golden Hind; Rob Roy - Folk  
Cow And Hare, Lode - John 812405