No.2

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Party Fears

The Stems

Marigolds • Doug Thomas/Greasy Pop/The Spikes

Comedy of Errors • Jim Fisher • Ganggajang • Indirekt

The Perfect Travelling Companion

Jim Fisher

Interviewing Jim Fisher is not just questions, it's delicious home-brewed coffee, dodging kids and it's modesty.

Jim Fisher is a man who insists he's still learning about music 16 years after joining his first band.

Have you a philosophy about music, especially your own?

"I reckon I'm still evolving. The Flaming Hearts has been really good, a bigger step in my direction than I've taken for a while. It's hard to make a living playing original music.

"My philosophy is it's a lifetime's work, so if it's not happening this year it won't really worry me."

So why have Jim Fisher and the Flaming Hearts split up just as I discovered them?

"Well, we don't get enough people in. Everyone says how good we are, but we don't get enough people to our gigs.

"Bands survive in Perth by playing young people's music. All I can say is our music is more like Dire Straits and Bruce Springsteen than Haircut 100, and it's sort of rhythm and blues based."

So would you call your music a type of rhythm and blues?

"Well, it's hard for me to describe it, 'cos I write it."

Why?

"I mean, it's rock and roll, but it's not

Party Fears Two

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CONTRIBUTIONS: Are gratefully accepted. Please tell me about it before starting, so that embarrassing incidents such as interview clashes can be avoided. With luck a possible clash can be turned into a more comprehensive total piece, eg. Doug Thomas this issue. So phone first.

Note however that certain things and concepts are fundamentally unacceptable, unallowable and an affront to God:-

i) poetry;
ii) cover bands;
iii) any band the Editor dislikes;
iv) professionalism;
v) whinging;
vi) there is no exception vi);
vii) anything else subject to Editorial whim;
viii) anyone taking exception to the Editor taking exception to the above.

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by THURSDAY 27th MARCH 1986. Please include a contact phone no. if possible. Thanks, kids.

- a man with a mission

conventional rock and roll. I think it's an amalgamation of styles, 'cos I've played traditional country and western, and Chuck Berry type rock and roll and everything in between, but it's probably the closest I've got to amalgamating them all," explains Jim.

Songs such as "Sacred Cow", "Surrender", "I Got True Love", "These Two Hearts" and the favourite "Walking On Glass" are classic examples of this uniting of styles, and live, shows the talent of the individual members of the band -- the Flaming Hearts. Saxophonist/keyboard player Billy Rodgers is a well-known figure having played with the likes of Cold Chisel, Dragon and John Paul Young. Gary Masel (drums) has worked through the Essentials, the Elks, Beagleboys and more. Bass player Dirk Dubois is originally from Sydney and came to Perth with Numotives a couple of years ago. Experienced guitarist David Bailey has recently written "The Kookaburra Song" (for the yacht entrant in the America's Cup) with brother John whom he, Dirk and Gary have joined in the Magic Bus.

Out on his own, Jim wants to keep writing songs and maybe record a demo, hopefully using not just his singing and guitar playing skills, but also those of piano, fiddle, mandolin, lapslide guitar and bass -- something he could not explore with the Flaming Hearts.

"I couldn't afford to do an independent recording in Perth. I've played music to Eastern States people high up in the industry over the years who think it's really good but have said, 'We can't do anything with this type of music.'

"I don't think Australian record companies have a lot of force. I am not a prepackaged idea. Perth, and to a certain extent Australia, has always been a follower of trends. Maybe if I was a bit more like Jimmy Barnes, I would be noticed. But I'm not very Jimmy Barnesish."

Jim's philosophy is you're always learning more. He admits he is learning with each new experience and band, but there's the wish, the very evident wish, for a return to the days of big dances and venues made to present music as it's meant to be presented, which means people care to listen to it.

"Hotels are based on how much beer is sold and I don't want to base my success on how much beer is sold at my gigs. Quite frankly that's a pain in the arse.

"I'm an artist, not a businessman!"

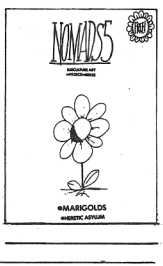
Liz Dring.

Nomads in

In mid-1984, when Alex Clarke and friends decided to produce a fanzine, they asked Anthrax to contribute something for it; what he came up with was a short story called Nomads, which was released on a one page pamphlet in December '84. The fanzine was never produced in its intended format due to a number of reasons which have been lost in the mists of time. In early 1985 Nomads 2 appeared, a continuation of the original story plus a new story, "Love Her Madly" by Michael Dean. Nomads 3 appeared in August '85, Nomads 4 in October and Nomads 5 (minus the original story which Anthrax got bored of writing) in late December. Due to a number of circumstances, such as the impending marriage and departure from Australia of the editor and general apathy on the part of all concerned (ie. we all believe that we've more important things to do with our lives than producing a fanzine; probably nothing more than demented delusions), the fanzine Nomads is being chucked into the deep freeze for the next few months/years/decades/whatever. Nomads 6 is lying latent in the minds of Alex Monster, Anthrax, Michael Dean and the Wilted Petal; waiting for some attack of inspiration to rouse it from its lethargy ...

The Anonymous Masturbatory Appliance.
(Mareeba, Qld, 22/1/86.)

deep freeze



The Stems

Dom Mariani talks to David.

What's been happening recently with the band?

Just recently? We're replacing our drummer. That's something that's happening, that's sort of a fairly major move for us. And we've been playing Perth for the last month. We'll be here till mid-February.

Why's the drummer leaving?

Just tour pressure and stuff. He's been on tour with us twice now, and the last time he was in Sydney I don't think he enjoyed it very much, so he can't sorta handle that side of it.

He loves playing, it's not a direction thing or a personality clash, it's just that he lives in the country, he likes to go back to Boyup Brook, and being on the road and in Sydney, it sorta freaks him out a bit.

Who's the new one?

Dave Shaw.

The immediate future?

Well, we're going to be doing some more recording early February. The forthcoming EP, it's coming out in February sometime. I can't give you a specific date, because if I do it'll be later, or it'll be wrong, 'cos we've had so many hassles ... 12"EP, four tracks.

And were there plans for an album?

Hopefully, yeah, sometime this year. Nothing's been negotiated or anything.

You were looking for a label with more money or something ...

Well, if they want to come along and give us lots of money ...

Can Citadel afford an album?

Well, Citadel have already said that if we want to do an album through Citadel, we can. The only thing is that we'd like to sorta get the band on a higher plane, that's all.

Citadel's a great label to be with. It's considered probably the best label at the moment for inner-city rock bands. But just distribution and that, independent labels don't have the distribution that major labels have. So we'd like to, y'know, have our records distributed further, and wider, through this planet of ours.

Is there any interest overseas?

Yeah, France and England have picked up our first two singles, so we've got a mini-album coming out. It'll be the EP with the second single on it. They were all recorded at the same time, which was in May and June.

The EP has already been recorded?

Yeah. It's just taking a long time to come out. We released a single first ...

Is it getting a bit old, that stuff?

Yeah, well, it's a bit like the band was back then, y'know. It's a little bit more varied than

those two singles we've had. It shows four different sides of the band, really.

It was done fairly quickly too, like, the production and stuff is the best possible for the amount of time that we spent on it.

It's still fairly rough 'cos we just went in there, played everything almost live, did a few overdubs ... We just did a few takes and thought, "yeah, that sounds pretty lively and good."

And the album sometime later this year?

Hopefully, if there's one eventuating, yeah. The next recording we do will be a lot, y'know, there'll be a lot more production, thought gone into it.

There was a version of "Tears Me In Two" done with "She's A Monster". Why was it re-done?

Basically because our second single was going to be that version of "Tears Me In Two" we did at Shelter, and the flipside was going to be "The Power Of Love".

But because the recording would be totally different, like you've got the garage quality of Shelter Studios, and then you have Trafalgar Studios which is, y'know, a fairly good studio, and have the production of Rob Younger and Alan Thorn on the B-side ... it'd be sort of quite a contrast. So we re-recorded it, and it came out two hundred times better. It was a really gutsy performance, y'know, it was enhanced by those guys' production as well.

We had to move on too, I suppose, we did the first one ourselves and the second single was produced by a "producer".

And there was a video for "Tears Me In Two". How did that come about?

That was done out at WAIT, a few students at WAIT, just friends of the band. We paid, I think, two or three hundred dollars to do the whole thing.

To begin with we thought it was a complete debacle, 'cos we looked at all the footage, it looked good, and then when we tried to piece it together and make a filmclip out of it, we found that we couldn't use bits because the camerawork was all over the place; shots of people's feet and, y'know, really stupid things.

So we spent about four really good long nights trying to put everything together. It turned out really good in the end, we just had to sift through it and find all the good bits and just put them together. And it worked really well.

There's a few imperfections in it if you watch it, but you have to watch really closely to pick them out. There's one bit where Gary's playing the drums, and on his snaredrum, because he was drowning out the tape, he's got a big cloth on it. You can see it if you look really close ... it's quite funny, you can see it moving.

And you got that on "Rock Arena". Did it help sales a lot?

I spoke to John Needham, the guy who runs Citadel Records, he had 750 copies of "Tears Me In Two", and a couple of days after he had fifty left. He ended up expanding his distribution to places like Townsville. Y'know, it just went wild after that.

(Goes off for coffee)

You don't want to ask about musical influences, or anything like that?

Well, everyone asks that sort of thing. It gets boring to read. "60's pop in the 80's", or something like that.

Yeah, well, it's basically what we do, is we're a pop band. It's pretty heavily influenced by the 60's, but it's a whole new interpretation. Like, there's a whole flood of that sort of thing coming back, y'know. "New psychedelia", or "paisley underground", some people call it.

Most of the stuff that calls itself "new psychedelia" strikes me as being just indulgent crap, going into a studio and making nice noises for a bit, which is fun but doesn't often get results ...

True. Well, it comes down to the songs, really. If the band's got the songs ... Y'know, if you just basically go on an image and just go into a studio and make all these psychedelic noises, fair enough, you're a psychedelic band, but, like, no-one's going to remember you ...

The things I remember are the songs that I've bought over the years. I'll buy anything that I think is good, that I like, and I'll always play that song again, you can play it and go, "yeah, wow, that's great, that was a really good song, way back then".

But a lot of people do buy records, and play them, and then ... y'know, "who the fuck was that group?" "Like, they made that really awful record?"

It's a matter of what actually stands up to a few years.

Yeah, the test of time.

There's a bit of a resurgence in bands with a bit of pop sense ...

I think that's gotta be the saviour of music, otherwise we've got nothing to look forward to. Hopefully, that'll creep into the top 40 in about a year or so again.

I'd just like to see all the dinosaur people piss off. Y'know, people like Dire Straits, and, um ... I reckon Phil Collins is a great producer, he gets sounds and stuff, but his music, his music's shithouse.

Compact Disc. "Ohh, can you hear that acoustic guitar coming from the left speaker ..." (laughs) It's people with a lot of money and not much taste.

(On seeing bands in Perth)

There's not many bands to see, really. Like, I don't class ourselves as a fantastic band, y'know, we're doing what we do. I think we do it well, we rock'n'roll in a really true sense, because what we do is a fairly honest type of thing. Like rock'n'roll's been with me for years, and all the other guys in the band just are really dedicated to this style of music.

And Perth has always been a bit sort of lacklustre for rock music, not a lot happening.

Unless you're heavily into cover bands.

Yeah, you're an avid listener of 96fm, and you wanna go out and chase a few young girls at the Nookenburra ...

How the hell did cover bands get a hold in Perth?

Yeah, it's weird, isn't it? I dunno. It really has stagnated the whole scene for about ten years. Whereas you go to Adelaide, and Adelaide's

more or less like Perth, but you've got a fairly healthy rock'n'roll scene happening there. It's not very big. They've got a really great label ...

Greasy Pop. (see Doug Thomas feature this issue)

Mmm. And that cultivates so many good bands there, and because there's a label in town they get airplay for them and the people in Adelaide have got that advantage of going to see an alternative band. Well, bands that are rock'n'roll bands, not ... fake rock'n'roll bands. Cover bands.

I suppose there's a few cover bands there, but I think they only cater for a small section of the community. Whereas here it's the reverse.

Bands like V-Capri can exist. Playing three-hour sets with three original songs ...

It's really amazing how they take out these huge ads in Rolling Stone, colour ads, y'know ...

(Discussion shifts to V-Capri ads in Smash Hits, then S.Hits etc. in general)

There's such a cynical outlook on things like that, I think, these days. Like, serious bands, they don't want to be ... well, serious bands and serious fans. The fans are up there as well, I reckon, because if a band is seen on something like that, they quickly get shit hung on them ... oh, you know, "you're selling out" ...

The concept of "selling out", I mean, it's just crap!

In the 60's, you saw the Doors in those teen magazines, you get the Doors on the cover as well as the Monkees. Everyone was in the one marketplace.

If a band can guide its own course and not change just to make a certain crowd happy, or make money, if their music remains the way the band want to play it ...

If the band have faith in themselves.

Exactly. Everything becomes really self-conscious these days, it's a real drag. I just get sick of people saying things like, the Hoodoo Gurus for example, a lot of people tossed them aside and said, oh, this band's a shit band because they're on Countdown and that now. It's just the outlook.

(More talking ... discussion of B-Side maga-

The Sounds of Ganggajang

GANGgajang's keyboardist Geoffrey Stapleton loves dancing, music and Perth, and his favourite word is "fantastic".

He describes GANGgajang as a thinking man's band and attributes much of this to the multi-talented facets of the band, their experience, and singer and main songwriter Mark Callaghan.

"Mark is articulate, a thinking man, and that's the way he writes music, thought-provoking music. I believe he is the best lyricist in Australia."

Mark Callaghan was born in England and grew up in Kenya, arriving in Australia as a teenager. He spent a lot of time in Queensland, and hence strong images of canefields, humidity and other Queensland scenes are prominent in his songs.

His songs can be visually tantalising if listened to closely, and can have personal meaning not just to him, the composer, but also to the listener.

However, the other band members cannot be called idle as songwriters. Geoff, who takes a different angle, composed one of my favourites, "Beat Me (Into Submission)".

"When we first went on the road, we really only had one prominent single and needed to throw songs together for a tour. Mark had a lot of songs lying around, but we also needed a musically different feeling," he explained. "The word 'beat' is an important aspect of the song."

I guess you could call it a play on words?

zine)

B-Side is into things at the moment, for sure. Like, they follow the trends. They were right into the new psychedelic movement for a while, but now because it's been invaded by so many bands, they're a little bit cynical towards that ...

The thing is, most of everything is garbage, but you can spot the garbage when there's a lot of it, just pick the top 5% or whatever.

Yeah. I didn't really enjoy the review they gave our single in the last issue. (no. 13)

In B-Side 12: "... a band that make the 60's tag irrelevant ..." that's exactly how I feel about it.

Yeah, well, everybody's trying to label it as revivalism, and it's really pissing me off, because, like, I get the same question put to me ALL THE TIME ...

Last-second note: The Stems played their last Perth gig at the Melbourne on 7/2/86. The crowd was 70% Gurus fans from the thing at the Entertainment Centre. (Ever heard someone use the word "suburban" as a vile curse upon someone else?) It was an OK show although the band were dissatisfied and felt they could have done better. (Fuller reviews next issue.) The band are going to live and work from Sydney, due to the expense of working out of Perth. It is uncertain when they will be back to play in Perth, but it won't be for some months yet. The EP should be out as you read this. Life continues ...

"Yes. It's inspiring to write exploring different rhythms. Actually, Joe Wissert, who's worked with Boz Scaggs and Lovin' Spoonful, wants to re-record "Beat Me" without the 'Into Submission' part, to accentuate 'beat'.

"At the moment we're exploring with 60's soul and changing it to suit the band. Rhythm is important. I also believe Buzz (Bidstrup, drummer) and Chris (Bailey, bass) are the best rhythm section in the country.

When GANGgajang formed a year ago, they decided to play it by ear and find out if they were viable. The band is not planned, rather they just take things as they come, assures Geoff.

"As long as playing is done for fun there are no hassles. The problems start when everyone gets too serious."

The album has made top 5 in Perth. Last time the band visited Perth in October '85, the album was delayed due to a pressing mixup, but after Christmas everyone started to buy it, which Geoff thought was "fantastic".

The next single is "The Bigger They Are", and a live clip was filmed at the Perth Entertainment Centre on January 31st.

Geoff pointed out that although it is costly for the band to come to Perth, the people's appreciation really shows.

"It's a shame bands can't work out of Perth due to the cost and travel. Perth is great, everyone we meet is fantastic!"

The bigger they are, the bigger GANGgajang get!

Liz Dring.

Indirekt

Hoorn, Holland, August 1982; a group of progressive anarchopacifists formed the band Indirekt as a means of communicating their political and social ideals. After several changes, the lineup is: Anneke, 19, the vocalist; Ruud, 17, the guitarist; Rick, 20, the bassist; Styn, 21, the drummer; Ko, 19, a reggae freak and the band's technician. The band list their influences as being 7 Seconds, Toxic Reasons, UK Subs, Sub-HumAns, MDC, Splodge, Jason and the Scorchers, and any early punk.

Over the past few years Indirekt have released a number of cassettes, including Greetings From Hoorn; an EP, News For Deaf (Wo)Men and Hard Of Hearing; their first album, Beware of the Wolf in Sheep's Clothing; and their latest album, released in October last year, On the Warpath.

Their repertoire, which includes a reggae song, is described by them as "melodic punk rock with a female singer". They sing against kiddie-porn, apartheid, apathy and computerisation; they believe in anarchy, peace, love and thinking for oneself.

For information, or their latest album (which costs $7), write to:-

INDIREKT, c/ Anneke, Sint
Jozefstraat 124, 1642 VT HOORN
(NH), HOLLAND.

Anthrax.

Marigolds

Six years into this decade, the 1960s have just about worn out their welcome for the second time. Every Tom, Dick and Melvin who could lay hands on a fuzzbox and a Farfisa organ has jumped on the garage-bandwagon, re-hashing minimalism on a very fishy scale, all this not because they understand the decade that "inspires" them, but because it's fashionable or they've misunderstood ... the fact is, innocence, once lost, cannot be recaptured. Just ask Adam and Eve.

How refreshing, then, to find a band in this jaded age who are genuinely innocent enough, exuberant enough and talented enough to recapture the zeitgeist of two decades ago. The Marigolds play pop steeped in the tradition of the 1960s. That is to say it is fresh, crisp and exhilarating. Their songs are melodic and well-arranged, and as a band they are greater than the sum of their parts, something every band consciously or unconsciously strives for. Lyrically, their preoccupation is the same which has preoccupied writers for generations: LOVE.

One should not make illegitimate demands of the medium that is pop. The Marigolds are enjoyable to watch and hear. The only thing that will impede them is self-awareness.

Kim Williams.

Interview with Jamie and Martin by Dawn B. (from radio int on 6NR's Sessions).

When did you start playing and when was your first gig? You just seemed to appear out of nowhere.

J: Dean and I first started in Brookman St where a few famous bands have started. We started jamming there and had a few people around to play with us, like Pete Michaels from Chad's Tree, and I think Julian from the Stems had a play, he probably can't remember. Our line-up just chopped and changed for ages until July, when we got a final line-up. We started playing in August for a 21st, and the first public performance was with the Stems at the Old Melbourne.

How did you manage to get that gig?

J: Well, we were told that the Stems were sick of all their supports, and friends of ours suggested that we play, and Julian half remembered us from when he came and saw us. So they tried us out and it went quite well.

You haven't been around for very long but it seems that you are pulling quite large audiences. How would you account for that?

J: I think the music is just completely different to everything else around at the moment. It's pretty poppy and people can understand the words -- I don't know whether that's a good thing or not -- but everything seems lively, poppy and fun.

You know how often in Perth bands start off as third support at the Parrot and you play at 10pm to 20 or 30 people, and then you might get a support at the Shaftesbury and you have to work your way up slowly ... has your band escaped this, have you moved straight away into big supports and maybe a headline?

J: Yeah, well, we have been pretty lucky I think. We're not really ... I don't think we are really looking for a headline at the moment. I still think that we are a bit too young. Like we have played at the Auld Mug a few times when we first started out, and that was good fun, and we have been playing at the Parrot for those Wednesday nights, but I don't know whether we are an attraction or not. But we seem to get quite a good crowd there.

Obviously you would say your music is 60's influenced? Or would you?

M: Yeah, definitely.

J: We started off listening to 60's music, but it is not the only music we listen to. We listen to lots of folk things, psychedelic.

M: I don't listen to a lot, I listen to some, but I don't think all of us contrive to play 60's stuff.

Martin, you are a recent addition to the band on drums. What were your instructions on playing, do you think you play 60's beats?

M: Not really, but they just ... when I started with them they showed me the beats to do, which I picked up pretty easily. It's not very demanding, it's good fun and it's probably the simplest drumming I have ever had to do in a band, but it's good fun.

J: Thanks!

Martin, you've been around Perth for quite some time playing in many bands. Can you give us a bit of your history?

M: Grandfather drummer here. First band I came to prominence with was a young brash band back in 1982 called Sans P.S. We lasted until the end of the year. I then auditioned for Intensive Care and from Intensive Care I went to Room To Swing A Cat with new bass player Velo, who is now in Skinny Jimms. After that I did a few stints with the Noizy Bastards -- three-piece lingerie show -- and for a month with the Angry Penguins. I've tried various other projects, but I'm now with the Marigolds.

It seems like you are all having a lot of fun. Is that one of your main aims?

J: Yeah, I don't think we want to be serious at all. As soon as it starts getting serious I don't think I'm going to be too keen to be doing it.

What about your songs, I went to the Old Melbourne to see you with the Stems and there were a couple of songs which I thought really stood out. One was "Cindy", is that your song?

J: Yep, I wrote it myself -- pretty amazing.

How do you come up with your songs?

J: I don't know, when I'm just sitting around making up tunes.

Another song which I've got the title totally

wrong, something about specks. Is that one of your songs?

J: No. They mention little white specks, but it is actually "Little Black Egg", but we didn't do that one -- pity.

Who wrote it?

J: I'm not going to tell you. We don't want anyone to know what covers we do, they can find out for themselves.

How many covers do you do?

We do four and a half covers, the half of one we have just stolen the bass line. None of us know how to end the song. I make up all the words as I go along, Andrew just makes up his lead break, and if we finish all together we are really lucky. But we really like the song and everyone else seems to like it.

What about the others?

J: What about them, I'm not going to tell you which ones they are (laughs).

M: Well, there is one real obvious one -- "Gloria".

J: Yeah, that's right, we do "Gloria", that's a cover.

So you're not going to mention any others.

M: Well, I don't even know and I'm the drummer.

J: A few people have discovered one or two of them. Some of the songs they say are not ours, are ours.

M: We had to ring up some young lady from 6UVS-FM to remind her that a song was one of ours because she said we were ripping off some song.

Do you think that because you listen to 60's music that this comes out in your songwriting or not?

J: Well, I have only written three of the songs. Andrew has written most of them and he doesn't really listen to 60's music that much at all. He only began listening to it this year, we sort of put him onto it. He loves the Hoodoo Gurus, which I absolutely detest. The only thing that has ever come good of a Hoodoo Gurus record is making a good ashtray. Andrew's songs I don't think reflect that sort of style that the Hoodoo Gurus play.

You've signed to Cherrytop Records. Do you think that is a bit of a premature move for a band who just want to have fun?

J: Yeah, I think it was a bit premature, because we had only played four times before he (Dennis Rice of Cherrytop) asked us. We had only been around for about two or three weeks, so it probably was a bit premature, we didn't know what we were doing. But the production of the songs, I listened to it for the first time last week, a few of the songs sounded quite good, but I think we were a bit too young -- I'm not too sure.

What does being signed to Cherrytop actually involve, a record output or a certain time period?

J: Well, we signed up for a year and I don't know what will happen after that.

So you don't have to do anything if you don't want to?

J: No. If we don't want to record anymore we won't. But we have recorded five songs and he was going to put them onto an EP, which we are not really too keen about, and we tried to persuade him to make it a single, but the test pressing will come back in January and we'll see what the quality is like and we will go from there. We would rather have a single because the other ones were meant just for a promo tape and they weren't the best songs. We did "I've Had Enough Of You" and "Feel Of You", "Sticks And Stones", "Let Me Guess" and "Girlfriend". "Let Me Guess" and "Girlfriend" are two of the best songs.

Where did you record those?

J: North Lake.

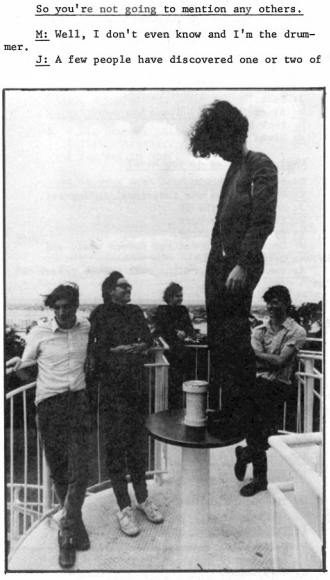
How did you manage being such a young band and entering the recording studios for the first time?

J: Ross had recorded before and Andrew had, but Dean and I didn't have a clue and nor did Joe, so we just let everybody else do the work and joined in whenever we had to. It was pretty tiring.

So you were just the talent?

J: Oh, I wouldn't say that! (laughs)

M: I think it was a pretty good first off effort actually. I listened to the tape and



thought it was pretty good considering they hadn't done any before.

You haven't done any demo tapes?

J: No, all the tapes we do are just taped live at different venues. We just stick in a tape and see what it's like ... they're usually pretty horrible.

You might think that, but you seem to get plenty of people going along to see you and have a good time.

J: Yeah, I think that if we practiced a bit more, we would be able to play all the songs at the right speed. All our songs seem to end up slightly too fast. We only practice once every two weeks. We're pretty slack.

M: Youthful exuberance!

J: Alcohol!

When is your next gig?

M: At the Uni Guild under-18 show tonight.

J: We're supporting Comedy Of Errors. I think we are pretty ready to support them. (laughter)

Who and what are Comedy Of Errors?

J: Jonathan Willoughby and a few other people, a pretty young band who usually play for under-18's and things. They're not too bad actually, but they sing about death and things like that, which I'm not really into.

M: Too much love in our band.

J: We're going to be completely opposite. We sing about love and girls and they sing about death.

What about plans for the future, you have already mentioned that if it gets serious you will probably opt out, but do you think it will?

J: I don't know. If the single goes really well, and we are making a video as well, so it just depends on what happens.

Do you listen to much Australian music?

J: Martin can answer the one on Australian because I don't listen to any Australian music.

M: Probably my favourite Australian band is Midnight Oil.

J: Urrrggh -- are you serious?

M: Yes, I am. I also like the Lighthouse Keepers, the Church, the Hoodoo Gurus. I saw the Johnnies last night and thought they were really good.

J: Well, I quite like Severed Heads and the Scientists -- there are a few.

Jamie, you were saying you are much more American influenced.

J: Yeah, there doesn't seem to be too much British music around that's worth listening to. I've been listening to a fair lot of 80's American bands like the Rain Parade, Green On Red ...

M: ... Husker Du ...

J: ... Tell Tale Hearts and things like that. But there are so many 60's bands worth listening to that nobody gives a chance and just think that 60's bands are just rubbish.

The Marigolds are:-
Dean Graham: rhythm guitar
Andrew Graham: lead guitar, vocals
Ross Campbell: bass, vocals
Martin Oakenfull: drums
Jamie Parry: singing and tambourine playing.

Comedy of Errors

by Anthrax

FRIDAY 27th DECEMBER, 6UVS-FM STANDBY STUDIO (thanx) AND AT HENRY'S 14th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS, WEMBLEY DOWNS.

Early 1985, somewhere in WA; Jonathan, who was at Uni, and William, who looks Italian, got together and started jamming. Not too long after this they realised they needed drums and bass; Jonathan's thirteen year old brother Henry bought a drum kit and Conrad, who wasn't present at the interview, agreed to play bass.

As the young band, as yet unnamed, built up their repertoire, they found they were having a lot of difficulty with one particular song, which Jonathan renamed Comedy Of Errors, the name which the band eventually adopted ...

Who writes the songs?

W: Jonathan writes most of the lyrics, I write most of the music, Henry does the drum rhythms; either I write music to lyrics Jonathan has written, or Jonathan writes lyrics to music I've written.

What are the songs about?

J: They're about alcohol, sex, drugs; normal everyday things. End Of The Line has eight different references to various drugs.

W: The music is all good, but Where Are You is too punk. I hate A Day In The Life Of ...

What style is your music?

J: Punk.
W: Blues.
H: Punk blues.
W: Blues punk.

What influences do you have?

Everyone: Alcohol.
W: We each have our individual influences.
J: Anarchy in the UK.
W: Elvis, early Cure.
H: My Shoes, totally.
W: Conrad brings Not For Heroes music and rhythms into our band.
J: The paintings on the wall of the granny flat.

What band, in history, would you REALLY like to support?

W: Blue Moon Boys.
H: The Cramps.
J: The Sex Pistols.

What are your favourite albums?

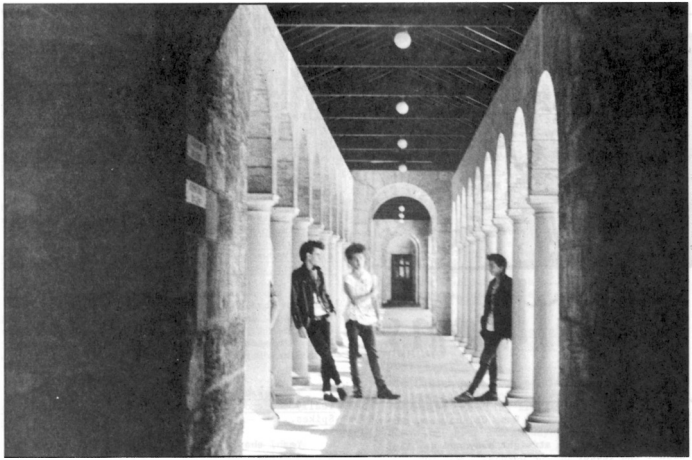
H: Cramps, live.
W: Anything by Elvis Presley.
J: (after much thought) 4AD, Bauhaus.

Favourite Australian bands?

H: Beasts Of Bourbon.
J: The Triffids.
W: The Marigolds.

Favourite cartoon characters?

W: Voltron, Defender of the Universe.
H: Papa Smurf.
J: Bugs Bunny.



Favourite colours?

H: Red.

Do you have any pets?

H: A big brother called Jonathan.
J: A little brother.
W: A cat called Miff.

What is your most annoying feature?

W + H: Jonathan!

If you ever made a movie, what would it be about?

W: Jonathan crashing his parents' Volvo. Again. And again ...

Do you talk about people behind their backs?

H: All the time.

What colour underpants do you wear?

J: White, with red kisses on them.
W: Conrad doesn't wear any.
H: Scotch coloured ones.

Would you appear as a centrefold if asked?

W: Jonathan would.
J: Conrad has.

What do you guys do with yourselves when you aren't making music?

J: I'm on the dole. I dropped out of Uni earlier this year.
W: I go to school sometimes.
H: I try not to go to school too often.

What are the bands' ideals?

J: Get pissed, have a good time, and terrorise the audience with our music.

What audience are you aimed at?

J: Females.
H: 14 year old girls.
W: Anyone who'll listen, anyone who'll pay.

What ambitions do you have for the future?

W: Ha ha ha.
J: I'd like to learn to sing.
W: I'd like to play somewhere without making any mistakes. Playing the Hammersmith Odeon would be an achievement. Or the Wizbah.
H: I'd like to collect bottles of Scotch.

How do you view commercialism?

H: We try not to be too commercial.
W: We couldn't be commercial if we tried.

If you guys ruled the Universe, what would you do?

J: Carry on as we are now; getting pissed.

COMEDY OF ERRORS INTERVIEW ANTHRAX

Who would you most like to interview?

Jim Morrison; everyone.

What is your favourite colour?

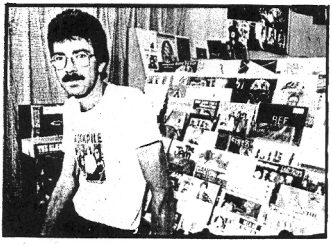
Red.

Wow, that's mine too. Do you know of a cure for hangovers?

Get stoned prior to getting drunk.

I meant something cheap!

Steal the dope!



Doug Thomas

Part 1: History/int by Ross Chisholm.

I have to jump in straight away and say that I wasn't the leader of the Dagoes, I was the rhythm guitarist. The Dagoes were always Tony Rome's band. I was invited to join.

Why weren't the Dagoes ever massive? Why didn't they ever go to Sydney, from Adelaide?

Probably because there was just no compromise within that band at all. It started out as a joke. The Dagoes were formed by five people who were all, at that time (1978), working in record stores. And with Tony Rome and the fat man, Johnny Tomato, we got together over a drunken afternoon at the Tivoli and said, "How can we possibly hold our heads high when we are forced to sell this crap to make a living? Let's put a band together and show the people what they really should be buying ..."

I've heard stories from way back then, your original vocalist Darryl Le Mercier, who is still working in a record store ...

Darryl never got on stage with us, though. Darryl never got out of the rehearsal room.

Yes, he told me that the band way back then, it was called Darryl Breakaway And The Niggers, actually knew four songs, that was their entire repertoire ...

Probably two Ramones songs and two Radio Birdman songs, at my guess.

But from there great things emerged, including the Dagoes, who went through more lineups than I can remember, and probably more than you care to remember.

Yeah. All I can really remember, without sitting down with three foolscap pages and trying to draw a family tree of it, the main thing that sticks in my mind is we went through seven bass players over four years ...

A certain degree of instability within the band?

Well, the problem with bass players is, they're always the temperamental musicians, and the Dagoes were not a band of musicians.

The original garage ethos.

Definitely, definitely. Our attitude was, play it and if it sticks, fine, and if it doesn't, too bad.

The Assassins, all three members were at that time playing in the Dagoes: yourself, Ian List on vocals and guitar, and Geoff Short, otherwise known as the Turk, on drums. How did they and their "Assassination" single emerge?

It was a song that I wrote two years prior to that, in absolute disgust at Malcolm Fraser being re-elected. And it was called, and I'm disappointed it didn't go on vinyl being called, "Kill The Prime Minister". The title says it all. And the last line of the song: "Australia needs this man dead."

The Assassins were the ad-hoc band who were really the crossover between the Dagoes and the Spikes.

Yeah, that's where I discovered Ian List had a good voice.

I gather the Spikes' "Six Sharp Cuts" was a bit of a seller, both in Australia and overseas.

Yeah. Not so much here, it's just gone into a repress now after being unavailable for six months ... it's been out in America since July.

Been selling constantly over there?

Yes. I don't know how well it charted in the States, probably cracked the college charts.

I noticed in the interview with Peter Bonner of the West Australian, you said you only break even in Australia and you're looking to overseas to make a profit.

Well, I guess until we get major distribution, which puts my records into ten times as many stores as they're going into now, there is really only a limited amount I can sell, about 500 of a 7" release and maybe 1000 of a 12" release. We've certainly exported a lot. But with releasing worldwide, who can tell? That's come down to licensing to other labels.

With "She's Melting", there were a thousand copies of that made, it sold about 500 in Australia, mainly in Sydney I must add. Probably about two copies in Perth. A hundred or so in Adelaide, everybody hated the band in Adelaide for the first year. And I was stuck with 500 copies.

Then magically within a space of about two months, those 500 went to New York and Los Angeles.

The same happened with the Acid Drops' single, it had been out maybe three months, and only 500 sold here, and the last 500 went to New York.

You've mentioned that that hasn't actually been available for nine months ...

... and I found copies of the first edition in Perth stores! Dada's have still got copies of it!

So even though quality music is out there, Perth audiences have a ... a reluctance, one might say, to just try and see what's out there ... A lot of Australians into the independent scene will collect anything and everything that's going, which is what Greasy Pop and Citadel and Hot and all the rest of them have, and after that they've really gotta push for sales ...

We have to push, we need that distribution and promotion of putting it into major retail outlets.

The airplay you get is mostly on the alternative stations. Are the people going into the more mainstream stores going to actually hear what the groups sound like?

Yeah, good point, they probably don't, probably just listen to 96fm, whatever. Basically what it needs is promotion, and unfortunately labels like mine aren't really in a position to spend money on advertising the releases. So that's where I think a major distribution would help.

What's it actually like knowing that you're selling half your printrun overseas and only half in Australia?

Obviously it's very frustrating, 'cos I know how good the records are ... In Adelaide, the FM station there, SA-FM, is now realising the quality of music that is coming out on Greasy Pop, and have high-rotationally programmed the last four or five releases I've put out; and so I've found that now, rather than sell like a hundred or two hundred copies of a release in Adelaide, I'm selling four or five hundred.

What's it like being THE label in Adelaide, or any one city? Do you feel a bit of pressure on you to expose a lot of bands there that aren't getting releases otherwise?

Yeah, there is a lot of pressure, like I get all the Italian cabaret bands giving me demotapes and expecting me to put them out ... but I just retain that what I release on my label is ... my own musical taste. If I don't like it then I don't release it.

Maybe a lot of people would see that as selfish, but if I don't believe in it, then how am I going to get my heart behind it and promote the thing?

What's happening with the Spikes?

We have recorded a new album, it's called "Melting In A Black Forest" and it'll be out in March, preceded by a single.

So is this going to be the big step forward over to America.

It looks like we'll get air tickets to the States on the strength of this album, yeah. Probably a college circuit starting in LA, down the west coast to Texas, then back up the east coast to Boston.

What's it like being hip in America?

Ask me when I get back.

I gather the Spikes have changed lineup since the EP occurred.

Yeah. "A Bloody Mess" was recorded with Mick Brown, Jim Selene, Greg Swanborough and myself. Ian List left Australia for twelve months, went overseas, had a look around ... he actually brags of auditioning for the Waterboys when he was in London. But he didn't get the job ...

And so he's listed on the back of the EP as M.I.A. ...

Missing In Action. But he came back in time for the photographs. We actually played three gigs as a five-piece band, with three guitarists. It didn't quite work. The only three we played were in Melbourne.

We're now back to the original four-piece, so Mick and Jim have left the band. Mick Brown's playing in Truck, and Jim Selene is playing in the Primevils.

I gather also the Dagoes might be making a return at some stage, but not as a permanent lineup.

The Dagoes have been talking about ... The Dagoes, incidentally, never broke up, even though they announced something like five or six breakups over the years. They have never really gone away. And while Tony Rome and Johnny Tomato are living in Adelaide, Adelaide is under constant threat of another reformation.

They're talking at the moment about recording the greatest unrecorded hits of the Dagoes. They have access to an eight-track studio, and plan to play it with various members from different lineups of the band.

Part 2: various notes collected by scribe David.

You were looking for a promoter to bring over the Mice, the Spikes, Screaming Believers and July 14th. Any luck?

Neil Wedd offered, but I don't know whether it might be worthwhile bringing the bands over. It looks like the only way that Wedd would be interested in doing it is door deals. And that would make it difficult to get any of the bands involved ... y'know, it's like a couple of thousand dollars just to get out of Adelaide, just to hire a bus to get across. Be quite an expensive operation.

I've noticed that a lot of the records just come out and then disappear, like the July 14th single ("Me And My Gun"), which came out twice then was deleted.

Yeah, two runs of 500. They just sold so quickly, basically in Adelaide and Sydney. And shortly after the second edition, I had an order for a thousand copies from New York. I just couldn't do anything about it, just couldn't get them pressed quick enough.

But it was the band's choice just to do limited runs of them, it's out of my hands. I don't sign a band's life away, I say, "OK, you tell me what you want". And that's what they chose to do. And to follow up the single with an album.

I sent a box of twenty-five to Steve Tallis (Monkey Music distributors) when the second edit-

ion came out, and two months later he sent the whole lot back! (screech of incredulity) With a note saying, "there's still copies of the first edition here ..." Which was fine by me, 'cos I just immediately sold them in Adelaide, it had been unavailable for a month.

The first edition came out and sold in about four, five weeks, and the next lot came out about six months later and sold in ten days. 500 copies just went within about ten phonecalls. It was great to see.

And now it seems like just about everything I release sells very well in the Eastern States, Melbourne and Sydney especially. And also now, there's standard export orders of 300 copies of everything I release. A hundred go to New York, a hundred to LA, and a hundred to London.

I think that overseas, Australian music has become very ... I hate to use the word "fashionable", but I guess it is. And just that they're cottoning on to the fact that there is some really fine rock'n'roll being made in this country, and it's been unavailable to them for a long time. The last four 12" that I've released, they've all been picked up and licensed overseas. The Spikes, Screaming Believers, Exploding White Mice and July 14th have all been released in America and Europe now. Big Time Records have released them in America, Statik in England, and a couple of other small labels, Planet Records in Sweden and one in Germany. It's gone quite well really, it's gone better than I've expected.

The Spikes got an over the top review in NME, which really helps. Very good review, just ended up saying "six not enough, more please". We're following it up in a couple of months with a new full-length album, which was recorded in December ("Melting In A Black Forest"). Hopefully, that's the record that will get the band to the States.

Fred Bestall, who runs the Los Angeles office of Big Time, says that if they can get it out there in late February they'll tour the band in March, April. We've been threatening to do it for a while ...

Planned releases on Greasy Pop:

Various: "An Oasis In A Desert Of Noise" LP: "13 tracks, 11 bands. The assumptions in the Mice review were correct, "Down On The Street" will appear on this."

Spikes: "Melting In A Black Forest" LP

Mad Turks From Istanbul: mini-album

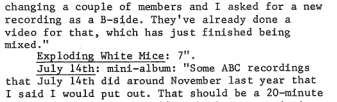
Garden Path: mini-album

Screaming Believers: "Faith" 7": "This is going to be off "Communist Mutants", it won't be touched, but the delay has been that they're changing a couple of members and I asked for a new recording as a B-side. They've already done a video for that, which has just finished being mixed."

Exploding White Mice: 7".

July 14th: mini-album: "Some ABC recordings that July 14th did around November last year that I said I would put out. That should be a 20-minute mini-album. Six songs, all with the woman singing, not Terry Bradford, so it's quite different; real moody stuff. It was actually recorded as the soundtrack to an ABC documentary."

Acid Drops: EP reissue.



Greasy Pop PO Box 136 Rundle St Adelaide

The Perfect Travelling Companion

Everything you were always wondering about THAT cassette ... Steven Phillips of 6UVS Drive-time int'd by David.

When and why did it come about?

It was around January last year. The Triffids had just come back from England, the Stems were recording their first single, and there were a lot of interesting original bands around in Perth. And I thought we could put some of this stuff together on tape as a Drivetime project, and provide people with something interesting to listen to that was made in Perth.

It was also the fact that I saw these bands and I felt they were worthwhile and enjoyed seeing them, and I wanted to listen to some of their stuff myself, but there was just nothing available. And in fact some of them have disappeared without a trace. So I thought we should try to document what happened in the original music scene last year.

I originally thought it would take about a month or so ... from starting in January we eventually had the tape out in November. Everything takes longer, I suppose.

How were the bands picked?

It was a personal thing, I suppose. There were a few obvious ones, like the Triffids, the Stems, Just Add Water at the time. They gave it credibility, I suppose; and at the same time, it's something people could latch onto, and then they'd hear all the other bands that were less well-known.

If you expect people to buy it, you have to like it yourself, and it has to be done well, let's face it. I don't want to buy rubbish and I don't expect anyone else to. So the choice was basically made by myself. I just approached various bands and asked if they were interested, and they said yea or nay, and away we went.

There's also a certain Drivetime audience, and I suppose we were trying to appeal towards that.

Why did you use chrome tape?

Quality was a big thing. We didn't want to release local material without it being of the best quality we could get at the time, 'cos there is no reason anyone should think local stuff is inferior to anything else. So we used chrome. And we did it one-to-one full-speed copying, which generally sounds better.

Some of the recordings themselves weren't fantastic, like one was done in someone's bedroom and so on, but I think we captured the sound of those bands. Altogether, I'm quite pleased how it sounds.

Where do the proceeds of the tape go?

Originally I wanted to do it and not make money off it or anything, but I was later convinced by various people, and thinking about it

myself, that if we did make a bit of money we could then maybe go on to a more ambitious project in the future.

So there's more in the pipeline?

Yeah, as long as I'm involved with it. And there's a lot of other people interested now, so hopefully it will be the start of an ongoing process.

How's the response been so far?

Good. Probably better than expected, actually. At the moment we've sold about 600 altogether, and we can expect to sell quite a few more. We started sending them over east last week. We sent about 150 over there, and a few shops have sold out.

We've also had a bit of publicity over there. Apparently 2JJJ have started playing it because the guy who does the Australian show there quite likes it. And there was a review of it in "On The Street" (a sort of Sydney X-Press) which was quite favourable.

There's quite a market over there. At the moment they're very interested in what's happening over in Perth. They've had the Triffids go across there for the last four or five years, and then of course the Stems went last year and caused quite a stir.

There have been a few problems, like I believe Phantom Records in Sydney were selling them for seventeen dollars (!!) at one stage, which is an incredible ripoff. We're obviously really pissed off about that. We'll have to seriously think about whether we sell tapes to them if they start doing that.

How have they been selling outside the specialist shops? Have any been going to top 40 sort of places?

Yes, actually. Steve Tallis does sell to some of the more top 40 stores. He is making inroads with Kevin Bloody Wilson, which I must say is a really bad tape, but I suppose it's in a good cause ...

He's also doing OK with the UVS tape at the moment, because it is selling in places like that, which you wouldn't expect. I think you have to penetrate the market, so to speak.

And it got nominated in the WA rock awards.

Yes. Probably because there's thirteen bands involved, and if all the people associated with them voted we'd get a few votes.

I don't think the Rock Awards are necessary, I don't hold that much credence in them. Lots of backslapping, for sure. I expect a lot of the major cover bands will have themselves winning a few awards.

I don't know whether we'll win. I don't expect us to, put it that way.

And so finally, everyone should go out to their nearest chart record shop and demand a copy of the tape.

For sure. Demand your copy now.

For the uninitiated, the Perfect Travelling Companion contains the Bamboos, the Peppermint Drops, Elroy Flicker, the Holy Rollers, Rabbit's Wedding, the Angry Penguins, Just Add Water, the Russians, Chad's Tree, the Triffids, King Pig, the Tarantulas and the Stems. An hour of good music on chrome tape for a mere $8.95. So what are you waiting for?

Note: Drivetime is on 6UVS at 4-6pm weekdays.

LOCAL BANDS

If you're thinking of putting out an independent record or tape, you really should get it distributed by

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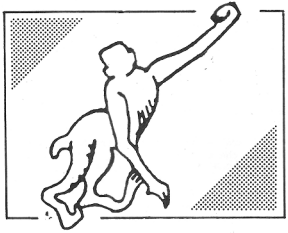

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Reviews

THE HOMECOMING -- Melbourne Hotel Jan '86

Behind Covered Door / Sometime Gladness / No More / Over Again / Beyond The Pale / Femme Fatale / Dead Not Buried / Cathy's Dream / Wasting Away / Last Year's Rain / Lies As Truth

The Homecoming were a lot better tonight than the last time I had seen them, a month or two back, when their drummer had been trying to play one-handed after injuring his arm. As might be gathered a one-armed drummer is rather limiting, especially in a three-piece line-up. The group started as a four-piece, but these days consists of John Davie (drums), Mandy Haines (bass and all-too-infrequent vocals), and Gil Bradley (guitar and vocals).

The group played a good gig tonight, it was tight musically and for the most part interesting. There was some good original material, the best of the lot I thought was "Beyond The Pale". However, some of the songs seemed to lack individual character, but that should change over time as the group develops. Essentially the group need more variety in their material, and their instrumental approach. I gather they may be expanding their line-up in the near future (though not with another guitarist, thankfully; a horn-player, perhaps?). Unfortunately, Mandy only sang lead vocal on one song, and back-up on one or two others. If they can develop some dual lead vocals, it would put more power into the overall feel. Minor considerations aside, I enjoyed them. What they really need is a regular small venue, such as the Wizbah, so they can build an audience; in the meantime, see if you can catch some of their support slots around town.

Larry W.

UNITED ROCK -- Rockwell's Jan 16

STATUES IN MOTION / OPEN WOUND / ARCANE DELIGHTS / CAUGHT IN THE ACT / MUTANTS OF DESIRE / LICK THE LIZARD / FEMME FATALE

STATUES IN MOTION: First gig. Tunes not so good, but the beat keeps songs alive, drummer destined for fine things. Songs sufficiently varied to keep interest if the singer didn't keep trying too hard, eg. smoking at the mic, and if he wants to dance like that he should lose three stone. OK. Should improve with time.

OPEN WOUND: "Hello. I hope you like the clothes I'm wearing." Singer makes a living presence-wise using anti-cool, pretty good at it too. Nice version of "Let's Dance" though he only looks like Bowie when the lights hit him right. Pretty good musically. Ends of strings hanging of guitar look really, REALLY cool. World's fastest bass-player provides visual interest. Yeah, these guys are good.

ARCANE DELIGHTS: See last issue. Changed drummers since then, new one Geoff Moon. They got a good response. Three covers, "Warnings Moving Clockwise" and "Burning The Blues" (Do Re Mi), and "Obsolete" (Toyah). Singer stands there like shoes won't let her move, bass still v.cool, guitarist lacking confidence but does OK, drummer sounds flustered (singer turns to stare at him after particularly awful fuckup). Visually undynamic but sound bloody good. They got an encore too.

CAUGHT IN THE ACT: Average rock shit with a cutesy fuckhead singer who think's he's Brian Mannix returned to earth, eg. "Since it's nearing midnight I should tell you there's a girl over there called Sandra who's the best pickup ..." etc. Brian Damage flashes his bright blue bass around for something to stare at. Caught In The Act are terminal Uncanny X-Men fans with rather thorough damage to their braincell. More people walked out on this band than any other. These boys will go far.

MUTANTS OF DESIRE: This is when all those who walked out on Brian Death and friends return for some fun and quality; rock'n'roll, LOUD, good songs, feel, and they know what they're doing. As is usual for the Mutants, one member of the audience (it was the disc jockey for the night, actually) went out and pogoed wildly like a man possessed, covering the entire dancefloor every five seconds. MoD tend to get this reaction. When the band get big (as they surely shall -- much squelching in seats if singer wears that silver waistcoat and does those high kicks when on Countdown), each of the fans will require a dancefloor to themselves. These guys are good.

LICK THE LIZARD: Not so good. This band are the sort who should start with playing 20-minute sets until they have enough short, different-sounding songs to go longer. The songs have OK fundamentals, but are overlong and overcooked. They are in bad need of some pop sense. Keyboards lay on sound like a thick veil of slush; should make up their minds whether or not to be synth-heroes, could be the new Ultravox here ... They will do well if they get their collective ass into gear and figure out exactly what they're doing. Should be good then.

FEMME FATALE: Aaarghh! the haircut strikes back. No joke kids, in Britain they could have got a record deal purely on the singer's hair. Image: long yellow mane sticking a few feet straight out from vocalist's head. Headless bass. AND headless guitar. Voice like anyone female who has ever made a loud noise (eg. such fine talents as Toyah, and down from there). Music: Ah. Lacklustre rock shit, shit rock, whatever, riffs and drumpatterns do not change ONCE, etc etc. "This next one's a favourite of ours," she says to the empty floor, "it's rather danceable ..." subtle, hey? Such a haircut wasted on rubbish like this. Second half of this I listened to in the burgershop opposite, sounded just as shitty only not as deafening.

The concept of United Rock is a fine one, doubtless: seven or eight out of sixteen little-known bands are exposed to the public eye each week, and no considerations of quality are used to screen bands to go on the list of sixteen. In this way, people can actually see what really is out there quickly and cheaply, and discover for themselves (it's the only real way) what a lot of shit the concept "we must support Local Original Bands, no matter how awful they may actually be" is. This sort of mentality encourages shit bands, and shit bands are killing local music. There are excellent bands out there in Perth. Assiduously avoid the crap and it will wither away. Letters on the subj. appreciated. Thank you.

KRYPTONICS / PRIDE AND PUNISHMENT -- Red Parrot 22/1/86

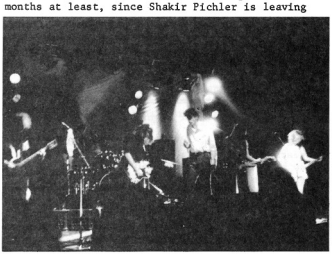
I'd heard that P.A.P. were the most boring band in all the world; they don't quite manage this, but by God they're trying. They play too long, their tunes are all the same and all the lyrics are in the "hey, look at me, I'm being relevanter than anyone else!" mode. They will have to i) play a short set (20-30 mins) so they can

reasonably hold your attention instead of the 50 mins they did here i) clean out all the samey tunes iii) cut with the guitar and bass players' headbanging routine before I will go and see them again.

Next up is a busker, who apparently plays most days in the Hay Street Mall. This guy is actually bloody good, and more than makes up for the hideously indifferent "support" act. A lyrical genius, too. Billy Bragg really doesn't stand a chance. Hot one.

Acid / Cyclops / Knife / Venture / Plastic Imitation / Harmless / Trapped / Swamp / Lost / Oedipus Complex / As Long / Baby / Land / (encores) Want U / Rock & Roll

This was meant to be the Last Gig for a few months at least, since Shakir Pichler is leaving



Kryptonics extended mix

for the Bamboos; as you will know by now, the label convinced them to do one more gig in aid of the record (released 20/1), at the Cherrytop under-18's show. But this really was meant to be the last for a while; the atmosphere was of a great outpouring to keep everyone dazed for the months until the next one; this was easily accomplished, for the Kryptonics are really very good. This is a fun band. Giveaways of singles, a short burst of "Tears Me In Two", much Kryptonite underwear awarded to best dancers, comments like "This one's coming out on Citadel next week", etc. then the encore, mostly a ten-year version of "Rock & Roll", with a lineup augmented by a couple of Bamboos and an ex-Stem (Gary); two drummers, one million guitarists, lots of shouting, lots of screaming, lots of dancing, rock & roll, etc. Everyone enjoyed it, I enjoyed it, apparently the band enjoyed it, and if you weren't there then it's your loss, your loss, your loss.

David.

MARIGOLDS -- Shenton Park Jan '86

-- Feel Of You / Want You / Black Egg / Garden / Knew Her / Come Too / Slaughter St / Chains / Girlfriend / Had Enough / Blue Girl / River / Love's In Danger / Sticks / Let Me Guess / Waiting In Line / She Lied / Cindy / Gloria

This gig was strange in that it was divided into two distinct halves, rather than an overall set. For the first half, the group seemed content to play a rather lightweight pop approach, verging almost on bubblegum; sure, people were dancing, but it didn't seem to go anywhere musically. Then, somewhere in the middle, the group seemed to kick into action, and dispense with some of the earlier shallowness. The sound became tighter and heavier, and the material picked up, while at the same time retaining their accessible pop/rock roots (circa 1965-66). The lead guitarist seemed to prefer the second half, and added a fair bit to the sound when the music picked up; not so the competent but over-animated drummer, who seemed to prefer the more visual approach.

Once the group decides which approach they will adopt, or even intermingle the two throughout the set, they will be a lot more consistent. Nevertheless, the forthcoming EP on Cherrytop may well be worth a listen. (fucking right -- ed).

HOODOO GURUS / BAMBOOS -- Red Parrot Feb '86

This gig was not particularly well-organised. Apparently a thousand tickets went on sale, and in fact sold out, but many, many people didn't even know tickets were available until the night of the gig. For those who didn't/couldn't get a ticket, there was a long wait outside the Parrot to see if you could be one of the chosen 400 to get in without a ticket. As can be imagined, a lot of people were less than happy with the situation.

The Bamboos did a quite competent support, with glimpses of how they could develop musically. Basically they tend to adopt a "white boy thrash" crossed with a hard rock approach, which works well for a while but needs something to contrast it with. Some of the material creeping into the set provides the variety necessary. The second-last song, "Virginia" (I think), featured Robert McComb guesting on violin, and was rather good, but the group's going to have to work out how to incorporate the changes within the present four-piece line-up, or else add someone else.

As an afterthought, I might add that it was good to see the Bamboos do "To Hell With Love", which Greg Hitchcock used to do with his old group, the Graverobbers, last year -- it's too good a song to get lost simply because someone changes groups.

Arthur / In The Wild / You Burn Me Up And Down / Death Defying / Like Wow - Wipeout / Deathship / I Want You Back / She / Emotion / Hayride To Hell / Dig It Up / Let's All Turn On / Leilani / Mars Needs Guitars / Bittersweet / Tojo / Be My Guru / Poison Pen / Kamikaze Pilot / Rock & Roll pt 2

There's not much I can say about the Gurus. They did essentially the same set as when they were last in town. There was only one new song, "Death Defying" (dedicated to Australia III), but apart from that it was the same, except louder.

After the last Gurus tour I swore that was it, I wasn't going to any more Gurus' gigs; not that I didn't like the band, just that their newly-found audience had all the overzealousness of the newly-converted. Well, another tour, and here I am in the middle of the audience, an audience that has got younger and a lot more suburban. Still, it's nice to have variety in an audience, even if the price is some drunken/stoned yobs pushing lemming-like towards the stage with no regard for the rest of the audience.

In the end, it was just another Gurus' gig, not much new, but enjoyable nevertheless, even if I had trouble hearing afterwards. Next time they come back to town I guess I'll still end up there in the middle of the audience -- such is life.

Ross C.

VIOLENT FEMMES -- Premier One Jan '86

It's 40°C. It's hot, sweaty and the tiny Premier One is packed to capacity with punks, skinheads, mods, surfs and of course "trendies".

The heat does nothing to release the growing tension of experiencing The Violent Femmes, the buskers turned teenage heroes.

The Stems were an absolutely brilliant entree. Dom Mariani, hair and all, led the many ignorant juveniles into a dark cavern of music that many thought never existed. Gary, in an almost possessed-like state, drummed as if it was his last time with the Stems ever. (It was his second-last.) Julian, looking as morbid as ever, played within his own little world, while Richard, so self-assured, gulped down the old amber fluid between verses. Funny, I thought this was an under-18's show.

There is no sensationalism within a Femmes show whatsoever. Gordon strolled on in a pair of shorts and a "muscle" T-shirt and simply began playing. But fun, these guys would make a V-Capri show a rage. Their humour relaxed all and both the audience and band proceeded to enjoy each other's company. The show included anthems from "Violent Femmes", "Hallowed Ground" and the new album "The Blind Leading The Naked". The old favourites provided an explosion of energy that could only be described as ecstatic. "Add It Up", "Prove My Love", "Blister In The Sun" and "Kiss Off" climaxed the already frenzied gig. The Femmes' version of the Batman theme provided a great encore.

These guys have no hangups. They're out to please and enjoy, and all without an image. Who'd have thought it possible these days?

The Wilted Petal.

General's On The Road Report -- Sydney Style

Whilst touring Sydney in November with the Stems I had a certain amount of exposure to Sydney's new independent band scene. The first band I experienced was Shower Scene From Psycho, a Melbourne band. Background music a-go-go, just the thing to take a shower to. Quirky keyboards in a sixties style, the keyboard player sings and if you couldn't see him you'd swear he was female. Maniac guitarist who's ridden too many horses. Interesting version of White Rabbit.

The Trilobites were a great improvement the next night. They have energy and a great single "Venus In Leather" on Citadel. They play a mixture of sixties covers and their own originals with a lot of energy. "For Your Love" was good, the only complaint I have is that they are overloud, but maybe that's just the mixer. Trilobites will be in Perth soon so go and support them.

The Trades Union Club is probably the best inner city gig for alternative bands. Three floors and a band on each makes for a lot of entertainment. I caught the Bambalams, a garage band still smelling of oil; and the UltraViolets, sixties covers in a boring fashion. Neither of these bands thrilled me; however the Upbeats, a great little three-piece mod cover band, did. There were two hundred scooters parked outside while the tickets'n'faces rocked out to "The Kids Are Alright".

The Crawdaddies were supposed to support alongside the Grooving Ghoulies at the Sutherland hotel, but the Crawdaddies' drummer was ill so they didn't play, instead the rest of the band danced to the Stems. The Ghoulies are in a similar mould to the Screaming Tribesmen, not my scene! Light-weight metal.

The Died Pretty played two gigs supporting Mr Cave and Mr Hawkins. Unfortunately they played the same nights as us and I never saw them, but everyone who did confirmed their brilliance. Two other bands to look out for are the Eastern Dark (metal meets the Ramones, great bass player Mr Bill Gibson take a bow) and the Psychotic Turnbuckles (the rock'n'rollin' wrestlers, hats off to them too)!

Decline Of The Reptiles played with us the next gig and I liked them. The sound was badly mixed but they put some energy into their set and have a couple of great songs. The Huxton Creepers were incredibly poor, doing terrible Doors covers, they just don't cut it on any level; bad presentation, even worse songs.

The last Stems gig in Sydney was over the top. Great venue the Tivoli, good support bands in the Hipslingers and Crystal Set. Both these bands have great independent singles. The Hipslingers have an interesting sound. Saxaphone prevails. And the Crystal Set played well in a psychedelic vein. Unfortunately for both bands the Stems were at their best. Hard'n'fast with lots of power. The crowd rocked out and Dominique responded by strangling his guitar, and then put the guitar to sleep permanently! Great gig.

The General.

ROKY ERICKSON: Clear Night For Love (New Rose) mini-album

The return of the legendary acid casualty, five years on from his last vinyl release. One of the few good things about the 60's revival is that people such as Roky Erickson can actually get to put out material because of newfound interest in their musical past. For that I'm grateful.

Both the tracks on side 1, "You Don't Love Me Yet" and "Clear Night For Love", show the lighter side of Roky's songwriting, similar to the softer material he wrote for the Thirteenth Floor Elevators' "Easter Everywhere" album, but not as good. "Clear Night" almost has a countryish feel to it.

The second side is where things pick up -- "The Haunted" is straight post-Elevators Erickson material, a song about things that go bump in the night, and like the other two songs on side two show that Roky still has a great voice that hasn't changed much in the last twenty years. "Starry Eyes" is lighter, and very reminiscent of Buddy Holly of all people (then again, they both came from Texas). "Don't Slander Me" sounds just like the Elevators without the autoharp -- tight R & B with that peculiar acid craziness -- great!

This album won't mean much to most people, but I'm glad to know Roky Erickson is still around, even if he does have trouble holding a conversation with anyone without having flashbacks. He can still write a fair song and his voice is as good as ever. Erickson may be dismissed these days as a burnout, but this record shows he is a lot better than the many who falsely claim him as an influence. If you want authenticity go to the originals. Roky Erickson is certainly an original.

Larry W.

FEEDTIME: Feedtime (no label) independent album release

An unknown Sydney group, who I only heard of through the recent Aberrant Records compilation, "Why March When You Can Riot?". This is definitely not going to appeal to everyone. The group, a three-piece (gtr/bass/drums), produce a hypnotic sound with a very prominent bass sound; the only other similar Australian group I can think of would be X circa the "X-Aspirations" album -- but X were much punkier. The vocals on this album sound as though they were mixed too low, but that

may be deliberate, makes you listen harder. I like it because it sounds as though they're trying to do something new, and succeeding. But as I said, not for everyone.

PSYCHOTIC TURNBUCKLES: Psychotic Situation / The Crusher (Vi-Ni1)

The second vinyl offering from this Sydney group, and not as good as their first one. "Psychotic Situation" sounds an awful lot like "Slave Girl" by the Lime Spiders, except it's not as funny, and is even more limited lyrically. Musically it's got fuzzed guitar and plodding drums -- straight 60's acid punk. As for "The Crusher", I know why the group did it (because of their wrestling connections), but really, everyone will have (over) heard the Cramps' version. The Turnbuckles do a competent enough cover -- but why bother?

THE ZIMMERMEN: Don't Go To Sydney / A Spy In The House Of Love (Au-Go-Go)

The title of the A-side gives it away -- a plea in the form of a song, with jangly guitars and double-tracked vocals. Quite catchy really. Although it's written from a Melbourne perspective it could just as well be Perth.

"House Of Love" borrows a lot of lyrical cliches and puts them into one song. The vocals sound like Graham Parker at times, and there are some interesting sounds in the background.

LIME SPIDERS: Out Of Control / Save My Soul (Citadel)

What I assume to be the last offering from the Spiders, as they broke up some months back. According to sole original member, vocalist Mick Blood, it just wasn't fun any more. Still, they seem to have had fun making this single. "Out Of Control" is full on and then some -- the usual Rob Younger / Alan Thorne production -- with Gerard Corben's guitar screaming -- the song's aptly titled.

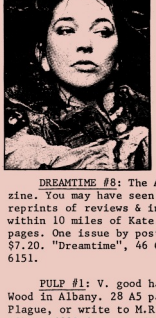
"Save My Soul" was originally done by Wimple Witch years back -- but the Spiders make it their own. This really should have been the A-side. Mick Blood is in great voice and the dynamics of the song actually let you hear him. Probably the best thing they've done since "25th Hour", it would've been great live.

Ross C.

HOODOO GURUS: Singles six pack (Big Time HOGWILD-1): This is a pack of all six Gurus singles in original pic covers, right back to "Leilani", for $20 (two bucks over price of separate singles but where else will you get the pics), it shows their skill at singles, it's a historical document, it came out in a limited edition of 500 and it appeared in December, so if any still exist on the planet you better grab one quick.

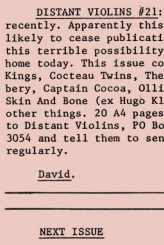
WET ONES: We Are The Wet Ones (PolyEster cass.): This gets five stars in the "value for money" bracket, having a badge, two stickers and a poster as well as the 23-minute cassette of the Wet Ones live around Melbourne. Includes very nice "Damaged Goods" and "Wild Thing". A fun little package. Give this a listen for sure.

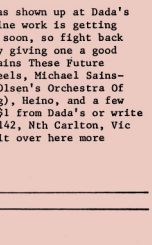
KRYPTONICS: Baby / Plastic Imitation (Cherrytop): Second in the Cherrytop line, apparently doing quite well already. This is in the same vein musically as "Oedipus Complex" except more polished (being a record not a demo). I'd suggest "Oedipus Complex" as the next single please. This is a goody; by no means world-shattering, but good stuff nevertheless and worth your pennies.



DREAMTIME #8: The Australian Kate Bush magazine. You may have seen the ads about. News, reprints of reviews & ints, and bits on anyone within 10 miles of Kate. Ideal for devotees. 20 A4 pages. One issue by post $1.80, four issue sub $7.20. "Dreamtime", 46 Gladstone Ave, South Perth 6151.

PULP #1: V. good handmade comic by Martin R. Wood in Albany. 28 A5 pages. Cost me $1 from Black Plague, or write to M.R.Wood, 3 Humphries St, Albany 6330 for more details.





DISTANT VIOLINS #21: Has shown up at Dada's recently. Apparently this fine work is getting likely to cease publication soon, so fight back this terrible possibility by giving one a good home today. This issue contains These Future Kings, Cocteau Twins, The Reels, Michael Sainsbery, Captain Cocoa, Ollie Olsen's Orchestra Of Skin And Bone (ex Hugo Klang), Heino, and a few other things. 20 A4 pages. $1 from Dada's or write to Distant Violins, PO Box 142, Nth Carlton, Vic 3054 and tell them to send it over here more regularly.

David.

NEXT ISSUE

This will be out around mid-April. Dead certainties include the Violent Femmes, the Homecoming, David McComb (Triffids), the Hoodoo Gurus, the Cherrytop label and God knows what else. Or you could spend the rest of your life reading the X-Press, if you'd rather. See you next time.

KRYPTONICS BABY

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