HOLD THE FRONT PAGE!

Well folks, this is a surprise! To find your favourite magazine dropping through your letter box once again. I know that many of you thought that your little fingers would never touch fresh pages of your hallowed 'Tales From The Woods' but we are back… not, sadly, on a monthly basis, maybe it will be a periodical for the foreseeable future. Whatever, we will simply do the best we can.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all you loyal contributors/subscribers for your patience. I am indeed flattered that not one of you has written or phoned to demand your subscriptions back. Equally, I would like to thank everyone for their messages of support over these trying months. I would love to tell you all about the details of my case with Network Rail but unfortunately I can't because, to receive the under-generous payout from my former employers, I have been forced to sign a gagging order which prevents me from speaking about my case publicly or indeed to any persons other than my next of kin. Well, what family members choose to tell at any future date is, of course, entirely their affair but for me personally, no! Silenced for life. Very difficult as you can imagine; it doesn't take a lot of working out to appreciate that I am not the type of person who diggs keeping his opinions to himself.

My eternal gratitude goes out to those who have spoken out, often quite vocally, on my behalf; my staff representative Adrian “A.J” Yates; my good friend, that man of mystery behind the scenes of ‘Tales From The Woods’, Harry; my friends and former colleagues Paul Freeman, Dave Mulcahy, and Russell Lloyd to name but a few; Tony Papard for his help in the early days of my campaign; Eddie Bowser who stood uncomplaining at my side not only when the sun shone but also when the wind blew and the rain pissed down whilst I waved my placard and beat the drum; Ken Major, ‘Tales From The Woods’ marketing manager, the tireless contributor Alan Lloyd and that fountain of knowledge on all things British, Darren Vidler who all rose from their beds at some unearthly hour to attend the non-event that was the industrial tribunal.

Like life itself it is time to move on. At the time of writing can you believe all that is happening on the roots music scene? The month of April will see Booker T and the MGs, Percy Wiggins, Anne Peebles, Wilson Pickett, Jack Clement, and Billy Lee Riley, amongst others, all at the Barbican. Across London, northside at The Forum. Kentish Town, once the home and the second home for many of us back in its glory days of the late ‘80s through to the mid ‘90s, the sadly missed Town and Country Club will be playing host to Chuck Berry and, a couple of weeks later, Bo Diddley will be back. As the cuckoo echoes in the first spring hours of May the hardest working retired man in the business, Little Richard, will be at the Royal Festival Hall on the South Bank. Also in town just prior will be the funky godfather himself, James Brown. Unbelievable. Many of these people are well into their seventies and are still out there doing it. You younger Kats out there in TFTW-land catch them while you can for, all to soon, it will be all over. Too late then to say I wish I had gone that night back in 2005.

A great deal has happened on the planet Earth since the last issue of ‘Tales From The Woods’ slipped through your letterbox into your eager, waiting hands. The Boxing Day tragedy in Asia took the lives of hundreds of thousands and a new word entered the common vocabulary, that of tsunami.

Much to the disbelief and dismay of the rest of the world, George W Bush was re-elected for a second term, and obviously much to the disgust of many Americans as well, as statistics suggest that...
there are more citizens of the U.S. living outside of their native country than at any time since the Vietnam war. Just a couple of months into his Presidency and what does that close friend of the multi-national corporations and the Bin-Laden family of Saudi Arabia do? Why, he promotes that architect of not just the Iraq war but the whole of the so-called American neo-Conservative Revolution, Paul Wolfowitz, to head of the World Bank! Neo-Conservative my arse! We here in Europe would no doubt describe them more accurately – neo-fascist or right wing Trotskyites. State Of Permanent Revolution Wolfowitz and his cronies are not a new phenomenon of course, they have been around for a couple of decades or more going back to the days of George Bush Sr and, before him, to Reagan, but they had the sense to keep them under control.

We saw the passing of the last of the old Labour Prime Ministers, Jim Callaghan, the former grammar schoolboy who held all four major offices of state; Home Secretary, Foreign Secretary, Chancellor of the Exchequer and, of course, Prime Minister. Taking over in mid-term from the great Harold Wilson, that generation of a high proportion of readers who should be eternally grateful to him for keeping us out of Vietnam and allowing what would have been a considerable number to live beyond our youth. Those far off days of Wilson and Callaghan and that of conservative with a small “c” Edward Heath, when the British Government stood up to be counted against American dominance. Ironically, the day that Sunny Jim Callaghan died a Study of Political Analysis was published and reported on a day or two later in the broadsheets, which amongst other things suggested that if women and not been given the vote in the early decades of the last century (the result of course of the Suffragette Movement) only one Conservative government would have held office since.

I personally did not find that surprising bearing in mind that, during the decade which dare not speak its name, the Mad Cow from Grantham, Maggie Thatcher, was put into and held in office by an unholy alliance of flag waving football supporters, the extreme right wing of the white working class, the fox hunting blimps of the shires, the gay community (no doubt because she reminded them of their mothers) and of course women, which must worry Blair with the upcoming election on May 5th. By all accounts he has lost the woman’s vote so beneficial to him on the two previous occasions, especially back in 1997, that boyish charm and the propaganda suggesting that Tony was known, during his university days, as Jumbo, but not for his prominent ears. the affectionate nickname was allegedly given because, when naked, he resembled a stallion. Some eight years on, the strain of high office and partial responsibility for countless thousands of deaths on foreign soil, has caused the boyish grin to vanish. No doubt he is still very well endowed but even that can’t guarantee the vote of his former lady admirers.

As I write this the Pope is lying in state for several days at the Vatican, his body pumped full of formaldehyde to keep him from humming, hundreds of thousands of devout followers queuing for up to seven hours to see his body. We here at the ‘Tales From The Woods’ editorial board have had our thinking caps on… would it not have been more beneficial to have pumped his body full of helium so he could have simply floated above the adoring crowds? So much better than to have to queue for many hours.

An amazing achievement you no doubt would agree readers, for a man who began his adult life as a lowly song and dance man on Polish music hall to rise to a position of such extreme elevation, becoming Christ’s vicar on earth. But who will follow him on such a stage? A couple of names have been bandied about, one of which is the African bishop, the 72-year old Francis Arinze who belongs to the order of the Congregation For Divine Worship who espouses such liberal views as men with ponytails and earrings should be drowned in Holy water. Another being the somewhat younger 62-year old Cardinal Oscar Andres Rodriguez Maradiaga, archbishop of Tegucigalpa who, when not despatching his bishopric duties, straps on a Flying V guitar and plays lead in a Led Zeppelin tribute band. Although sadly he has a handicap; he is known to lose the very cool that makes him cool. For example he reportedly hit another priest, who had the temerity to disagree with him over a theological point of issue, over the head with his guitar.

What about our own Sir Cliff Richard or Dame Clara as he is known to his closest friends, the ‘50s Rock’n’Roll impersonator who became a born again puritan after studying for many years at the Dirk Bogarde College of Sanctimonious Self-Importance? We here at the ‘Tales From The Woods’ editorial board believe that the holier-than-thou Sir Cliff is the perfect candidate. Yes, great idea, lets start a campaign; write to the Vatican enclosing this copy of ‘Tales From The Woods’, “We want Cliff”, “Sir Cliff for pontiff” etc.

(As you will know, it is too late as the new Pope, the one with the killer’s eyes, has already been chosen, but he won’t last that long as all Popish cycles follow the rule of long-term, short-term religiously. So, Cliff for Pope in 2008 – H)
Like me, no doubt many of you had read in the
newspapers that London is now officially the most expensive city in Europe and certainly within the top five in the world. This was really brought home to me recently when I took a student, who was staying at Hotel Queen Anne for a few weeks, and escorted her around our capital city a few weeks back. Close to President Blair’s home of democracy, the Houses of Parliament, we both had the need to take a leak. Following the signs for toilets, we headed down to the Embankment only to discover that to gain entrance to this establishment, Westminster Council wanted us to place 50p into the machine on the wall. 50p to spend a penny! I’d sooner do it over the railings into the Thames.

We here at the ‘Tales From The Woods’ editorial board are no fans of Westminster Council. Those of you with long memories will remember the one-time leader of the corrupt and money grabbing council, Dame Shirley Porter, still wanted in the U.K. for fraud charges who has been granted immunity from extradition in Ariel Sharon’s (Middle East policy adviser to the United States) Israel. The very lady that was responsible for the bulldozing of London’s first electric cinema, which used to stand in Wilton Road, close to Victoria station. The cinema, which dated back to the turn of the last century, was in fact a grade one listed building. So how did Dame Shirley and her cronies get round the predicament? Simple; the building was demolished overnight… literally. And what sprung up in its place? Well, bless my soul, it is now incidentally a Wetherspoons!

These past months have seen the passing of yet more of our heroes from the world of roots music. I will, in upcoming issues, do my best to catch up although this may mean keeping them cruelly brief. The final instalments of last year’s Ponderosa Stomp however, will now sadly not appear, for the simple reason that too much time has elapsed and by the time we finally get to print, a party of around 25 loyal ‘Tales From The Woods’ contributors/subscribers will be heading out to the southern states for the 2005 Stomp, reviews of which will be in the more than capable hands of Hardrock Bunter. Sadly, I will not be present – penniless, unemployed and unemployable, it is a luxury I cannot afford.

It’s great to be back at the helm of ‘Tales From The Woods’ and I hope you enjoyed my little piece. Naturally I do hope I have not offended anyone. Hopefully the next issue will reach you by mid-summer. Catch up with you all later for The Buzz (at the back of the mag).

Friday meet up at the Chandos, October 8th 2004

I had a funny feeling that there would be a small turnout for this meet up as it was very short notice due to ‘Tales From The Woods’ being out very late but I expected to see more than just two people. At approximately 7:40pm when I arrived I saw only Shaky Lee Wilkinson and Crystal Palace Tony. I timed it just right as Tony was getting a round in.

This pub was chosen by a person who did not turn up and it is a nice old pub, not too crowded for a Friday night in London with reasonable prices for beer at under £2.00 a pint. A bit later on Bunter arrived with just a carrier bag of cardboard and no CDs at all. Then came Tony Papard, Alan Lloyd and another Brian, with Woody finally turning up at 9:15. We set out to get a meal at the New Piccadilly restaurant but when we walked in they said they had been closed for half an hour. So we went off walking for somewhere else to eat with Alan pulling his bag on wheels like he was taking his dog for walkies. He had come straight from work in the Midlands.

Keith said that we should try the Stockpot and when we arrived we had a short wait while they found a table for six on the lower floor where we ordered our beers first and then we all had starters and main meals. We raised a toast to several people who had passed on recently, two of these being Rufus Neal and songwriter Billy Davis. Service at this place was very quick, clean and friendly and all for less than a tenner, including tip. We then decided to have a last drink in the pub called the French House in Frith Street, a very crowded little pub which only sold half pints of beer.

Then it was home to bed to dream of Miss Whiplash who had been at Hemsby the previous weekend. She came second in the fancy dress competition, a very tall blonde lady dressed head to toe in black PVC and very high heels she caned me and later that night, when she was watching the great Bobby Hendricks, she took her high heels off and was smelling them. I asked if I could have a sniff and she obliged. Heaven.

Randy Brian Jessup.
Letters to the Editor

Dear Ed.

I wish to thank all readers who helped me celebrate my 60th birthday and retirement bash on July 29th and particular thanks to those who contributed with cards and presents. It was a great evening with many seldom seen faces making appearance. Everybody appeared to have enjoyed it, and even the pub’s management mentioned they would be delighted to host future similar events.

Sincerely,
Ken Major

Rhythm Riot
(Oct 04)

Hi Folks,

Just returned (suitably knackered) from another excellent rockin' weekend at Rhythm Riot, Camber Sands, and I'm still shaking with disbelief from the utterly WILD performance from one Roddy Jackson. I was once quoted in print (roughly) as saying that we expect all the black guys, irrespective of age, to turn in a credible performance, but don't expect too much from the white artists. Well, this weekend was an exception; saxophonist Joe (No Blow Joe) Houston was sad to see, surely he'll never perform again, and although the Frogman won the audience over, Roddy Jackson (62) brought to the stage for the first time since (name your fav) what I call -a-l Rock'n'Roll, not R&B, nor R'n'B but piano pounding, sax wielding, vocal rasping, teen lyric '50s authenticity, and the band was good too!

I saw more than a shade of Little Richard, Larry Williams, Don & Dewey but also the intensity of a Gene Vincent on the slower numbers. A natural replacement for the late and great Ronnie Dawson and a Rock'n'Roll benchmark that I doubt if any other performer on this planet can match. I feel really sorry for the guys that did not make this show; sure he'll be at Hemsby and maybe at the Ponderosa Stomp sooner, but in 40 years time at our London West End meet up we will toast the greatest ever Rock'n'Roll performance to be witnessed in the UK perhaps since 1962? My ACE order for the new CD due in Spring is with my local store.

And wasn't the pub dinner entertaining? What was the punchline 'I won't buy you a cowboy outfit but I'll buy you Pontin's instead!' Next year perhaps we'll have a treat with a troupe of lap dancers for dessert!

Ken Major

More Rhythm Riot

Just like to add my two-penneth to Ken's rave review of Roddy Jackson at the Rhythm Riot.

The weekend started off a bit slow, but built up to a terrific climax on the Sunday night. As Ken said, sadly Joe Houston was a bit of a disappointment, but for me Hank Thompson was fantastic on Saturday night. OK, it wasn't his authentic Western Swing sound as Hank was using the house band, the rockin' Rhythm Riot Kings of Rhythm, with a specially hired steel-guitarist and fiddle-player as extras. To be honest, these last two weren't that hot. But Hank's voice was as great as ever, and for me nothing was more magical than experiencing the original singer of 'Wild Side of Life', which Hank took to the top of the charts way back when, performing this great number 'live'.

He ran thru a whole gamut of other songs, both fast and slow, looking remarkably like his old pictures and with all his hair intact, and not a trace of grey. This was billed as his Sunset Tour, and he is now in his 7th decade in the recording business. They just don't write songs like this anymore, it certainly wasn't New Country! Drinking/lost love ballads with lyrics like 'in tap, can or bottle' and 'my tears have washed "I love you" from the blackboard of my heart'. Corny, but I love 'em! Great tunes too. A good mixture of ballads and uptempo Western Swing numbers. I bought a CD, t-shirt and got the great man's autograph.

(Not true that someone in the line-up for autographs said to Hank: 'You look in great shape considering I thought you died of drink on New Year's Eve 1952!) That makes 4 great Hank's I've seen 'live' - Hank Thompson, Hank Locklin, Hank Snow and Hank Williams Jr. Sadly I missed Hank Snr and Hank Williams III, though still time to catch up on the latter.

I also enjoyed seeing the British group The Extraordinares again. Whatever people may say about them not being 'originals', they certainly have enthusiasm and energy. Certainly we won't see the American original doo-wop groups doing acrobatics on stage like these lads.

The Sunday finale exceeded all expectations. Ken has already written about the fantastic experience of seeing wild rocker Roddy Jackson for the first time. Great voice, wild pianist and sax player, and the real treat was hearing for the first time a whole
load of self-penned rockers recently found ‘in the vaults’ and never released, though they should be next year. This is one guy I’d definitely go to see again, and recommend him most highly to those who missed him. (One person in our chalet was watching football on TV whilst Roddy was on - shame!) Roddy literally blew us all away!

Clarence ‘Frogman’ Henry, who I’d only seen ‘live’ previously at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festivals, looked as if he wasn’t going to make it on stage. Hobbling along on two sticks, with the help of his minder, he amazed everyone by standing for most of his act, which went way over time. He was scheduled to do 45 minutes but sang for well over an hour. We had his usual mix of slow and faster numbers, including several from the Fats Domino catalogue. He was laughing and joking with the band and the audience, even the sound engineers. I have an old video of him sitting at a piano playing and singing - surely this would be the ideal format for this stage of his career, rather standing for over an hour on rather shaky legs? Anyway he gave a great performance as always. Great character, and his voice has held up well. The high- pitched voice and ‘frog’ croaks on ‘Ain’t Got A Home’ sound as fresh as ever.

I thought that the evening and the Weekender was over, but stayed anyway to see the last band, an Italian outfit called I Belli Di Waikiki - billed in the official program as ‘Hawaiian Hula Party Time’. I can’t think of a better way to end a Weekender - everyone letting their hair down in a very ‘camp’ end-of-weekend party. Great atmosphere, and everyone seemed to be thoroughly enjoying themselves. Teds and rockabillies, along with a guy dressed as a Hula girl and another with Carmen Miranda type headgear doing backflips for the cameras and both generally camping it up gutless. The band were good fun too, and it was certainly different.

Another great Weekender. Roll on the Rockabilly Rave at the same venue next March.

Tony Papard

JAZZ JUNCTION

Porretta Soul Festival –
4 to 6 July 2004

The Rufus Thomas Park was yet again the venue for the 17th edition of the Porretta Soul Festival. A scorching Friday in the Emilio Romagna region of Italy meant that, unlike last year, there was never any doubt that the festival would commence on time.

After a brief welcome by emcee Rick Hutton, the Clarence Carter Band stretched their chops on an up-tempo blues before Clarence Carter, dressed in green suit and dark glasses, was led slowly to front of stage and was handed his guitar. One sustained note, a few more and then his trademark laugh as he introduced himself to the audience.

‘My name is Dr CC. I like it like that.’ He chuckled. Then the ‘Love Doctor’ was down to business with Too Weak To Fight and his title number Dr CC. The band locked into a groove and gradually built the tension and Clarence began to sway. It was simple and it was repetitive but it was effective and impossible to ignore.

As he did on most occasions, the next number was given a short introduction. ‘In 1970 a bad thing happened. I got married. Bad, bad, bad! I’ve been married five times and I’ve been divorced five times.’ Did he accept any blame? ‘Nothing wrong with me, ‘cos I’m still him.’

Patches and Slip Away were given a semi-autobiographical slant. And having confessed that the effect of a pre-performance gin was beginning to kick in, he recalled the influence on his guitar playing of Jimmy Reed with A Man Down There. Both this and the later Baby What You Want Me To Do leant variety to his set yet fitted in with his groove style performance.

Dock Of The Day was perhaps a contractual requirement given the festival’s inspiration and What I’d Say was a timely tribute to the recently departed Ray Charles. Lookin’ For A Fox (from the film Another Day In Paradise) and Strokin’ were Clarence Carter at his most infectious and clearly enjoyed by the audience with some unrestrained dancing.
Brazilian-born and noted producer, arranger and writer Eumir Deodato, who had returned to the stage in 2001 after a fifteen year break, raised hopes of some jazzed-up funk but in the end the music was only ‘interesting’. It was however enjoyed by many, especially the Café Italia which gained the custom of a large group of early departees.

Saturday saw the first Porretta appearance by a bespectacled Howard Tate, dressed in white suit and black shirt. His was a band for fans of real instruments with a four-horn section (trombone, trumpet, tenor and baritone saxes) which punctuated and polished a high quality performance which must have been one of the longest ever witnessed at Porretta – I counted at least twenty songs (eight coming from the Get It While You Can album on Verve and seven from his latest CD release Rediscovered).

After Part-Time Love and Look At Granny Run Run, he turned to his latest album with Show Me The Man, squeezing the mic-stand as he got inside the song, 8 Days On The Road, a 1972 recording on Atlantic, benefited from a fine keyboard solo. Then it was back to his Verve catalogue for Get It While You Can, with which, he said, Janis Joplin enjoyed greater success than him. Then his falsetto inflected vocal enhanced the vengeful sorrow of Ain’t Nobody Home.

He switched again to his latest album with Sorry Wrong Number and maintained the intensity with the bluesy Mama Was Right, before a superlative rendition of I Learned It All The Hard Way, tearing out the emotion bit by bit, kneeling and singing with hand on heart. At this point he left the stage to a standing ovation but this was not to be the end but a premature climax as it emerged that he was only half way through his long set.

He was back for more with a second half dominated by his very fine Rediscovered album commencing with She May Be White (But She Be Funky), Either Side Of The Same Old Town (written by Elvis Costello), Eternity and the funky Kiss during which he was even moved to dance. But it wasn’t over. There was an encore which included How Blue Can U Get and Baby I Love You. It was an outstanding performance which was at least a couple of notches up on Utrecht 2003.

The next section of the show was ‘The Ladies of Southern Soul’, all supported by the Millie Jackson band dressed in glittering waistcoats and called Easy-Akshun. Apart form the usual rhythm section there were three horns (tenor saxophone, trumpet and trombone), two keyboard players and two backing singers. Millie Jackson’s daughter, Keisha Jackson, was the aperitif and she acquitted herself well on Bill Withers’ Lovely Day and Shirley Brown’s Woman To Woman.

The first course was the ‘Queen of Country Soul’, Dorothy Moore, who shimmied on to the stage, which had been vacated by the horn section and two backing singers, to Baby What You Want Me To Do. Better was Willie Nelson’s Funny How Time Slips Away, warmed by her brandy-soaked voice and sung with a gentle sway of the shoulders. Aretha’s Dr Feelgood was sung with attitude, hand on hip, before she returned to familiar Dorothy Moore territory with a hip-swaying Lover Girl (written by Chuck Roberson) and ending with her signature tune Misty Blue.

On this last number I felt that Dorothy’s use of melisma was a shade too much, as I tend to the belief that with Dorothy less is more. But this was a minor criticism as she displayed consummate stage presence and personality. However it was over all too soon and whilst I put down the shortage of country soul to the choice of material
being limited by having to use the Millie Jackson band, all of these songs appeared on the *Gittin’ Down Live!* CD covering concert appearances made during 1989 to 1995.

The main course saw the horns reinstated and Keisha Jackson added to the backing singers as Millie Jackson appeared in a sort of circus master outfit lacking only a whip, although her stage persona carries one. Her set was a mixture of the outrageous and soulful.

She started with *Sugar On Me,* which seemed to be located in punk-funk territory, changing to southern soul for *If Loving You Is Wrong, I Don't Want To Be Right,* complete with rap middle, the subtlety (or not) of which appearing to go over the heads of many of the Italians in the audience.

She then turned to her last CD, which had not been titled *Not For Church Folk* without reason. This soon became clearer as the slow grinder which followed contained references to an un-Crufts-like ‘doggy style’ and borrowed from Mae West with ‘Is that a gun?’ *All The Way Lover* was another song which did not leave anything open to doubt. But it was all tongue in cheek humour.

A shift to her more substantial soul side saw a medley which included *If You Could See Me Now,* *If You’re Not Back In Love By Monday* and *It Hurts So Good.* But the outrageous Millie was soon back with *Old Bitch (Got It Going On)* and *Put Something Down On It* which segued into *Do Ya Think I'm Sexy.* She was soon telling us ‘I’m cheap, don’t do drugs, I drink beer – good for the kidneys, I don’t smoke – I don’t understand how people get hooked – unless it was weed.’ But just when you were about to take her seriously, she smiled and said ‘Just because I’m alone, it don’t mean I’m lonely’. Finally the ‘Queen of Raunch’ visited the south again with *Keep the Home Fire Burnin’* replete with guitar solo appropriately on the wrong side of good taste.

On Sunday we were treated to one of those youngsters groups with whom the Italians are so generous in their support. However this time the school band, the *Yellow & Blues Band,* had come all the way from the mountainous region of west Yorkshire. Under the leadership of a teacher, Michael Ford, on rhythm guitar, the band was a mix of girls and boys barely into their teens. The smallest girl was almost hidden by the drum-kit and another two were on saxophone and trumpet. There were two boys, one on trumpet, and the other a bass guitarist who really looked the part, being extremely relaxed and confident. The singers were two girls, who either performed solo or as a duo.

Not expecting too much, they turned out to be a real highlight. *Letter To Poretta,* written for the festival, was a catchy number. Michael Ford was clearly a northern soul fan as exemplified by Jimmy Radcliffe’s *Long After Tonight Is All Over.* Some songs worked better than others. *When Something Is Wrong With My Baby* was more teenage desolation than adult pain but enjoyable nevertheless. Finishing with *Sock It To 'Em JB,* Marvin Gaye’s *Pride And Joy* and Major Lance’s *Monkey Time,* they went out to enthusiastic audience appreciation including their own young ‘fan’ club who had united on the slope behind the sound desk.

As has been the tradition over the years, Sunday’s show also included truncated performances of those who had appeared on the previous nights. Except that on this occasion sadly Dorothy Moore did not appear, apparently due to her manager embroiling herself in a contractual dispute with the festival.

*Clarence Carter,* dressed in a white suit with silver lapels, shuffled on stage and started with the million-selling *Too Weak To Fight.* It would
have been good to hear him reach back for more than just three numbers of his excellent Atlantic material but the highlight was again the utterly infectious *Strokin’*.

Next two *Bobbys, Johnson* and *Wess*, queued up to give us some ‘supermarket soul’. They took their songs from the easy-to-reach shelves with *Soul Man, Midnight Hour* and *I Feel So Good* but more discerning eyes might have avoided *A Whiter Shade Of Pale*.

**Howard Tate** in red suit and shoes was every bit as good as the night before, again leaving out some numbers which meant that *I Learned it All The Hard Way* was more appropriately placed as the penultimate number. His singing marked by the occasional anguished cry was superb and if his stage presence was rather formal, it did not detract. The highlight was again *I Learned it All The Hard Way*, which was the number on which he became most animated, dropping to one knee as he pleaded ‘Give me another chance’ and taking a handkerchief out as he cried ‘Can’t you see the tears in my eyes?’

Even without Dorothy Moore, *Keisha Jackson* was allowed only one number as she reprised *Lovely Day* from the night before. But *Millie Jackson* was not constrained by convention and she paid tribute to festival favourite, *Ann Peebles*, with *Feel Like Breaking Up Somebody’s Home*. And to *Keep The Home Fire Burning* she added a mickey-take of Diana Ross singing ‘Reach out and touch somebody’s hand’.

Nor did the fact that it was Sunday mellow her outrageousness as the words ‘I am going to do my favourite now’ introduced the *Phuck U Symphony*. There might have been those who considered it an aria too far but only Millie could get away with it. Whatever next? ‘And now I’d like to do something from my latest gospel album!’ However the highlight of the set was a superb version of Ann Nesby’s *Put It On Paper*.

Millie Jackson really can put on a show and while some of the Italian audience may not have been able to pick up on all the (rather earthy) humour, there is no getting away from the fact that she does have a soulful voice and a large quantity of wonderful material to fall back on.

**Monty Alexander at Ronnie Scott’s – 12 August 2004**

Like quite a few jazz musicians these days, Australian tenor saxophonist *Jamie Oehlers* supplements his income by being a tutor. Of course that should not be seen in any way as a negative, as he ably demonstrated at Ronnie’s in August. A nicely judged eclectic set included the standard *Dearly Beloved*, Wayne Shorter’s *Yes And No*, and one of Bill Evans’s beautiful tunes *Nardis*. Pianist Sam Keever’s tribute to Kenny Kirkland was thoughtful and Jamie’s reading of Ornette Coleman’s blues *Ramblin’* showed just how accessible some of the avant-garde saxophonist’s early compositions were.

Jamaican-born *Monty Alexander* moved to the USA in 1961 and eventually established himself as a pianist of note, working with top names such as Dizzy Gillespie, Clark Terry and Sonny Rollins. He also played and recorded with Milt Jackson and Ray Brown and he reminded the audience that it was with these two that he appeared at Ronnie’s in 1981 and 1982 (although his first appearance was in 1974).

His set was marked by a typical desire to entertain and to bask in the audience’s enjoyment. Stylistically he appears to owe a debt to Oscar Peteterson but without touching the same heights. Where he scores, is in mixing jazz with the music of the land of his birth. However, apart from the first number, on this night his set was mainly standards including *Fly Me To The Moon* and *Somewhere Over the Rainbow*, and ended with a treat for fans of Westerns with a medley which included *Home On The Range* and *I’m An Old Cowhand*. 
Jeremy Pelt at Ronnie Scott’s – 26 August 2004

Some music critic or promotions person has dubbed Gwyneth Herbert ‘the next Jamie Cullum’. From where I was sitting, Gwyneth, who was dressed in décolleté black dress and whose voice is as warm and mellow as Jack Daniels, definitely is not. I guess where she does resemble Mr Cullum is in her choice of material. Sure she dips into the almost obligatory Great American Songbook but the youthfulness of today’s jazzy-pop singers means that they are just as likely to raid the music of their parents and their youth so that numbers by Portishead and Al Green were visited with just reward.

The swamp-funk interpretation of Bill Withers’ Grandma’s Eyes was, I felt, misplaced. But that was the only grey spot on an otherwise pleasurable performance by this promising newcomer. Her band, featuring John Parricelli on guitar, was first class and provided sympathetic accompaniment.

Ask any jazz fan ‘Who’s the best trumpet player around today?’ and there’s a good chance their thoughts will turn to Wynton Marsalis. But there’s a young man who has been making a lot of noise playing in the Cannonball Adderley Legacy and Mingus Big Band. His name is Jeremy Pelt and he is also gaining respect as leader of his own group which at Ronnie’s comprised Xavier Davis (piano), Vicente Archer (bass) and EJ Strickland (drums).

Jeremy has explored the great jazz of the fifties and sixties and it is his love of this period that informs his post-bop style of today. His playing was warm and direct and never failed to captivate, whether on the ballad Weird Nightmare or the thirties torch song Take Me In Your Arms, which was taken at an extremely fast tempo. And when he switched to flugelhorn on Jimmy Rowles’ 502 Blues, he was characteristically expressive.

Deitra Farr at The 100 Club – 14 October 2004

You can tell when an artist of special quality is appearing by the number of fellow artists in attendance. On this night, Big Joe Louis, Otis Grand and Shakey Vick were the musicians-come-fools. It was a fair turnout for a Thursday but much less than her debut at the 100 Club in 1998 and if London is not going to continue to miss out when the real deal visits these shores, then more blues fans will have to put their gramophones and foot-stools away for the evening.

Hailing from Chicago, Deitra Farr was joined on this visit by her cousin Carole from Atlanta, Georgia who was seeing her perform for the first time. This may have helped her relax as she eased her way through some excellent blues-soul. Her voice was full-bodied yet clean-sounding—rather like a Guinness (if it could sing)—and she was supported by a British band with Jon ‘T-Bone’ Taylor in superb form on guitar.

Songs from her 1997 JSP album, The Search Is Over, were the mainstay for her, although her take on Marvin Gaye’s How Sweet It Is preceded I’d Rather Be Gone, a song she wrote in a lonely hotel room in Montreal, How Much Longer and Waiting For You.

By the end, however, she was revealing her taste for the blues with two Little Walter songs, Just For You and Mean Old World, Jimmy Reed’s Shame, Shame, Shame and Big Bill Broonzy’s Key To The Highway. She told us that she was returning home Sunday to record a new CD – definitely long overdue.

Sam Mangwana at Ronnie Scott’s – 24 October 2004

There is an old Congolese saying that you can’t travel in two directions at the same time. And so, whilst one of that country’s musical stars, the indefatigable Kanda Bongo Man, was plying his trade at the Forum, I headed for the cosier but more confined space of Ronnie Scott’s to see Sam Mangwana. The man who has been described as ‘the king of Congolese rumba’ has mixed traditional Zairean soukous with biguine but eschews labels and prefers to call his music ‘African music’.

The two sets at Ronnie’s reflected this variety, reaching back to 1963 and a song he sang as a young man with Tabu Ley and taking us to other places in his forty year career. Songs included Morena, Minha Angola (both his parents were from Angola), and Fati-Mata as the ever-popular hitmaker cajoled us with Red Indian yells and the singing guitar sounds gave Hamelinesque incitement to dance.

With no specialist dancers in the group (just two backing singers, two guitars, conga drums and drums), members of the audience were selected in turn to join them on stage to entertain us. Their efforts were warmly appreciated, whatever the standard, but at least one (perhaps as a result of her authentic ethnicity) compared to what is usually on offer.
**The Mingus Big Band at Ronnie Scott’s – 27 October 2004**

Sadly I managed to catch only one set by The Mingus Big Band during their week long residency at Ronnie’s but ‘Oh yeah. What a set!’ After a short introduction by Sue Mingus, widow of the great man, band leader Craig Handy broke the news that tenor saxophonist John Stubblefield had not been able to make the trip as he was back home recovering after being in hospital for an operation to cure prostate cancer. He went on to let the audience in on some of John’s words of exhortation to the band in the dressing room and on stage. One I particularly liked was ‘Drink up and be the person you thought you should have been’.

The first number, *Jump Monk*, on which Abraham Burton used his tenor sax as a flame-thrower and Ku-umba Frank Lacy sprayed his trombone far and wide, was typical of the whole set. It was so hot and fiery that I understand that the London Fire Brigade was obliged to keep one of their engines permanently on duty outside all week.

The quality of the music burned brightly through the rest of the set featuring well-turned solos by Dave Kikoski (piano) on *The Shoes of the Fisherman’s Wife*, Earl McIntyre (tenor saxophone) on *Paris In Blue* and a spirited battle between Wayne Escoffrey (tenor sax) and Ronnie Cuber (baritone sax) on *E’s Flat, Ah’s Flat Too*. Once again the combination of the Mingus Big Band and Ronnie Scott’s was simply irresistible.

**Ronnie Scott’s 45th Anniversary Photographic Exhibition**

On a cultural whim, I popped along to Redferns Music Picture Gallery which had an exhibition celebrating the 45th anniversary of Ronnie Scott’s. The (mostly black and white) photographs were of many of the outstanding jazz musicians who had appeared at Ronnie’s over the years and had been taken by John Hopkins, David Redfern, David Scott and Val Wilmer.

As I was viewing the photographs, who should walk in but David Redfern himself? He was immediately introduced to me by the gallery’s manager. It was one of those occasions when you wished you had some questions prepared but I had been daydreaming. The photographs had been taken at the ‘old place’ as well as Frith Street and it seemed to me that there was a general darkness about many of them. And so I asked him why. He explained that Ronnie was always in favour of subdued lighting and that the better-lit photographs were actually taken when TV recording had been taking place. Whilst the exhibition is now over there is a book of the photographs titled *Ronnie Scott’s 45* with words by John Fordham and photographs by the four already mentioned together with Allan Titmus (who was not listed amongst the exhibitors at Redferns).

**Lizz Wright at the Purcell Room – 20 November 2004**

It was a very welcome return to Lizz Wright who appeared at the Purcell Room as part of the London Jazz Festival and who was one of the hits of last years festival. There was a change in the instrumentation in the band with percussion replacing drums so that hands were used instead of sticks and Spanish guitar in place of stand-up bass. These changes introduced subtle variations in texture and enhanced further the attractive warmth of Lizz Wright’s voice.

Two sets merged into one as she teased us with songs to appear on her second album (hopefully in April 2005). *Hit The Ground Running*, written by Joshi Reagon (daughter of Bernice Johnson Reagon of Sweet Honey In The Rock) gave optimistic portent of things to come. Otherwise she mined her debut album, *Salt*, before returning to encore with *Fire* and *Open Your Eyes, You Can Fly* by which time we were ready to wing our way home.

**In Memoriam**

Jazz Junction would like to pay its own respects to two of the recently departed. Firstly the laconic DJ and broadcaster John Peel, whose wide and eclectic musical tastes meant that tuning into his programme in the late 70s/early 80s I well remember hearing him reveal his pleasure at finally being able to see Illinois Jacquet (one of our favourite tenor saxophonists at the Junction) when he appeared at the Pizza Express. Also around the same time, amongst all the new wave and punk bands I heard him play a Linda Jones track, at the end of which he summed up with the words ‘Anyone not moved by that must be a whelk!’ All the tributes were justified.

Secondly November 2004 saw the end of the Utrecht Estafette, not only a wonderful event but also a great social occasion. It has always been an opportunity to meet many friends and to share an Indonesian rijkstafel with the driver of the Utrecht Express and fellow passengers. Highlights over the years are too many to mention but three immediately spring to mind – Otis Clay in 1988 (my first Estafette), David Dee in 1993 and Lou Pride in 2003. What they all had in common was superb showmanship and driving backing bands in which the musicians appeared to have been
moulded into single units to provide effortless empathy between band and singer.

Dave Carroll

SOUL KITCHEN
“Required reading” - John Broven.

SOUL CD OF THE ISSUE

LITTLE BEAVER...THE VERY BEST OF.... Stateside 78328


Willie 'Little Beaver' Hale is not everyone's cup of tea, but I'm quite a big fan of his searing lazy Southern drawl. My immediate reaction to this long overdue release was what's not been included, no 'Katie Pearl' a tribute to a passed away girl friend, a genuine classic that is, or his astounding version of Bobby Bland's 'Two Steps From The Blues', both being smouldering soul blues drenched fusion.

Beaver moved to Florida from Arkansas when he was a teenager, and was soon involved in the Miami scene, playing with various bands and recording for local minor labels. His reputation as a guitarist and writer was gathering local acclaim, so before long he was picked up for Henry Stone's TK Records as house guitarist, playing on innumerable sessions, embellishing most of the important soul sides that escaped from Miami during the seventies, featuring his melodic lines and snazzy fills. Beaver penned 'I Love The Way You Love' for Betty Wright, and played the guitar hook on her 'Clean Up Woman', and Latimore's superb 'Let's Straighten It Out'.

This seventeen track anthology is drawn from TK's subsidiary Cat, which features the hits and a goodly cross section of hard riffing guitar licks, and mellow grooves surrounding his carefree vocal style.

'Joey' his first hit, 48 R&B, is a haunting blues song about slipping around. He sings a tale of waking up in the middle of the night to find his lady muttering "Joey" in her sleep. "I know two or three cats named Joey but they sure ain't no friend of mine," wails Beaver in an astringent sorrowful voice, while his guitar scatters flurries of savage notes. His biggest hit, 2 R&B, was the relaxed breezy summer swayer 'Party Down', a groovy zestful flavoured Latin jazzy fusion, over which Beaver wails and picks a gentle tune. 'Groove On' follows the same summer cooking shuffle party toe tapper, punctuated by sparky guitar. On 'I Can Dig It Baby' Beaver sounds really zonked out as he invites us into an excursion into his mind, as he just manages to drawl out this catchy lifter.

Other welcome cuts include 'When Was The Last Time', a gorgeous lazy cool sawyer, the neat lilting string filled floater 'Little Girl Blue', an insidious 'I Can Dig It' with Betty Wright guesting on vocals, and 'Wish I Had A Girl Like You' is a compulsively catchy beat ballad with up-front female support. The final two tracks are certainly worth the wait. The swaying ballad 'I Feel Like Crying' takes an almost fusion approach, with gentle sax and a smooth sexy chorus, while the deeper 'I Really Love You' breezes over a striking samba rhythm foundation, with an inkling to Leroy Hutson.

A great blast of Miami soul, rich as a ripe plum.

RATING (out of 5) 4 Soulboys

The CHARLES ‘CHUCK’ JACKSON Story, co-starring The Independents, Marvin Yancy, Ronnie Dyson and one of my favourite albums by one of my favourite artists.

CHARLES JACKSON

Charles Henry Jackson was born, 22 March 1945 in Greenville, South Carolina, into a talented family where music and religion played important roles. He was a younger brother to the civil rights activist Reverend Jesse Jackson. Jackson's early interest in music was from the church, his mother sang in the choir, and young Charles was initially dragged to church, but was soon to follow her footsteps by singing in the choir. He had voice lessons at school, and was an intangible part of the high school choir. During his later school years he began writing, scribbling down song ideas. He formed his own street corner group with three other school friends.

After high school, Jackson earned a master's in commercial art at Fermin University and taught for a year. During his term he got involved with a university vocal group called the Blueskins, so aside from street corner tips he started to make pocket money from his singing. In 1969 he moved to Chicago to work for Hugh Heffner's Playboy Magazine as an art director, so any idea of
making a living from music was put aside for a few years.

He heard about a songwriting workshop that was organised by soul supremo Jerry Butler. The Jerry Butler songwriters workshop, which was financed by Chappel Music, awarded struggling songwriters the opportunity to develop writing skills. So along with a team of other aspiring lyricists, he started to earn a living from his compositions. Many of our great soul artists made their start in various writing, performers workshops that were linked to major record labels and corporations. Jackson had written numerous songs stuffed into his tatty notebooks, and advice from Butler would mould some of these Gospel scrawls into more commercial offerings. He approached Butler with one of his workshop songs, 'If It's Real What I Feel', who was impressed, but didn't feel the song was quite right for him, until Jackson returned with a demo featuring a close church friend, Brenda Lee Eager. Butler recorded the song, achieving an 8 R&B hit. Jackson penned several other songs that were subsequently recorded, but he was primarily a lyricist, and needed a partner to put his words into meaningful tunes.

As luck would have it in 1972 Jackson met Marvin Yancy, a minister who also played piano, at the Black Expo in Chicago. Yancy was backing legendary gospel group The Caravans. After the show Jackson approached Yancy about co-writing songs together. They hooked up and quite quickly the pair's collaboration became a successful commercial partnership. Jackson wrote the lyrics and would sometimes come up with the basic melody, while Yancy wrote the music and arrangements.

**MARVIN YANCY**

Was born 31 May 1950 in Chicago, the son of a Baptist minister. His mother was a great church singer, as were other members of his family, so he was surrounded by gospel music from a young age. He was a gifted gospel tinged pianist by the time he was nine years old and was accompanying church choirs. He studied at the Chicago Baptist Institute and the Mooney Baptist Institute of Theology. When gospel greats would pass through Chicago, Yancy, by now a recognised master of the keyboards would get the jobs in the backing bands. By the end of the sixties he was playing keyboards for such major Chicago gospel greats as James Cleveland and Jessy Dixon amongst others. Meeting Jackson was the impetus to take Yancy into secular, commercial music.

**THE INDEPENDENTS**

Jackson brought Yancy into the workshop and the duo were soon laying down a smattering of demos. One such competition 'Just As Long As You Need Me' caught the ear of former Impressions manager and promotional entrepreneur Eddie Thomas who thought they were good enough to record in their own right, and suggested that Jackson and Yancy form a vocal group. Choosing the name the Independents. Thomas got them a deal with Scepter-Wand Records. With Charles Jackson's richly emotive soulful voice on lead vocals, they recorded the mellow gospelized soulful 'Just As Long As You Need Me' at Chicago's Paul Serrano studios, with Chess musicians and arranger/saxophonist Gene Barge. Scoring immediately with a top ten R&B hit.

With success on their hands the duo hastily recruited Helen Curry and Maurice Jackson, as the record zoomed up the charts. Maurice Jackson had previously had singles releases on Lakeside and Plum records. The follow up was the exquisite million seller 'Leaving Me' which was a gold number one R&B hit in 1973. It is a stunningly superb melodramatic sad ballad, Jackson's stutteringly poignant lead vocal cries its way through the track, which along with other group members' harmonizing only serves to pile on the heartbreak. Their second biggest hit followed 'Baby I've Been Missing You', following their now established formula, Jackson's wailing preaching tenor lead, Curry's sweet interceptions, assisted by shimmering electric pianos, dramatic vocal chorus and a lush layer of sympathetic orchestrations. The group's first album THE FIRST TIME WE MET went gold.

Yancy who preferred the behind the scenes work, was replaced for their second album CHUCK, HELEN, ERIC, MAURICE by Eric Thomas. The album was considerably weaker, and flopped, spooning just the one R&B hit 'It's All Over'.

The group's popularity was enormous between 1972 and 1974. Until their demise, they achieved eight R&B top ten hits. Other notables are 'The First Time We Met', 'In The Valley Of My World' and the more up-tempo 'Arise And Shine', all are powerful vocally interplayed in the true gospel tradition. Often compared to the Soul Children,
who also featured a shared boy girl lead vocal. The Independents were a lot more mellow, oh so much sweeter, then the grit of the Children.

Amid record company squabbles, and along with Jackson and Yancy losing interest, the group disbanded in 1974. Helen Curry released some solo singles without success, Maurice Jackson and Eric Thomas went on to form the moderately successful Silk, charting just the once with ‘Party’ in 1977. There seems to have been a couple of other groups called Silk, this incarnation sort of carried on where the Independents left off, faultless vocal interplay between group members, highly orchestrated, sweet soul with a slight dip to disco.

JACKSON and YANCY

However the Jackson and Yancy team stuck together to continue writing and producing. Natalie Cole, the daughter of Nat King Cole, was a lounge circuit singer, covering jazz/mor, she had just signed a management deal with Kevin Hunter, who was looking for fresh material for Cole to record. A chance meeting with Hunter towards the end of 1974 when the two were on a trip to New York, resulted in the duo working with Cole, laying down tracks at Curtis Mayfield's Curtom studios. The finished demos proved difficult to interest any record company, until finally gaining a contract with Capitol records. The trio's first collaboration ‘This Will Be’ was a world wide smash, so other record labels’ loss was Capitol’s gain. Cole with the duo architecting and developing her career, even for a period replacing Aretha Franklin as the queen of soul, went on to achieve astronomical success, notching up numerous gold and platinum singles and albums along the way.

In addition to Cole, who became Mrs Yancy, they were also coming through with hit songs for Curtom acts The Impressions, The Natural Four, and the super brilliant Notations. The duo also recorded a couple of hit albums with Ronnie Dyson, particularly the brilliant album THE MORE YOU DO IT, as well as having their songs recorded by numerous other acts.

The pair moved their operations from Chicago to Los Angeles to work, mainly to concentrate on Cole’s albums and career. When the Cole well had run dry after five years of phenomenal success, the duo’s partnership sort of split up.

RONNIE DYSON

Was born 5 June 1950 in Washington DC and was raised in Brooklyn New York. He was brought up in a family involved in gospel singing and much of his childhood was spent singing in local churches. His first professional break came during his teenage years, when he joined the cast of the musical HAIR, a leading role he was to play for four years. During this period he signed for Columbia records, his first release ‘God Bless The Children’, wasn’t a major success although Dyson didn’t have long to wait because his second release was a million seller, with a song from the musical Salvation, ‘(If You Let Me Make Love To You Then) Why Can’t I Touch You’ in 1970.

A progenitor of the successful Philly sound of the era, he then went on to score with an updating of the Delfonics’ ‘When You Get Right Down To It’, his fragile boyish voice extruding a beautiful and soulful delivery. Then subsequent hit ‘One Man Band (Plays All Alone)’, with Dyson vocals soaring over the scampering strings. He also recorded the original version of ‘Just Don’t Want To Be Lonely’, a song which later became a hit for the Main Ingredient. Later in the seventies Dyson moved his recording base to Chicago and hooked up with Jackson and Yancy. The result was the smash hit ‘The More You Do It (The More I Like It Done To Me)’ in 1976. Dyson's high asexual vocals were on top form on this easy lollloping rhythm with such a strong hook.

After a quiet period, Dyson resurfaced in 1982 on Cotillion Records, for whom he cut the critically acclaimed, though commercially unsuccessful PHASE 2 album, full of vocal melodies, vocal harmonies, and vocal ad-libs, all supported by a rich orchestrated sound keeping the whole romantic epic shrugging along. Later he had a hit forty-five ‘All Over Your Face’, but was unable to achieve major success. Dyson revived his career once more by signing to UK based Ardent Records. A single ‘See The Clown’ was issued in 1990, just prior to his death on 13 November 1990.

CHARLES JACKSON

Charles Jackson was aching to move from his creative lyrical desk, to return to the performer, which he had abandoned to concentrate on writing and producing after the Independents folded, finally deciding to go ahead and record an album. His initial solo album in 1978 was titled PASSIONATE BREEZES and was produced by Marvin Yancy and Gene Barge, a superbly crafted soul album. The album received high critical
acclaim, but sadly never met with the acceptance it deserved.

The magnificent PASSIONATE BREEZES album has always been a long-term twenty-two carat favourite with me. Just about the definitive soul album, very worthy of a revisit.

'Passionate Breezes' is the perfect opener, a laid back gentle floating slowie which portrays the implications of its title perfectly. A spoken intro and subconscious attacking chorus line. 'Love Of You' follows, it's a gentle, creamy ballad, building and sustaining throughout, caressed by winningly seeping strings and a chorus of angelic female backing vocalists. 'Ooh Child', not the Stairsteps tune, is a distinctive grow on you funkified low down rhythmic mid-tempo groover, as our man's heart rendering sexy crooning floats nicely on the surface. Following is a tasty medley of 'I'm In Heaven' and Billy Preston's smoocher 'You Are So Beautiful' which winds up side one and again it's a fine melodic highly soulful slowie, displaying his richly emotive soulful voice.

Side two opens with the album's killer track, 'The Train' The gripping lyrics wail of tragedy throughout, vintage irresistible mournful emotive slow soul. Rap intro with Jackson lamenting his lover's departure on the chuff chuff that's taking his love away from him. Jackson's haunting vocal pushing a mood of infinite sadness is ably supported by a sympathetic string section, comforting background vocals, weeping guitar fills gentle support in expressing his sorrow. The next track is a particularly pleasant surprise, as Jackson treats us to a stunningly soulful interpretation of Rod Stewart's 'Tonight's The Night'. The treatment is similar to that of the cockney crooner but with more of Charlie's bedroom urgency. Where macho Rodney wants a quickie, Jackson's gonna give this lucky gal the works. Our man seems seconds away from tears over a perfect musical backing, when the horns come in on the second verse its sensational super seductive soul. Funny how you never notice how good a song is until you hear it improved on and given justice. 'Get On Down' moves up a pace, on this meaty dance track, with positive thinking lyrics, over the pumping rhythm which really is irresistible, a guaranteed mover. The final track 'I Really Want You' takes us way back down to get our breath back. His mellow, moody, sensual vocals take us out of the album with yet another skilfully orchestrated ballad gem. Jackson and Yancy have a hand in much of the writing, the one notable exception being 'Tonight's The Night'.

The following year 1979 sees his second and final album? hit the racks, GONNA GETCHA' LOVE. It's a mix of disco, funk, and sophisticated soul ballads, but unfortunately saw the same fate as its predecessor, acclaimed but falling by the wayside. In fairness PASSIONATE BREEZES is far superior, as this album has a more commercial feel which presumably was the aim. Sam Dees' 'For The Sake Of The Memories' attempts to fill the role of 'The Train' but fails. The majority of the tracks are attractive blends of poppy soul and disco. Stand-outs are few; 'I Love You Only' is a respectable duet with Sylvia Fox. 'I Finally Found Myself' is a nod in the direction of D J Rogers. 'I'm Through With You' phrases like Al Green and the horn arrangement has a stamp of Willie Mitchell.

Charles Jackson returned to Chicago and went on to write and produce sessions for Lace, Independent Movement, Aretha Franklin, Michael Henderson, and Phyllis Hyman amongst many others.

MARVIN YANCY

Cole and Yancy divorced after a few years. He returned to Chicago where he became a pastor at his late father's church and recorded several gospel albums.

In 1985 at the age of 34 he died of a heart attack. At the time he was enjoying his biggest selling gospel album HEAVY LOAD.

LOST SOUL

RITA (SYREETA) WRIGHT

Rita Wright was born on the 28th February 1946 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and began singing at the age of four. When she was five her father was killed in the Korean war. She was brought up by her mother and grandmother, who in 1957 first moved to Detroit when she was eleven, then to South Carolina when Wright was fifteen. In her
late teens she returned to Detroit. She had ambitions to become a ballet dancer, but due to the high cost of lessons she had to abandon the idea. Singing and song writing was now her main aim, so to get her foot in the musical door she found a job as a secretary at Detroit's Motown records.

Wright soon moved to the artist and repertoire department as secretary to Micky Stevenson, one of Motown's key talent spotters. He enlisted her into the studio to contribute handclaps and as a backing singer. In 1967 she got her big chance to record her debut single, a song that was written by Ashford and Simpson, and originally intended for the Supremes 'I Can't Give Up The Love I Feel For You' released under the name of Rita Wright. It was after this recording that she changed her professional name to Syreeta.

Despite the record making little impression, Motown founder Barry Gordy heard something of Diana Ross in Syreeta's voice. He considered her as a replacement when Ross left the Supremes at the end of 1969. But in stepped Stevie Wonder. Two and half years later after her initial single she was still handclapping and working in the Motown office. Wonder had heard of her singing and song writing abilities, and approached her with a song 'Win Your Love'. From that studio venture their relationship flourished. He encouraged her and they began writing together, which spawned a serious of hits, 'If You Really Love Me', 'Signed Sealed Delivered' and the Motown (Detroit) Spinners 'It's A Shame' amongst others.

She had a huge collaboration on Wonder's ground breaking albums MUSIC OF MY MIND and TALKING BOOK. By the time of her debut album in 1972 SYREETA they had fallen in love and married on the 14th September 1970, only to divorce some eighteen months later, although they continued to remain friends and work together. The couple collaborated again on the album, STEVIE WONDER PRESENTS SYREETA released in 1974. This album brought her chart success with the reggae flavoured single 'Your Kiss Is Sweet' and 'Spinning and Spinning'. It was another three years before Syreeta released her third album ONE TO ONE. She remarried, had children and her fourth album RICH LOVE POOR LOVE, released in 1977, where she shared the duets with Motown artist, ex lead vocalist with the Detroit Spinners, G C Cameron.

Billy Preston signed to Motown in 1978. He and Syreeta were united for the sound track of the film FAST BREAK from which came her biggest selling forty-five 'With You I'm Born Again', duetting with Preston.

Further albums, another self titled SYREETA 1980 and SET MY LOVE IN MOTION 1981, both were not that successful. She recorded her last studio album THE SPELL in 1983. Shortly after that she left Motown.

In the mid eighties family affairs took over for a while, retiring from full time music work. She reappeared, laying down several tracks for Ian Levine's Motor City Label. She spent most of the nineties away from the music scene, although in 1995 she played Mary Magdalene in a touring production of Jesus Christ Superstar.

Rita 'Syreeta' Wright was a wonderful singer with a distinctive and classy delivery. She died 6th July 2004 after a two-year battle with bone cancer

RICK JAMES is the latest soul man to pass over. He died on the 6 August, seemingly from natural causes. At the time he was in discussions for a movie based on his life, in celebration of his 25 years as a top selling soul artist, selling millions of records along the way. His album from 1981 STREET SONGS would definitely feature in my all time top albums. Full obituary next issue.

SOUL/R&B released in the UK

September 1966. Once again a nice selection from the groove yard.

Little Anthony/Imperials Gonna Fix You Good'/You Better Take It Easy Baby U Artists 1151
James Brown Money Won't Change You/part two Pye 25379
Ray Charles I Chose To Sing The Blues/ Hopelessly Hey You Little Boo-Ga-Loo/Pussy Cameo Parkway 989
Chubby Checker Cat Three Stars/Somethin' Else Liberty 10249
Eddie Cochran Baby 'Dave' Cortez Countdown/Summer Time Roulette 7001
Don Covay You Put Something On Me/Iron Out The Rough Spots Atlantic 584025

Marvin Gaye Little Darling/Hey Diddle Diddle T Motown 574
Wee Willie Harris Someone's In The Kitchen With Dinah/Walk With Peter & Paul Parlophone 5504
Chuck Jackson Chains Of Love/I Keep Forgetting Pye 25384
Mable John It's Catching/Your Good Thing Atlantic 584002
Gladys Knight/Pips Just Walk In My Shoes/Stepping Closer To Your Heart T Motown 576
The Left Banke Walk Away Renee/I Haven't Got The Nerve Philips 1517
Barbara Lewis Make Me Belong To You/Gils Need Loving Care Atlantic 584037
Well, September rolls around again as does the birthday of the man I consider to still be the most awesome entertainer in the world. Jerry Lee Lewis reaches the age of 69 on September 29th. Happy birthday Killer.

NOW LET’S POPEYE
Also celebrating his birthday this month is another piano man, the enigmatic Eddie Bo who was born Edwin Bocage on 20th September 1930 in New Orleans. His family included several musicians, his mother being a pianist and his Uncle Peter playing trumpet with Sidney Bechet. After graduating from Booker T Washington High School and serving in the army he returned to New Orleans where he studied at the Grundwald School of Music. Initially influenced by the jazz stylings of Oscar Peterson and Art Tatum, it was perhaps the disparate style of Professor Longhair that contributed most to Bo’s distinctive sound.

1957 saw a move to Chess for whom his recordings included the rocking ‘Oh Oh’ and the ballad ‘My Dearest Darling’ which was subsequently covered by Etta James.

Further recordings for various small New Orleans companies during the sixties followed, such as the drum laden ‘Pass The Hatchet’ on Seven B which was issued under the name of Eddie & The Gypsies. His 1969 recording of the catchy ‘Hook And Sling’ for Scram made the national R & B charts, while ‘Check You Bucket’ for his own Bo-Sound label the following year saw a UK release on Action in 1973.

I first saw Eddie Bo at the Royal Festival Hall on 16th May 1992 as part of a New Orleans Gala which also featured Dr John, Willie DeVille, Zachary Richard, The Wild Magnolias and Johnny Adams. It was a wonderful package show, since which time I have witnessed several pleasing performances by Mr Bo in both London and New Orleans. He likes to create a carnival atmosphere
with funky undertones in his playing, and is at his best in a small club scenario where he is able to interact with his audience.

After nearly fifty years in the business Eddie Bo is still actively involved in both recording and performing, his latest CD ‘We Come To Party’ being released in 2001 on his Bo-Sound label. He was the recipient of the Best Of The Beat Lifetime Achievement Performer Award in 2003.

This is how the Record Mirror Top Twenty looked for the week ending 20th September 1958:

1. When – The Kalin Twins (Brunswick)
2. Carolina Moon/Stupid Cupid – Connie Francis (MGM)
3. Volare – Dean Martin (Capitol)
4. Return To Me- Dean Martin (Capitol)
5. All I Have To Do Is Dream – The Everly Brothers (London)
6. Splish Splash/Hello My Darlings – Charlie Drake (Parlophone)
7. Poor Little Fool – Ricky Nelson (London)
8. Fever – Peggy Lee (Capitol)
9. Endless Sleep – Marty Wilde (Philips)
10. Tulips From Amsterdam/Hands – Max Bygraves (Decca)
11. Hard Headed Woman – Elvis Presley (RCA)
12. Yakety Yak – The Coasters (London)
13. Mad Passionate Love – Bernard Breslaw (HMV)
15. Volare – Domenico Modugno (Oriole)
16. Patricia – Perez Prada (RCA)
17. Early In The Morning – Buddy Holly – Coral
18. If Dreams Come True – Pat Boone (London)
19. Rebel Rouser – Duane Eddy (London)
20. Splish Splash – Bobby Darin (London)

Nearly as many English comedians as American rock ‘n’ rollers in that lot!

Waffling Wilkinson

CD REVIEW

JAY CHANCE – ‘50’s 60’s Man’

Lovin’ Up A Storm/I’m Left You’re Right, She’s Gone/Behind Closed Doors/Blues About You Baby/Hallelujah I Love Her So/Wayward Wind/Everybody’s Tryin’ To Be My Baby/I’ll Be Gone/I’m Lookin’ For Someone To Love/In Loving Memory/Got You On My Mind/Matchbox/I’ll Make It All Up To You/That’s All Right/50’s 60’s Man

A pre-release promotional copy of this CD was sent to me by the artist at the request of a mutual friend of ours who knows we are both big Jerry Lee fans. Jay Chance started out as a Rock’n’Roll singer/guitarist whilst in his teens, was a resident singer at the legendary 2 I’s coffee bar, played the American Airbases and also performed for a month in Germany.

Jay’s professional singing career was relatively short-lived and he subsequently re-surfaced as the actor John Woolvett. This album came about when John appeared in a production of Fame where the musical director was former Flying Picket Rick Lloyd who produced this disc. A studio, session musicians and a backing singer were hired to record these tracks last year.

The result is very entertaining indeed as Jay shows a genuine enthusiasm, love and feel for the music with a fine clear vocal delivery. Most of the songs are familiar but these are not just slavish copies, being enjoyable individual interpretations.

Jay/John is currently starring as Dr John Templeton research psychologist in the Sky One series Shock Treatment. He can be contacted via his website www.johnwoolvett.com Check it out.

Shaky Lee

C.D. REVIEWS

HI THERE, KATS AND KITTENS. IT’S BOPPIN’ BRIAN (A.K.A. HIRD ROCK BUNTER, AKA BRIAN CLARK) WITH A LOOK AT SOME RECENT ROCKIN’ CD RELEASES

Last Train To Memphis - Bobby Charles - Proper PRPCD 016

Last Train To Memphis | The Legend Of Jolie Blonde | I Spent All My Money Loving You | String Of Hearts | I Wonder | Everyday | Don’t Make A Fool Of Yourself | Homesick Blues | Forever and Always | The Sky Isn’t Blue Anymore | Full Moon On The Bayou | What Are We Doing | Sing | Goin’ Fishin’ | See You Later Alligator.

Bonus CD: I Can’t Quit You | Secrets | Angel Eyes | But I Do | Party Town | I Don’t Want To Know | Love In The Worst Degree | Why Are People Like That? | I Believe In Angels | Les Champs Elysees | Not Ready Yet | The Jealous Kind | I Want To Be The One | Walkin’ To New Orleans | I Remember When | Ambushin’ Bastard | I Don’t See Me | Wish You Were Here Right Now | Clean Water

Here we have a collection of songs covering 1975-2001 by a truly legendary figure of Louisiana music. Bobby Charles is probably the most inaccessible and reclusive of New Orleans artists but his recorded work, from his classic Chess cuts of the ‘50s to some of the songs included in this double set, has consistently been of a high standard. Many of his most successful compositions are to be found here, sometimes featured in unlikely arrangements; for instance,
the version of "But I Do", from a 1987 session, bears a jazzy feel.

There are many special guests heard throughout the set. Sonny Landreth supplies some cool guitar on Charles’ much-covered ballad “The Jealous Kind”, Fats Domino recognizably vamps away on a ’90s cut of “Walkin’ To New Orleans”, Neil Young appears on “I Want To Be The One”, Delbert McClinton blows some hot harp on the title track, Willie Nelson plays rhythm guitar on “Homesick Blues”, and on a 1994 cut, “Full Moon On The Bayou”, Clarence “Frogman” Henry plays piano. I notice that some songs, for instance “Ambushin’ Bastard” and “I Remember When” were included on the Stony Plain CD “Wish You Were Here Right Now” (the title track of that CD is here too). For the rockers, there’s a great 2001 version of “Later Alligator” on which Sonny Landreth can be heard. All in all, a good-value package from Proper, perfect for purveyors of New Orleans music. Bon ton roulet!

Johnny Kidd and the Pirates - At The BBC - Blakey BLCD 518

My Babe | Magic Of Love | Growl | If You Were The Only Girl In The World | That’s All You Gotta Go | Weep No More My Baby | Never Mind | A Fool Such As I | Setarip | Dream Lover | I Go Ape | A Teenager In Love | Please Don’t Touch | Restless | Shakin’ All Over

Now then, now then, as Jimmy Savile would say, what do you UK Rock’n’Roll fans think of this?! This little bobby-dazzler was picked up by myself at Hemsby and has rarely been out of my CD player since. Not sure of its legality, but I would hope (like all fair-minded fans) that the JK estate would gain a major slice of the financial pie. If you watched the excellent JK rock doc “Jukebox Heroes” on BBC 1 some three years or so ago, and if you had keen ears, you would have been treated to some tantalising snippets of “Saturday Club” material (making up for the total lack of vintage TV and filmed concert appearances) over the course of the programme. Now, all the appearances on Brian Matthews’ legendary show made by Johnny betwixt 1959/61 are here for your delight, and in excellent sound quality.

The earliest tracks, presumably from July 1959, a time when Kidd’s storming debut “Please Don’t Touch” was ensconced in the Top 30, are a mixture of original songs plus versions of teen hits of the day. Original Pirates Mike West and Tom Brown (the latter probably the better singer) warble away such as “Dream Lover” and “A Teenager In Love”. But on his selections Kidd shows us all why he was such a great, ballsy Rock’n’Roll singer (with the obvious exception of the dreadful “If You Were The Only Girl In The World” - who on earth insisted he record that??), and in the especially-rare department, he performs spiritual versions of the professionally-unrecorded-by-JK “My Babe”, (though of course the Mick Green-Pirates recorded a powerful version at Abbey Road studios in ’64), and Brenda Lee’s “That’s All You Gotta Do”. On the songs from ’60, I’m assuming it’s Alan Caddy, Brian Gregg (co-composer of the classic “Shakin’ All Over”) which is heard here regrettably in fragmented form) and Clem Cattini playing behind our hero. To add to the overall atmosphere there’s some occasional banter between Brian and Johnny, where Kidd reads out a dedication or two. An important release then, and one that will surely sell well in the months to come.

Rick Nelson - Rick's Rareties 1964-1974 – Ace CDCHD 995

I’ve Been Lookin’ | I Need You | Stop The World and Let Me Off | Your Kind Of Lovin’ | Freedom and Liberty | Fire Breathin’ Dragon | Peddler Man | Blue Moon Of Kentucky | Outside Lookin’ In | Helpless (2 versions) | Take A Broken Heart | It Doesn’t Matter Anymore | They Don’t Give Medals To Yesterday’s Heroes | Try To See It My Way | Freedom and Liberty (2) | I’m Called Lonely | Moonshine | The Lady Came From Baltimore | I Think It’s Gonna Rain Today | Promises | My Bucket’s Got A Hole In It | California Free

A useful collection from Ace here of tracks, some originally released only on singles, and scarce albums by Rick Nelson, a still underrated talent in the field of Rock’n’Roll, saddled as he sometimes is with the term “teen idol”. From 1963 to 1975 he recorded for the Decca label, which later metamorphosed into MCA. Initially Rick (moving on from the “Ricky” tag) scored some chart hits but once the Beatles et al. entered the picture he and many of his contemporaries were yesterday’s news. There are a number of unissued cuts on this CD and the collection leads off with three from 1964-65; “I’ve Been Lookin’ is a zippy adaptation of the Crickets’ “Lookin’ All Over Town”; “Stop The World”, a Buck Owens song I believe, is obviously an out-take from the “Bright Lights and Country Music” session, while “I Need You”, which bears no relation to the “I Need You”
that Rick recorded for Imperial, is a nice ballad that will no doubt go down well with fans.

A first stab at "Freedom And Liberty" and "Peddler Man" are of a very folksy nature, while "Blue Moon Of Kentucky", obviously another "Bright Lights?/"Country Fever" out-take, owes much to Elvis' rendition with its slappin' bass. The remainder of the collection veers between tasty country and indifferent MOR, with the reworking of Ricky's superlative take on "My Bucket's Got A Hole In It" (recorded live at the Troubadour in Los Angeles in November 1969) and the pleasant country opus "California Free". Very much a collection for fans only, but the notes by Nelson experts Iain Young and Bill Parker, plus the overall presentation is well up to Ace's usual standard. A nice touch is the credit "Dedicated to the memory of John Stafford", a good pal to many TFTW contributors and readers.

John Fogerty – Déjà Vu; All Over Again" - Geffen 80003257-02

Déjà Vu (All Over Again) | Sugar Sugar (In My Life) | She's Got Baggage | Radar | Honey Do | Nobody's Here Anymore | I Will Walk With You | Rhubarb Pie | Wicked Old Witch | In The Garden

The first album in some seven years by one of my major heroes; is it up to scratch? Indeed it is, and I'm hoping the rumour is true (at this typing) that John Fogerty will be visiting the UK to promote the album. Looking at the songs on offer, the title track and "Sugar Sugar" are fairly easy-going affairs, with the former reminding one a bit of "Who'll Stop The Rain". The mid-tempo "In The Garden" and "Radar" are good punchy mid-pace fare, not too sure about the organ on the latter though. "Wicked Old Witch" is downhome, swampy, and puts you in mind of "Green River". There's a guest appearance by Mark Knopfler on "Nobody's Here Anymore", while "I Will Walk With You" and "Rhubarb Pie" are nice acoustic pieces, the latter with some good slide guitar courtesy of Dean Parks. Best for me, though, are the rockin' "She's Got Baggage" and the cool rockabilly of "Honey Do", which will no doubt become firm fan favourites. Yes, the Man's back, and he still cuts the Rock'n'Roll mustard. Keep on chooglin!!

**Festival Report**

**The Great British R & B Festival, Colne, Lancs 27-30 August 2004**

Inspired by a first trip to the Burnley Blues Festival this Easter, I ventured up North again during August Bank Holiday to witness my first Colne blues fest, along with long-time attendee Shaky Lee. My God, they know how to present a blues festival in Lancashire; over a thousand acts appearing in a variety of venues up and down the "main drag" in the heart of town, with the American headliners strutting their rhythm'n'blues/soul stuff in the area's principal venue, the Municipal Hall. Some thoughts on the U.S. acts in a mo, but let's first look at some of the peripheral gigs that I caught. Most of these were by Walter Mitty's Head, a punk band with a great feel for the blues; this was reflected in some of their chosen songs, with Bo Diddley's "I Can Tell", "Who Do You Love" and "You Can't Judge A Book By The Cover". Chuck Berry's "It Wasn't Me", Tom Waits' "Heart Attack and Vine", and even Richard Berry's "Have Love Will Travel". Once or twice there was a dash of Rock'n'Roll/rockabilly as well, with Bill Allen's "Please Give Me Something", Vince Taylor's "Brand New Cadillac" and Link Wray's "Rumble" (also worthy of note was a version of "These Boots Are Made For Walkin'".

On rhythm guitar in the band is none other than Scott Wilkinson, brother of our very own Lee, and it was great to meet with Scott and to see this highly exciting band whose performances I really enjoyed.

Another fringe act I caught were the very visual King Bees, at the Conservative Club, whose saxman and guitarist made a habit of storming through the crowd and, in addition to a number of blues standards, they surprised yours truly with a powerful romp through "Great Balls Of Fire". Good fun.

So, to the visiting Americans. Billy Branch, a fine harpman and singer, did a strong set with Sean Costello and his band on Friday, with things like Little Walter's "Juke" and "Crazy Mixed Up World" on the musical menu. From Washington D. C., harpman Doug Jay and The Blue Jays impressed many, including self, with a powerful hour's worth of rockin' n'slow blues, Jay reminding me at least of Delbert McClinton. Bearing a more gospelly-approach was Sista Monica Parker, who also wowed the assembled.

One of the must-see acts on my list was Earl Thomas, whose scintillating set at Burnley rates as my top soul/blues gig of 2004. Again he delivered the goods on this, the occasion of his 44th birthday. He pretty much reprised the Burnley…
set, (sadly no "Look At Granny Run Run" or "I'd Rather Go Blind", which proved to be a showstopper at Burnley) but, for an encore, he delivered a punchy rendition of Jimmy Rogers' "That's All Right".

If ever we're lucky enough to see this guy in London (the Jazz Café would be an ideal venue), he will surely take the capital by storm. How about it, promoters?

Just a quick detour from the American contingent and allow me to praise sets at the Municipal Hall by Blue Harlem and by Maria Vincent and the Millionaires, jump-jive bands both, and each fronted by luscious lovelies. Imelda Clabby is the resident singer with Al Nichols' fine band who frequently play London's 100 Club, and Blue Harlem were in top form tonight, with Imelda delivering great versions, yet again, of songs made popular by Wynona Carr and Ruth Brown. Maria and the Millionaires also did a fine job in their set with things like Etta James' "Good Rockin' Daddy", Wynona Carr's "Ding Dong Daddy", and Lavern Baker's "Voodoo Voodoo". Two tasty acts that you must try and catch.

Back over the big pond now. Sharrie Williams is blessed with a gutsy, powerful voice but I felt that her Wiseguys were a bit too overpowering for me, very little subtlety in their playing, not enough light and shade. But she went down well with the Colne Kats'n'Kittens, so fair 'nough. I was chomping at the bit to see the Chief himself, Eddie Clearwater, and he didn't let ol' Bunter down. Kicking off in superb style with "Messin' With The Kid", he eased his way through a slew of blues'n'boogie cokers including "Tore Up", "Cool Blues Walk", his rockin' club favourite "2 Times 9" and, as if to emphasise the Chuck Berry influence, "Sweet Little Rock'n'Roller". Mighty Mo Rodgers headlined on Monday night, and although his politically-motivated material may not be to everyone's taste, I thought he was tremendous; he has a great deep Chicago voice that embraces blues and soul styles perfectly, his keyboard playing is downright funky and his band were musically spot-on.

I've decided to save the best for last, and if I were to choose a top 3 list of blues/soul gigs of the year, Sherman Robertson's set at Colne would sit just below Earl Thomas and Gary "U.S." Bonds. Make no mistake, after an absence of a few years, "the man" is back in form. Prowling around the stage like a caged tiger toting a hot Strat, full of "don't mess with me" attitude, he despatched a performance that was truly something special: "Victim Of Circumstance", "Don't Want No Woman", among others, totally enraptured the crowd; perched on the balcony, my thoughts often turned to a trip to the 2005 Colne festival; with shows of this standard, I simply must do it. And I intend to. So, dear reader, must you. Before I finish, a huge, huge thank you to TFTW readers/supporters Steve and Sue Howarth and family for letting me stay at what is now their old address; the very best of wishes go to you at your new home. Yes folks, ol' Bunter's love affair with Colne has well and truly started; see you next year!!

Hemsby33

September 28 - October 3, 2004

Yep, it's time to pack the case/holdall and head for Hemsby once again with other rockin' chaps 'n' chappettes to enjoy a veritable selection of national and international performers from the world of the Big Beat. I only managed to attend Friday thru Monday (thus missing Robert Gordon's Thursday performance which garnered mixed opinions from friends and acquaintances), but let's rundown what went on before my eyes.

On arrival at the camp I learned that billed-to-appear Link Wray was unable to make the trip over due to illness (a disappointment for me personally as I have yet to see him perform live) and so it was decided that his spot be filled by cameos from some of the weekend's headliners. First up was Joe Clay, still as effervescent and bouncy as ever, with versions of "Flip Flop and Fly" and "Shake Rattle and Roll", closely followed by Robert Gordon (hooray!) with excellent readings of Don Gibson's "Sea Of Heartbreak", Johnny Burnette's "I Just Found Out" and Jack Scott's "The Way I Walk", which seems to be equally associated with Gordon these days. Great compensation for me, that one.
Lastly, **Bobby Hendricks**, one-time Drifter, came out and dazzled us with his voice and stagecraft, even if his chosen material, "Mustang Sally" and "Under The Boardwalk" seemed somewhat inappropriate for the occasion. Filling in the gaps was a song or two from the Hemsby Houseband. Regular good guys Wayne Hopkins on bass and Paul Atkinson on drums were joined by Dave Brown on piano and guitarist Antonio Coni, who deserves max cred for a blistering version of "Miserlou".

This done, it was time to bring on **Wayne "The Train" Hancock** and his trio, who musically flitted between Hank Williams and Elvis, Scotty and Bill, but very effectively. They rocked out with such regular crowd-pleasers as "Flatland Boogie", "Juke Joint Jumpin", "97 Southbound", "Louisiana Blues" and of course, "That's What Daddy Wants". Often touted as the natural successor to Hank Williams, his readings of "Lovesick Blues" and "Weary Blues From Waitin"., were right on the money. Though the ballads "Every Time" and "We Three" signalled a welcome change in pace, I'm not too crazy nor too sure about Wayne doing this kind of material. Anyhow, good show and good musicianship from Wayne and the boys. I look forward to seeing them on their next trip.

There were two major acts on show Saturday night, the first of which was singer, guitarist and occasional drummer **Joe Clay**, whose electric rockabilly sides cut for RCA in April/May of 1956 deservedly stand as some of the genre's best. Virtually all of these ("Ducktail", "Get On The Right Track Baby", "You Look That Good To Me", "Crackerjack", "Sixteen Chicks", "Did You Mean Jelly Bean") were featured by Joe, who bopped around the stage with gusto; also a nice surprise was a great, forceful take on Ray Sharpe's "Linda Lu". Great stuff from a guy who once deeped for D.J. Fontana on an Elvis show in Louisiana in 1956. (Still a fair drummer is our Joe I).

I didn't get to see all of **Lee Rocker's** act that night, but the bass-slappin' Stray Cat and his American band delivered a hard-hittin' 'n' heavy set, with things like "I'm Left, You're Right, She's Gone", "Please Don't Touch" (surprisingly!) and, from the Stray Cat days, "Stray Cat Strut".

Traditionally Sunday evening is given over to rhythm'n'blues/doowop and Hemsby 33 was no exception, presenting **Bobby Hendricks**, who bowled over the Hemsby crowd with his powerful tenor voice and sheer professionalism, if not, mainly, his material, much of which consisted of classic songs by the Drifters. Why? Because he was a Drifter in 1957-58, memorably singing lead on "Drip Drop" (must admit, a chill ran down my spine as he sung this tonight. likewise "Itchy Twitty Feeling"), and so he decided on doing things like the aforementioned "Under The Boardwalk", "Save The Last Dance For Me", "There Goes My Baby", and "Up On The Roof" instead of the likes of "Psycho", "I Want That" and, in particular, "A Thousand Dreams". I was still mesmerised by this likeable entertainer however, and wish him a speedy return to these shores, though on this showing Mr. Angry, had he attended, would be turning on the computer and venting his spleen for a future TFTW.

Once again, a big thanks to Willie and Varick and the team for another enjoyable session, big applause to Lee Hugman for his typically top-notch compering, and major thanks to the excellent squad of DJs (in particular the superb, evergreen Wild Cat Pete) for keeping the dancin' Kats'n'Kittens happy in between acts. Next May's shebang includes the return of Art Adams, also the Hemsby debuts of Roc La Rue and the Willows. See ya then!

Hardrock Bunter
Keep ‘em Peeled

The Southern California home of Blues musician James Harman was burglarized in August 2004. Among other things the thieves made off with James’ collection of vintage guitars and recordings. Friends and fans of James are begging every musician and blues fan to be on the lookout for the items listed below. If enough of us are watching there is a chance that James may be able to recover at least some of the stolen items.

Here are the guitars that were stolen:

- 1940 Stella acoustic resonator, painted sunburst, alligator texture case
- 1946 Gibson ES-350 sunburst w/3 P-90 pick-ups, in orig. brown case
- 1946 Gibson L-48, sunburst, gold hardware, deArmond pick-ups, brown case
- 1958 Fender Telecaster, maple neck, butterscotch blonde w/white pick guard
- 1959 National Town & Country, Les Paul shape w/2 pick ups, brown case
- 1961 Fender Precision Bass, shell pink, white pickguard
- 1963 Fender Stratocaster white, white pickguard
- 1964 Supro red fiberglass Resophonic, no cutaway, chrome pie-plate cover

A large collection of vinyl LPs and 45s were also stolen. Some of these have Jimmy Harman or JH or JH + DJ or Jimmy + Dorothy written on the label, the sleeve, or the jacket. The 45s were in manila or faded red custom sleeves or picture sleeves. Many of the sleeves have writing listing the title, artist, label issue number, session and release date, or sidemen. Record labels include Atlantic, Stax, Chess, Checker, Argo, Duke, Peacock, Excello, Vee-Jay, Sun, Imperial, Blue Note, Prestige, Impulse, and others. The collection is primarily Blues, Rhythm & Blues, Soul, Rock & Roll, and Jazz. The LPs and 45s are collectible and may be sold together. If you notice a large number of old Blues, R&B, Soul, and Jazz records suddenly show up at too-good-to-be-true prices please be suspicious! Any legitimate seller will easily be able to document where & how they obtained the records.

Three handguns were also stolen: one antique nickel plate, pearl-handle .45 cal. over/under derringer and two 1962 near-new condition Colt Cobra .38 specials with 1” barrels.

James worked very hard to bring us great music for many years and it is a shame that some idiot could wipe out a life’s worth of collecting. If enough of us are on the look out we may help catch the thieves and recover James’ hard-earned guitars & records. Please contact James Harman at james@jamesharman.com or through the other methods listed at www.JamesHarman.com. Thank you! Lets get the word out there. maybe James might recover some of his lose.

Detlev Hoegen, CrossCut Records
P.O.Box 106524, 28065 Bremen, Germany

Linda Gail Lewis, Half Moon, Putney, Aug 21st, 2004

A great show by Linda, as always. Mainly rockin’, but a beautiful ‘You Win Again’ and ‘Where Could I Go But To The Lord’. Some unusual numbers such as ‘Wild One’, and some I wasn't familiar with. I got a mention from the stage, as did Peter Checksfield and Barrie Gamblin. ‘You Can Have My Husband’ is always one of my favourites - great lyrics. And we got the X-rated Jerry Lee Lee Worth version of ‘What’d I Say’, and Linda’s great ad-lib in ‘Rip It Up’ - ‘well it’s Saturday night and I just got laid’. (lucky old Linda!) Linda was really rocking, and was well appreciated by a good crowd with many familiar faces.

She was backed by the Ray Thompson Trio, who first did their own set with Stuart (Mac's son) on keyboards. Of course he didn't play when they were backing Linda, but they were joined by a young saxophone player. So actually it was the Ray Thompson Quartet throughout the evening.

I may go down to Southend to see Linda on September 19th. She'll be returning to the States soon to promote the Lewis 3 (Linda plus daughters Annie and Mary Jean) but still plans to tour Europe. We all wish the Lewis 3 the very best of luck and hope they take off as the latest New Country sensation. Well if The Judds could do it, why not the Lewis 3?

Peter Checksfield lists the songs as follows (with his comments):

In The Boogie Woogie Country Mood
Crazy About Love (or Crazy In Love. Sounded like an old song, though I’m not familer with it. Peter Checksfield checked with Linda Gail, and the correct title of Crazy About Love is as follows:
It's a Ruth Brown song called 'As Long As I'm Movin". Linda recorded this in 1991, but it's never been released.)

Let's Have A Party (fantastic vocals)
Boppin' The Blues
Real Wild Child/Wild One (wild! Great piano playing!)
You Win Again (very slow, nice sax)
Let’s Talk About Us (Linda kept looking at me while singing this as she knows it’s one of my faves)
Shake Rattle & Roll
Lie & Deny (the self-composed title track from her forthcoming Swedish album, sounded even better than the studio recording)
You Can Have My Husband
Wait & See (the old Fats Domino song from ‘Jamboree’)
What’d I Say (long version with some nice ad-libs)
All Shook Up
Jambalaya (great slap-bass from Ray Thompson!)
Old Black Joe
Great Balls Of Fire
Rip It Up (dedicated to Jeroen from Holland)
Where Could I Go But To The Lord (with Ray singing harmony)
Good Golly Miss Molly

Tony P

The Commie Quiz
by Comrade Tonski

How well did you know the Commie jargon and details of the Soviet empire? The Unacceptable Face of The Loony Left, Comrade Papard, has devised this quiz to test your knowledge. No prizes, but all getting less than 10 out of 10 will be democratically re-educated (i.e. shot).

1. What event is referred to in the following phrase: ‘The fraternal assistance provided by five Socialist countries to defend socialist democracy in the CSSR.’
2. What does this phrase mean: ‘Heroically defending the inviolable border installations of the Capital of the GDR.’
3. What is referred to in the following phrase: ‘The excesses of the era of the Cult of the Personality.’
4. What does this phrase refer to: ‘The Great Juche Idea of the Great Leader of the DPRK.’
5. What name is given by the Soviets/Russians to the Second World War?
6. What did the Soviets officially celebrate annually on November 7th. (i.e. what they called this event.)
7. How many Soviet Socialist Republics made up the USSR?
8. Which of these political parties existed in communist East Germany: The Communist Party, the Social Democrats, the Christian Democrats, the Liberal Democrats, the National Democrats, the Democratic Peasants’ Party? Were there any others?
9. What was the NEP, introduced by Lenin?
10. Who were Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, Joseph Vissarionovich Dzhugashvili and Lev Davidovich Bronstein.

Gone But Not Forgotten

Following the great popularity of TFTW’s Obituary columns, which sometimes take up half the magazine, here is a list of some fondly remembered places now sadly gone, changed character or that are in the process of being disestablished:

The Black Raven pub, Bishopsgate - Teddyboy bar with jukebox, run by landlord Bob Acland
The Fishmongers Arms pub, Wood Green - wildest Teddyboy crowd at their Saturday night Rock’n’Roll sessions in back hall. Gene Vincent once appeared here.
Flamingo Club, Wardour Street, London W1 - first regular Rock’n’Roll record hop my brother and I attended in mid/late 1960s. Wax spun by the late Mike Raven of Radio 390. A live British revival group was tried out there once but they got booed off stage. Jerry Lee appeared at this venue at the end of the 1966 tour. This club shut down years ago, and is now just another doorway in Chinatown.
Astoria/Rainbow, Finsbury Park, North London - where I saw my first live Rock’n’Roll show - Bill Haley and His Comets in 1964, and several great Jerry Lee and other artists’ shows. The internal decor complete with Moorish village, starry sky ceiling and fountain in the foyer is unique. These still exist and have recently been restored, but the building is now a church of some kind.
The Lyceum Ballroom, near The Strand (now a theatre) - venue for regular Rock’n’Roll nights and other gigs.
The Royalty Ballroom, Southgate - regular Rock’n’Roll nights with live appearances by Bill Haley and His Comets, Carl Perkins, Bo Diddley, Danny & The Juniors, Johnny & The Hurricanes, Hank Mizell, Sleepy La Beef, and many others.
The Original Tennessee Club, off White Hart Lane - the best of the three locations for this club. Many
top rockabilly and Rock’n’Roll acts appeared there.

The Telegraph pub, Brixton Hill - where the Fishmongers Arms crowd moved in the mid 1970s. Again, a wild venue.

The Saville Theatre (now ABC Cinema), Shaftesbury Avenue - which the late Brian Epstein took over in the mid-1960s and where he brought over many original Rock’n’Roll stars to perform including Little Richard, Chuck Berry and Bo Diddley. The theatre was ‘messed up’ during a riot in which yours truly participated, when the manager brought the Safety Curtain down in the middle of Chuck’s act. Brian Epstein scolded the manager, and brought Chuck back for another show a week or so later.

Wembley Stadium - venue for Europe's biggest ever Rock’n’Roll show in 1972 with Bill Haley and His Comets, Little Richard, Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Screamin’ Lord Sutch, etc. The two London evening papers, the Evening Standard and Evening News, produced special souvenir editions for the event.

The Buzz Bar, Battersea High Street - venue for Keith and Tony’s record hops and ‘live’ gigs, including two legendary appearances by Linda Gail Lewis. We watched Gene Vincent/Eddie Cochran on an 8” TV screen piled on beer crates, and listened to vinyl played at the wrong speeds on their clapped out disco equipment. Now being turned into a restaurant.

The Selhurst Railway Club - where teeming hordes of roots music fans assembled, braving snow and ice, to see two great bands and listen to the hot wax via the latest in hi-tech sound systems. Well actually about 20 or so people turned up and the disco equipment was more clapped out than The Buzz Bar’s!

The Weavers pub, Islington - venue for many great Country and Folk oriented acts including Billy Swann and Rattlesnake Annie.

The Adam and Eve pub, Hackney - old Rock’n’Roll venue opposite Hackney Hospital in Homerton High Street. Freddie Fingers Lee and loads of British bands played there.

Hackney Hospital (monthly Saturday night Rock’n’Roll sessions) – terminally ill patients rocked into the next world on Saturday nights by the sounds of hot wax and top ‘live’ bands. Weirdest Rock’n’Roll venue I know. We were kicked out some years ago, perhaps some of the patients complained; all they wanted was a bit of peace and quiet!

The Carvery, King’s Hotel, Newport - King’s Hotel was the venue for David Webb’s great Jerry Lee Lewis Conventions, the highlight of which was a three-day series of concerts by Jerry Lee himself in 1993. His sisters Linda Gail and Frankie Jean also made appearances at the Conventions, as did Van Morrison, Johnny Allan and many others. When The Carvery closed it spelled the beginning of the end of this great annual event.

The Assembly of God Church, Camden Town - where yours truly almost got 'saved' just to follow in the footsteps of The Killer. All true Jerry Lee fans should join this Church, get saved, get expelled from a theological college, marry and divorce six times (twice bigamously, and once to a 13-year old cousin) shoot someone in the chest, get chased by the tax authorities, live for years on a permanent 'high' and then recover against all the odds from a life-threatening operation. Well perhaps not. I guess I just got a little carried away by finding a little Assembly of God Church round the corner from where I lived! It was nice music, though. Live adult baptisms were conducted by opening a flap in the floor to reveal a kind of sunken pool where adults were fully immersed, fully clothed!!! However nobody crawled down the aisle on hands and knees talking gibberish (sorry I mean ‘speaking in tongues’) as in the Ferriday branch of this sect.

Haney's Big House, Ferriday, La. where B. B. King and many others first influenced Jerry Lee and his cousins. Cecil Harrelson pointed out the empty lot where this historic venue stood on the 2002 Ferriday Ride.

The Memphis Blues and Soul Museum (near Peabody Hotel) - sadly missed. The Rock and Soul Museum is good, but can't replace this earlier museum. Where have all the exhibits/video clips gone I wonder?

The Lewis Family cemetery, Clayton, La - apparently Frankie Jean is getting the close family moved into her front or back yard because of vandalism in the cemetery. Poor little Elmo Jr has already been moved for the second time - first to the Clayton family cemetery, now to Frankie Jean’s front yard. (Cecil Harrelson moved Elmo Jr the first time and said he may have left bits of him in the old grave; hopefully all the remaining 'bits' are now in Frankie Jean's yard). Mamie Ethel and Elmo Kidd, parents of Jerry, Linda, Frankie Jean and Elmo Jr, are next in line for the move. Bizarre! Would you bury YOUR family in your front garden or backyard?

Tony Papard
THE ROOSTER CROWED OVER
BURGESS HILL

BEN WATERS

I heard it on the grapevine that pianist Ben Waters was worth seeing should the opportunity arise, so when he played two ‘local’ gigs in Sussex this Summer, Paul ‘Shutterbug’ Harris and I decided to give him a try – and we weren’t disappointed.

The first gig was at the Middleton Beer & Blues Festival (of course, we weren’t just there for the beer, although that was a welcome bonus) where Waters played with his full band which comprises Adie Millward on drums, Chris Lonergan on bass, and Clive Ashley on sax. This combination really works with great interplay between Ben and Clive who share the solos (nice to go to a gig without a guitar solo all evening!) and generate a fun atmosphere. Ben’s a great boogie pianist and a good singer too – and his choice of material should appeal to TFTW readers – Chuck Berry, Jerry Lee and Louis Jordan are amongst his heroes. There’s just the right amount of banter between each number too – at Middleton this included a lighthearted complaint that his favourite bee – Betty Stoggs – was not amongst those racked-up for the Festival. Yes, Ben enjoys a pint or two.

The second gig was at the Charles Dickens pub in Worthing. Here Ben played solo and his material was different. Whereas at the first gig it was Rock’n’Roll orientated, here in an intimate basement bar, boogies and ballads were more in evidence, although there was still a place for Chuck Berry and Fats Domino songs. Just as enjoyable in its own way although I have a slight preference for Waters in full flow with his band. Still, it was good to see the flip side of this really talented musician.

Indeed, Paul and I were so impressed we decided to find out a bit more about Ben, and here’s what his proud mother has to say about her talented son:

“He was born in Weymouth on 6th February 1974. He literally woke up one morning able to play the piano (reminds me of the joke where the patient asks the hospital doctor if he’ll be able to play the piano after the operation – when the doctor replies ‘yes’ – the patient says ‘that’s good, ‘cos I can’t play it now!’ - B.B.). He was 14 years old, having received a tiny keyboard as a Christmas present. He had to get to a piano and the first boogie woogie he performed (after only hearing it once) was Meade Lux Lewis’s Honky Tonk Train (which is still my favourite!). Ben began playing in pubs from the age of 16; was asked to perform for a Youth Royal Command Performance for Prince Edward on 30th June 1990; attended Weymouth College on a music course for one year after which the year tutor telephoned me and suggested that Ben became a professional musician as he was a natural - with the proviso that if it didn’t work out they would welcome him back with open arms. I was concerned and wondered what Ben was letting himself in for in such a vulnerable profession. However, within one week of having left college, Shakin’ Stevens was on the phone asking him to play and just after that Mick Jagger’s brother asked him to stay with him for a couple of weeks in London to play at very prestigious venues which was very reassuring. As they say, the rest is history and at the age of 30 Ben is now very happily married with two lovely children and an amazing career that has seen him play with many of the greats of Rock’n’Roll and travel the world in both tiny and huge venues”.

All I would add is that I hope Ben’s success brings him enough money for him to invest in his wardrobe. He doesn’t have to look like a cocktail lounge pianist, but at both gigs he hasn’t scored any marks for his attire. Still it’s the music that matters, and if you want to dip your toe in the Water(s), then I do recommend his most recent CD "Shakin in the Makin" which includes a duet with Jools Holland. The CD is representative of Ben’s ‘band’ stage act and includes originals and covers. It’s well recorded and, like Ben, good entertainment. Check him out!

BLUES BOY

ANSWERS TO TONY’S QUIZ ON PAGE 23:

2. Shooting people trying to escape over the Berlin Wall.
3. The crimes of Stalin.
4. The so-called doctrine of self-reliance formulated by the late North Korean President, Kim Il-Sung.
5. The Great Patriotic War.
6. The Great October Socialist Revolution (the Bolshevik Russian Revolution which occurred on October 25th, 1917. A change in the calendar makes this date now November 7th.)
7. 15 (the Russian federation plus Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Byelorussia (now Belarus), Ukraine, Moldavia (now Moldova), Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan)
8. All existed, although the Social Democrats and Communists merged to form the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED). All parties plus the FDGB (Federation of Free German Trade Unions), FDJ (Free German Youth) and Democratic Women's League of Germany formed the Democratic Bloc in the Volkskammer (People's Chamber/Parliament) as part of the National Front of Democratic Germany, a Communist-led coalition. Interestingly, the National Democrats were the officially recognized political party of ex-Nazis and ex-Wehrmacht members who had supposedly broken with their past. The National Democrats are still an extreme rightwing party in the reunited Germany.
10. Lenin, Stalin and Trotsky.

Marff'a's Muffins

Anti Nowhere League – The Bleach Boys @ Cartoon 2, Croydon 20th August 2004.

A night of punk was the order of the day.

First up The Bleach Boys – great name, crap sound - this 4 piece played really fast punk rock that sounded awful. The best thing about them from my point of view was the song titles: Someone stole my bike - I married a lesbian sex commando - Jesus stole my underwear, were some of the more memorable ones. The last song went something like Blah blah blah F*CKING C*NT! I think that summed that part of the evening up nicely!

'We are The League!' the opening track on their eponymous titled album opened up the Anti Nowhere League show to an eruption of slamming/pogoing; and it didn’t really stop until a good hour and half later.

During that time the crowd enjoyed themselves to such musical wonders as 'Woman', 'Snowman', 'Animal' the classic 'Streets of London' and the obscene publication squad upsetting ‘So what!’

Some newer material was aired amongst the set, this sounded good if perhaps a little less raucous than they older stuff. The last song of the evening was dedicated to the proprietor of a Pub in Tunbridge Wells, it was called 'The Landlord is a wanker.'

It was a fair turn-out for the Cartoon, people wise. It wasn’t sold out but it was busy, and it was busy with people enjoying themselves a lot.

Well, if you want to know more about the Anti Nowhere League why not visit www.thecartoon.co.uk to read some of the vocalists’ memoirs. Failing that, get yourself down to the Cartoon on Saturday 4th December (don’t bother, you missed it – H) for a repeat performance which includes support from The Roosters.


I liked what I heard of The Dirty Burds; they played really well and their sound was reminiscent of a harder version of The Donnas. And yes, they are an all girl band too. They rocked out hard, but then that’s what you would expect from a band that have supported the likes of The Hives and Jet.

The Mutts are a Brighton based band that I had never heard of but wouldn’t mind checking out again, if only because I can’t remember what they were like! I do remember enjoying them though.

The Dirtbombs are from Detroit and, I’ve written about them in these hallowed pages before praising their 'Ultraglide in Black' album; which was a rockier/punky reworking of many old Soul classics that Mike Collins (vocalist) heard in his childhood.

I must tell you now that I had been looking forward to this gig for a while; however personal circumstances took over and I really didn’t feel like it when I arrived. To be frank, if I hadn’t bought the ticket in advance I wouldn’t have gone! I was pleased I made the effort though as I really enjoyed it in the end.

It was an impressive sound that they managed to achieve; two drummers giving a wall of sound that shook the house. Another stand out part of the band was the Oriental looking female guitarist. She was quite diminutive next to Collins but, what
She didn’t have in size she made up with sheer energy, she was a veritable ‘pocket rocket’!

They played a lot of the tracks from the ‘Ultraglide in Black’ album, things like: ‘Chains of love’, ‘Underdog’, a stonking version of ‘Kung Fu’ and ‘Ode to a Blackman’. They also played a fair amount of tracks from their last album ‘Dangerous Magical Noise’, this didn’t take me to the aural highs that the older tracks had. I’m unsure if this was because they weren’t as good, or whether it was because they were new to my ears.

The encore was a strange choice, it started with a version of ‘War Pigs’ by Black Sabbath but ended up about two or three verses in to it going off in to something completely different and unmemorable/recognisable. Visit The Dirtbombs at www.thedirtbombs.net for more info.

BOOK REVIEW
by Neil Foster

LET THE GOOD TIMES ROCK!
A Fan’s Notes On Post-War American Roots Music by Bill Millar
360 pages Illustrated Indexes £18.99
Published by Music Mentor Books, 69 Station Road, Upper Poppleton, York YO26 6PZ
Telephone/Fax +44 (0) 1904 330308
Email: music.mentor@ntlworld.com

When I started our Rock’n’Roll mag “The Rock” in 1971 (superseded by “Not Fade Away” in 1973) there was very little serious writing available on 1950’s Rock’n’Roll and even less on Rockabilly.

Apart from Charlie Gillette’s pioneering “Sound of the City” there were hardly any books either, except by a few well-informed enthusiasts, the most prominent of whom was Bill Millar. I tended to avoid “Let It Rock” because most of the content of that magazine was so pretentious and thus missed much of Bill’s output but this volume of his collected reviews, essays, sleeve-notes, and general musings on everything from Doo-wop to Hillbilly, from Rock’n’Roll to Rockabilly, from R & B to Cajun and even some Soul artists has enabled me to fill in the gaps in my reading.

I also bought (and still have) his books on The Coasters and The Drifters, which demonstrate his knack at combining solid information and research with great readability and it is a fact that you can pick this book up at any point and be unable to put it down.

The dynamic full-colour cover features Big Jay McNeely blowing up a storm and, talking about sax-players (try to stop me!), I particularly enjoyed his article on that artist and also the one about Johnny and the Hurricanes. I was always sure it was the group (not session-men) on their hits,
Despite claims to the contrary – nobody but Johnny Paris had that tone and that attack!

Since some of the articles and reviews are over twenty years old, you might imagine that they would be dated but that is not so. Lots of the artists dealt with were little-known (or completely unknown to all but collectors) when these articles were first published and the information and research remains as a firm basis for any future discussion.

There are three exhaustive indexes, of Names, Song and Album Titles, Films and Shows.

I understand that Bill Millar has (effectively) hung up his Rock’n’Roll shoes so it only remains for me to thank him for being a voice in the wilderness for so long.

THE END

Further comments from the publishers;

For almost four decades, the name 'Bill Millar' has been synonymous with the very best in British music writing - from his pioneering books on the Drifters and the Coasters, to his long-running ‘Echoes’ column in Record Mirror, Let It Rock and Melody Maker, to the authoritative sleeve notes he has penned for dozens of albums.

This fabulous new book collects together 49 of his best pieces - some previously unpublished - in a thematic compilation covering hillbilly, rockabilly, R&B, Rock’n’Roll, doo-wop, swamp pop and soul. Includes essays on acappella, the early Sixties’ doo-wop renaissance and blue-eyed soul, as well as detailed profiles of some of the most fascinating and influential personalities of each era.

Passionate and knowledgeable, music journalism rarely comes much better than this. It is available by mail order from the publishers: £21.59 (UK), £23.04 (Europe airmail), £26.06 (Rest of World air-mail). It can also be ordered on line at: http://musicmentor0.tripod.com

If you would like any more information, please do not hesitate to contact me.
George Groom-White, Sales

Tony’s Trip
20 September 2004

Just got back Friday after spending a week at Pontin's Concentration Camp just south of Blackpool on the border with St Annes.
Hilton is much less expensive than the Blackpool Hilton where we are staying.'.

At Pontin's Concentration Camp we paid £99 for 4 nites accommodation, including all electricity, 3 meals a day and all the entertainment. Even there we encountered a snooty couple who acted as if they were staying in the Hilton. They tried to hog two tables in the main hall all to themselves, but we ignored their protests and sat down there anyway. My mum lit up a fag immediately (well the snooty couple should have sat in the non-smoking gallery!) They cleared off when an old comedian started telling rather vulgar toilet-humour jokes, complete with chamber pot! Good riddance! What did they expect at Pontin’s - sophistication?

Now looking forward to Chippenham Eddie Cochran Weekender end of this week. See some of you there!

Offers of help still needed for Tales From The Woods photocopying (they'll probably have to organize a proper print-run by professionals for the next issue). So far Darren and myself have offered to help, but that still leaves 30 or 40 pages to be photocopied. Offers of help to Keith Woods please.

Tony “Happy Pappy” Papard

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THE EDDIE COCHRAN CONNECTION
For the fans, by the fans

Breathless Dan Writes
(brief briefs, short shorts and rockin’ ramblings)

THE EDDIE COCHRAN CONNECTION
For the fans, by the fans

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Breathless Dan Writes
(brief briefs, short shorts and rockin’ ramblings)

They - and that means professional music folk, as well as the fans - say that Bill Haley is a new man, that Rock’n’Roll started him. And that, when the fad fades, Haley will be swept away with all the other broken pelvis bones.

Certainly the statistics of Haley’s current success are staggering; they make him seem the Man of
the Moment. Consider: two films, Rock Around The Clock, Don't Knock The Rock, built around him; more than five million of his records on the turntables - three at once on the Top Twenty lists; an international name and more work than he can handle.

Star Who's Unknown
Yet Haley, who with his Comets is here on a big British tour, is largely an unknown man - is he a jumped-up jazzman? HE EMPHATICALLY IS NOT. He's been rocking around the United States for more than fifteen years. And playing music not one beat slower than this “new” rhythm called Rock'n'Roll!

The Bill Haley success story is the answer to those who speculate gloomily on his future. He is NOT another Presley, a freak phenomenon created by a music fad. He is an experienced musician who plays guitar, not hip bones. No, he's not a product of Rock'n'Roll. In fact, he helped to originate it and has so far, at twenty-nine, written more than 150 songs in rock tempo.

He started off from his home in Michigan as a schoolboy, playing a home-made paste-board guitar. At first he was a market-place entertainer, then went on tour through America's West with a “medicine-show” followed by a touring stint with a singing group called 'the Down Homers. While he was still in his early twenties, Haley had sung and strummed his guitar over thirty-eight different U.S. radio stations. Then, with years of gradually accumulated experience, he returned home to form his own group. Name: the Saddlemen. Style: Western hillbilly and blues - the rhythm Haley learned best from his travels through the rural areas of America.

But Haley has never been just a hick musician. One of the Saddlemen's first recordings was called "Rocket 88", a hint of the new sound for which Haley was searching to feature with his group's Western guitars. The record sold more than ten thousand copies. And Haley followed it with "Rock The joint", which was even more successful. Yet Rock'n'Roll had still not been discovered at that time.

Then Haley found the formula for which he'd been searching. He added drums to the outfit and varied the style of his guitars. He explains it this way: “Mostly using string instruments we were somehow managing to get the same effect as brass and reeds." You know the sound today as Rock'n'Roll.

That Restless Mood
A little more than two years ago, with the new sound worked out to his satisfaction, Bill Haley reformed his group, changed its name to the Comets and made a record called “Crazy, Man, Crazy". It established his name, big-time, in America.

When M-G-M was making “Blackboard Jungle", it wanted a theme that would reflect the excited, restless mood of teenagers. Bill Haley and His Comets provided just that - with "Rock Around The Clock". That relentless twelve-bar blues gave Rock'n'Roll its kick… the rest you know.

Bill Haley, is now in the forefront of the big beat boom. He is a bigger star than he's ever been. BUT he really doesn't need Rock'n'Roll to stay in business. He's not one of those one-two-three-or-four-record stars. He has the experience and the knowledge to come up with something new in music when Rock'n'Roll is as old-hat as the Bunny Hug.

It's Becoming A Habit

Strange, isn't it? The Bill Haley tour, starting in London this week, is in cinemas. NOT concert halls, NOT theatres. It's becoming a habit - a habit it doesn't talk about much - with the Rank Organization. Pat Boone toured Rank cinemas, too.

Agent Leslie Grade explains that this way: because the chosen cinemas are big, because films can be stopped for one night without trouble, the fans get a fair deal – “At a price right for everyone".

But what about the spectre that dogged showings of “Rock Around The Clock", the controversial Bill Haley movie riots? Right up to the eve of Haley's London show, the Rank Organization was confident that there'd be no trouble at the current concerts.

A spokesman, who dealt with the publicity over "Rock Around The Clock", recalls that the stories of so-called rioting were terribly exaggerated by some newspapers.

“There were absolutely no riots INSIDE any of our cinemas during the showing of the film. Since the fuss died down, 'Rock Around The Clock' has played dozens of cinemas over the country without a peep from anyone... No, we don't expect any trouble with the Haley tour.”

SO LONG, HE MIGHT HAVE ADDED, AS THE NEWSHOUNDS DON'T BLOW IT UP AGAIN.

Yours in Rock'n'Roll

Breathless Dan O'Coffey
DON'T talk to me, you miserable lot.
As a result of your carelessness, the word Carniola is about to drop out of the top 86,800 most common words used in the English language. It is poised fourth from the bottom, and the next time Wordcount, the organisation that publishes the most common words in English, does a survey it may have fallen out completely.
We must save this word, and I trust, now that you know, you will attempt to use it in conversation as often as possible, include it in letters, invent similes containing the word, and generally span, and e-mail everyone you know, so we can not only save the wonderful word, but get it removed from the relegation zone completely.
As you are no doubt aware, Carniola is a region of Slovenia, part of the old Yugoslavia. However, if we are to preserve the word, it will have to be used in other contexts.

**Toyota**

Like, we could name a rose after it, or persuade Toyota it is a good name for a car. What is a person who has sex with fairground workers to get free rides on the dodgems called? You’ve got it, a Carniola. What’s your favourite brand of condensed milk? Yes, Carniola. It could be used to describe a curved ball in baseball, a new cloud formation, Carole King’s backing band (Carole King and the Carniolas is not a patch on Marty Stuart’s Fabulous Superlatives, but, hey!), or even the generic name for books set in travelling carnivals (admittedly, Something Wicked This Way Comes by Ray Bradbury is the only title that comes to mind, but there must be others if you think hard enough). Call your next-born Carniola, accidentally bang your thumb with a hammer, and exclaim Oh Carniola! Did you have Carniola last night? Nudge nudge, wink, wink.
OK, I’ve got you started, it is now up to you to start spreading the word.

**Rivingtons**

And the word is not bird, anymore. (© The Rivingtons) Or even Johannesburg. (© Gill Scott Heron). It is Carniola. Keep it, and maybe those folk at Wordcount (you can see all the words at www.wordcount.org), will hear, and move our favourite word into the top thousand, alongside Paris, poodle and curry.

**The Top Ten Most Used Words in English**
1. the
2. of.
3. and.
4. to.
5. a
6. in.
7. that.
8. it.
9. is.
10. was.

**The bottom ten**
(or the least used words of the 86,800 most common words in English)
86,800 conquistador
86,799 recrossed
86,798 workless
86,795 Carniola
86,794 tangency
86,793 multi-lingualism
86,792 lauro
86,791 Golgotha
86,790 home-makers
86,789 savills

*Wordcount is a graphic experiment based on data collected by the British National Corpus, who carried out a survey of 100 million English words, and is infinitely more interesting.*
CORPORATE exploitation of foreign workers normally suggests Pakistani kids sewing footballs, Mumbai-accented outbound call centre or prison labour in China stuffing soft toys. But you can find it closer to home. Not that you are likely to read about it in your local newspaper, because it is in the offices of your local newspaper that the exploitation is taking place.

Journalism is so hard to get into that graduates grasp jobs paying less than £10K per year if they are among the lucky one-in-seven qualified entrants to the game who receive a job offer at all.

STARVATION

More likely, they are offered an internship (read: no pay at all), taken on three at a time, with just one trainee job at starvation wages on offer at the end of six months, with two out of three shown the front door. They will find it easier to land their next internship because they now have six months experience of real work. Meanwhile, they are likely to be around £15K in debt as a result of their three years of university preparing them for work. My most recent brush with local papers was on a regional evening, where they sought someone mature and qualified in law and local government, shorthand and IT, to supervise a team of six. Someone who probably had a degree and ten years of experience.

ACCURACY

Evening and weekend working with no paid overtime, taking responsibility for the accuracy, timing and output of six others. The pay? £15K a year. Sufficient to take out a mortgage on a £65K house, or run a scooter. Just over £200 per week after tax. But this was no family firm struggling to make ends meet.

This was a fat and successful newspaper, plump with supplements and stuffed with advertising for houses, cars, shops and hookers. From experience, I know a single recruitment advertisement in its Sits Vac section costs £400 so it is not cheap to advertise in its columns.

It is part of Newsquest newspapers, the largest regional publishers in the UK, owned by Gannett Company Inc, the largest publishers in the US and the people behind USA Today. Those that work there pronounce it like the bird that eats everything. The job? Thanks, but no thanks. And it’s not just regional dailies and weeklies that exploit those foolish enough to want to write for a living. Galaxy Publications, who produce adult magazines from Knave to Mayfair, were seeking an editor for one of their titles.

On offer? Again. £15K p.a.

It took me eight, long, hungry years to achieve 100 per cent of the pay scale for a senior reporter. Then I worked on a paper where no journalist earned more than £10K p.a. and no printer earned less than £30K - and Thursday lunch the printers work finished for the week.

UNION

They, of course, had a closed shop union. When that was attempted for journalists, a man you might believe to be a hypocritical slimebag were he not so litigious called Michael Foot was to veto the idea in the Commons, citing “Freedom of the Press”.

This, of course, guaranteed members of the press the freedom to starve.

So-called “new technology” was forecast as the saviour of underpaid editorial staff on regional newspapers. So we all learned about Apple Macs, DTP, IT, QuarkXpress, Photoshop, laptops, modems and the rest, hundreds of printers were sacked, and the journalists found they were earning...less. And you have to hand it to Rupert Murdoch. He broke the print unions when he moved his operation to Wapping in the eighties. The money he saved paying the printers, he gave to the journalists. Er, no he didn’t.

He used it to buy 20th Century Fox film studio, set up the Fox TV network in America, not to mention STAR TV in Asia, and became a huge media player worldwide, all on the back of the broken NGA.

Happily, I’m out of it now. I’m left with one mystery and one small victory. The mystery is why no-one writes about this shocking state of affairs.

VICTORY

And the victory? Neither of my children chose to become members of this literate underclass exploited by Manhattan fat cats who couldn’t live long enough to count all the money they have gouged out of decent hard-working people.

AND THE FUTURE?

There are more media studies graduates coming out of British universities every year than the total editorial employees in the whole of the UK publishing industry.
Skeeter Davis Dies at 72 (Sep 04)
This Associated Press story says she was 72, but other news sources put her at 73.

NASHVILLE, Tenn. - Skeeter Davis, who hit the top of the pop charts with "The End of the World" in 1963 and sang on the Grand Ole Opry radio show for more than 40 years, died Sunday of cancer. She was 72. Davis died at a Nashville hospice, said Grand Ole Opry publicist Jessie Schmidt. Davis had been diagnosed with breast cancer in 1988 and had a recurrence in 1996.

Davis, nicknamed Skeeter by her grandfather who said she was so active she buzzed around like a mosquito, had toured with Elvis Presley and the Rolling Stones. She became a regular on the Opry, a live radio show, in 1959, and continued to perform as late as this year.

In 1973, she was suspended from the Opry for more than a year for protesting the arrest of "Jesus freaks" in Nashville. "I felt like a child without a home," she said after her reinstatement.

Besides "The End of the World," her hits included "I'm Saving My Love" and "I Can't Stay Mad at You."

A native of Dry Ridge, Ky., Davis was born Mary Frances Penick. She took the name Skeeter Davis in the 1950s when she became half of the Davis Sisters duet. She began a solo career after her duet partner, Betty Jack Davis, was killed in a 1953 car wreck. Skeeter Davis was critically injured in the same accident. Her autobiography, "Bus Fare to Kentucky," was published in 1993.

Kevin Westlake has died (Oct 04),
Kevin was Slim Chance's founding member and co-writer of Ronnie's biggest "solo" hit "How Come", he was also present at the formation of the Small Faces. He'd had a massive heart attack on Wednesday night and died the following afternoon never regaining consciousness.

Kevin was a fine musician whose career never reached the heights it should have due to ill health for many years; however he did manage to keep his chops up when he could.

He started his music career as a drummer in Wales in the early '60s being a stalwart of a fine local scene that also included Dave Edmonds, Andy Fairweather Lowe and many others. On moving to London he then became a member of R&B band "Johnny Be Great and the Quotations". Again many fine musicians passed through this band including Kevin's old flatmate, Rockpile guitarist "Billy Bremner". A highlight of the Quotation years was backing Little Richard on a European tour, which in Kevin's words was "a great education".

Pioneer adult filmmaker Russ Meyer dies (Sep 04)
LOS ANGELES -- Russ Meyer, who helped spawn the "skin flick" with such films as "Faster, Pussycat! Kill! Kill!" and "Vixen," has died. He was 82. Meyer died Saturday at his home in the Hollywood Hills, according to his company, RM Films International Inc. Spokeswoman Janice Cowart said Meyer had suffered from dementia and died of complications of pneumonia.

Meyer's films were considered pornographic in their time but are less shocking by today's standards, with their focus on violence and large-busted women but little graphic sex. Altogether he produced, directed, financed, wrote, edited and shot at least 23 films, including his debut, "The Immoral Mr. Teas," in 1959 and the 1968 film "Vixen," whose success earned him notice from major studios. He went on to direct the major studio release "Beyond the Valley of the Dolls", which was co-written by film critic Roger Ebert.

In a 1996 interview with The Associated Press, Meyer described his films as "passion plays ... Beauty against something that's totally evil."

Meyer was unapologetic for his movies, arguing the onscreen female nudity put customers in theatre seats. But he maintained that women liked the films. "The girls kick the hell out of the guys. I've always played well at the Ivy League - Cornell, Dartmouth. I have never encountered a berating woman," he said.

Meyer's work made him rich and earned him critical acclaim. He was honoured at international film festivals, his movies were discussed in college courses, and his work was shown at top museums. His 1966 classic, "Faster Pussycat, Kill! Kill!" about three hip go-go-girl club dancers who go on a vengeful murder spree against the men who did them wrong still makes the art house rounds.

Meyer married three times. His studio said he left no survivors.

Kevin Westlake has died (Oct 04),
Kevin was Slim Chance's founding member and co-writer of Ronnie's biggest "solo" hit "How Come", he was also present at the formation of the Small Faces. He'd had a massive heart attack on Wednesday night and died the following afternoon never regaining consciousness.

Kevin was a fine musician whose career never reached the heights it should have due to ill health for many years; however he did manage to keep his chops up when he could.

He started his music career as a drummer in Wales in the early '60s being a stalwart of a fine local scene that also included Dave Edmonds, Andy Fairweather Lowe and many others. On moving to London he then became a member of R&B band "Johnny Be Great and the Quotations". Again many fine musicians passed through this band including Kevin's old flatmate, Rockpile guitarist "Billy Bremner". A highlight of the Quotation years was backing Little Richard on a European tour, which in Kevin's words was "a great education".
Kevin then moved on to legendary psychedelic band "The Blossom Toes" who also counted Slim Chance bass player Brian Belshaw as a member. Around this time Kevin switched to guitar and ended up working with Californian guitarist Leigh Stevens from Blue Cheer. Stevens plus Kevin and drummer Mickey Waller then tried to form a band with Ronnie Wood and it was during one of their rehearsals that Woody made the fateful call to Ronnie Lane inviting him to join them in a jam at the Stones rehearsal space in Bermondsey.

Kevin went on to produce a splendid solo album called "Stars Fade in Hotel Rooms" using the same musicians who'd played in the first line up of Slim Chance. Sadly Kevin developed diabetes around this time and had to reassess his lifestyle needing routine instead of the hectic life of a professional musician.

Mack Vickery dies (Dec 04)

I recall back in 1992 (when I accompanied Chas White on two field trips to the Memphis area researching his book on Jerry Lee) that we made strenuous efforts to track Mack down. After about the twelfth disconnected telephone number, we had to admit defeat. Seemingly several other people were also seeking his whereabouts.

PETER COOPER The Tennessean Staff Writer

Mack Vickery, the Alabama-born wild man who penned such hits as George Strait's The Fireman, Ricky Van Shelton's I'll Leave This World Loving You and Jerry Lee Lewis' Rockin' My Life Away, died Tuesday at his Nashville home of an apparent heart attack. He was 66.

"Rockin' My Life Away is his whole life in one song," said friend Merle Kilgore, who signed Mr. Vickery to his first publishing contract and who co-wrote the John Anderson hit Let Somebody Else Drive with Mr. Vickery. "I never met anybody in my whole career that wanted to be around the music 24 hours a day, but all Mack wanted to do was sing, be in clubs and be around music people. He just didn't want to go to bed."

Born in Town Creek, Ala., Mr. Vickery faced hardship from an early age. His mother died when he was 3, and he moved throughout the South and Midwest with his family. As a teenager, he played in Ohio and Michigan honky-tonks, and after his 1957 graduation, he headed to Memphis and recorded three songs for legendary producer Sam Phillips. The recordings were not released, and Mr. Vickery went back to performing in Michigan.

Around 1964, he moved to Nashville and began working to write hit country songs, though he never gave up performing or recording (he sometimes made records as "Atlanta James" or "Vick Vickers."). In 1970, he released a none-too-austere album called Mack Vickery At The Alabama Women's Prison. The album cover featured some eye-catching prisoners peeking lovingly at Vickery.

"He went down and got buddy-buddy with the warden," Kilgore said. "It was a female warden. They had a few drinks together, and he talked her into letting him come down there. He came out onstage like Elvis — shaking — and them women went wild."

A master of lascivious songs, Mr. Vickery penned Meat Man for Jerry Lee Lewis (it was a raunchier predecessor to The Fireman). He and Lewis were close friends, and Lewis recorded more than 20 of Mr. Vickery's songs. Other Vickery-penned songs — I'm The Only Hell (Mama Ever Raised) and Sweet Honky Tonk Wine among them — offered a window into Mr. Vickery's rollicking mindset.

Legendary guitarist Hank Garland dies (Dec 04)

By RON WORD Associated Press Writer

Legendary guitarist and musician Hank "Sugarfoot" Garland, who performed with Elvis Presley, the Everly Brothers, Roy Orbison, Marty Robbins and Patsy Cline and many others, has died. He was 74. Garland died Monday evening at Orange Park Medical Center from a staph infection, his brother, Billy Garland, said.

In the 50s and 60s, Walter "Hank" Garland was the talk of Nashville, known for musical riffs that could take a recording from humdrum to dazzling, as he did on Elvis hits like "Little Sister" and "Big Hunk of Love." He also pioneered playing jazz in the country music capital.

Four decades after an auto accident almost killed him and ended his music career, Garland spent the final years of his life fighting ill health, trying to pry royalties out of record companies and talking with Hollywood about a movie based on his life.

In addition to performing with Elvis and other stars in Nashville, Garland was at the forefront of the Rock'n'Roll movement; enjoyed a prestigious career as a country virtuoso, pioneering the electric guitar at the Grand Ole Opry and inspired jazz instrumentalists such as George Benson.

Garland worked with Elvis from 1957 to 1961, and was playing on the soundtrack for the movie "Follow That Dream" when in September 1961 his 1959 Chevy Nomad station wagon crashed near Springfield, Tenn., throwing Garland from the car and leaving him in a coma for months. That, along with a series of 100 shock treatments administered at a Nashville hospital, left him a shadow of his former self. Billy Garland claims the crash was no accident, but an attempted hit by someone in the Nashville record scene. Hank Garland had to relearn everything from walking to talking to playing the guitar. A native of Cowpens, S.C., Garland began playing guitar at age 6 and radio shows at age 12. He was discovered at a Spartanburg, S.C., music store at 14, where he went to buy a guitar string. Paul Howard, leader of the Arkansas Cotton Pickers, heard Hank's playing and was impressed. He took Garland with him to Nashville, but child labour laws soon put his professional playing days on hold until he was 16. When he returned, he set the country music capital on fire.

He had his first million-selling hit at 19 with "Sugar Foot Rag," a legendary country tune. In 1954, along with his close friend, Billy Byrd, Garland invented a short scale neck guitar for Gibson Guitars. In honour of the two, the guitar was known as the "Byrdland." In 1960, Garland recorded what he claims was the first jazz album ever done in Nashville, "Jazz Winds from a New Direction."

"He was born with talent," said Garland's brother Billy. "A God-given talent."

Ex-Drifter, Johnny Lee Williams, Dies At 64

John Lee "Johnny" Williams, a recording and performing member of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame vocal group, The Drifters, has died at age 64. Williams, a lifelong resident of Mobile, Alabama, died at a local hospital on December 19, 2004.

Born October 27, 1940, the tenor was just 18 years old when he was tabbed to replace Ben E. King on stage in the touring Drifters group in mid-1959. On July 9, he joined King (who still recorded with the group), Charlie Thomas, Dock Green, and Elsbeary Hobbs in the studio and sang lead on "(If You Cry) True Love, True Love". During his tenure with the group, Williams also sang background on several of their biggest Atlantic label hits including "Dance With Me", "This Magic Moment", "Save The Last Dance For Me", and "I Count The Tears".

When the Drifters toured Mobile in May of 1960, Williams became homesick and decided to leave the group. The singer later recorded as a solo artist on Kent, Cub, and Cy Records, and sang lead on the Embraceables "My Foolish Pride", also for the Mobile-based Cy firm in 1962.

Williams was preceded in death by two of his fellow 1959-60 Drifters, bass Elsbeary Hobbs (1936-1996), and baritone Dock Green (1934-1989). Survivors include his wife, Myrtle Williams of Mobile; five daughters, one stepson, two brothers, and numerous grandchildren. Funeral services took place on December 23 at Small's Mortuary on South Broad Street in Mobile with burial in the nearby Gethsemane Cemetery.

From Matt Lucas

Earlier in the year, I played the Ponderosa Stomp in New Orleans and became a member of the Knights Of The Mystic Mau Mau. What a musician's blast it was! James Burton backed me on stage while I sang and played drums. To make a long story short, James said we should record together in Shreveport, LA, his hometown, as he has some great players and knows of a great studio there.

Also at the stomp was my friend and former piano player of some 30 years ago, Mark Brumbach, also known as Chicago's Mad Scientist. After hearing James and I, he put together a group of the finest players in Chicago along with a few others to record at Twist Turner's House Of Sound, Chicago's home of the Blues studios. The musicians were of course the wonderful James Burton on guitar, Mark Wydra from Eddie The Chief Clearwater's band also on guitar, Bobby Watson a guitar player that has worked with all the Chicago acts, Nick Lloyd from Cincinnati played upright bass, Billy Fazara from the UK played upright bass also, Renni Gits from Belgium on rhythm guitar and Gordon Patricia on electric bass. Jon Hiller and myself on drums and Twist Turner on the studio board.

I left our little house in Suwannee County Florida at 4am the morning of Sept 21st to drive to the Jacksonville Intl Airport and hopped on a United non-stop to Chicago’s O’Hare. 2 hrs and 30
minutes later I was back in the windy city getting flashbacks of playing drums as a kid in Calumet City at the Bar X.... one of the wildest places I've ever played in my life, complete with b-girls and mobsters with windows painted black so no one could see in and selling 12 Benzedrine tablets for one dollar right at the bar.

Man! That was fun thinking about the old days but by then my buddy Mark Brumbach picked me up and we spent the day going to music stores to pick up stuff for the session (James wanted a special model Fender amp for the session and Mark found one, then we went to Mark's pad where we went over songs, etc. James flew in the next day and, after getting him checked into Airport Hotel, we headed for supper at Jon (the drummer) Hiller and his wife's house in Clarendon Hills, a Chicago suburb (his wife is the mayor). We had the biggest and best 3 inch thick steak that I had ever had in my life and traded stories about our musical past including every one from jazz, country, to Sinatra, Ricky Nelson, Elvis, Jerry Lee, to all the blues people. Fun!! Fun!!

The next day we were in the studio by 11am and started recording soon after. The first song we got into was "I'm Still Movin' On" a tribute to the late Hank Snow as I had a huge worldwide hit with "I'm Movin' On" in 1963. Although my song did not resemble his I did get the idea from him. In fact it starts 'I remember back in '63 when the great Hank Snow inspired me to start movin' on, keep movin' on he said Matt, if you don't stay too long you can't do no wrong, keep movin' on! I got the idea for this song from the great writer and webmaster of the Rockville Int. site, Adriaan Strum from the Netherlands. He had the first hall of fame I was inducted into in the early '60s.

I think we cut 6 songs that day leaving the studio around 8pm. I, as well as the other players, was beat! Come noon the next day we were back at it recording the Chuck Berry song "Sweet Little Rock & Roller" then one of my original songs that I wrote in '77 after hearing the news of Elvis's passing. It goes 'Mr. King of rock roll, there won't be another you, the day you left us by surprise, you gave the whole wide world the blues!' Then the Dave Dudley smash, "Six Days On The Road". "Travellin' Man"; it turned out real nice as James had lived and played with Ricky, David, and Ozz & Harriet in the '50s in Hollywood.

We cut a couple of instrumentals. One, the "Mad Scientist Rumba" and "The Horizontal Fandango" and I think that brought the day to a close. The next day I launched into the Gene Autry theme song "Back In The Saddle Again". James came up with a great intro then it was 'I'm back, back in the saddle again, back baby, where a friend is a friend, where I ride the range at night, on my hoss I'm quite a sight I'm back, back in the saddle again!' I do hope Gene's not rollin' over? - but boy, it rocks!

As I said earlier, James and I had played the Ponderosa Stomp in New Orleans in April for the Knights Of The Mystic Mau Mau. The mystic one himself, Dr. Ike. I had so much fun at the event that I wrote a song as a tribute to him "The Mau Mau Boogie" 'Dr. Ike, Dr. Ike, what can you do? He said Matt don't worry let it come over you! I was a nervous wreck; I was going wild under the spell of the mystic mau mau!' I think we got it in a couple of cuts. Next came the song "Little Sister" made famous by Elvis. James came up with a different arrangement of it that worked out nicely as he had played on the original great song.

Blues time again - as you know I love the blues and we cut "The Musician's Blues", a song I wrote many years ago when I was freezing in Canada and playing what seemed to be an endless supply of 6 night a week honky tonks and drinking heavily: 'I'm in a drunken stupor, sittin' here all alone my pants is hangin' on the door knob where I hang my pants is my home'. Next we nailed the Fats Domino song "I'm Ready To Rock & Roll" with Mark becoming the mad scientist with his piano playing. Oscar Peterson he is not but he plays Rock'n Roll, boogie woogie and the blues with so much feeling and energy that I have seen his fingers bleed.

Next day at the studio I think we got "Mountain Of Love" (I played drums on the Narvel Felts version), then the old Hank Locklin tune "Jambalaya (On The Bayou)". Next was another one of my original blues, "The Show Off Blues" 'Leave the light on baby, when I make love to you I wanna see your face go through the changes, I want to see what my love can do!' Back in 2000 I played the Rockabilly Hall Of Fame's first fest in Jackson, Tenn. with friends Narvel Felts, Ace Cannon, Marshall and the original Bill Haley Comets, Brenda Lee and others. I was there again this year. Henry Harrison started it and also a museum downtown (he is building a new one) so I wrote a song and recorded it called "Henry's Rockabilly Ball". In one of the verses I mention my old friend 'Come on Jerry Lee to the rockabilly ball, from Mississippi to Jackson, Tenn. ain't far at all, step on the gas cause it won't be long, there won't be no one left to sing our songs.'

Well, it was a hard week of recording but great fun and good rockin' and blues so it went pretty fast. We also cut "Blue Moon Of Kentucky", Little Richard's "Miss Ann", Jimmy Reed's "Little Rain", and maybe more? I was so over tired that I could not sleep but a couple of hours a night and that came only with the help of some pills from my doc. All the time I was in Chicago my sweet wife
Barbara was getting hit by hurricane Jeanne as she was home alone. She made it through the week.

I flew out of Chicago on the 21st and it was good to get back home...i must say I had a blast with James and all the boys in Chicago. James is such a great player and super nice guy to be with. Now, another friend and Grammy/WC Handy award winner, the wonderful Charlie Musselwhite will be putting the finishing touch on the tracks.

It’s been another great year meeting so many people like James, Peter Ford (Glen Ford’s son) Dr. Ike, Lady Bo, too many to mention. On Nov. 4th Barb & I fly to Barcelona, then Munich, the French Riveria, Rome, Barcelona, the Canary Islands, Nassau, and back home just in time to rest for 6 days before leaving for South America. Life is great but it sure as hell was not always like this. My buddy and ol’ friend, the late Ollie McLaughlin said “Matt, you sure have paid your dues”. Well, I’m still movin’ on. Hugs to music fans everywhere, Matt

MEMORIES

The tickets (reproduced below) were given to me recently by a one-time Rock’n’Roll freedom fighter. He came up to me at the Windsor pub in Penarth, a sometime hang out for the survivors of the original Rock’n’Roll gang. He reminded me that he had indeed been at the hop and had attended all the film shows we ran back then. The first ticket is for “Rock, Rock, Rock” with a live show from the Backbeats Rock’n’Roll band who were later the basis for Shakin’ Stevens and the Sunsets.

We ran a weekly hop and used the Backbeat Rock’n’Roll club name as an angle to beat the tough laws then governing non-cinema screening of movies. I think this was 1963, but it could have been ’62 and may have been ’64 but ’63 is my best guess. The second is dated and was one of a number of events run by the Rock’n’Roll Preservation who were, as I recall, Ritchie Hall, Russ Alsop, Joe Blount and me. Mal ‘Catman’ Clint was our first member with the somewhat short-lived ‘The Jiver’ being our magazine. The last film show I held was in the Royal pub in the early/mid ’80s with “Go Johnny, Go”. Happy days, man, they still are.

FESTIVE FUMING

Isn’t it marvellous? Starting Saturday December 25th, or earlier, we have at least 10 days when nothing works/runs as normal. Christmas Day virtually all public transport stops in UK, so those without cars are stranded just at the time of year they most want to travel to visit friends and relatives. Those who can drive are denied the pleasure of a drink at Christmas, the one time even teetotallers may feel like a drink. Of course they WILL drink, and so road accidents/deaths will soar as usual. That wonderful organization Keith W. worked for, Network Rail or whatever it’s called this week, don’t run on Boxing Day either, just to f*ck up our holidays completely.

Most shops will be shut Xmas Day, and millions of women, single, gay and ‘new’ men will be slaves to the kitchen all day preparing food nobody really wants whilst millions in the developing world starve. There’ll be absolute crap on TV for the full 10 days, and we’ll all get cards from people we don’t see from one year to the next, plus presents which we don’t want and wonder who to pass them on to next year. We will of course have spent hard-earned cash on presents other people don’t want. Only the shops/commercial enterprises will benefit from all this nonsense. (The cards, by the way, bring news of all those who have died during the year, and all those who have contracted terminal illnesses, just to cheer us up and remind us of our own mortality! In my
case at least 3 have died and one told me about their potentially terminal illness.)

All over the country there will be arguments over whose mother should we spend this Xmas with, or can we live with our consciences if we go abroad to escape from all this festivity, and leave all our relatives unvisited?

Then we come to New Year, another excuse for a piss-up and drunken louts on the street who make it less dafe than usual to go out. Many pubs/clubs etc. charge £10 at least just to enter the premises, and then you find you can't get home again because all public transport, including taxis, are full to capacity.

Everyone wishes everyone else a 'Happy New Year' knowing full well it will be worse than the one just gone. We'll all be a year older and nearer the grave, friends and loved ones will pass away during the year, others will get ill, and the world situation will continue to get worse, with wars, famines and all the rest of it.

Do I sound a little cynical? Not really. In two weeks it will all be over, thank God or whoever/whatever got us into this stupid festival every year, and we can go back to what passes as normality. We'll be no better off, of course, but at least we won't have to pretend to be all cheery and festive. A woman at work summed up the Christmas spirit when she said of Santa Claus/Father Christmas: 'He's scary! The last thing I want is some horrible old man coming down my chimney!'

Next year I'm sending Scrooge cards with the words 'Christmas, Bah Humbug!' on them. (I say that every year then bottle out of it.)

Tony Papard

The next gang meet up will be Friday 28th May, at the Shakespeare, Holborn, which is situated 100 metres from Holborn Tube Station along Kingsway. Be there from 18:30 hours onwards. Depart for a meal at approx. 20:15. Hope to see as many of you as possible. If not, see you all with the next issue, expected to be winging towards you late July or early August.

The Organ for the Swedish Rock'n'Roll Club

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Welcome to The Buzz
The 'Tales From The Woods' round up of gigs where you really need to show your face.

Hi folks, here I am, back again, presenting you all the latest gig news and general... err... well, buzz, I guess. First lets catch up with some birthdays out there in 'Tales From The Woods' land.

Back in the midst of what has been a long, dull, typically depressing winter, February 17th to be precise, Dave from Bromley, Kent celebrated his 61st birthday in his usual unique manner with a mug of Ovaltine whilst tuned into Dvorak piano trio no 3 in F minor on Radio Three.

Moving forward a couple of weeks, Guns And Roses fundamentalist Eddie Bowser of Battersea, South West London totted up a grand total of 26 years on March 7th. Come March 21st, the man who joined 'Tales From The Woods' virtually at its inception, who has entertained and infuriated in equal measure ever since, I refer of course to the unacceptable face of the loony left Tony Papard, passed 60 on that date, celebrating with a bash at the King and Queen. He shared this with whippersnapper Dave Woodland who entered his
47th year on the planet in grand style. By all accounts a harassed postman left sacks of cards on Dave’s doorstep on the 23rd March. Also celebrating that night was a slightly inebriated but carefree Alan Lloyd who, I am pleased to say, is perky and back on top form after his recent operation. Alan saw in his 61st year on March 27th.

The cold March winds give way to April showers and, by the 3rd, Rita Brown of Margate, Kent celebrated her 67th birthday over a bottle of wine (or two) and a meal at an establishment well-known for both its quality and non-provincial prices, Broadstairs Fish Restaurant, with her husband George before returning home considerably poorer and reliving their honeymoon night of over a quarter of a century ago.

The 27th of April saw Brian ‘The Rocker’ Jessup celebrate his 62nd birthday quietly at home with a few glasses of Sherry surrounded by his plants whilst he duck-walked merrily around his flat strumming air guitar to his favourite Chuck Berry records. (I heard that Miss Whiplash popped round to brighten his day – H)

One month later the legend that is Soulboy will also celebrate his 62nd birthday. His column in every issue of ‘Tales From The Woods’ since its earliest days reminds us all that his knowledge of soul music is unsurpassed by anyone in the entire world. No doubt John ‘Soulboy’ Joliffe will be bringing along the lovely Soulgirl Annie to the combined birthday bash, date and venue as yet unknown, although it seems likely that Earl Green accompanied by the Bop Brothers will be the exalted choice of entertainment.

Two days later on May 29th Nick ‘Peter Pan’ Cobban, despite still being asked for his ID in pubs and nightclubs, will be celebrating his 59th birthday. Nick, of course, took my place on the ‘TFTW’ tour of the Southern States of U.S.A. No doubt young Nick represented me well. Oh well, that’s life but I will be there next time.

I’m sorry if I missed any birthdays out but Kats, if you don’t tell me when your birthday is then I can’t include it.

A few of our loyal contributors/subscribers have not been feeling quite themselves of late, all of which, we here at the editorial board are pleased to say, are well on the road to recovery. The irascible Dr Charles Dale needed a good doctor himself to see him through a trying time during the final months of 2004; likewise for the Aussie import Alan Lloyd who had to spend a while in hospital and more recently our very own British Rock’n’Roll legend Dave Travis was hospitalised. Great to see you all back on your feet guys.

Congratulations of the most grovelling kind are, by all accounts, in order for ‘Tales From The Woods’ sometime subscriber, broadcaster and roots music historian, Charlie Gillett of Clapham, South West London who, according to BBC Radio London’s very own Robert Elms stating recently on his weekday afternoon radio show that Charlie (or should I say Sir Charlie) has been made a knight of the realm. Now Robert, often amusing, is known shall we say to get things a little mixed up and is equally prone to providing the odd wind-up. Can anyone out there in ‘TFTW’ land clarify this for us? Much appreciated, thanks.

A few months back (everything’s a few months back with our recent publishing schedule – H) the aforementioned Robert Elms was discussing, via phone-ins, pubs around old London town in which he enjoys a tipple. Mr Elms is obviously no lover of tартed up theme pubs, which resemble, in terms of atmosphere, doctors’ waiting rooms. Various watering holes were spoken of, some of which would be familiar to many of you good readers.

My ears certainly pricked up (not a pretty sight – H) when Robert suggested his favourite of all is Wetherspoon’s at Victoria railway station. For those who are not familiar, the pub is situated on a raised level above the station concourse, reached on one side by an escalator whilst on the other by steps. His reason for liking the pub is obviously not for décor or any traditional values but for the fact the place is frequented by what he describes as oddballs, misfits and eccentrics. Hang on a minute; yours truly is known to frequent the establishment once a week or so… surely such a description could never possibly be applied to me?

However, I am often in company with whom the title might be more apt; like slide blues guitar player Luke The Drifter who came along for the first time to our most recent King and Queen bash. He enjoyed our company so much he can’t wait to strap on his National Steel guitar and play some slide for us in the near future, bringing along his mate Italian Tony from Venice who is the great nephew of the legendary avant-garde film director Fellini. Or perhaps Elms’ description applies to Sue and Jenny from the Evening Standard chorus line. Maybe it’s Tony Crystal Palace Blues-Boy Phillibert who has been known to call in on his way home from work at the British Library, downing a few dozen pints before tumbling head first down the escalator a little after closing time. Or perhaps another loyal ‘Tales From The Woods’ subscriber Mike MacDonald who has shared a beer or two with me in the past. Oddballs, misfits and eccentrics? Well the finger of suspicion is pointing in your direction, definitely not mine.

Finally congratulations must go out to ‘TFTW’ subscriber Alan Hardcastle who attended the recent Ike Turner, Sonny Burgess, and Billy Lee
Riley show with special guest Jack Clement at the Barbican, Alan’s first stage show since the now legendary Sun Sound Show at the sadly missed Rainbow, Finsbury Park way back in 1977. Great to see you out and about again Alan. Whilst on the subject of the very recent Ike Turner etc gig at the Barbican, yours truly, on leaving the building to make our way to the tube station, discovered a loyal ‘TFTW’ subscriber surrounded by policemen who were bundling our handcuffed subscriber into a police van. Your secret is safe with me, loyal subscriber. I will not breathe a word, I promise.

See you all in the next issue and thank you for waiting.

Keith Woods.

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**Thursday 12th May**

- **Shepherd’s Bush Empire**  
  - **Melanie**  £15

**Thursday 12th May**

- **Earls Court**  
  - **Rod Stewart**  £32/£55

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**Thursday/Friday/Saturday 12th/13th/14th May**

- **Lyric, Hammersmith**  
  - **Linda Thompson**  £25

**Friday 13th May**

- **Earls Court**  
  - **Bryan Adams**  £35

**Friday 13th May**

- **Forum, Kentish Town**  
  - **Roy Ayers Ubiquity**  £15

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**Saturday 14th May**

- **Shepherd’s Bush Empire**  
  - **The Go-Betweens**  £15

**Sunday 15th May**

- **Ronnie Scott’s, Frith Street, Soho**  
  - **Roddy Frame**  £16.50

**Sunday/Monday 15th/16th May**

- **Shepherd’s Bush Empire**  
  - **John Legend**  £22

**Monday 16th May**

- **Royal Festival Hall**  
  - **Alison Moyet**  £27.50

**Monday/Tuesday 16th/17th May**

- **Astoria, Charing Cross Road**  
  - **Futureheads**  £12.50

**Tuesday 17th May**

- **Barbican**  
  - **Herbie Hancock**  £15/£35

**Tuesday 17th May**

- **Shepherd’s Bush Empire**  
  - **John Martyn**  £22.50

**Wednesday to Saturday 18th to 21st May**

- **Barbican**  
  - **Laurie Anderson**  £15/£35

**Thursday/Friday/Saturday 19th/20th/21st May**

- **Shepherd’s Bush Empire**  
  - **Van Morrison**  £15/£20

- **Friday 20th May**  
  - **Forum, Kentish Town**  
    - **The Fall**  £15

**Saturday/Sunday 21st/22nd May**

- **Lyric, Hammersmith**  
  - **Jimmy Webb**  £20

**Sunday 22nd May**

- **Ronnie Scott’s, Frith Street, Soho**  
  - **Roddy Frame**  £16.50

**Sunday 22nd May**

- **The Grand, Clapham Junction**  
  - **Oasis**  £20

**Monday 23rd May**

- **Shepherd’s Bush Empire**  
  - **The Tears**  £25

**Wednesday 25th May**

- **Cabot Hall, Canary Wharf**  
  - **Colin Blunstone – Rod Argent**  £14

**Wednesday 25th May**

- **Coronet, King’s Cross**  
  - **Oasis**

**Thursday 26th May**

- **Hammersmith Apollo**  
  - **Oasis**

**Friday/Saturday 27th/28th May**

- **Royal Albert Hall**  
  - **Bruce Springsteen**  £22.50/£55

**Saturday/Sunday 28th/29th May**

- **Barbican**  
  - **Herbie Hancock**  £15/£35

**Sunday 29th May**

- **Ronnie Scott’s, Frith Street, Soho**  
  - **Roddy Frame**  £16.50

**Sunday 29th May**

- **Hammersmith Palais**  
  - **The Charlatans**  £15

**Wednesday 1st June**

- **Astoria, Charing Cross Road**  
  - **Teenage Fanclub**  £15
Wednesday/Thursday 1st/2nd June
Hammersmith Apollo
Beck £25

Sunday 5th June
Shepherd’s Bush Empire
Marianne Faithfull £25

Sunday 5th June
Hammersmith Apollo
Todd Rundgren – Joe Jackson £25

Wednesday/Thursday 8th/9th June
100 Club, Oxford Street
The Rutles £14.50

Friday 10th June
Hampton Court Palace
Jools Holland And His Rhythm & Blues Orchestra £32.40/£39.50

Sunday 12th June
Hammersmith Apollo
Pat Metheny Group £25/£30

Wednesday 15th June
Forum, Kentish Town
Billy Corgan £23.50

Wednesday 15th June
Shepherd’s Bush Empire
The Las £30

Thursday 16th June
Hammersmith Apollo
Motorhead £25

Friday 17th June
Forum, Kentish Town
Isaac Hayes £20

Friday/Saturday 17th/18th June
Jazz Café, Camden Town
Gwen McCrae £17.50

Sunday/Monday/Tuesday 19th/20th/21st June
Hammersmith Apollo
Kings Of Leon £19.50

Sunday 19th June
Wembley Pavilion
Motley Crue £21.50

Monday 20th June
Royal Festival Hall
Robert Cray £24.50

Tuesday 21st June
Hampton Court Palace
Van Morrison £45.50/£65

Wednesday 22nd June
Hampton Court Palace
Brian Wilson £45.50/£65

Saturday/Sunday 25th/26th June
Jazz Café, Camden Town
Terry Callier £18.50

Sunday/Monday 26th/27th June
Forum, Kentish Town
James Brown £35

Monday 27th June
Queen Elizabeth Hall
Suzanne Vega £22.50

Monday/Tuesday 27th/28th June
Crystal Palace Athletics Stadium
Coldplay £32.50

Tuesday 28th June
Hammersmith Apollo
Crosby, Stills And Nash £43.50

Tuesday/Wednesday 28th/29th June
Jazz Café, Camden Town
Taj Mahal £25

Wednesday 29th June
Hyde Park
Keane – Supergrass £35

Friday 1st July
Royal Albert Hall
Oscar Peterson £27.50/£60

Friday 1st July
Shepherd’s Bush Empire
Peter Frampton £26

Saturday 2nd July
Kenwood House, Hampstead
Elvis Costello £21.50/£33.50

Sunday 3rd July
Clapham Common
Jamiroquai - Amy Winehouse - + others £30

Monday/Tuesday 4th/5th July
Brixton Academy
Nine Inch Nails £30

Tuesday 5th July
Somerset House (Temple)
Beth Orton £22.50

Wednesday 6th July
Somerset House (Temple)
Doves £25
Thursday 7th July
Tower Of London
Amy Winehouse £35/£48

Thursday 7th July
Islington Academy
Love £20

Friday 8th July
Hyde Park
Queen with Paul Rodgers £39.50/£49.50

Friday 8th July
Somerset House (Temple)
Super Furry Animals £25

Saturday 9th July
Tower Of London
Humphrey Littleton – Acker Bilk £35/£48

Saturday 9th July
Hyde Park
REM £35/£45

Saturday/Sunday 9th/10th July
Milton Keynes Bowl
Oasis £45

Monday 11th July
London Coliseum
Gilberto Gil £10/£20

Tuesday 12th July
Somerset House (Temple)
Bloc Party – The Kills £20

Wednesday/Thursday 13th/14th July
Brixton Academy
Nine Inch Nails £30

Friday/Saturday/Sunday 15th/16th/17th July
Stoke Park, Guildford
The Pogues (Friday), Paul Weller (Saturday)
Status Quo (Sunday)
plus many others £75/£85

Saturday 16th July
Tower Of London
Lisa Stansfield – Swing Out Sister £35/£48

Thursday 21st July
Shepherd’s Bush Empire
Soft Cell £22.50

Thursday 21st July
Hammersmith Apollo
Lenny Kravitz £29.50

Friday 22nd July
Brixton Academy
Lenny Kravitz £29.50

Acknowledgements
Editor – Keith Woods

Page 1, The Buzz – Keith Woods
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Remember – you’re only young twice
Keith Woods