

# BRUM BEAT

THE MUSIC MAG OF THE MIDLANDS

NUMBER TWELVE

FEBRUARY 1981

Staff at Birmingham's Top Rank venue were in a state of shock this week as news leaked that the 2,500 capacity city centre hall will close on February 28.

The Rank Organisation has confirmed that the decision to close has already been taken - despite the fact that the venue has been in profit since October 1980.

These profits however have not been considered sufficient to offset the big losses sustained in the past. Although live bands have generally not fared as well at The Top Rank as at the Odeon - Black Slate recently only attracted 200 people - some bands (notably

The Beat and The Specials) have pulled capacity crowds.

Despite its general lack of acceptance as a live concert venue, the hall regularly had a crowd of 1200 for their Saturday night dance, 400 on the Monday Mod night and 800 for the Sunday Roller

## Rank Topped

SHOCK  
CLOSURE  
OF MAJOR  
CITY VENUE

Disco. This leaves only two major city centre venues - The Odeon and The Town Hall with the latter restricting the type of concert they allow to non-rock acts.

The Top Rank was the centre of a dispute last year regarding the attitude and tactics of its door and security staff.

A spokesperson for Rank Leisure blamed the closure on "overwhelming" increases in rates, wages, and maintenance costs. The rise in rates in particular were, say Rank, "...horrendous, it just got out of hand."

## E.M.F.'s Final Battle

Rick Wakeman, Noddy Holder, Mike Oldfield, Linda Lewis, Phil Lynott and Billy Idol will be among the judges when the nationwide Battle of the Bands talent search reaches its climax with the Grand Final at London's Hammersmith Odeon on Sunday March 1st.

Winners of the Midlands heat of the contest, Coventry's E.M.F. will be lining up for judgement against Xena Xerox, Arrowmatic Tors, Pretty Boy Floyd, Cobra, Time Files, Louis and the Look, Carl Green and the Scene, Ohibo Parenti, 100% Proof, The Nerves, and Asylum. Sounds like it could be a busy night or ten.

All the bands in the final are featured on a special compilation album due to be rush-released on the Battle of the Bands label.

Compere for the final will be Radio One Jock Mike Read, while the Ak Band from Kenilworth, who already have a single 'Pink Slippers' released on the label will be the night's special guests.

EMF, in the meantime, can be heard warming up for the contest at Bedworth Civic Hall (February 5th) and Coventry The Venue (9th).

The Bedworth gig is a benefit to raise funds for the survival of Nuneaton's Social Activities Centre.

EMF, who have recently replaced bass player Tony Morgan with Delroy Binns, will have one track 'Anti Bellum' featured on the album.

## MCA Sign Reno

Birmingham band Reno alias White River have signed to M.C.A. Records. The band line up is Pete Brazil, Mick Broadhurst, Paul Price and Dave Simpson. Pete Brazil has already had a single released on M.C.A., now all four members have a single entitled "Crashing In" scheduled for imminent release. There are plans for an album in the near future. Reno are recording demos at Zella and a suitable one is to be mastered at Worcester's Old Smithy. A new name as yet undecided will be adopted by the band. This does not mean the end of White River Band as they will continue to function playing mainly country gigs throughout the Midlands, with the occasional Reno number thrown in for good measure.



# Bureau **OPEN FOR** Business

Following the split last year of Dexy's Midnight Runners - one of the most successful Midland bands of 1980, nothing but unsubstantiated rumours have been heard about the plans of the majority of the original members from the group who left to form their own breakaway band.

At the end of last month the new group announced their new name - the Bureau - and their immediate plans for the future.

For the first time since the split, original members of Dexy's have given interviews to the music press. Tenor sax player Jeff Blythe talked to Brum Beat.

The Bureau includes five members of the original Dexy's: Jeff Blythe (tenor sax), Steve Spooner (alto sax), Pete Williams (bass), Mick Merton (keyboards), and Andy 'Stoker' Grocott (drums). They are joined by new members Archie Brown (vocals), Rob Jones (guitar), and Jake - "just Jake" - on trombone.

New members Archie Brown and Rob Jones were formerly with The Upset, while Jake is an ex-member of Gonzalez.

And to celebrate the launch of the new group, The Bureau have announced that they have finalised a record deal with Island Records.

"Dexy's was more than just a band making songs. We had a lot of ideals, things we strongly believed in, things like we said we would never stand still, never repeat ourselves. We felt that a lot of it was degenerating into dogma."

The re-recording of an old album track, 'Keep It', as a single was widely blamed as the cause of the arguments which caused the Dexy's to split. "That record was a symptom, not the actual cause. The actual cause was that we felt that in order to keep the ideals we believed in, and

for the band to develop the split had to happen. We don't think about it much at all now. We are the Bureau now - we're thinking about what we want to do. There were a lot of people shouting about it at the time but you'll find that the people who weren't shouting about it were the band themselves."

"The first thing we had to do after the split was to get some money. We received no royalties, they were taken up with touring costs etc. So we promoted a few gigs, Spandau Ballet, Fashion, UK Subs and so on which got us a bit of money. Then we got a practice room and started auditioning people. We wanted to approach this by having a complete organisation.

## STOKE CRIES HAVOC

A new Midlands compilation album hits the streets this month. Titled 'Cry Havoc', it is the first release on the Slip label which is run by the Stoke Musicians Collective.

Scheduled for release on February 20th, the launch will be accompanied by a special gig at the city's Victoria Hall featuring ten of the thirteen bands on the album.

Covering a wide range of music, the bands featured are: Vermilion Hair, The Decks, Platinum Needles, The Lemmings, White Lightning, Doris, All the Madmen, The Heaters, Walter Mitty, The Uninvited, Strate Angel, Time Out, and the wierd and wonderful Amphibrach Enallage and the Catalectic Paragoge.

All proceeds from the album will, say the Collective, be reinvested into Slip Records with a view to releasing a second showcase for local talent in the future.

STEVE/COXON

In Wake Of  
Dexy's Split

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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## INSIDE..

- LOOK! HEAR!
- RUM RUNNER
- STYX COMPETITION
- NEWS
- REVIEWS
- GIG GUIDE

# BRUM BEAT

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## Radio on...

Dear Brum Beat,  
I was very interested to read the letter from P.A. in Weoley Castle. I don't think this gentleman has anything to worry about if his name and address are printed. I am still trying to obtain legal advice on the subject, but I am 99.9% sure that there is not a £400 fine for listening to a pirate radio station - at least not a landbased one. What P.A. is getting confused with, I think, is the 1967 Marine (etc.) Broadcasting Offences Act which prohibits broadcasting by British subjects from a ship or aircraft. It is this act which tries to prohibit such stations as Radio Caroline from broadcasting. Within it there is a Section, 5 (3) (f), which seriously restricts an individual's freedom to mention and promote 'pirate' radio. It is this Section which most free radio supporters want to see repealed, and it reads thus:—  
"A person . . . shall be guilty of an offence if they publish the times or other details of any broadcasts which are to be made, or (otherwise than by publishing such details) publishing an advertisement of matter calculated to promote, directly or indirectly, the interests of a business whose activities consist in or include the operation of a station from which broadcasts are or are to be so made."  
"A person guilty of an offence under this act shall be liable (a) on summary conviction, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three months

without the pseudo-religious self indulgence and degeneration which typified those earlier rebels of the soul.

The Bureau will tour in late March with a single to be released at about the same time. "We'll be finding venues that make it easy for us and easy for the audience. We used to smuggle kids in through the bog windows, now we want to make sure they can get in through the front door. So we'll probably be playing a lot of unlicensed venues."

As I said, the Bureau have a feeling around them which inspires a belief in their own guarded self-confidence and strength. It's a feeling which will grow.

*Dexy's Midnight Runners aren't finished. They've just changed their name and are coming back more powerful than ever.*

## LETTERS

or to a fine not exceeding £400 or to both; (b) on conviction or indictment, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years or to a fine, or to both".

Roughly translated, this means that no-one can mention the name of an off-shore radio station, otherwise they could be convicted for advertising the station.

This Act does NOT apply to landbased stations, which are covered by the 1949 Wireless Telegraphy Act. I have not been able to obtain a copy of this yet, but I believe there is a Section which says it is illegal to listen to a 'pirate' broadcast. I do not know what the fine is, however (probably something silly like £5) and I don't think it has ever been enforced. Some people have claimed, as P.A. does, that it is illegal to listen to 'pirates' and that the fines are heavy, but I cannot find anything to substantiate this.

It is true, though, that the Marine (etc.) Broadcasting Offences Act has been used in the most appalling way. For example, in 1976 a person in Liverpool by the name of John Jackson-Hunter was sentenced to 3 months imprisonment as a result of displaying a Radio Caroline car sticker. He served 60 days and was released after going on hunger strike as a protest. In Kent, David Hutson was convicted and fined for selling £1 worth of Radio Caroline badges . . . . . What sort of country are we living in?

Yours sincerely,  
**JEFF COLE**  
E.S.T. Box 943.

## ...and on.

Dear Brum Beat,

In reply to last month's letter from P.A., Weoley Castle and the comment that fines up to £400 can be handed out for listening to a free radio station.

According to the law, it is technically illegal to listen to a pirate station, but I can only recall one prosecution regarding this part of the Wireless Telegraphy Act. In 1977, in Leicestershire an alleged member of pirate radio station Radio Gloria was fined £5 for admitting listening to a pirate station.

endless, but there is nothing to stop you tuning into the station/channel accidentally as long as you keep it to yourself and don't tell a second person about things you have listened to, then the law is not being broken.

It's very confusing isn't it? I accidentally listen to 'Offensive' channels on an occasional basis, but I couldn't possibly tell you any details - or could I? ?

Confused  
West Bromwich

COPYDATE FOR  
THE MARCH ISSUE:  
FEBRUARY 22nd

## BUREAU OPEN FOR BUSINESS — From Page 1

We want to go to record companies with a finished product and use the record companies simply as machines which produce 1000s of whatever it is and push it out all over the place."

Another rumour which abounded at the time of the split was that the new band would attempt to keep the Dexy's name. "At one time we were going to try to keep the name but we decided against it because of the name being associated with things we don't agree with. It's a new name, new material. We've still got to make it on our own merits. As we feel it, this band has been formed to develop Dexy's in the way we see it."

The material for the new band will still be based very much on black music, with everybody contributing ideas and lyrics.

As Jeff says, the band still hold strong beliefs and are still committed to their own ideals. "The most important thing is that whatever we can say, it's all got to be backed up on stage and on record. The most important thing to us is to let the music speak for itself. I couldn't sit and say things to people if I couldn't back it up."

It was that determination to uphold the integrity of the music which led to the startling move last year to ignore the music press.

"We got really angry and thoroughly disillusioned with the music press. 80% of music journalists are wankers. Looking back on it we were too dogmatic. Although we weren't talking to the music press we were still talking to fanzines, the dailies, foreign music papers. O.K. so 80% of music journalists are wankers, so are 80% of the Fleet St journalists. The Bureau is still going to be selective about who they talk to - there are only certain journalists."

There's already a positive atmosphere surrounding the new group, a feeling that they know exactly what they're doing and how to go about doing it. Perhaps one of the most exciting developments of the Dexy's original theme that the Bureau have undertaken is the self-sufficiency of the organisation of which the group is the centre.

"One thing we hope to do is involve a lot more things. It may involve publishing books, it may involve making films, or being involved with other bands. We can't say it would or wouldn't happen, it's a very open thing."

The most important thing about the new band, however, is obviously the music which Jeff describes as, "There's a lot more mood and atmosphere in the music we're doing now. At the same time it's still very aggressive. The sound has got to be more than just the brass section. We'll keep it there basically as a power unit, but develop on top of that."

Despite the massive interest shown in the new band from the business and the London media, the band still have their base in Birmingham. "There's no particular reason except that we are based here and there's no positive attraction for changing. Birmingham's got no attraction, but London's got no great attraction either. It is easier, though, to keep sight of your own ideals and where you want to go yourself."

The Bureau is more than just a band, it is a powerful protective and creative network made up of interested people all contributing to the good of the energy source which powers it, the band. It is similar in many ways to a hippy commune (Jeff doesn't agree with the analogy, by the way) - but

## STYX COMPETITION

So anyway, there's this bunch of people down in London called A & M Records who keep phoning us up and giving us lots of things to give away to Brum Beat readers. Very nice people.

So, they phone up the other day and say "Listen, we've got this album out at the moment called Paradise Theater by this American supergroup called Styx and it's really good. We reckon that some of your readers might like to have a copy FREE! Not only that, but we'll throw in a free, signed and framed, full colour print of the album sleeve as well, just for the crack." See what I mean, very nice people. "We've only got five to give away though," they say "and we know lots of people will want an album, so just to make it interesting we'll put together some questions and the first five correct postcards out of the hat will get a copy of Paradise Theater, and the very first one out of the hat can have the signed print as well. Can't say fairer than that, can we?" Dead right, we thought, so here it is: the Styx Paradise Theater Competition (Swoon) .....

1. WHAT WAS THE NAME OF THE FIRST LASER-ETCHED ALBUM RELEASED BY A & M LAST YEAR?
2. WHERE IN THE U.S.A. WAS PARADISE THEATRE?
3. NAME THE CURRENT SINGLE BY STYX.
4. NAME STYX' LAST HIT ALBUM.

Simple. Now, send your entries on a postcard with your name, address and telephone no. (if any) to Brum Beat, Styx Competition, 190 Monument Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham 16 to reach us by not later than Wednesday 25th February.

The Editor's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into. This competition is open to anyone who can write.

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## Dawson's Ginger Goes 24

Phil Dawson's Ginger Recording Studio, based in Aldridge, goes 24 track this month, making a major addition to the studio facilities available in the Midlands.

Phil, who has worked for the Birmingham commercial radio station BRMB since it was founded over four years ago, also intends to work in the studio full-time from the beginning of April when he leaves the station.

"It was a bit of a problem to know whether or not to go for 24-track," said Phil, "But there always seems a time when you need those extra tracks. In any case, 24-track seems to be the norm with top, professional studios".

There are less problems involved in the transition from 16-track than faced by other studio operators as Phil is a fully qualified electronic

engineer with studio experience spanning 15 years. The new MCI machine is expected to be fully operational this month.

## ALL CLEAR

The New Clear Band, from Stourbridge, have extended their Thursday night residency at Birmingham's Barrel Organ to continue through February. The Barrel gigs are reported to be free, and the band are creating a lot of interest in the area.

A single, likely to be titled 'Rocking Saints', is planned for release in March on their own label.

Apart from their Barrel Organ residency, the band also gig in February at Shifnal Star (6th), and Redditch Winyates (20th).

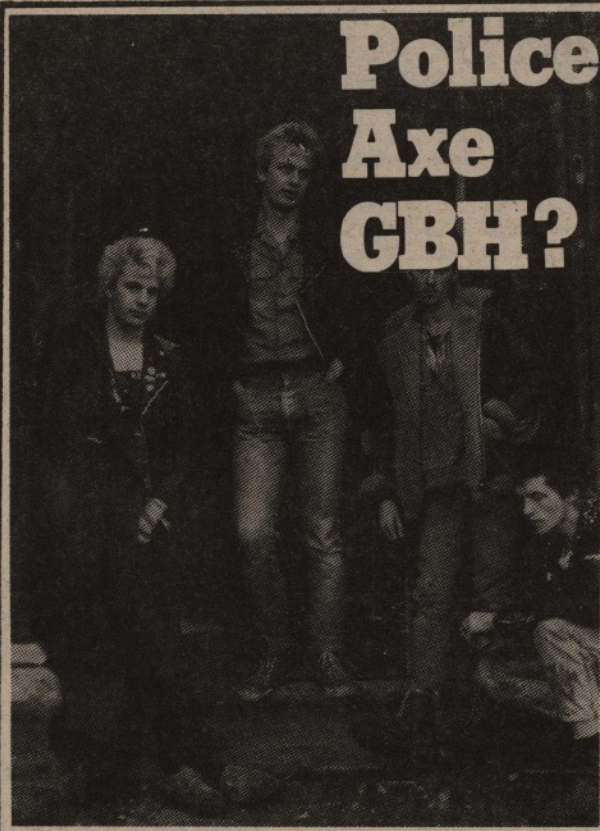
## ROBIN'S ROCK 100

BRMB Rock Jock Robin Valk kindly sent us his most recent Rock 100 - the eighth that he has completed from listener's votes. Robin notes the following points of interest "The over-riding impact of HM in 1980 - at least as far as the fans readiness to contribute to the 100; the fact that 2-Tone is only represented in the lower reaches; that Police are relatively low on the scale; Thin Lizzy and Queen are well down on previous years; the resurgence of 'Imagine'.

the rise and rise of AC/DC - and the staying power of 'Stairway to Heaven'.

Here's the Top Ten: 'Stairway to Heaven' Led Zeppelin, 'Whole Lotta Rosie' AC/DC, 'Smoke On The Water' Deep Purple, 'Freebird' Lynryrd Skynryd, 'Layla' Derek and the Dominoes, 'Paranoid' Black Sabbath, 'Suppers Ready' Genesis, 'Don't Fear The Reaper' Blue Oyster Cult, 'Shine on You Crazy Diamond' Pink Floyd, and 'Whole Lotta Love' Led Zeppelin.

## Police Axe GBH?



Coventry Police have, it seems, developed a down on punk bands - if the experience of Birmingham punks GBH is anything to go by.

The band were booked to play the city's top pub venue the General Wolfe towards the end of last month.

Promoter Alan Jones had finalised arrangements with both the band and the landlord, a support band - Lord Noises - had been settled, and publicity for the gig had been published.

The weekend before the gig, the Wolfe's landlord phoned Alan to tell him that the gig had to be cancelled because of police objections to the band's name. Apparently, they feared that the band would incite violence at the gig.

The band and their manager, Colin Hall, told Brum Beat that they attach no blame to either the landlord of the Wolfe or to promoter Alan Jones, but expressed surprise that the Coventry police should raise objec-

tions to them when their West Midlands County colleagues in Birmingham have never found cause for complaint.

A police spokesperson commented, however, that no-one in the subdivision which covers the General Wolfe had made any complaint to either the pub or the group and that they did not know the group were even playing. "If we had objected, we'd say so, but we didn't. I don't know where this has come from."

## SHORT CUTS

### Lichfield Jazz

Lichfield Jazz Club present a Hot Jazz Spectacular at the Civic Hall on February 6th. Featured bands are: Max Colliers Rhythm Aces, and the Zenith Hot Stompers. Other February bands presented by the Club at their usual Old Crown venue are The Dunning/Thatcher Revival Jazz Band (7th), The Frog Island Jazz Band (14th), The Trent Valley Stompers, (21st), and the Eagle Jazz Band (28th). Jazzers in the East Midlands should note the Derby Jazz Club which convenes every month at the Hardie Club, Sacheverell St. Upcoming bookings include the excellent Sammy Rimington band (26th February), and Bob Taylor's Full Frontal Rhythm Boys (26th March).

### Extra Quo and Springsteen

Status Quo have added an extra date at Birmingham's 10,000 seater International Arena. They will now play on Sunday March 22nd, in addition to their gig the previous which has already sold out. Bruce Springsteen moves into the same venue the following week for his two dates, one of which has already sold out. The American megastar appears on March 27th and 28th.

### Xpertz

Birmingham band the Xpertz have short residency at Mr. Sams in Birmingham in February when they play the last two Sundays of the month (15th and 22nd). They also gig in February at Leamington Crown (10th), and Birmingham Golden Eagle (27th).

### Rock Against Anti-Social Missiles

The Birmingham Anti-Nuclear Campaign has organised another benefit gig in February at the Bournbrook Hotel, Selly Oak on February 28th. Bands appearing are the Pinkes, the Privates, and the Everready's.

### Big Daisy Release

Rock band Big Daisy release a

single on Ellie Jay Records in February titled 'Fever/Footprints in the Water'. They also have a large promotional tour planned (see Gig Guide, pages 10 & 11).

### Mercat No Faith

After an absence of almost a year, No Faith return to Birmingham's Mercat Cross for a Monday residency in February. Apparently they took a year off in order to devote time to writing new material but (quote) "just sat around getting pissed."

### Street Tyrant

Birmingham rock band Tyrant who disappeared from the scene halfway through last year have resurfaced with a new name and a personnel reshuffle. Now called Street Trader, lead guitarist Pat Hambly who left to join Starfighters, has been replaced by former Cocaine and Spizz Energi guitarist Gary Williams. The rest of the line-up remains unchanged as Keith Dallyson (bass), Dave Cooper (vocals), and Tony Stevens (drums). The band's first gig will be headlining a festival organised by the Motorcycle Action Group at Hopwood on 28th February.

### Leicester Label

A new record label is launching in Leicester with a policy of releasing "good commercial pop and disco music." Called Travelgold, the label is headed by Dave Brown whose own disco version of the old Harry Belafonte hit 'Banana Boat Song' marks Travelgold's first release. The second release is planned to be 'Six Million Funky Angels' by reggae band Godson. Travelgold is distributed by Orpington based Pinnacle Records.

### SIouxSIE ON WARPATH

Siouxie & The Banshees tour takes in Midlands dates at De Montfort Leicester (February 22) and Assembly Rooms Derby (23). Support act is The Comsat Angels who are promoting their debut album 'Waiting For A Miracle'.

MLC Presents

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Plus support  
Plus disco

Dudley Town Hall  
Saturday March 7th

7.30 p.m.

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# Bleeding Hearts

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## SHORT CUTS

**Dealers Release**

The Dealers release their first single on their own label on February 16th. 'Don't Touch That Dial/Tracey' (DEAL 1) will be distributed by Graduate Records. Dedicated to Ronald Reagan, the single is a follow-up to their last vinyl adventure 'Share the World'. Mark Bristow, vocalist with the band told Brum Beat "We've got to keep it local as far as distribution is concerned. We thought we'd do the single ourselves rather than try to get a major company interested." Promotional gigs will take place to coincide with the release, although apart from the Railway Friday residency, nothing has been confirmed at Press time.

**Discharge in Brum**

Stoke-on-Trent band Discharge support the Angelle Upstarts at Digbeth Civic Hall on February 7th and play the Golden Eagle on February 5th. They have three records out on the Potteries' Clay label, with their latest single 'Decontrol' staying in the upper reaches of the independent charts since its release at the end of the last year.

**CROWN ABDICATES**

Sad to hear of the early demise of the Tuesday night live gigs at the Crown and Cushion, Perry Barr. Traditionally it has always been a good venue with a large catchment area and everything looked good for its resurgence. But, unfortunately, the paying customers simply did not materialise.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY, R & J!**

Monday's Rock nights at Romeo's and Juliet's, Birmingham, are one year old come February 2nd - thus confounding all the cynics who felt that HM could never be acceptable in a City night club that was more accustomed to featuring the likes of Freddie Starr, Bernard Manning, The Dooleys et al, and was notorious for its dress restrictions.

From the opening night when 600 Goths and Vandals braved near-Arctic conditions to see Quartz without any management objections to the sea of leather and denim it

**Medium Cherry**

Nottingham's Medium Medium have signed for Cherry Red Records. A single, 'Hungry, So Angry/'Nadsat Dream' is due for release in February.

**So Romantic**

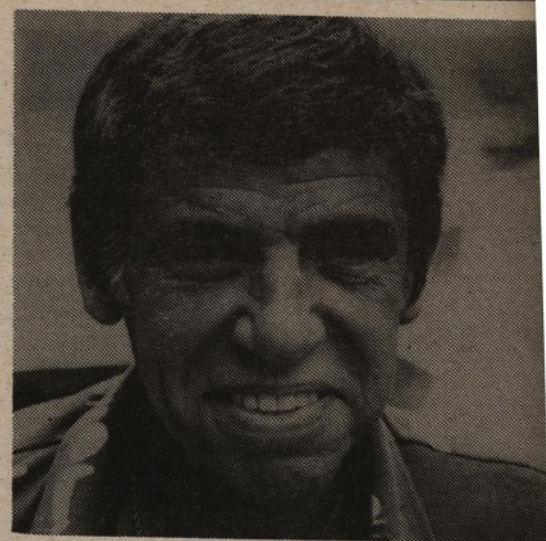
Bob Lamb, famed producer of UB40's early hits, has launched his own Romantic Records label with a release from Handsworth's Reality set for March. The other two bands already signed are The System and John Caswell. The new label will be distributed by M.C.A. Records, with London's Heath-Levy Music handling Romantic's affairs in conjunction with Bob.

**Set Roadworks**

The newly formed Birmingham band The Set take to the road this month with gigs at Leicester Polytechnic (7), Bournbrook Hotel, Selly Oak (8), North Staffs Polytechnic, Stoke (March 6), Worcester College of Higher Education (7) City of Birmingham Polytechnic, Edgbaston (13), Newman College Bartley Green (27).

**Beeb Tickets**

Tickets are available for upcoming Family Concerts at BBC Pebble Mill on application to Room 709, Birmingham B5 7QQ. February 27th spotlights piano man Emanuel Ax who's programme features works by Haydn, Schoenberg, Schumann, and Chopin. The guests on March 13th are Sarah Walker (mezzo soprano) and Roger Vignoles (piano). Their material will be Bartok, Dvorak Grieg and Sibelius. Bartok features again on March 27th in the hands of Gyorgy Pauk, Peter Frankl, and Janet Hilton.



The man generally acknowledged to be the Worlds Drummer - Buddy Rich - brings his 15 piece American Big Band to the Birmingham Odeon on Monday 16th March.

The original tour schedule did not include a Birmingham so Brum Beat Music paper decided to venture into the world of concert promotion to ensure that the world's important young Big Band Jazz outfit played the city.

Buddy has a reputation of finding unknown young musicians to develop as major talents following a stint in his own exciting raunchy Big Band.

Anyone who has interest in the importance and influence of today's music will not miss one of the Buddy Rich Big Band rare visits to this Country.

**Cannon Hill Events**

February activities at the Midlands Arts Centre, Cannon Hill include the movies 'The Canterbury Tales' (Feb 1st and 3rd), 'La Cage Aux Folles' (8th to 14th), 'The Lacerator' (15th and 17th and 20th), and the brilliant 'The Tin Drum' (22nd to 28th). Live music is featured on February 21st with members of the BBC Symphony Orchestra giving some stick to the Trout Quintet, Schubert Quintennial Hummel.

**Tramps Step Out**

Stepping out at the Tramps Club, Worcester in February are Momo Pa and the Motorways (2nd), Cool (9th), Bodytalk (16th), and a special appearance of someone called Noel Edmonds who's a DJ or something on February 23rd.

**The Real McCoy**

Brumbeat reaches Stourbridge this month with promoter Mike featuring a season of top Birmingham bands at his McCoys venue town's High St. on Wednesdays. Opening with the Quads on Feb 18th he continues with Lazars (25th), Willy and the Poorboys (M 4th), Bright Eyes (11th), and the Thrillers (18th).

**COVENTRY VENUE SETS BANDS**

Following it's successful first of rock gigs, The Belgrave Coventry is embarking on a new venture featuring local bands. Upcoming confirmations are A.K. Band X Certs (February 2), E.M. a mini-Festival featuring 4 bands headed by Human Cabbage, God's Toys and Partizans, The Snacks and Channel A (M 2), Team 23 and The Shot Dangerous Girls and L'He de Terre (16) Shades and Editors (23), The Quads (30) intimate and atmospheric Venue provides a valuable link in a chain of successful gigs that to be steadily building through the Midlands.

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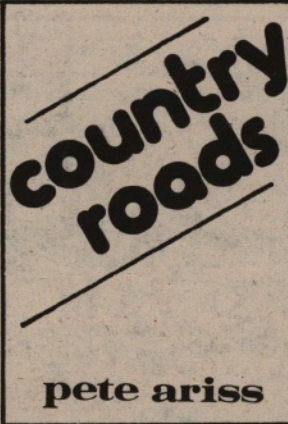
**BIRMINGHAM ODEON**  
**Sunday 8th March**  
**7.30 p.m.**

Tickets: £4.50, £4.00, £3.50 from Odeon Box Office  
and usual agents.

Firstly, news of a new society designed to 'take the panic out of country music.' The Country Grapevine Service aims to provide bands with replacement musicians should a player go sick or join the Moonies and clubs with bands if they get a last minute pull-out. The C.G.S. say they are not an agency as they are a non-profit organisation charging only a nominal membership fee. People interested in joining should contact Mick Hitchcott on Coventry 306181.

Although purist country fans will refuse this paragraph the new Raymond Froggatt album should now be available and is well worth consideration. Every song bar one on the album is penned by Froggie and standout tracks are "It's Only the Memories", "Fools Rush In", "Sometimes People Get Hurt" and "Festival of Fools". Froggie is at present enjoying the sun as he tours the Texan Bars, but he should be back on the circuit by April.

Emmylou Harris' Hot Band consists of Steve Fishell (Pedal Steel) Barry Tashian (Rhythm Guit) Wayne Goodwin (Fiddle) Don Johns (Piano) Frank Recard (Lead Guit) Mike Bowden (Bass) and John Ware (Drums). Emmylou plays Birmingham Odeon on 9th February.



Birmingham country stars Cotton Gin have replaced lead guitarist Freddy O' Bourne with ex Quill axe man Chas Ginder.

Polyannas in Newhall St commence what is hoped will be a regular Monday night country gig on February 9th featuring local band Key West - who they play a charity night at Kinghurst Labour Club Chelmsley Wood on 26th February with the Johnny Allen Duo.

Holland's top Country Group the Ruud Herman Band are to make an appearance at this years Wembley Festival and in addition to this two Midlands dates are planned - Leamington Pump Rooms on 23rd April and Wolverhampton Hen and Chickens on 27th April. This will be a rare opportunity to see one of the reportedly best country bands in the business.

Finally a few details of the better February gigs. Cotton Gin play the Viking (2), Hobmoor (3), Golden Cross (19) and the Lyndon (21). Chug-a-Lug are at the Star & Wagon Droitwich (21), Wild Silk at the Crown Four Oaks (20), Patsy Powell appears at the Hobmoor (10). White River Band play the Hobmoor on (7) (17) and (28), the Viking (23) Golden Cross (12) and Rubery Rose and Crown (21 and 22). Lastly Paradox play a one-off at the Viking on (16).

## Mainly Folk... Sean Patel

### "It's tough in the Gulf"

Or so I was reliably informed by a succession of suntanned, overfed, overpaid, usually drunk Brits, Aussies, Yanks, Krauts, Kiwi's, Frogs and Disc Jockeys. There were occasional Arabs as well, but they were too busy counting their money to say much.

And tough it was. Sometimes I had to work two hours a day and, on at least three nights, I had to put on a sweater to step out into the chilly desert night with temperatures plummeting into the 60s.

### Oil be seeing you

The most obvious thing about Dubai is money. The one reason for its existence is oil money, and the large population of Western expatriates in situ are there to get their hands on as much of it as possible. The locals, having paid large sums to the expats for various professional services, are adept at prising a good proportion of it back.

This is generally achieved by playing the Honkies' desire for Japanese consumer goods and 'sophisticated' entertainment the latter takes a form which your scribe had previously thought only to exist in movies about Las Vegas but which, he now realises, can be found in many parts of the world wherever persons lacking taste and good breeding are allowed to get their hands on a quantity of the folding green items. What there is not, in Dubai, is anything remotely resembling the sort of grassroots entertainment which Brumbeat's eminently tasteful and well bred readership would go for

### Sheikh Rattle and Rule

The Hotels, in whose nightclubs and restaurants the whole sordid business takes place, tend to operate on the simple principle of 'Tit Count'. It is essential to have a group of scantily clad female dancers and the resident band is obliged to include at least two women even if they don't do anything but sway about a bit.

Being a moslem country run on authoritarian lines, Dubai does not permit anything so enjoyable as genuine erotic diversion, so you end up with a bit of sub-Pan's People business which couldn't tickle my jaded sexual appetite, but seemed to arouse most of the punters to a polite frenzy.

### Sands for the Memory

My gig was slightly more worthy as I was providing a bit of singalong entertainment in a wine bar. The main limitation was the taste of the paying customers, who had an insatiable appetite for 'The Wild Rover', 'Streets of London', 'Leaving on a Jet Plane' and 'American Pie', none of which were in my repertoire.

This was something of a disappointment to the proprietor, who had just paid £400 for my air ticket and was laying out a further sum in wages and keep each week. I refrained from pointing out that, if he just wanted someone to sing 'Wild Rover' etc, he could probably find a suitable candidate much closer to hand and sensitive artistes like myself had a duty to the public, a responsibility for the presentation of exciting new material etc. Instead, I buckled to and learned at least a few of the requested items.

### Chucking out time at the Oasis

Drinking is no problem in Dubai, unlike Saudi Arabia or Kuwait. Non-Muslims and those with friends in high places are able to consume freely in the bars of the large number of hotels. These vie with each other to produce authentic English pubs, usually with authentic Filipino Barmen dressed up as Beefeaters. The only rule to observe is: Don't Drink with Divers! Divers are only ashore for two days at a time and manage to put back enough sauce in those 48 hours to keep them above the breathalyser limit for the next thirty days offshore. Other persons to avoid are the police. While the constabulary is polite and fair minded, they can be keen to extend their hospitality for long periods until such time as you are able to convince them of the stainlessness of your character.

### Hot Licks

The outstanding compensation for playing in Dubai is the weather. While your mates back home are lugging the speaker cabs up the icy concrete steps of dismal Victorian pubs and braving the blizzards at 2am on the M6, your biggest problem is to choose between sunbathing on the beach or sunbathing at the swimming pool. Nobody in his right mind would spend summer in the Gulf but at this time of year the weather is perfect.

Which is brought home with a bang the day after you get back and you drive the old heap down to Bristol to an 11.00 pm gig for a bunch of late drinkers who won't turn away from the gas fire just to listen to you which is just as well because your jet-lagged brain still thinks four hours ahead and making it three in the morning and the only songs you can remember are Wild Rover and Me and Bobby McGhee .....

### Solihull Folk Poll Shock

One piece of news from the folk scene which was waiting for me on my return was the results of the Boggery Folk Club's 'Golden Bogroll' awards for 1980. The votes for best group and best solo artist went to Waterfall and Rosie Hardman (Waterfall getting the group award), but these well deserved awards were eclipsed by the controversy surrounding the third vote which was for best floor singer of 1980. For some reason this went to a desperate hack called Chris Rust. This person has been attempting to make an impression on the folk scene for many years despite an appalling lack of talent and no friends to speak of. The fact that a tone deaf no-hoper such as this can even be considered for such an award implies an element of cynical maliciousness on the part of the judging panel who, one can only surmise, planned the whole thing as a heartless prank to publicly humiliate a dreadful musical parasite who would be better left to the oblivion which his mediocrity richly deserves.

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Down a drive off Broad Street (near the Rendezvous) lies the refuge of aspirants to high style, ex-Blitz and Hell aficionados and moderne cognoscenti. Namely, the Rum Runner.

Although the club has been in the family for 15 or 16 years, it was around 3 years ago Paul and Mike Berrow took the place over and changed its emphasis. As Paul said about the transformation 'It was a gradual process, we just threw everybody out so we could change the policy.'

To them music is very important. Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturday's it's moderne music - with punters in a style to match. Live bands, of the appropriate idiom, sometimes play on Tuesdays. (Prices on these nights are between £1 and £2.50 - cheaper for females than males - and members get a 50p reduction too on most nights membership itself is £7 a year). Mondays is jazz-funk, the DJ then is Dave Till (who also does Saturdays). They discovered him in Manchester where "he did a lot of all day things. He's the best in England. He's got about 8000 albums." His partner, Sean Williams, holds the fort Mondays and Sundays. The prime mover behind the moderne nights is Roger Whittingham.

Since they regard music as so important 'the main thing' how specifically did they see their policy? 'We are the most musically up front in England, probably the world. Our musical policy is that we develop musical concepts and stick to them. We won't dilute them by mixing a whole mish-mash of musical things together. We have rigid concepts and most of these are relevant to the current modes of music. We are right in the front line of it. That has been the policy for 2 years.'

#### Image

But, leaving the official version aside, what does the place look like? Go down Rum Runner Drive and along either side of it runs the premises - old warehouses done up. Step into reception and you're surrounded with mirrors. Masses of tiny, twinkling squares of mirror tiles. More mirrors in the low ceilinged (but not midget sized) dance area. Likewise around the bar, which is a four sided affair.

More exotica in the restaurant area with zebra-striped chair coverings. There, you can avail yourself of pizza and chilli, Brooklyn burgers, Chicken a la Ritz (though how ritzy do you get on £1.30?). All of them priced between £1 and £2. Steaks are available too (reasonably priced) plus sweets and coffee. The bar prices aren't too over the top either - average for spirits (not a sign of Powers, Jameson or Bushmills to be seen). Slightly more than average (though less than some other Brum clubs) for lager and beer.

#### Rum Runner people

The clientele are stylish. Poseurs, if you prefer, who come to see and be seen. Acceptable outrage is the order of the day. I'd been on a couple of Wednesdays when it's usually closed but sometimes is open for parties, usually based around a particular theme. (A likely excuse for dressing up). If you go on such days make sure you're clutching an invitation.

But who do the owners see as Rum Runner people? After all, I'd heard football stars and models often frequent the place. Over to the owners who admitted that although these two professions are part of the RR crowd 'We do get people in just ordinary jobs who have just a little bit more awareness'. He felt that the environment intimidates a lot of people... they don't comprehend it. Ordinary people aside, 'Midge Ure, Hot Gossip, Spandau Ballet have

all been down and have been completely flipped out by the place.'

He reiterated his belief that their is 'one of the leading clubs in Europe for the escapist, flamboyant...' then changed tack slightly. 'It's difficult to put the music into the right perspective. EMI and Phonogram reckon we are the leading club in England, so we must be the leading club in Europe.' He was very scathing about non-RR people 'The average disco-goer lacks style. They really don't know how to behave themselves'. Out elsewhere the previous night a couple of rucks broke out, it was obviously a shock to the brothers. 'We had forgotten what a fight was like. We live in an artificial world, we have created a utopian situation.'

#### Getting in

To maintain this utopia, and make sure only the right sort of people get in, they rely on the judgement of their 'reception staff'. Their term, in less elegant places, I believe the word is 'doormen' or 'bouncers'. They look at someone's face and they have got to be heading in the right direction (no he doesn't mean they should be sober enough not to walk into the wall) 'You can tell just by looking at a person's face and it's a matter of the reception staff understanding basic psychology. Al, our Reception Manager, is excellent at judging people's personalities at a look. He's got great insight. It's an attitude. The clothing they wear is a reflection of their attitude.'

The brothers are really after 'the new breed of person, an 80's type of individual. People who just want to enjoy themselves. We have helped to cultivate that new breed of people in Birmingham. They've got a higher level of appreciation than the average disco-goer. They are also much more passive and they appreciate aesthetics.'

Breeding and cloning and pacifying the right sort of punters aside, what else do these men do?

#### Local talent

Well, to be fair, they are doing their best to encourage local musical talent by letting them utilise the premises 'UB40, Dexy's, Darts, Fashion, Duran Duran, Dance all rehearse here.

Of course they handle Duran Duran who, in mid-December, were recording at Abbey Road Studios and who have just signed "a major deal with EMI. It's talked about as EMI's major signing for the 80's" says Paul. They don't shirk from putting plenty of money into the Club and its decor either. 'There's a giving attitude rather than a taking attitude.' We never ever take a single penny we've earned. We're going to be spending another £30-£40,000 on the Club in the next 12 months, despite the recession.' (All profits are reinvested into the Club), the brothers maintain. Basically it's going on 'general cosmetic refurbishment, putting the finishing touches to the place. There will be a major light show as well.' And they're doing up the toilets 'they're our pet hate'.

They also pointed out as 'very relevant' their attitude to the sort of surroundings they provide. As an analogy, Paul said 'If we had a palm tree that's cost, say £150, in reception and for some reason or other, we have misjudged a customer and he's trying to destroy it by plucking at the leaves, we don't think when it's destroyed - we won't replace it.'

'Our customers are part of the family that we have tried to create here.

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# REVIEWS

## DIAMOND HEAD Hammersmith Odeon, London

When I first saw this bunch of rockers from Stourbridge a few months ago, my over-riding impression was one of arrogant amateurism and posed anachronisms. But, there was something in there that was worth developing and a nagging feeling that maybe they'd be worth keeping in mind for the future.

As support on the April Wine tour, Diamond Head have proved that their early arrogance was fully justified and that budding promise had bloomed into a rich and fruitful experience. Getting to the point, they're out of this world.

Their music combines various standard rock styles in a magical potion of devastating power. The atmospheric 'Am I Evil', for example, or the sustained power of 'Don't You Ever Leave Me' and the brash, but mature, moodiness of 'Borrowed Time'. It all adds up to one helluva good time for everyone present - not least the band, which is always a good sign.

The audience's acceptance of DH was surprisingly warm, and in a lot of cases sizzling. It's a measure of the success of their conquest of the London crowd that even when the lights went up at the end of the set, they carried on shouting for more.

In the non-too distant future, I can see that shout being echoed a thousand fold. It is a privilege to watch them.

Steve Coxon

## DRONGOS The Golden Eagle Birmingham

Anyone who goes round town even semi-comatose can't fail to notice the legend "Drongos" writ large on walls and subways. But this, in truth, was the first time I'd caught them live.

Founded late in '79 and due to do a master tape and a John Peel session soon, Drongos' personnel reads: Tommy (vocals), Steve (guitar), Errol the Tasmanian Devil?!?! (bass), Gebbs (drums).

They started off at full tilt with the ironically-titled "Peace": a number that got the punters up and dancing to match the band's charging-round-the-stage brand of nihilistic attack. "Hostage" featured some winning and near-tribalistic work on drums. "Police Attack" came across with anger and force. As did their swipe at the army "Death's a Career" and the snarled and sneered "Violence".

Drongos are a direct and unadorned band specialising in direct and unadorned punk music - no frills and no concessions. They're abounding with energy and the audience was obviously with them virtually the whole of the way. So any attempt at putting themselves across more as individuals (rather than en masse) to the audience is probably superfluous. Maybe I'm carping. And playing a support slot (in this case to an adventurous GBH) isn't the easiest task in the world. Criticisms aside, they're worth braving the cold to go and see.

Jule Wieland

## ASSYNE Cedar Club Birmingham

Not another bloddy reggae band! Well, no, not exactly. Assyne are, most certainly reggae, but they use the music differently to most bands in the genre. Haile Selassie doesn't even get a look-in and Jah Rastafari is banished from this band's sound system. What's more, their particular brand of the music is tinged with a magical touch of jazz guitar and sax which raises more than a few easy comparisons with Weapon of Peace.

Relaxed, but retaining the undercurrent of powered performance which distinguishes the good reggae outfits from the bad and the ugly, the

outstanding track in a set which only occasionally strays from the path of excellence is 'Run Like Hell' - easily the most appealing song from a reggae band I've heard since I saw Eclipse do 'Enjoy Yourself' for the first time.

Their stage presentation is non-stop exhortation and movement with the resultant exuberance which only the best bands can generate. All helped along by a standard of mixing far superior to most bands muddying up the atmosphere around town.

Do yourself a favour, and put yourself on Assyne-ment.  
Steve Coxon

## SPEEDO Mercat Cross, Birmingham

For a band playing their first gig in 'da Big City' to an audience of me, the landlord, assorted camp followers, and perhaps half a dozen casual drinkers, Speedo were surprisingly sure of themselves.

O.K. so there's nobody here - let's play.

And play they did. Competent covers, interspersed with originals who's interest stemmed from the style of playing more than the songs themselves. A moderately insane bassist, a steady, powerful drummer, and two vocalist guitarists with totally contrasting vocal styles.

I mean, how do you expect me to react to a band with one vocalist who sounds like his father was JJ Cale and his grandfather was Tom Waits, and a second vocalist who's so laid back he makes Dire Straits sound like they're copying him?

Yip, I'm a convert. Still, they could do with a lot more attention being paid to their own material which although it has a smattering of good ideas, is too patchy apart from obvious instances like 'Dumper, Dumper' an incredibly commercial rock number in the best of senses.

Their gig a lot in the Hereford area, which is a pity because they're limited there to village halls and miniscule pub rooms and are not getting the exposure they deserve to tighten their act.

Steve Coxon

## ENIGMA Romeo & Juliet's Birmingham

This band was wont to send the inhabitants of Bogarts running for the cover of the far bar on Saturday lunchtimes. But now a change is beginning to take place.

Enigma, having suffered a personal shake-up are now down from five to three members. Bassist Mick Walker is the third vocalist to grace the band in a matter of weeks. This is not however, a case of "third time lucky". He lacks the power of a rock vocalist. I didn't catch many of the lyrics either. An over-enthusiastic drums mix accounted for this, but then it did serve in the same instance to highlight the intuitive drumming of 18 years old Eddie Fincher.

Third man in the line-up is guitarist Nik Lloyd. The sound engineer wasn't doing him any favours either, Cryer fans clock this one! This gentleman not only looks like Stu Clarke, but he's been flipping through the same book of rock poses too. Lack of Stu's finesse though. A large proportion of Enigma's material is good heavy-rock, and a new number, "Lennon" promises a little more imagination in the future. The final and most important gauge of success or otherwise is the audience reaction, and Enigma was themselves an encore where purportedly greater bands have failed.

Debbie Fussell

## BESHARA Barrel Organ Birmingham

This was the start of a new Monday night residency for Beshara, a 7-piece reggae outfit who've been around for 5 years and have played virtually everywhere - including London's 100 Club. Surprising then, that they aren't bigger, since they produce some winning music.

One of their great strengths is the masterly use of the horn section (Scruffy - trumpet, Byron Bailey - sax). Sometimes, it reminds you of Bad Manners, others it veers towards jazz and then again, meanders into Tom Waits territory. Combined



## TOYAH WILLCOX Aston University Birmingham

Toyah Willcox. Lady of many talents. 3 albums, T.V., film, and stage appearances. Honour of being subjected to an ATV documentary. Local girl makes good. What next?

Musically, she can only be compared to Siouxsie Sioux, although Toyah is no mere clone of the lead Banshee and she has been recognised for her own individual talent. Nevertheless, the similarities are still there.

The music is consistently either hard-hitting rock - inherited from the punk days - or grey, moody, synths bringing it up to date. The best demonstration of the former is 'Indecisions', while 'Danced' is the best pick of a bunch of otherwise depressingly shallow synth numbers which dominated the latter half of the set.

'Neon Moon' was the outstanding number, fusing together the two musical strands and allowing Toyah to demonstrate her vocal ability. Dipping in and out, it switched from guitar to synth before ultimately exploding into a climax of devastating overdrive rock.

But it's Toyah's stage appearance which really catches the attention. With her blazing red hair and non-stop activity she's like a human dynamo. Forget the music, the band, the surroundings. Just watch and feel the power generated by that one person on stage. Toyah, Toyah, Toyah.....  
Marco Polo

with the very-near wonderous keyboards of Michael Nanton, this adds an extra dimension to Beshara which cuts across the choppy insistence and inventiveness of the rhythm section.

Apart from their quite joyful danceability and musicianship, this band avoid being turgidly message-ridden (in other words, their ideas are suggested to you rather than flung full pelt). And more, they have a sense of humour - "News at Ten" for instance. Then there's an almost camp pastiche when Raymond Watts (rhythm guitar) takes major vocal honours on numbers like "Men

Cry Too" and "Don't Do Wrong". Real over-the-top Atlantic style.

If you asked me for standouts, I'd probably say "Secret Affair" (absolutely nothing to do with Ian Page) and "No Reason".

Not shackled rigidly (they had snatches of jazz, ska and soul sneaking up on you) this band is well worth seeing. Despite a few sound problems, I liked, I liked. And, must include the rest of their eminently masterly personnel: Paul Cunningham - bass, Dixie Pinnock - drums, Tony - vocals.  
Jule Wieland

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**NEEDED**

Paul Bearer

ace in the hole debut album from Midnight Rags, "The Werewolf of London" (Armageddon) with Paul Roland as mastermind. Styles cross-breed Marc Bolan and Al Stewart and tackle electric and acoustic approaches. Imagery is sharp and invigorating and there's a strong sense of romanticism and gothicism, notably on "Blades of Battenberg" and the guitar/violin number "Lon Chaney". "Oscar Automobile" is Rex to a T and the same chugging guitar surfaces on several tracks but the album still maintains its own identity. One of the best debuts in many a while. Styx celebrate Chicago's "Paradise Theatre" (A&M) on a laser etched disc which keeps down the

pomp quota and is reasonably appealing, especially on the single "The Best of Times" and "Rockin' The Paradise". Can't see anyone singing about the Hippodrome. Elvis Costello must get bored quickly, because several songs on "Trust" (F Beat) fade out unreasonably suddenly, but fortunately he manages to see "Different Finger" through to the end and both "From A Whisper To A Scream" and "Shot With His Own Gun" indicate that the potential hasn't been totally squandered. Welcome back to Douglas Quintet (now with Alvin Crow) on "Border Wave" (Chrysalis) which is packed solid with fresh and hypnotic tex-mex music to surprise all those who thought Joe Carrasco came first. "Down On The Border" and "Old Habits Die Hard" are great but the whole album washes over you like sun and tequila with a dash of ice. Magic.

The Boomtown Rats "Mondo

Bongo" (Mercury) is somewhat experimental for them and although in most cases the musical departure is successful Geldof's lyrics feel vaguely unbalanced and lacking in the depth of previous work. "This Is My Room" and "Fall Down" are convincing but perhaps the lines "not from want of trying I have nothing left to say" are too accurate. Pearl Harbour's direction as she skips from new wave (US version) to country maintaining a pleasant but innocuous charm throughout the transitions. Basement 5's sub PIL Trevor Rabin's "Wolf" (Chrysalis) "1965-1980" (Island) sounds like it was recorded in one, while Trevor Rabin's "Wolf" (Chrysalis) appears to have used a similar cellar although South Africa's Tom Scholz does get more impact from his underground warblings. Often reminiscent of Earth Band, which isn't strange since Manfred Mann adds keyboards and Chris Thompson provides back-up vocals.

Alan Vega's solo debut (PVC/Ze) picks up the electric rock n roll of Suicide as he clips and gulps his vocals through a selection of 'huh huh's and 'bop do bop's' with genuine affection for the roots and precise knowledge of the future. Best cuts are "Jukebox Babe", the Hollyish "Ice Drummer" (ace), and the Blue Hawaii parody "Lonely". If Sun records were starting up in the 80's then he'd be their Presley-Viva Las Vega! Third is Richard Strange's "The Live Rise of ..." (PVC/Ze) which is the US shortened selection from his soon to be recorded political fantasy - although perhaps a lot more prophetic than most fantasies. Sound quality isn't too hot but the chance to hear the work in progress before the complete opus arrives is comparable to hearing first draft readings of The Waste Lane. Very Brecht/Weill in style and influence and containing the stand-out "International Language" and "I Won't

Run Away" which has the potential to be another "Argentina". Virgin imports this issue offer Bernie Marsden's "And About Time Too" (Trash) which is much more melodic and 'poppy' than you'd expect from the Whitesnake axe man although he does break loose on several cuts. Guests include Lord, Paice, Bruce, Powell, Murray, Airey and Simon Phillips and it might prove interesting to pursue the identity Cover'd by Bobby Dazzler. Should be on wider release here but isn't. Try and hear "You're The One" and "Head The Ball". Finally arrived is much delayed news from The Shoes, "Tongue Twister" (Elektra) which even eclipses underrated "Present Tense" with fine Californian contemporary rock given touches of the 60's UK

beat Best cuts are "Girls Of Today" and the gentle "Karen". Try em for size. Brand new Krokus album "Hardware" (Ariola) is well up to expectations with gutsy metal in the AC/SC mode but ringing a few changes too as with "Celebration". Monster power packs are "Easy Rocker" and "Burning Bones" though I'm a bit uncertain about single choice "Rock City" which strikes me as bit too bluesy basic for wider appeal. Also due is Kevin (Sky) Peek solo album "Awakening" (Ariola) which on preview listening is likely to have the opposite effect. As dull and turgid as you'd expect from a coffee table conceptualisation. Finally the second Fawty Towers (BBC) set is about with "The Rat" and "The Builders" - singalonga Cleese. Paul Bearer

**BUZZINGS**

MIKE DAVIES

Good news first and Steve Gibbons' "Street Parade" album is to be released here by RCA on Feb 13 (catalogue number "RCA LP 5005"). It's the German version with "Human Race" included and exclusively reviewed on import in Brum Beat some months back. Not much news this issue and few releases but singles head up with God's Toys "Everybody's Got A Mother" (Badge) and I'm somewhat disappointed. Good band with a good sound but the vocals are lost in the mix and it doesn't really go anywhere. Pity. Two albums only this column with Eyeless in Gaza featuring ex-Stereotypes vocalist Martyn Bates leading the comments. "Photographs As Memories" (Cherry Red) is stark and intense and hardly armchair listening (unless lined with razors) but after a few confrontations begins to make a sizeable impression. More accessible is Climax Blues Band with "Flying The Flag" (WEA) which is definitely US easy listening rock with a smooth edge to it. Nice lolloping rhythms

to "So Soon After Midnight" and "Hold On To Your Heart" and even a touch of country influences in and about, but "Gotta Have More Love" should really have repeated the UK success of "Couldn't Get It Right". Still bearing in mind Warners lack of budget for the album it's not surprising it didn't make much impact. Worth proving the marketing men wrong. Not caught much live stuff lately but ventured into the hinterlands of Wem a few weeks back to see Assassin and Triton. Missed Assassin but even if they'd stayed at home and watched tv they'd have been better than Triton - with the emphasis on trite. An amateurish HM band with Priestian appearances and Motorhead vocals that make 'abysmal' sound like a compliment. Often difficult to distinguish between the drumming and the vocals and the lead guitarist would have been more at home at a limbo competition. Fortunately neither bass nor rhythm guitarist appeared to be plugged in. On to tapes and little input this time but what there is bodes well. Kidz who were Shock TV - (and I trust become something else before appearing on vinyl) - have a strong collection of poprock numbers that compare vaguely to The Vapors but with more polish. "Channel One" is an instant marriage of guitar riff and

descending vocals that jogs along with commercial appeal, a quality that fairly explodes out of "Cinema Girl" with its catchy chorus and metronomic rhythms. Not knocked out by either "Bring Back The Night" or "You're So False" but which would make superior B sides. Knockabout ska number "Face Of The Eighties" shows the rough edges of the home-recording but skanks along in fine form with a light feel and radio appeal and quite wonderful tacky piano break. "She's So" (?) seems largely on the way to a strong number with some strident guitar work and solid drumming and "Stop Press" is nicely urgent and would do well from studio discipline but I'm more impressed by "Macho Man" with aggressive guitars and commanding, putting arrogant vocals round a dominant bass line. A band of definite promise who I look forward to catching live and expect to ink a contract before long. Rapped on the knuckles by Airphix for not covering them in past issues for which apologies because the demo tapes are most absorbing. Good use of synths and vocals through the samples which head up with "Luxury Every Day" setting a high standard, 'fashionable' outfits and they rely much on the vocal tones and range to provide nuances to the melody rather than keeping them as zomboid

as vaguely possible. "Ring The Changes" I feel to be a bit uncomfortable in the shifts of key but it drifts along reasonably well, although lacking in sufficient shade. "Train Of Thought" occasionally recalls Ultravox or Visage and has a certain European mood to the vocals and keyboards and is most effective although the overall impact of "International Affairs" complete with special effect intro makes it the best on the tape. "Cameo" closes and is perhaps a bit bogged down on occasions with portentous keyboard breaks but by and large it maintains the impression that Airphix deserve to be a band to be reckoned with in the current climate of electronic rock and given the production and opportunities could well step into the upper ranks. Taling of which Duran Duran's debut single is out on EMI and as expected is "Planet Earth". Would like to be able to eat my words and say how magnificent it is but it's not so I can't. Production is very good, and song is strong and the drumming/keyboards are excellent but I still feel there's a certain overall lifeless quality. Nevertheless it pounds along well and the vocals are in tune - if rather on a level - and since EMI are pouring in promotion support equal to the Gross National Debt I've no doubt it'll chart high. Mike Davies

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Jane Kennaway & Strange Behaviour have a hit with "IOU" (Deram) and I trust Roger Chapman will call in the debt for the blatant loan of a Family riff. Good stuff from The Atrix on "Treasure On The Wasteland" (Double D) with a catchy 'ooeooooe' chorus that should have helped more than it has. Hard Doobies for new Gordon Haskell's "5-10-15" (RCA) which is very clever and underlines his talent but won't be a hit - unexpectedly good production from Bill Kimber. Michael Moorcock's "Dodgem Dude" (Flicknife) should have followed on from the much ignored Deep Fix album "New World's Fair" and today sounds somewhat stilted but it's worth having for the completion of the series - now someone re-release the L.P. Jonathon King meets The

## SINGLE FILE

Moodies for Final Eclipse's "Bird-song" (Heartbeat), with acoustic guitar and crashing drums. Good one.

Teenage Filmstars say "I Helped Patrick McGooohan Escape" (Fab Listening) but should really have volunteered to act as replacements. Dull The Barracudas keep trying to be the Ramones with "I Can't Pretend" (Zonophone) and still don't quite make it but it's good surfing fun. Praying Mantis resurfaced with "Cheated" (Arista) failing to get the "I Surrender" from Rainbow (Polydor) - frankly neither side won. Old Joe Strummer stuff with the 101'ers (Big Beat) on

"Sweet Revenge" is quality pop, the like of which he's started to produce again via Clash. "Direct Line" (Dindisc) is from Dederinger for AC/DC! Jags give up impersonating Costello on "I Never Was A Beach-boy" (Island) and it works - strong single that should see them back in favour. Straight version of "We've Gotta Get Out Of This Place" from Wild Willy Barrett (Black Eye) which could do well. Good newie from Teardrop Explodes "Reward" (Phonogram) which ripples with power yet keeps it tightly in check. Subdued charm from The Passions "I'm In Love With A German Film Star" (Polydor) a la Pauline Murray, and equally alluring (Korgis style) are The Regents on "Just A Little" (Arista). John Ellis returns with "Hit Man" (Rat Race) produced by Pat Collier and remixed by Steve Hillage and it's a definite grower and again shows his versatility and proficiency as a guitarist. Quirky but essential. New sound for The Stranglers with a simple synth ripple and semi-spoken vocals adds up for a big hit for "Thrown Away" (Liberty). Excellent and complex offering from Landscape, "Einstein A Go Go" (RCA) which is directed at the EDM market but could cross over into wider fields. Deserving of massive success. Oddly so too is James Galway's haunting version of "I Started A Joke" (RCA) which could repeat his success of "Annie's Song". Check out Joe Jackson's new single to get live version of "Is She Really Going Out With Him" (A&M) on flip and ponder on his lack of success here. Paul Bearer.

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 Holte: Hobsons Choice/White Line  
 Railway: Sweet Revenge  
**WEST BROMWICH:**  
 Coach & Horses: Paradox  
**WOLVERHAMPTON:**  
 Lafayette: The Look

● **MONDAY 9th**  
**BIRMINGHAM:**  
 Drakes Drum: Quill  
 Mercat: Standards  
 Odeon: Emmylou Harris & The Hot Band Polyannas: Key West  
 Railway: Viking  
 Romeo & Juliets: Arc

● **FRIDAY 6th**  
**BIRMINGHAM:**  
 Barrel Organ: Willy & The Poor boys  
 Crown, Corporation St: Nimbus  
 Fighting Cocks: Laissez Faire  
 Golden Eagle: Tadpoles/Vision  
 Collision/Guilty Millionaires  
 Hobmoor: Palladin Holte: Atlantis  
 Horseshoes Hotel, Hall Greer:  
 Sub Zero Mercat: Boxer  
 Oscott Social Club: Chug-A-Lug  
 Railway: Bandanna  
 Tyburn House: Misty Blue  
 Aston University: Gordon Giltrap  
**COVENTRY:**  
 General Wolfe: Wild Boys  
**DROITWICH:**  
 Star & Wagon: White River Band  
**FOUR OAKS:**  
 The Crown: Sundance  
**SHIFNAL:**  
 The Star: New Clear Band  
**WALSALL:**  
 St Pauls Hall: Straight Street  
**WOLVERHAMPTON:**  
 Gifford Arms: Dalmain

● **SATURDAY 7th**  
**BIRMINGHAM:**  
 Birmingham University: Darts/Suppt  
 Crown, Corporation St: Sykes  
 Digbeth Civic Hall: Angelic Upstarts/Discharge  
 Fighting Cocks: Wide Boys/Guilty Millionaires  
 Hare & Hounds: Maddy Prior Band  
 Hobmoor: White River Band  
 Mercat: Dawnbreaker  
 Railway: Dealers  
 Tyburn House: Bert & Les  
**COVENTRY:**  
 General Wolfe: Flying Saucers  
 Hope & Anchor: Dance only  
 Dance  
**DUDLEY:**  
 J.B.'s: Ruby Turner Band  
**LEICESTER:**  
 Poly: The Look/The Set  
**NOTTINGHAM:**  
 Rock City: Hazel O'Connor  
**RUGBY:**  
 Hill Morton Ex-Servicemens Club: Paradox  
**SHIFNAL:**  
 The Star: U.X.B.  
**TIPTON:**  
 Brewer Baker: Cotton Gin  
**WEST BROMWICH:**  
 Coach & Horses: Sub Zero

● **SUNDAY 8th**  
**BIRMINGHAM:**  
 Barton Arms: Johnny Patrick & Brenda Scott (Lunch)  
 Bournbrook: The Set/Ian Campbell/Excelsior Jazz Band  
 Crown, Corporation St: Trappa  
 Eagle & Tur: Missing Persons

Three Maggies Hall Greer: Missing Persons  
**COVENTRY:**  
 The Venue: E.M.F./Suppt  
**NEWCASTLE-U-LYME**  
 Tiffany: Roy Wood's Helicopters  
**SOLIHULL:**  
 The Viking:  
 Country Reunion

● **TUESDAY 10th**  
**BIRMINGHAM:**  
 Hobmoor: Patsy Powell & The Goodtimers  
 Hunters Moor: Quill  
 Mercat: Sport  
 Odeon: Harry Chapin  
 Opposite Lock: Willy & The Poor boys  
 Queens Head Erdington: Country Travellers  
 Railway: Money  
 Tyburn House: Questionnaires  
**FOUR OAKS:**  
 Crown: Saracen  
**LEAMINGTON SPA:**  
 The Crown: Xperts  
**SUTTON COLDFIELD:**  
 Boldmere Hotel: Eagle Jazz Band  
**WOLVERHAMPTON:**  
 Poly: Orphan

● **WEDNESDAY 11th**  
**BIRMINGHAM:**  
 Barrel Organ: Osprey  
 Hobmoor: White River Band  
 Hunters Moor: Paradox  
 Tyburn House: High Spirits  
 Railway: Handsome Beasts  
**FOUR OAKS:**  
 The Crown: Quill  
**LEAMINGTON SPA:**  
 The Crown: V-Babies  
**STONE:**  
 The Wayfarer: Cotton Gin

● **THURSDAY 12th**  
**BIRMINGHAM:**  
 Barley Mow Ward End: Key West  
 Barrel Organ: New Clear Band  
 Bournbrook: Tadpoles/Guilty Millionaires  
 Fighting Cocks: Osprey  
 Golden Cross Harborne: White River Band  
 Golden Eagle: The Pinkies  
 Holte: Quill Mercat: Briton  
 Railway: Dawnbreaker  
 Three Horseshoes Stinchley:  
 Hamilton's Power  
 Hare & Honds: Dealers  
**COVENTRY:**  
 General Wolfe: The Mix  
**FOUR OAKS:**  
 The Crown: Northside Jazz Men  
**LEAMINGTON SPA:**  
 The Crown: Raah  
 Winstons: The Mosquitos  
**NOTTINGHAM:**  
 Rock City: Alex Harvey  
**WEST BROMWICH:**  
 Coach & Horses: Emmitt Till

● **FRIDAY 13th**  
**ALFRETON:**  
 Explosive Products: Cotton Gin  
**BIRMINGHAM:**  
 Barrel Organ: Willy & The Poor boys  
 Crown, Corporation St: Atlantis  
 Fighting Cocks: Dance  
 Golden Eagle: Andy Lloyd & The Wedge  
 Hobmoor: Country Travellers  
 Mercat: Boxer  
 Railway: Dealers  
 Tyburn House: Modemaies  
**BURTON:**  
 76 Club: Witchfynde  
**COVENTRY:**  
 General Wolfe: Chainsaw/Ide Eyes  
**FOUR OAKS:**  
 The Crown: Wrangler  
**LEICESTER:**  
 Hungerton Village Hall: Chug-A-Lug  
**RUGELEY:**  
 White Eagle: Big Daisy  
**SHIFNAL:**  
 The Star: Bleeding Hearts  
**STOKE:**  
 N. Staffs Poly: Afrikan Star/Tadpoles  
**STRATFORD:**  
 Ettington Park Manor: More  
**SUTTON:**  
 Tech. College: Denizens

● **SATURDAY 14th**  
**BIRMINGHAM:**  
 Crown, Corporation St: Sykes  
 Fighting Cocks: Weapon of Peace/Saturday Fourteenth  
 Hare & Hounds: Saffron Summerfield  
 Hobmoor: Palladin  
 Mercat: Enigma  
 Newman College: Paradox  
 Springfield Tennis Club: Harvey Andrews  
 Tyburn House: Bert & Les  
 Westhill College: Dealers  
**COVENTRY:**  
 General Wolfe: Johnny Storm  
 Hope & Anchor: Dance only  
 Dance  
 Lanchester Poly: Chainsaw  
**DUDLEY:**  
 J.B.'s: More  
**LEAMINGTON SPA:**  
 Ladbroke Village Hall: Chug-A-Lug  
**NOTTINGHAM:**  
 Rock City: Bad Manners  
**SHIFNAL:**  
 The Star: Assyne  
**STRATFORD:**  
 Green Dragon: The Mosquitos  
**WEST BROMWICH:**  
 Coach & Horses: Willy & The Poorboys  
**WILLENHALL:**  
 The Cavalcade: Sub Zero  
**WIMBLEBURY:**  
 Double M Club: Big Daisy  
**WOLVERHAMPTON:**  
 The Fourways: White River Band  
 Gifford Arms: Tall Story

● **SUNDAY 15th**  
**BIRMINGHAM:**  
 Barton Arms: Johnny Patrick & Brenda Scott (Lunch)  
 Crown, Corporation St: Flair  
 Eagle & Tur: Missing Persons  
 Erdington Queens Head: Key West  
 Golden Cross Harborne: White River Band  
 Holte: Mothers Worry  
 Maxwells Plum: Alto Ego  
 Railway: Sweet Revenge  
 Tyburn House: (Lunch) Rick Barnes (Eve) Bert & Les

**WEST BROMWICH:**  
 Coach & Horses: Andy Lloyd & The Wedge  
**WOLVERHAMPTON:**  
 Lafayette: Quads

● **MONDAY 16th**  
**BIRMINGHAM:**  
 Drakes Drum: Quill  
 Mercat: No Faith  
 Opposite Lock: Big Daisy  
 Railway: Viking  
 Romeo & Juliets: Chinatown  
 Three Maggies Hall Greer:  
 Missing Persons  
**COVENTRY:**  
 Hope & Anchor: Largely R 'n' P  
 The Venue: Human Cabbages  
 White Swan: Helpless Huw & The Hesitations  
**NOTTINGHAM:**  
 Rock City: George Melly  
**SOLIHULL:**  
 The Viking:  
 Paradox

● **TUESDAY 17th**  
**BIRMINGHAM:**  
 Hobmoor: White River Band  
 Hunters Moor: Quill  
 Mercat: Wicked Sister  
 Queens Head Erdington: Country Travellers  
 Railway: Money  
 Tyburn House: Bryan Ward Four  
**FOUR OAKS:**  
 The Crown: Saracen  
**LEAMINGTON SPA:**  
 The Crown: Aucadion  
**MELTON MOWBRAY:**  
 Pie & Cheese Club: Cotton Gin  
**SUTTON COLDFIELD:**  
 The Boldmere Hotel: Zenith Hot Stompers

● **WEDNESDAY 18th**  
**BIRMINGHAM:**  
 Barrel Organ: Osprey  
 Hobmoor: Key West  
 Hunters Moor: Paradox  
 Mercat: Blues Night  
 Tyburn House: City Limits  
 Railway: Handsome Beasts  
**FOUR OAKS:**  
 The Crown: Quill  
**LEAMINGTON SPA:**  
 The Crown: The Editors  
**RUBERY:**  
 The Dingle: White River Band

● **THURSDAY 19th**  
**BIRMINGHAM:**  
 Barley Mow Ward End: Key West  
 Barrel Organ: New Clear Band  
 Fighting Cocks: Osprey  
 Golden Cross Harborne: Cotton Gin  
 Golden Eagle: Close Rivals  
 Holte: Quill Mercat: Briton  
 Railway: Dawnbreaker  
 Three Horseshoes, Stinchley:  
 Midwest County  
**FOUR OAKS:**  
 The Crown: Northside Jazz Men  
**LEAMINGTON SPA:**  
 The Crown: Missen - Buchrie  
 Winstons: The Mosquitos  
**NOTTINGHAM:**  
 Rock City: The Stranglers  
**STONEHOUSE:**  
 Crown & Anchor: Aucadion  
**WEST BROMWICH:**  
 Coach & Horses: Emmitt Till

● **FRIDAY 20th**  
**BIRMINGHAM:**  
 Barrel Organ: Willy & The Poor boys  
 Crown, Corporation St: Atlantis  
 Fighting Cocks: Slag Benefit  
 Golden Eagle: Starfighters  
 Hobmoor: Sydewynder  
 Mercat: Boxer Railway: Bandanna  
 Tyburn House: Flight  
**BURTON:**  
 76 Club: Brooklyn

**COVENTRY:**  
 Allesley Hotel: White River Band  
 General Wolfe: Dee-go-tees  
 Coundon School: Chainsaw  
**DARLSTON:**  
 Town Hall: Assyne/Mick Hill Band  
**FOUR OAKS:**  
 The Crown: Wild Silk  
**HEREFORD:**  
 Market Tavern: Aucadion  
**NOTTINGHAM:**  
 Rock City: After The Fire  
**SHIFNAL:**  
 The Star: Switches  
**WORDSLEY:**  
 The Ashwood: Cotton Gin

● **SATURDAY 21st**  
**BIRMINGHAM:**  
 Crown, Corporation St: Sykes  
 Fighting Cocks: This Product/Paritans/Shaft  
 Hare & Hounds: Telephone Bill & The Smooth Operators  
 Hobmoor: Bromford County  
 Lyndor: Cotton Gin  
 Mercat: Dawnbreaker  
 Railway: The Dealers  
 Tyburn House: Bert & Les  
 Hopwood Chequers: Big Daisy  
**COVENTRY:**  
 Hope & Anchor: Dance Only  
 Dance  
**DROITWICH:**  
 Star & Wagon: Chug-A-Lug  
**DUDLEY:**  
 J.B.'s: Fatal Charm  
**RUBERY:**  
 Rose & Crown: White River Band  
**MALVERN:**  
 Mount Pleasant Hotel: Aucadion  
**SHIFNAL:**  
 The Star: Accelerators  
**STRATFORD:**  
 The Boathouse: The Mosquitos  
**SUTTON COLDFIELD:**  
 Midland Red Social Club: Key West  
**WEST BROMWICH:**  
 Coach & Horses: Standards  
**WOLVERHAMPTON:**  
 Gifford Arms: Hamburger Mary

● **SUNDAY 22nd**  
**BIRMINGHAM:**  
 Barton Arms: Johnny Patrick & Brenda Scott (Lunch)  
 Crown, Corporation St: Flair  
 Eagle & Tur: Missing Persons  
 Erdington Queens Head: Key West  
 Holte: Penny Black  
 Maxwells Plum: Pazzaz  
 Railway: Sweet Revenge  
 Tyburn House: (Lunch) Rick Barnes (Eve) Bert & Les  
**RUBERY:**  
 Rose & Crown: White River Band  
**TAMWORTH:**  
 Mile Oak Hotel: Cotton Gin  
**WEST BROMWICH:**  
 Coach & Horses: Ferrari  
**WOLVERHAMPTON:**  
 Lafayette: Sub Zero

● **MONDAY 23rd**  
**BIRMINGHAM:**  
 Drakes Drum: Quill  
 Mercat: Trident  
 Railway: Viking  
 Romeo & Juliets: Cryer  
 Three Maggies, Hall Greer: Missing Persons  
 Tyburn House: R & R Night  
**COVENTRY:**  
 Hope & Anchor: Largely R 'n' B  
 The Venue: Partizans/Goz Toys  
**SOLIHULL:**  
 The Viking: White River Band  
**STAFFORD:**  
 Riverside Centre: Dealers  
 Malto Hops: Aucadion

● **TUESDAY 24th**  
**BIRMINGHAM:**  
 Erdington Queens Head: Country Travellers

Hunters Moor: Quill  
 Mercat: Flight  
 Railway: Money  
 Tyburn House: The Bryans  
**FOUR OAKS:**  
 The Crown: Saracen  
**SUTTON COLDFIELD:**  
 Boldmere Hotel: Eagle Jazz Band

● **WEDNESDAY 25th**  
**BIRMINGHAM:**  
 Barrel Organ: Osprey  
 Golden Eagle: Q Tips/Denizens  
 Hobmoor: Palladin  
 Hunters Moor: Paradox  
 Mercat: Blues Night  
 Odeon: Camel  
 Railway: Handsome Beasts  
 Tyburn House: Bert & Les  
**FOUR OAKS:**  
 The Crown: Quill

● **THURSDAY 26th**  
**BIRMINGHAM:**  
 Barley Mow Ward End: Key West  
 Barrel Organ: New Clear Band  
 Fighting Cocks: Osprey  
 Golden Cross Harborne: B.B. Country Band  
 Golden Eagle: Babylon Rebels  
 Holte: Quill  
 Kinghurst Labour Club: Key West/  
 Johnny Allen Duo  
 Mercat: Briton  
 Railway: Dawnbreaker  
 Three Horseshoes Stinchley:  
 Dallas  
**COVENTRY:**  
 General Wolfe: Wilko Johnson  
**FOUR OAKS:**  
 The Crown: Northside Jazz Men  
**LEAMINGTON SPA:**  
 The Crown: Azores  
 Royal Spa Centre: Q Tips/Suppt  
 Winstons: The Mosquitos  
**LEICESTER:**  
 Enderby Social Club: Cotton Gin  
**NOTTINGHAM:**  
 Rock City: U.K. Subs/Anti Pasti  
**SHIFNAL:**  
 The Star: Fear of Flying  
**WOLVERHAMPTON:**  
 Barley Mow: Sub Zero

● **FRIDAY 27th**  
**BIRMINGHAM:**  
 Barrel Organ: Willy & The Poor boys  
 Crown, Corporation St: Atlantis  
 Fighting Cocks: Graffiti  
 Golden Eagle: Xpertz  
 Hobmoor: State Express  
 Mercat: Boxer  
 Railway: Bandanna  
 Top Rank: U.K. Subs  
 Tyburn House: Chucknell  
**BURTON:**  
 76 Club: Chevy  
**COVENTRY:**  
 General Wolfe: The Mix  
**FOUR OAKS:**  
 The Crown: Palladin  
**KIDDERMINSTER:**  
 Cornberton Arms: Hamburger Mary  
**NOTTINGHAM:**  
 Rock City: Gordon Giltrap  
**SHIFNAL:**  
 The Star: Straight Jocelyn  
**WOLVERHAMPTON:**  
 Gifford Arms: Singles

● **SATURDAY 28th**  
**BIRMINGHAM:**  
 Crown, Corporation St: Trappa  
 Golden Eagle: Quads  
 Hobmoor: White River Band  
 Mercat: Chainsaw  
 Railway: The Dealers  
 Tyburn House: Bert & Les  
**COVENTRY:**  
 General Wolfe: Black Cats  
 Hope & Anchor: Dance Only  
 Dance  
**DUDLEY:**  
 J.B.'s: Willy & The Poorboys  
**NOTTINGHAM:**  
 Rock City: Odyssey

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**Lichfield is fast establishing itself as one of the most unlikely musical hotbeds of the Midlands.**

This tiny, 30,000 population Staffordshire city has so many bands it seems as though there's a budding superstar in every household.

Back in January, three of the town's brightest hopes joined forces with the local newspaper, the Lichfield Mercury, to stage a show-piece rock show at the city's biggest venue, the 400 seat Civic Hall.

Heavy rockers Big Daisy, a band which is steadily building a name for itself throughout the Midlands, topped the bill.

They played a 45 minute set, as did Victorian Parents — an excellent New Wave outfit with a sound they describe as 'organised musical entropy' — and RPM, a modern pop band with an average age of 17.

Big Daisy showed just why Tommy Vance thought they were worth airing on his Radio 1 Friday Rock Show a few weeks back.

Hard, heavy and tight, with a fine sense of dynamics and the ability to throw in some delicate, almost folkly sounds the group brought the gig to a storming close.

Standout numbers were their fine opener 'UFO', both sides of the first single 'Fever' and 'Footprints On The Water', 'Witches', and 'Day Of The Damned'.

Spam Spence on vocals and bass, Roger Fox on guitar and drummer Deg Newman looked and sounded the part of a prime hard rock outfit to the hilt throughout their set.

His two mates also more than earned their beer money, giving the capacity crowd a show to remember.

Musically the night was made for me by the Victorian Parents, who must surely be just one break away from the big time.

Sounding like a fusion of the Police, Robert Fripp, and Peter Gabriel with something all their own thrown in, their music has a disconcerting, frightening edge which is spellbinding to listen to.

Their tight sound — born out of weeks on tour in Germany and Belgium visiting USAF bases and daily rehearsals — may not be wildly commercial, but it's immediate appeal and lyrical topicality is worth experiencing.

You can dance to it too! First on the bill always has the toughest time — but RPM provided a 100 mph set of raw-edged vitality which gave the other two groups something to follow.

Mark James on vocals, Brian Cropper on drums, Bob Pritchard on guitar, Duncan Rule on Keyboards, and 'Bails' Bailey on bass really enjoyed themselves, and showed a lot of promise for the future.

The music was superb all night, but no matter how good the musicians, a bad PA system can easily ruin a gig.

Luckily, the Lichfield Mercury Sounds Around/Poptones New Year Concert had the benefit of what is definitely one of the best PAs in the Midlands, the city's own Omega Sound Systems.

Keith Saiger, engineer Paul Harvey, and their crew provided a sound which was as clear as anything I've heard anywhere in the country.

# Lichfield Licks!



The Victorian Parents soundcheck



Spam Spence, Deg Newman, and Roger Fox — Big Daisy at the Omega mixing desk

*In the event of a protracted Ansell's strike resulting in the prolonged closure of several live music venues we hope that none of them will feel unable to reopen with a live music policy due to the inevitable run-down of trade and custom. Ansell's own three major City gigs — the Barrel Organ, the Railway, and the Golden Eagle — and if we should lose any of these venues it would be sad indeed. Perhaps the Musicians Union should point out the probable long-term effect on their members to the TGWU. We pity John Dempsey at the Barrel Organ who unloaded 45 barrels only*

## ...and lastly

to have the flying pickets load them back onto the truck . . . . . Unsavoury cassette received from Worcester's A Brigade that features a track called the 'Yorkshire Ripper'. Nobody at BB felt inclined to review this epitome of bad taste . . . . . The Bureau are poised to sign for a major record company — the whisper is that the field has narrowed down to Phonogram or Island, with the former as clear favourites . . . . . Sad to hear of the break-up of Birmingham band England who at one point looked about to cut it . . . . . Saxa of the Beat names Buddy Rich concert at the Odeon on March 16, Buddy also appears on the Muppet Show on February 15th . . . . .

City Boy reportedly deep in rehearsal at the Opposite Lock — a niterie which commendably keeps its drinks at pub prices from 9.00 until 11.30 . . . . . With the King of Kool Kevin Rowlands firmly ensconced at EMI with Al Archer and Big Jim, and the Bureau about to put ink on paper, whither the last Dexy, Andde Leeke? He was last spotted driving his Maserati on Beggars Banquet . . . . . Thrillers set to play a long overdue City gig when they appear at the Cedar Club on February 26th — not to be missed . . . . . Tony Garnett's 'Prostitute' talkie previewed at the Futurist late January but no general release date yet. The film features two songs by the Gangsters on the

soundtrack . . . . . Cockney Reject Micky Geggus and Kids Next Door roadie Grant Flemming made an unadvertised appearance at Walsall Crown Court recently. Neither of them went down well but both received encores — Micky: 6 months suspended sentence plus £500 costs and Grant: 150 hours community service plus £200 costs. Scurrilous rumours that the community service consists of keeping the Kids Next Door off the road cannot be discounted. The two were convicted on a charge of assaulting two people after a Birmingham gig last year . . . . . Judas Priest tour off — could it be down to a rift within the band centred around Dave Holland . . . . . Upcoming Army single on Coventry's MAP Records entitled 'Kick It Down' . . . . . We hear reports that Diamond Head are storming as April Wine tour support . . . . .

**Blues Rock Band forming.** Lead and Bass require vocalist 1, frontman drummer and keyboards to complete line-up. Demo tape recently completed. Tel. Wolverhampton 741461 Colin.

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