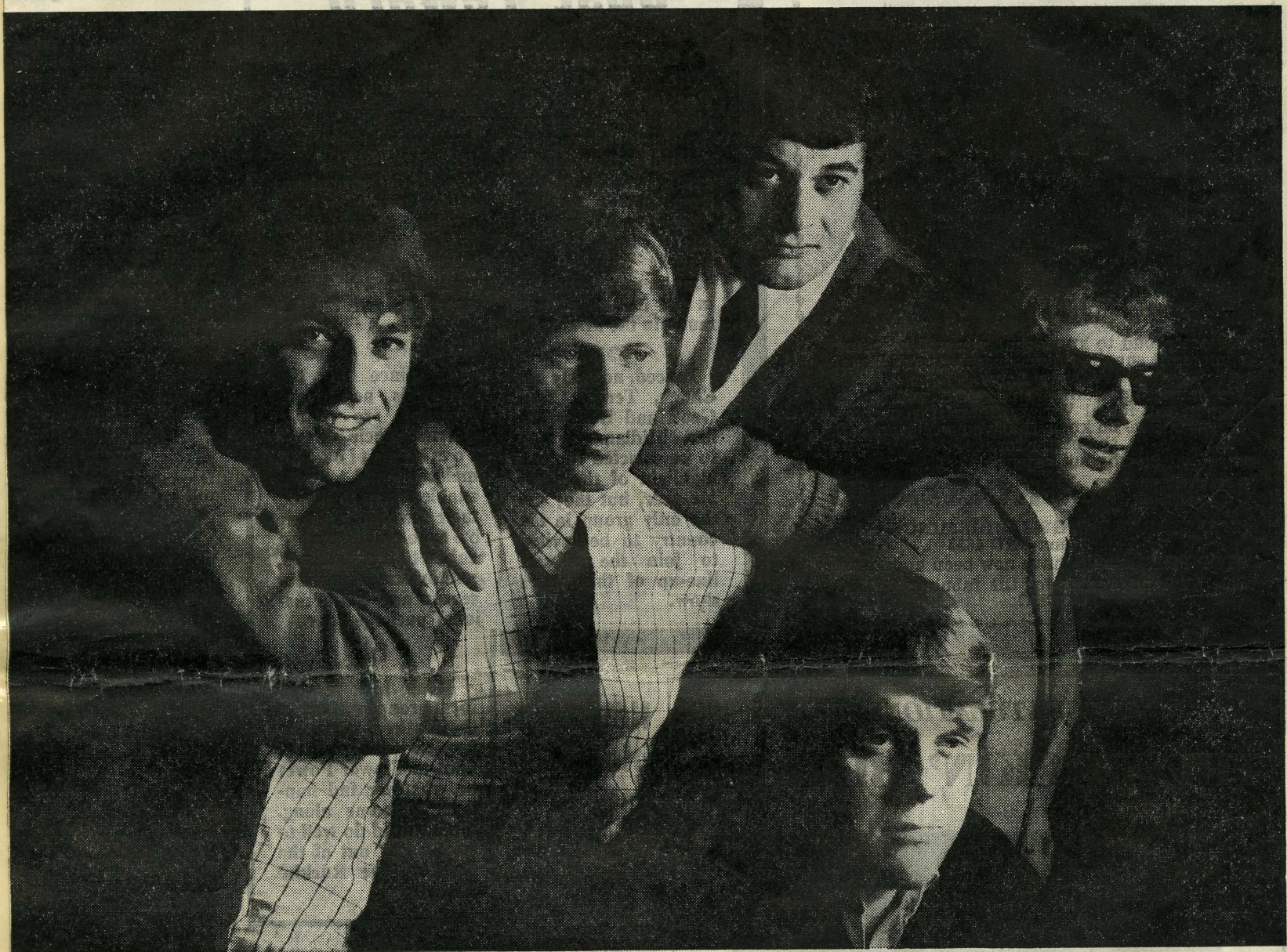


MIDLAND BEAT

Number 45 *OCT/NOV 1967* Price One Shilling

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Clive Lea (front) and (left to right) Terry Bond, Geoff Turton, Chuck Botfield and Bobby Thomson. —Picture: Dezo Hoffmann Ltd.

The Berries' Royal secret

THE Rockin' Berries for the Royal Variety Show! Yes, that's the fantastic news that has delighted pop fans throughout the Midlands.

"We're thrilled to have been invited to appear," said a jubilant Terry Bond. "It's obviously the most exciting thing that has happened to us."

The appearance of the Berries in the Royal Variety Show at the London Palladium on November 13 shows just how they established themselves as an act appealing to all members of the family.

"We're all the more conscious of the honour because we are the only group invited to appear," exclaimed Chuck Botfield. "We're determined to live up to the occasion by giving the show of our lives."

Full line-up of the Berries is lead guitarist Chuck Botfield, vocalist-cum-comic Clive Lea, rhythm guitarist Geoff Turton, bass

guitarist Bobby Thomson and drummer Terry Bond.

The Berries are having new suits from Jackson the Tailor at Wolverhampton specially for the show. But exactly what they will be doing in their spot is a secret.

'Up my sleeve'

"I've got an idea for an impersonation with a royal flavour about it," admits Clive Lea, whose impression of Harold Wilson brings the house down in the group's act. "But I'm keeping it up my sleeve until the night of the show."

Since making two big hit records, "He's In Town" and "Poor Man's Son," Birmingham's Berries have concentrated on becoming all-round entertainers, resulting in summer seasons at Great Yarmouth, Blackpool and Bournemouth, as well as pantomime at Wolverhampton and Stockton.

Another hit

They have also appeared four times in ATV's "Sunday Night at the London Palladium."

Apart from the Royal date, the Berries' future commitments include a lengthy tour with Engelbert Humperdinck, pantomime at Torquay and a third cabaret season in Bermuda next Easter.

What more could they want? "Well, it would be great if we could get another hit disc," admitted Chuck Botfield.

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Picture Editor: JIM SIMPSON

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Just reward

CONGRATULATIONS, Rockin' Berries! Never has a pat on the back been more deserving than in the case of this quintet from Birmingham.

For their spot in this year's Royal Variety Show is an honour unprecedented in the history of pop music in the Midlands.

Indeed, not only are Chuck, Terry, Clive, Geoff and Bobby the first Midlands group to be selected for this highlight of the show biz year, but they are the only group in the country to be invited to join the all-star line-up of this year's show.

But it is surely not so much as a pop group but as entertainers that the Berries have earned this Royal feather in their cap. It is recognition of the way they have graduated from belting out beat to presenting an act that has something for everyone, from two to 92.

A place in the charts is no longer essential to the Berries. Their shrewd combination of melody and mirth enables them to divide their working year between lucrative cabaret engagements, pantomime, summer season and the occasional package tour.

Meanwhile, other local groups remain in the depths of obscurity by switching from Soul to Flower Power or whatever fad happens to come along. They would do well to take a leaf out of the book of the Rockin' Berries.

New blood for Method

THE Method is still a name prominent on the local scene—even though there have been five changes of personnel within the last few months.

Of the original group, only the organist and bass remain. New blood has been drawn from such well-known outfits as the Rest and the Jump.

Line-up now comprises John "Gobbler" Goble (organ), John Bond (bass), Tony Iommi (lead), Jesse Ward (drums), John "Acker" Blizzard (tenor, clarinet, flute), Chris Smith (vocals) and Philip George Savage (vocals).

The Method are now fully professional and have joined the growing ranks of Birmingham recording groups after receiving a very tempting offer from Polydor Records.

● First of a new series in which we spotlight a Midlands "Show Business Personality of the Month."

Roy Edwards: 22 years of entertaining

WE certainly have an abundance of talent in the Midlands, one of the most popular cabaret artistes and certainly one of the busiest, being ROY EDWARDS, who will best be remembered for his many appearances on Television's "Lunch Box" programmes, writes Pat Hassell.

Not many artistes today can match his record, going back twenty two years.

His broadcasting started in 1945, so his broadcasts run into thousands, including his own radio series for the last three years.

Future dates

Roy's coming radio dates will be on Thursday's "Roundabout," on November 11 and 23 and December 7 and 21. He will also be in B.B.C. 1's "Late Night Extra" on Friday, October 20.

Television-wise, too, he holds quite a record, for during his six-year association with A.T.V.'s "Lunch Box," he appeared in no less than 1,255 programmes.

At the moment, he is being kept very busy in cabaret, which takes him all over the country.

Charity shows

He is an artist who, although busy with his own commitments, is always ready to come forward in organizing or to appear in many worthy charity shows.

I therefore nominate Roy Edwards "Midlands Show Business Personality of the Month."

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NOW TUBBY'S CUP IS

FULL

WELL done, Tubby Dunn! This popular leader of the resident trio at Birmingham's Gay Tower Ballroom has been awarded a cup for his group as one of the

best bands on the Mecca circuit.

"We're thrilled to bits," enthused Tubby, sipping a celebration glass of champagne. "We didn't think we had a chance because the

cup could have gone to any one of over 100 other bands working on the Mecca circuit"

The cup is a fitting tribute to the enthusiasm Tubby and the boys have put into their work since they arrived at the Gay Tower 12 months ago.

In fact, modest Tubby, a bass guitarist and vibes player, gives full credit to the support he has received from guitarist-organist Johnny Andrews and drummer Tommy Farnell.

LUDWIG KIT

The boys have celebrated their success in a way that will guarantee them an even better sound. Tommy has bought the latest Ludwig kit from Yardleys and Johnny has treated himself to a Hammond organ from Cranes.

"The addition of the organ in particular must improve our general sound," commented Tubby. "It will give us so much more scope for broadcasting work."

Versatility is the keynote of the Tubby Dunn outfit. They cover the whole gamut of pop music from Morgan James Duo arrangements to beat.

Only bachelor in the trio is Tommy Farnell, who comes from Handsworth. Johnny was married to Pat



Tubby Dunn (centre), Tommy Farnell (left) and Johnny Andrews, with their cup.

Hopwood, of Wolverhampton, on July 22, whilst Tubby wed Linda McAndrew from Harborne five days later.

But Pat and Linda are far

from the only fans of the Tubby Dunn Combo. They put so much personality into their performances at the Gay Tower that they have plenty of other admirers.

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THURSDAY—Candlelight Party Night. 8 p.m.—2 a.m. Licensed bar till 1.30. Admission 10/- double ticket, 6/- single ticket before 10.30 p.m., 7/6 per head after 10.30 p.m.

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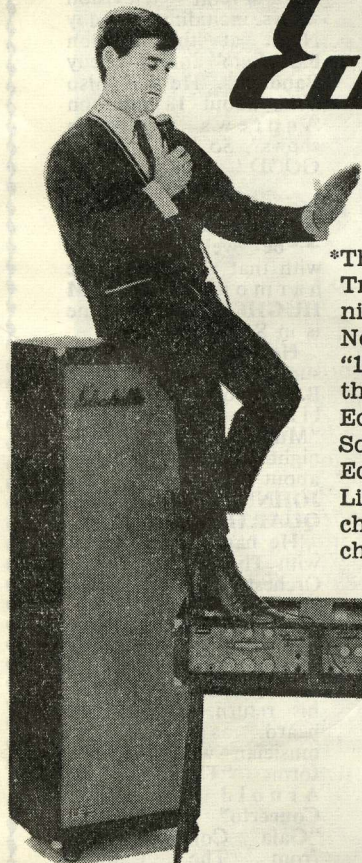
SATURDAY—Saturday Night Special. Dancing 7.30 p.m.—2 a.m. Licensed bar till 1.30. Admission 7/6 before 10.30 p.m., 10/- after 10.30 p.m.

SUNDAY—Sunday Night Out. Dancing to BRIAN PEARSALL AND HIS BIG BAND. 7 p.m.—11 p.m. Licensed bar till 10.30 p.m. Members and guests 6/-. For table reservations, at no extra charge, 'phone John Morgan—EDG 0107.

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MIDLAND NIGHT BEAT

ALTHOUGH the north and north-east of England have the reputation for the best and largest clubs, Birmingham is fast catching up.

In the last twelve months, Birmingham has become much more "club minded", and people are taking more and more interest in cabaret.

The lavish **Castaways Club** in Birmingham is just celebrating its first anniversary, and is continuing to bring big star names to the city, among which have been **TOM JONES**, **ENGLEBERT HUMPERDINCK**, **MAX BYGRAVES**, **CLEO LAINE** and **JOHNNY DANKWORTH**.

P. J. PROBY, the American singer, whom I had the pleasure of meeting there told me that The Castaways Club compared very favourably with any of the night clubs in Las Vegas, and was an artist's paradise.

The new band there is **THE RONNIE CARYL BAND**, who were previously at The Pigalle in London, and before that at The Latin Quarter. Their music is appreciated by artiste and audience alike.

John Reeve is a very charming host and gives a warm and personal welcome to old and new members.

About the new drinking laws, which could have an adverse effect on club life, John Reeve says they are contemplating some form of transport system for their patrons, which I think would be a paying proposition.

Forthcoming attrac-

tions at The Castaways include **BILLY ECKSTINE**, **ACKER BILK**, **THE BARRON KNIGHTS** and **KATHY KIRBY**.

WE are now looking forward to the opening of the new club **La Dolce Vita** on the Smallbrook Ringway in November.

If it is anything at all like its namesake in Newcastle-on-Tyne, it will be fabulous, and, being a **Bailey Organisation** club, cannot fail to attract.

Here are just a few of the top stars we can expect to see:

The one-and-only "Mr. Showbiz," **FRANKIE VAUGHAN**, **TOM JONES**, **BOB MONKHOUSE**, **JACKIE TRENT**, **SANDIE SHAW**, **THE WITNESSES SHOW BAND** and many, many more.

The Baileys have sent their charming and attractive representative down here to promote membership, visiting firms and directors, etc., for block membership.

Anyone interested should get in touch with Miss Sheila St. Clair. I hope to report on the opening of the new club in next month's issue.

*

THE Cresta Theatre Club in Solihull is also just about one year old, and is doing better business than ever.

It has seating capacity for about 800 people, but can hold up to 1,000.

The running of the club is in the very capable hands of the general manager and host, genial Mr. H.



LEMON TREE SIGNED

The Lemon Tree are the latest Birmingham group to be signed by a London agency. They are now managed by Galaxy, where Ron King acts as manager with Tony Burfield and Sue Rose handling bookings. The boys are currently sorting out material for their first disc. Line-up is Taffy Taylor (vocals), Gag Wortley (organ), Keith Smart (drums), Monty Meredith (lead guitar) and Dek Arnold (bass).

Campos, who is always very helpful and respected by everyone in the business.

THE GEORGE TAYLOR TRIO provide very entertaining musical backing, and are a complete act in themselves.

They have done lots of television and radio work, and George himself is a brilliant pianist and arranger.

The resident dancers are the **VIVA SHOW GIRLS**, a well-dressed and always original troupe, and the resident compere is likable **JERRY HATCH**, a very talented boy with a fine singing voice and sense of comedy (his impression of Norman Wisdom is hilarious).

THE BACHELORS were a recent attraction, and stars booked for future shows include **MIKE NEWMAN**, **HOPE AND KEEN**, **ERIC DELANEY**, **THE NEW FACES**, **FREDDIE** ("Parrot Face") **DAVIES** and **THE DALLAS BOYS**.

Their policy is to give very good value for money, and a full four hour show is presented nightly.

*

THE Ambassadors Club has recently had a "new look". There is an attractive bar in the cabaret room which certainly adds more atmosphere.

The old cocktail bar is now the casino and the previous casino room is a comfortable cocktail lounge opening onto the cabaret room.

It is not necessary to have a meal to see the cabaret as before, although a good a-la-carte menu is still provided together with a snack menu.

THE ROY KENTON COMBO provide the

excellent backing for cabaret and dancing, and Roy is now the host.

*

THE Hillfield Hall Country Club in Solihull was once a beautiful old country mansion, and still retains its olde worlde charm, standing in its own extensive grounds.

Cabaret is starting again this month with the celebration of the club's first "birthday" and presenting in cabaret those two glamorous Birmingham songsters, **THE MAYDELS**, who have another very important date, supporting Dickie Henderson at the famous Batley Variety Club.

*

IVOR Novello's Music is being presented at Solihull Civic Hall on October 25, starring **LUCILLE GRAHAM** with **MIRIAM HORNE** and **HERBERT BOWEN** with **LESLIE DUNN** as narrator, and **The Birmingham and Midland Operatic Society**, directed by **PHYL GROVE**.

Olde Tyme Music Hall is also coming to Solihull Civic Hall on November 21 with **PETER ROBINSON** of television and radio fame, and **FRANKIE HOLMES**, the comedy magician, after his successful summer season with Ronnie Hilton at Bridlington.

*

JANE FYFFE, star of "Robert & Elizabeth," in London and on tour, has been appearing in Birmingham during a short break before her next musical.

She was at **The Manor Hotel**, Meriden, on October 7 followed by the Fisher and Ludlow

Social Club on October 22.

Jane will be remembered for her part as Elizabeth in the production of "Robert and Elizabeth" at the Birmingham Theatre earlier this year.

*

THE A.T.S. AGENCY whose head office is in Leeds, have also for the past nine months had an office in Birmingham.

This branch is being run by **ROY DOUGLAS**, who is himself a very talented comedian and vocalist, having appeared on several television shows, including "Sunday Night at the London Palladium" and "Comedy Bandbox". He has also done about 18 Eamonn Andrews "warm-up shows". So he has to be GOOD!

*

RADIO listeners must be well acquainted with that virtuoso of the harmonica, **JIM HUGHES**, whose home is in Solihull.

He has enjoyed a most successful year with the B.B.C. on programmes like "Swingalong", "Music Through Midnight" and "Roundabout" with the **JOHNNY PATRICK QUARTET**.

He has also broadcast with The Midland Light Orchestra, and on "Music in the Air" series.

He has been enjoying the last two cruise voyages entertaining on the "Queen Mary". Upon his return, Jim will be heard as a serious musician when he performs "The Malcolm Arnold Harmonica Concerto" on B.B.C.'s "Gala Concert Hall" from The Camden Theatre in London.

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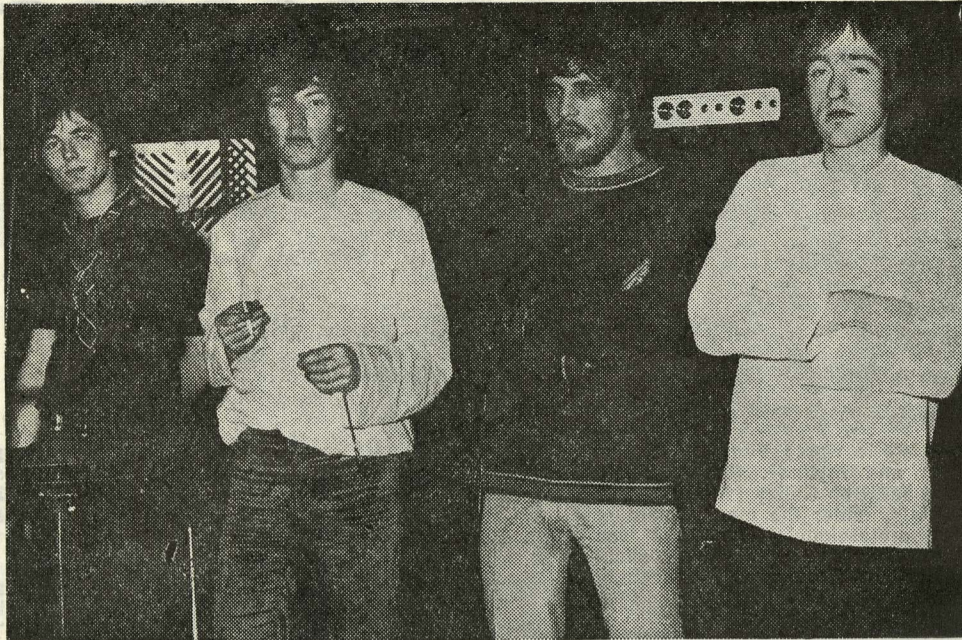
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ACCENT on AMPS

SIMON Dupree and the Big Sound are the latest top group to switch to Park, the amplification made by Cleartone Musical Instruments Ltd., an associate company of Jones and Crossland, the Birmingham Musical instrument retailers.

Others already using Park include the Move, Procul' Harum, Pinkerton's Colours, Second City Sound, the Applejacks, Ugly's and the Peeps.

"Several other well-known groups have also been in touch with us about changing over to Park," says Keith Tonks, a director of Cleartone Musical Instruments. "And numerous Midland groups change over to this equipment every week."

Meanwhile, the company is continuing to hold clinics throughout the country to demonstrate Park. One has just been held in Cardiff and another is planned shortly for Bournemouth.

There is also a big demand for the new Park guitar, which is now available in a range of attractive colours, including golden sunburst and cherry red. It costs 126 guineas.

Laney in demand

ANOTHER locally-produced amplification system, Laney, is also creating a lot of interest, especially since groups have heard it used by Traffic on their package tour.

In fact, the sole distributors for Laney Sound Systems, Ringway Music, of Birmingham, are finding it difficult to cope with the demand for this equipment.

The popularity of Laney has gratified the two young men who got together to put it on the market—ex-Capitals bass guitarist Lyndon Laney and agent-promoter Bob Thomas.

"Some amplifiers on sale today are terribly over-priced and lacking in quality," maintains Lyndon Laney. "We have set out to provide a quality amplifier at a fair price."

Adds Ringway Music's George Watts: "We are able to provide custom-built Laney systems to customers' specifications, such as for discotheques, as well as a wide range of speaker cabinets. And we quote genuinely undistorted ratings."

Built own speakers

BIRMINGHAM group The Way of Life have designed and built their own speakers, using them in conjunction with standard amplifier units.

John Bonham, the group's 19-year-old drummer, a former carpenter, did the woodwork. An upholsterer friend of the group covered the cabinets in orange leather and fitted them with green speaker cloth.

Finally, Chris Jones, the 21-year-old lead guitarist, wired up the speakers. Chris and bass guitarist Dave Pegg use two 4 x 12" units each.

Nineteen-year-old Dave, former bass guitarist with the Exception and the Ugly's, is the Way of Life's newest member. Their singer, Reg Jones (23), is having another two P.A. columns built to complete the outfit.

Publicity . . . for free!

FREE publicity for groups is being offered by Marlison Electronics of Halesowen. Any group or manager in the area is invited to send a card and photographs for a permanent window display.

So many groups are using Marlison maintenance services that promoters have become aware of the interest and are contacting the firm to ask if they can recommend groups.

Marlison specialise in the maintenance of P.A. guitar amplifiers, echo units, etc. They also build special transistorised equipment and group members are welcome to consult their expert, John Williams.

Guitar strings and other accessories are stocked, too. And there is the advantage of easy parking at the Marlison premises at 176 Hagley Road, Halesowen.



ALL SYSTEMS GO . . . PRO

Meet the Capitol Systems—(left to right) Paul Whitehouse (bass), Dave Bailey (organ and rhythm), Robert Moore (drums), Paul Sargent (lead) and Bob Catley (vocals). This smart, young Birmingham group, under the management of Vic Sims, have just turned professional. The move was inevitable because of increasing commitments as far afield as Peterborough, Reading, London, Cirencester, Tewkesbury and Oxford.



Jimmy Powell and the Dimensions—back on the disc scene.

WELL, the Move have been monopolising the headlines with the settlement of the libel action brought by the Prime Minister, Harold Wilson.

The blaze of publicity has perhaps tended to make one overlook the fact that they have chalked up a hat trick of hits with their first three releases—"Night of Fear," "I Can Hear the Grass Grow" and "Flowers in the Rain."

All credit to these five Birmingham boys, especially Roy Wood, composer of all three songs. It may well be that we have in Roy the Midlands' answer to Lennon and McCartney!

Tough for Arthur

BOMBSHELL on the agency scene has been the closing of the A.D.S.E.L. offices. Arthur Smith had the sad task of telling his staff of eight that they had lost their jobs.

The future of A.D.S.E.L. lies in the hands of the holding company, Polydor Records. But Arthur Smith admitted as we went to press that there seemed little possibility of its resuming operations in Birmingham.

Thus comes to an end an agency-cum-promotion set-up responsible for launching 13 records by local groups and singers on the Polydor label in 18 months.

"House of Lords" by the Monopoly was the final release under the A.D.S.E.L. aegis. Others who recorded under the A.D.S.E.L.-Polydor tie-up included U.K. Bonds, John Bull Breed, Two's Company, Nightriders, Giorgio and Marco's Men, Michele, Con-Chords and Bobbie Ember.

Tough for Jimmy

A WARNING to groups with broadcasting aspirations to make sure they are members of the Musicians' Union came with the last-minute dropping of Jimmy Powell and the Dimensions from my "Midland Beat" programme on Radio 4 Midland.

**SE
CI
SC**

The group programme, secretary Phil had not joined Michael Ford their spot.

But Jimmy pleased about lished themselves "Unexpected Hollick and

Time will

IT is before big hit from he has at his time to be f

It has also Race getting their first Magazine." that could w of luck.

I love Vi them in Libe "Imposters c

She writes their humour almost sleep; of owls wok the light."



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Q. Are busin
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COND NY ENE

by Dennis Detheridge



The Move—a hat-trick of hits.

was all set to appear on the... But intervention by local M.U. Boothroyd because the boys... ned the union left producer... i with no option but to cancel

and his lads must still feel... t the way they have re-estab-... lves as a recording group with... 'Mirrors,' recorded at the... Taylor studios at Handsworth.

tell

surely only a matter of time... John Taylor produces a really... these studios. The equipment... disposal is on a par with any-... ound in London.

been good to hear the Idle... g so many plugs on the air for... disc, "Imposters of Life's... Here we have another group... ell make the grade with a bit

vien Holgate's description of... ty Records' press release about... f Life's Magazine."

:"Their accents are soft and... subtle, their manner quiet and... y—rather resembling a quartet... en in the day and blinking in

you sick of the... ness?

ck of some of the... in the business... of the groups—not... them of course—... e attitude of non-... sionalism, whether... go to work or not... portant.

when they get to... nue late, and they... with promoters... to play at a... able level of... this is when I get... f it.

do you think... a successful... y?

ncy in bookings... able to provide... groups—not bril-... groups, but good... s who are consis-... the same and who... put on a good... ed performance... ver they play, not... d performance one... and a bad perfor-... e the next week.

here is a problem... a band, like illness... can find a replace-... quickly, so that the... ter isn't at a loss... group and in the... of late-night clubs... able to provide a... at very short... from another... when and if a... do let them down.

do you think so... agencies fold up?... se of lack of... ncy.

are complaints... groups being un-... le and late for... ements. Do you... any ideas on how... s can be made to... the line?"

THIS is when I get sick of the Business . . .

Continuing our series, The Ten Per Centers, in which the agents of the Midlands are interviewed by "Midland Beat." This month, JOHN SINGER provides the answers to our questions.

A. Well, I have a very strong opinion of groups that are late and it can make people think very badly of you.

But I feel that if a group are late, they've broken their contract and they deserve to be fined for being late in the same way that if a contractor is scheduled to make a delivery and he doesn't, he has to pay for it in some shape or form.

Either in cancellation of whatever it happens to be or some form of penalty clause.

We encourage all our bands to be early but unfortunately we can't go with them. If we went with every group, we'd have to have about 50 directors.

Q. Do you think it's a good thing for the business that there seems to be a monopoly of just two or three agencies in Birmingham handling virtually all the work.

A. I don't think it's a bad thing that there are only two or three agents.

What I do think is a bad thing is that small people come along with no financial backing and attempt to be agents and when they have to stand out a few quid they suddenly fold up and this is what gives agencies a bad name.

What we must remem-

ber at all times is that lots of promoters are very slow at paying and agencies have to be prepared to finance certain promotions as long as they are reasonably sound.

Q. There is a lot of criticism at the moment about payment by cheque. What are your views on this method of payment?

A. Well, there are two reasons why we pay by cheque.

Firstly, the people we're dealing with—not all, again, but a large percentage of bands who aren't under our office—are very lax at paying us our commission and, after all, what we're here for is for commissions.

Therefore, the only way we can guarantee receiving the money is for us to stop it when we pay the cheque.

The other reason, which is probably more important, is that promoters do not always go to their own venues. If they have several dances running on the same night, they do not wish the managers of the promotions to handle payment of the groups.

Also, the groups may have a tendency—certain groups—to ask for more money than they're in fact booked for and in this way we have the problem of sorting it out.

I would say that eighty per cent of the professional bands or semi-pro bands who are well organised are happy with payment by cheques because they know at least their money is reasonably safe.

But what is the problem is when a promoter says he's going to pay by cash and in fact doesn't, then we have a problem. If all promoters paid by cheque, then at least we would know where we were with them and, if the payments didn't come in at the end of the week, or at the end of the month, we would know we could take certain action to get the money.

Q. How do you account for the fact that every Birmingham group that has ever got to the top has done it with London management? Is this a reflection on managements in Birmingham or agencies in Birmingham?

A. I think the reason is basically there is a better chance in London. But for every one that makes it—from the provinces, not necessarily Birmingham—there are hundreds, or if not hundreds, dozens, who don't.

And we see the sad effect of bands who disappear to London and come back after a few

weeks or even a few months with no money, no work, a broken-down van and stories of promoters in the south who owe them fortunes and so-called good agents who haven't done a sausage for them.

There are certain groups who've been lucky, there are certain groups who deserve to be lucky.

But of those who have been lucky there are dozens who have been unlucky and I think it's better for a Birmingham group based in Birmingham to get regular work at reasonable money than take the chance of making the big time because the chances are very slim, especially in this day and age.

Q. But a man like Danny Betesh, for instance, has been able to get groups to the top whilst remaining in Manchester.

A. He was able to do this soon after the emergence of The Beatles from Liverpool. We weren't as fortunate here in Birmingham to see anything in the charts from Birmingham when the Beatles were about. Since then I think

you'll find Danny Betesh hasn't had a top group other than those he's signed from London, i.e. The Troggs and the Who. These groups are London-based groups or groups that were established in London by other offices who he's now taken over on agency but not manage-

ment. There is a subtle difference. Management and agency are two different things. Management, in my opinion, can be based anywhere.

It's sometimes beneficial to have a good London agent but they are few and far between and they are not prepared to sign unknown bands and get them work, which is more important.

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It has been eight months since the foundation of the Midland Agents Association, a group of Midland agents meeting frequently to discuss complaints against agents, promoters and groups.

The aim is for every case to be considered in a completely unbiased manner and, if necessary, appropriate action taken against the offenders, thus benefiting, it is claimed, everybody connected with the entertainment business. But does the MAA wield too much power? This is one of the questions asked by "Midland Beat" editor Dennis Detheridge in this interview with MAA Secretary Pete Gittings.

DENNIS DETHERIDGE



PETE GITTINGS

DD: There was a fear that groups might be unfairly blacklisted by members of the Association. How have you safeguarded against this happening?

P.G.: No group could possibly be blacklisted unfairly with a committee of five different agents who have got to agree completely on any complaint received against such a group, apart from which the members of the Association always give the person complaining and the persons who are being complained about an opportunity to present themselves at the meeting where this complaint is being discussed.

In other words, giving us a chance to hear both sides of the story, which would be investigated in all ways, to make sure that no group, promoter, or agent is being penalised wrongly.

DD: The Association has been condemned by some groups because it is claimed that members of the Association are themselves guilty of slip-ups from time to time.

Is the Association able to take action against one of its own members?

P.G.: Complaints received by the Secretary from groups, agents or promoters are dealt with by the committee, whether it be one of the committee they are complaining about or not.

In fact, we have in the past taken action against a member of the committee.

We are always prepared to consider complaints sent in writing to the Secretary from group members agents

BOTH SIDES OF THE STORY

or promoters if the complaint is serious enough to warrant investigation or to be brought to the committee.

DD: Monopolies can be dangerous and it appears that the Association is made up of people responsible for providing virtually all the work for local groups in the Birmingham area.

Therefore, blacklisting a group almost amounts to ordering its execution. Is it right that the Association should have such power?

P.G.: I disagree with this point as two members of the committee are Wolverhampton and Nottingham agents and I would further point out that this is a Midlands Association and therefore it is obvious that all Midlands agents should be included in this Association.

I would further point out that other agents outside the Birmingham area have been invited to join the committee.

For example, the Worcester and Coventry areas. And interest has been expressed in the Association by agents as far afield as Manchester.

Also, I might add, several agents booking solely artists and dance bands are now members of the Association. And we are working in close conjunction with the Musicians' Union.

No decision is made regarding what action should be taken against any group, agent or promoter unless a unanimous decision is reached by members on the committee. Blacklisting is possibly the wrong word here.

The Midland Agents Association is not interested in blacklisting groups but helping them to get a square deal and the same applies to promoters and fellow agents, whether they be members of the Association or not.

Groups who are complained about are dealt with in accordance with the seriousness of the complaint. If the complaint was raised on two or three occasions after they had been warned, this is what we consider as being serious.

To give an example, a group complained about at one of the meetings had already been warned three times for late arrival, their punishment being 14 days suspension from all work connected with any of the agents attached to the Association.

This had no effect on the group after the 14 days. In fact, this group is now back to normal working procedure and arriving on time. The group concerned also accepted the suspension because they knew they were in the wrong.

DD: Because the members of the Association are all agents, they must surely look at a complaint against a group solely from their own point of view.

Would it not be fairer to the groups if you had group members as members of the Association so that they can make observations from a group's point of view when the conduct of a group is being discussed?

P.G.: The Association is called the Midland Agents Association and therefore cannot allow group members to sit on the board or make observations on complaints raised at meetings, which are, in fact, confidential and only to do with persons connected with the complaint.

The management or leader of a group under discussion is invited to attend to give their side of the story.

The group is getting a fair deal because they are invited to the meeting anyway. As each member of the committee also handles group management they also see the groups' angle to any complaint that we receive.

DD: Groups will obviously have complaints about agents outside the Association. If your aim is to get fair play for groups as well as your own members how do you propose to get agents outside the Association to toe the line?

P.G.: It is obvious that groups, or agents outside the Association, have reason to complain to us and they are dealt with in the same manner as agents among our members.

Most of the agents outside the Association are actually engaging groups, artists and bands from agents within our organisation and therefore this answers the question.

DD: A club booking groups through a particular agency might wish to use another agency if it was

dissatisfied with the service it was getting. However, if they turned to an agency outside the Association, presumably you would regard the changeover as poaching on the part of the agency.

Do you not agree that this attitude would stifle competition based on the business providing the best service earning work?

P.G.: Members of the Association agreed at their first meeting that if a club promoter or any other promoter suggested to them that they wished to change it was agreed that the agent who was being offered the venue would automatically ring the other agent and advise him that he had been offered work at the club.

In this case, this would not be looked upon as poaching, providing the agent being offered the venue did not go to this club making offers for the work involved at this particular venue and whether the agent is within the Association or not it would be far better for this agent to ring the agent involved and tell him as this would be looked upon as being fair and square, which is all this Association is trying to prove.

However, if it was discovered at a later date that this agent went along and actually poached the venue, serious action would be taken against the other agent, whether it be a member of the Association or not.

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STAFFORDSHIRE

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Staffs.

BIRMINGHAM has had its big agency amalgamation (last month's "Midland Beat") and now it is the turn of my county. For without a doubt the biggest news of the month must be the tie-up between Wolverhampton's two top agencies—Astra and Roger Allen.

Under a new agreement these two large forces on the Midland group scene have joined together to form the Astra Allen Agency. The amalgamation officially came into being on October 1st and since then things have been going pretty smoothly according to everyone concerned.

Roger Allen told me: "Yes, we are quite pleased with the way it has turned out so far. It has gone quite well and the prospects for the future appear unlimited."

The new set-up must rank the agency amongst the biggest—if not the biggest—in the Midlands. They now have weekly outlets for groups numbering near the three figure mark and the outfits on their books come to over a score.

Astra will continue to handle the bookings from their Wolverhampton offices while Roger Allen takes care of group management at Tettenhall.

At the Criterion Suite town centre offices, the agency has Maurice Jones and Alan Clayton on bookings; Tony Perry promotions; Geoff Evans and Peter Fielding, outside reps; and four girl receptionists. Administration manager is Len Rowe.

Alan Clayton also told me how well the merger has gone. "A lot better than we expected, in fact. We find people are happier dealing with just one outfit instead of having to go from one to the other as in the past."

Fifteen of the groups that come under the agency are professionals but the full impressive line-up is as follows:—Montanas, Californians, N'Between, Vogues, Finders Keepers, Delroy Good Good Band, Hari Kari, Dual Purpose, Varsity Rag, Intent N' Purpose, Staffords, Parchment People, Lady Jane and The Royaltee, Soul Seekers, Dante's Inferno, U-No-Who, The Fyx, Bostons, Second Thoughts, Penthouse Suite, and The News. Quite a crowd in anyone's language.

● The Montana's new record—a Tony Hatch composition titled "You've Got to be Loved"—was released



on Friday, October 13. It's quite a catchy tune and I rate it their best yet, although I don't think it is quite powerful enough to go crashing into the charts.

Certainly, though, I would expect them to at least crack the top thirty and perhaps enjoy a spell hovering around the twenties.

The disc is certainly getting enough plugs to do just that. Pye named it the record of the week and the boys have got lined up practically every radio pop spot going. Tony Blackburn has given it several good pushes in his early morning show and Radio One as a whole must be playing it somewhere in the region of at least two or three times a day.

Alan Clayton commented: "We are hoping that Friday the 13th will prove the opposite for The Montanas of what it appears for everyone else." In November the group are having a short break before they embark on a nine-day tour of Scotland.

● Also going to Scotland towards the end of November are The Californians. Their new platter, "Follow Me," came out on October 6th and has also been getting some good spins on the B.B.C.'s new station.

Incidentally, according to a poll conducted by Roger Allen, the top groups in Wolverhampton are the two just mentioned and The N'Between. Following them are Finders Keepers, Hari Kari, Varsity Rag, Dual Purpose, Times Square and The News.

Getting back to The Californians, I hear that at the time of going to press the disc is selling quite well and the boys have bought

new cars on the strength of it.

● Cannock's Zero Five gained some useful publicity for themselves before breaking up via a crazy "footprints" stunt.

Yes, the group have often been asked for their autographs but never their footprints. Yet this is the unusual request they received from a fan and obviously they willingly obliged.

So along to the home of lead guitarist Reg Marshall—at 15 Lansbury Drive, Cannock—came 17-years-old Vivienne Cunnington. Vivienne, who works as a career girl at the Scholl foot comfort centre in Wolverhampton, has this unusual hobby of collecting footprints by using a pedograph machine.

Now those of The Zero Five join her collection, which includes The Applejacks, Alan Price, Tom Jones, The Montanas, Chris Farlowe and The Troggs. Zero Five manager Graham Richardson told me he was naturally surprised at the request but the boys thought it was great fun.

● Some news should be available shortly on the recording prospects of The N'Between. But at the time of going to press they were still heavily involved in the legal battle over their recording rights following their change of management to the Astra Allen Agency.

It is expected, however, when the matter is finally straightened, they will probably be issuing a Bee Gees composition.

● The In-Pack from Cannock Wood, near Rugeley, have now changed their name to The Mail and

'Kick' for Gary and Michele

One of the greatest admirers of singing brother-and-sister act Gary Rogers and Michele, is Frankie Vaughan. So it will give this duo from Shirley, Solihull, a special kick when they appear in the same show as Frankie at Batley Variety Club the week commencing November 12th.

Gary and Michele will be appearing on home ground the week of December 10th, when they will be on the same bill as the Dallas Boys at the Cresta Club in Solihull.

It was with Polydor that Michele made her recording debut. But her next single is likely to be for CBS with Johnny Hawkins as recording manager. Frankie Vaughan has recommended a Tom Springfield song for Michele to record.

have also undergone some line-up changes.

Manager Mr. P. Craddock called to tell me that they now comprise: Brian Eustace, lead; Neil Craddock, organist and rhythm; Ian Gwilliam, bass; Brian Hewitt, drums.

The new boys are Brian Eustace and Ian Gwilliam, who have previously played with The Invaders and The Go-Generation. Former lead guitarist Gwen Hughes left to join The Chequers, who have since become The News, and Peter Stephens has joined Herbies' People.

"This new line-up has almost completely changed the group's sound for the better. They are much better musically and can tone down their sound if the audience requests it.

"This is something I feel lets a lot of outfits down. They think all they have to do is make a 'big' noise but this is not the case so much nowadays and I have impressed it upon my group," said Mr. Craddock.

The boys, average age 18, are good instrumentalists and now keener than ever, says their manager. They are also now writing their own numbers.

● The Dual Purpose are the first British group to play Casablanca—and that's quite a boast. This Wolverhampton outfit were first booked for only four weeks but were then asked to stay another two because of their success.

They readily agreed to carry on their four-nights-a-week spot at a night club because it also included their own villa right by the sea thrown in for good measure. They are expected back in November.

NORTHANTS

ONE of the most promising groups in Northants is Phoenix, whose reputation has now spread far outside their native Northampton. In fact, the boys are even considering several tempting offers from abroad.

Linda Hutchins described them as "not only polished but commercial, too," in a review of one of their performances in a recent issue of the "Northamptonshire Advertiser."

Added Miss Hutchins: "The flashing lights and way-out sound generated a fervent excitement, high lighting the much-improved quality of their music.

"Guitarist Brian and organist Loz have perfected the group's vocal sound. Brian's voice has acquired a superfine Stevie Winwood touch and Loz's has matured.

"A lot of the rhythm and blues and soul stuff has disappeared from their repertoire and in its place comes the Phoenix version of music-scene '67 and it was very impressive.

"And the finishing touch to their re-incarnation? Gorgeous wildly coloured kaftans, made specially for them."

So it seems that Phoenix are looking just as colourful as they sound these days. They are obviously all set to go places and it should not take them long getting there if their enthusiasm is anything to go by.

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WALES

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THE passing months have brought their changes in South Wales—and changes, it transpires, which are geared to the natural progressions of the year.

Right now, the scene is autumnal. On stage and off. But while the leaves are dying, the music, daddy, is evergreen, ever-present, ever-vergent.

Read on . . .

● Beautifully named are the *Love Sculpture*, the *Clockwork Motion* and the *Fawn Grass*, all from the western extreme of my patch.

I am bound to remark—as has been my wont in previous dispatches—that I find a good group name a very fair indication of the quality of group performance.

Originality which shows itself in a title is almost always reflected in the music. I am bound to say, too, that as an area, West Wales probably has more colourfully-named groups than any similar sized area anywhere else in the country.

Ecclesiastical collaboration of music and light..!

"THE most creative sound ever to emerge from this country"—that's the rather startling claim about *The Breakthru* on this Birmingham group's publicity material.

And their act is also proclaimed as being "an ecclesiastical collaboration of music and light developing into a sensation of feeling and movement."

One might be inclined to dismiss it as a blatant case of overwriting but any of the *Breakthru*'s fans would disagree. They will also vouch for the accuracy of the descriptions of the individual members of the group.

Gary Aflalo: "Lead vocals from Chicago. Fantastic mover." Keith Abingdon: "Lead Guitar. Vocals. One of the most brilliant guitarists in the Midlands." Bob Booth: "Bass



Guitar. Vocals. We have to keep the girls back when Bob gets going."

Jeff Garratley: "Organ, Vocals. Brilliant. In the last number he completely dismantles his organ while

still playing it." And Jim Layland: "His vicious drumming is perfect and his finale of demolishing his drums adds showmanship to skill."

Sounds like quite a group!

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West Wales, too, produces most of the artistic people, though the only one I will name is Dylan Thomas, who had the sort of poetic paradox mind that seems to come out with names like "fawn grass", "powder tears" and "past tomorrows".

In South Wales, I guess, the poetic heritage died hard while the expressionists put their hands to way of producing a crust and shut down their minds. Enough.

● Then there was the story of the psychedelic goat . . . The stories, in fact, because local vocal duo *The Buddies*, who have lately joined the *Flower People (The Buds?)*, insist on telling a different version to each inquisitor.

Variously — *Hippy*, the psychedelic goat, came to listen to their music as they practised in a shack near the secret Regional Seat of Government (RSG) in the Brecon Beacons; *Hippy* came to them in a dream; *Hippy* stepped from the screen during the 547th performance of "The Sound of Music" at Cardiff's Capitol Theatre.

But I can reveal, fearlessly, exclusively and accurately that *Hippy* came from Cardiff Zoo, Barry, and that his colourful complexion—green head, blue body, red legs—is the result of the application of vegetable dyes by ex-hairdresser *Tony Miles*, one of the *Buddies*.

Recently, the boys—*Tony* and *Hadyn James*—have been scoring in the Northern clubs with *Hippy*. They went down big, too, with *Johnny Hamp*, of Granada's *First-Timer* TV series—particularly with their composition, "Letter From A Soldier," inspired by the Arab-Israeli War.

Recording manager *Monty Babson* will be producing this number shortly for the Columbia label.

● In the last four years, it has been the *Club Discs A'Gogo*, the *Sphinx Club*, the *Scene Club*, the *Koo-koo*

Byrd Discotheque. And now, it is to be the *Teen Beat Club* and promises the very best in musical happenings. One watches with interest.

● When the *Tremeloes* arrived in *Treharris* minus their instruments—lost in a van crash the day before—valley groups rallied around to provide the necessary means to a living end.

Second hand it might have been, but it is a tribute to the *Trem's* professionalism they could sound so good on borrowed boxes.

The *Five of Diamonds* and the *Desafinados*, who supported the *Tremeloes* at their concert, did their bit and *Pete Lovis* and the *Spirals* (once called the *Tremiloes*) added their fourpennorth.

● *Jayvee Entertainments* of Neath are bringing over two Swedish outfits—*The Tages* and the *Rainy Day Women*—in the next couple of months for ballroom tours of the Swansea and West area.

Question Corner

Q. I wish to learn the clarinet, and have been offered a Simple System instrument cheap. Would this be suitable for a beginner?

A. No. Buy a Boehm System Bb low pitch clarinet, even if it costs more. Other systems are obsolete, and time spent learning them would be largely wasted.

Q. I have achieved a basic efficiency on my instrument (tenor) and now wish to start improvising. What is the best way?

A. This is a difficult question to answer briefly. A thorough study of chord structures and sequences will provide a good basis—also listen to plenty of records of the great tenor jazzmen—*Coleman Hawkins*, *Ben Webster*, *Stan Getz*, etc. to help you with your ideas.

Q. Can a Leslie Speaker Cabinet be fitted to organs other than Lowrie?

A. Yes. Matching units for most organs are supplied with Leslie Cabinets as an optional extra. They cost under £2.

Q. We are an out of town group. Can you give us any information about beat group contests in Birmingham?

A. We understand that Messrs Jones and Crossland will be holding another contest early in the New Year. Venue will be the Locarno Ballroom, Birmingham. More details will be available later.

Q. I have been playing a single manual portable organ, and wish to change to a double manual instrument. What do you recommend?

A. Personal preference is the deciding factor—*Vox*, *Farfisa*, and the new *Selmer Capri* are all first class instruments, at prices ranging from £273 to 299 gns. (plus pedals). In common with most portables, all need a separate amplifier, which should be capable of handling the bass frequencies.

● Do you have a question you would like answered concerning musical instruments? Then write to "Question Corner," *Midland Beat*, 110 Wake Green Road, Moseley, Birmingham, 13.

WARWICKSHIRE

BRIAN A. RIDGE,
87 Broomfield Road,
Coventry.

THE new scene of the Matadors is now that they have re-formed into an 8-piece band. The name has been changed to the Magazine.

The line-up now is the orthodox Matadors group plus baritone, doubling flute, tenor, alto and trumpet.

"This outfit," says manager Mike James, "should happen this time, particularly as the arrangements for the group are being done by two of the best brains in the business in this field."

One of the local Coventry groups, the Flowers, ex the Pips, have just turned down two weeks in Sweden owing to the lead singer's nervous breakdown.

A spokesman for the group told me; "We have been overlooked."

This is a very good point with Friars Promotions since this company provides most of the work for the group.

This group has been in demand all over the Midlands.

Another local group that is doing very well at the moment, the Inside Out, is still playing local venues. The Chicanes have now rechristened themselves the Beautiful People—this is very hard to believe when you look at them!

Sad ending to the Tudor Club, Coventry. "But bright things to come," quotes director, Sean Convey.

"We have moved the Tudor Club to the Mercers Arms and the policy will be mainly name groups."

The opening session in this new club was, in fact, Sunday, October 1, when the Mike Cotton Sound with Lucas played, and the place was packed, which is a good sign for the future!

Other attractions playing at the Tudor Club on Sunday nights are John L. Watson and the Web, and the Riot Squad, plus eventually, I suppose, the local top soul group, the Ray King Soul Band.

"On the Coventry scene at the moment are," quotes Jack Hardy, Director of a large Coventry promotion firm, "Lady Jane and Royaltee, plus the new Magazine, Jo Jo Cook, Ray King Soul Band, Bobby Ash Sound, Sight and Sound, Flowers, and the Inside Out. (I wonder what has happened to 3-AM?)"

The Hotel Leofric, who have been suffering from a slump in attendance over the past twelve months, have now revitalised the Sunday Club by using name groups.

Coming shortly are the Move, Jimmy James, Amen Corner. Cliff Bennett went down very well recently with Taylor Upton Big Jump Band.

Also, Chris Farlow and the Thunderbirds, but I think the local Leicester group, Le-Gay, surprised everybody with their performance, although this group have not turned out to be to everybody's liking in the local venues.



The Peeps should be taking a look at Sweden and Portugal in the New Year (See Warwickshire).

Blue Ribbon Roll Band, about whom I have heard so much recently.

They are arch rivals to that more established Cinderford group, The Castells.

If this band approach the Castells' standard then they are very good indeed.

From Cheltenham comes news of the firm establishment of Drummond Agencies, founded by my manager, Major M. J. D. Henderson, and yours truly.

Cheltenham's Ramrods have changed their name to the Untoved.

Chris Garland, ex-manager of Cheltenham's boutique, M a n About Cheltenham is now working at Lord John's in Carnaby Street.

Can it be true that Alan Walker has finally left the Long John Baidry package and gone solo

Best modern jazz entertainment for miles around is at Brockworth's Flying Machine, on Thursday nights, when the Alan King Orchestra lets rip. What talent! Alan's voice is superb.

Cheltenham has become the Hippie capital of the Midlands. Fantastic new art college has brought in the Flower People from all over England.

Three Cheers for Cheltenham's new with-it management at the Town Hall, they are even going to book local groups!

Lulu was great on her appearance there.

Sharpness Youth Club is due to open officially this October.

The large sums of money earned by the weekly dances they have run there since April is proving embarrassing to the committee.

Mr. Magoo's at Stroud celebrated its annual birthday with the new Winder K. Frogg outfit.

As usual, the effervescent Don Hedges had the dance completely under control, despite a half-hour delay due to Winder's organ breaking down.

All the Beautiful People were there—or at least the plastic Hippies with their joss sticks.

The new group is not a patch on the old Winder K. outfit—a disappointment really, with only two vocals. However, in all fairness, they will improve.

Cheltenham's Blue Moon Club is reopening as the Spa Ballrooms with a licensed bar.

Bill Reid is at the helm again. A great idea for Cheltenham's late teenagers and early twentyites.

However, the march has been stolen on them by the latest gas, the Dandy Lion Club, half-way between Gloucester and Cheltenham. It's got an atmosphere and, a good crowd.

Following a report of the Reaction splitting up in Barrie Finch's Worcester column last month, I'd like to make it clear that this does not refer to Cheltenham's Reaction.

Far from packing up, they are exploding—a really great act from these much improved boys—complete with flashing lights.

mitted free. So one can have a choice of two dances almost every night.

My home number is Coventry 75754, or write to me at 87 Broomfield Road, Coventry. I am always pleased to receive news about the Warwickshire scene.

BORDERLAND

AUSTIN POWELL,
Station House,
Bucknell, Salop.

THIS year's Ludlow Beat Contest prize was carried off by a local outfit, Ram Bunk Shush, who were until recently known as the Four Aces.

To their two guitars/drums/vocalist line-up, they have added a saxophonist, and their act included soul, comedy and Ska.

They won by a convincing margin. Second place went to Leominster group The Modelle Union, while the Skylons (Dawley, Salop) took third place.

The winners received £30, plus cups, £15 was the second prize and £5 for third. Three heats had decided the five groups that were to appear, but strangely, attendance was well down for the final.

The Christy Castelle Formula, based in Newport, Salop, are fast-becoming Shropshire's brightest hope.

Their dates are taking them out and about, and with an act that mixes soul with the surfing sound, they please a large slice of dancers.

Psycho is the new name for the Cosmics from Dawley... The Bird and B's hop to East Anglia late in October for a series of dates, while early November sees them back in the South of England and in South Wales... The Magic Spoon (Ludlow) now no longer active.

The Chicken Shack visited Knighton (Rads) for a gig on August Monday, straight from their appearance at the Windsor Jazz Festival.

The group told me that Rik Gunnell had just signed them, and that Mike Vernon (Decca/Blue Horizon Records) was producing their sides.

I hope that other people have better luck than I did while looking for Dennis Murphy's Shrewsbury office... Are there any groups in Herefordshire apart from

the Modelle Union?... the Soul Party doing an awful lot of work in Wellington.

Shrewsbury's Characters breaking into the club scene, with offers from Stoke area and from Doncaster... According to hand-out, Dennis Murphy's real name is (wait for it!) Donacada Sean O'Muricu (from Ireland!).

The Shrewsbury promoting scene is hotting up.

While the Borough Council continue occasional promotions with big names on Fridays at the Music Hall, Astra Agency have taken over the Saturday dances there.

Meanwhile, The Powerhouse continues on Fridays, having switched from Wednesdays and Saturdays.

However, Saturday promotions at the Lord Hill Hotel have ceased due to rowdyism.

The management plan to commence with dance bands from the middle of October.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

ANDREW M. JAMES,
1, Priors Court,
Priors Road,
Cheltenham.

BRIAN Hardwick, ex-lead with former Cinderford group the Lucky Charms, is striving hard to become a solo ballad singer under the guidance of Steve Daly.

Steve is a local songwriter of some repute who is pushing hard for his first real recording success.

Worcester group the Knack recorded his "More and More". However, release was deferred by producer Kingsley Ward of E.M.I. on the grounds that the vocal was too harsh.

Mr. Ward then re-recorded it with Bryn Yenn and Steve is anxiously waiting to hear whether it is to be released or not.

Similarly Phil Smith of Pye recorded his "Tears Fill My Eyes," using Sons and Lovers. Again, Steve is awaiting the result.

Talented Mr. Daly has a wealth of material at his disposal and is anxious to find further Midland groups who might be interested in original material with a view to recording.

Anyone interested can contact Steve through me.

Also from Cinderford come the fast improving

TWO weeks ago, it was my misfortune to discuss group politics with an up-and-coming soul band (no names mentioned to save the group embarrassment).

I said they were an up-and-coming band—however, if they stay up in the clouds, as they are at present, I give them three months to find themselves thrown out in the cold.

If you haven't guessed what attitude I'm talking about now, I'll clue you in. It's the old, old story of "I'm the greatest."

I've nothing against the boys personally—in fact, I quite like them. But nobody has ever succeeded with this attitude.

In the last seven years, I've worked with some of the biggest stars on both sides of the Atlantic, from the Beatles down.

ROSE RITES.. Outspoken comment by Euan Rose

Only the little known and inferior artistes have ever submitted to this misguided thinking. You've met the type yourself, no doubt—separate dressing rooms, swear at everyone and don't speak to the supporting groups.

I remember speaking to Roy Wood of the Move at the Plaza, Old Hill, some fourteen months ago. I asked him how it was going. "We've still got a lot to learn," he replied.

Incidentally, they had just played to a 1,000 strong crowd who had come especially to see the then nationally unknown Move. He'll still tell you the same today, too.

In general, no matter how bad a group is, you can always learn something from them, even if it's only

the enthusiasm they put into it.

Another thing—talk to a promoter or an agent with this attitude and see how far it gets you.

Whether you like it or not, fellas—remember, you're paid by the management. And from the time you get to the venue, to the time you leave, you're in their service.

Also, if there is another group on the bill, don't slate them. You never know when you're going to need friends. And friends are one thing you're going to need if you want to be on the scene for a long time!

Start here

IF your group hasn't been abroad before, but want to go, then Hamburg is the ideal place to

start. Be prepared for hard work, though, and don't forget to pack the throat tablets.

The two best clubs to work at if you get the chance are the world-famous Star Club and the Top Ten.

The Star Club is open 12 hours a day and employs three or four bands a week. Here you'll have to work about four hours a night, sometimes less, which is good by Continental standards. The money is much higher than ours and there's no fear of not being paid.

The Top Ten is harder still. You'll play five-six hours a night in an hour on, hour off, routine, with a supporting band. Generally, the clientele is much better at the Star Club, but the money is not quite as high.

Still well worth going though.

Stay away from the smaller clubs, such as the Blue-Bird and the Rocker. They expect eight hours a night and the money is hardly enough to live on.

Despite the hard work, it will do any group good to work in Hamburg. You'll find it will develop polish.

When you get back to England, the scene here will seem so soft, it isn't true.

Carl kidding?

COMMENT of the Month: Carl Wayne in the "Daily Mail": "My ambition in life is to cause a riot." Come off it, Carl—you've got to be kidding!

My favourite Group of the Month: 47th Precinct from Nottingham.

GERMANS? THEY'RE SIX MONTHS BEHIND

IN last month's issue of "Midland Beat" Carl Wayne began his article by saying that London is six months behind the States, and Birmingham is six months behind London.

I have recently returned from Germany, where I have been for the last year, working my way through a number of German clubs and American forces clubs.

My impression of the scene over there was that it was six months behind Birmingham, which according to Carl would be saying something.

The German scene has no trendsetters. They follow on to anything that England comes up with, only way behind.

I estimate that in another six months time, Flower Power will be setting in, and by this time England could well be on to something new.

By the month

GERMAN night clubs are "not bad", but I'd seen them all before, and the depressing thing was that they booked one or two groups to play for a whole month.

So if a person liked the club and frequented the place, then they would get fed up with the same entertainment night after night, and eventually become disinterested, no matter how good the group might be.

This method of book-

BRUM!

by DENNIS BALL
bass guitarist
with
Out of the Blue

ing a group on a monthly basis has a bad effect on the musicians themselves, and I've found this out from experience.

If a musician has no ambition within his group to perhaps eventually to make the grade, then, fair enough, it's stable work.

But looking at it from a go-ahead point of view, it's not the best way to spread the name of one's group, when one is stuck in one particular city.

It's the same if a group is content to stay in Birmingham, and not venture into other towns or cities in England.

Used them

THE experience gained from working in Germany was good. For Out of the Blue it was a means to an end.

Admittedly, we used the Germans, by trying out ideas on them, and playing numbers which they had never heard before, and, of course, we had a mixed response.

We played them our original material, and if they made comments like: "Oh yes, we like it, you sound just like the . . ." we would tear the number to pieces until they associated our numbers only with us.

This was a very difficult thing to do, especially to foreigners, who tend to pin a name on you as soon as they can pick out anything familiar in the numbers you play.

Some people called us the English Beach Boys, and although a lot of people would take this as a compliment, we regarded the comment as something that had to be changed for our own sakes.

Eventually, we had the Germans watching us very curiously because they hadn't heard anything like the music before, and this was good.

As a stranger

HAVING been out of touch with the British pop scene for so long, I have been able to look at it almost as a stranger.

Flower Power was something brand new to me, and I looked upon it as a pathetic attempt by young people to spread love.

Although the idea is very nice, the whole thing is destined to be a flop, because of the few, and they are a minority, who preach that drug taking is "good", "expands the mind", or just simply "fun".

Unfortunately these few people who profess that drugs are good, are helping to ruin the idea of spreading love for the dedicated ones.

No comment . . .

I'D LIKE to comment finally on certain people who say whether a song is potential hit material or not.

I recently heard a representative of a big recording company preaching his gospel about "the song with a hidden meaning", which he said was essential nowadays if a song was to be a success.

Whilst he was talking about "purple pastures lying under a sea of wrinkled brows", perhaps he should take a look at the charts; "Even the Bad Times Are Good", and "The Last Waltz", are two very basic tunes with simple lyrics which obviously appealed to the public.

Perhaps he would have put the words: "I had the last psychedelic freak out with you", into the song, instead of that old fashioned waltz which is earning somebody a lot of money right now.

ON THE BEAT

with Bo Berry

WHITHER Arthur Smith? . . . Yellow Rainbow a knockout at the Crown and Cushion! . . . Leicester's Deuce Coup have most bizarre publicity poster yet . . . New on the Midland scene—a group called Firpo the Bull.

Don't expect Jimmy Powell to send Phil Boothroyd a Christmas card . . . Yellow Rainbow went down well at the Crown and Cushion! . . . How did Keith Tonks manage to lose a stone in 24 hours? . . . The Move unlikely to start a fan club for Tony Noble!

Band of Joy's new name is no yoke! . . . We've had a letter raving about—wait for it—the Union Pacific Show Band! . . . Yellow Rainbow a hit at the Crown and Cushion! . . . Congratulations to Second City Sound's Alan Nicklin on his marriage to secretary Mavis Holloway. Which group rang "M.B." to ask how to get singing lessons? . . . Plenty of punch from the Yellow Rainbow at the Crown

and Cushion . . . Is Keith Mallett taking liberties with his new night club plans? . . . Seeing groups without an appointment is not John Singer's way of life!

Who mistook Barmy Barry for a country yokel? . . . The Mayfair's decision to change their name came out of the blue! . . . Did the Idle Race think it was a liberty when they heard about the Family's recording contract . . . Yellow Rainbow gave a thumping good show at the Crown and Cushion.

Rockin' Berries diary would make many of today's chart groups green with envy . . . Have the Vogues given Den Caney a raw deal? . . . Plenty of radio plugs for Idle Race disc . . . Plea from Dave Terry: has anyone got an old hearse they don't want.

Understatement of the year: the Beatles are not Liverpool's answer to the Cedar Cet . . . Welcome back, Phil Myatt . . . Did John Singer tell the Yellow Rainbow where to go—or did they tell him where they were going? . . . The Lemon Tree haven't struck a sour note with promoters yet.

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