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Leo likes it Hot!

SPECIAL LIVE
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B-Bedrock with Fox

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Taupin's Talk-In

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Abba Colour Poster



RECORD MIRROR & DISC
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ROSALIND RUSSELL

REBEL ROW — SMOKIE PULL OUT

A ROW has broken out between Steve Harley and Smokie, the band that was supposed to have supported him with Cockney Rebel last Monday at Wembley Pool.

Smokie were pulled out of the gig by their management in a last minute decision on Monday afternoon. A statement issued hours before the show was due to begin, said:

"They (Smokie) were not given the co-operation they were led to expect from Harley's people. The show was scheduled to start at 8 pm. At the last minute Smokie were asked to go on half an hour earlier than the published starting time. They were refused permission to use their own stage lighting system. They would have been playing in full house lighting and with no stage effects to an audience

arriving. It would have been worse than useless. "In these circumstances we have no alternative but to pull Smokie out of the gig altogether."

British tour of their own on April 15 at Southport's Floral Hall. The other dates are: New Brighton Winter Gardens (16), Ashford Stour Centre (17), Southend Cliff Cliffe Pavilion (19), Scarborough Ocean Ballroom (22), Glasgow Kelvin Hall (23), Carlisle Cosmo (24), Hull New Theatre (25) and Bournemouth Winter Gardens (26).

Tour

Harley had to start the show himself. Smokie, whose single 'Wild Wild Angels' is just released, begin a short



SMOKIE: last minute statement

LEE LINE-UP ON THE ROAD

ALVIN LEE is taking the new line up of his band out on the road this month for seven dates. He has a single out in three weeks titled 'Sea Of Heartbreak'. They are currently finishing an album, 'Sagitar', which will be ready for release at the end of May.

With Lee in the band are: Tim Hinkley (keyboards), Bryson Graham (drums) and Andy Pyle (bass).

The dates are: Cardiff University (April 24), Bradford University (30), Birmingham Odeon (May 1), Bristol University (7), Ipswich Gaumont (8), York University (15) and Southend Football Ground (to be confirmed) May 31.

Olivia Newie

OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN has her new album out on April 30 titled 'Come On Over'. The title track was written by Robin and Barry Gibb. The album also includes Livvy's version of 'The Long And Winding Road'.

Rastaman's extra date

BOB MARLEY and the Wailers have had an extra concert added to their dates at the London Hammersmith Odeon. They will now play on June 18, in addition to 15-17.

A new album, titled 'Rastaman Vibration' is out on April 23. A single will be released at the same time, titled 'Johnny Was'.

The other British dates for them are: Wolverhampton Civic Hall (June 20), Birmingham Odeon (22), Bristol Colston Hall (23), Exeter University (24), Leeds University (26) and Manchester Belle Vue (27).



BOB MARLEY

Lynsey De Palladium

LYNSEY DE PAUL has been included on the bill for a week at the London Palladium with Sacha Distel. Also appearing will be Marti Caine and Mike Reid. The shows are from April 19 to 25 and they will be Lynsey's first live concerts in London.

Her single, 'If I Don't Get You The Next One Will' has just been released and an album is due later in the Spring.

Four for Feliciano

JOSE FELICIANO arrives in Britain at the end of this month to play four dates. A single, titled 'Angels' will be released to coincide.

The concerts are: London Albert Hall (April 21), Edinburgh Usher Hall (24), Ashton Under Lyne Tameside Theatre (25) and Leicester De Montfort Hall (27).

SHOT OF MEDICINE IN MAY

DR HOOK and the Medicine Show arrive in Britain at the end of May to play a series of concerts. Their new album, 'A Little Bit More' will be released to coincide.

The album was recorded in Nashville and was produced by Waylon Jennings and Ron Hafkine. The title track will be released as a single on May 7.

The dates begin at Wolverhampton Civic Hall on June 2. They continue at Leicester De Montfort Hall (3), Bristol Colston Hall (5), Croydon Fairfield Halls (6), London Hammersmith Odeon (7), Manchester Free Trade Hall (9), Glasgow Apollo (10), Newcastle City Hall (11), Sheffield City Hall (12) and Oxford New Theatre (13).



DR HOOK: tour

CHUCK'S AWAY

CHUCK BERRY is to tour Britain in May. At the end of the tour, he will appear at a one day festival on the Isle of Man on June 6.

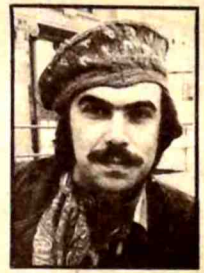
The other dates are: Birmingham Odeon (May 13), Liverpool Empire (14), Bournemouth Winter Gardens (15), Cardiff Capitol (21), Stoke Jollies (June 1), Newcastle City Hall (3) and London Lewisham Odeon (5).

Spanning the open air

STEELEYE SPAN will be playing a couple of open air concerts this Summer. They have been approached to appear at a three day folk festival

near Wigan in Lancashire, but the details have not yet been confirmed.

Named the July Wakes Festival, it will be held on July 23, 24 and 25.



STEELEYE SPAN

Average White Glasgow

THE AVERAGE WHITE BAND are to play three concerts in Glasgow. The shows are being arranged by promoter Fred Bannister in conjunction with Radio Clyde.

the Glasgow Apollo on May 21, 22 and 23. The date on the 23rd was already booked as part of the band's British tour. AWB will be guests of honour at the Scotland - England football match on May 14.

The band will play at

Musicians get their dues

THE BBC has agreed with the Performing Rights Society to pay royalties of over £4 million for the year 1975-1976. The Performing Rights Society looks after the royalties due to musicians who have their records played on TV or radio.

Negotiations have been going on for some time and the final figure they arrived at is just over £1 million more than the previous year. The figure is calculated as being two per cent of the BBC's income from receiving licences.

PILOT EXTEND THEIR CREW

PILOT HAVE a new single out on April 30 titled 'Running Water'. From their third album, it will be released in mid - Summer.

The band are expanding to six members when they take on two keyboard players and a guitarist.

Bill Lyall, who recently left the band, has just finished his solo album titled 'Solo Casting', which will also be out in the Summer. A single is expected in June.



PILOT: two new members

the Rolling Stones

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SELECTED ELECTRIC

ELO RETURN to Britain at the end of the month and begin a nationwide tour on May 7 at Ipswich Gaumont. When the tour is finished, the band leave for Germany to record their next album.

Other dates on the tour are: London New Victoria (8), Birmingham Town Hall (10), Oxford New Theatre (11), Liverpool Empire (13), Manchester Free Trade Hall (15), Newcastle Theatre Royal (16), Glasgow Apollo (17) and Hull City Hall (18).

Ticket prices for London are: £1.00, £1.25, £1.65, £2.00 and £2.25. A support act is yet to be confirmed.

Roller coasting

DEREK LONGMUIR, drummer with the Bay City Rollers, was slightly shaken up when the car he was driving was in collision with another car in Edinburgh. Derek was said to be suffering from shock but no one was injured.



DEREK LONGMUIR

CITY TO CITY

CITY BOY dates for the Spring include: Scarborough Penthouse (April 23), Doncaster Outlook (26), Cardiff Top Rank (27), Liverpool Poly (30), Poulton College (May 1), Swindon Brunel Rooms (4), North Staffs Poly with Charlie (6), Redford Quarterhouse Club (7) and London Bedford College with Charlie (8).

Sassafras new album

SASSAFRAS ARE currently recording a new album which will be produced by Pete Gage. They leave for a European tour in May and begin their first major British tour on June 15. Details of the venues will be available later.



ELECTRIC LIGHT ORCHESTRA: nationwide tour

Widows make a move

WIDOW MAKER have dates fixed for next month. They include: Colchester University (May 1), Aylesbury Vale Hall (8), Shrewsbury Music Hall (11), Newcastle - Under - Lyme College of Education (14), Folkestone Leas Cliff Hall (15), Twickenham Winning Post (16), Cardiff Top Rank (18), Tunbridge Wells The Court (20), Liverpool Stadium (22), Stockport Davenport Theatre (23), Hanley Victoria Hall (28) and St Albans City Hall (29).

REDDY FOR THE DRAGON

HELEN REDDY has been signed to take the starring role in a new Walt Disney film, 'Pete's Dragon'. The company expect it to be their biggest budgeted film since 'Mary Poppins'.



HELEN REDDY: Disney star

This is Ms Reddy's first starring role, although she made her film debut last year in 'Airport 1975'. Filming begins in California in June.

Pipers appearance

THE SANDPIPERS are to appear in concert at the London New Victoria on June 5. It will be their only London appearance, but they will play three months of cabaret and concert dates in the UK during the early Summer. Tickets for the New Vic show are priced £3.00, £2.50, £1.75, and £1.25. They go on sale on Thursday.

SAILOR TV SPECIAL

SAILOR WILL feature in a TV special on London Weekend Television on May 1. The show, titled 'Sailor In Concert' will run for 35 minutes, beginning at 11 am. It is the recording of a live concert played at the Southend Kursaal earlier this year.

Sailor leave for an American tour on April 30 and return to the UK in the Summer. A British tour is being set up for September/October.

Drifters on their last leg

THE DRIFTERS begin the last leg of their British tour on May 1 at Batley Variety Club.

Other dates for the band in May include: Stafford Top Of The World (3), Mexborough Jesters and Chesterfield Aquarius Club (4), Chesterfield Aquarius Club (5), Burslem Queens Hall, two shows (6), Blackpool Locarno (7), Ayr Darlington Hotel (8/9), Wakefield Theatre Club (10), Wakefield Madison Club (11), Wakefield Theatre Club (12), Portsmouth Locarno (13), Bournemouth Village (15), Reading Top Rank (16), Watford Baileys (17/18), and Derby Baileys doubling with Leicester Baileys (20-22).

NEWS IN BRIEF

NEIL SEDAKA has been forced to cancel his European tour, but not his British dates, following his collapse recently. He is reported to be suffering from the strain of heavy commitments.

Pre-Lude has been added to the bill for the Frank Clark farewell concert at Newcastle City Hall this Thursday.

Gentle Giant have a new album out on May 2 titled 'Interview'. The Four Seasons have been presented with a Gold Disc for sales of their single 'December '63 (Oh What A Night)'. A new single, titled 'Silver Star' is released this week.

Extra dates for Snaps include: Coventry Smithfield Club (April 14), Southsea Nero's (17), Crencroft Crown Hotel (23), Bristol Tiffanys (24), Stoke Kings Hall (26), Darlaston Town Hall (29) and Widnes Town Hall (30).

Lynyrd Skynyrd's drummer Artimus Pyle and his wife Pat have an addition to the family. They have a son who is called Marshall Daniel. Pyle took a quick break during the band's US tour to visit his wife and son then rejoined the band.

Caravan begin a British tour on April 17 at Maidenhead. Other dates include: Lancaster University (23), Nottingham University (24), Canterbury Odeon (25), Brighton Dome (26) and Liverpool Poly (28). Other dates await confirmation on the venues. Their new album, 'Blind Dog At St Dunstan's' is out April 23. Cliff Richard has a new single out on April 23 titled 'Devil Woman'.

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Hollywood

Stations force rush releases

LED ZEPPELIN and the Rolling Stones are involved in the same controversy which led to a Los Angeles radio boycott of the Wings album last week (see American Hotline, April 10).

Both the 'Presence' and 'Black and Blue' albums were given unauthorized advance play on Los Angeles radio, with different results for each album.

KMET began playing the Led Zeppepin album at noon on Tuesday, March 31. The reaction from Atlantic Records (distributor of Swan Song in the US) was to rush copies of the album to radio stations all over the country and move up the release date of the album. It was in the stores by Monday, April 5.

At first, KMET was asked to stop playing the Zeppepin album. The station agreed, but disc jockey Thom O'Hair played the album despite the ban. By Tuesday evening other stations had the album and airplay was strong throughout the country.

Just as stations were receiving 'Presence', KHJ Radio in Los Angeles pulled another coup, by airing the Rolling Stones' 'Black and Blue' at 6.15 pm on Tuesday, March 31. Attorneys for the Stones immediately sent a 'cease and desist' order to the station, asking for an immediate end to airplay. The same attorneys appeared in Los Angeles court on Thursday, April 1, to determine the group's legal rights as to copyright.

The Stones' are contemplating releasing a single from the album early to counteract the advance airplay ('Fool to Cry' backed with 'Hot Stuff'), and the album is scheduled for release April 15.



ROLLING STONES: 'cease and desist'

THE PAUL McCartney and Wings tour, cancelled because of guitarist Jimmy McCulloch's finger injury, has been rescheduled to begin May 3 in Fort Worth, Texas.



WINGS

DR. FEELGOOD practiced their routine at the Starwood in Los Angeles; seen attending the show was Pete Townshend, who dropped in at a party for the group at the Hyatt House (also known as Groupee Heaven) Hotel on the Sunset Strip.

ERIC CLAPTON had a birthday party in Malibu, and among the guests seen with or without party hats: Bob Dylan, Van Morrison, Billy Preston, Ronnie Wood and various members of The Band. Clapton and the Band have been recording together at Robbie Robertson's Malibu home. FRED BRONSON

New York

Sayer's Christmas dream

LEO SAYER'S first album to be produced in America will be by Richard Perry, who has previously worked with Art Garfunkel, Ringo Starr and Carly Simon. He has had many singles and album hits in the past and as an added incentive to Leo, he pointed out that the studio in which they'll be working was built on the site where Bing Crosby recorded 'White Christmas'.


ELVIS PRESLEY, as everyone is aware, has never played in England. It doesn't look as though he's ever likely to either. But this week it was announced that Presley impersonator Alan, will be coming over by the end of the Summer. Alan is even recognised by Elvis's own fan club as "the nearest you can get to the real thing". STEPHEN MORLEY

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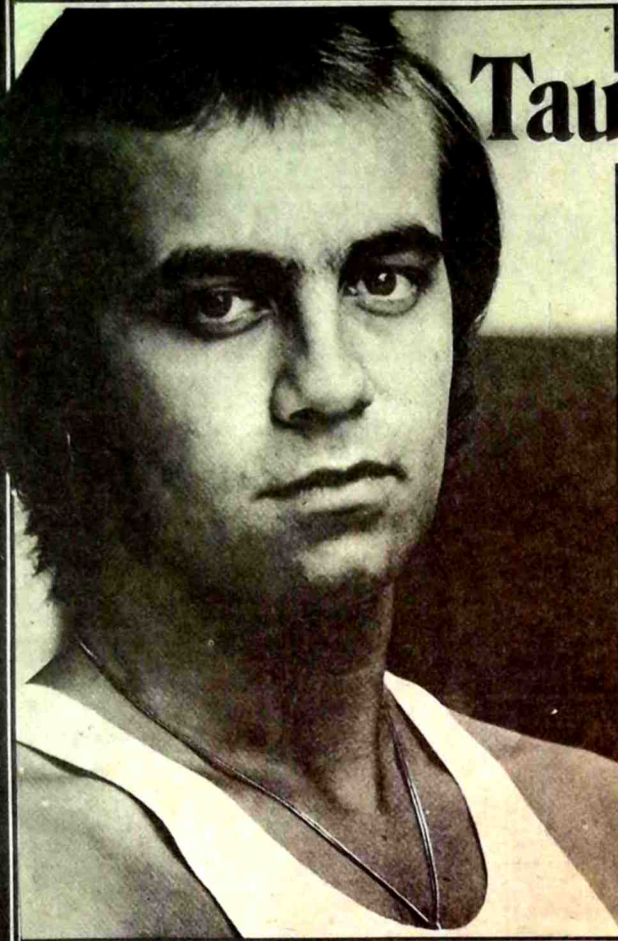
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Taupin: The Fame-Brain



BERNIE TAUPIN: Elton John's other half

THE OTHER half of the Elton John fame / brain is Bernie Taupin. He's the one who writes the songs, the down-to-earth, flash-less one who isn't nearly as foppish or extrovert as his music maker counterpart.

He's also rather handsome in a matelot (strippy t-shirt, earring) sort of way.

Bernie Taupin has brought out a very arty hard-back book comprising a collection of his lyrics. The book also includes some interesting illustrations by the famous and the not so famous. (See full review, page 25).

Bernie Taupin sits in an elite suite in the Inn On The Park, London. He refuses an alcoholic beverage ("I wanna be on form tonight!") and instead asks for fresh orange.

He's ever so nice. We jaw about the book: "Well in fact," Bernie begins, "it's so long ago we started thinking about it that I can't even remember how long ago it was, it seems like years. I think the idea came up just before the 'Caribou' album came out.

"I went to Dick James and said it might be a nice idea to do a book similar to the Beatles illustrated lyrics, only do it sort of, well a bit less comic-y. So he said why not bring in Alan Aldridge (the book's Editor) whom I'd never



BERNIE: with John Lennon taking a bow on stage

'I call Elton ol' fat pig and he calls me little twerp'

met before, but we went out to lunch and we got on fine, and now he's one of my best friends.

"Anyway, we got together and he said it would be a nice idea to do the book in black and white instead of colour, and I agreed. I thought it would be a nice change. If we do another one (which we probably will) then we'll probably do some colour in it."

Whose idea was it to get super-stars like Joni Mitchell and John Lennon to doodle for you? "Oh, that was my idea. All those music people — John Lennon, Alice Cooper, Joni Mitchell, Charlie Watts, Ringo, I know them all. Ronnie Wood also did a couple of drawings but they didn't use them, which was unfortunate, and a bit embarrassing too. I haven't seen him yet" (bites lower lip, smiles and shrugs shoulders).

I like the foreword that Elton's written to the book, but better beware Bernie. Elton's got writing talents!

Wunnerful

"Yeah" he says laughingly. "I was saying the other day to somebody that I'd much rather Elton wrote what he did than something that was horribly false (puts on fake Yank De-eeep voice) 'Well ah think he's truly wunnerful, a real genius'. I mean that would've been awful. Besides, Elton's incapable of doing anything like that towards me y'know, like I call him ol' fat pig and he calls me little twerp, it's that kind of relationship — we're not serious."

"I'm not doing this book to make money, 'cos I can make money on records." Has this book given you the urge to write more? "Oh, yeah well I love books. This is my own little ego trip really. I love books sort of smelling those pages, and flicking the page over. I mean I've got millions of books at home."

What's your favourite lyric in the book? "I'm always changing my mind really, but as far as basic lyrics are concerned I like 'Indian Sunset' and 'Amoreena.'"

Bernie is doubtless today's leading commercial pop poet / lyricists. He reckons writing verse is as easy as

pie, he never sweats blood when composing his works. In fact ideas tend to flow as lavishly as North Sea oil.

"I never spend more than half an hour writing an actual song or a lyric. I never write and then come back to it. The only exception to that rule was when I wrote 'Captain Fantastic.'"

Bernie's lyrical recipes are usually a hotch-potch of ingredients. "I like to write things that are a little more original. I mean writing ballads or love songs can be a bit boring; if I write a love song I like it to be a bit different, to have a different angle to it, or approach it in a different way. I just like writing as much as I can on original subjects — and it's funny 'cos most of the songs I've ever written about women are either about hookers or dirty little girls or groupies."

Destroyed

Waah, you into all that then Bern?

"Well no (laughs) I just think it's more interesting than writing about someone who's regular."

"I totally destroyed somebody the other day because they were saying how much they loved 'Your Song' and thought is was a beautiful love song and I don't really like it any more — I've heard it so many times it drives me nuts now, and I said I thought that 'All The Girls Love Alice' a song about a lesbian, was much more of a love song than 'Your Song' will ever be. There's a lot more feeling in that."

There's also a lot of feeling in 'Candle In The Wind', which some say is Bernie's most wonderful piece of prose.

"People just said I should do it, so I did it," he explains.

"I've always been a fan of Marilyn Monroe," Bernie confesses, "and I always wanted to write about her but I could never come up with the right approach 'cos it could've been very tacky if I'd just let loose. So I waited 'til I came up with the right idea and then tried it out."

Elton showed his appreciation of the song in typical EJ manner — he bought Bernie Marilyn's dress model, which is on show back home in America.

"He bought me her shoes as well," says Bernie, "which was really sweet. I keep the dress model in this huge glass case with light bulbs all around. When you plug it in it flashes on and off — very tacky! Then there's these white satin stiletto heeled shoes of hers which are on the piano."

Hiding

Sometimes Bernie comes out of hiding and joins Elton on stage (or rather Elton drags him on). I wonder how Bernie feels sipping a snippet of the limelight?

"I'm not nervous of audiences or TV, but it's a bit embarrassing sometimes. I don't mind walking on, taking a bow or something, but I don't like staying there bashing the tambourine. I always feel such a twit."

"Although I must say it was great at Dodger Stadium. We had a backing section and Billy Jean was with me. At Madison Square Gardens it was great as well 'cos I went out with John, y'know Lennon."

Might be seeing more of this boy honking it out front, for Bernie has just made an album in Canada, which should be released by the end of next month. It's a little Rock 'n' Roll and a little bit of country.

"People just said I should do it, so I did it," he explains.

Enviably

"I mean I sing on it, it's yer actual Rock 'n' Roll album. I picked a lot of songs by other people; nothing really well known, say, 'Let It Be Me', an old Everly Brothers' song, which Phil Everly sung on it with me, which was great, and then I did 'Crying Time' as a duet with Ringo, it was hysterical," he says, killing himself. I want to call the album 'Loose And Boozie', but I doubt if that'll happen."

I've often thought Bernie Taupin was in the enviable position of having the best of both worlds; he isn't always in the public's beady eye, and if he wants to shoot off for a weekend there's nothing to stop him.

"Yeah, I was saying to someone the other day I'm probably one of the most recognised unrecognisable faces. I don't play and I don't go on stage, but the kids see me on the album covers, and they know me. I've got a big following, I get recognised so much and it always surprises me."

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ELTON JOHN

by Jan Iles

IN AN age when pop stars are geared almost exclusively to the almighty disc selling machine it's refreshing to know that people like Leo Sayer are still around.

Yes, surprise, surprise, the kid's back. OK you haven't heard him on the radio or seen him on the tele but that's because he's got no new 'product' out. Leo's a real live performer — something rare.

He's taken the gamble of going on a nationwide tour without having a single or album to promote. The curly-headed street kid has kicked against the accepted pattern of things in the music biz — and, of course, it's worked.

Because he's the contemporary of what was once called 'vaudeville', Leo can still pack 2,100 into Birmingham's Odeon Theatre (capacity 2,400) even though he hasn't been around for a while and his last record didn't hit the charts.

You see, the boy's a trouper.

Nervous

While support act Glyder go through a sound check, Leo is in the bar at the second city's Albany hotel ordering tea and getting disappointed because they don't have any toasted cheese and tomato sandwiches.

"I can't eat anything else before I go on because I get so nervous I throw up," he confides.

Leo is happy, rattling away, and bursting with surprises. For a start he reckons he'll be spending more time in Los Angeles than London with every possibility that the next album will be produced by ace American Richard Perry.

Since his No 1 hit with 'Moonlightin' Leo has spent a lot of time that side of the pond. He's released one other single, 'Let It Be' and that surprisingly flopped.

"I don't think the media got behind it enough," he explains. "I don't think they liked the idea of someone tackling a Beatles song."

"It was a kind of experimental move for me and it did work out the way I wanted. I don't mind it not being a hit. It upset Chrystalis and Adam Faith but it didn't worry me



because I think the single was a class move and those are the moves you have to make.

"Let It Be' was always Terry's (Adam Faith) favourite song and he was always trying to persuade me to do it and he's had this project in the back of his mind that he would like to see somebody making new interpretations of great Beatles songs. Before I thought it was a fabulous idea but I was always scared to do it.

"What people don't realise is that the Beatles laid down that song as a demo and left it there for

Sayer: super trouper



'I suppose I'm trying to prove that there's more to Leo Sayer than just Leo Sayer, the very British songwriter'

Interview & live report by David Hancock

anyone to pick up and do. Same with Stevie Wonder on 'We Can Work It Out' and Joe Cocker on 'With A Little Help From My Friends'.

"Strawberry Fields Forever' was the first thing to turn me on to the Beatles and 'Let It Be' I found a little soft, but I didn't realise those songs were laid down as demos rather than the same way that 'The Basement Tapes' were available to this country and people picked up on them and did their own version.

"I suppose it was a drastic step for me to take but you've got to have some bravado in this business.

Clown

"I mean I dropped the clown thing didn't I? I don't want to be stuck in cement shoes for the rest of my life."

Leo reckons that anyone professing to be a singer as well as a songwriter should have the guts to tackle other people's songs. After all, the Beatles did it early on when they covered Motown hits on the 'Please Please Me' album.

"The business is all about doing things you love doing," he concludes.

For Mr Sayer performing is probably the thing he does best.

"We tried to find some product before going out on tour but we couldn't find anything that we sat happily with so we decided to just carry on with the tour.

"I'm just enjoying surprising people. You know I even play harmonica on stage now and I might throw in a Blues song or something. I suppose I'm trying to prove that there's more to Leo Sayer than just Leo Sayer the very British songwriter."

"I think it's important to do that, I've got to stretch out one time and I've got a great band now who have given me the confidence to go out on stage and play the harmonica. I certainly couldn't have done that before."

Magical

The new magical set up still includes lead guitarist Les Nicol who has been with Leo since the Chris Stainton band and Steve Chapman (who was drummer with that band) has now returned.

Then there's ex-Rubette and Dana Gillespie Band, Pete Arneson on keyboards; Jimmy Leverton, late of Fat Mattress and one time Frankie Miller Band on bass, who also adds back-up vocals.

Leo says he disbanded his last team after a brave experiment.

"I wanted to take session guys out on the road but in the end I found it flat and unexciting. I'd like this new band to be permanent but who knows — I'm one of these geezers who changes his mind every day. All songwriters are like that because they're basically schizoid personalities."

And at that point Leo reveals all.

"I did an album last year which hasn't been released and never will be. It was made with Frank Farrell (Leo's writing partner after the split with Dave Courtney) and Les Nicol, recorded in small studios around London and is an expensive hobby I can tell you.

"I thought it would be nice to do something off my own bat for once but I don't think we'll release it because it seems a little bit too ahead of its time.

"It's me on harmonica

and singing and doing lots of different things."

Since then Leo's had another change of mind. Now it's off to America and the 'official' album.

"I've done a bit of recording with Richard Perry and so I've got loads of things to choose from," he confesses. "I'm in the happy situation of the future being wide open and not being worried about it."

Glyder have not only finished their sound check but their set is also over before we see Leo Sayer again. This time the boy's got a pink carnation in his buttonhole and a natty little waistcoat over a yellow shirt. Thumbs in the side of the waistcoat and it's into 'Just A Boy'.

The band are impressive. Leo was right, but it's not really till they hit 'The Last Gig Of Johnny B Goode' that everything is settled and then with 'Only Dreaming' Sayer has the chance on the title line to show why his voice is more powerful and distinctive than most of his contemporaries.

He's moving around for 'Train' urging the audience to join in, clowning about between numbers. This lad is real showbiz right down to the imploring Al Jolson hands.

Versatile

But there's nothing camp about the band. They are a smart little outfit and although the bass mix may be down a little too low there can be no complaint about the playing, especially the keyboard work of Arneson who's original jazz background is allowed to shine through and loosen up the whole sound.

The already documented harmonica playing of Sayer on the newly penned 'Nostalgia' gives the song a subtle country undertone.

But the other surprise is a Bobby Bland type blues called 'Evenin'' showing how versatile a voice Leo has and how adaptable the band can be.

The rest of the set consists of the biggies like 'One Man Band'; the despairing 'Bedlammerland' and the one with the biggest applause, 'Let It Be'.

But it's not just the voice and playing that you go to a Leo Sayer concert for. Those are rarely in doubt. It's the performance of the man as he struts and frets his one hour and 20 minutes on every major stage around Britain.

The marionette type arms with those expressive



hands flicking out at every nuance; the way he leaps, runs and clowns around the stage; the silly voices and the teenage girls flocking the front of the stage.

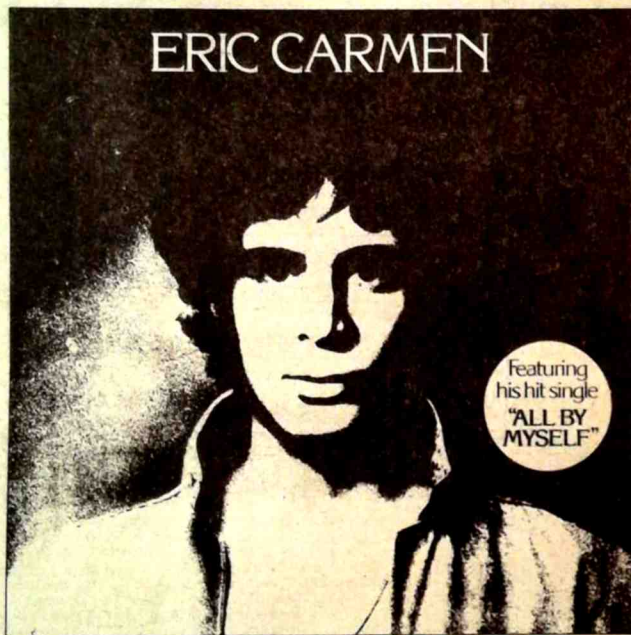
The last three songs are predictable. 'Moonlightin'' leads into 'Long Tall Glasses' and you're home and dry with 'The Show Must Go On' — phew?

Back in his dressing room and wrapped in a gown, Leo Sayer is pleased.

"Thank God you caught a good one," he says. "Usually when the press are there things go wrong."

The haunting song
'All By Myself'
that stormed to No.1 in the USA
is from Eric Carmen's
superb album.

ERIC CARMEN



The album is called simply
'Eric Carmen'
and it's out now on Arista.



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Fantasy girl,

YOU GET the impression that the wistful Noosha might well be an illusion herself.

The lead singer with Fox, and arguably the most original and stylish 'chanteuse' around at the moment, has enigmatic qualities.

Born in Australia and raised in a convent, she is a subtle beauty with a cultured accent. She's also nervous and, you guessed, a little unsure.

Working with songwriter Kenny Young, Noosha, is a creator of fantasy — a pop star. But her version of being a star has nothing to do with neon lights or dry ice.

She has no brashness about her. After all, it wasn't until she was 18 and left the convent that she heard a Beatles record.

Her voice has distinction: "Although I was born in Australia my father was English and he insisted that we have elocution lessons from the age of two.

Horror

"I hated all the time I lived in that convent and when I left I travelled about visiting the States and the Continent. It was all much to the horror of my family."

Noosha, as her friends call her, doesn't appear the archetypal rebel with a dress sense that is instinctive good taste, this girl maintains that she is very firmly a "realist".

That means she's no manufactured star. "I don't think it's possible to build an image for someone. Whatever I appear to be is really me.

"The word image is used a lot in pop music, but that's because you don't present your entire self to the world. The part you do present is confused as image."

Noosha, as you now gather, is not just a pretty face and clear complexion. Which doesn't lead us very neatly into fantasy, but there we arrive anyway.

Kenny Young's sojourn on the Indonesian island of Bali which resulted in songs for the band's second album, 'Tales Of Illusion', helped boost Fox as strong on lyrical imagery and into the dream-weavers class.

Dreams

"I think the fantasy is very real," is the demurred statement from Noosha. "I am a realist in my head but what's going on around is all fantasy and I think it's a nice thing to project these dreams if I can on stage. To do that I have to be myself."

So what are the latest fantasies Noosha?

"I don't discuss my fantasies with everyone. You don't want to shatter dreams."

Moving further into the illusion, Noosha admits to being happiest when she's playing live — when the fantasy is in full flight.

"We're starting a Continental tour in May, which will mean a lot of



Foxy lady

hard work. But it's worth it to get the adrenalin flowing. That's what I enjoy the most."

Noosha says she doesn't know the appeal and sound of her voice.

"The taxi driver today said he liked 'S-S-Single Bed' because he thought it sounded Japanese. A lot of people say similar things about our sound. I don't know."

"It's like nobody knows what they look like, only other people can see them. I don't really know what my voice is like."

"But I'm very pleased. It's so nice when people say they enjoy it."

The latest Fox hit must come as a relief because 'Strange Ships' failed to make the charts.

"I wasn't disappointed at all by 'Strange Ships' not being a hit, because I didn't think it would be — it didn't sound like one at all," continues Noosha

with the sort of honesty that smashes through phony illusions.

"I don't make records to be international singles or album tracks. It's the record company who choose the single and after all it's their right to do that."

Noosha, who claims not to be a careerist and doesn't feel as if she's part of a business, began as a folk singer before meeting Kenny Young.

She is a lady with in-built charisma who may never be quite sure why people want to interview her and why she's the centre of attraction, but that also could be an illusion.

by David
Hancock

Gladys Knight & The Pips 1976 British Tour



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Convention's silver lining

YOU'D BE forgiven for thinking Silver Convention to be another all-American soul trio, although the ladies come from Germany, and their international success has spread from there.

They've had three successive hits, all with a strong disco appeal, and two albums to back them up.

Silver Convention are Ramona Wulf, Linda G. Thompson and Penny McLean. Penny replaced original member Jackie Carter last year.

Like the other two girls, Penny is also a solo artist in her own right, and finding the double life rather hectic. "I can't go on like this forever," she says.

Decide

"I've been doing both since I joined Silver Convention, and will have to decide soon which is the more important to me."

Penny was born in Austria but spent most of her life in Germany, where she sang with several groups. As a solo artist she gained recognition there with 'A Letter From Miami', followed by 'Lady Bump', which topped the German charts for six weeks. "I can't bear to hear it any more," Ramona Wulf was an



SILVER CONVENTION: (L to R) Linda G. Thompson, Ramona Wulf, Penny McLean.

established solo artist before Silver Convention was formed, doing German cover versions of English or American pop hits. Linda was a session

singer, and a former member of the Les Humphries Singers. She has followed Penny's solo success by releasing her first single 'Ooh What A Night'.

As a group, they have not worked together for some time now, due to Ramona's serious illness, which caused them to cancel their US tour. "I remember it was one

afternoon we were practising," said Penny. "Ramona just broke down, screaming with pain. Some people said pretty nasty things about us because we had to call

the tour off only a few days before we expected to go to America, but we couldn't go and that was it. People expect us to be robots, no emotion, nothing."

Ramona has just left hospital, and their first public appearance since mid-February will be a TV show in Vienna on April 14. They are hoping to finally make America in May of June, but have no plans to visit Britain.

"I'd love to come to London," says Penny. "Silver Convention came last year, but that was before I joined."

Meanwhile, we will have to make do with their current chart entry, 'Get Up And Boogie', and their second album, 'Silver Convention Discotheque Vol. 2'.

Glad

"We are very glad about the situation in England," said Penny. "The current single is written by the same people who wrote 'Fly, Robin, Fly'. I like it better, it has more rhythm."

They first appeared in the British charts with 'Save Me', followed by 'Fly, Robin, Fly', which made it to number 28 here, but got to number one in America.

"I've just been working, working, working," moaned Penny. "Linda has just returned from holiday, and Ramona is recovering from her illness, but I've been so busy because of my own hit."

"But as long as everyone likes our music so much, I suppose I'd better not complain."

by David Brown

Super Stars

CANCER
(June 22 to July 23)

A grand week. Nothing will go wrong as far as dealin' and wheelin' goes. It'll take a lot to get you on the straight and narrow path, because you're such a lucky chump you don't want to play it right. Right? Sure.

LEO
(July 24 to August 23)

You have met your bird of paradise (or as the case maybe boy of etc. etc.), but before you get ready for a passionate romp in the Garden of Eden brace yourself, and remember that these loving little creatures are as hard as nails and they maybe after draining you for every cent. Just wipe the love mist outta yer eyes and take a closer look.

VRIGO
(August 24 to September 23)

We doubt whether you've had much to chuckle about recently, but at the same time life hasn't been that dire. Well, it's the same this

week: No outlandish happenings; no scintillating showdowns, lowdowns, hoodowns. But then nothing mean, dirty, beastly or nasty. So what's the sweat?

LIBRA
(September 24 to October 23)

Nice easy going relaxing week, provided you don't MAKE work for yourself. Time to sit back and enjoy watching the world go by, otherwise just go to bed for a week and catch up on lost sleep.

SCORPIO
(October 24 to November 23)

Don't fade away completely, stay involved with your particular clique and put yourself about a bit (no wot I mean guv?) otherwise friends might think you ain't hip and sick and full of zip anymore. Well per'aps you ain't.

SAGITTARIUS
(November 23 to December 21)

Be wise, be smart, invest in something that will bring tears to yer eyes and joy to yer heart. Don't squander your well-earned pittance and more important make sure you have your wallet at home when you go

round the pub. If all that fails just hibernate with a few bottles of beer.

CAPRICORN
(December 22 to January 21)

You're splashing out again, you naughty little 'ing, you. And at a time when you need every penny you can lay yer maulers on. Friendly (persuasive) tip: When you see something in a pretty shop window don't shake all over and crave for it. Scurry past as if the most notorious killer/yobo of all time is behind you.

AQUARIUS
(January 22 to February 17)

What's this we see? Plenty of good times heading your way. Perhaps our crystal ball's out of order, but it does seem a gr-a-at time for you lot right now. Everything you do is spot-on, no crossing with heartbreak. Enjoy it pal.

PISCES
(February 18 to March 20)

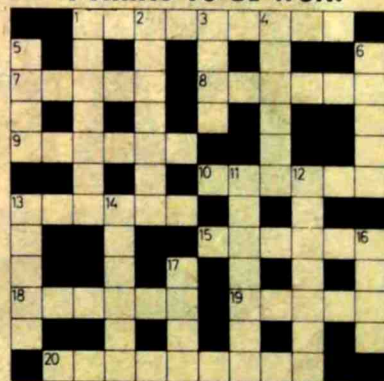
You just might do yourself a favour if you sort out your romantic life — pronto. For it is almost ruining everything you do. Time to make a clear breast of things. If you were mad about the boy/girl, why not try being mad about someone a whole lot saner.

RECORD MIRROR & DISC

CROSSWORD

THE FIRST five correct entries to this crossword drawn from the postbag will win a unique Fresco - Le - Raye Record Mirror & Disc Freak T-shirt. Send your entries to: Crossword, P.O. Box 195, Spotlight House, 1 Benwell Road, London, N7. Entries must arrive by April 21.

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ACROSS

- Type of book from a Beatles-style writer (9)
- A lot of water for Billy (5)
- Miss King or Alec, perhaps (6)
- One of the million to bash (6)
- Band leader Joe's deficits (6)
- A Latin one to do (6)
- Name to go with Baker (6)
- Its waves made a Dylan album (6)
- New art, it appears, from Bonnie (5)
- She gets a hey from the Chequers (4,5)

DOWN

- Ann couldn't stand the rain (7)
- At which Elton's a wizard? (7)
- Just the music for TV follies (4)
- Band that's not without its points? (6)
- As is rolled by the Stones (4)

- At which Marmalade may fall apart? (5)
- Such a whistle to be tested? (3,4)
- Last event of Bowie's rock 'n' roll career? (7)
- Like the Tramps' people who go places? (5)
- Pretty objects (6)
- Crazy George Mally LP (4)
- The Supremes had to do so in the name of love (4)

DISCWORDS No 518 SOLUTION

- Across: 1 Jungle Rock, 3 Chinn, 9 Blonde, 10 Tender, 12 Pridet, 13 Slater, 15 Wheel's, 18 Robbie, 20 Rebel, 21 Arms of Mary.
- Down: 2 Union Man, 3 Genie, 4 Roller, 5 Can, 6 Scot(t), 7 Heart, 11 December, 13 Storm, 14 Eddie, 16 Harum, 17 Silk, 19 Bar.

No. 519

NAME

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by David Brown

THE GOOD news for Doobie Brothers fans is that the Doobie-liner will be heading across the Atlantic again this Summer.

"I'm not too sure about dates yet," said their lead vocalist and guitarist Tom Johnston. "We only heard about it from our manager yesterday. So you probably know as much about it as we do."

The band are currently touring the mid-West and Southern States.

"It's going beautifully," reported Tom. "For me it's the first touring I've done for eight months, as I have been laid up. I was in hospital with an ulcer, which I got by carrying a lot of the weight for the band. Now I've got to watch things more carefully. But I'm still working hard."

Rumours

During his absence from the band there were the usual strange rumours.

"I hear someone said I was dead," he said, sounding very much alive on the transatlantic telephone.

"The rumours got round when I was in hospital. I didn't get much inspiration in there. It doesn't exactly lend itself to creativity."

"After I convalesced I gradually got back to work. I've done some session work and some things for a possible solo set. I worked with people like Nicky Hopkins. Then there were a few jams and I felt ready for the Doobies tour again."

There was just one Tom Johnston track on their 'Takin' It To The Streets' album - 'Turn It Loose' - since much of the album was done while he was still.

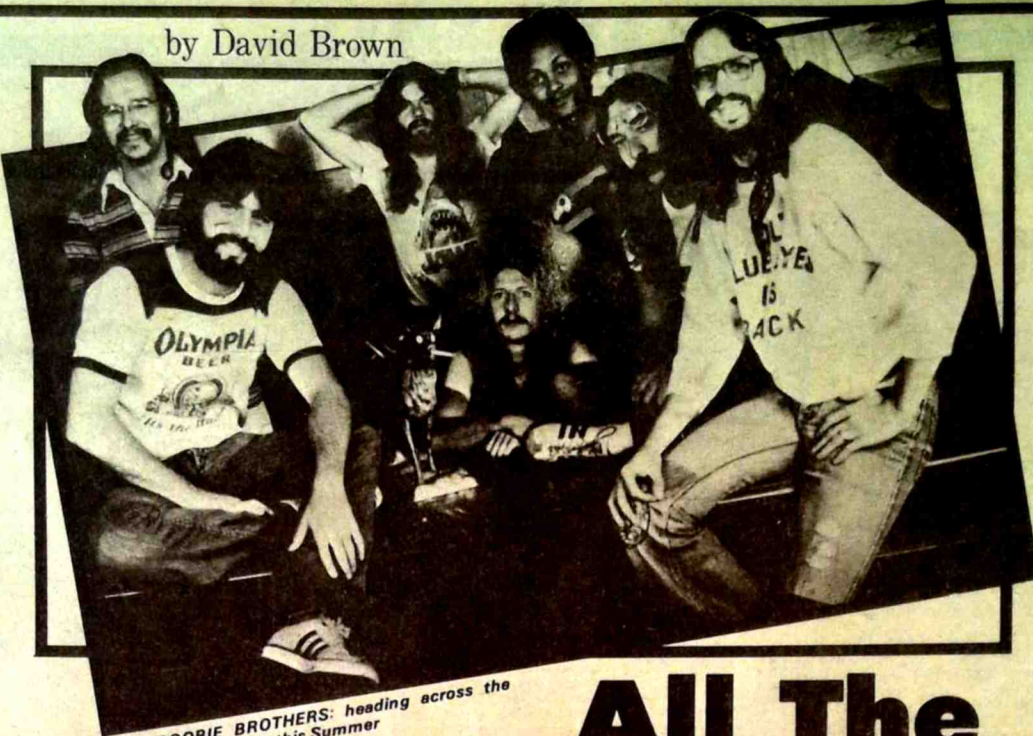
"I did that track and worked on 'Wheels Of Fortune' and one or two other things," he explained. "The album just made a big jump in the

charts here. I don't know if there are any plans to release a single. Probably 'Take It To The Streets' if they do."

What can we expect from them when they arrive in the Summer? (probably August). "We'll do three or four

from the new album, but not too much or the kids won't be able to relate to them. There'll be some older numbers like 'Black

Water' and 'Listen To The Music'. And we'll probably do 'Take Me In Your Arms'." On the last album the



DOOBIE BROTHERS: heading across the Atlantic again this Summer

All The Young Doobs

Memphis Horns made a major contribution on the more soulful numbers.

One criticism of the band in the past has been that although they have produced fine albums (six to date), they have not always been able to do justice to their music live.

Now, they are taking the Memphis Horns on the road with them so it should be interesting to see if they can reproduce their material more faithfully.

Glimpses

They met with less success when they played the Knebworth Festival. Last year they came over headlining the Warner Brothers package tour with Tower of Power, Montrose, Graham Central Station and Little Feat.

Little Feat proved to be the hit band of the tour, while the Doobies got another mixed reception.

The Doobies currently comprise: Tom Johnston, guitars; John Hartman, Drums; Pat Simmons, guitar; Tiran Porter, bass; Keith Knudsen, drums; Jeff 'Skunk' Baxter, guitars; and Michael McDonald, keyboards plus the Memphis Horns.

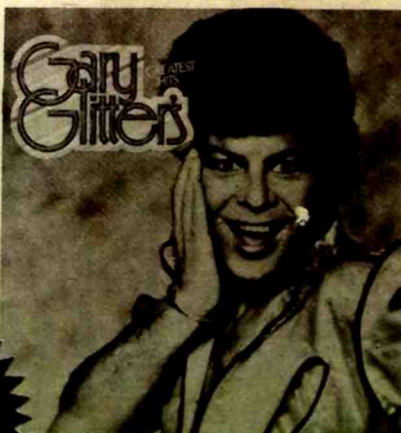
One surprising fact is that they won't be bringing quite so much sound equipment with them. "We just don't need it," says Tom. "We switched to smaller amps, no big stacks, and it gives us a clearer sound. We used to get so loud you just couldn't hear us properly. Anyway, as there will be 13 of us on stage at times, we need the extra room," he laughed.

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ROADSHOWS

Reeling 'n' romping with Rebel

STEVE HARLEY & COCKNEY REBEL / Wembley
HARLEY WAS as charismatic as ever. In flowing coat of many colours and dark glasses he reeled and rolled and romped with the daring audacity of some crazed religious jiver. It was all too much.

Cockney Rebel, comprising Duncan Mackay, keyboards; Stuart Elliot, drums; Jim Cregan, guitars; George Ford, bass; Joe Partridge, guitar and Lindsay Elliot percussion were playing like there was no tomorrow - Duncan in particular was superb throughout the set.

But with all that said there was still something lacking. An empty void that somehow marred most of the evening. Maybe it was due to the overpowering size of Wembley? It's not the best place in the world as far as sound's concerned. Which meant that the extraordinary subtlety and delicacy of Rebel's music wasn't coming through, and a lot of their prowess was lost.

Even so, the seven and a half thousand supporters seemed well pleased with Harley's performance. Harley lookalikes in Bowler hats (girls as well as guys) were swaying and emulating the interesting mime and fluid hand movements that Harley was demonstrating on stage.

The material was a mixture of some newbies and some oldies. The Psychomodo medley which included 'Here Comes The Sun' was well received as was 'Red Is A Mean Mean Colour' (from Harley's latest album). But the show reached its zenith when 'Sebastian' struck up and took off in thrilling musical frenzy. It was a stunning end by any standard.

The encore was the obligatory 'Make Me Smile', which turned into a party singalong.

Two months ago I'd seen Harley in Glasgow, and to me that was the closest you'd ever get to 'the perfect show'. I'm afraid Wembley came a poor second.

Jan Iles



STEVE HARLEY

OLYMPIC FEAT

THE BIGGEST DISCO EVER / Empire Pool, Wembley.

THE MAN in the uniform with the peaked cap prodded his spectacles back to the bridge of his nose and surveyed the wondrous scene before him.

It was the biggest disco event of its kind in this country, which for several sweaty hours kept 'em dancing in support of Superspike, the fund for our impoverished Olympic athletes.

Not even the cavernous Empire Pool is big enough for everyone to dance at once. The organisers segregated the audience into four groups to make their near impossible task of judging competitors a little easier (prizes included tickets to see The Stones - now that is rolled gold), but this often meant that while one quarter participated the rest had to look on, when all they wanted to do was dance.

If they had awarded prizes to DJs then Capital's Roger Scott should have gleaned one for tasty selections, and the Emperor Rosko for proving he's still the bossman.

All the Biddu Orchestra were there, though marred by sound problems, and featured brief appearances from Billy Ocean and Tina Charles singing you know what. Earlier on, Osibisa showed they get everyone dancing to their happy magic from 'Music For Gong Gong' to 'Sunshine Day'.

Remember when it was the discos that played second fiddle to bands?

As the man in the peaked cap and glasses put it so aptly: "It wears you out just watching." **David Brown**



TINA CHARLES with COCO of OSIBISA.

FOUR SEASONS / London Palladium

OH WHAT A NIGHT! Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons rocked the Palladium with their immense charm and professionalism, and Frankie in particular proved that you're never too old to rock around the clock.

It was very much his night. Dressed like a shop-window mannequin and looking every inch a real pro, his amazing three and a half octave vocal range flowed through each season-ed greats as 'Silence Is Golden', 'Let's Hang On', 'Rag Doll' and 'Big Girls Don't Cry', his face distorting like something out of The Hunchback of Notre Dame as he reached those luscious high notes. But it wasn't all pop corn nostalgia. They did a lot of new releases which went down as well as the evergreens. The Four Seasons provided musical impetus, particularly

big guitarman John Paiva and drummer Gerry Polci, who bashed the daylight out of his skins all evening. The band also had the opportunity to display their multi-talents without the effervescent Mr. Valli when they did two songs taken from their latest album - namely 'Silver Star' (their new single) and 'Slip Away' The latter had

bassist Don Ciccone singing lead and sounding not unlike Colin Blunstone. They were later joined by Valli for the excellent 'December '63', which sounded even meatier live. It was definitely one of the highlights of the performance along with 'Who Loves Ya Baby' Yeah, whata night.

Jan Iles

KEVIN COYNE / New London Theatre

A **FAT** lady sat at a table on the side of the stage, looking like she had fallen out of one of the prolific writer's songs.

Coyne warbled and wobbled about the stage, flailing his arms around as he sang and poured his heart and mind into the microphone, wandering aimlessly while the band delivered their solos.

It proved to be a conspicuous evening's entertainment, showing the man's aptitude and total disregard for the restricting formalities that have somehow wormed their way into rock concerts.

The band was impressively tight, injecting life into some numbers that

have seemed flat on record. George 'Zoot' Money screeched away on organ, and provided matching backing voices and noises, while Andy Summers added some notable guitar breaks.

Coyne's songs are often painfully real, encompassing child-like obsessions, fantasies, violent, rude realisations, and showing a stubborn yet healthy opposition to what is too often taken for granted. There is a danger with this becoming too gloom laden, but they showed the other side of the Coyne with 'One Fine Day', 'Sunday Morning Sunrise', and one that just about says it all, 'Happy Band', a prophecy of hope from his new 'Hearthburn' set.

David Brown

THREE DEGREES UNDER

THREE DEGREES / London Palladium
THE KINDEST thing that can be said about the Three Degrees show on Monday evening was that they worked hard. Their singing was competent and their dancing vigorous. Their choice of material wasn't so hot.

The opened with 'Love Machine', which was a good, well known number to galvanise a lethargic audience into action. Mind you, it's hardly surprising everyone was sunk in a catatonic trance - a short spell of Ted Rogers' weak, snide comedy act had flattened the atmosphere like stale beer. Perhaps this was why the Three Degrees were so well received. Anything that showed signs of life was welcome.

The Palladium orchestra was too loud and looked bored and the three girls had to work hard to push over their own personalities. However, they would probably have been better in cabaret. I found their act unskillful and vulgar (not rude) but the large majority of the audience really loved it. The old guys really loved the soft pedal sex oozing down at them from the thigh slashed costumes the girls were poured into.


From the first album, the girls sang 'If And When'. It was pretty, but spoiled by things going wrong with the dry ice machine at the wrong moments.

Their solo spots were much better. Fay, an original member of the group, started with 'Send In The Clowns'. She began well, but developed the number in a style too hard for the lyrics. Followed by Shellia Ferguson, who I thought had the most mature voice of the three. She sang a fair version of 'Love Will Keep Us Together' and lifted the tone of the show somewhat. Valerie's 'What Are You Doing The Rest Of Your Life' was competent.

Best of all was the three of them singing 'Dirty Ol' Man'. It was spirited and showed guts which I suspect could really bring the band to the front with a younger audience. I think the song may have hit home to a few gents in the audience.

In all, I thought the girls appealed (successfully) to the lowest common denominator in their audience. Given the chance, they could do so much better.

Rosalind Russell.

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soul stirrings

by
Kevin
Allen

The heat's on for Lee Garrett

LEE GARRETT is almost certainly a new name to everyone except those fanatical soul collectors who pour over the record credits and assimilate even the smallest of print.

Those worthies will tell you that, although he's never been given much credit, Lee has already made something of a major contribution to the progress of popular black music. He was co-writer with Stevie Wonder on 'Signed, Sealed And Delivered,' on much of Wonder's 'Where I'm Coming From' album and on the Detroit Spinners' big Motown hit 'It's A Shame.' His songs have also been done by Frankie Valli, Carl Graves, Jackie Moore and others.

Like his good friend Stevie, Lee Garrett has been blind since birth. Music has given him the kind of creative outlet he might otherwise never have found, because, if it's often hard to be black in America, it's even harder if you can't see.

"Really, music was my only hope other than the unemployment line," he said.

Born in Mississippi, Lee was sent to a state school for the blind up in St. Louis.

Back in 1963, Philadelphia was already a hot-bed of music, thanks to the then burgeoning Cameo - Parkway family of labels as well as such rival operations as Swan and Jamie - Guyned.

"I hitch-hiked my way out there and met up with a girl in the Orions, who were then just about the hottest girlie group in the city. I moved in with her and her family and spent two years hanging out in Philadelphia.

He spent most of his leisure hours at the Uptown Theatre.

"All the major soul acts coming through town would appear there. That's how I first came to know Stevie."

While Wonder went on to become a major star, Garrett stuck around in Philly, cutting some demos of his own compositions which impressed local DJ George Woods, then programme



LEE GARRETT: with Stevie Wonder

director of WHAT Radio. "He offered me a job, not as a singer but as a deejay," Lee recalls.

Eventually, he became assistant programme director at WHAT, before moving on to Detroit's WGPR - FM station.

"When I got to Detroit I connected with Stevie Wonder again and we started writing songs together. Happily, quite a few of them were successfully recorded, some by Stevie, some by other acts.

"I didn't make a fortune, but enough to let me spend some time running round the country. I went to New York,

Los Angeles, Phoenix and eventually Hollywood.

Things started happening when Lee met up with Robert Taylor, a songwriter who was on the staff at Barry White's Soul Unlimited Productions company.

"We really clicked

together as writers. It was fantastic. Our first song 'Burning Bridges', took just 10 minutes to write, then we sat down and wrote 14 more songs. Unfortunately, Roberts couldn't get out of his contract, so the partnership had to split up temporarily before it had a chance to make a mark."

Undaunted, Lee kept on trying for his own thing and found his haven in the unlikely form of the American office of Chrysalis Records.

Lee Garrett became not only the first soul artist to sign with Chrysalis, but also the first American.

'Heats For The Feet' has been the immediate result, a fine nine-track album of mostly lilting, melodic songs with very much the feel of current Los Angeles' soul about them - which is no wonder since he employed such illustrious locals as saxophonist Tom Scott (whose LA Connection is currently super-hot), June Millington (formerly of Fanny) and several members of Stevie Wonder's band.

With Eric Malamud and Tom Sellers producing, the album is an ideal showcase for Lee's talents as an artist and for the songs he wrote with Robert Taylor, the partnership having contributed all but one of the cuts

soul gossip

ACCORDING To an independent Arbitron radio survey in 15 key markets across the US, soul music is the second most listened to radio format among all teens, black and white alike, but is only ranked fifth among men over 18 and third among women over 18. Moreover, it was revealed that black listeners have wider musical tastes than was thought and spend more than half their listening time tuned into stations other than specialist soul ones. Spanish speaking Americans spend as much time listening to black soul as Latin stations, all of which indicates the broadening base of popular music, a most welcome trend... black deejay Clarence "Soulful Sonny" Scroggins, has just set new Guinness Book of Records figures by playing his soul disco for 1,000 hours at Topeka, Kansas, beating the previous record by 200 hours!... Sly Stone's sister Rose Banks, formerly the Family Stone's keyboard player, has signed to Motown... film company Superfly suing Buddah Records for 17,000 dollars over the soundtrack of 'Superfly Two', which Buddah released... Crossover Records, owned by Ray Charles, has issued the blind soulman's version of 'America The Beautiful', which was used as backing music during the skating at the Innsbruck Winter Olympics.

New Names

New name Tommi is a beautiful black American lady who has been building her career over in Germany backed by her Quiet Fire five-piece funky aggregation. A first sampling of her talents can be found on 'Love Bandit' a Roger Greenaway production released on the Target label (TGT 100)... you wouldn't guess it from listening to the record, but Chrysalis assure me that new name Sno-Ball is a group of white session men from Detroit. 'The House Is Rocking' (Chrysalis 2033) hinges round a choppy guitar riff with a strong vocal dancing over the top... mounting a massive soul push, Warner Bros have made a host of new signings. Among artists now packed to the company are Funkadelic, Lamont Dozier, First Choice, Donny Hathaway and the DeLontics...

album pick

VARIOUS ARTISTS: 'Music City Soul' (Charly CR 30107). The relatively new Charly label, master-minded by Joop Vissers, has been doing great things for collectors of specialist music, be it rock 'n' roll, country or blues. Now the soul fans get their turn with this fine set of vintage material which shows Nashville as a rich source of black music as well as its more familiar country sound.

The artists featured in the good value 16 tracks, all with original US release numbers and a fine Martin Hawkins' sleeve-note, range from the well-known to the obscure. They were recorded in Music City USA by Shelby Singleton, whose work has long bestraddled the soul and country fields (Jeannie C. Riley's 'Harper Valley PTA' was one of his).

Shelby's assorted labels - including SSS, Silver Fox, Plantation, Midnight Sun and Wet Soul, always seemed to offer a crisp, clean production sound which showed up any flaws in performance, but enabled the more talented artists to really get over. Consequently, several of the cuts included here rate as true classics, like

Johnny Adams' 'Reconsider Me'. Whatever happened to this great singer?

Some of the artists concerned had big reputations long before they went to Singleton. Wisely, in tailoring their music to his own label sound, he did nothing to bury their identities. Thus Wilbert Harrison's tracks, for instance, while having a fresh vitality, are very much what you'd expect of the man.

Big Al Dowling, the sadly under-rated Peggy Scott and Jo Jo Benson with their delightful 'Pickin' Wild Mountain Berries', veterans Betty Lavette and Hank Ballard, teamed for 'Let's Go, Let's Go, Let's Go', Robert Parker (the barefootin' man), Calvin Leary and Gloria Taylor



ASHFORD & SIMPSON: winning team.

all show fine form here and, to ensure plenty of variety, they've even included a classy blues cut, 'All Night Long' by the late T. Bone Walker. The whole thing is highly recommended.

ASHFORD & SIMPSON 'Come As You Are' (Warner Bros K 56159). Former Motown production/songwriting team Nick Ashford and Valerie Simpson come through with their third Warner Bros album and it's a winner. Credit goes not only to their own class but to some top East Coast sessionmen, including keyboard ace Richard Tee, white guitarist Hugh McCracken and that superlative drummer Steve Gadd, a man who can turn to jazz, soul or pop with equal dexterity.

Ashford and Simpson wrote seven of the eight songs and the album's strength lies as much in its material as in its performance. Sooner or later this pair are going to break through with a big hit single. Meanwhile, they're building a fanatically faithful, if at present small, following with some fine albums.

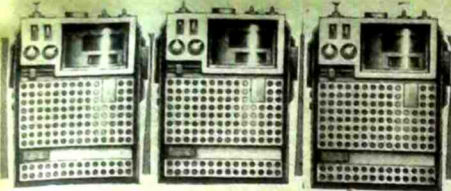
Incidentally, their erstwhile songwriting partner Josie Armstead is heard on background vocals here.

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TUNE IN

Films

In the family way...

'THE SLIPPER AND THE ROSE' U. Empire Leicester Sq. now and general release soon. THIS IS the British film industry's latest attempt to produce successful family entertainment. And the difference between *The Slipper and The Rose* and the others is that this one will succeed. Based on the Cinderella fairy story, which everyone knows by heart anyway, it stars Richard Chamberlain as *The Prince* and a newcomer to films, Gemma Craven, as *Cinderella*.

The Prince is unhappy because he hasn't found a suitable bride from all the neighbouring countries and protocol insists he marry a princess. His father the King, arranges a "Bride-finding ball" to which all the local nobility will be invited, bringing with them their daughters. Invitations go to the stepmother and two step-sisters, but not to *Cinderella*. While bemoaning the fact she receives a visit from her Fairy Godmother. All is well, and *Cinderella*, kitted up in a fabulous outfit, gets to the ball and of course attracts the attention of the Prince.

Midnight strikes, *Cinderella* has to make a quick exit and the poor prince is left with just a glass slipper to remember her by.

Directed by Bryan Forbes, the film, which contains a full score of songs written by the Sherman brothers, is a treat from start to finish. The costumes and the settings, like the King's castle, are super to look at. The two principals are very good indeed and the rest of the cast looks like a who's who of the British acting profession, with stars like Kenneth More, Margaret (Justice) Lockwood and Dame Edith Evans.

MIKE CHILDS

Radio



IF YOU'VE ever wanted to know what happened to RNI disc jockeys Mark Stuart and Crispian St John, take a look at our photo. It's their Socks disco van, which takes them to gigs at Roedean and other suitable schools and colleges in the Brighton area.

Mark is actually back on the radio this week, starting for one week only at the enjposable Swanses Sound, where CSJ worked until he decided he wanted to "get his head together". CSJ also runs a radio programming company down in Brighton, and if you want to drop in and see either of the two gentlemen, the address is 168 Edward Street, Brighton, Sussex.



ELTON JOHN: the musician

Books

The words of Elton's other half

ONCE UPON a time there were two writers. One was very good at writing lyrics, but not too good at the musical side. The other could write music, but had no way with words.

So it seemed a fair enough idea they should get their heads together to deliver the goods. And the people saw that what they did was good, and they worked together, happily ever after.

Bernie Taupin was the lyricist, Elton John the musician, and while it has been the latter that has gained the super stardom, his inventive partner has always got the recognition his talent deserves.

The idea of a book by Bernie Taupin seemed a good one, and when whispers of the expected event drifted over the Atlantic, it looked like something promising. To be truthful, we were a little disappointed when it turned out to be a collection of songs, but the product itself dispelled any hasty pre-conceptions. Entitled

'Bernie Taupin, The One Who Writes The Words For Elton John', published April 8 by Jonathan Cape at £2.95, it contains complete lyrics from 1968 to 'Goodbye Yellow Brick Road'.

What makes the book stand out is the awe inspiring collection of drawings, photos and montages illustrating the works.

It will, of course, be precious to any Elton John fan, or Bernie Taupin fan for that matter. It's also a prime example of pop poetry.

What it does confirm is that Bernie is a lot more than just the one who writes the words for Elton. So, when are we going to get a book Bernie?

DAVID BROWN

● See interview with Bernie Taupin Page 6.

LOOK FOR...

Friday night's guests on the 'Russell Harty' show are the Bay City Rollers, Dudley Moore and writer Mel Streathfield. Guesting on 'Saturday Scene' are Bernie Taupin, Rula Lenska and Charlotte Cornwall of 'Rock Follies', and the group, Hatters. Sunday's film on London Weekend is Rodgers and Hammerstein's glorious musical 'South Pacific'.

LISTEN FOR...

Saturday April 17: Ian Anderson's Top 12 on Radio One at 1 pm and at 6.30. 'In Concert' features Renaissance. On Sunday April 18 at 5 pm 'Insight' is about the career of the Drifters.

BLEEPS

MARTYN SUTTON, head of music at BRMB in Birmingham, has just added to his playlist - with a baby girl, by the name of Sallyann. Daughter and mother Anne are both doing well, and should be charting any day now... And at Radio Clyde, The Average White Band are definite to the FOR Clyde 76, the music and community festival in Glasgow. The Scottish band will be at the Apollo Centre on May 21, 22 and 23. The winner of the Guess The Face competition was David Lovegrove of Doncaster. He gets four albums. The montage was made up from the left eye of Alan Freeman, the chin of Johnnie Walker and the right eye of Tony Blackburn. The nose was where everyone missed out except Radio Hallam listeners, who said rightly that Michael Lindsay was the man in question.

Wolverhampton football star Derek Dougan was a guest at the London concert for the Miracles last week... Beacon Radio came on air on Monday serving the Birmingham, Wolverhampton and West Midlands area, broadcasting on 303 metres... More about Beacon next week... We understand the Indyatlantic motoring event at Brands Hatch two Sundays ago attracted just over 7,000 paying spectators. The organisers were expecting 15,000.

Tony Gilham is the new jock at Radio Leeds, taking order from Leslie Hows, who has left to go to BRMB. Tony was with UBN...

Theatre

LEAVE HIM TO HEAVEN / Watford Palace Theatre

THEY'RE ROCKING in the aisles again, this time at Watford where Ken Lee's musical is proving to be more than just grease nostalgia.

It tells the story of one Conway Tearle, played by Brian Protheroe, who is dragged off the streets to become a Rock 'n' Roll star.

His climb to fame is illustrated with more than 40 original rock numbers, sung with more sincerity and conviction than you would expect in most musicals, and perfectly echoing the period.

Highlights include Conway as a DJ, in a console reminiscent of a space-age pulpit; Paul Felber as Johnny the leathers, delivering his heartfelt plea to Laura with his dying breath; Sue Bond as the inevitable dumb blond, Janeen the swim suit, and a motor bike crash! And if you've heard of rock revivals, well this must be the first one to actually feature a rock resurrection.

There is talk of the show coming to the West End - it certainly should do. But meanwhile, if you live within jiving distance of Watford, the show continues there till April 24, and it really is rock poetry in motion.

DAVID BROWN

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Gloria



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GARY'S SIGNATURE TUNE



A HEARTFELT plea for Gary Glitter not to give up showbiz has been made by 3,000 fans. He was given the signed petition, plus a copy of 'Gary Don't Go' recorded by Sean O'Dowd, at Gary's Dublin farewell gig.

HEAVY METAL SPANISH HUSTLE!

TALK ABOUT the Spanish Hustle! — among the people who went along to see The Heavy Metal Kids at Madrid, sunny Spain, were the Riot Police, complete with tear gas.

It seems rioting at rock concerts is the in thing in Spain, so when the audience got a little over-excited, the police sprayed them with the said gas. The band made a hurried exit, leaving the police and audience to sort everything out.

Earlier, the band had to perform their entire three hour act before three official censors, all of whom were reckoned to be over 60. Needless to say, they did a bit of their own censoring to the act, like omitting the scrap in 'The Cops Are Here'. And as if that wasn't enough, lead singer Gary Holton was banned from going out on his own after a policeman arrested him, apparently objecting to the red stripe in his hair, and him having something to do with the Devil. Vive Espania!

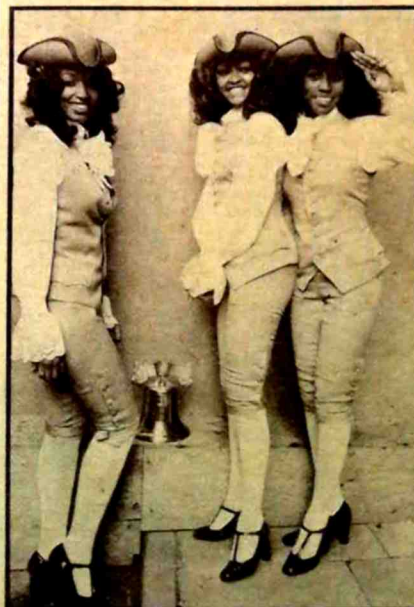


GARY HOLTON



WITS' END

3 Degrees do their hat-trick



THREE DEGREES: Bi Centennial trio

WHERE DID you get those hats? And why on earth didn't you leave them there? As the Nation is gripped by the American Bi-Centennial celebrations it would be too much to expect mere pop singers to be excluded.

So, here are the Three Degrees looking extremely silly in their historic garb, arriving at Heathrow complete with celebration bell to present to Princess Anne.

Next please . . .

Dylan's grannie is back



NOEL REDDING: pictured here with Jimi Hendrix

'BOB DYLAN's grandmother' — Jimi Hendrix's fond term for his bassist Noel Redding — is back in business. He has just completed a nationwide American tour, where he last played with Hendrix in 1969.

For three years Redding has been living in exile in Clonakilty, Ireland, but has recently regained interest in the music business.

His music is reported to be more commercial pop than hard rock, including versions of material like The Move's 'I Can Hear The Grass Grow'.

Noel and his band are mixing an album in England and soon embark on a European tour.

Of his past he says: "I have a lot of good memories from those times, and they are important. That music was relevant then, but now it's 1976 and I don't want to be just a memory. I have a new musical statement and its place is now, the present. I'm having fun making the music and I want to see the audiences enjoying it too."

NOEL EDMONDS wants it to be known that he goes motor racing for "fun", but he wouldn't mind winning a championship round for the first time. He first became interested in motor racing through Radio One, but this year sees his fourth year of "serious" racing, as he competes in 12 rounds of the Radio One Championship, starting at Snetterton on Easter Sunday.



THEY'LL never take it alive, back, back you varlets . . . the Ifford legions of the Sssh Fan Club have sworn vengeance on any scoundrel trying to prevent this scandal sheet appearing. Gossip lives (and is quite a good selling point) but enough of tittle-tattle, now for the lies . . . those Fulham follies the Chanter Sisters went out west to the Cafe Royal for a shindig that attracted Kenny Jones, Arrows, Jess Conrad (who?) and Fenella Fielding in a black plastic mac — honest I luv! . . . Meanwhile down in Marylebone Lane the party of the day turned out to be Les Gray's twenty (cough splutter) first birthday . . . Those newly-created New Seekers were there as were rising superstars Limey and Bethnal. Most people drank so much they went blind . . . And so on to the middle class reception (puff, puff, pant, pant), Bernie (he'll always be Reg to me) Taupin entertained guests at the fashionably demode Septembers and we spied Marc Bolan and Glor, Mike (he'll always be Paul to me) McGear and little Lynsey (he was never really Ringo to me) De Paul. Most people were blind before they got there . . . which is more than can be said for the decorators at the George V hotel in Paris who not only noticed that the three McCartney daughters had drawn all over the expensive wallpaper in their suite but also that felt pen is hard to get off.

Paranoia strikes. Notice our undeliberate mistake in the Jan Iles scintillating feature on schoolkiddies. We called the most fabulous guy 'shum Jim'. It should, of course, have been 'Slim Jim'. Paranoia over . . . Latest pop pop is Micky Clark of the Rubettes whose wife Val produced, arranged and conceived an eight pound baby boy . . . Now for the truth . . . Rubin "Hurricane" Carter has been granted a re-trial (thank you Bob); Beach Boys definitely set for July / August visit; Joni Mitchell and LA Express drummer John Guerin have parted company while Patti Smith and J. Paul Getty III seeing a proverbial lot of each other . . . Now then, is Alice Cooper trying to muscle in on the Disco Tec act — Coop's next album is a non-stop disco killer, welcome to my hell . . . Are Cafe Society the latest underground British export to San Francisco where their album is consistently being played (at least that's what Cafe Society tell us)? We'll believe anything, back you varlets . . . Alan's leaving the Rollers caused nothing more than a ripple did it? Wait till we discover which group he's moving to, back you varlets, how many more times . . . Ahh mes enfants we have not got very much longer together. Keep taking the gig BYEE XXXX XXX XXX

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