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Dear BBR

I was astonished to read in issue 15 the letter from the tripe-eating correspondent regarding Blind Willie. Where is this chap's sense of history? Doesn't he know anything about the great legacy left to us by the likes of Blind Willie?

When researching for my Doctorate in '75 (Nuances and Cadences Of The Delta) I had the honour and privilege to meet the Great Blind Willie and was able to establish, beyond any doubt, that he was indeed the greatest blues harmonica player of this century.

During our lengthy discussion, I was able to piece together the tragic circumstances of his life, including the appalling incident at the saw mill, (so sympathetically portrayed in your brilliant strip cartoon), which together with the unfortunate jail sentences and other unlucky breaks, all combined to give this man the true blues sound which, sadly, so few Brits have heard. It is wonderful, therefore, to see Blind Willie at last receiving the attention he deserves through the pages of your organ, thus releasing him from the anonymity to which he has been relegated for all these years.

One final point - is your author aware that Blind Willie had a sister of equally remarkable ability and with an equally tragic history (her disability resulting from an unhappy encounter with a dual-earthed amplifier)? She is still alive and, although over 100 years old, she still plays the blues harp. Further, due to her disability, she pioneered the method of playing known locally in that part of the Delta as 'The way Minnie does it'. Perhaps we can look forward to an illustrated biography on her at some time?

Meanwhile, perhaps your tripe-eating correspondent should rethink his diet and start eating more greens.

Yours sincerely
Seymour Brown (Dr)
Leicester

Dear Ed

As a subscriber and occasional contributor to BBR I have been delighted to watch it's evolution and development over the past 3 years and have been equally delighted to see it improve with every issue.

Humour is something that has featured (in fits and starts) since issue one, There was the excellent 'Nigel

Smarman, the A&R Man' by Tom Nolan, which vanished after a few issues. 'The Twelfth Bar' by Roger Pearce was still going (albeit intermittently) up to issue 13. Also in issue 13 was the start of the superb story of 'Blind Willie McTool'. Imagine my shock/horror/disappointment as I eagerly flipped through the pages of issue 15 for the latest instalment about my newfound blues hero, only to discover an issue completely devoid of humour! (It was just as well I was sitting on the toilet at the time.) Dutifully, I turned to page one, and began reading the serious stuff and found these words in "Talkin Blues". "Above all, it must contain that necessary amount of humour which alleviates the cynicism of bluestyle..." Then, on the facing page, a letter from a self-proclaimed "boring old fart" actually complaining about our genial genius! This person's own feeble attempts at humour (going on about tripe and onions) only serves to indicate that if WIT was SHIT, he'd be constipated.

An explanation of these contradictions would be much appreciated and, if you have (as it appears) acted upon 'Stoic from Stockport's' suggestions, perhaps this 'Cannonade from Camberwell' will change your mind.

Finally, still on the subject of Blind Willie, I noticed that there was no by-line. Some of us do recognise real talent and would appreciate the artist being credited. It's probably too much to hope for, but wouldn't it be wonderfully ironic for Mick Moores (aged 42), if it was by Chris Youlden!

Wolfie Witcher
Camberwell,
London

Blind Willie certainly got some of you going. In answer to all the questions: Yes, Dr Brown, we'd like to commission a similar biog on Minnie McTool. Wolfie, we'll publish letters from anyone. The reason there was no Blind Willie in No 15 was due to lack of space. Ditto this issue. He will be in the next issue and, as we've already seen the next episode I can tell you that it's just as good as ever. Also, go back to your preferred place of reading BBR and checkout the artist's signature, top of the page, between frames one and two. Mr Pinn always signs his work so no need for a by-line.

"...TIME TO POOP OR GET OFF THE POT"



DANNY GATTON

Interviewed by Trevor Hodgett

Les Paul recently said of Danny Gatton that "...he's taken everything I've ever dreamed of, everything I've ever done, and incorporated it into his own thing." Lowell George simply called him "The greatest guitarist in any style that I've ever heard." Rolling Stone declared that Gatton "...will leave you gasping with awe...". And Clarence White of the Byrds succinctly observed that Gatton was "a real motherfucker."

Such unsolicited tributes from such impeccable sources would reduce most guitarists to quivering wrecks, unable to ever again play another note in public, but during his performance in Tramps, New York's premier blues club, Gatton truly astounded an audience that included a visibly impressed Johnny Winter. On songs like That's Alright, Mystery Train and Memphis Tennessee, Gatton proved himself to be arguably the most technically awesome, fiendishly original and breathtakingly eclectic guitarist on this or any other planet,

interspersing his blues playing with rockabilly, jazz, rock and country licks, sometimes in the space of a single infinitely inventive solo.

Gatton is downbeat about the sort of tributes that most guitarists would kill for. "I'm not an egomaniac, in this thing for that. I'm basically a shy person and I just play to have fun with my friends and hopefully somebody out there will enjoy it. I don't like to be a gunslinger guitar player, I don't show off on purpose. I just do what I have to do to express what's inside me."

It was in fact Les Paul who first inspired Gatton. "Les Paul had the

speed of a lightning bolt and the sweetest tone. An incredible mind for arranging. I just can't say enough about him. The recording techniques! I first saw him play in 1959, he and Mary Ford, and it was like I might as well have died and gone to heaven. They were carrying 8,000 lbs supposedly, of equipment that was all hidden under the stage, and his pulveriser - he would make Mary Ford sound like Bing Crosby. I started playing when I was nine in '54, so I knew what I wanted to play which was Les Paul, but naturally you had to play for a while to learn that. I have an older sister; she brought home all the Fats Domino records and the Ricky Nelson stuff and Elvis stuff. In the fifties, all that stuff was in my house. And big band records with Charlie Christian, Gene Krupa. Western swing stuff. I was engulfed by everything."

Gatton began gigging in his home town, Washington DC, where one of his contemporaries was Jack Casady, later of Jefferson Airplane. "I used to be in a band in 1959 called the Offbeats and there was another band a half a block up called The Medallions. We'd go up and sit in with them and they'd sit in with us. It was old fifties stuff like James Brown. Mostly the bands I played in did everything. They were showgroups like you don't see anymore. Jack did all that stuff too."

Gatton tuned down an offer to work in New York City with jazzman Bobby Scott. "He wrote A Taste Of Honey. I had an opportunity to be a studio musician. The offer just scared me to death, so I said 'no.'"

Back in DC Gatton developed into a local legend. "In 1973 myself and Billy Hancock, who's fairly well known in rockabilly circles in Europe, and Dave Elliot formed a trio called Fat Chance. Our first gig was at the Village Inn Pizza Parlour and we drew so many people, after we'd played there for a few weeks, and they were rowdy. They said 'Hey, y'all got to go.' That was the first time we got fired for drawing too many people!"

Inspired by his hero Les Paul, Gatton experimented relentlessly with sounds. "I built a Magic Dingus box that was very similar to Les's pulveriser. Mine did a lot more stuff than his. His had four buttons. Mine had thirteen on it. It had master volume, echo repeats, echo volume, various reverbs and phase shifters and things and it worked a Lesley amp. I got shocked on that thing many a time!"

Still based in DC, Gatton released his first LP 'American Music' in 1975. "It was basically obscure 50's stuff. Some of it was New Orleans influenced. Bill Hancock wrote a tune called 'Tribute to

'They said 'Hey, y'all got to go.' That was the first time we got fired for drawing too many people.'

Amos Milburn' and the whole song was nothing but titles of tunes that Amos Milburn had written and recorded and Billy put it all together and made an amazing song out of it. It was on the Alladin label"

Recently, a tape from the American Music sessions has been released. "Bill Hancock bought the rights. There's a lot of outtakes and things."

Gatton followed up American Music with 'Redneck Jazz' in 1978. "That was on NRG - my parents started that label. Evan Johns wrote most of the vocal tunes. The only other vocalist was Chuck Tilley."

Tilley had previously worked with Gatton's DC contemporary and rival Roy Buchanan. "Rival because of the press, not because I wanted to be a rival. I think Roy Buchanan was the greatest blues guitar player that ever lived. He was a great country player, tremendous barband player. As far as being a blues player, I like him better than anybody. My idea of what I do now is to incorporate all the styles I already knew before I ever saw him plus put his thing in there. When I'm playing I'm thinking saxophones and organs and stuff. I don't think guitar so much."

After Redneck Jazz, Gatton again left DC. "I was coerced into going to California to play with a band on the pretence that we were going out on a tour opening for George Harrison, which turned out to be pure bullshit. So there I was, in Santa Cruz,

California, having a great time, making no money. And I got tired of that and went to LA and that was actually starting to happen for me down there. I was brought in to do sessions for people as a ringer, where these guys were being paid the scale and they'd give me ten or fifteen bucks to come in and do their parts, because they couldn't do it. But I got homesick." Gatton returned to the adulation of his DC fans. "I put together the Redneck Jazz Explosion with Buddy Emmons, who's the greatest steel guitar player in the world. We just took musical licence to go in any direction we damn well pleased. We set some attendance records in clubs in DC that had stood for twenty years."

In the late seventies and early eighties Gatton hired out his talents to Roger Miller and Robert Gordon, playing with Miller in Vegas. "Many, many times. Thumbs Carlyle was in that band. He plays the guitar like Jeff Healey. He invented it." Gatton didn't record with Miller, but made two albums with Robert Gordon. "I think 'Are You Going To Be The One' might be the name of one of them, and 'Too Fast To Live, Too Young To Die'. I was told to play like I was twelve years old. Forget everything I know and play really dumb. And that's what I did."

By 1980 Gatton had retired his Magic

mind was somewhere else. A guy from Warner Bros. called me and said I was being considered to play in his road band and send him a tape and I just never sent him the tape. And I had a shot to play with Woody Herman one time and didn't take it 'cos I couldn't read. He said 'I don't care.' I said 'I do care. I'm not going to mess up your band. Your guys are playing charts and I can't read.' So I didn't do that. Lowell George asked me to join his band. He said, 'I'll call you tomorrow,' and he didn't call, and I knew that wasn't like him. Then the paper came out the next day and said he'd OD'd. Didn't surprise me 'cos he was doing . . . I don't know what he was doing. I guess he was sniffing heroin."

Gatton's inimitable talents have been recognised by Fender. "I've got my own signature model Telecaster. They built this guitar to my specs and it's the ultimate hotrodded Telecaster that'll play dirty if you pound on it. If you take it easy on it, it's clean."

In the last few years Gatton's career has finally begun to take off, with the 1987 LP Unfinished Business and the 1990 release Blazing Telecasters with Tom Principato, both being acclaimed (his version of the old swing classic Cherokee on the former was likened by one reviewer to "a night of passion between a brainy Jeff Beck and a

'I'm just trying to make a living. Basically trying to save my wife from working for the Government and getting up at 3.30 in the morning. It's gonna kill her if I don't do something soon.'

'Dingus. "I used to play pedal steel and guitar at the same time. Sit down behind an Emmons with nineteen changes with my old '61 Les Paul custom with the Dingus box on it running through the Lesley and switch back and forth between the steel and the guitar. But that got to be a real drag, humping all that stuff around. And people started calling me Danny Gadget because I had so many little things going and they thought the gadgets were playing the music and not me. So I said 'Well, OK, I'll just go back to a Telecaster and a Four Ten Bassman.'"

Over the years Gatton has let many opportunities slip by, including an offer from John Fogerty. "At that time I was really heavy into building hotrods, so when the Fogerty thing happened my

randy Les Paul"!).

"I never got the hunger to make it 'till a few years ago. I was always content to play in the bars with my friends. I'm just trying to make a living. Basically trying to save my wife from working for the Government and getting up at 3.30 in the morning. It's gonna kill her if I don't do something soon. I either got to make it playing real soon or quit playing altogether and go get a day job. Which is why I've been on the big bus trying to do this for the last year and a half. It's starting to solidify and get somewhere. I've signed to the William Morriss Agency for bookings. Got a seven-album deal with Electra, with the options. The first Electra album will be out in January. It's time to poop or get off the pot. I'm forty five. I can't mess around."

JO ANN KELLY

January 5, 1944 - October 21, 1990



Jo Ann Kelly, 1968 - Photo: Pete Gibson

On Sunday 21st October, after a two-year illness, Jo Ann Kelly passed away. She had undergone an operation to remove a brain tumour in 1988 and had been told that she had only two years to live. After the operation, Jo returned to the music world in fabulous form. Her 1988 album, simply titled 'Jo Ann Kelly', had just been issued and was a brilliant milestone in a long and creditable career. Throughout her illness, her performances went from strength to strength and it was hard to accept the cruel facts that Jo and her family were facing. A half page obituary in the "Independent" with a more than generous sized photograph on Tuesday 23rd, followed by a major obituary feature in the "Times" on Thursday and the "Guardian" on Friday, confirmed how well she was rated in the national press and in the world of music. We have a wealth of her recordings to play. There are currently three albums on the market and I am sure that these and other re-issues will be listened to by generations of blues fans for a long, long time to come.

RECORD REVIEW

Peter Moody

Jo Ann Kelly

RETROSPECT 1964 - 1972

Connoisseur Collection

(LP) CSAP LP 101

(Cassette) CSAP MC 101

CD CSAP CD 101

In our October 1988 issue (BBR 4), I reviewed Jo Ann Kelly's new album issued on Open Records and included in that review the observation that a Jo Ann Kelly album was long overdue. I also said that Simon Evans, who had engineered the album, had made himself a difficult task to follow if a second album was to be issued on his new label. Well, Simon Evans hasn't followed up another LP on Open Records. He has put together, with Jo Ann and her friends, a brilliant compilation of works from her earliest recordings from 1964 up to 1972, and the result is issued by the Connoisseur Collection label on LP, CD and Cassette Tape.

Four tracks recorded by Tony McPhee are her earliest recordings and originally issued around that time on a limited edition EP. 'New Milk Cow Blues', 'Boyfriend Blues', 'Long Black Hair' and 'I Look Down The Road And I Wonder' all hold musical brilliance from Jo, then aged only 20.

Jo's long association with harmonica player Steve Rye was captured for the first time on record with two tracks originally issued on an anthology

album of artists from the Loughton Folk Club in Essex. With piano from Gil Kodilyne, this trio performs superb renditions of John Estes' 'Buddy Brown Eyes', and Little Son Joe's 'Black Rat Swing'.

Two unissued numbers recorded in 1968 for the Alexis Korner Radio Show present Jo performing 'Walking Blues' with 6-string bottleneck, and with Bob Hall on piano on 'Just Like I Treat You'. Jo's musical partnership with Bob is well remembered, as with Steve Rye, and both accompany her on 'Ain't Seen No Whiskey' with Bob Hall this time on mandolin. This is a beautiful number, sympathetically recorded by Mike Vernon. A second Vernon production features Jo with John McPhee's Groundhogs doing Big Bill Broonzy's 'I Feel So Good'. This number really stacks up the start of side 2 (or half way through, if you've got CD). Both the Vernons were recorded in 1969 and capture Jo at the time her CBS album was receiving rave reviews in the music press.

Three sides from 1972 are from sessions recorded by Nick Perls. If you are familiar with Jo's Blue Goose record, you'll appreciate their inclusion. John Fahey accompanies her on 'Shave Em Dry' and 'Try Me One More Time', and Jo solos on a beautiful version of Skip James' "'Hard Times Killing Floor'.

Last, but far from least, savour her 1969 recording of 'When I Lay My Burden Down' with Mississippi Fred McDowell which confirms all the statements and answers all the questions as to how brilliant, beautiful, talented or whatever complimentary adjective you choose to describe Jo's singing.

The album is superbly packaged with the cover notes from Paul Jones, and photo's from Jo Ann's private collection.

Connoisseur have already paid royalties to Jo, and further sales will mean further royalties for her family. This is an LP of important archive material that has to be one of the British Blues issues of 1990. There is enough rare and unissued recordings for a second volume and I'm sure Jo would endorse a second showcase. The sales of this one will prove it all.

Peter Moody.

My personal reflections of JO ANN KELLY

The first time I heard Jo Ann Kelly sing was on a radio programme presented by Alexis Korner some time in the middle sixties. She sang Jimmy and Mama Yancey's 'Make Me A Pallet On The Floor', backed by Bob Hall on piano. Not unnaturally when listening to a radio show, I formed a mental picture of the lady with such an amazingly big blues voice - this had to be a big, fat, middle-aged woman who wore dresses that resembled tents because nothing else would fit her. How wrong I was and little did I know at that time, listening to my parents' big old valve radio back home in a little Yorkshire village, that I would eventually get to see and hear this wonderful blues singer many times in many settings. Even less did I realise that Jo Ann Kelly would eventually become a personal friend. I heard Jo again on Mike Raven's R&B show during the late sixties and then some college friends bought a compilation of British country blues artists called 'Me And The Devil' which featured Jo's photograph on the sleeve. Shortly after, we went to see her play in Bradford and for the first of many times to come, experienced 'that' voice, live. For some unknown reason, I still remember that she wore a smart, grey outfit - maybe because the gig represented such a milestone to me as a blues fan.

In 1969 I travelled with the same college friends to London (quite an expedition) to see Mississippi Fred McDowell play at the Mayfair Theatre, and Jo Ann was on the same bill. The highlight of that show was certainly the duet between Fred and Jo, 'When I Lay My Burden Down', which was to appear much later on record when Red Lightnin' put out an album of Fred's performance. The track has also subsequently appeared on the Connoisseur compilation of Jo Ann's work which was released last year. I think this is one of the finest examples of her recorded work and, in itself, well-worth the cost of the album. Then in the early seventies, I moved to London and was able to see Jo Ann live quite often, at various venues. I was a



London, 1989 - Photo: Dave Peabody

regular at the Sunday afternoon sessions at Ken Colyer's Club Studio 54 in Great Newport Street and got to know Jo Ann, her brother Dave Kelly, Sam Mitchell, Steve Rye and many others. I also took great delight in going to Les Cousins in Greek Street. I'd get there early so I could sit in the front row and nearly get knocked off my chair by her superb voice - which had no need for PA.

I also remember going to a pub somewhere in North London to see Jo Ann play with her band Spare Rib, which featured founder member of Stealers Wheel, Roger Brown, (with whom Jo Ann collaborated on some songwriting), and Adrian 'Putty' Pietryga on lead guitar.

Shortly after this I left London, firstly for Canterbury and then to the little Sussex town of Rye, where I still live.

After the relatively short-lived electric band, Jo Ann teamed up with Pete Emery and I was able to keep up my connections with the blues scene by giving them bookings down in Rye. On one occasion, Jo and Pete were due to play a gig as part of the Rye Festival. They drove from Cornwall and didn't get here until about 10.30pm. In spite of their fatigue, they went on stage and played a fine set.

During the eighties they came to play in Rye more frequently, becoming favourites of the landlord of the then best music pub in the area, as well as the regular crowd. It was in this relaxed atmosphere that Jo Ann chose to play her first gig after recovering from the operation to remove a brain

tumour two years ago. In spite of the severity of the illness and seriousness of the operation, that famous voice was not diminished and she sang and played the guitar as well as ever. For me, one of the highlights was Jo singing 'Come On In My Kitchen', backed by Roger Hubbard on slide guitar. She couldn't remember all the words but that didn't matter - we were hearing a superb rendition of Delta blues.

The last gig she played down this way was at the Hastings Festival of the Natural World last summer. Apart from her own set, she also joined John Pearson to add her distinctive vocals to 'Jesus On The Mainline', which must stick in the memories of all those who listened.

When Jo Ann Kelly died on 21st October, we lost one of the finest blues singers who ever trod this earth and my family and I lost a good friend. The highlights of her career have been fairly well documented in this magazine and others. But, sadly, she had to be dead before getting coverage in the national quality press; even The Times ran an obituary.

We are mostly familiar with stories of how she shunned the big time, such as offers from Canned Heat and Johnny Winter, but there is something else I want to mention. Her willingness to help other musicians, especially blues musicians. Kevin Brown has told me that when he first arrived in in London, from Lancashire, in the early seventies, Jo Ann was one of the few people who went out of their way to be of assistance to him. She was also instrumental in getting Nick Perls to record Roger Hubbard and other British bluesers and I saw her digging out names and addresses for John Pearson. This was, of course, part of her down-to-earth openness, kindness and honesty. She will be greatly missed in many quarters, both as an outstanding blues singer and as a person.

Although none of her recordings can, in my view, match the live experience of hearing her sing, we should be grateful for them now that she is gone.

Michael Prince

Twenty five years ago Paul Jones was one of the most screamed-at teen idols in the world of pop, but for bluesologists of course, the esteem in which Jones is held depends more on the fact that he was one of that extraordinary group of young Brits whose unprecedented passion for blues music in the early sixties led to the music's enduring international popularity. And now of course, in the nineties, Jones fronts the country's most popular blues band and Radio 2's most unmissable programme.

Before his recent performance at the Belfast Festival at Queen's, Jones

STILL ON HIS TOES PAUL JONES

Interviewed by
TREVOR HODGETT



recalled the unforgettable impact that blues had on him as a teenager.

"It started with skiffle. Lonnie Donegan used to talk about people with names like 'Leadbelly' and 'Big Bill Broonzy' and it all sounded very exotic. I think the first ones I bought were Leadbelly and Broonzy. Gosh, it was just not like anything else that you could hear. It was so strong and so fierce and so emotional. So direct that it really spoke to me. It still does."

A few years later Jones encountered

electric blues. "I distinctly remember going into Pete Russell's Hot Record Store in Plymouth in 1960 and he played me T-Bone Walker's 'Play On Little Girl' with Junior Wells. A Chicago blues band with T-Bone Walker...Weird! (sings) 'Play on little girl, just kept having fun...' and Junior Wells...'Waahh, waahh, waahh.' and I just went ...'Wow, what is this?'"

At Oxford Jones formed Thunder Odin's Big Secret. "It was a jazz based repertoire with some Ray Charles and

Charlie Mingus and even one Ornette Coleman piece, as well as Muddy Waters."

Jones next found himself playing pop. "I'd left Oxford, or been sent down, and I was working in a dance band in Slough. I remember the audition. Everybody sang The Young Ones for their audition and I sang Georgia On My Mind and I got the job. They couldn't stand another Cliff Richard imitator!"

But Jones' passion for blues remained.

I heard, probably in Jazz News, that Alexis Korner had this little club, The Ealing Club, so I went down and I couldn't believe it. It was absolutely wonderful."

Jones met a kindred spirit, Brian Jones. "I got talking to Brian at the Ealing Club and he said, 'Let's make a tape and send it to Alexis.' so I got together with George Khan and a drummer, Chris Oakington, and Ben Palmer, who later became Cream's roadie. We did the tape hoping to do the interval at the club, and bearing in mind Alexis' legendary and well deserved reputation for encouraging young artists, it will tell you something about the quality of that tape when I tell you that he never replied!"

Paul recalls Brian Jones fondly. "The man I knew was incredibly together. Very dapper. A good businessman. It used to make me laugh when they said all those things about the Stones being so disgusting. I never knew anybody so fastidiously clean as Brian Jones. I was a pretty grotty student and Brian used to amaze me. His trousers would always be pressed, his shirts were always clean. He wore ties. What were ties? I never saw a tie!"

Paul still enthuses about Brian Jones' playing. "Oh, wonderful. He was way ahead of anybody else I was playing with, but there was never really much future in that band with Brian. We both had too-big egos! He said the only circumstances under which he would play in any band were because it

"Otis Spann and Matt Murphy came down one night and jammed with us. Blew us away completeley. Murphy was mindblowing."

Jones' career began to move forward when he met Manfred Mann and Mike Hugg. "They were playing Modern Jazz-Quartet stuff, but they were more avant garde as well. Thelonius Monk was an influence. They eventually got the sack from Butlin's in Skegness



The Blues Band, with Paul Jones far right

where they were playing because Manfred would insist on playing the piano keyboard with the entire length of his forearm. So they decided that they weren't going to be able to make a living as modern jazz musicians. Now, they really had no feeling for rhythm

"...So I call Jack (Bruce) up and he said, 'Yeah, who else have you got?' I said, 'Eric Clapton and Ginger Baker,' and there was a long silence. He said, 'How much do you know?'"

was his band."

Despite the failure of the project with Brian Jones, Paul was by 1962 guesting with Blues Incorporated. "They did those wonderfully inventive instrumentals like Fingals Cave, which put the blues harp with a jazz riff. Mingus was a big inspiration for that band. And of course Baldry was doing everything from James Cotton type songs, you know, Hoochie Coochie Man, through to Big Joe Turner R&B. It was a very exciting band and the ideal was to be allowed to sing with them, which I did, Mick Jagger did, Andy Wren, Art Wood, all those people."

and blues. What they did know was that they didn't want to play rock and roll, but that it was kosher for jazz musicians to compromise as far as R&B. Even Ornette Coleman had played with R&B groups. So for them it was a compromise between music and money."

With Jones as singer the band, now known as Manfred Mann, recorded an album. "When you listen now to The Five Faces Of Manfred Mann you can hear Smokestack Lightning is played by musicians who didn't have a terrific amount of feeling for that kind of stuff. Even I, I don't know why I even attempted that song, because there is a

cultural gulf between me and Muddy Waters and Little Walter, but it's nothing to the cultural gulf between me and Howlin' Wolf. Howlin' Wolf could be from another planet! The guy was just unbelievable! The thought that I would attempt to sing Smokestack Lightning is an outrage. I should have been put behind bars.

"On the other hand the original material, I think, stands up pretty well, and also things like Sack O' Woe, The Cannonball Adderley stuff, because really they had much more

sympathy with that. It's Gonna Work Out Fine was Ike and Tina Turner, and Untie Me was The Tams, and you can see there my record collection starting to influence the Manfred Mann repertoire. All the following singles, Doo Wah Diddy Diddy, Sha La La, Oh No Not My Baby, and Come Tomorrow, they were all single records by black blues and gospel and soul artists out of my record collection."

Jones increasingly got the chance to meet some of his blues heroes. "We backed Sonny Boy Williamson, and boy were we the worst people in the world to do that. I mean he complained about The Animals, he complained about The Yardbirds. But really, I'm not sure about The Animals either, but The Yardbirds accompanied him wonderfully. But he was notorious for dropping beats and getting lost and coming back in the wrong place, and of course that was okay with The Yardbirds, 'cos they could follow him a bit. They were coming to the blues from the blues, but with guys who were coming at the music from jazz where you played a 12 bar blues and it was a

12 bar blues, and you changed the chord here and you changed the chord there, and when you came back you were all together and if somebody didn't come back they were wrong. Well, Sonny Boy was the singer. How could he be wrong? The accompanist has got to be wrong! So we had a terrible time with him. He spent most of the time scowling and complaining at everybody.

"There was a lot of drugs, a lot of craziness, a lot of televisions out of windows and it wasn't me. Drugs scared the hell out of me."

"Nevertheless I thought he was wonderful. The actual sound that he got acoustically from the harmonica was unbelievable. Such an emotional sound, like a child crying or something. Or a human being in real emotional crisis. And it just took me to pieces to listen to him, it really did.

"And we played for Little Walter, but unfortunately by the time we played for Little Walter - this always took place at the Marquee Club where we had a residency for the best part of two years - Walter was not playing well. And that amazing tone that he had wasn't there. The whiskey bottle was in his mouth more than the harp and it was really sad.

"Otis Spann and Matt Murphy came down one night and jammed with us. Blew us away completely. Murphy was mindblowing. He suddenly said 'You know any Horace Silver tunes?' and Manfred and Mike Hugg went 'Do we know any Horace Silver tunes?' They played some great stuff and my mouth dropped open. They were beautiful guys as well."

By 1964 Manfred Mann had begun a run of eight pop hits featuring Jones. "Obviously we wanted hits, there's no two ways about it. We saw those girls screaming at the Stones and I wanted a piece of that. My regrets about those days include the fact that I did take so many songs from my record collection rather than going on with writing, because we wrote 5-4-3-2-1. But we didn't stick with it, after that we only wrote B-sides and album tracks."

The band became renowned for their Dylan covers. "Manfred was much

keener on Bob Dylan than I was. I wasn't thrilled with them. I could hear that he meant what he was doing and I was lost in admiration for the lyrics, but they didn't have the emotional power for me of the blues. He used to like the way we did his songs, but that didn't surprise me 'cos I thought that we did them much better than he did. But come to think of it, who didn't? No, no, that's not really fair!"

Jones and Dylan actually met. "It was 1964. He was pretty much a regular bloke. Most people were in those days. Acid wasn't around much. Drugs really changed a lot of people."

In 1966 Jones left Manfred Mann. "To a certain extent it was ego. I wanted a bigger share of everything. I wanted a bigger share of the money. I figured if all these girls were screaming at me, they'd scream at me if I was there without Manfred and all the others and I wouldn't have to share so much money with them."

Before leaving the Manfreds, Jones enjoyed a diversion with Powerhouse. "Joe Boyd from Elektra phoned me and said, 'Can you put together a moody band?' Jack Bruce was in the process of extricating himself from Manfred Mann and so was I. So I called Jack up and he said, 'Yeah, who else have you got?' I said, 'Eric Clapton and Ginger Baker.' and there was a long silence. He said, 'How much do you know?' I said, 'About what?' It turned out they'd been rerhearsing together - what became Cream. So it was Ben Palmer, I appeared as Matthew Jacobs, Ginger decided he wouldn't do it, so we got Pete York. We got Steve Winwood and Eric."

Jones found going solo did not live up to his expectations. "In the newspapers it said Paul Jones left because he wanted more control over his career. It was a joke. As a member of the Manfred Mann group I at least had 20% say in what we did. I was overridden several times, most notoriously about Pretty Flamingo. I thought it was a dumb song and I said it would never be a hit. But that was okay, I never minded that, but suddenly I didn't have 20% control of my career. I was expecting to have 80%! My manager wanted to do this, the producer wanted to do that, even the publicist was putting his oar in. Mike Leander was hired as the

arranger and co-producer. All of a sudden it was his songs, his musicians, his backing singers. I hated some of the things that we did."

Jones' first solo LP was Love My Friends. "Now a lot of that was my idea. John McLaughlin, he's pretty well on the whole album. He played on most of my records."

Jones hit with High Time and Bad Bad Boy and had a near hit with The Bee Gees' And The Sun Will Shine. "That was a hit record. Unfortunately they didn't press up enough records and that hit got away." The B-side was Paul McCartney on drums, Paul Samwell-Smith on bass, Jeff Beck on guitar and me on harp. It was a heck of a little blues band."

By 1968 however, Jones was feeling out of step with the pop scene. "Well, I'll tell you what happened. I toured Australia with The Who and the Small Faces, and, no disrespect to any of those guys - as a matter of fact I got on pretty well with lots of them, especially Daltrey, who I thought was a really nice guy, and Kenny Jones from the Faces - but I was out of sympathy with the whole lifestyle. There was a lot of drugs, a lot of craziness, a lot of televisions out of windows, and it wasn't me. Drugs scared the hell out of me, absolutely scared me witless. I couldn't bear that thought of being out of control. I mean, sure, I used to smoke dope and stuff like that, but I don't even do that now."

Jones began to concentrate on acting, but recorded Crucifix In A Horseshoe in 1971. "My show Conduct Unbecoming on Broadway had closed so my manager said, 'Why don't you do an album with American musicians?' We did a few tracks at the Motown studio in Detroit. A couple of songs have the blues influence but I was going through a very English thing at that time. It was a failed experiment." For most of the seventies Jones concentrated on acting, but in the eighties returned triumphantly to blues with The Blues Band. After ten years how do they retain their enthusiasm? "We get other people to come in and stimulate us. Big Joe Duskin, Plas Johnson, Bob Hall, the Memphis Horns. Same when we play live. It keeps us on our toes!"

Trevor Hodgett

BBR BOOGIE

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SAVOY BROWN

by Tim Pratt

Part 1

Over the years Savoy Brown has been many bands with guitarist Kim Simmonds being the only constant factor. Not unlike many of the other British Blues bands from the '60s-early '70s, Savoy Brown suffered frequent personnel changes. Through the ever changing line-ups the band's sound was easily recognizable and sadly most "rock journalists" paid more attention to Savoy Brown's instability than to the band's music. Hopefully with this article this problem will be remedied.

Kim Simmonds was born in Wales in 1948 and moved with his family to London when he was ten years old. Kim credits his older brother Harry, who was to become Savoy Brown's manager, with laying the groundwork for his interest in music. Harry's record collection included Bill Haley, Elvis Presley and Chuck Berry amongst others and because of these influences Kim bought his first guitar when he was about 13 years old. Kim's taste in music shifted away from straight rock and roll to blues artists John Lee Hooker, Sonny Boy Williamson, Muddy Waters and Lightnin' Hopkins whom Kim has mentioned as an influence many times. Another early influence was Elmore James whose basic rhythms were picked up on by almost every British blues guitarist of the so-called "BLUES BOOM" period of the '60s. Jeremy Spencer of Fleetwood Mac made a career out of rehashing Elmore James riffs. The beginnings of Savoy Brown can be traced back to the first meeting between Kim Simmonds and harmonica player John O'Leary. The two future bandmates met in an import record shop that specialized in American blues records. (Tony McPhee and Jo Ann Kelly met in a similar situation.) Simmonds' and O'Leary's mutual interest in the music of Chicago style blues artists Otis Rush and Bobby Bland as well as Muddy



Waters led to discussions about forming their own blues band. The Savoy Brown Blues Band was formed in 1965 by Simmonds and O'Leary and went on the road in 1966. According to one source the band's first bookings were in Scandinavia, which I have reason to doubt. Savoy Brown went the usual route of playing a residency at a club, (The Nag's Head in the Battersea section of London), where the band built up a strong following. The Nag's Head was the location of the first

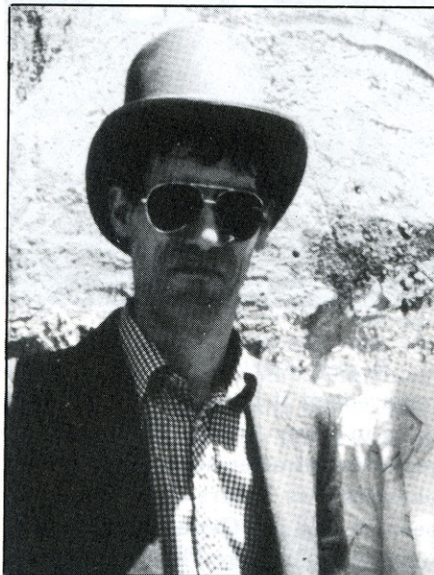
meeting between Savoy Brown and producer Mike Vernon. In his job as a staff producer at Decca Records, Vernon was given free studio time to audition bands for the Decca label. Vernon's first impression of Savoy Brown was that their music was "rough, raw and at times ragged." Vernon talked Harry Simmonds into letting him record the band in the early months of 1966 for singles to be released on his own Purdah label which was the forerunner of his later

Blue Horizon label. The four songs that the band recorded were "I Tried"/"I Can't Quit You" released on Purdah 45-3503 and "True Story"/"Cold Blooded Woman," which was withdrawn shortly after its release. The personnel on these tracks was Kim Simmonds-g, John O'Leary-h, Brice Portius-v, Ray Chappell-b, Leo Mannings-d and Bob Hall-p. The songs have a very authentic blues sound and show that the group had done their homework. Simmonds' guitar work and O'Leary's harp playing are the highlights of all four tracks, especially "True Story." None of these songs were released in the U.S. until 1968 when they were included on the Immediate Records Anthology of British Blues series. "True Story" also later turned up on the Sire Records History of British Blues album although it was titled "True Blue" on this 1973 release. Decca was impressed enough by these recordings to allow Savoy Brown to record an album. Before Savoy Brown started recording what was to become the 'Shake Down' album, the first of many personnel changes occurred. Founder member John O'Leary left the band and was replaced by guitarist Martin Stone. O'Leary went on to play with the John Dummer Blues Band, the Brunning-Sunflower Blues Band and Sweet Pain, which may have been the original Aynsley Dunbar Retaliation under an alias for contractual reasons. More recently, O'Leary played on an album by Main Squeeze in 1983.

For some reason the Mike Vernon produced 'Shake Down' album was never released in the U.S. and it's a crime because this is one of the strongest British Blues albums from that period. "Shake Down" was released in England in early 1967 and pre-dates John Mayall's "Crusade" album, which was similar in that both bands recorded songs from their favorite blues artists. "Shake Down" features only one group original, Martin Stone's "Doormouse Rides The Rails" but this takes nothing away from the quality of the album. The album includes "I Ain't Superstitious", "Let Me Love You" and "Little Girl" by Willie Dixon, "High Rise" by Freddy King, "Rock Me Baby" by B.B. King, "Pretty Woman" by Albert King, "It's My Own Fault" by John Lee Hooker, "Black Night" by Fenton Robinson, "I

Smell Trouble" by D. Malone and the bands' arrangement of "Shake 'Em On Down".

Better recording facilities at the Decca Studios and the addition of Martin Stone made for a great improvement from the bands' first recordings, which were done at Wessex Studios in London. Stone proves to be a fine



Chris Youlden

guitarist in his own right and is featured on his own composition as well as the solos on "It's My Own Fault" and the second solo in "Shake'Em On Down." Kim Simmonds is the lead guitarist on all the other numbers and is in fine form throughout. Bob Hall had gained a reputation as the finest boogie pianist in England and was very much in demand as a session player. This may explain why Hall only played on three tracks from the "Shake Down" album. An interesting note concerning Bob Hall is that one of his sessions was with Tony McPhee and the Groundhogs. The Groundhogs' recording of "Shake It" from 1965 is nearly identical to what Hall played on the Savoy Brown version. I'd recommend tracking down this Groundhogs single, which also included "Rock Me Baby."

Singer Brice Portius is in fine form throughout the album and his vocals on "Black Night" is one of the highlights of the "Shake Down" album. Bassist Ray Chappell and drummer Leo Mannings made a fine rhythm section, although at times Chappell seems to be buried in the mix. All in all, "Shake Down" holds up twenty years after its release.

During this period Savoy Brown had begun to build up a steady following in the London clubs, playing regularly at The Nag's Head, Flamingo Club, Blue Horizon Club and The Marquee. At this time, John Mayall was reaching his peak in England and Savoy Brown played support to the Mayall band on many occasions. It's been said that due to the limited number of venues in London that featured blues bands there was a lot of competition amongst the bands. The club atmosphere was very loose with band members shouting out numbers on stage whereas later on, in concert settings, songs were rehearsed for weeks before they were even attempted on stage.

The next of what was to become a regular occurrence in the long history of Savoy Brown came shortly after the release of "Shake Down" when singer Brice Portius was replaced by Chris Youlden. Portius had become very difficult to work with, and Ray Chappell suggested Youlden, who had sung with Savoy Brown occasionally when Portius was ill or didn't show up for a gig. Youlden had been in various blues bands in the London area including Shakey Vicks Big City Blues Band.

Almost immediately after Chris Youlden joined Savoy Brown, bassist Ray Chappell and guitarist Martin Stone were sacked from the band. In an interview years later, Simmonds stated that the band had split into two factions; Simmonds and Youlden who were drinkers and the others who had started to "dabble with psychedelics." Chappell's replacement on bass was Bob Brunning, whose claim to fame was that he was the original bassist in Fleetwood Mac. Martin Stone went on to join The Action, who evolved into Mighty Baby, who recorded two albums in the late '60s. Stone had previously played in another Purdah label band called Stone's Masonry, who had recorded a single in 1966 featuring "Flapjacks"/"Hot Rock" that later turned up on one of the Immediate Blues Anthology albums.

This lineup of Simmonds, Youlden, Mannings and Brunning was even more short-lived than usual because drummer Leo Mannings quit the band. On Brunning's suggestion, former Mayall drummer Hughie Flint was asked to join Savoy Brown. Flint had left Mayall in September 1966 and was replaced by Aynsley Dunbar. In the

interval Flint had spent nine months working with Alexis Korner in Free At Last.

It was during this time in 1967 that guitarist Dave Peverett joined Savoy Brown. One of Peverett's earlier bands had opened some shows for Savoy Brown and he had, on occasion, joined Savoy Brown's original lineup on stage. Savoy Brown were by this time working seven nights a week as were most of the other blues bands from this period. The bands took bookings all over England just to make enough money to make ends meet since very few of them made any money from the sale of their records.

The next record release by Savoy Brown, still called Savoy Brown Blues Band, was the single "Taste and Try, Before You Buy"/"Someday People." The single was released in England in November 1967 and featured the short lived Simmonds, Youlden, Brunning Flint, Peverett and Hall lineup and was recorded at the Decca Studios. "Taste and Try," written by Youlden, is an up tempo rocker with a hot guitar solo from Simmonds and some frantic drumming by Hughie Flint. "Someday People," written by Simmonds, is a slow blues number, which again has a strong solo from Simmonds and excellent piano work from Bob Hall. The single gave the public its first chance to hear Chris Youlden on record.

Savoy Brown continued their busy road schedule, and it was at this time that it became very apparent who was running Savoy Brown. In later interviews, former members gave the impression that Harry Simmonds had gone to the John Mayall School of Economics. Band members were paid a wage from the groups' earnings and paid like session musicians for any studio work. These money differences were the reason for the next personnel changes in Savoy Brown. Bob Brunning and Hughie Flint both questioned Harry Simmonds' policies and were sacked. Flint went on to play with Georgie Fame, Chicken Shack, Alan Price, McGuinness-Flint and The Blues Band. Various drummers were used during this time including Bill Bruford, whose audition with Savoy Brown was his first after coming to London. His stay with Savoy Brown was very short by mutual consent; he lasted only three gigs. The band settled



Roger Earl

on Roger Earl as a permanent replacement if there ever was such a thing in Savoy Brown. Bob Brunning's replacement after several temporary bassists was Rivers Jobe. Jobe had been in the pre-Genesis group, The Anon with Anthony Phillips and Mike Rutherford, from May 1965 to July 1966.

With this line-up of Simmonds, Youlden, Peverett, Jobe, Earl and Bob Hall, Savoy Brown entered the studio in early 1968 to record another single. Savoy Brown had by this time dropped the Blues Band tag from their name and the "Walking By Myself"/"Vicksburg Blues" single, which was released in England in June 1968, was their first record as Savoy Brown.

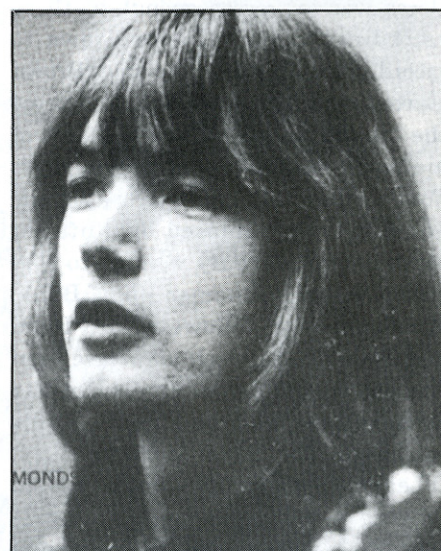
"Walkin By Myself" is a fiery rocker that features some great boogie piano from Bob Hall and has a live in the studio sound. I have a BBC tape from June 1968 with a live version of "Walkin By Myself" that is nearly identical to the studio version. The tape also includes an unreleased instrumental called "Gnome Sweet Gnome" that features some very hot soloing from Kim Simmonds and a version of "Louisiana Blues" that has Chris Youlden doing the vocals. Later performances of "Louisiana Blues" featured Peverett on vocals and this song was an in-concert favorite for many years. The B side of the single "Vicksburg Blues" is a Chris Youlden-Bob Hall duet that was later included on the "Blue Matter" album.

This same line-up next recorded the "Getting To The Point" album, which

was again produced by Mike Vernon and was engineered by Roy Thomas Baker who later gained fame as a producer for Queen.

"Getting To The Point" was the first Savoy Brown album to be released in the U.S. and has a different cover than the U.K. pressing. The U.S. cover has a maze with what looks like 17th century artwork in the back ground and where the maze ends the album's title is printed. The U.K. cover has a picture of Kim Simmonds wearing round glasses with the reflection of a black man in each lens. On his shirt are two buttons. One says Savoy Brown and the other Decca.

"Getting To The Point" features seven group originals and two blues standards, "Honey Bee" by Muddy Waters and "You Need Love" by Willie Dixon, making this the fourth Dixon song to be recorded in just two albums.



Kim Simmonds

"G.T.T.P." is not nearly as strong an album as "Shake Down" for two reasons; the first being that this line-up had not been together for very long and the second being that the band had become more dependent on original material. Although the originals were strong, they didn't stand up too well against the blues standards.

The album opens with "Flood In Houston," a slow blues number that is mediocre at best. "Stay With Me Baby" written by Simmonds, Youlden and Peverett is next and features some fine piano work from Bob Hall. "Honey Bee" is next and is given a very sedate treatment by Simmonds, Peverett and Youlden. "The Incredible Gnome Meets Jaxman" is an instrumental written by

Simmonds and features Simmonds and Peverett in a call-response guitar duel. Side one ends with "Give Me A Penny" and doesn't become interesting until the guitar solo by Simmonds. Side two begins with "Mr. Downchild," written by Simmonds and Youlden and is one of the strongest tracks on the album with again a great solo from Kim Simmonds. The title track follows and is an instrumental that sounds similar to a Freddy King number. "Big City Lights" is next and was written by Youlden and Bob Hall and is given a laid back treatment. The album's final cut is "You Need Love," written by Willie Dixon and is as the cover states a group rave-up. All the members of the band take solos and the track is similar in feel to "Shake'Em On Down" from the first album.

In an interesting note Willie Dixon sued the members of Led Zeppelin in 1984 for songwriting royalties from their song "Whole Lotta Love," which contains nearly every verse of "You Need Love." In press releases, Dixon's management mentioned that Savoy Brown had recorded the song and had given Dixon his credits. Maybe someone involved with Howlin Wolf's estate should listen to Led Zeppelin's "Lemon Song" and see if it isn't a lot like Wolf's "Killing Floor."

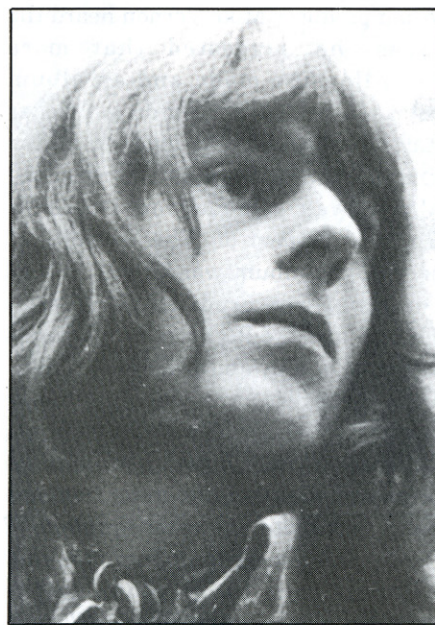
In late 1968 the "Train To Nowhere"/"Tolling Bells" single was released and featured the same lineup as the "Getting To The Point" album. "Train To Nowhere" was considered by the band to be their finest moment. The song was written by Simmonds and Youlden and featured a five piece horn section, the first time horns had ever been used on a Savoy Brown song. Youlden was a big Bobby Blue Bland fan and this was a forerunner of his later material. "Tolling Bells" is a very powerful cut that lasts over six minutes and again was written by Simmonds and Youlden.

In November 1968 Rivers Jobe was fired from Savoy Brown and former bassist Bob Brunning was asked to rejoin permanently. (He had filled in earlier at some dates.) The band promised big money and a forthcoming American tour which was to start in January 1969. Brunning refused because of the heavy work schedule and his desire to remain a school teacher. Jobe's eventual replacement was Tone Stevens and as in the past

Savoy Brown was right back on the road with occasional trips into the studio to work on the follow-up to "Getting To The Point."

The "Blue Matter" album was released only six months after "Getting To The Point" yet the difference is amazing. One side of the album contains studio recordings and the other was recorded live in concert at the Leicester College of Education, on December 6, 1968.

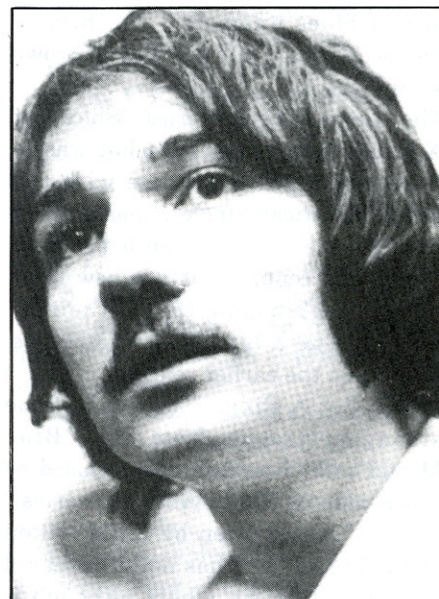
Side one opens with the two single tracks "Train To Nowhere" and "Tolling Bells" and were bassists Rivers Jobe's last recordings with Savoy Brown. His replacement on bass, Tone Stevens, played on two studio tracks and the live recordings. "She's Got A Ring On His Nose and A Ring On Her Hand," "Don't Turn Me From Your Door" and "Vicksburg Blues" are the remaining studio cuts. "Vicksburg Blues" was the B side of



Lonesome Dave

the "Walking By Myself" single and features only Youlden and pianist Bob Hall. "She's Got A Ring..." is a Youlden number and is one of the best songs he performed with Savoy Brown and features a hot solo from Kim Simmonds. "Don't Turn Me From Your Door" is a John Lee Hooker song and is another very strong track with Chris Youlden also adding guitar.

The live recordings on side two feature Savoy Brown minus Chris Youlden. According to the liner notes, Chris had a bad attack of the flu and was unable to perform. I've always tended to doubt this explanation because it seems strange that the one show that



Tone Stevens

Savoy Brown and Mike Vernon decided to use on record was one without Youlden. Since this show was recorded, I'm sure there were others during this period that were also recorded that did feature Youlden vocals.

The three cuts that make up the live side are "May Be Wrcng" by Dave Peverett, "Louisiana Blues" by Muddy Waters and "It Hurts Me Too" written by James Nolen. Dave Peverett Handles the vocals in Youlden's absence and does a passable job. (I've since learned that all of Peverett's vocals were rerecorded in the studio.) The version of "Louisiana Blues" on this album is worth the price of the album in itself. Simmonds plays some of his best ever guitar on this track, which lasts over nine minutes.

"Blue Matter" was the first Savoy Brown album to chart in the U.S., although it only reached number 182. The band had been in America three months by the time "Blue Matter" was released and played the regular circuit at the time. The Fillmores in both New York and San Francisco were the show case venues and Chicago and Detroit were also major markets for Savoy Brown. It was in Detroit in fact that Savoy Brown made their first breakthrough. It was also during this period that Chris Youlden began wearing the fur coat and top hat that became his trademark as the front man in Savoy Brown. The "Savoy Brown Boogie" also came about during this tour when the band found that the audience reaction to old rock and roll standards was much better than to the

slower blues numbers. "The Boogie" has been a part of every Savoy Brown show since.

The "Grits Ain't Groceries"/"She's Got A Ring..." single started what was to become a regular practice with the band's American single releases. That was to take a track from a previous album and couple it with a new lp or non-lp track hoping that if the new song became a hit it would generate interest in the earlier releases.

"She's Got A Ring..." was one of the strongest tracks from the "Blue Matter" album and it was released as the B side of "Grits Ain't Groceries." "Grits..." was written by Little Milton (Titus Turner) and has never appeared on a Savoy Brown album although it could have fitted right in with the next Savoy Brown album "A Step Further." The song has a very dynamic arrangement including a horn section and a somewhat out of place guitar solo from Kim Simmonds. "Grits..." is in the Bobby Blue Bland mold which Chris Youlden was becoming very influenced by. I'm not sure to this day if this single was ever in general release because many reference books don't list the single and the only copies that I've seen have been radio station promo releases.

Savoy Brown's fourth album titled "A Step Further" was released in October 1969 and as was with the case with "Blue Matter" includes one studio and one live side. On the studio side all of the tracks except "Made Up My Mind" feature horn sections and orchestrations. This seemed a bit strange to those fans who thought of Savoy Brown as a blues and boogie band. Not surprisingly "Made Up My Mind" is the strongest track on the studio side of the album although "I'm Tired" was chosen as the single with "Stay With Me Baby" from the "Getting To The Point" album being the B side. All the members of Savoy Brown showed continued improvement especially Lonesome Dave Peverett who plays an interesting solo on "Made Up My Mind."

Side two of "A Step Further" includes the "Savoy Brown Boogie," which had been a part of the band's stage show since the first American tour. The band found that the rock standards were a medley of these early rock hits. The live version of "The Boogie" on "A Step Further" is a twenty-two minute

tour de force that still stands up well today, nineteen years after it was released.

The Boogie" features "Feel So Good," "Whole Lotta Shakin'," "Little Queenie," "Purple Haze" and "Hernandos Hideaway" and with variations was part of the live shows for years. I have a tape on which "The Boogie" includes "Sweet Sixteen" and "Shake Rattle and Roll" and it is amazing. Chris Youlden's vocals are more powerful than on any studio recording he did with the band.

During the sessions for "A Step Further" Dave Peverett, Tony Stevens, Roger Earl and Bob Hall used some spare studio time to play some rock and roll standards while Simmonds and Youlden took a break from the sessions. Supposedly no one knew that engineer Roy Thomas Baker had left the tapes rolling during the sessions. When producer Mike Vernon heard the tapes, he suggested that more recordings be made and an album released from the recordings. Roger Earl's brother Colin helped out on the remaining sessions and the resulting album was released on Decca in England as part of "The World of..." series. The album was titled "Rocked Out" and was credited to Warren Phillips and the Rockets. The album is pure rock-a-billy and is very enjoyable. Dave Peverett said in an interview years later that since Chris Youlden was moving the band into a more orchestrated sound and away from the blues rock roots, the other members of Savoy Brown were subconsciously escaping from the sessions. These sessions also marked Bob Hall's last recorded works with Savoy Brown.

"Rocked Out" was released in the U.S. with no liner notes and it wasn't until it was rereleased in 1979 that all of the details of its recording were known. One of the songs "Blue Jean Boogie" was played in later tours as part of the encore. "Rocked Out" also sowed the seeds for what was to become Foghat 18 months later.

Savoy Brown's next album, their fifth, was "Raw Sienna" and was released in May 1970. This album marked Chris Youlden's swan song with Savoy Brown. One of Youlden's biggest influences was Bobby Blue Bland and it showed in the songs that he was writing. It was becoming more difficult to recreate his songs on stage because

the songs were so dependent on horn arrangements. This caused problems within Savoy Brown and Simmonds and Youlden nearly came to blows over the material.

Much of the material on "Raw Sienna" didn't hold up under the added weight of the arrangements and this is even more apparent when listening to live versions of the songs from the album. On tapes that I have from Youlden's final tour with Savoy Brown, the stripped down versions of songs like "A Hard Way To Go," "That Same Feelin'" and "A Little More Wine" are very powerful.

"Raw Sienna" was the first album to be produced by Kim Simmonds and Chris Youlden and has an almost Jazzy feel and features some nice guitar work from both Simmonds and Dave Peverett who continued to improve with each album. Since Bob Hall was no longer involved with Savoy Brown, Youlden and Simmonds shared the piano duties when needed.

Hall had turned his occasional projects with Bob Brunning into a full time band. The Brunning-Sunflower Blues Band recorded four albums and former Savoy Brown members John O'Leary and Leo Mannings appeared on one of them. Brunning and Hall continue to work together almost twenty years later and have done sessions with virtually every visiting American blues man to play in the U.K.

The best songs on "Raw Sienna" are "A Hard Way To Go" written by Youlden and "That Same Feelin'" written by Simmonds. "Raw Sienna" peaked at number 121 on the U.S. charts, which had to be a disappointment to the group after reaching number 71 with the "A Step Further" album.

Part 2 of Savoy Brown by Tim Pratt will appear in the next issue of BBR Boogie.

Festival Roundup

With four major festivals in this country in the coming year, we might be forgiven for thinking we're being spoiled for choice. Three of the festivals, Gloucester, Burnley and Colne, are continuations of already successful festivals, and the fourth at Redcar can be fairly said to have evolved out of the others. Much hard work by professionals and enthusiasts, or both, have built up a solid base for revival of blues music as a serious alternative for refugees from rock and pop and rap earbashing. The blues scene may yet go into overkill, but until then, let's enjoy



Joe Louis Walker, (Gloucester)

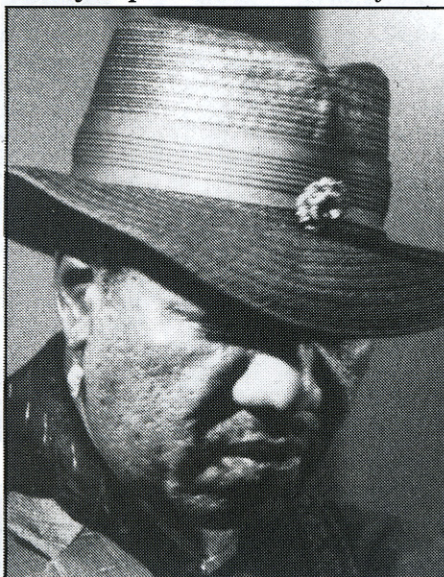
it while we can.

THE GLOUCESTER BLUES TWO FESTIVAL has an expanded line up after last year's initial success. This year there are six American bluesmen on the bill plus acoustic concerts and films, talks, workshops, all augmented by an exhibition of photographs of legendary blues musicians and characters.

There is a good mix of blues styles and many aspects of the blues are

covered from the hard Chicago blues of **Lefty Dizz** to the west coast groove of **Joe Louis Walker** and **The Boss Talkers**

Also on the bill are **Wild Child Butler**, whose harp playing could be one of the highlights of the show, **Lucky Lopez Evans** who is busy



Lucky Lopez Evans, (Gloucester)

plugging his latest album 'Evil' and was very popular at Gloucester last year, plus the two Texas guitar wizards, **U.P. Wilson** and **Jesse Guitar Taylor**, who will both be kicking up a storm. All of these American musicians will ensure that the standards set will be high and the blues will be hot.

The British blues bands supporting are **Junkyard Angels**, **Ray Minhinnet Band**, **Bare Wires** and **Booze 'n' Blooze**, all of whom should do the job well.

There will be plenty of acoustic blues too with **Dave Peabody**, **Top Topham**, **Bob Hall** and **Mike Messer** all demonstrating their country and southern styles.

In addition to these continuing concerts, there will be a series of talks on such legends as Robert Johnson, Muddy Waters and Blind Gary Davis, by **Robert Tilling**, and a talk on How Women Survive the Blues by **Maurice Bottomley**. Films featuring Lightnin' Hopkins, Clifton Chenier, Blind Gary Davis plus Ma Rainey, Ida Cox, Bessie Smith and Alberta Hunter among others, will ensure that blues awareness will be enhanced by this festival. The festival runs from Thursday March 28th, over the Easter weekend until Monday, April 1st. **Louis Hawkins** is the organiser and has details at **The Guildhall Arts Centre** on 0452 505086.

It's unfortunate that this festival clashes with an equally good festival in **THE THIRD BURNLEY NATIONAL BLUES FESTIVAL**, though with the

Otis Grand and the Dance Kings (Burnley)



present cost of travel most people will probably go to the one nearest them. Burnley goes from strength to strength each year and they should know something about the business by now.

They have a Chicago house band this time round, which should offer cohesion for the various main American acts, in the form of **Harmonica Hines** and **James Johnson**.

The bill is headed by **Rosco Gordon**, with **Big Moose Walker**, **Lefty Dizz**, **Doctor Ross**, **Angela Brown**, **Jan Harrington**, **Otis Grand** and **The Dance Kings** and **Jesse Guitar Taylor**.

The **Jim Daly Blues Band** crosses the Irish Sea to join **The Mick Clarke Band**, **Tony McPhee** **John Pearson**,



Ed Williams

Marilyn Middleton Pollock and **Will Killeen** from the home grown contingent.

There will be five major evening concerts and two afternoon concerts augmented by the festival stage, workshops, and of course, the **late night festival club**.

Dave Peirce is once more organising Burnley and details can be obtained from the box office at **Burnley Mechanics** on **0282 30055**.

We don't yet have any details of the **Colne British R&B Festival**, but we'll give you those when we get them.

The other major festival, **LANGBAURGH INTERNATIONAL BLUES FESTIVAL** at **Redcar** from 3rd to 6th May, promises to be the highlight of the festival season as far

as numbers of acts is concerned.

Koko Taylor and The Blues Machine, **Ronnie Earle with Sugar Ray and The Broadcasters**, **Magic Slim and The Teardrops**, **Jimmy Rogers**, **Li'l Ed and The Blues Imperials**, **John Hammond**, **The Walter Trout Band**, **Wild Child Butler**, **Guitar Shorty** and **Little**



Koko Taylor (Redcar)

Willie Littlefield, where do you stop? Add to that bill a whole host of British Blues bands and performers including the likes of **The Blues Band** and **Dana Gillespie**, and you have the makings of a mammoth festival.

In addition, the **Acoustic Lounge**, **Road House Sessions**, **Midnight Blues Club**, **Piano Bar**, and whatever else tickles your fancy means many sleepless nights and large hangovers...sounds like the blues to me.



John Hammond (Redcar)



Ronnie Earl and Sugar Ray (Redcar)

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- ★ **JESSE "GUITAR" TAYLOR**
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Joe Louis Walker

Talks to Pete Feenstra

It was perhaps a poignant fact that when I came to interview JOE LOUIS WALKER in the company of fellow West Coast bluesplayer, but UK resident-OTIS GRAND, Joe should be tired, bereft of his usual resonant voice and in truth worried about whether he was going to be able to get through his T&C gig that night. Like a true pro only the occasional cough and frequent use of a throat sweet betrayed Joe's end-of-tour listlessness. The real point about all this is the underlying question as to why one of the world's leading blues men should be having to put himself through all this. After all, with the release of *Blue Soul* had't this smoking bluesman just recorded one of the best albums of the decade? With this clearly vexed problem of a lack of recognition and the resulting low profile tour as a back drop to the conversation, Joe reflected on the making of *Blue Soul* before he and Otis both attacked the lack of money going into blues from record companies.

"I felt like *Blue Soul* was a bit special at the time. It was'nt just another album, there was an awful lot of work went into it, a lot of feel, blood, sweat and tears. After all this was'nt something we put together overnight. I was reasonably happy with the first two albums, and *Blue Soul* was a kind of natural progression - the result of a couple of months intense work. But I'm quite happy working at that level of intensity. And when you do finally get some kind of budget to record with, you tend to pay attention to a whole number of variables."

"On *Blue Soul* I was always looking for new inspiration on the session. Its like you sometimes need an extra little charge - a bit more energy. After you've been dealing with the different bits of recording, from the engineers to the different studios, the vocal sessions, the backing-tracks etc., you



have to work that bit harder to keep the spark. But that's OK, and at the end of that particular session I did feel quite pleased and I thought it was a worthwhile, and good project to be associated with." Joe's approach to *Blue Soul* did'nt apparently differ from either *The Gift* or *Cold Is The Night*, yet the album displays a maturity, probably born from having waited years to record.

"I always was busy writing, even during the 70's when no-one was particularly interested in me or the blues. Most of the gigs were a mixture of soul, gospel, r&b etc, but I always felt ready to record, and I think my material has never really been a problem, whereas getting the records to the people has." Much has been made of the Hightone connection (Joe's label in the US, and licensed to Demon over here). With artists like Denis Walker leading the way, the label became known as having something of a house style. But its not a view Joe readily concurs with. "I've heard people say that and I've been

similarly compared to Robert Cray. But that's up to the listener. Its their prerogative. Its all in the ears of the beholder really. People talk about the so called modern blues style, and its connection with Hightone, but in my case its more the two getting together rather than particularly mutually accommodating one another. I mean Hightone built up its own reputation, and I know what my sound is like. Maybe its a case of the label knowing me as something other than a regular blues guy, and me being aware of Hightone being more than a regular blues label with a particular style in mind. Whichever way you approach it I think we're both happy." Back in the US Joe's reputation as a leading blues man has seen him play clubs, festivals, and has led him to visits to the White House and a prime spot on the front of a leading blues magazine, yet the feeling persists that this superb player is still being undersold. Much has been made for instance of both the late Stevie Ray Vaughan's and Jeff Healey's successes (although the latter

now appears to be firmly entrenched in the rock market) compared to Joe's relatively minor achievements, commercially speaking. "You read that interview, right?" smiles Joe. "I hope it wasn't misconstrued. I mean Stevie Ray is a great player, and Jeff had his merits, but all I've done is stick to my own style. I don't think either Stevie or Jeff changed theirs in any particular way to get a deal or anything. People talk about crossing over into a rock market, but the way I see it folks can cross over to my style of music if they want to. I'm not too sure what the phrase means. I mean you have your own style and that's it. I play what I play and I'm not about to start using drum machines or synths to cross over to anything other than what I'm doing at the moment." Fighting talk from a man who finally appears to have found an audience who accept his soulful blues in their own right. But there is more than a tinge of bitterness when it comes to the people who turned down the present chestnut. "What this is really all about is record company policies or the lack of them. I know for a fact that a couple of labels turned down Blue Soul even though the A&R people liked it. Joe Smith the former boss of Capitol Records wrote a book in which he came right out and said that the trouble with record companies today is that they want everything easy; they want it safe and easy. In other words what the guy is saying is that even though a company might like the product, they would put their aesthetic considerations aside and go with something that's far more easily marketable. Nobody's hiding from the fact that we're in a commercial situation, but the point is someone along the line isn't doing their job. I've even had companies tell me they love the stuff and they passed it on to the marketing department from the A&R division, and by the time it got to the people who should be hitting the market with it, they just turned round and said 'We don't know who would listen to this sort of music. I find that kind of hard to take given the fact that this band has spent the last eighteen months playing to packed clubs and sold out festivals in the US and Europe. Not only are record companies ignorant of what's going on, they don't even bother to send any one out into the field anymore.'" At this point Otis



Otis Grand

Grand interjects to further illustrate Joe's point. "Yeah, its pretty much the same here. It has actually amazed me the kind of people that have come to see our band, At a recent gig in Gloucester I thought we had been booked into the wrong place. I looked out and saw all sorts of people - including skinheads, and thought Oh! Oh! this can't be for us. But at the end everyone was on the floor. Kids of 18 and 19 were coming up to me and asking 'What was that you were playing? And I turned round and said Hey, this is the blues, go out and check out BB King, Joe Louis Walker etc. So yeah, I think Joe's point is very accurate. There is an audience out there with potential for a lot more. The problem appears to be a marketing one in which the blues needs to be dusted down, and represented in a positive way. That's precisely what I'm trying to do with our band.

"Most people over here were brought up on all that sustained guitar stuff - the British blues of the late 60's. That's OK, but we are trying to play the real blues in a contemporary way. And I think that's the case with Joe as well. In fact, were it not for Joe's efforts and encouragement, I don't think I could have kept my band together. So all in all it is about time the record companies backed the blues..." "There's a lot of talent out there" mutters Joe "Look at people like Kenny Neal, Chris Caine, Curtis Salgado, Russell Jackson and of course Otis. Plus of course there's a whole range of players back in Oakland who haven't so far had the chance to show what they can do."

Like Joe himself, hopefully their time will come. Otis meanwhile is doing his bit in having just brought over Curtess and also has plans for Jimmy T 99 Nelson.

"I like to help guys like that. But what encourages me, and amazes me, is the fact that this guy wants to play new stuff with kids and isn't even really

interested in his old hits. That's a great boost for the current blues scene. "I think the blues can be extended to a whole new audience with the right backing. I mean, I was in France back in the late 70's and there was no interest - except those who saw the blues as an antiquarian form of jazz. Now I go over there and you see some amazing bills; people like Albert King and Anson Funderburgh, Ronnie Earl etc., are being booked to do big rock festivals. But they're still sticking to their blues, and the kids love it."

On the playing front, Otis & the Dance Kings have markedly moved away from the Jump/Boogie woogie style and now feature the ebullient Mr. Grand up front on guitar with the horns adding support rather than leading the way.

"It was all part of the plan" whispers Otis in a conspiratorial fashion. "I had a hard time with the horns, getting them to play the blues properly rather than merely learning their blues chops the night before the gig. But now that they're versed in the idiom, the time has come for me to move the band on." With a major deal in the pipeline, possibly in Europe, Otis reflects on Joe's efforts, "The man who gave me the initial inspiration."

"On Always Hot, we had a budget problem, and time problem. I mean Joe had to leave to go back to the States, and Special Delivery did as good a job as they could, given the circumstances. I thought it better to have an album out than not, so we did it.

"Joe's experience, guidance, writing and arranging were crucial He's a REAL bluesman who knows what he wants. I still think I Don't Know Why is good enough to become a standard, and I think his influence is so large it crosses over the contemporary blues scene as a whole." Three hours later, Joe is busy making light of his sore throat and giving one of the most enigmatic blues shows of the year. The guy is pure class, and clearly his anger at the current lack of backing for the blues comes through in his playing.

As Otis suggested, Joe is setting the standard for the 90's. It's a standard that I feel few contemporary players will be emulating but there should be some sparkling blues along the way whilst they try.

Pete Feenstra

BEDROCK BLUES

with **JESSE TAYLOR**

"I've recorded on over 57 albums but this one's a bit of self indulgence. After playing on all those cuts and all, I figured I wanted to make a guitar album and play all those things that I've been doing for years. What you hear on the Last Night album is a live band that had been gigging together for a year. That's exactly how long it took to cut the album."

T rue to form and character JESSE "Guitar" TAYLOR has turned his first opportunity to record under his own name into an extended road house jam. After a quarter of a century of gigging with the likes of Jimmy Dale Gilmore Butch Hancock and Joe Ely, Jesse has grabbed the opportunity to return to his beloved Texas blues after lengthy spells of incorporating his blues style into Country orientated combos high on style but low on good old Texas blues. With a licensing deal in the UK with Bedrock records, all that is about to change. Last Night the album, is a tough soul inspired blues album that may not blow your socks off on first hearing but gradually penetrates your consciousness and then your feet, before you finally twig that there is a heavyweight guitarist pushing along that Stax sound. Jesse's longest touring stint came with Joe Ely and gave him the opportunity to play his flowing riffs in front of The Stones, Tom Petty and even The Clash— not blues cogniscenti by any means - but an opportunity to play to people beyond his native Texas. "I've always been a blues player ever since I ran little combo's out of school" confirms Jesse with a wry smile. "The fact that I haven't always played in a blues band didn't make any difference to my own influences and the way I like to play. So people think just 'cos I joined Joe Ely, I must be a Country player,

but I'd dispute that. The truth was that Joe got himself a Texas blues guitarist that was adaptable enough to fit in with the format of the band. The reason that band sounded so good and was able to play to so many different people was the incorporation of different styles into what Joe was doing. I enjoyed every minute of it and still get to play with Joe, Butch and Jimmy when the opportunity arise. They're all great players."

To call Jesse Taylor the perennial sideman is not to take anything away from a musician who has finally sought out the opportunity to put out his own album. It's just that his playing is so effortless and full of a generation of influences that it comes as no surprise to find some key elements on the Last Night album that suggest other people's styles. "Well first of all being a guitar player and coming from a way-out-back place like Lubbock you tend to take notice of anything that stands out and at the time we had the Soul boom with Sam & Dave and those Ike Turner reviews. So I suppose all those Stax type horns on the album are the kinds of sounds I was brought up on. The guitar sound on some of the stuff probably came from Lonnie Mack. Round about the time I was 13 or so, he had that monster hit Memphis and that song just turned me right around. We all had combos at the time... and a lot of us practised Ventures-style instrumentals. But this song probably

influenced everyone I knew who played. In fact Lonnie was getting a lot of airplay back then, and following that style up I finally came to Jimmy Reed. Somebody back then lent me an album and suddenly all those sounds, and tunes that were buried in my head and heart were all there in front of me on this one record. It was nothing but the blues and they've never left my side over the years. So to get back to the question of the album, I suppose the material is an amalgam of all those different influences over the years." Side two contains a number of fairly well covered numbers from Gangster Of Love to the gospel blues of Mary Don't You Weep For Me, all classics that ended up on the set due to Jesse's Texan fans rather than by design; "Well that old Johnny Guitar Watson thing is probably the song I've been doing the longest out of all of them and when it came to recording it was a case of people coming up to me and asking me whether it was going to be on the album. In fact it wasn't ever a question, more threat 'You ARE going to put it on aren't you?"

Evil is another classic I've been doing for years, and the gospel thing came from Aretha Franklin's version of that song - did you ever catch that? I also heard the Eric Gale version, and although his is a guitar version it was Aretha's reading of the song that inspired me. Funnily enough it was also the last cut of the session and when we got to thinking about what to finish the album off with, it proved to be the natural number to do.

Out on the road for 6 weeks in the UK represents Jesse's longest Euro tour so far. By the time you read this Jesse will have covered everywhere from South Wales to Scotland having taken in far flung places like Blackpool, Scunthorpe and even Grimsby en route (with all due deference to the good people of the east and North West Coast). "I've enjoyed the dates so far. I had it in mind to make a bit of name association. Some people will have seen me with Joe on tour, or just know me as the guitar player so and so. Other people won't even know me but hopefully by the time I get round to their neck of the woods the album will have done a bit of good. So far, the reaction at gigs has been fine. In fact I get the impression that some of the places are real pleased to see that



someone is making the effort to play in their town. It all comes down to getting some exposure. I got a break with this album, and it seems like all of us such as Jimmy Dale, Butch, Joe etc., get a bit of recognition over here in Europe, which is great. Back home in Texas we also get to do some hot gigs around Austin and beyond, but there's so many of us that I suppose we're more of a novelty of here. Its fantastic that people like Bedrock are prepared to get behind an album over here, and that's why basically why I'm able to tour like this." Jesse mentioned Austin and inevitably the conversation drifted towards the blues scene . "People always seem keen to find out why Austin is like it is. For a start you're

talking about being able to catch all kinds of blues players at least six nights a week. And on the weekend the list is awesome. I mean at any time on the weekend you could catch Buddy Guy or John Lee Hooker, Anson Funderburgh, the list goes on. And then again there's a bunch of local guys as well. Texas is full of good players. There's always been a tradition for the blues, and Austin has always been a blues town ever since anyone can remember. As a kid I met Freddie King and had the good fortune to know him socially and eventually jam with him on three or four occasions before he died. I also regularly caught people like Lightnin' Hopkins and just about everyone that was around. I suppose

just like Lubbock, there are hundreds of communities out there just waiting for something musical to happen. On top of that you've also got Antone's which must be one of the top, if not the top blues club in the whole of the USA at the present moment. So the tie up between blues and Austin has a historical perspective, one that's being maintained nowadays as much as it was many years ago."

"Its the same with Lubbock as regards musicians. There's not an awful lot goes on there (unlike Austin), but probably because of that reason anyone that can play music takes it up for something to do. A friend of mine has a theory that the all those muso's from Buddy Holly onwards all come from Lubbock because of a weird tie in with the Lubbock Lights UFO sightings. It all happened in the 50 's when they were reported to have been sighted. Its was a big thing and still is to this day in the field of UFO studies. But there are hundred's of theories, and not many answers. It's just one of those things that keeps the town on the map musically speaking."

Jesse has already nearly completed a second album. "Its going to be more to do with my song writing. The first album was a shot at a guitar album, the stuff I've been doing all my life. I wasn't thinking much about what to write for it. But the next one's going to be more of me, and probably less of the live thing."

Whatever the outcome Jesse is currently busy working his way around one of the most gruelling UK tours undertaken in many years by anyone. The man's a real trouper and even in the tour's more adverse circumstances—such as a paltry crowd at Bobby Brown's in Nottingham—the faithful few cheered him on to victory. Happily those sparse crowds have been few and far between and Jesse has been making plenty of friends and selling a few albums along the way.

"I'm aiming to come back in 5 to 6 months with my full band. This tour is just the beginning and next time we'll do about a dozen choice gigs and also take off to Europe."

On the evidence of the two performances I caught let's hope Jesse is successful in his future plans.

Pete Feenstra

LIVE *Reviews*

CHARLIE SAYLES Willesden Green Library Centre, London NW10 24th November 1990

After a seven year absence, Charlie Sayles was back in town! A unique Bluesman, still largely a street performer, he plays harp like no-one else around: tough and fierce, filling in for all the instruments and with very firm ideas of what he expects from his backing musicians, as he proved at the sound check for this gig. His songs stray frequently from the twelve bar pattern and often contain unexpected changes (or don't change at all!), but for all their apparent spontaneity, Charlie knows just where they're going. His wife and bass player Kerry is very much the anchor of his band back in the States, and she filled the same role here, giving cues to drummer Sam Kelly and Jon Taylor, the guitarist from The Bop Brothers - but I must also add that these two guys learned very fast!

Once everything was to Charlie's satisfaction, it was off down to GLR (Greater London Radio) for a six o'clock spot on the 'Mary Costello Show'. Charlie was relaxed, laughing and joking, and after Mary had played "Eli" from his new CD, there was a short interview and he played two solo pieces which demonstrated just how full his sound can be.

After grabbing something to eat, it was back to Willesden and another brief rehearsal, then a break to get changed before the gig itself. Charlie came onstage looking sharp and produced two forty-five minute sets, consisting almost exclusively of original songs, drawing on his two records ("The Raw Harmonica Blues Of Charlie Sayles" Dusty Road LP701 and "Night Ain't Right" JSP CD241), and a lot of unreleased material which underlined just how criminal it is that there is so little of this man's music available. His vocals were warm and expressive, his harmonica playing non-pareil, and his stage manner surprisingly confident; Jon Taylor was called upon to solo from time to time and his harsh, jagged playing meshed well-nigh perfectly with the leader's tough blowing. Charlie's originals are very strong,

even if the basic idea does not seem too promising; a good example of this is his driving instrumental "Woody" which he told us is based around the laugh of cartoon character Woody Woodpecker, because "I thought he was pretty cool"! There were occasional flashes of other Blues greats: a very original reworking of Sonny Boy's "One Way Out", Little Walter's "Blues With A Feeling" ("to show I can do it"), and the Muddy Waters feel of his own "Lamp Post", but as I wrote at the beginning, Charlie is unique.

Afterwards he sat chatting and signing copies of his CD - he must have sold a bundle, and deservedly so. He was pleased with the way the evening had gone, and Kerry was enthusing over the two British musicians: "You just can't find people like this in the States"...so hopefully we won't have to wait another seven years before Charlie graces these shores again!

Norman Darwen

KEVIN BROWN

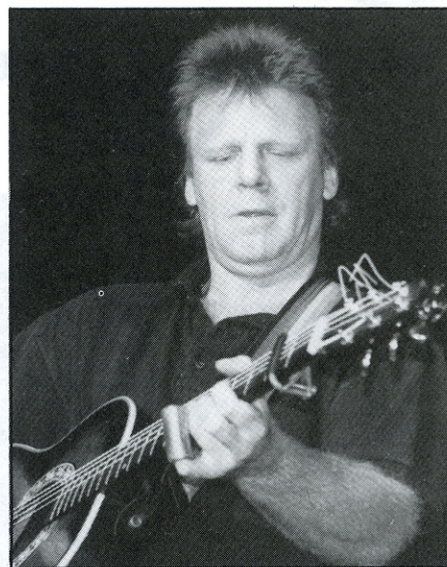
Leas Cliff Hall, Folkestone - 25th October 1990

This was the first time I'd seen Kevin play live for about 4 years and I'm pleased to report that the old magic is still there. He delighted the Folkestone crowd with some great singing and of course outstanding slide guitar playing. I'm very fussy about slide players and don't have a lot of time for some who seem to bask in hero-worship, but who for me just can't play blues. Kevin Brown is one of the finest currently on the circuit and when you add to this his great voice and songwriting talents you're bound to come up with a winning formula.

He was supporting The Blues Band, who need no introduction, so Kevin charmed the audience by walking on anonymously without guitar, making a short speech to welcome "Kevin Brown" with a wave to the curtains, walking off and reappearing with guitar in hand. He started the show with his version of Robert Johnson's "When You Got a Good Friend" before dipping into

the Brown songbook for the rest of the set until the last number.

Naturally Kevin featured songs from both his Hannibal albums, "Road Dreams" and "Rust", putting the band numbers into a solo setting and with greater use of slide-guitar. From the latter we had "Diamond Ring" which really rocks and highlights his funky bottleneck work. A very different reading of "If I Had My Way" from the second album again was slide orientated as opposed to the band version with West Coast-style lead guitar in standard tuning. Kevin wrote this song in response to his disappointment at landing in Los Angeles for the first time after dreaming of visiting the city for years and finding it to be a dump, a sentiment I can endorse, having been



there this year myself.

I was pleased to hear a few songs which are not yet on record, especially "Lancashire Blood on a Texas Floor", which would easily win a grammy were there a category for "Ace Song Title of the Year". This tells the somewhat unlikely story (for all I know that bugger Brown probably made it up anyway) of Bill Travers fighting alongside Davy Crockett and Jim Bowie at the Alamo. Travers, it appears was a Lancashireman and loused it all up. As a dyed-in-the-wool Yorkshire lad I could comment on that, but won't. Another song of Kevin's which I rate highly is "Gypsy Boy", a slow one with searing slide work about a character he once met who has adopted the itinerant "hippy convoy" way of life. Also completely new to me was a fast song called "Walking All Night" which was almost a bit

fine Blues Bunch had provided Taylor with a big band setting, but I'm rather glad I caught the man here instead, the pared down instrumentation serving to focus attention on the man's excellent guitar playing.

It was hardly standard Texan fare though. He opened this show with the Mar-Keys classic that christened his LP, which was no mean feat sans horns, and there were Memphis connections with his second number too, Lonnie Mack's 'Satisfy Suzie'. Mack is an obvious influence on Taylor, both men sharing a preference for big, gutsy solos underpinned by a trace of a rockabilly twang. Yet much of the set had a Chicago feel and, even more surprising, source material such as Fats Domino's 'I'm In Love Again' and Chuck Willis' 'There's Got To Be A Way' was also easily assimilated into the act and given the Guitar Taylor stamp.

And its highly fitting that the instrument should disrupt the flow of his name, since its something of a star in its own right with its expanded fretboard (Jesse has BIG mitts) and red dice in place of knobs. It certainly served him well throughout the evening, both on originals like 'Gambling Man' and the excellent slow blues 'One A.M.', and the motley assortment of covers. Guest vocalist Mick Terry joined the band for a couple in the Joe Ely vein, including his 'Fingernails', whilst Taylor's limited but appealing larynx effectively coped with material from the canons of Muddy Waters, Guitar Slim and Jimmy Reed, amongst others. By my reckoning, we got 21 numbers at this show, which isn't bad by anyone's standards. All good stuff too, so if you like your R&B hot and rockin' with just a hint of country, check out the big guy in the bootlace tie.

Paul Lewis

CHRIS BARBER JAZZ AND BLUES BAND

**"Jazz In The Hay", Hay-On-Wye,
1/9/90**

More than perhaps any other single musician - Alexis included - Chris Barber can lay claim to the title 'Father Of British Blues'. After all, Korner had sprung from a Barber band himself, where he had temporarily replaced a called-up Lonnie Donegan another major influence on the 'sixties blues scene - and to which he later returned, along with new pal Cyril

Davies to form an in-house blues unit. Furthermore, it was Barber who first brought many legendary Blues, Gospel and R'n'B names to these shores and on one notorious occasion caused a near riot by presenting an amplified Muddy Waters.

Unlike his contemporaries in the revivalist or 'trad' jazz movement, Barber it was who best survived the onslaught of the beat groups by continuing to include within his repertoire the same contemporary blues that were inspiring these younger musicians, and indeed to this day his 'Jazz and Blues Band' retains a healthy proportion of blues material alongside his eclectic mix of jazz styles. Catching up with them at an outdoor, 'festival' gig at this picturesque 'town of books', I was immensely impressed by the standard of musicianship amongst the band members, the groups 'tightness' no doubt due to the Barber line-up being one of the most stable in all jazz. An eight-piece featuring two reedsmen, trumpet, bass, drums, two guitars (one of them designated 'blues' guitar, the other frequently interchanged with a banjo) and of course the leader's trombone, their set here contained many favourites - the ubiquitous 'Bourbon Street Parade', Louis Jordan's arrangement of 'I Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate' (Jordan toured with the band in 1962), Hoagy Carmichael's 'Stardust', the modern-sounding jazz original 'Battersea Rain Dance'. Long serving trumpet Pat Halcox got that Ellingtonian growl off to a tee on the great bandleader's little-known 'Immigration Blues' and the rhythm section of bassist Vic Pitt and new-boy Russell Gilbrook on drums were splendid all evening.

But it was to be the second half on the concert that contained most to interest readers of this magazine. With the band reduced to a five-piece ('bone, bass, blues guitar and drums), Barber's own composition 'Going Up The River' proved sensational. With a fine vocal from the leader himself, and quite the best, bluesy guitar playing I've heard in ages from John Slaughter, this finely judged blues was easily the highlight of the night. And things really started to swing as the band launched into Stick McGhee's 'Drinkin' Wine Spo-Dee-O-Dee' and an incredibly funky version of 'Saints'. With a funeral-band arrangement of 'Didn't He Ramble' to close, this was superb entertainment and a great night out. Oh yes, and just a word of commendation for John Crocker's stunning clarinet soloing on 'After You've Gone' and Russell Gilbrook's

unusually engrossing drum solo.

Chris Barber has made over 150 LPs. I've certainly got some spending to do.

Paul Lewis

MEMPHIS SOUL NIGHT

**The Town & Country Club, London
13th October 1990**

Such a show demonstrates just how close the links between Blues and Soul music can be. Many blues enthusiasts can listen to southern soul music quite happily and this Memphis package (aka Waylo Records tour) blurs the categories quite nicely.

It's not just the big names either; the soundman was William Brown, not a name that's instantly familiar perhaps, but look at the small print on some of Albert King's Stax albums and you'll find him there as engineer. On baritone sax was James Mitchell, another name to be found on King's (and Little Milton's) work for Stax. Trumpeter and Waylo maestro (and James's brother) Willie Mitchell played on B. B. King's 1952 recording of "3 O'Clock Blues" and has crossed paths with the blues many times since then. About halfway through the show, he had his own solitary showpiece - it was "20-75", his hit from 1964 which is based on the riff from Roscoe Gordon's well-known "Just A Little Bit"...

The proceedings had begun about ninety minutes previously with Billy Always bounding onto the stage; he's the god-son of all-time Gospel great Mahalia Jackson and spent a lot of time working with Aretha Franklin but at first I was pretty sure I wouldn't like his set - too much of a 'lurve man', I thought, but gradually his classy singing and material won me over, and his instruction to guitarist Thomas Bingham to "play the Blues" on one number dispelled any lingering doubts. Later in the show vocalist David Hudson had a similar kind of set - for me he wasn't as charismatic as Billy, but he is unarguably a fine singer.

Sandwiched between these two was Ann Peebles; she opened with her driving version of Little Johnny Taylor's "Part Time Love", which is based on a riff similar to that employed by Cream on "Crossroads"; she followed this with another Blues, "Breaking Up Somebody's Home" and of course there was her hit, "I Can't Stand The Rain" - but before you groan, take a listen to the bluesy feel of Ann's original rather than judging it from the numerous covers. Ann was much more confident than on her

appearance here last year, but unfortunately she was only onstage for less than half an hour. Someone should bring her over as headliner in her own right.

Topping the bill this night though, was Otis Clay - this man is simply outstanding. Within the first couple of minutes no-one present could have doubted that he deserves his reputation as one of the great Soul singers. His version of O.V. Wright's "Nickel And A Nail" was stupendous and was topped off by a mighty solo from guitarist Bingham again - a few deft touches on the wah-wah here! Everyone returned for the final number, "Peace" and then the houselights went up - no encore, but nobody minded too much; all the acts had given as much as they could and the backing band had been playing for over three hours solid. The drummer must have been shattered - all night he had maintained an awesome beat! This was the second "Memphis Soul Night" - just make sure you don't miss the third!

Norman Darwen

SK'BOO

**The Rotterdam Bar, Belfast
13/10/90**

Kenny McDowell is so legendary in Belfast and so beloved of local blues and rock fans that he almost makes even Van Morrison seem like an upstart. McDowell is of the same magnificently durable mid sixties vintage as Morrison (must have been something they put in the Guinness in those days) and like his illustrious contemporary, his music is a thrilling amalgam of blues, rock, soul and Jazz traditions.

The current lineup of McDowell's band Sk'boo is awesome, featuring Brian Connor, epitome of the boho jazzier, on keyboards, stalwart blueser Alan Niblock on bass guitar, and the mighty John Wilson, one time skin blatterer extraordinaire with both Them and Taste, on drums (when was the last time you saw a drummer get a standing ovation?).

Sk'boo's repertoire is a wonderful mixture of McDowell's own compositions, obscurish songs such as Delbert McClinton's I Want To Thank You Mama and Dr John's Rain, and standards such as I Don't Want No Woman and T Bone Shuffle, all of them brought electrifyingly alive by the extraordinary power and conviction of McDowell's vocals which would be impressive in a stadium and are positively hair raising when heard in a small bar.

For Sk'boo to doggedly remain loyal to a city where A'n'R men fear to tread is clearly an act of insanity, but this writer at least is prepared to bet his entire collection of Howlin' Wolf records that Sk'boo is the best unsigned band in the U.K.

Trevor Hodgett

MOJO BUFORD and THE BEALE STREET BLUES BAND

New Brighton, Wirral 12/9/90

Northern blues enthusiasts have revelled in the appearances of many 'heroes' in recent months (John Lee Hooker, Buddy Guy, Lefty Dizz, Joe Louis Walker), but Mojo Buford's appearance at the Wirral International Jazz Festival was perhaps less inspired. Mojo's set was enjoyable but the lack of any practice with support, The Beale Street Blues Band, shone through.

This however was no ordinary gig. Most of the audience were seasoned jazz enthusiasts, who to their credit had come to check out a 'real bluesman' - one who had played with the great Muddy Waters. This though, did not help matters and despite my own howlings, 'Mannish Boy' was recreated in a silent vacuum - lacking the loose feel that is so apparent on Muddy's 'Hoochie Coochie Man' album. Mojo played a set which comprised many of his own numbers, but failed to include 'Picking Rags' - the best song on his enjoyable 'State of The Blues Harp' album. Despite a warm reception for 'Hoochie Coochie Man', the delay between songs proved frustrating as Mojo and guitarist conferred over keys. Furthermore, his continual pointing at the appropriate moment for a solo or to wind up proceedings, led to an annoyance which culminated in the playing of one song completely out of key. Needless to say, this was conveniently cut short to avoid any further embarrassment.

As is often the case, things began to hot up only near the end. Mojo succumbed to some sort of blues paranoia and gave a splendid version of 'I got My Mojo Working' and aptly ended a show which had really only just begun. The crowd beckoned for more, but were left with The Beale Street Blues Band who rounded off proceedings as they had begun - with some excellent rhythm.

Jerry Weltman

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Record Reviews

JOHN CAMPBELL
A Man And His Blues
Crosscut (Ger.) CCR 1019

David Cooper raved about John Campbell's appearance at Peer back in BBR #10 and, after hearing this album, I most definitely share his enthusiasm! Campbell is now in his late thirties, born in Shreveport, Louisiana but he moved to Texas whilst a teenager. It's hardly surprising that the Blues of the Lone Star State - particularly Lightnin' Hopkins - is the biggest influence on his playing, but you may be surprised at just how good this guy actually is...

The solo guitar and vocals on the Lightnin' styled boogie-blues of "Going To Dallas" make for an impressive opening and this strong beginning continues with the slow, powerful "Bad Night Blues". Snooky Pryor's "Judgement Day" is the first collaboration on this album with Ronnie Earl; the two guitarists share solos on this rocking number, ably backed by ex-Muddy Waters harp blower Jerry Portnoy and Ronnie's regular drummer Per Hanson. The vocals are handled by Darrell Neulisch (as it's spelled here and anyone who saw him fronting Ronnie's band at the T&C 2 in July won't need telling just how good he is. Ronnie Earl also takes the lead on "Sittin' Here Thinkin'", a lovely slow country blues styled number and the twin guitar approach can also be heard on Elmore's "Sunnyland Train", on which Ronnie plays some very impressive licks on acoustic lead.

However, let's not forget that this is John Campbell's album, though there isn't much danger of that as his abilities, are very well showcased on the self-explanatory "Deep River Rag" and the autobiographical, swirling "Texas Country Boy" (though I must commend Portnoy's harp again on the latter number) Both "Bluebird" and the closing "White Lightnin'" find Campbell back in the Hopkins bag, beautifully played and sung, with the latter title also featuring Per Hanson's drumming, just like those old albums of Lightnin's where he was backed by Spider Kilpatrick, Sam Lay or Francey Clay. This is very highly recommended to Hopkins fans, or Country blues enthusiasts in general; make the effort to track it down, you won't regret it. To end, I'll just echo David Cooper's words: "Promoters,

take note"!
Norman Darwen

BENOIT BLUE BOY ET LES TORTILLEURS
Elle Rentre Dedans/Sur Les Traces
Label La Lichere LLL 45/07

With 1992 and the Channel Tunnel in mind, here's a look at what we can expect blueswise from the other side of La Manche. Benoit Blue Boy presents two sides from his upcoming album "Parlez-Vous Francais?"; the top side is a Cajun styled rocker, somewhat reminiscent of The (late) Balham Alligators - hardly surprising really as, in the true spirit of European co-operation, the accordion playing is supplied by none other than Geraint Watkins! The flipside is more restrained, with Blue Boy's harp replacing the squeeze box and a longish guitar solo. Two interesting sides, blues-based rather than the real thing. I wonder what else this guy has done...

Norman Darwen

SAFFIRE - THE UPPITY BLUES WOMEN
Alligator RL 4780

It has been asserted that women blues artists have in the fullness of time served the blues far better than their male counterparts. With a greater emphasis on lyrics, a more down-home style of playing and a gentler (generally speaking) vocal style of phrasing, the decibel breaking, speed obsessed rock blues, has never really blighted the female blues artist. It comes as no surprise therefore to report that Saffire-The Uppity Blues Women, recently signed to Alligator, and more recently still, stars of the Chicago 90 Blues Fest, place the lion's share of their blues emphasis on humour and delicately played acoustic blues.

This is not to say that the trio cannot rock with the best of them, rather this debut album holds its charm in the uncompromising way Gaye Adegbalola, Earlene Lewis and Ann Rabson wrap their way around some blues inspired, lyrically meaningful songs that deal both humourously and ascerbically with real life situations. Gaye Adegbalola adds a touch of steel to the vocals and, as a result, the opening

Middle Aged Boogie Blues irreverently summarizes the trio's attitude. As the number concludes, Age Is nothing but a number. The Country blues feel extends into Take It On Back, which is a fine meeting of Ann Rabson's percussive piano work and guest harmonica player Mark Rebner. Rabson adds her evocative vocal style to the self explanatory Annie's Blues, and the trio mellow out on the truism that Even Yuppies Get The Blues. Saffire employ the basic musical accompaniment of guitar, piano and bass, and its a measure of their intuitive reading of the blues that they are able to offer sufficient light and shade to retain more than a passing interest in the album. Silent Thunder In My Heart is the kind of impressive burning slow blues that might well become the band's strongest number - featuring Ann's cool piano lines and an equally impressive vocal performance, full of emotion and superbly delivered. Whilst the overall point may be made that the Country Blues and boogie format takes up most of the album, there's enough innovation and vitality here to suggest Saffire - The Uppity Blues Women have made the correct decision to play the blues full time.

Pete Feenstra

JOHN MAYALL: A SENSE OF PLACE
Island CID 9938

I take the title to refer to Mayall's undoubted place in the forefront of the blues - whether Californian or British, I'll leave others to argue about. Because what is clear from this surprisingly good album (perhaps better described as the comeback album) is that Mayall continues to have a talent both for discovering new talent and for reworking good blues material - ranging from the acoustic oriented duo format, to the unlikely, but hugely successful, Latin influence on Congo Square, the number that sets this album on its way. The new talent is Sonny Landreth, a slide guitarist who, on the evidence of both his writing and playing on this album, is all set to push Mayall into new directions. In a nutshell, that is what this album is all about, a refreshed John Mayall with lots of variety, plenty of original arrangements and even the occasional self penned effort. What is perhaps most surprising is that Mayall has retained his love of the blues, making a mockery of recent media interviews that dwelt only on the late 60's scene and totally ignored John's work in the last decade. I Want To Go, is a brief aural preamble featuring

Record Reviews

Sonny's languid slide and Mayall's vocal. It gives way to Conga Square, an exquisite Latin blues with a joyful celebratory rhythm track. It features some fine harp from Mayall and a fine guitar break over a stripped down rhythm section, before the band returns and the number finished on a percussion-led outro. Send Me Down To Vicksburg features Mayall on piano, vox and harp, Landreth's slide and Joe Yuele's drums. Its a down-home affair and will surely please all long time Mayall fans as it represents a glimpse of his blues roots. Debbie Davies adds guitar on the, almost Dave Edmonds-sounding, Without Her. The tough, beefed up drums put you in mind of The Fabulous Thunderbirds and, almost as a counterbalance, Mayall follows with a subtle arrangement of J.J. Cale's Sensitive Kind. Sonny Landreth's slide was made for this number and together with an intuitive guitar figure from Coco Montoya and Mayall's dreamy vocals, J.J.'s original is polished up and successfully reconstructed. For the rest, there's an Al Wilson-like vocal by Mayall on Jackson Highway, and Canned Heat's cover of Wilber Harrison's Let's Work Together is taken as a duo by Mayall and Landreth. This segues nicely into the rock-solid I Can't Complain, a passable Don Nix's Black Cat Moan, and the album's other highlight, the dobro led Sugar Cane. Almost Louisiana in style, this Sonny Landreth number is quite superb, and easily tops this fine album.

Pete Feenstra

EAGER BEAVER Painkiller. **Skivfabriken Records**

Painkiller may very well refer to the trials and tribulations of this excellent Swedish R&B band who over the years have faithfully moulded their style in the Southend norm of stripped down hard hitting R&B, best exemplified by Dr Feelgood, The Inmates, Micky Jupp etc. After overcoming broken-down vans, cancelled gigs, abortive recording sessions and the occasional wandering PA system, Eager Beaver finally surfaced with a fine 6 track mini album last year called Arrowhead Drive. It was the kind of powerful sub-garage rock affair that immediately had you thinking they were the kind of classic Essex outfit that only Essex,

after all, can produce. Just goes to show how wrong you can be about these things, for Eager Beaver come from Stockholm - Sweden that is - and in the course of 40 minutes or so, quickly illustrate just how much the Scandinavians have developed. Produced by the Inmates' Peter Gunn in London, Eager Beaver give the impression that Painkiller is a project they have had in mind for a number of years. It bristles with energy, is shot through with guitarist PA's trebly runs and shrill echoing notes and is topped by Ulf Holgerson's Phil May-style vocals. Eager Beaver hit the mark with numbers like The Girl That Radiates That Charm and the would-be B movie schlock-horror of Godzilla. There are a couple of covers of which The Kink's You're Looking Fine is particularly impressive. Curiously enough, on Duxe Deluxe's Fireball, Eager Beaver for once fail to generate the energy levels to tackle the kind of song that - you would have thought - was written with this kind of band in mind. This is a rare failure on a fine debut album that should quickly establish Eager Beaver's, adrenalin-pumping Southend sound beyond their present Swedish boundaries. N.B. Painkiller should receive UK distribution by the end of July.

Pete Feenstra

THE ROOT DOCTORS : Gumbo To Go : Chariot CJC 004 (cassette only)

Doctor in Your Mind / I'd Rather Go Blind / Werewolves of London / Come On, Let the Good Times Roll / Just Like That / Lady Marmalade / Yellow Moon / Weedsmoker's Dream / Talkin' To Your Daughter / Absence / Right Place, Wrong Time / Cajun Lullaby (La Berceuse Creole)

Whilst this is by no means a pure blues album it is a close enough relative to merit inclusion in these pages. The Root Doctors are a Cardiff-based 7 piece band, whose members have quite varied musical backgrounds. This current release, like its forerunner Get Yo' Gumbo was recorded live at the Four Bars Inn in Cardiff, which is home ground to the band. Unlike it's forerunner it has fewer jazz influences and is nearer to the R&B/Rock end of the spectrum, but is still very much of the New Orleans school.

In fact the opening number Doctor in your Mind, written and sung by keyboard-player, Tony Lambert has a definite Little Feat feel from the rolling New Orleans drum sound to guitarist Graham Williams' slide work. What's more it's a great opener and gets the album off to a rocking start. Lambert, who also produced the recording contributes another song, Absence on which he puts in a fine vocal performance. Again from the rock field we have a first-rate version of Warren Zevon's Werewolves of London with lead vocal handled again by Tony Lambert.

The other star vocalist in the band is Lee Harding who has a powerful soul voice and on I'd Rather Go Blind she sounds uncannily like Aretha Franklin. She also fronts the Doctors on Let the Good Times Roll, Lady Marmalade and the well-worn Weedsmoker's Dream (If You're a Viper). The latter is for me a poor choice of material, but it has to be said that Lee and the band turn in a very listenable reading of the song. On a couple of tracks Lee shares vocal chores with trombonist and band-leader, Mike Harries, including the only straight blues number, Talkin' to Your Daughter which is the Root Doctors' version of the J.B. Lenoir classic Mama, Talk to Your Daughter. Mike handles the singing alone on Cajun Lullaby and a reggae song, which actually fits in well with the other material here, Toots Hibbert's Just Like That.

Instrumentally the band are very strong and tight, which means the fact that the album has been recorded in a live situation presents them with no problems - which would not be the case with many other outfits. Band members not mentioned so far are Glen Manby on tenor sax., Danny Kilbride on bass and drummer Jeff Jones, all of whom perform very well indeed. Special mention must be made of guitarist, Graham Williams (ex-Racing Cars - remember them?) who plays superbly on all cuts in lead, rhythm and slide modes.

There are quite a few self-released cassette-albums on the market now, some good and some not so good. Gumbo to Go comes in the former category. Give it a try, if New Orleans based music is your bag.

The cassette costs £7.50 direct from Mike Harries, Field House, Old Port Road, Wenvoe, Cardiff, CF5 6AL or you'll probably get it from the mail order specialists like Red Lick and Grammar School.

Michael Prince

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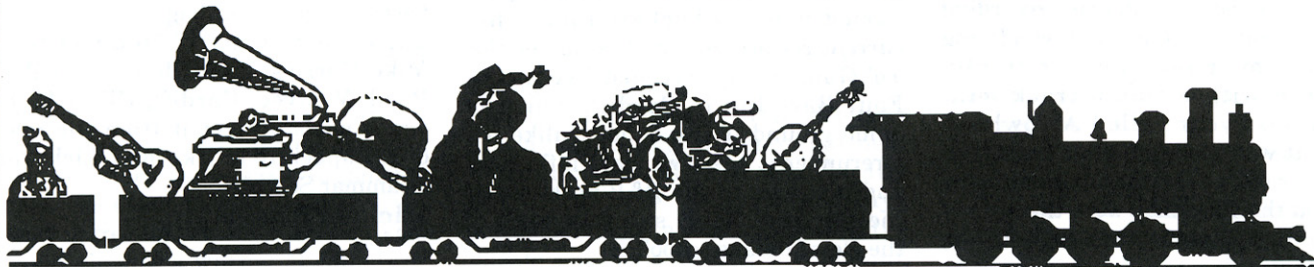
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Bluesnews Bluesnews Bluesnews

We've been gone so long , we've almost forgotten what news is. Thanks for all the encouraging letters in the interim.

From the States comes news of two new blues publications. **The Leadbelly Society's** quarterly newsletter, **The Leadbelly Letter** is issued to foster the appreciation and celebration of Huddie Ledbetter and intends to give Leadbelly his proper place in history and the World of music. Leadbelly was a prolific songwriter with over 500 songs credited to him, among them Midnight Special, Sylvie, CC Rider, Cotton Fields, Frankie and Albert, Rock Island Line, Stewball, House Of The Rising Sun and of course, Goodnight Irene which became a cover hit, just after his death, reaching No 1 and selling two million copies for The Weavers.

Blues Revue Quarterly will concentrate on acoustic and traditional blues with articles across the whole range of the music from Blind Willie Johnson, to Saffire and John Hammond in issue No 1, to be followed by Blind Lemon Jefferson, John Lee Hooker, Muddy Waters, Robert Jr. Lockwood, to Bob Brozman in future issue so there is a good coverage to look forward to. Subscription details of both quarterlies can be had in the small ads column on page ?? of this issue.

There doesn't seem to be much space left in this issue for a lot else but we would like to assure all those bands and musicians out there that we will allocate more space in future for their gig news. Life will be made easier for us if it can all be typewritten...our eyes are going fast, so please use new ribbons if possible, then perhaps we can spend more time at gigs or in the pub, rather than at the office.

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