

ISSUE 7



MAY '84



Inside....

☆ Bruce's
Diary from
America

○
Barrowland
LIVE:
Video review

BIG COUNTRY

☆ Tube
interview,
plus lots
more!



COUNTRY CLUB

OFFICIAL FAN MAGAZINE
26-40 St Andrews Street
Northampton



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With the exception of Big Country's headline performance at "Pink Pop" in Holland on June 11th, "The Crossing" comes to an end where touring is concerned. So, having toured the UK three times, US twice (plus a showcase in New York), Canada, Japan, Germany and two festivals in Holland and Belgium, I reflect with much pride and satisfaction on a very successful year for Big Country on their debut album.

Now the group are rehearsing and demoing new material for their second album with recording commencing on 18th June. If all goes to plan, there will be a single for late July, a follow up in early September and a worldwide simultaneous release of the album in late September.

It's too premature to reveal touring plans, but rest assured the UK will be treated no differently than before now that the band are internationally successful, other than the venues may be larger. But if so, the tour could be split into two parts, accomodating smaller halls in the latter part of the year.

It is possible, however, that Big Country may hold their own outdoor event at Dunfermline Football Club in August - watch the music press for an announcement.

You should be aware by now of the availability of "Big Country Live" on video, which we've reviewed on Page 15 of this issue. This is, of course, the filming of Barrowland on New Year's Eve, and is truly an extremely good representation of what Big Country love and do best - playing live. In the next issue we will run a competition, and the video will be one of the prizes.

Regarding this magazine and Big Country in general, the administration is now handled extremely efficiently by ACME, who finally put our house in order, and Mike Bartram from Liverpool (who formerly ran Porrohmag) has taken over from Martin Somers, who, due to personal reasons, couldn't continue with the magazine. We thank Martin for his contributions and wish him well for whatever he may do in the future.

Having just arrived back from one of the most exhilarating trips the band and I have ever been on - JAPAN (details and pictures in next issue) - I'd like to personally thank all of you good people out there who have made it all possible over the last eighteen months, from the eras of the 101 Club, Dingwalls (Newcastle, Sheffield and Bristol) and to Hammersmith Odeon, etc, and finally Barrowland.

Cheers!

IAN GRANT

CONTENTS



COUNTRY CLUB

ISSUE SEVEN

Page

3	.....	Editorial - Ian Grant
4	.....	Editorial - Ian Grant
5	.....	U.S. Diary - Bruce Watson
6	.....	U.S. Diary - Bruce Watson
7	.....	Photograph of Bruce Watson
8	.....	U.S. Diary - Bruce Watson
9	.....	U.S. Diary - Bruce Watson
10	.....	U.S. Diary - Bruce Watson
11	.....	U.S. Diary - Bruce Watson
12	.....	U.S. Concert Reviews
13	.....	Letters page
14	.....	A Country Tale - Sue Hartley
15	.....	Video Review - Mike Bartram/ Siobhan Jones
16	.....	Import Review / Competition
17	.....	Photograph of Stuart Adamson
18	.....	"Tube" Review - Kim Banks
19	.....	"Tube" Interview - Kim Banks
20	.....	"Tube Interview" - Kim Banks
21	.....	Photograph of Mark Brzezicki and Stuart Adamson
22	.....	U.K. Discography
23	.....	Photograph - Tony Butler
24	.....	For The Record - Alan Edwards
25	.....	News
26	.....	COUNTRY CLUB




A U.S. DIARY BY BRUCE WATSON

Well, here we go on our second tour of the United States of America. Rendezvous with Tony, Mark and Ian at the Concorde suite at Heathrow, London. Destination Los Angeles. Object of trip, Grammy Awards and six week tour. Concorde only takes three hours to get across the Atlantic. We travelled at 1350 mph, twice the speed of sound!

GRAMMYS

Big Country nominated for two Grammy Awards. The categories were "Best New Group" and "Best Rock Performance By a Duo or Rock Group With Vocals", otherwise known as a bunch of tubes singing a song.

We were really chuffed to appear on the Grammys, but the whole production was very shoddy and unprofessional. So much money was spent on limos for the artists and families, and so on, yet the backstage facilities and sound were diabolical and embarrassing. Anyway, we didn't win, but it was a good laugh appearing on what could be called "The Michael Jackson Show".



After the Grammys, we had the day off, with the exception of a few interviews about bagpipes and haggis with the press. Stuart, Sandra, Calum and Joe (personal assistant) went down to Disneyland for the day. Mark and Tony went to Laguna Beach with friends. I decided to explore Universal Studios, where most of the big movies and T.V. shows were made. The trip involved an alien attack from Battlestar Galactica, and a shark attack by Bruce the Wonder Shark, star of such movies as Jaws, Jaws 2 and Jaws 3D. A good day was had by all, well all except for Dave (tour manager) - today was account day.

From one extreme to another, Los Angeles to New York. Flying through snow storms at 33,000 feet is about as funny as a poke in the eye with a sharp ferret. Spent two days in New York rehearsing and doing interviews. Our guitar roadie Les's wife Pepe gave birth to a daughter. Heavy drinking all round tonight.

Now the tour starts.

Date: 2nd March PENNSYLVANIA

Spent all day looking for Dracula, but couldn't find him. Must be the wrong town, or maybe I was looking during the day.

Date: 3rd March. Charlottesville, Virginia was a laugh. Stayed at a haunted hotel on the edge of town. Outside in the driveway was a black truck bearing the name "Peter Poltergeist & Son. Furniture Removals". Tonight I would not sleep alone.

Mark and I went out to explore the local watering holes. The first bar had a rock band playing on stage. Their whole set consisted of badly played Rolling Stones songs. The local country and western bar refused us because they said our haircuts would cause trouble. We eventually found a small college type bar with students twisting and jiving to the sounds of the local jukebox type college band. Mark and I were the only people not consuming soft drinks



What a strange town. What strange people. Talking about strange people, Dave Wernham, our tour manager, is a complete eccentric. He is also a keen bird-watcher. When trying to doze in the tour bus the next day, Dave would jump out of his seat, smack you round the head and shout "My God, look up in the sky. There's two buzzards!".

Headlines in this morning's local paper read:

APPEARING TONITE!
BIG COUNTRY
BAGPIPES FROM HELL!

FREDERICKSBURG

Played at an all girl's college, which was fun!

WINSTON SALEM

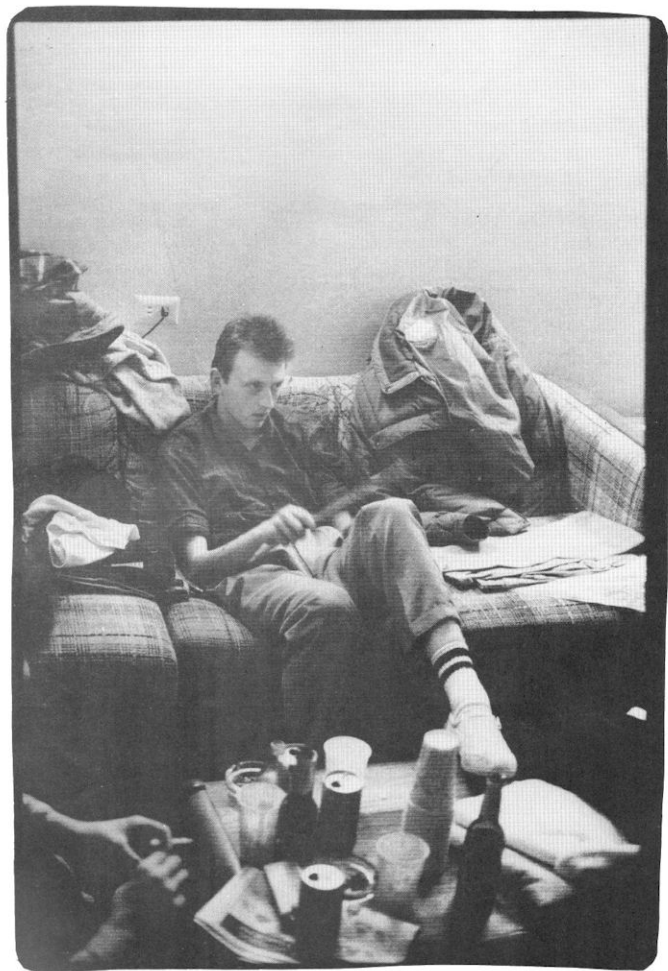
Going further south now. I think we're in witch hunting territory - everybody keeps making secret signs at each other, and my haircut is definitely not going down well with the locals.

Date: 6th March: Had card games and domino tournament on bus.

Date: 7th March: Mark and I ended up jamming with a reggae group called "Quasar" in Indiannapolis. We played a version of "No Woman No Cry" - Qasar played the reggae parts, Mark played the jazz parts and I played the heavy metal parts! It sounded pish but we had a good laugh! Decided to cut my hair due to dirty looks from the locals in different towns. Decided to buy a hat to hide new haircut.

The roadcrew bus got raided by three state troopers looking for two escaped convicts today. Les nearly got arrested!





 CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS 

Date: 8th March: Stayed at a haunted hotel. Sandra stitched up Mark's hotel room by making a dummy out of Stuart's clothes and strategically placing it at the side of Mark's bed. A luminous skull was added, and the trap was set. Unfortunately, someone else in the party walked into Mark's room by mistake, and a huge scream could be heard all the way down the hallway, but it wasn't Mark!

Phoned home to mother, and found out that my newly-purchased house is ready for occupancy at the end of the tour.

Date: 9th March: Arrived at our hotel in Madison to be greeted by an all girl basketball team. Why do all young American girls wear braces on their teeth?

Played "Wonderland" for the first time on the tour. Problems plagued tonight's gig due to electrical faults, so we had to cut the set short.

Date: 10th March ANN ARBOR

Just a normal day.

Date: 11th March: MY BIRTHDAY! Celebrated the event with everyone in my hotel room. Champagne and beer all round!

Sandra had a motorcycle crash in which she injured her foot. She was riding Callum's toy motorbike, which crashed into the side of the stage! Why don't some American states have helmet laws?

Date: 12th March: Off to Nashville, Tennessee, the home of country music yiall. Mark and I went out clubbing with Don Williams' band, Danny, Pat and Dave. Don couldn't make it.

Date: 13th March: Next stop Atlanta.

Took Scuba diving gear with me, thinking we would have to swim underwater to get there. We did an "in-store" at the local record shop, signing autographs, having our pictures taken, etc. Also did a TV interview with a stupid woman who kept saying "Gee, I love your accent - you've got a cute haircut". I just told her her head was all mince, and she just smiled saying "I love yoo guyz".

Date: 14th March:  DAYTONA, FLORIDA 

Home of the motorcycle race. Daytona is hotter than the hottest thing you can think of . . . spent most of the day swimming, bodysurfing and looking for sharks. It was really funny, because all the members of the group were wearing Budweiser caps and short trousers because of the sun. It gave the impression of three nude guitarists on stage. We're beginning to get suntanned now, and my haircut is growing in well now - well, at least it's blending in with the scenery.

Date: 15th March: St Petersburg, and the circus comes to town. We played next door to the circus, which was run entirely by Egyptian masons playing drums. TRUE.

* * * * *

Date: 17th March: We are a bit worried, because we're travelling to Miami, and there's riots there just now. Ian, our manager, is staying at a hotel in the middle of it! Today we packed our bags, kidnapped Little John (onstage sound), and went down to the beach at Fort Myer. It was a scorching hot day, perfect really. Well, except for the flies. I've never seen so many flies in my life. Anyway, getting into the spirit of things, Mark and I bought these hideous Hawaiian shirts that looked like skin complaints. At least they kept the flies away! Suntans are looking good now!

Travel down to Coconut Grove, right in the centre of the Miami riots. Whilst asking directions to the hotel we were told to avoid certain streets because of trouble. Spotted two large road blocks, one bomb squad truck and numerous police cars and ambulances. What also worries me is that we're travelling in a large black bus with blacked-out windows. Also, in white letters on the front of our bus is the name MARIAM. Various journalists and photographers from the British press are here to join the tour for a few days.

We went down to Fort Lauderdale beach for the day. Fort Lauderdale has been the subject of many films because it's famous for students who come here during the spring break to let off steam. Spent most of the evening at the hotel bar, where after a few bevies Mark and I tried our hand at break dancing. Instant rupture!

Played an open-air gig in Miami, which turned out really well.

Went down to Disneyworld in Orlando with Joe, Mark, Stuart, Sandra and Calum, and went on a thing called Space Mountain, which is like a cross between a big dipper and the corkscrew, only fifty times faster. Bought a Davy Crockett hat and saw Mickey Mouse, who's looking no bad for his age.

Mark met one of his heroes today, none other than the famous drag queen, Danny La Rue. Only kidding, he bumped into Stewart Copeland, the Police's drummer, at Miami airport!

Arrived in New Orleans at around 10.00pm. We're staying in the French Quarter, just three blocks away from the infamous Bourbon Street, where they have the Mardi Gras. Bourbon Street is full of life. Every second building is either a transvestite strip joint or a club with a band playing. You can get in anywhere free, and the streets are full of transvestites and transexuals, and has the same sort of atmosphere as some streets in Berlin.

Typical interview with college tabloid:

RB: Hi, I'm Ralph Blowtorchski, and I'm damn glad to meet you.
BW: Hello, I'm Bruce Watson, and I'm, ahem, damn glad to meet you too.
RB: How do you get your guitar to sound like bagpipes?
BW: Well, goodbye.
RB: Hey, wait a minute guys, don't you guys really kick ass?
Tony: Do what!
RB: Hey Mark, I really dig your Australian accent
Mark: Do what!
RB: Hey, Stuart is it true you guys wear nothing but plaid?
SA: What!

Tonight, we are playing on a riverboat on the Mississippi river. Soundcheck was a bit dodgy, because of water dripping down from the upper deck onto our amplifiers. Spent most of the day hanging around Bourbon Street with Mark and Joe. We had our pictures taken wearing old style cowboy clothes.

As it goes, the riverboat gig was a complete success, although I thought the boat was going to sink. After the gig, Mark and I went down to Pat O'Brien's bar just off Bourbon Street to sample New Orleans' most deadly cocktail, the dreaded HURRICANE. Now the trouble begins....

THE HOLOCAUST

After a few hurricanes, we went back to the hotel to find two dodgy women arguing outside our bedroom. Next minute, this guy comes up saying we were making too much noise. We told him it was nothing to do with us, and Mark closed the door in his face. He then informed us that he was a policeman, so we asked to see his I.D. Next minute, he kicked the door in, shouting and swearing and saying he didn't have to show his I.D. because he had a gun and would use it!! One of the girls in the corridor fainted, and Mark was arrested for assault and battery of a policeman. Dave, Joe and myself had to down to the central lock-up section of the police department to bail Mark out. Once inside the lock-up, policeman and newly released prisoners were asking for our autographs! Mark even had to sign his mug shots for one of the policeman's children! Bail came to \$1,100!

Next day in court, Mark was told that because the policeman hadn't shown his I.D. they had made a wrongful arrest. We were also told that if we didn't press charges for wrongful arrest, or sue the State of Louisiana, the police would forget about the incident with the women in the hotel. They nearly got charged with trespassing in the hotel. So we got our money back, forgot the whole incident and everything was wonderful, and everyone was happy - BASTARDS.

New Orleans is a town we'll never forget.

Next stop, Houston, Texas.

A normal day.



AUSTIN, TEXAS

We played a live broadcast for a show called The Source, which is the best live tape I've ever heard of us.

DALLAS, TEXAS

Texas is quite a nice state. Nothing much really happened, probably because we had a heavy schedule and we had never played in this neck of the woods before. Stuart and I were presented with two miniature travel guitars. Calum strapped one on, and started impersonating his dad!

LAS CRUCES, NEW MEXICO

Mark and I get back in the spirit of things by not shaving for three days, and calling each other Gringo.

Joe keeps feeding us on new vitamins which turn our urine bright orange

HOLLYWOOD

Here we are back in Hollywood, after four and a half weeks on the road. Discovered an English pub called the Cat and Fiddle, which sold draught bass and Heineken.

Next day, Joe and Ian made some Shepherds Pie, which was definitely Meal of the Tour. Most of the group and crew went down to Disneyland again.

Strolled down Santa Monica Boulevard today, which has a bad reputation for gays. Walked into a gay shop by mistake, but decided to take back home with me a game called Gay Monopoly.

SAN DIEGO

Ian and Alan went down to Mexico for a few hours. Ian had his camera stolen, and James (his son) nearly wasn't allowed back into the country. After the gig, everybody got stuck into the Mescal, which has a maggot at the bottom of every bottle. After drinking, the maggot must be consumed. Big Joe had hallucinations.

At the moment, the Big Country party looks like the Hill Billy family, what with Stuart and Sandra wearing General Custer jackets, my Davy Crockett hat, and all the children's cowboy gear.

Slade turned up at the hotel today. I think they and Quiet Riot are coming to the gig tonight. Mark and I got quite friendly with Don Powell (Slade's drummer), who tends to forget things quite quickly due to a car accident a few years ago.

Went to the LA Sports Arena with Mark to watch the Annual Track Pull event, which involves Hot Rods with helicopter engines pulling big weights across a basketball arena.

SAN FRANCISCO

Stuart and I discovered a new drink called a Kamikazi. What it is is a double vodka with a shot of vodka and a little lime juice. San Francisco is like it is on the television. Every corner has bums, faggots, policemen, druggies and drunkards. Went down to a radio station which overlooks Alcatraz Prison, which has now been turned into a national monument!

SANTA BARBARA

Everybody is dying to get home now. Stuart keeps counting the hours till the last chords of In A Big Country resolve, plus my wrist is getting sore writing this book!

SAN LUIS OBISPO

Spent most of the day playing baseball with the crew. Played a blinder of a gig tonight, and that was it. All over. The end of our second American tour. Champagne and beer all round for the crew, support group (Wire Train), and us.

On the tour bus, our driver Don showed Stuart and I some country and western guitar licks. Everybody is now in high spirits at the thought of going home. This diary will go into action again in twenty days at the start of our Japanese tour.



Bruce

MILWAUKEE, WI.
MARQUETTE TRIBUNE
MARQUETTE UNIV.
T.H.

U.S. CONCERT REVIEWS

'Big Country' impresses fans

By JEFF RAPP
Tribune Staff Writer

When hands are dubbed the "Next Big Thing" in music, some live up to the notion any other does not. Based on Big Country's appearance Nov. 22 at the Eagle's Club, 2401 W. Wisconsin Ave., they will not disappoint their prophets.

The Scottish/British quartet has two things going for it. First, they play inspiring and stirring music. A Scottish folk influence was readily evident in their guitar sound.

Secondly, their sincere enthusiasm rubbed off on the crowd. Instead of shallow trendiness typifying the fashion-music scene in England nowadays, flannel shirts do Big Country just fine. They let their music attract — not their attractiveness.

Big Country's sound consists of the Scott-influenced, ringing guitars of Bruce Adamson (lead vocals) and Stuart Adamson (lead vocals) and Brian Watson. Often compared to "U2" because of their heavy — not heavy metal — guitar, a synthesizer isn't to be seen. The songs are tailor-made for the pyrotechnics of electric guitar.

Starting with a rousing "1,000 Stars," the concert didn't let up from there. Backed by the excellent rhythm section of Mark Brazzick (drums) and Tony Butler (bass) — two session men most noted for their work on Peter Townshend's solo albums — even the marginal songs sounded good.

A minor flaw in Big Country's material is a certain similarity in all the songs. Every cut from their debut album, "The Crossing," was played, and no less than three long anthems and no less than three long anthems were performed, namely, "Last and Patrol," "The Storm" and "Purohman."

This similarity was coupled with the exclamation of "Shal!" in nearly the same way. Nevertheless, Adamson has promised a more varied second album, and until then, their exhilarating performances will make up nicely for this one fault.

As expected, "Is a Big Country."

"Groups coming now, from Britain America, the world even, live. Hang on, Big Country have been successful... Christ Almighty, what are they doing? They're using the words passion and spirit. We've have to use words like that because we believe in that!" So you get more and more interviews using the words passion and spirit, it's getting cliched, it's embarrassing."

Mark Brazzick, drummer (na) Big Country, December 1983 interview
"Spirit is a word we don't hear much these days

Public Trust telephone
"We'd like to be looked upon as a group of good songwriters, rather than a guitar band. If we were piano players we'd be a piano band."

Bruce Watson, guitarist (na) Big Country, December 1983 interview
"I'm stumped for words, have you seen my words?" quipped Mark as he peeked under the conference table.

"Are they doing it on faith, honesty, and passion they just fell out of your pocket." Bruce replied.

from "Big Country - Les Is More," unpublished, by William "Bill" Williams

their current single, was received enthusiastically by the crowd — even more so when they played it a second time to end the concert. Among the surprises was a fitting scenic backdrop and a successful cover of Smokey Robinson's "Tracks of My Tears."

The sense of normalcy and enthusiasm make Big Country the most exciting new band in some time. Their power and originality that has become their trademark is sure to pick up a large following as they make their first crossing through this big country.

MAD ABOUT PLAID

by annene kaye

NEW YORK ROCKER March 1984

"How can I look those guys in the eye and tell them 'Chance' reminds me harmonically of that silly 'wasting away in Margaritaville' song? If they've not heard it, they won't understand; if they've heard it, I'll have to run."

Annene (on the phone to "Bill")

"I HATE CRITICS! They're so in love with their own minds!"
T. Johnson, Letter to the Editor, Cream, December 1983

"Ring dinga ling ling, ringa ra dinga ling ling!"

Big Country's guitars

"We don't talk about religion or politics. The minute you start talking about religion and politics you start segregating people — putting them into brackets, and wars happen... it has since the days of Babylon and Jesus"

Mark Brazzick

"You're talking about fucking religion and politics, Mark, stop it!"

Bruce Watson

"Big Country. So what?"

William "Bill" Williams

"People try to go in too deep 'ah, there's a secret meaning behind this the guitars the bagpipe sound.' Ridiculous."

Bruce Watson

"The videos were a type of Boy's Own comic, a lites thing. Like the idea of that, it's got a certain naive to it, which we do. I mean, we're just four idiots basically, playing in a group — not really idiots, but we are."

Mark Brazzick

"Like a lover's voice fires the mountain-side." "400 miles on fields of fire" "The storm broke upon us with fury and flame" "both horses and masters bogged down in the rain."

lyric sampler from Big Country debut album

"Other frequent concrete symbols of abstract love (in dreams are: 'tire,' 'food,' 'money'"

Emile A. Guthrie, M.D., The Handbook of Dream Analysis

"Anthem band? What is an anthem band? Look, if you're going to use U2 get it over and done with."

Mark Brazzick

"It's at the risk of perpetuating this way of thinking that I report that the best songs of Big Country have a genuinely authentic quality."

Critic Mitchell Cohen, Cream, December 1983



IS THE QUAKE APRIL

The road through this big country has had its share of surprises for Scottish song-smiths Big Country. They appeared on this year's Grammy Awards show, where they performed "In A Big Country" in an estimated audience of 10 million. This exposure along with the MTV airing of Big Country's New Year's Eve concert, which was recorded in Glasgow by the band's record producer Steve Lillywhite has offered a first chance for many people to grasp the group's live talents. The sold-out exclusive of Big Country's first statewide tour of smaller venues left a good number of potential show-goers lacking. This is one reason for the band's new show-place at the Warfield Theatre (\$200) bypassing a hoped-for appearance in the city's latest showcase The Kabuki.

The unique venue on the Big Country tour was a club in New Orleans called the Riverboat. The club, a real paddle wheel steamer converted for entertainment purposes, posed a unique problem. Drummer Mark Brazzick gets seasick quite easily. In true show-biz tradition, the show went on trading with big time Euro-pop. Mark has been laying down the percussion tracks to new recordings by Abba and Freida. Asked to contribute material to the Abba LP, guitarist/vocalist Stuart Adamson wrote "Fall Of The Country," a song under-estimated consideration for release as the

first single from the album. Big Country have apparently tapped the ears of a very large audience. Kenny Rogers and Doro Merande's Steve Nicks have both asked Stuart to contribute material to their new albums. Perhaps not as wild as the thought may seem Stuart feels that to write songs with that range of material in mind would stretch his abilities as a songwriter.

The community of Coconut Grove was discovered by the thought of a bus drenched Florida afternoon on Daytona Beach playing to thousands of fans sounds like a great way to make a living, the sunshine state soon showed its other side. With the band enroute to Coconut Grove provided by manager Ian Grant, a surprise snow reared its ugly head. The community of Coconut Grove was discovered to be embroiled in a controversy surrounding the arrest of a police officer. The ensuing riots lead to the arrest of over 200 people. Road blocks prevented the arrival of the band until the following day, actually invoking the usual Civil Disorder and Acts of God clause found on most performance contracts.

Appropriately enough, the band has recently recorded a song entitled "All Fall Together" for the soundtrack to the movie Streets Of Fire. Look for the release of Streets of Fire this summer in your local theatre, minus the Coconut Grove/Miami footage of course.

"While in Florida, the band played the debut first live open-air concert in the states on the beach at Daytona with the likes of R.E.M., who with Big Country are partners in a trans-Atlantic mutual admiration society.

Big Country then goes trans-pacific with subsequent tours in August and work returns to the new album with an odd song cover. The new album will be segmented into completion of the LP follow-up of Big Country's gold debut LP "The Crossing." You can expect a "doomier" "Wonderland" Big Country's latest import single back with a live version of "Lost Patrol."

"Words are like a promise to play. Only vigils can have per pas."

Simon Gilham, rock fan

"America's funny... How would you like your eggs? Round, white, with the yolk in the middle. There's a lot of competition, and the American system is geared around profit. Every company is trying to sell a piece that gets results. You tend to get your question answered with another question, 'cause they're trying to give you something extra."

Mark Brazzick

"Nobody can force you to do a thing, you can walk away from anything. You're not going to be because of it, are you?"

Bruce Watson

An extra bonus for American audiences is the addition of "Heart and Soul" on the ep, a track previously found only on import cassette versions of the Crossing album. So much for vinyl offerings!

The heart of Big Country lies in their live performance and that's exactly what the Bay Area will be treated to on April 30 at San Francisco's Warfield Theatre, along with local word-wonders Wet Train will also be appearing in Davis the

We'll work the drive, walk or run to either venue, the shows will be an evening's entertainment. Don't forget to bring your eyes, ears and hearts. You'll need them.

"... when you work with people who misunderstand you, instead of transmissions you get transmutations, and that's more interesting in the long run."

Andy Warhol

"Who the hell is Andy Warhol?"
Tom Raipharo, letter to the Editor, Cream, December 1983

"Somebody said to me, 'Isn't that unusu?' You've got drums and three guitars. I said, 'The Beatles had that, didn't they?' So did the Rolling Stones. 'The Jam were doing it two or three years ago."

Mark Brazzick

"Chance" is the only fully realized song here
Critic Bob Chisgou, Cream, December 1983

LETTERS



Dearest Stuart,

Thank you very much for the great concert!!!

I've just come back from your concert, and my whole body is still full of your music and excitement. I've never experienced such a wonderful concert before in my life!! I was so much impressed. Oh, how can I express this feeling I have now? It's very hard for me to say it in words. Anyway I want to thank you for coming over the long way to Japan and have concerts for us. I wish I could say "Thank You" to you personally, but it's obviously impossible for me to see you. So I'm writing this. All I can do now is writing a letter to you. I'm going to the concerts the following two nights, so maybe I will find someone who can give this to you for me.

I waited for you to come for a long time. I waited for you listening to your records, studying your lyrics, watching your videos and dreaming about this day to come!! Finally today I was able to see you in front of my eyes and hear your voice and music. It was quite a big thing to me to live the rest of my life. I saw four flames of life on stage tonight, and it made me feel that life is wonderful. Thank you very much Stuart. I am sure you and your music can change the spiritless and hopeless young people of the world. Yes you can, Stuart, I believe in you and I will follow you. I will never forget about this day I see you for the first time in my life. Please keep making wonderful and spiritfull music from now on too. Please take good care of yourself, and say hello to your wife and son for me.

*Thank you very much and 大好きです
Love, Alan*

P.S I am sorry for my English it is far from perfect.

Dear Mike,

I thought I'd write in about additions to the current Big Country's U.K discography. As regards twelve inch white labels, there have been issues of 'Harvest Home', 'Fields of Fire' and 'Wonderland' identical to the standard issue. I've seen no mention of a twelve inch white label for 'In a Big Country' anywhere, so I presume there aren't any. 'Chance' was released as a twelve inch white label, although different from the standard issue because 'Tracks of my Tears' was omitted. There have been two seven inch radio promo issues, 'Fields of Fire' was issued with the normal version on one side, the alternative mix on the other side, and 'Chance' was issued in the standard seven inch form. All of these records have been advertised in various rare record shops in the last few months and none are too hard to find. Much more difficult, however, are acetates which seem to be very rare and therefore particularly expensive; I've only seen one mentioned, a 'Fields of Fire' single sided acetate, in a record auction, which was sold for over ten pounds. Presumably there are acetates of most of the B.C issues, and there may possibly be one for 'Heart and Soul' b/w 'Angle Park' which was supposed to be the second single, although, of course, never issued commercially.

As well as the white label for 'The Crossing' there were also a number of standard issue albums, with both red and blue covers, that were issued with 'Promotional Copy - Not For Sale' embossed on the back in gold - these are more common than the L.P white label. Finally, for the truly dedicated collector, all the seven inch singles have been issued in two formats - early editions invariably came with glossy card sleeves, and with paper labels, whereas later copies came in thinner paper sleeves with silver printed centres. 'Harvest Home' was originally issued in

the former format only and was for a time deleted, although it has recently been re-issued with a thinner sleeve, which is easy to get hold of at the moment.
All the best

SIMON JONES (BRIGHTON)

A COUNTRY TALE

It was a lovely warm summers day at HARVEST HOME when Mark decided it was about time they did something exciting, "I wish with all my HEART AND SOUL that ALL OF US could go somewhere adventurous."

"Like where?" asked Stuart who was sat on the BALCONY sunbathing and reading 'The Dandy'.

"I don't know. Got any ideas Bruce?"

"How about ANGLE PARK for a game of footers" he suggested.

"Nar, it's too hot, anyway, I can't play football. How about you Tony."

"Well I don't know about you, but I could do with a pint at the FLAG OF NATIONS down the road."

Meanwhile Stuart's become so engrossed in aboys adventure comic, that he's now miles away in the 'Adventures of Winker Watson in WONDERLAND. The sky turned to dark and a 1000, STARS shone brightly between the clouds. 'Winker' walked over the carpet of purple grass and onto the yellow brick road. He stopped at THE CROSSING and read the sign post 'Welcome to WONDERLAND, you are now IN A BIG COUNTRY belonging to the Giant people' underneath GIANT the word PORROHMAN had been crossed out. Winker soon realised that the clouds above him were smoke, and ahead of him he could see FIELDS OF FIRE and little elf like men dashing around with buckets of water.

"They've done it again, please help us mister." said one little man as he ran past Winker with more water.

"Who's done that?" Winker asked.

"They've set our homes alight. The GIANTS have burnt all the homes belonging to the PORROHMEN. Look, see for yourself!" The little PORROHMAN scuttled away and as Winker followed, he saw more PORROHMEN being carried away on stretchers to the LOST PATROL hotel.

When he arrived at the PORROHMANS village, Winker picked up the buckets of water and started to throw the water over the burning houses in a desperate attempt to put the fire out. It was immensely hot and he could feel the heat working INWARDS through his shirt and onto his skin. Just when the fire was beginning to die down, the GIANTS appeared again, crawling over the hill-tops. The PORROHMEN dropped their buckets and ran to the safety of the LOST PATROL hotel.

"Quick we must do something to drive them away. I know, have you got any really terrible songs on that tape recorder of yours? They hate bad music. We'll have to take a CHANCE on that."

"No I don't think I have." said Winker as he searched his pockets for a cassette.

"What's that one?" asked the PORROMAN pointing to a tape in Winkers back pocket.

"Hmm, THE CROSSING by Big Country, no that no good, they'll come back for more."

"I know!" shrieked Winker, "how about 'Send your Love' by Rene and Renarto."

He put the tape in and switched the recorder on. "Quick block your ears." In the distance they could hear screams and groans then the whole land shook, and the GIANTS ran away.

"Hurray! we've done it!" shouted the little man as he jumped up and down. "Hey can you smell burning, not the houses, something round here," he paused for a minute, "Help my shirts on fire! Quick somebody I'm burning!

"I'm not so bloody surprised, you've been asleep for two hours, look you're burnt to a cinder!" shouted Bruce as Stuart woke up to find himself on the BALCONY at HARVEST HOME, he sat up and wiped away THE TRACKS OF HIS TEARS, "Phew, that was a CLOSE ACTION."

SUE HARTLEY

(CUMBRIA)

VIDEO REVIEW

BIG COUNTRY LIVE.

This video has been eagerly awaited by all Big Country fans. This first official release of Big Country in action will not disappoint anyone. From the superb opening scenes of roaring, untamed seas and 'storm' like weather, to the final notes of 'In a Big Country', this video is brilliant entertainment on every level.

Musically it is Big Country at their very best, the camera captures the true unrivalled passion and excitement to be found at a Big Country concert. Praise is deserved all round for the excellent picture and sound quality of this tape.

The concert kicks off with a great version of '1,000 Stars' and it's obvious from the start that Big Country are going to give the fanatical capacity audience a New Years Eve they will never forget. Next follows 'Angle Park' and 'Close Action'. After 'Close Action' it's 'Lost Patrol', the number chosen to appear on the B-side of 'Wonderland', this is a track the audience need no encouragement to participate.

Stuart then introduces 'Wonderland' by saying it was recorded in a place outside Edinburgh before they went to America. 'Wonderland' goes down well, and is followed by 'The Storm', which Stuart says is one of his favourite tracks of 'The Crossing'. During 'The Storm', the full effect of the superb light show and back drop scenery can really be appreciated. 'The Storm' is interrupted by a countdown to the strike of midnight, which sees the band shake each others hand, and wish their fans a happy New Year.

Then quite appropriately and more than apt for the occasion the Dysart and Dundonald Pipe Band make an appearance, to play traditional pipe band music for a few minutes.

After the departure of the pipe band Big Country re-appear and perform the excellent 'Porrohan', a long time favourite of mine, now with swirling smoke and flashing lights Big Country prove they can rock with the best of them.

After taking the fans to fever pitch of excitement, Big Country then show they're also capable of creating a crowd reaction at the other end of the scale, when they play 'Change', however, Big Country and their fans show their true colours as they become one in bringing 'Chance' to a rousing finish.

After great versions of 'Inwards' and the ever popular 'Fields of Fire' Big Country leave the stage, leaving the fans to beckon for their return. Big Country of course oblige and break into 'Harvest Home', Stuart saying it's a song that cures the home-sick feeling when they perform it away from home. 'Harvest Home' is played in such a way, that makes it, in my opinion the Highlight of the concert. Then it's time to slow things down again with 'Tracks of my Tears'.

Big Country continue and end their performance with 'In a Big Country', Stuart first thanks the audience and tells them to 'Stay Alive'. After 'In a Big Country', the rest of the group leave Stuart to say a final thank you to the fans. Stuart then leads the band into 'Auld Lang Syne', then as the mass followers of Big Country continue to sing, Mark, Tony, Stuart and Bruce triumphantly leave the stage.

.....At only £19.95 this 75 minute tape offers great value for money, and really 'Big Country Live', performance and production wise cannot be faulted. It's a video which brings over a true reflection of Big Country in concert, capturing every exciting moment and magical memory to be relived over and over again, by those lucky enough to have been present on the night, and for those who were not in Glasgow on New Years Eve, then 'Big Country Live' almost makes you feel you were.

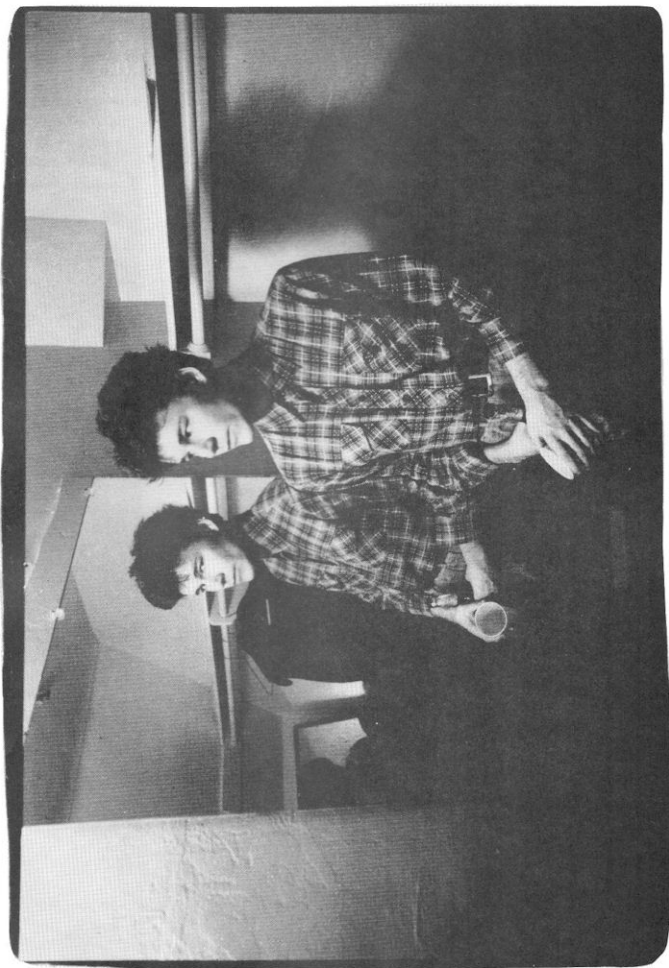
INTERESTING IMPORTS..... INTERESTING IMPORTS INTERESTING IMPORTS

Two more very interesting Big Country imports have come on to the U.K market recently. The first is the Japanese twelve inch release of 'Fields of Fire'. This record is issued in a red 'Crossing' type cover, with the title written in black, and comes with three more tracks. Secondly, the U.S version of 'Wonderland' can now be found on import. This twelve inch four track release features beside the title track, 'The Crossing', 'Angle Park' and the number all Big Country fans will be eager to know about, 'All Fall together'. This record, unreleased in the U.K, is in fact 'Giant' with lyrics, though the music does show a slight variation it runs for 5.05 minutes.

☆COMPETITION☆

For the competition in this month's edition of Country Club, we'd like you to try to make as many words as you can from the surnames of the members of Big Country. Send your entries to us, marking the envelope "Competition - Issue 7", and the winner will receive a prize.





With a crashing rendition of 'Porrohman,' Big Country opened up their twenty minutes air-play on tonight's edition of the Tube. Their first live performance this year went fantastically well playing to a much appreciative audience.

The extensive introduction on this left the audience waiting with bated breath for someone to sing! Finally, Stuart sings the opening line and very soon everyone is jumping and bobbing around like buoys on the sea - fists punching the air as if to prevent the sky from falling in on them!

As the camera moves round behind the group, you can't help but notice the Bruce Watson look-alike standing in the front row!

'Porrohman' always sounds like two different songs - haunting one moment and up-lifting the next.

Mark brings to an end the first song after a confirming nod from Stuart.

An almighty roar goes up and the next song is introduced as being the last single - 'Wonderland.'

Still fresh in the minds of the audience, Big Country receive plenty of backing from people sporting tartan shirts - a symbol as common now as "long hair" was when the Beatles reached their hey-day!

Last but by no means least, 'Harvest Home' winds up their all-too-quick television appearance. Bruce joins in the vocals as well as Tony - a welcome change from their normal set-up.

'Harvest Home' being their first single and of course a track from 'The Crossing.'

All three guitarists jump around to this as if on pogo-sticks! - an achievement in itself, let alone to play the guitar and sing as well!

Over far too soon, Stuart encourages the audience to join in with repetitions of "Just as you *SEW* you shall reap" and "In a Harvest Home" and gradually fades away into the background.

"Brilliant" is the only way to describe Big Country's performance tonight.

They not only did themselves proud but as a fan what they did tonight left a lump in my throat - a feeling that will be there for a long time!

Kim Banks.

BIG COUNTRY

QUESTION : What were your impressions of America then Stuart, just got back having been really busy?

STUART : When you're doing that much travelling you never get a chance to really meet anybody or talk to anyone. I was quite surprised by the sheer vastness of the place and just the speed of everything. I think it's just really, really fast - like everything's got to be done in five minutes. It's like every street sort of screams at you "Buy this!" "Feed the bee!" "Go in here!" It's just totally alien to anything I've ever seen before. It's really interesting to go there actually, it's worth seeing.

QUESTION : Now you've got back, it's odd isn't it, whenever a band's gone away and they've just been a medium success band over in Britain and you go over and come back with your laurels on because America's loved you, you always have a bit of a hard time in Britain don't you? They're funny, they don't seem, especially the music press don't seem to like that happening. Do you think that's going to happen with you?

STUART : I don't know, I'd really hope not. I mean, it's not as if it's a case of it's changed us or changed anything that we're about really, I mean we're still about the same things we were about a year ago and if people want to see it like that, well, fair enough. I don't think the amount of records you sell changes you as a person. I think with certain groups it does, with us we're neither here nor there with it. What we set out to do is try and change the way people saw music and the way people reacted towards it and we're still trying to do the self-same things. We played in Glasgow a week after we came back at Barrowlands and it was brilliant. The people were just amazing and as far as they're concerned nothing's changed for them, it's definitely not changed for us.

QUESTION : It's hard, though isn't it not to change. People change all the time whether you're a garage mechanic or a musician, just going different places.

STUART : "Aye" everybody has the right to be their own individual.

QUESTION : Don't you find, Bruce even that going around America and people getting the kind of adulation that you obviously got and the interest, it must've changed you a bit?

BRUCE : I don't really bother about it. I don't like to think about it too much, you know? I mean, if folk come up and say "You're great" and this and that, I just don't bother about it, you know. So what?

QUESTION : It's funny that the two British bands that are doing so well over there are yourselves and U2.

STUART : Yeah, but U2 aren't British, they're Irish!

QUESTION : Well, I was just about to say, they've got a real celtic feel about them and I know you've always been pointed out as having a real celtic feel to yours, do you think that's just a coincidence?

STUART : Theirs is definitely better than ours and that's why the guitars sound like bagpipes!



BIG COUNTRY

QUESTION : I was going to ask you how you get your bagpipes to sound like guitars!

BRUCE : It's cassettes in the back!

QUESTION : Yeah, but you know what I'm getting at, everybody says there's a real Scottish feel to your music and obviously there's a real celtic feel to U2's. Now, is that something the Americans are desperate for?

BRUCE : Well that's just their tag in a way.

STUART : Everybody likes to label music down and that's what we're seen as but for me it's just us playing the music that comes naturally to ourselves. I mean when Bruce and I started working we didn't set out with any great masterplan, I mean all we wanted to do was to sit down and write a bunch of songs.

BRUCE : And just play them in front of as many people as we can.

STUART : And we just wanted things to be natural and not sit down and pre-plan it like a set of building blocks and make it like a musical language as it were. I didn't go around looking for "wee chockters" up in the hills playing the fiddle and steal their songs or anything like that, you know.

QUESTION : Rock bands maybe fall by the wayside just in as much as the most important thing to them is being famous and girls waiting for them outside the stage doors. If you've got something extra, do you think that gives you the edge?

STUART : I think it takes it away from the normal and brings it back down to a more human level if you're aware why you're writing songs and what you're writing them about, instead of being able to look towards what the end result will be. I think a lot of groups start out with the main idea in their heads as becoming as rich and as famous as quickly as possible. Which I think is a shame in a way because it means that music then is always geared around success and people can't try things that are coming from themselves and that are the things they want to do.

QUESTION : What about the future then, I mean, you've done what you wanted to do and you still are, can you see yourself stopping when you haven't got anything else to say?

STUART : "Aye!"

BRUCE : You can't do it forever.

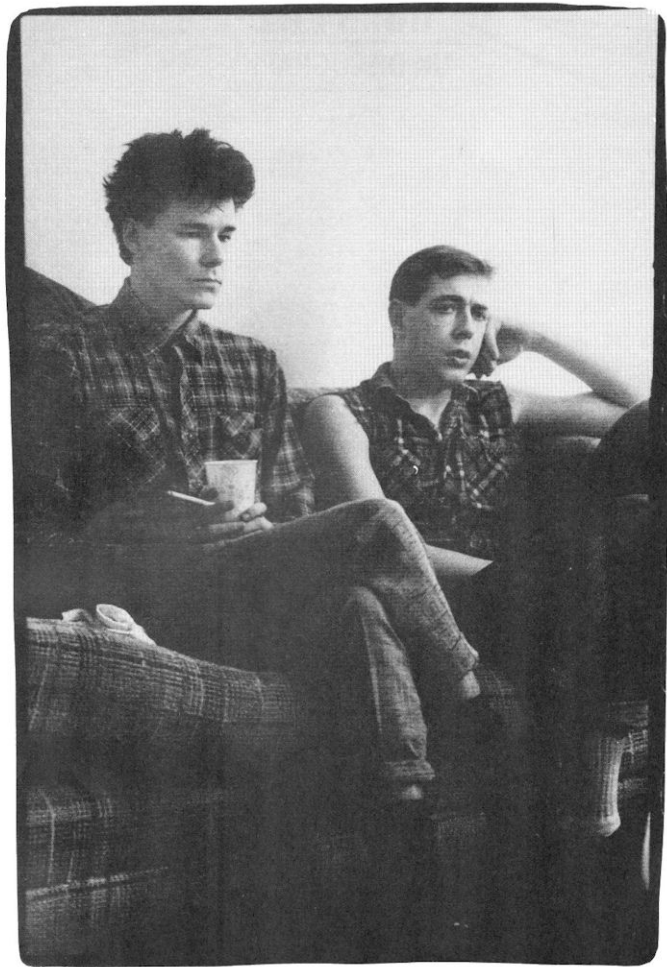
STUART : You'd just be lying to yourself if you just carried on doing the same old thing time in and time out. When you find yourself in that situation, it's time to say "Well, wait a minute" you know "Why am I doing this?" and you've got to question yourself a lot, I think. A lot of people just carry on for the sake of say a meal and a nice comfortable job. They find it quite easy to listen to their old records and copy them.

QUESTION : But most people do do it and don't enjoy it because they're driven on by some need, the need to have a career if you like. You don't see it that way?

STUART : Or the need to have an ego, you mean?

QUESTION : Or an ego, yeah!



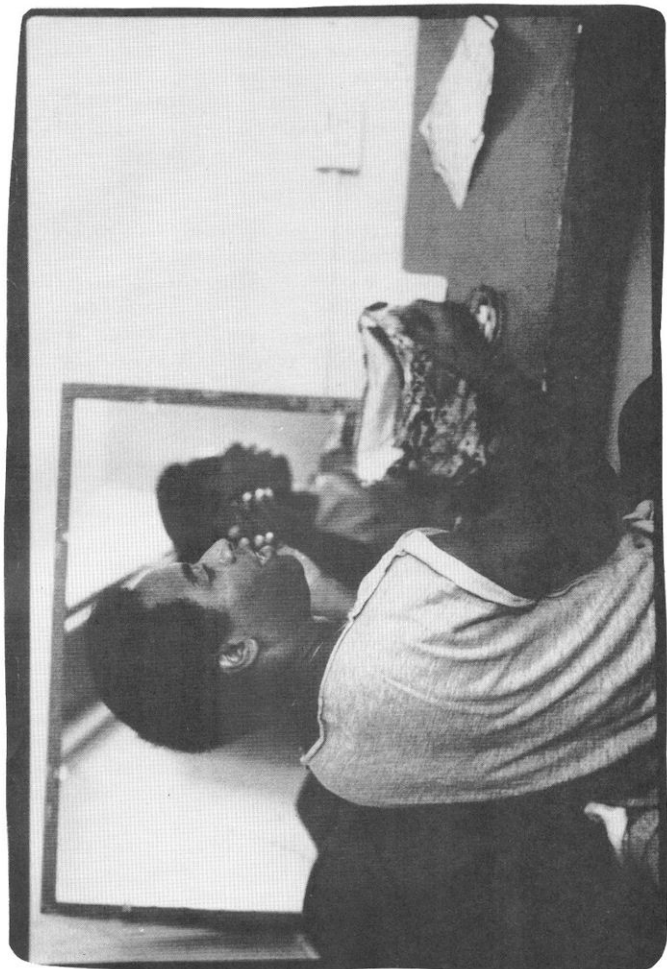


BIG COUNTRY

UK DISCOGRAPHY

- September '82 7" Harvest Home / Balcony
- November '82 12" Harvest Home / Balcony / Flag of Nations (Swimming)
- February '83 12" Fields of Fire / Angle Park / Fields of Fire (alternative mix)
- February '83 7" Fields of Fire / Angle Park
- May '83 Scotland shaped picture disc - Fields of Fire / Angle Park / Harvest Home
- May '83 7" In a Big Country / All of Us
- May '83 12" In a Big Country (pure mix) / In a Big Country / All of Us
- July '83 12" Special edition four track E.P same as above but with Heart and Soul as extra track
- July '83 L.P The Crossing (in red and blue covers, red later withdrawn)
- August '83 7" Chance / Tracks of my Tears (early copies contained a colour photo)
- August '83 12" Chance / Tracks of my Tears / The Crossing
- October '83 12" Chance Picture Disc
- January '84 7" Wonderland / Giant
- January '84 12" Wonderland / Giant / Wonderland (extended version)
- February '84 12" Wonderland / Giant / Lost Patrol (live) clear vinyl
- February '84 7" Wonderland / Giant / Lost Patrol Parts 1 + 2 two pack single
- March '84 The Crossing (green cover)





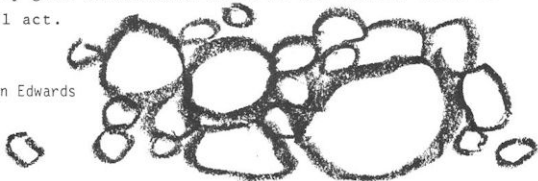
An indiscriminate round-up of the latest releases. The single of the month is "Malcolm X" by TOMMY BOY a New York import that features the thoughts of Malcolm X. X was a Harlem pimp turned Black Power spokesman. Heavy isn't the word. Disappointing debuts from both the SMITHS and PREFAB SPROUT, both of whom sound like they were rushed into the studio too quickly. It's a shame, because both bands have really great singles out; stick with those.

"Cafe Bleu" from the STYLE COUNCIL has its moments. As far as black music goes, the LIONEL RITCHIE album is what you would expect: lots of ballads in the "Hello" vein, notable exception being the anthemic "All Night Long". A great find is the album "Womack and Womack", by veteran soul singer BOBBY WOMACK with help from his daughter. It is a really accomplished album, with stand-outs being the cover of "TKO" (a Teddy Pendergrass staple), and the Stones' "Angie". Talking about the STONES, (and we quite often do in Big Country circles, because Joe, our Security man, works for them, and we also have a PR in common), the rumour is that Mick Jagger is currently recording a solo album in the Bahamas using the same batch of musicians as Bowie did for "Let's Dance".

Reggae wise, (yes, there is still reggae after the demise of Bob Marley), there is one gem in the shape of GREGORY ISAAC'S album "Out Deh". Special tracks being "Private Secretary" and the title track. Otherwise, there is a YELLOWMAN/CLINT EASTWOOD duet album, with the latter coming out surprisingly on top. ASWAD'S live and direct album fulfils their potential - a big album from a soon to be big band. Elsewhere, DEAD OR ALIVE'S album is about a hundred times better when you see their great live show. Expect new albums from DIFFORD & TILBROOK, BRYAN FERRY and BARRY DIAMOND (who? The world's funniest comedian, that's who).

Oh yes - a really good alternative debut is the COCTEAU TWINS LP - a really special act.

Alan Edwards



A music magazine you can hear as well as read has just come out over here, although it's already proved successful in Germany.

Called "Debut", it's printed like an LP cover, although it's got 64 pages with a 12-track LP inside. The first issue has a photo of Big Country on the cover, with a two page interview inside, and "Harvest Home" is included on the LP.

The new Channel 4 series "Play At Home" should be screened in July. Each programme is made by and about the groups themselves, and gives an extremely interesting alternative perspective to life in a group. Look out for Big Country's programme!

In case you weren't at Barrowland on New Year's Eve, and to keep you happy until their next British tour, Big Country have released (10th May) a 75 minute video of the concert which is reviewed on Page 15.

You can buy it from W H Smith, HMV and most video shops and record stores and costs a mere £19.99. The band are all very proud of it as it was extremely well filmed and the sound quality is amazing.



Is anyone out there interested in purchasing any foreign releases direct from us? There have been quite a few different releases of Big Country singles around the world which we think would be of interest to Big Country fans, so if you would like to buy them, please drop us a line.

Just to let you know, Japan is Releasing a mini album with 'Wonderland' (12" Version) and 'All fall Together' c/w Angle Park, Heart and Soul and a live Version of Lost Patrol. Also Holland should be releasing another mini Album with 'Wonderland' (12" Version) and 'All fall Together' on the A Side, and 'Angle Park', 'The Crossing' and 'In a Big Country' (12" version) on the B-Side. The Canadian one features Wonderland, Angle Park and All Fall Together on Side One with Chance 12" mix, Heart And Soul and The Crossing on Side Two.

Incidentally, we have a recording of a live broadcast Big Country did in Austin, Texas on the last American tour. It went out live by satellite to 72 radio stations across America, and was engineered by Shelly Yakus, who has worked with Bruce Springsteen, Stevie Nicks and Bob Seger, and is quite honestly the BEST live recording we've ever heard of the band.

If the response to this news item is great, we will try and make this recording available to Country Club members. This should also compensate you for any offers you might have seen in Porrohmag which were bootlegs, which we, of course, cannot condone in Big Country's own fanzine. This will be an OFFICIAL offer.

COUNTRY COUNTRY CLUB CLUB

Hello to all COUNTRY CLUB MEMBERS.

I have had a lot of letters asking "Why has my membership number been changed", some of you feel demoted by this. The membership number is a reference number, it has nothing to do with devotion to BIG COUNTRY or longevity of membership. All BIG COUNTRY fans are valued.

Membership will now last for 12 months from the date of joining not just until the end of 1984. You will automatically be sent a renewal form when your years membership expires.

It is now four months since we took over the Country Club and I think I can say we have now sorted out all the problems that came with it. If we have your name and address wrong please let us know and if we only have your initials we'd like your Christian name.

Martin Somers is no longer with us so please send your information letters to the Country Club and mark the envelope INFORMATION SERVICE. We will do our best to answer all of your questions as quickly as possible - Don't forget the stamped addressed envelope! All of your letters will be passed on to the band for them to read but, for obvious reasons they won't be able to reply personally.

We would welcome any suggestions and ideas for the fan club and anyone who would like to contribute to the magazine-please do! If you have a complaint please let us know so that we can put it right.

It has been suggested that we start Big Country penfriends, if any of you are interested please send in a letter stating your age, interests, etc and we will compile a list to send out to start it off, after that we will print the up-dated list in the magazine.

We are sorry the magazine is late again, a problem we hope we have now solved for the next one.

Thanks for your patience and support.

