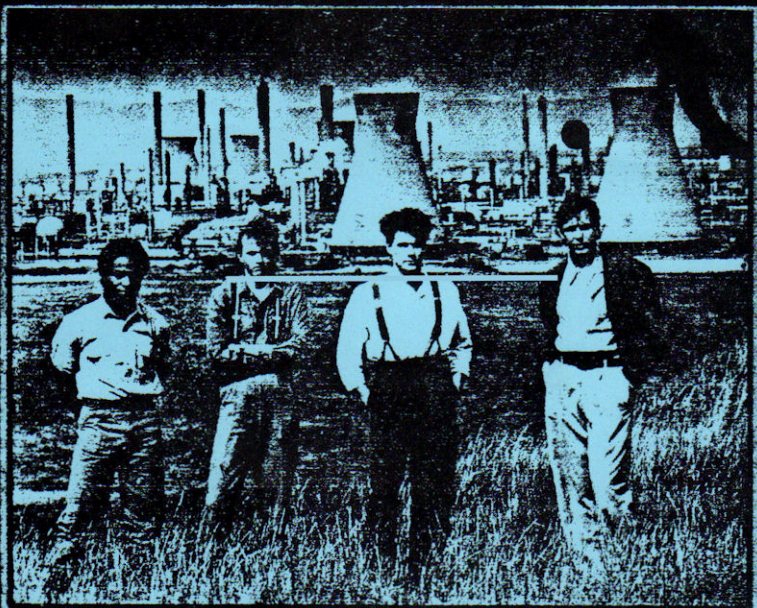


BIG COUNTRY



ISSUE II



BIG COUNTRY

country club

Acme House, 26-40 St Andrews St
Northampton NN1 2HY, U.K.



BUONGIORNO BUENOSTARDES GUTTENTAG CIAO BONJOUR HI AND HELLO
sorry for any spelling mistakes

Well it's here at last, despite the lack of faith some of you showed (TUT).

I'm getting loads of letters saying that you haven't received your Fact Files yet. WEEEEELL, there's a very good reason for this.... they haven't been sent out yet. I won't bore you with the details but the signed photo didn't happen. All concerned are very sorry but it can't be helped. I now have the photos in my sticky mits and all of your patient envelopes are in the process of being filled as I write, you should get them very soon if not already. Please no more letters on the subject of Fact Files or signatures the nightmares are getting really scary!!

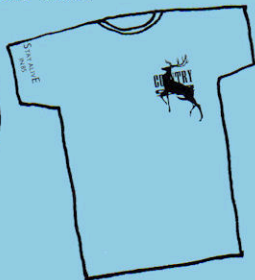
Anyone having difficulty finding records or wanting imports should write to **ADRIAN'S RECORDS, 36 HIGH STREET, WICKFORD, ESSEX.** They have a very good catalogue and run a mail order service (worldwide).

A lot of you are still insisting that I am a male type person, I'm not, I've looked and I confirm that I don't have the right bits!! I am female and almost human (but not before 10 am). This has given me an idea for a **very silly competition** - Send in a drawing of what you think I look like (to me at the above address). You don't have to be an artist to enter because as I say it's a silly competition. The drawings on this page are by four year old Rachael and apparently are of me. I'm saying nothing so you'll have to get your imagination in gear. I'm looking forward to seeing me, and will think of a suitable prize for the closest and the funniest.

Hope all you 'renewed' members liked your shirt. Members who will be renewing in 1985 will be getting one then. Members who have joined this year will be able to buy one for **£4.00** through the Mail Order Department of ACME TOTAL MERCHANDISING LTD. (cheques, postal orders, International Money Orders, Access/Mastercharge NO CASH PLEASE) The T-Shirt is exclusive to Country Club Members so please do not buy them for non members. Before you ask, Yes you can buy 'extras' for yourself... THE T-SHIRT WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE IN 1986.

Keep those letters coming, **STAY ALIVE**

Andy
X





Country Club time again and here we are with issue 11. Record wise '85 has been pretty quiet on the Big Country front, Just A Shadow wasn't the hit it should have been, but both albums continue to figure in the charts, for The Crossing in particular this is a great achievement.

Big Country's latest venture is a film project entitled Restless Natives. This movie will feature a musical score written by Stuart and performed by the band. An article on Restless Natives is included in this edition of Country Club, also to be found in the magazine are readers reviews, T-shirt design winner, a look at the music press polls and a few articles by myself, also a rather controversial letter by a fan (on which we would like to hear your thoughts), among my own contributions is a report on music T.V shows and how they changed and improved over the years. Hope you find all this interesting, and don't hesitate to send in your views and contributions, which as always are most welcome.

'Till number 12, be seeing you

Mike Bartram.

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THE WAREHOUSE TO WEMBLEY

I first saw Big Country in April 1983, in the small surroundings of Liverpool's back street club The Warehouse. The place was packed solid and Big Country played superbly, their tremendous sound bounced around the tiny venue, and was still rebounding in my ears for the following day. The photos I took at The Warehouse you can see on this page, if I wanted I could have taken a film and sound crew into the gig as the security was non-existent.

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A couple of nights ago on December 14th 1984 I saw Big Country for the 25th time, this time at the huge Wembley Arena. I think its an interesting comparison to look back at the Wembley and Warehouse events which touched both ends of the concert appearance scale. The Wembley Arena had more security and stewards than The Warehouse had fans, and they were just as enthusiastic. I had my bag searched three times, in case I committed the unforgivable crime of taking photos at a special occasion.

Personally, I think everything has got a little out of proportion at rock concerts these days, and a lot of the pleasure has gone with it. At some venues, the bouncers do their level best to ruin your evening by not even allowing you to stand up. I know many fans have been hurt because they have been hurled forceably back into their seats.

Basically, a rock concert should be enjoyed by the individual in his or her own way. If that means sitting peacefully in your seat, and politely applauding each number thats all very well. However, if you feel like leaping all over your best friend, and playing non-existent strats in the aisles, then you should be permitted to. If you're restricted in any way your enjoyment is restricted also. When a fan pays good money to see a group perform, he should be allowed to show his appreciation in his own way. Don't get me wrong, throwing beer glasses and uplifting row 'A' is not on, but surely security men can distinguish between dangerous antics and just pure excitement. I don't relish sitting down to music which makes me want to do otherwise. Needless to say I've got no pictures to remember my Arena visit by.

* * * * *

WINTER TOP OF THE FLOPS 84

The weeks leading up to Christmas is always a risky time to release a single, as most D.J.s and the record buying public are most concerned with records with a festive flavour to them.

It's inevitable that many good releases lose out in this Christmas period, and of course Where The Rose Is Sown was a prime example. Along with Harvest Home and Wonderland 'Rose' is one of my fave singles and yet only peaked at number 29, whats more suprising was that the record went down following a T.O.T.Ps performance, very unusual.

Other notable artists who must have been disappointed with their December releases were Culture Club with the Metal Song which failed to make top 30, and yet it was far better than the dreadful War Song. Bowies 'Tonight' didn't do much, and The Stranglers excellent 'No Mercy' from their album Aural Sculpture, deserved to be a hit.

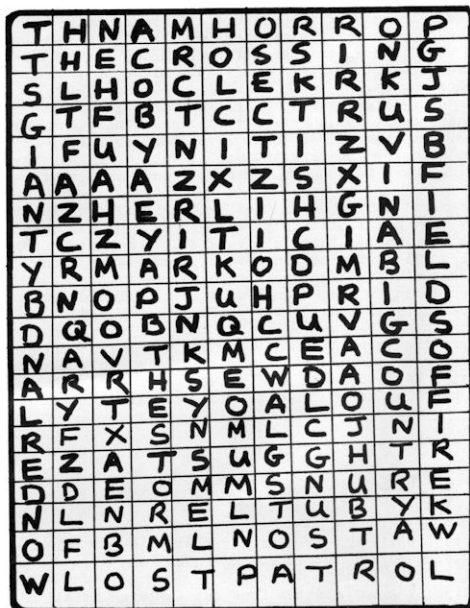
On the album front, the compilation various artists releases tend to dominate the weeks leading up to Christmas, for obvious reasons, but a little sanity returned to the chart a couple of weeks after the holiday when SteelTown reentered the top 20. Two various artists l.ps however still held the top two positions.

Updating the charts concerning Big Country, what a surprise 'Shadow' only reached 26. After a jump of 9 places from the previous week, T.O.T.Ps had the cheek to call it a top 40 breaker, they only played a snippet from the video, maybe the 'beeb' should have re titled the song 'Just A Clip'!!

Mike.



WORD SEARCH



ADAMSON
 BIG COUNTRY
 BRUCE
 BRZEZICKI
 BUTLER
 CALLUM
 CHANCE
 FIELDS OF FIRE
 GIANT.
 IN A BIG COUNTRY
 LOST PATROL
 MARK
 PORROHMAN
 STUART.
 THE CROSSING
 THE STORM
 TONY
 WATSON
 WONDERLAND.

USUAL RULES APPLY
 TO THIS EXCELLENT
 WORD SEARCH, SENT IN
 BY
 STUART SMITH (357).
 MANY THANKS TO HIM.

**BIG
 COUNTRY**

Friday 8th February 1985.

5 PM. I was enjoying childrens T.V when Siobhan came in from work. I quickly turned over to B.B.C 2 and grabbed the polish and duster.

Sher. "Hi Mike!"

Mike. "Hi Sher!"

Sher. "What's on the T.V tonight?" (We lead a full life!)

Mike. "Not much.... two ornaments and tha gas bill"

Sher. "Humph!..... Big Country are on the Oxford Road Show, it's live from Mancheste....."

"TAXI! TAXI!" Screech!!!!

Mike. "The Station on the double".

AT STATION.

Driver. "That's £2.50, doubled up to £5".

Sher. "Wise guy!"

TICKET OFFICE

"Two halves to Manchester please".

Arrived at the studios at 6.50.

Doorman. "Those with tickets go in, guest list over ther, hardluck stories wait."

We had none of those, so we started our own 'charm' queue. After Siobhan failed at that, we joined the other punters in the hardluck stories group.

Joan Armitrading Fan. "Who have you come to see?"

Mike and Sher. "Big Country".

Ignorant Joan Armitrading Fan. "Are they country and western?"

Mike. "Course not, you must have heard of Jocky Brzezicki, on drums, Angus Mc Adamson on lead bagpipes, Hamish Mc Watson on second bagpipes."

Sher. "And Tony Butler the only Scottish member, on bass."

Ignorant Joan Armitrading Fan. "Oh yes, now I know who you mean."

Anyway we dreamed up a story and five lies, sorry five minutes later we cracked it, we were in.

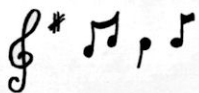
We were shown to Big Country's dressing room, where they were preparing for their one number appearance. They were also busy signing lots of album sleeves.

We went for a coffee from the beeb canteen, which was later sent to the lab for tests.

At 7.15 we made our way down to the studio, Stuart was the guest presenter and after the intro's he joined the band and they performed 'Just A Shadow' and went down very well, there were lots of Big Country fans in the audience. Stuart continued to present the show, and his interview with Tommy Docherty was very interesting. The rest of the boys watched the show from an adjoining room on a T.V set.

After the show, everyone agreed Stuart did superbly. Then we joined the band in a conference room where drinks were laid on.

Tony was telling us of the bands U.S plans to support Hall and Oats, and gave us the update and his thoughts on Big Country's progress with 'Restless Natives'. The following day Stuart and Bruce were to return to Glasgow to continue work on the film. After a chat with Stuart, Mark and Bruce, it was time to get off home. It had been a really great evening, and considering it was all unplanned it couldn't have gone any better.



STAY ALIVE IN '85





B - SIDE REVIEW

Although Big Country's last two singles have been lifted from SteelTown both in their original form (though 'Just A Shadow' was a slight remix) their b-sides have featured three new tracks.

'Where The Rose Is Sown' was backed with 'Belief In The Small Man', a five minute song of true class in the same vein as 'The Crossing' and the '12' version also had the extra track the instrumental 'Bass Dance'. 'Winter Sky' was an excellent b-side to 'Just A Shadow', this atmospheric number is very much a Adamson / Watson creation, Stuart wrote the lyrics and they both wrote the music and produced it. All this work was done and recorded in Edinburgh on the 1st and 2nd of December, with a new engineer, Laurence Rieva. Judging by the many letters 'Winter Sky' is very popular with the fans.

Mike.

STEELTOWN POLL RESULTS AND COMPETITION

There was a really good response to the SteelTown poll held in issue 10, thanks to everyone who sent in their votes. Right from the start 3 tracks led the way and constantly swapped places, eventually 'Just A Shadow' pulled away to win, and become the most popular track from Steel-Town.

The competition linked with the poll was won by Alison Biggs (0192) from Essex. Well done to Alison who correctly predicted 6 from the 10 positions including the top 5.

RESULT

1. Just A Shadow	46
2. Steeltown	38
3. Rose	34
4. Raindance	10
5. Come back	8
6. Tall ships	5
7. East Of Eden	4
8. Grey eyes	3
9. Great Divide	1
10. Flame / West	0

Alison Biggs

1. Just A Shadow
2. Steeltown
3. Rose
4. Raindance
5. Come back
6. Grey eyes
7. East Of Eden
8. Tall Ships
9. Flame / West
10. Great Divide

A few reasons behind your votes, the winner said 'Shadow' had very moving lyrics that highlight the problems of unemployment and lost opportunity which the band are obviously concerned with.

Charlotte Parker (Surrey) says 'Shadow' is quite simply wonderful, almost as sad as 'Chance' yet as powerful as 'Fields Of Fire'.

Karen Brown (Glasgow) and Rachel Ward (Birmingham) put the meaningful words behind their vote for 'Shadow'.

A. Jenkins (Wales) says the words sum up the groups sensitivity. Finally Mark Batten (Swindon) voted for 'SteelTown' because everytime he hears it he jumps around the room playing and "air" guitar. I play a mean air guitar myself Mark.

Your Letters

Dear Mike,

The last couple of days I've heard 'Just A Shadow' being played a lot on Radio 1. Is it Big Country's new single? I hope so because it's one of my fave tracks and the best thing they've done for ages. Considering the state of the charts at the moment, if this doesn't get into the top 10 I shall never pay any attention to the charts ever again! Do you by any chance know where I can purchase some of Big C's promo posters for records, tours etc. I've seen loads in record shops but haven't been able to persuade anyone to let me have some. Tight bunch of sods! Also thanks for confirming the gig at Lancaster. It took a lot of groveling to get a couple of tickets as it was completely sold out, but was definitely worth the trouble. A good time was had by all (except Stuart who crashed off the end of the stage half way through. Poor fellu!)

Stay Alive

Sue Hartley.

For promo posters try, A.J Chester P.O Box 210, Sheffield, S6 2pw. (S.A.E for full list). If anybody else knows where you can obtain promo posters let me know.



MIKE

This will not, indeed, be as scathing an attack as I first intended. I can now apply Rational critique in place of the rampant disgust I experienced during and immediately after the N.E.C concert Dec. 10th. I had not even intended to see the band at such a large arena, feeling (as it turned out, quite correctly so) that the atmosphere of many songs would be lost in the cavernous hall. Nevertheless, I felt that this problem would be overcome, especially after the quality of the recent Birmingham Odeon gig. How wrong can you be!

I will, parenthetically dwell on The Cult's performance, a sadly ragged affair in light of the excellent reputation they brought with them. Their shining light was a truly superb guitarist, who could become something special given adequate material. Nevertheless, the lead vocalist's promise that we would be paying to see them in 12 months time will undoubtedly come to fruition. And so to 'The Event', the tones of Raindance fed through to the bar and we made our way to the inadequate seats. The subsequent Wonderland and the last but three Porrohman were to be the only reminders of how great this band are. Songs of this quality transcend all problems, and I must say there were several.

1. Shoddy P.A stacks, worse than Wolverhampton Civic Hall!
2. A band simply 'going through the motions'.
3. Fans of the band, not the music. Sorry Stuart you are a teen-idol whether you like it or not.
4. Cliched sing-a-song--Stu. Worse offenders;-
 - a) Chance (orange)
 - b) Tracks Of My Tears (yawn!)
 - c) In A Big Country (shame)
 - d) Fields Of Fire (now a parody).
5. Why is Fields Of Fire left until the end? It is a magnificent track, but I would appreciate some variety within the set. Raindance seems to be the new traditional opener, relieving 1000 Stars from its duties. The set is a little bit predictable, you know what I want to know is, where are the B sides? This would provide a spark of originality. How about forgetting a single once in a while, and giving us say Flag Of Nations or Giant.
6. Money: Admittedly a band in this position has the pulling force to fill places of this size, but isn't it all just a little bit 'Woodstock'? You know, community spirit, keep the home fires burning, eh what! Surely it would be better to limit your crowds to 2-3,000, where at last some atmosphere would be retained?
7. Warning! You are losing your contact with the fans. It may as well have been Nik Kershaw. The only difference is, your fans have the intelligence not to scream everytime anyone wiggles their bum! (Could also have something to do with them singing all the time). Get back to basics, or you will lose many of your long standing fans!

Now on the plus side.

1. Wonderland
2. Porrohman
3. Marks drumming.

Not much is it? It's at times like this when the N.M.E's analysis of the new wave of guitar bands-simple minds, 'U2, Big Country- (Smiths excepted, of course) - does seem to be spot on, we have witnessed in 1984.

1. The demise of Simple Minds to a U.K Foreigner:
2. U2 resurrected, currently the best band in Britain (pompous I should confess).
3. Big Country fall from grace (in these eyes at least) as a most potent live force, to what is now a pale shadow of its former glories. I know its sad, but U2 should give us all hope.



When it is all put into perspective, perhaps too much is being read into that was simply a bad night. However, the principles remain the same:

1. Why a large venue?
 - a) Money
 - b) The genuine shock displayed by Adamson at the rapturous support seems to indicate doubts in the first place as to whether the place would fill. So why bother.
2. Why a second tour?
 - a) Why not do consecutive nights at smaller venues?
 - b) Why so quickly after the first?

I have endeavored to be constructive. It is difficult in my present state of mind not to go over the top with criticism. You should understand that my disappointment lies in a deep rooted belief in this band and what it stands for. I look forward with interest to 1985 and the hope of better things to come.

Stay Alive

Don Mitchell.

Phew!!! Don raised quite a few points there, do you think they're valid? Let me hear your views, one thing I can say is, in an arena of 9,000, many fans may not have seen Big Country before, or perhaps maybe only once or twice. To these fans especially there is nothing to 'yawn' at, when seeing Big Country in action, and the audience's reaction in general shows Big Country are still the best 'live act' in the U.K today.

Mike.

While at the Big Country offices, Ian Grant the bands manager put forward his own views regarding Dons letter. P / A stacks on the December tour were built and freighted from the U.S.A, they were made to Big Country's specifications, and are systems very much sought after by many bands. Fans of the band, not the music, is a situation which is totally unavoidable. Stuart didn't go looking for teen idol status, but it's something he can't just shun.

The cliched sing a song a Stu is something that the crowd now take up first. If a particular audience doesn't demand the sing a longs then it doesn't happen.

The fact Fields Of Fire is a magnificent track is the reason it's left to Big end. It's such a worthy encore. As many fans may have just got into Big Country on the strength of Steel Dawn, that's why The Crossing material is still very evident in the bands playlist, B-sides and other tracks not played in concert so far will turn up in future tours.

The money is not the reason behind playing large arenas, (N.E.C take 25% of the box office), but if the N.E.C for instance was not played, to accommodate the demand the group would have to do three or four nights at the Odeon. An 'Odeon' tour would mean the band being on the road for longer than you could expect after the countless tours they have performed in 83 / 84. As Don Well, that's Ian Grants own personal reply to some of Dons points. Which says his criticisms lie in his belief for the future of Big Country, which is a fair reason for his outlook. But I think most fans would agree the future concerning Big Country looks fine and they ended '84 on a high note.

Dear Mike,

Issue 10 of the mag was really interesting. I didn't know what an engineer did. You mentioned that if anybody had any interesting imports etc. to write in. I've got a 12" white label promo copy of East Of Eden, 12" mix on one side and 7" version of Prairie Rose on the other. A German import 7" double A side in A Big Country / Fields Of Fire. Also Fields Of Fire German import 12" remix and a mini album with Angle Park / All Fall Together / The Crossing and Wonderland on it. I've also got Wonderland reissue 12" clear vinyl with Lost Patrol 'live' and Giant on the back, but I think they're quite common.

Having bought The Cult 'Dreastime' album I recommend it. It's a real strong sounding L.p and Ian Astbury's lyrics are well worth listening to. Some talented guitar playing from Bill Duffy too. I'm hoping to buy a guitar soon, just wondering if Stuart or Bruce have any advice on a good guitar to start off with, I'm left handed which limits the choice down a bit I think. I'm also hoping to start a band in the future and could the band give me some advice on that subject.

Just like to wish the band good luck on their forthcoming American tour and hurry up back to Britain and do some more dates in the U.K. The last tour was brilliant. At least they are leaving Britain on a high note with a superb single, Just A Shadow, the B side is worthy of an A side, Winter Sky is one of the most folkiest songs Big Country have done yet, I really like it.

Anyway until next time Stay Alive
yours, Gary Lawless



readers review

Dear Mike,

I know this is a tall order but could you please help me to trace two girls who I met at the Big Country concert on Friday 14th Dec. names so I can only describe where I met them and what they looked like, so maybe you could put an advert in your Club magazine and maybe they'll see it and remember me and hopefully write back. As I said we met at the MC Donalds take-away shop in Wembley on Friday 14th Dec, as I said there was the two of them, they stood in front of me in the queue. One wore a red and black check shirt, she was about 5" 7" to 5" 10", she also had a very distinguishing red flick in her hair, she also had black trousers on and smoked, a very helpful factor was that she and her friend were both Scottish and they had a very heavy accent, her friend wore a white top and she was about the same height as her mate. She actually turned around and asked me if I was going to the concert that night. I'm about 6" 3" to 6" 4", I've got ginger hair, I wore jeans and a two tone blue coat and a black Big Country T-shirt. I was with a friend also, he wore a black coat and a brown and white check shirt, he's about 5" 5" to 5" 8" with fair hair, we sat in a corner, a few tables down from them, upstairs in the seating area. I'd be very very grateful if you could print the above in your next issue of the Country Club, as my friend and I are desperate to get in touch with the two girls again.

Yours very thankfully,
Paul Harkness,

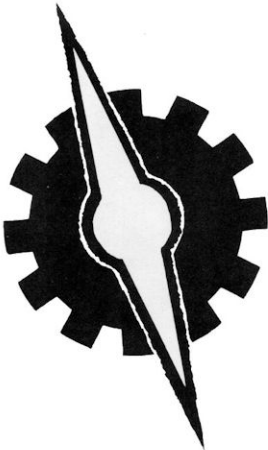
We believe the girls were aged about eighteen, so how about dropping the guys a line.

BIG COUNTRY AT WEMBLEY ARENA ON 13th - 14th DECEMBER 1984

Big Country have certainly come a long way since I first saw them at a dinky Nottingham night club in November '82 in front of just a handful of people. Only three songs (Harvest Home, Lost Patrol and Porrohman) remain in the live set from that time, but the newer songs more than make up, in both quality and quantity, for those which have been dropped.

The band opened with the excellent Haindance. On looking around the Arena, I was amazed to see the majority of the audience in the stands had remained seated - there were even stewards telling fans to sit down! It wasn't much better in the arena seats either, with most people standing quite motionless. Were they at the right concert? I wondered. Anyway, second was Wonderland which was followed by the storming Lost Patrol. Next up came Steeltown, my favourite track on the latest album, and then it was Flame Of The West, the first of the two new songs added to the set since the October tour. The crowd started to liven up to and which Stuart jokingly introduced as Cum On Feel The Noise! next The Storm, its extended intro swirling impressively around the epic venue. The songs from The Crossing seemed to get the best reception. Where The Rose Is Down back to back with Come Back To Me. The set was brought to a stunning crescendo with 1000 Stars and Harvest Home (the magic of which has never really been captured on vinyl), leaving everyone shouting for more. After a short break, the band entered with East Of Eden and Porrohman before leaving the stage again. They then returned to play Tracks Of My Tears, and when they launched themselves into the final song Fields Of Fire (complete with the snatch of Boy About Town), I couldn't help remembering the last time they'd played it here in December '82. Then it had been greeted by some sections of the audience with sarcastic cheers when Stuart announced it as their last song, but now almost everyone was singing and dancing along. But all too soon it was over. It will probably be a long time until the next British tour, but whenever it is, when planning the London gigs, and play somewhere like the increasingly popular Brixton Academy. This can accommodate something like 6,000 people standing and is the sort of venue that can help create the atmosphere Big Country gigs are all about.

Barry Gray.

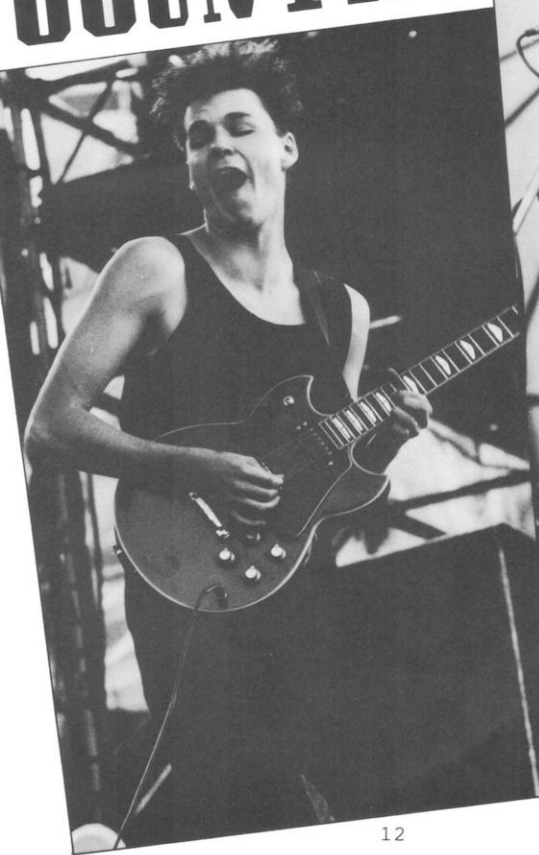


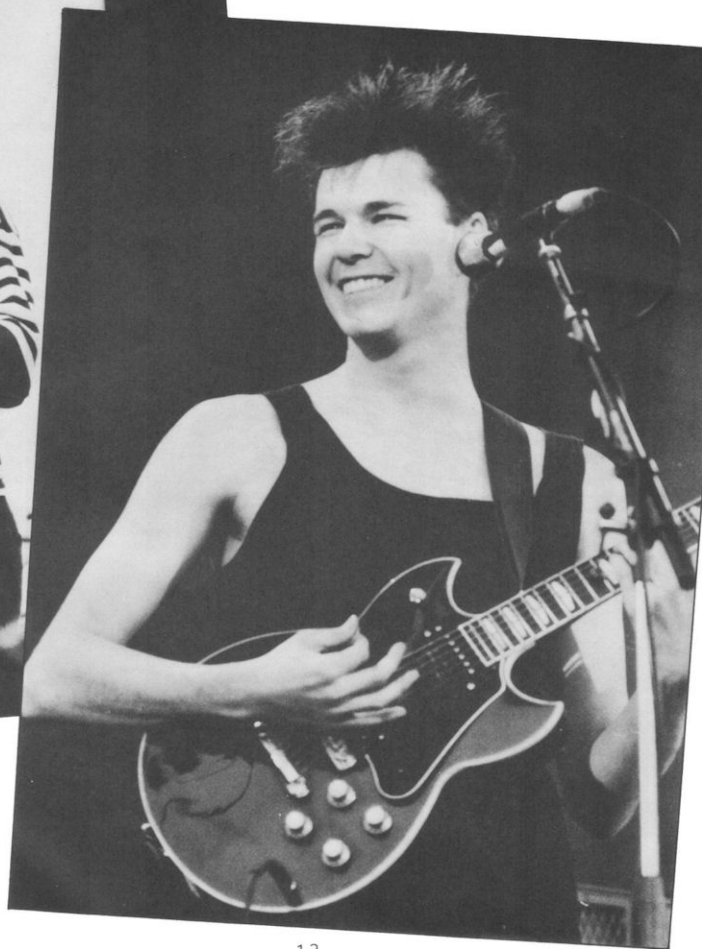
THE CULT

"SHE SELLS SANCTUARY" (4.18) B/W "TUMBER 13"

The Cults follow up to 'Resurrection Joe' sees them produce the sort of material that graced every groove of 'Dreamtime', 'Sanctuary' has a light eastern / Banshee's feel to it, with a nice subtle touch of acoustic guitar thrown in for good measure. The producer quite surprisingly is Steve Brown of Wham fame, and he's done a crisp job on this number. No doubt 'She Sells Sanctuary' will make a dent in the indie chart, but I think it's about time The Cult were nationalised. A word about the '2' B-side, it's a mammoth number of 8 minutes plus day. Buy!!!

BIG COUNTRY





John King from Cheshire suggests we let the fans know where the band purchase their more familiar clothes, e.g Marks flying jacket, Tonys black boots, Stuarts red boots, Marks baggies etc. If you have seen some similar clothes as worn by the band drop us a line.

To accompany a film showing a wintery farm scene C.B.T.V played snatches of 'Winter Sky'.

Damon Williams from Clwyd sent in a petition for the re-release of 'Harvest Home'. They even got a few celebrities to sign it, including the very shaky hand of President Reagan, the childish scrawl of Andrew Ridgley and a 'paw' print from Paul Young.

Big Country were featured in the December 'One Two Testing' magazine and the January 'Jamming' magazine.

ROCK ON THE BOX

In the 60's the chance of lesser known bands getting T.V time was very remote. Music shows were few and far between, and they would be shared between the pop giants of the day.

The 70's at last started to recognise pop / rock music as a audience pulling attraction, and as a result music shows got more updated, not only musically but just as important visually. The glam rock era started by Marc Bolan, and quickly followed by Bowie, Roxy, Slade etc brought a whole new excitement to our T.V screen, and certainly these artists can be thanked for a new age of fan-mania which many people thought had gone forever when The Beatles split up in 1970.

Competition in the music world in the 70's became fierce, and new T.V shows popped up to supply the demand for music on the box. Without doubt the most explosive and imaginative new T.V show to emerge was the excellent Supersonic, produced by Mike Mansfield, Supersonic went to incredible lengths to add visual effects to the music, infact many times the sounds played second fiddle to the special effects, but Mike Mansfield and his guests always produced lots of fun and the ratings were very good for a show which was shown in children's T.V time. The mid-70's saw many successful groups achieve their very own series, these were low budget affairs produced by Muriel Young for Granada T.V. Artists who appeared in their own series included The Bay City Rollers and Pilot, however these didn't prove too successful, the Pilot series in particular was a failure as they never lived up to the potential expected of them. However Muriel Young came up with a winner in 1977 with the Marc Bolan series titled simply 'Marc', this six part series was even repeated due to public demand in 1981.

The series will be remembered for not only the T.Rex contributions but the foresight of Marc to invite guests of little known status to play on his own series. The BoomTown Rats, The Jam, Generation X, Eddie and the Hot Rods, Radio Stars, all appeared on the Marc shows, who all went on to great things. The last show of the series had an amazing scoop, with the suprise appearance, all the way from Switzerland of David Bowie. The late 70's and early 80's have seen a whole new set of new music shows, T.O.T.P.'s, of course has continued despite its critics to top the ratings of all its rivals, however as it only deals with chart music, its popularity is understandable.

A host of shows which suddenly cropped up included, Something Else, The Switch, Whatever You Want, Riverside all now which are off our screen, these shows were of major importance in covering new talent Big Country themselves appeared on most of them, giving them vital exposure to perform 'live'. Razamatuzz is a fairly good attempt to make a sort of childrens T.O.T.P's, the big bands certainly had no hesitation in appearing on it and the show does give out an atmosphere which T.O.T.P's seems to lack.

The Tube, now coming to the end of another series, is Channel 4's answer to producing a rock programme, and in many peoples opinion they have come up with the goods. The Tube really is a mixed bag, going out live it can be depended on for surprises and the unexpected. Musically they have a huge cross-section of guests who must play live, recently Dead Or Alive, despite being number 1 in the charts, were turned away from appearing because of the backing tracks they wanted to use. The Tube is probably the most watchable and entertaining music show ever to turn up on T.V, an ambitious venture which has proved a winner.

The O.R.S seems a little disjointed and guest presenters don't help the situation. On the plus side, when I went to see Big Country perform Just A Shadow on the O.R.S the set up was far more organised than T.O.T.P's, and the staff were more friendly and helpful. Also the show is a live presentation and you don't find poseurs hogging the camera, all too often seen in the T.O.T.P's audience. The O.R.S 85 is also coming to the end of its present run.

The new updated Whistle Test is a vast improvement on the Old Grey version, with fresh faces, new acts, good interviews and a chart survey. The Whistle Test also boasts the hindsight feature and video vote giving the viewers a say in what goes on. All this makes the Whistle Test a close second to The Tube, out of the current offerings on the 'square' screen.



the damned

Singles



Grimly Fiendish

Despite this records commercial flavour, major success is as likely as a good edition of T.O.T.P's. The Damned's career has had more ups and downs than a pogo stick, but they have survived, due mainly to the huge audience they still command. This following has had 9 years of constant high quality material to drool over and 'Grimly Fiendish' continues in that trend.

This is the first Damned release without the Captain and judging by its quality and their recent live stint on the Whistle Test his personality may be the only thing that will be missed.

With a Madness style intro, nifty guitar and trumpet snatches, The Damned give us disciples another winner.

If only among their followers, there were a few beeb D.J's, then 'Grimly Fiendish' may taste the success it deserves, but who knows may be The Damned have cracked it at last.

BIG COUNTRY

ON TOUR

I was lucky enough to see Big Country on both legs of their recent British tour - Bournemouth International Centre on 17th October, 1984 and Wembley Arena on 14th December, 1984. The two venues were to say the least contrasting.

I travelled by coach the same morning from Aylesbury which took about six hours and arrived in Bournemouth at 1.30 p.m. The weather was terrible - cold, windy and wet. As I was by my-self, I decided to get rid of my luggage and have a good look round. The town was still very busy even though it was the end of the summer season.

Inside the International Centre was a hive of activity. The equipment was already being set up for the evenings performance. No-one was allowed inside the Maxwell Hall where the group were due to play. After a little persuasion, I managed to get inside the hall and listen-in on the sound check. After half-an-hour I noticed the tour bus arriving and hurried out along with a few others to try and get autographs. Everyone obliged as usual. I was wearing a jumper with the Big Country logo on it I had made which Mark noticed and remarked that he'd like one. I told im I'd make one and send it on.

Callum and Alexander
a couple of presents to
inside the building.

have to stand and autograph bits of paper and pose for the camera when you've probably been travelling half the night and all you want to do is crash down somewhere - anywhere!

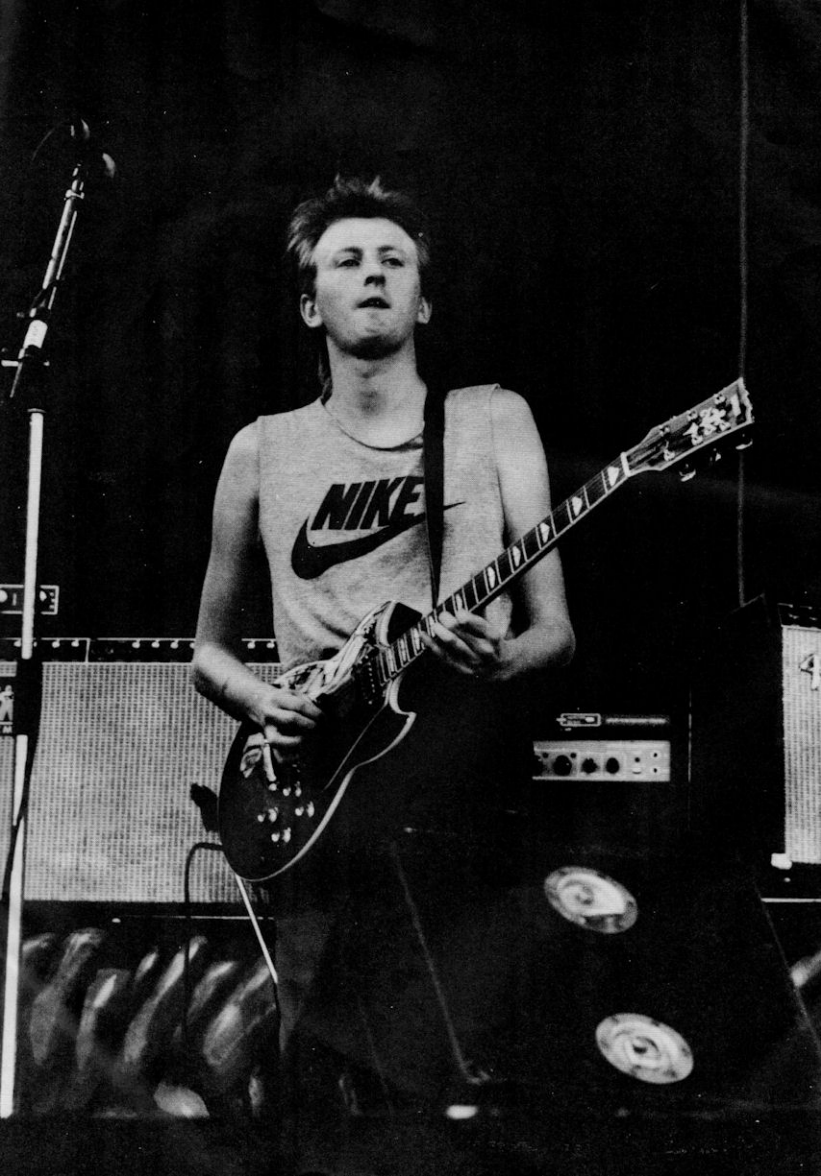
The afternoon passed quickly and before I knew it, it was 7.30 p.m. The band supporting Big Country were White China. I didn't quite know what to expect from the group as I hadn't heard of them before. If I'd had any doubts about them before the gig, they had been unfounded. White China did themselves proud. It can't be easy when you're the first act, going out there knowing the people you're playing to have come to see someone else! They certainly knew their stuff and have got to be one of the best support bands I've ever seen (apart from "Silent Running" at a Simple Minds Concert!)

Even though they were very good I couldn't help wishing they'd hurry up so Big Country could get on with theirs. I always get butterflies whilst waiting for them to appear and every minute seemed like five!

The hall was filled to capacity and it wasn't long before they were on.

Callum was given
everyone was hurried
each a venue to





BIG COUNTRY

This was the first tour in Britain where they had some new material to play and experiment on an ever-eager audience. They opened with "Raindance" from the new L.P. "Steeltown," which had to be started twice due to faulty equipment.

This seems to be a problem for Big Country recently both live at gigs and also, for example at a live performance on The Tube. They looked fed-up, to say the least about it but carried on regardless. I don't think half the crowd even noticed - they were too busy singing themselves!

The Bournemouth gig was not a big venue but the crowd was just as enthusiastic as ever. There was, however one unfortunate incident where some slob took it into his head to spit at Stuart whilst he was playing. Once again the show came to a halt with Stuart so disgusted at this, saying "You think you're so big. The most you could accomplish by spitting is to clear your throat."

A jeer went up as Big Country continued to play. It made me sick to think someone would actually do something as disgusting as that. Seeing such appalling behaviour at this level is sickening. I was ashamed of being part of that audience. The group seemed unaffected by this and ploughed thier way through the rest of the evening like superhumans. The songs, both old and new were mixed together like some magnificent musical cocktail. I started the evening at the front of the hall but as soon as the intro to "In A Big Country" began, I was squeezed out by the surging crowd. To an over-excited audience, this track is like a red flag to a bull - a stampede of heartfelt words and hypnotic music.

Big Country's music is like a drug - the more you hear, the more you want to listen. This, surely is what music is all about - being able to feel something more than just the thumping in your ears at the end of a concert.

The worst feeling at a concert is wondering whether the next song will be the last. Finally, the feeling is realised and all that's left is an empty stage and a litter-filled hall. Whilst the roadies load up the trucks and the stewards clear up the mess, a jubilant crowd disperses into the night .

The nice thing about music is that you can go along to a concert anywhere in the world alone but return home having met people just like yourself, united by one common interest. And that's got to be a good thing.

B.I.C. WINDSOR MALL	
Harvey Goldsmith Entertainments present BIG COUNTRY plus support	
EVENING 7.30	
£5.00	
N ^o 1848	
FOR TERMS SEE BACK Tickets cannot be exchanged or Money refunded. To be retained	
WED 17th OCT 1984	

BIG COUNTRY

Even though the Bournemouth gig was great, I had no idea what was in store on 14th December, 1984 at Wembley. The ticket price was £7 compared with Bournemouth which was £5. There were far more people here than at Bournemouth -

understandable when you consider how accessible London is from all over the country. Merchandise was plentiful with official goods ranging from button-badges to scarves to jackets and new-edition T-shirts.

The bands supporting Big Country here were The Cult on 13th and The Anti-Nowhere League on 14th. I didn't think much of the latter - they seemed to play the same song over and over and did more shouting than anything. They reminded me of Gary Glitter's "Glitter Band!" I was more than relieved when they'd finished.

It wasn't long before the lights were dimmed, the crowd ecstatic as the group burst into the first number. The effects at Wembley were spectacular. The opening scene was a shipyard - an impressive "showcase" for the new album Steeltown. Each song was received more warmly than the last. Between tracks the crowd erupted - stamping, applauding, singing. It was like witnessing an earthquake, you could actually feel the seats move!

There were times where the lads couldn't carry on with the next track because the crowd were still applauding the last! As they played some of the "older stuff" the scenery changed to a landscape of storm and quiet, the fans singing along to each and every word. The display of lights were fantastic which only made the backdrops more effective.

Every time I see the band live they seem to have improved since the last time. But where will it end? All I can hope is that it doesn't and they carry on being as professional as they have always been and keep on releasing good music for thousands of people like me who never want them to stop.

I was lucky enough to present Mark's jumper to him which I'd promised way back in October. He seemed to like it. I only hope he did.

There are only certain things that can be said about this group without sounding repetitive, but so long as they keep making such brilliant music, they can rest assured there will always be people out here waiting to listen.

Thankyou, Big Country for an amazing tour.
I look forward to the next.

Kim.

KIM BANKS

Wembley Arena		ENTER BY SOUTH DOOR
TBA INTERNATIONAL BY ARRANGEMENT WITH GRANT EDWARDS MGT.		BLOCK 56
PRESENT		ROW C
BIG COUNTRY PLUS SUPPORT		SEAT 62
£ 7.00	FRIDAY 14TH DEC 1984 8:00PM	SOUTH UPPER TIER

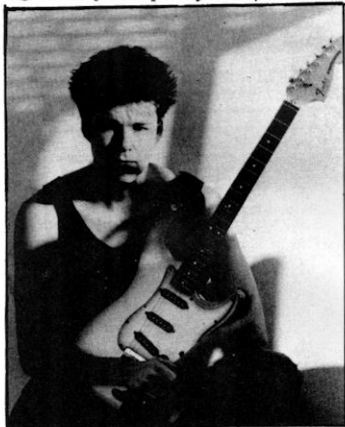
TO BE RETAINED (See conditions on back)

The turn of the year sees the music press conduction their annual polls, which though I find interesting I don't think the results really bear a true reflection of the music scene, a bit like the top 10.

Well in the Record Mirror survey Big Country didn't feature in a single category, which according to the paper all the top positions were fought out between the big four, Duran, Wham, Frankie and Culture Club. The Record Mirror poll however can't be considered of major importance regarding musical talent. I guess it's o.k if I want to find out whose owned the "most fanciable big toe of 84".

Onto the Sounds where as expected Big Country did pretty well, here are their findings.

Best Band	14th
Live Band	14th
Stuart Guitarist	4th
Tony Bass	13th
Mark Drums	11th
Video	9th
SteelTown	11th
<u>Album Sales of '84</u>	
L.p The Crossing	29th
L.p SteelTown	50th
<u>Video Sales</u>	
Big Country 'Live'	19th



In the first poll held in the Jamming magazine Big Country were placed 12th in the best group section. 'Music Week' magazine awards of '84 best press advert 'SteelTown' design, by Jules Balme.

N.M.E - in the N.M.E points charts (30 for a No 1 - 29 for a No 2 etc..) these were Big Country's placings.

The Crossing 30th - 197 points

SteelTown 51st - 118 points

Over all chart singles 59th - 147 points, and finally the N.M.E poll.

Best Group	11th
Male singer Stuart Adamson	23rd
Best song writer Stuart Adamson	13th
Best dressed sleeve SteelTown	15th
Instrumentalist Stuart Adamson	12th
Best L.p SteelTown	17th

- Q. WHAT HAVE LEVEL 42 BEEN UP TO SINCE THE 'TRUE COLOURS' ALBUM.
- A. LOTS! WE'VE BEEN TOURING ALL OVER EUROPE AND SCANDINAVIA; LIVED THROUGH WILD PARTIES AT XMAS. SINCE FEBRUARY WE'VE BEEN WRITING SONGS FOR OUR NEW ALBUM, WHICH WE ARE CURRENTLY RECORDING.
- Q. GOING BACK IN TIME, IT'S NOW FIVE YEARS SINCE YOU SIGNED TO ELITE, HAVE THINGS GONE THE WAY YOU HOPED.
- A. PROBABLY NOT! BUT THEN OUR VIEW OF THE WORLD AND OF THE MUSIC BUSINESS MAY HAVE CHANGED A LITTLE SINCE THEN. AS MUSICIANS, WE ARE DEALING WITH AN EVER CHANGING SET OF VARIABLES i.e. PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE, RECORD COMPANY POLITICS, etc. SO WE NEVER REALLY KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT FROM ONE MONTH TO THE NEXT, ANYHOW.

Q. WOULD YOU SAY THE EARLY TAPES WAS A NECESSARY RELEASE.

A. NO, IT WASN'T. IT WAS BADLY RECORDED, IN FACT, IT WASN'T EVEN FINISHED WHEN IT WAS PUT OUT, IT WAS REALLY A CONTRACTUAL SITUATION. WE'RE GLAD, HOWEVER, THAT THOSE PEOPLE WHO WERE INTERESTED GOT TO HEAR IT BECAUSE ALL OUR EARLY GIGS WERE BASED AROUND THE MATERIAL FROM THAT ALBUM, (OF COURSE) AND WITH ALL IT'S MISGIVINGS IT STILL HAS SOMETHING TO OFFER.

Q. THE SUMMER OF '83 WAS A VERY SUCCESSFUL PERIOD FOR THE BAND WITH 'THE SUN GOES DOWN' SINGLE FOLLOWED BY THE 'STANDING IN THE LIGHT' ALBUM BOTH MAKING THE TOP 10, WAS THAT SORT OF SUCCESS IMPORTANT TO YOU.

A. YES! SUCCESS IS IMPORTANT, IT GIVES YOU MOBILITY. IT DOESN'T QUALIFY YOU AS A PERSON IN EVERY RESPECT, AS SOME MISGUIDED MUSICIANS BELIEVE, BUT IT DOES VINDICATE WHATEVER IDEAS YOU MAY HAVE MANAGED TO SQUEEZE ONTO THAT LITTLE PIECE OF PLASTIC.

Q. (to Mark) WAS RECORDING A SOLO ALBUM DONE MERELY TO FULFILL AN AMBITION, OR DID YOU NEED A BREAK AFTER 4 ALBUMS WITH LEVEL 42.

A. THERE WERE AN AWFUL LOT OF THINGS THAT I WANTED TO TRY THAT ONLY REALLY WARRANTED MY ATTENTIONS, THAT IS, TO SEE THE IDEAS COME THROUGH WITH ONLY MY COLOURATIONS AND NOT THOSE OF THE OTHER GUYS, BECAUSE WHEN LEVEL 42 WORK IN THE STUDIO THE INPUT OF EVERYONE IS ESSENTIAL TO MAKE IT A LEVEL 42 RECORD (CHEMISTRIES etc. etc.), AND THAT'S THE BIG PLUS OF THE BAND BUT THAT ISN'T THE ONLY SITUATION THAT YOU CAN CREATE IN SO I USED THE OPPORTUNITY OF MAKING "INFLUENCES" TO TRY WHATEVER - WHENEVER I WANTED...IT WAS AN EXPERIENCE.

Q. WERE YOU HAPPY WITH INFLUENCES.

A. YES, WHEN I HEAR IT NOW I FEEL SAD - BUT I THINK I INTENDED THAT AT THE TIME.

Q. KEN SCOTT PRODUCED 'HOT WATER' AND TRUE COLOURS, DO YOU THINK HE ADDED SOMETHING EXTRA TO YOUR WORK.

A. THE 'TRUE COLOURS' ALBUM REPRESENTS A CHANGING PERIOD IN OUR LIVES, BOTH PERSONAL AND MUSICAL. KEN HAD TO PUT UP WITH A LOT FROM US OVER A PERIOD OF ABOUT THREE MONTHS AND WE ARE ALL GRATEFUL TO HIM FOR BEING SO PATIENT. NOT ONLY THAT, HE IS A VERY CREATIVE PRODUCER AND BROUGHT A LOT OUT OF THE MUSIC THAT WE COULDN'T SEE.

Q. HAVE YOU CONSIDERED PRODUCING YOUR OWN ALBUM.

A. THE TIME HAS COME! AT THIS VERY MOMENT WE ARE CO-PRODUCING OUR NEXT ALBUM WITH WALLY BADAROU, WHO HAS PLAYED ON ALL OUR RECORDS AND IS THE GENIUS SYNTH/SOUND MERCHANT BEHIND THE LIKES OF GRACE JONES, FOREIGNER, MICK JAGGER, etc.

- Q DO YOU STILL ENJOY TOURING AS MUCH AS IN THE EARLY DAYS.
- A NO! IT IS NO LONGER A NEW EXPERIENCE AND OUR BOREDOM THRESHOLD IS LOW. TOURING CAN BE RIDICULOUSLY BORING AT TIMES, AS YOU WELL KNOW, AIRPORTS, HOTELS, DRESSING- ROOMS, ALL LOOK THE SAME AFTER A WHILE. THAT SOUNDS LIKE A VERY ROCK AND ROLL THING TO SAY BUT IT'S TRUE. ON STAGE, THAT'S WHAT COUNTS, PLAYING, MAKING MUSIC, THE FOCAL POINT OF THE WHOLE CIRCUS, IT THANKFULLY MAKES UP FOR EVERYTHING, BUT ONLY JUST.
- Q IS THERE ANY MORE SOLO PROJECTS PLANNED FOR THE FUTURE.
- A NOTHING PLANNED BUT THERE'S AN AWFUL LOT OF MUSIC TO GET OUT AND LEVEL 42 IS ONLY ONE SIDE OF US SO YOU CAN BE SURE THINGS WILL MOVE IN THAT DIRECTION SOON
- Q ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITIES OF LOSING SOME OF YOUR AUDIENCE IN BETWEEN RELEASES.
- A THIS IS A FACT OF LIFE. NOTHING TO BE WORRIED ABOUT, IT'S SOMETHING YOU ACCEPT. PEOPLE MOVE ON, WE MOVE ON, MAYBE WE DON'T CONNECT WITH A LOT OF OUR EARLY FANS ANYMORE, IT'S SAD, BUT WE CAN'T STAND STILL, AND NEITHER CAN THEY.
- Q AFTER FIVE YEARS TOGETHER IS THERE SOMETHING IN PARTICULAR LEVEL 42 STILL STRIVE FOR.
- A IT'S STILL THE SAME THING, WE'RE JUST TRYING TO MAKE SOME SENSE OF IT ALL, LIKE EVERYBODY ELSE.



'Restless Natives'.

After a series of singles two breathtaking albums and countless tours and T.V work, Big Country have embarked on a new aspect in their musical career. It was Stuart, who after reading Ninian Dunnett's script for 'Restless Natives' accepted the offer to write and record the musical score, on a film set and made in Scotland.

The film described as a romantic comedy was made by the Oxford Film Foundation, and backed financially by Thorn EMI and the National Film Finance Corporation who put one million pound into the project. Though the company who made the film, was set up by ex-university students trying to better themselves through an organization called 'Priveledged', Rik Stevenson, the producer says it's a very professional set up, and believes the young group of people behind the movie have produced a winner.

American director Michael Hoffman has no time to entertain suggestions that 'Restless Natives' has a Bill Forsyth 'touch'. True it's a comedy about youngsters set in Scotland, but he claims the plot and the people offer more than seen in Forsyth's work.

It's no secret, that the involvement of Big Country will hope to attract media attention to the film, but in admitting that Stevenson also says that, just as important, from a creative point of view they were the right people to produce the music.



Ninian Dunnett, Tony Butler, Stuart Adamson, Rick Stevenson.

Geoff Emerick, an experienced producer is working with Big Country in Glasgow's Park Lane studio's, and as Tony says it's just like making an album, which may turn out to be quite a true statement, as plans for a soundtrack L.p release is a serious consideration. A single from the soundtrack is another possibility, with a video of the boys in the studio to accompany it.

These days, no film is a guaranteed success, no matter who stars in it, or how much money goes into it, and 'Restless Natives' will be competing in a tough and risky business. With EMI's promised big promotional treatment, hoping to emulate the huge popularity of 'Gregory's Girl'. 'Restless Natives' will open in British cinema's in the Summer. Hopefully, for Big Country, and everyone connected with the film, their own belief in 'Restless Natives' will meet with similar belief and approval from the people who will make or break the film.

Mike.

ALL OF THESE LOVELY PEOPLE WOULD LIKE TO WRITE TO OTHER LOVELY PEOPLE. IF YOUR NAME IS ON THIS PAGE, DON'T JUST SIT THERE GET OUT YOUR PEN AND PAPER AND WRITE TO THE OTHERS. Sorry but

I can't fit the details in as there are so many of you, it will give you something to write about won't it? Many thanks to those of you that wrote to that bunch of nutters on H M S Ajax, they would still like more letters, the names and address are in issue 8/9.

JANET LOVERING (15)

CATHY HOWITT

CANADA C1A 7K2

CANADA

LOUISE BEBB (17)

AMANDA YOUNG (14)

Scotland

ANNE MCGUIRE

KEVIN CONNELL (16)

U S A

MICHAEL KELLY (20)

CAROLYN THREADGOLD (14)

Eire

STEPHEN JONES (17)

HANNAH KING

PATRICIA WALKER (16)

TINA O'HEA (16)

Scotland

Eire

GARY LAWLESS (17)

TERESA UYENO (16)

SUZIE PARKER (18)

CANADA

ANDREA SHEMWELL (17)

U S A

ANNE JENKINS

GARY STAFFORD

Eire

PENPALS CONT.

KIRSTEEN ROBERTS (16)

ALISON TURNER (15)

Kim (15)
Monta Rosa

MARK LOVELACE (21)

FE SKOUFA (17)

CAROLYN SCHWARZ

AUSTRALIA
Stuart McPherson

Ian Forster (26)

U S A

SCOTLAND

THAT'S IT FOR NOW HAPPY WRITING EVERYONE