

**BIG
COUNTRY**



March 1997

ISSUE 39

Hi everyone,

It's the skiing season so, as normal at this time of year, the piste called and therefore all of my work got a little behind-hand again. Sorry.

I get countless letters asking about the Eclectic video? Well, I want to see it too. BUT Castle has been absorbed into a new label, Red Ant, and the band are now free of a recording contract and I guess that until they have a new BC album ready there's no panic to secure a new deal. Anyway, Ian says, "*Due to the demise of Castle I am trying to acquire the rights to this video*". Again, let's keep fingers crossed that this video sees the light of day 'cos I know we'll all love it.

Yeah, I know from the e-mails etc. that I receive that you are all STILL or maybe it's, AGAIN, in a panic about whether BC have split. They have not split - they are each doing their own thing because now is a good opportunity to pursue these interests - their disillusionment over the last couple of years with the record company crap etc means that now is not the time to work on another BC album, they need to get rid of the nasty taste left in their mouths by Castle et al and, once the decks are cleared and the time is right, they will be back with gusto and renewed enthusiasm as Big Country. They are "*having a sabbatical and it's down BC tools for the time being, it has to be, until the time is right and, when we come back it will be with something to make people realise what they've missed over the years. Buffalo Skinners, I think, was one of the best albums we've made and WTLF was just as good but there was total unawareness of their existence.*" says Tony and I asked him about the fact that answers in a recent interview appeared in the 'past' tense when talking about Big Country, "*Yes, that was unfortunate but the questions were all rhetoric and when answering you don't always stop to think about the tense you are using. Big Country are NOT finished*".

Jan

P.S- Marion Nicholas and others have written to me complaining about the "stranger" on the hot line. I have mentioned the complaints to Tony so, hopefully, things will revert to a more normal basis in the future.

Cover shot from Keith Groom (003749) from the gig at Joe's Pub on 12th July. (Joe who has looked after security for BC).

The HOT NEWS system. The way to keep up-to-date. How it works:- All you need do is lodge a stamped, self-addressed envelope here, clearly marked Hot News. (Overseas members should send International Reply Coupons). This envelope should show your membership number and the date of the last Hot News received by you. I will then keep them until there is news of release dates/tours or what-have-you. If you don't participate then, I have to say, that you could miss out - funds do not run to general mailings every time there is a bit of news, sorry. To keep abreast between the regular Newsletters/magazines you need to participate in the Hot News System, whether by E-Mail or "snail mail".

If you wish to receive this news via your computer screen then just let me know your E-Mail address and I will add you to the BC address group.

Country Club, P O Box 59, Ashwell, Herts SG7 5NG, England
INTERNET:100647.3550@Compuserve. Com

News, News, News

Tony: is keeping himself extremely busy and has several projects underway, with which he is very excited. There will be much more news later in the year but, in a nut shell:

"Great Western Records" Tony's newly formed record label. Primarily this has been formed with new, local bands in mind. For only two or three years now there has been available a method of recording on to computer as opposed to tape "*Hard disc recording*" which is far cheaper than conventional methods and therefore makes the whole concept of recording far more economically viable for new bands who are trying to break into the music industry. The sound is, apparently, very good and this is the method by which Tony has recorded his solo album. The launch of "Great Western Records" is planned for later this year. More news as it comes in.

As mentioned, apart from working with and producing local bands Tony has a collection of songs which he has written over the last ten years and has made an album entitled "Black And White" - before you all start trying to get this album it is NOT RELEASED YET, the release is expected to be late summer. On the launch of the record label and release of the album there could well be some gigs from Tony and his band (Mark features on drums on a couple of the tracks but otherwise it's Tony with local musicians). These projects have been totally Tony Butler and he has not, nor will he be using any BC contacts when it comes to distribution, management, agents etc. etc. "*I've wanted to do this for years and this is my chance, if BC were to keep going without a break I just wouldn't have the time to see this through*".

Then, of course, there was and still is the ME Awareness single "One Day To The Next". This is planned for release in 1998 to coincide with ME Awareness Week in March or May 1998 (not 1997) and will be available via the charity. That's a long way off yet so, nearer the time I'm sure to be able to tell you more.

Stuart: As I type this, Stuart has written fifteen songs and is back in Nashville for his fourth visit continuing work on the album. Nashville is a very close knit musical community and, in order to crack through this, he has been co-writing with country musician which, to date, include Vince Melamed, Marcus Hummon and Bruce Sudano. I promise that as soon as I know anything about release I will let you know but no matter how many times I'm asked the question, we don't know yet. As mentioned previously, Stuart wants to finish this project before working with Carol Laula so this, as yet, has not happened.

Bruce: I mentioned in the previous issue that Bruce was going to be working with Fish and also on an Alex Harvey Tribute album. Well, I spoke to Bruce yesterday (Thursday 27th February) and neither of these projects have actually come off.

Bruce is also busy - no sitting on his arse. He and Sandra have recently moved house and Bruce is busy with the DIY bits as, apparently, the house needs renovation and, having only just finished our house I know exactly what they are going through with the chaos that is unavoidable.

BUT, the painting and papering has to be fitted in with his obligations to his new, "wee" band (Bruce's brother on drums). The band is, as yet, unnamed but he did throw a few ideas at me yesterday, one of which was "*Wild Blue Yonder*" - yeah, sounds OK to me. The music, apparently, is fairly up-tempo and, like Tony, Bruce sees this as an outlet for the songs he has written over the years which were not used and there is a chance of a live recording which, if it happens, will be sold by themselves and probably available through mail order. In fact, it's a little back to basics 'cos when we had finished talking Bruce was off to make a pedal board - he has to play "roadie" now and set up his own gear etc. The gigs are to be acoustic - the first of which was a warm-up on Thursday 27th February to be closely followed on Sunday 2nd March, both at a pub in Dunfermline - "Sinkys" - they have a set list of about 13/14 songs of which half will be original and the other half covers.

Chance of a tour? - Yeah, could well be. I'll pass on any info I get on this.

Mark: Mark is busy to say the least but the problem is that he is doing so much that everything is all very open at the moment and until one of the many projects really breaks through it's difficult for him to tell me what he's doing and even more difficult for me to pass on the details.

Basically,

Writing alot on keyboards, partly with Josh Phillips

Has been to France ghost-drumming with a band over there on an album

Has done lots of demo work with The Crazy World Of Arthur Brown (which demos are being looked at or, should I say, listened to at the moment)

There is work underway with two female vocalists

A project with a young male vocalist

He has worked with Tony on his album (as mentioned elsewhere)

Potentially to drum on Stuart's solo album

A lot of session work with different bands

TV jingle writing

Voice-over on a video

Recording with Bernie Marsden and Micky Mooney with the possibility of some gigs

Demo with Whitesnake

Then there is Procul Harem - released this year "*Within Our House*", an album recorded live at St Mary's All Saints Church, Dunsfold with a string quartet and a 30 piece choir. Mark says, "*It's a great album*". (For further information send a s.a.e. to Shine On, 75 Clarence Way, London NW1 8DG)

Late 1996 saw the release of another Procul Harem album with the London Symphony Orchestra with Tom Jones guesting - yeah, Mark's on this too (in fact, if you are interested it's probably worth flicking through the Procul Harem section and checking out who is on drums!)

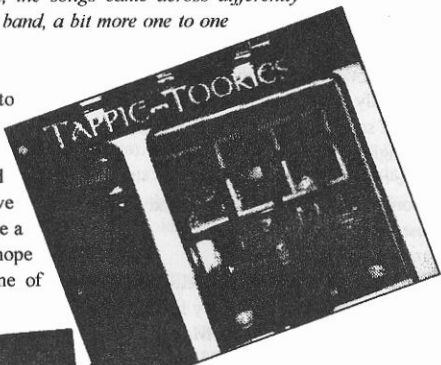
So, you can see that Mark is dashing around and, until something definitely comes to fruition it really is a case of "**WATCH THIS SPACE**" But I have asked that he keeps me informed as and when something definite is happening.

Mark says, "*This is a very unpredictable phase - there have been offers for BC to work live but not all members have agreed on the timing*".

Glowing reports about "Tappie Toories" from fans lucky enough to have had a pint or two there

I've received lots of letters from fans about *Tappie Toories* and **Eddie Shiels** (000292) went there to quench his thirst back in September and has sent me a couple of photos. He says, "*Stuart was joined by Carol Laula and it was an absolutely great night, the songs came across differently without the rest of the band, a bit more one to one type of feel.*"

I've been unable to speak to Stuart as he is in America but, apparently Stuart and Sandra absolutely love the pub and have made a great success of it. I hope to be able to visit one of these fine days - Jan.



Your

**R a l f
Kirschnick (001828)**

has asked the following:
"....I found the following in a recent edition of Melody Maker 'Info Freako' about accidents that have happened on stage":

'At their Reading Festival headline in 1983, Big Country's pyrotechnics - a wall of white flame between them and the audience - went off with such an unexpected vigour that bass player Tony Butler had to be treated for burns at a local hospital immediately after the gig. Any audience member within fifty yards of the stage needed eyebrow transplants'.

Ralf asked, whether I would check with the band if this is true or not.

Ian Yes, this Melody Maker piece is true. A combination of

me signalling the pyrotechnic operator to "GO" prematurely and the band not stepping back from the mike stands resulted in all three band members needing St John's Ambulance

Questions

*treatment - t
could be felt as far back as the mixing tower.*

Q From Susan Bickley (003873). I have the location, birth date and year of each band member but would it be possible to find out the exact time of birth.

A Not a lot of luck here, Susan, but Tony did say, "No idea, it must have been late evening 'cos I'm a 'night person'."

Answers

**From
Steve Bullman**

"For the past few months I've been video taping 'Helter Skelter' which BC plainly taped acoustic mode songs

from sometime around the "Non" release. I've got "All Go Together", "Look Away", "I'm Not Ashamed", "Send You", "The Storm", "You Dreamer" and "Ships" but I missed "Long Way Home". So, did BC record any other songs in that same session? Any possibility of them being commercially released in some form? I can imagine quite a few BC-ophiles who would queue up to buy it. Cheers, Steve

A No, Steve, no extra tracks and no release planned.

In the last magazine **Oliver Hunter** raised the question of a CD entitled "Long Way Home" which includes "All Go Together", "Long Way Home", "Where The Rose Is Thorn" (?!), "Alone", "Steeltown", "Ships", "We're Not In Kansas", "IABC", "F of F", "Hey Hey My My" and "Long Way Home" (acoustic). No one seemed to know anything about this but, since then I've received a response from **Karl Proese** (004129) who tells us that this is a bootleg which was recorded in Germany during the Buffalo Skinners Tour. Also, Karl says

that there is another bootleg entitled "Where Did The Feeling Go?". This includes songs from the WTLF tour and was recorded in Karlsruhe. Cheers, Karl.

Peter Hornberg (000046) also wrote to me on this subject saying the bootleg tape was recorded at Balingen, Germany.

And then, **Andreas Schade** (004191) wrote saying, "..... bootleg CD from the concert in Balingen, Germany at the SWF 3 Open Air 9th July 1994. I actually was at that gig (where also Gotthard and Bob Dylan played). BC played around ninety minutes and before the concert they gave an interview. During that interview they played two songs unplugged: "IABC" and "Long Way Home". The concert was broadcast on German TV (I have that record) and on the radio (of course I have that, too). The songs which are not on the "LWH" CD are "Wonderland", "Look Away" and "Chance". The first two songs are included on the video (also the interview with the unplugged songs) and

"Chance" was played on the radio. So, I own the complete show Before and after the concert the audience were interviewedthe audience interviews are also on the video. The "IABC" unplugged and the live version were mixed up in the video so you have the beginning of the unplugged song and end of the live song. Unfortunately, Stuart's superb guitar solo is missing in that song. 1994 was the year of the football world cup and during one song a football was thrown on the stage. Bruce gave it back to the audience with an enormous kick and Stuart interrupted his singing shortly to comment on Bruce's football

qualities. It was a very nice afternoon and Stuart had also a lot of fun with the audience by make some jokes."

If you would like a copy of that concert, drop Andreas a line and a copy will be sent in exchange for anything else Big Country." (Andreas Schade, Albstrasse 36/1, D72800 Eningen, Germany)

Adam Brown (004226), amongst others, has written asking "What is a Porrohman". As BC gain more followers I am often asked this so, for all of the newer fans - Porrohman is a voodoo witch doctor.

REVIEWS

Hazel and Steve Dominey (000435). Yeah, remember they never miss a BC gig but this year, unfortunately, they did miss two appearances due to illness. Anyway they sent to me a couple of articles on the custom bikers show:-

From "Back Street Heroes"

"..... By the time Big Country came on, the stage area was packed as people settled in to enjoy an accomplished set from the Scots rockers. All the old faves were performed with polished accuracy, with their raw, crystal clear guitar rhythms sounding as fresh as ever. The crowd lapped it all up, boozin' and boogying and singin' along as Stuart and the boys proved that they just get better and better. From then until the wee small hours, the focus shifted to the kickin' disco and welcome warmth of the

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THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE

So, 3rd March saw the release of "In A Big Country" (dance mix) "Mr Blank Meets Big Country" *Stay Alive In A Big Country*. Released on 12" - 12 RIPE 221 and CD RIPEXD221 through RCR Ltd.

1. Radio edit (3.35)
2. Club mix (7.56)
3. Barefoot mix (club dub mix) 8.52
4. Big Spliff mix (afterlife mix) 5.21
5. Extended radio mix 3.54

I asked whether Bruce had heard this and if so what did he think. "From the little that I've heard all that's left is Stuart's vocals with electronic rhythm - no tune at all."

All I know is that I like a good tune and really do not like all this electronic crap but I guess it might be interesting to hear what they've done to this although I doubt that I'll be buying it but I'll be interested

to hear what you all think - Jan.

Then, there will be the **King Biscuit** live release from **Barrowlands** on March 25th. The sleeve notes are by the band and there's also an interview with Stuart. Track listing:-

"Opening sequence"

- 1000 Stars
- Angle Park
- Close Action
- Lost Patrol
- Wonderland
- The Storm
- Bells and pipe band sequence
- Porrohman
- Chance
- Inwards
- Fields Of Fire
- Harvest Home
- Tracks Of My Tears
- In A Big Country
- Auld Lang Syne
- Stuart's interview

Cat No CD 70710 88022-2
King Biscuit through BMG

As Hot News participants will have been told by me the **Rarities** and **Restless Natives** release has, once again, been delayed. It seems that Polygram decided that it would be better served if the project was delayed in order to get all components together. So, release is now scheduled for **July**. The track listing as follows:-

All Fall Together	Promised Land
Troubled Man or Song Of	The Teacher (mystery
The South (to be con-	mix)
firmed)	Return Of The Two
Over The Border	Headed King
Made In Heaven	When A Drum Beats
Not Waving But Drowning	World On Fire
On The Shore	Winter Sky
Balcony	I'm Only Waiting
Dead On Arrival	Flag Of Nations (swim-
Pass Me By	ming)
Where The Rose Is Sown	Kiss The Girl Goodbye.
(extended mix)	
Just A Shadow (extended	
mix)	

Reviews cont from page 9

beer tent, while numerous clumps of friends wandered around the site or gathered in groups to make the most of the remainder of the night, enjoying the festival atmosphere until, like tired little teddy bears, they gratefully retired to their tents and their happy snores resounded though the site. This was quite simply the best show of the year, well organised and attitude free; and a must for your bikin' calendar. Be there next year....." *Heather*

And from **AWoL** ".....'The Sweet' were up next and to many people I spoke to these were the musical high-light for them but Big Country really did the job for me. To be honest I was expecting a group of 80s has-beens but how wrong could I be. Obviously they really kicked it with their hits but they managed to keep it going (and the crowd) through the whole shabang. They were feeding off the whole buzz and

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Letters, thoughts and experiences

I've received a couple of e-mails and, for anyone who has access but hasn't been there yet, it appears that Stuart and Kirsten have popped into the Big Country chat room from time to time at John Underwood's web site "The Crossing". 'Chatters' were a bit sceptical at first about whether it was truly Stuart but, why shouldn't it be?? Anyway, thanks go to Michael for sending the transcript through but I will not reproduce the dialogue here because, as you stated in your e-mail "I guess you just had to be there" but it sounds like fun.

Michael says, "... a few words about the chat room environment. It's generally a place of R&R where fans unwind and get to know one another, so a sense of relaxed informality is the norm. Also, unlike the list, subscription is not a prerequisite for entry so anyone and everyone can drop in, and often do.

Recurring visitors have included gen-u-ine country music fans (who as a rule are polite but bemused) as well as net surfers who haven't a clue as to where they are except that it looks like it might be a fun place to chat. All are welcomed, as to do anything else would be a discourtesy to them and a disservice to BC.

As might be expected in such an open forum, there have also been those visitors who evidently derive enjoyment from being abusive or vulgar. (Simply ignoring them is the most effective counter-irritant).

And there are the charlatans. "GOD" has been there, and one of the most entertaining chats in my experience was with "Death", who stayed firmly in character for the entire conversation.

It's also perhaps relevant to note that at the time "The Adamson Chats" occurred the room had been a going concern for nine full months without a single "official" visitation - to some fans (such as myself) the likelihood of one ever occurring seemed remote indeed.

But, most importantly, and please keep this in mind, the chat room is a fun place and often a silly place.

So, why this "disclaimer"?

Because, for all the above reasons, it was not easy to give instant and/or full credence to "Stuart's" claim of identity, which accounts for the oftentimes irreverent tone of the chat. Even so, did "Stuart" feel welcome? I think it's a telling point that "Kirsten" stayed in the room after he left and, more importantly, returned the next day.

Also if you have never been there the repetition of crashes and entrances and even text is quite common. Also normal is the often inverted or delayed conversational flow. "A" will say something to "B" and the very next post on the

screen is from "B" but it totally ignores what "A" just said. "B" has not yet seen "A"'s post and may not catch up for several minutes. Also, there's generally more than one conversation going on at the same time. Keep that in mind too, as that's the way it goes."

Anyway, reading the transcript it all looks quite good fun if you have the time, access and money to pay for the time on-line. Pay a visit why don't you and you could be "in the same room as Stuart" for a while. (Stuart was there on 14th October at 9.55am EDT)

"The Crossing" - <http://www.cs.clemson.edu/~junderw/music/bc>

Phillip Bendall says, "I was put on hold for a long time the other day when I called a government agency. They played taped music to me down the line, a mixed tape of songs a few years old and I just about dropped the phone when "King of Emotion" came on! Now that's my kinda Muzak!"

Martin Hetherington (004090), (I wait to hear from you, Martin, as to whether you are happy that I print your address! - Jan) To my knowledge any sheet music which has, in the past, been available is now out of print. So, you could be of help to lots of fans. - Jan

Martin has noticed several requests in past mags for guitar chords. So, he says "I have quite a lot of material, both bought and worked out myself which I use for my home use. I would be quite happy to supply this material to other members and also maybe transcribe other BC songs. Martin says there are many techniques for transcribing songs with the most basic of set ups. My way is supplied if you would like to publish it. You will need the following equipment:-

- 1) **CD player.** Though cassette or record player is OK they do not have the same quality as a CD player and you don't get the same sort of control over the track for pausing and rewinding. You're also less likely to damage your favourite song. Variable equaliser controls are quite handy, though this doesn't have to be 25 band (I only have 5).
- 2) **Stereo headphones.** Though mono ones are OK it is easier to listen to one side of the mix. Some Big Country songs have Bruce's guitar on one side and Stuart's on the other. If each headphone speaker has adjustable volume this is

even better because you may want to listen to the whole of the mix but with one side louder than the other.

3) A tab manuscript book. These can be bought in music shops. If a tab manuscript is not available, normal musical stave manuscripts are OK (I used to use them), though there's only five strings available so the first string (low E) can be tabbed on an imaginary line. If a PC is available this is better. Use a text editor and create your own tab lines or pick up tab utilities from the Internet. (<http://www.OLGA.net/>).

4) Patience. Sometimes a piece will get on your nerves. Keep plugging away, take a break and come back to it later.

***Before you start to transcribe
think about people in your house and the neighbours.***

I annoyed everybody where I lived trying to learn Fields Of Fire with my guitar amp full welly. They are more impressed when you can play it, so don't let them hear it till you can.

Make sure you are comfortable. Sit down and have everything within arms reach

Tune your guitar to the CD. I'm not aware of any BC songs using non-standard tunings, so electronic tuners should be OK with normal setting.

***I tend to make myself familiar with the song
before I try to learn it***

This may mean having it on constantly in the car going to and from work, or it is maybe a favourite of mine that I have finally got around to learning. I can't learn a song straight away after opening the CD for the first time. You need to have the song somewhere in your head to refer to.

Using your EQ, if you have one, eliminate the bass drum, bass guitar and other low frequencies by running down the low button(s). Eliminate the highs by turning down the high button(s). This will take out some of the vocals and cymbals/hi-hat. Turn the mid button(s) up and experiment with your headphone volumes. This should hopefully make the guitar louder than everything else but the emphasis must be on playing around until you get the best volumes for the guitar parts you want to learn. I think there is a device called a Guitar Monitor, which sells at about £70 which can be used to cancel out the vocals and bass completely. I have only read about this so I don't know whether or not it's possible. If it is, get one and call me so I can get one.

I tend not to duplicate what Bruce or Stuart play, as they are expressing themselves their way. I get it close and then do my own bits, whatever comes out. This just adds to the feeling you get when listening to Big Country songs."

Well, I hope you lot understood all of that 'cos I'm bugged if I did! -Jan

AN UP-DATE ON THE ADDRESSES ON THE "NET/WEB":

THE CROSSING - a comprehensive set of pages maintained by John Underwood -
<http://www.intercenter.net/~jnu/bc/>

WONDERLAND - by Lewis Crow, the "unofficial" Big Country home page -
<http://www.flash.net/~barcrow/BigC.htm>

I HOPE YOU LIKE IT - A more personal homepage with photos and gig reviews
maintained by Oliver Hunter - <http://www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Alley/2384/>
STEELTOWN - Robert Oliver's beautiful BC page including the famous Book of
lyrics - <http://www.mint.net/~roliver/bc-mint.htm>

PHILIP DIXON'S BC PAGE - A new and (as yet) small BC homepage -
<http://www.mindspring.com/~pdixon/bc-wpl.htm>

And, of course, the list run by MARKUS SCHOELLER - subscribe to:
INTERNET:bc@specklec.mpifr-bonn.mpg.de

Oliver Hunter kindly up-dated me on the above and has also supplied the following information *"There are various other sites that have bits and bobs about BC but are not actually BC web sites/pages, here are some of these addresses:"*

BC's entry in the Ultimate Band List
<http://ubl.com/artists/002098.html>

CDNOW's entry for BC + biography by Rick Clark
<http://cdnow.com/cgi-bin/mserver/pg=0/page=popsearch/amgart=3671>

The Rough Guide To Rock's entry for BC
http://www.roughguides.com/RG_WWW/rock/final_rock_entries/BIG_COUNTRY.html

Article in an ezine on futurenet
<http://www.futurenet.co.uk/~oliverhunter,bigcountry,/music/totalguitar/Issue9/whatever/Whatever.html>

The War Against Silence (CD reviews incl. BC)
<http://metaverse.com/vibe/twas>

Big Country guitar chords/tabs on the net (part of huge archive)
http://www.scranton.com:2222/archive/b/big_country/

A place to cast votes on all BC albums
<http://www.cs.uit.no/Music/View/big+country/>

A site for the Ebow, how to use one and who has used one
<http://www.ebow.com>

Jeez!!! The lists goes on and on.

So, what are you waiting for? If you haven't visited these addresses get surfing!
Thanks once again, Oliver.

flinging it right back out through the speakers. Again, the feeling that every one was a part of the show and making it happen was all around.

Although BC are hardened campaigners they still had the energy to really enthuse and a nice touch was, getting people up dancing with them breaking the barriers down (metaphorically speakin' or somefin), excellent.. *Andy*

Peter Hornberg (000046) has translated a couple of reviews from Dutch magazines for us:- *"Big Country have everything in them to be big again. They are known for their characteristic guitar sound and they are considered as a bit "passé". But, in the meantime BC are back with a very strong CD (WTLF) and a surprisingly modest live CD. Together with some great guest musicians BC work their way in a blazing and unconstrained style through songs of J.M., B.S., Beatles, Stones etc. It is one big party of recognition!"* and

Name: Big Country

Come from: Scotland

Music: New wave with bagpipe guitars

Latest CD: Eclectic - live

Opinion: Surprisingly modest live CD full of good atmosphere with a surprising choice of own songs and covers. The numerous guest musicians make this CD a cosy and snug party.

I have definitely a feeling that, at least here in Holland, things are getting better for BC. Critics seem to realise that when a band is still there after fifteen years, there must be something good in it!

Peter then says, *"Oh Jan, why don't we make a "pilgrimage" to Stuart's pub, I'm sure a lot of fans are interested to go there, maybe a low key convention in the new year?!"* Well, Peter, the answer to that is not in my hands, sorry! Good idea, though.



Ronni Scotts

“Never Out Of Place At A Big Country Gig” by Jean Hayton

My son, Simon, (aged 18) is a member of Country Club and we have travelled all over the place to gigs over the past few years and I have to say that each time it has always been well worth the distance.



Ronni Scotts

I just want to say that, whatever your age you are never out of place at a BC gig. On Saturday 3rd July 1996 we travelled to a field in the middle of nowhere in Pentrich, Derbyshire to the Bikers Festival as we had learnt that BC would be topping the bill. It was an absolutely brilliant evening. After crossing “Fields of Bikes and Tents”, we managed to get quite near the front and the sound was excellent, atmosphere electric, the crowd lively

and knee deep in beer cans - we drove home at 3.30am totally exhausted but ecstatic.

In total contrast, our next excursion was to Ronni Scott's Club in Birmingham on Thursday 5th September. After frantic phone calls to the Club I managed to acquire the last couple of tickets available. A hectic dash down the M6 after work and we arrived just in time and were given a tiny table practically on the stage at the side near the fire exit. What an absolutely superb night we had. The audience were all seated, sipping cocktails! Luckily many true BC fans were at the front. This has got to go down as one of my favourite gigs of all time, apart from a unique night at the Boardwalk in Manchester several years ago.

Ronni Scott's was an unusual choice for a BC gig, but the sound, atmosphere, choice of songs, excellent guests, the band's good humour - especially Stuart's - all combined to make a truly memorable evening. I'd love to see more gigs like this, probably because I'm getting too old to stand up all night! Don't you believe it - I couldn't stay seated at a BC gig to save my life - despite numerous request from son and husband to "act my age!"

From Val Busby (003536) "..... I and I know other fans will follow each member of the band's progress on their individual projects but, six years ago I fell under BC's spell when I saw them for the first time at the Hull City Hall and, in my opinion, they are the best live band around and I consider them to be worth waiting for so, to Stuart and the lads, we are still here, hope you are still there.

I thought I would just mention "Eclectic" I bought it but was disappointed. Apart from "Winter Sky", "Buffalo Skinners" and "Come Back To Me" I just couldn't find anything else on it that I liked. It isn't BC but, then, maybe it is not meant to be. It will be interesting to hear other fans opinions on the album, maybe I've missed the point." Val

Ed Baptista (001728)

, USA

Ed would like any live audio tapes from the WTLF tour. Can anyone help?

Garry Mathers (003774),

, Scotland,

FOR SALE OR EXCHANGE: Live CDs - 1995 Karlsruhe gig and the 1989 PIOT gig at London Hammersmith £10.00 for both or swap for any live tapes from 1984 to 1990.

Bradley Williams (003848),

USA.

WANTED: Any BC video especially "Through A Big Country" and Big Country Singles.

Alasdair MacCaluin (003449),

Alba (Scotland)

DESPERATE "to get my hands on a copy of the book of the film "Restless Natives" and if any body knows where to get a copy it'll be somebody in Country Club! I am a big "Restless Natives" fan and hope to translate the book into Gaelic for possible publication as soon as I can find a copy of the English original."

Gavin Byle (003675),

Desperately WANTED: a video of BC at the Town & Country Club 1990. Filmed and broadcast by Sky

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and shown on ITV as a Stage One programme. All replies answered, best price paid and will even supply blank video tape!

Andreas Schade (004191),

Germany.

SEARCHING for any live recordings (audio or video) from BC in exchange for copies from his list - the list is enormous and I, therefore, can not reproduce it here but why not drop Andreas a line.

Graham Goodall (001511),

, England

"Helter Skelter" - BC have appeared on about 10 shows performing acoustic songs. Graham has most and if you would like a copy then send him a blank audio tape together with a stamped, self-addressed envelope and he will do the biz for you.

Satu Holmberg (003608),

, Finland.

Satu has a spare copy of the "Non" EP on offer and says that if you're lacking this then make contact and a fair price could be negotiated.

Oliver Hunter (000490)

, England.

Oliver would like a copy of Issue No 6 of the CC mag - photocopying and postage costs will be paid.

In fact, because I was so stupid however long ago and sent the last original copy out, I would appreciate an

original copy so that I can reinstate this on the merchandise list as I am quite frequently asked for it. Thank you - Jan

John Davis (003360),

, England

WANTED: copy of Karlsruhe 1995 concert on video and if a full recording exists from BBC Scotland, New Year's Eve 1995 from Edinburgh Castle, please.

Stephen Ashe (003312),

Ireland

WANTED for cash or exchange a copy of the CD bootleg "Long Way Home" recorded in Germany n 1994. Stephen can offer, in exchange, CD version of the live bootleg "DeFrostin" recorded in Austin, Texas in 1984.

Mick Murphy has e-mailed a few un-Big Country funny stuff which I found really quite amusing and thought I would share a couple of them here:-

A Bucharest hotel lobby:
"The Lift is being fixed for the next day. During that time we regret that you will be unbearable."

A Yugoslavian hotel:
"The flattening of underwear with pleasure is the job of the chambermaid."

A Japanese hotel:
"You are invited to take advantage of the chambermaid."

A Bangkok dry cleaners:
"Drop your trousers here for best results."

A Hongkong dress shop:
"Ladies have fits upstairs."

They brightened up my morning anyway.
- Jan



*Joe's pub 12th July 1996 from
Keith Groom (003749)*