



BIG COUNTRY



October 1997
ISSUE 41

Front: Neal Gandhi (000234) is on his travels again and sent this postcard from Aussie - whilst staying on a cattle station in the outback somewhere the first song he heard in the bar was "In A Big Country!"

Hi everyone,

So, here I am again. Back from a wonderful holiday trying to get back into the routine of normal life with all the stresses and strains that that brings with it but I won't dwell on my problems. Thank you to all who have sent me their contribution for this mag and I've enjoyed reading all of your memories about Big Country going back over the years but I can't include everything received in this issue and will keep them on file for future issues.

ECLECTIC VIDEO .What can I say? Negotiations are still underway on this and news is awaited from Castle, generally, regarding this and other subjects. It would be such a shame if this did not see the light of day. Having said that, according to **Peter Hornberg** (000046) VH1 Germany have broadcast the Eclectic video three times - 9th, 11th and 14th June!! He says, *"... the music, as we all know, is great but the camera work is GREAT too. This is a superb video!!"*

"IABC" DANCE MIX (12 RIPE 221 - 12"). For those who do not participate in the Hot News System will be unaware that I have some here available to members of Country Club. (See elsewhere for full details). This WAS to be commercially released in August and then there was talk of it appearing on a compilation but, as yet, we are not certain of the position and certainly have seen no proof it being included on said compilation! So, get your promo copy here.

The "RARITIES" and "RESTLESS NATIVES" Probably the longest running saga, and it continues! It's been on and off more often than, well, I don't know. At a recent meeting at Polygram, attended by Ian and five of their executives, it was said that Mercury WERE going to release it afterall although Ian may challenge their rights so to do. Complaints have been lodged about the label's lack of attention to the catalogue globally, Ian will be making contact with them again shortly following his return from holiday. Will keep you posted.

Then we have "ECLECTIC" and AMERICA. This would have been released in America but, Castle withheld permission! As stated above news is awaited from Castle, generally, regarding Anyway, Ian is talking to a label about a new deal over there and the band are getting together at the end of November in the States to "jam" and write new songs etc. and there may be a few low-key BC gigs in Nashville!!

BRIGHTON ROCK CD - recorded on 5th November 1995 recently released, I hope you all managed to get your copy without too much difficulty.

There has been talk on the "Net" about a release of "Kings Of Emotion - a Diverse Collection" 2 CD set. We know nothing on this but, should we find out anything prior to going to print I will pass on any info.

Coming shortly - the official Big Country Web Page - Watch this space.

I would just like to thank Oliver Hunter (000490). Not only for helping me rebuild my BC E-mail address list after big problems here with the wonderful electronic world but, thank you Oliver, you'll know what for.

Cheers,

Jan

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, you could miss out - funds do not run to a general mailing 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: Great West Records was launched on Saturday 2nd August at the Cornwall Coliseum. The show was called "The Great Big Noise" and I have included a couple of letters about this from those who were lucky enough to get there (I had to miss it due to a prior engagement).

Tony's solo album "*The Great Unknown*" is great and I trust you have all got a copy in your record collection. If not, then this and other GWR releases are available in record shops in Devon and Cornwall or direct from Great West Records, Mail Order, Manaton House, Dunheved Road, Launceston, Cornwall, PL15 9JE or E-mail gwr@thenet.co.uk and allow 28 days for delivery. "The Great Unknown" Cat No: GWR0001 £12.00 including VAT and postage and packing within the UK. Cheques payable to Great West Records.

From the Press:

"...on the showing of this collection of fourteen songs it's just a wonder that it took so long for Butler to break out..." John Cullen, What's on Southwest.

"The album certainly sees some superb mixtures of acoustic and electric riffs all played by Butler as well as playing the bass, lead and backing vocals (what a guy!)" Minky, Scene Magazine.

Planning a trip to the west country? If so, then make sure you catch **Tony and his band on the road:-**

21st October	The Grove	Exmouth
24th October	Strawberry Fields	Hayle
30th October	Plymouth Uni	
31st October	The Rising Sun	Barnstaple
1st November	Band Club	St Austell
7th November	The White Hart	Launceston
8th November	Lanterns	Ashburton
14th November	The Britannia	Plymouth
15th November	The Bolton Hotel	Brixham
20th November	Rumours	Exeter
22nd November	Treyarnon Bay Hotel	Near Padstow

Stuart: So, what's occurring here? Apparently Stuart has presented Ian with six new songs demoed by him with two others in Nashville. (Ian will be seeking a record deal in the USA for this). The band are a kind of country Crosby/Stills and Nash type outfit, apparently, and the current name is "*Blue Healer*". There are another six songs in the pipe-line and Stuart has already been approached by a couple of labels. More as it comes in.

Bruce: I had a quick telephone conversation with Bruce to see how things were going. "Wild Blue Yonder" - they have and still are recording a bit but, as for release; maybe, perhaps, could do sometime in the future but, basically, Bruce's band have finished due to the fact that Big Country will be working together again shortly and what with his house decorating etc. he says there's no point and no time to have two bands on the go. The gigs they did went brilliantly, apparently.

Mark: Amongst other projects he is still working with *Crazy World Of Arthur Brown* - they performed a sensational show at the Whitby Dracfest. and there is now an EP (co-written by Mark) available via

P O Box 107, South Godstone, Redhill, Surrey, RH9 8YS
cost £5.00 including Post and Packing within the UK.

Also, keep your ears and eyes open for them performing on VH1 - recorded on Thursday 30th October (broadcast date t.b.a.) and if you get the chance to see them perform there should be some dates in December coming up.

General: This has been an intentionally quiet BC year so there is not that much news but, as far as the time spent apart, Ian says, "*.. it's actually the best thing possible for the future of the band. They needed it and I know it will benefit them in many ways. They are all very excited and looking forward to getting together soon and I have already started getting offers for European festivals next year. However, the initial agenda will be to get a deal and for the band to write the best album they can. I must say that, we would make a conscious effort to break America again rather than try and force it here.*"

THERE WOULD BE NO BETTER STORY FOR UK THAN US SUCCESS!



The mail box

Peter Hornberg (000046) wrote to tell us that "... Record Collector printed a top 500 of the most collectible artists, Big Country, last year, were at 154 this year they were placed at 123!! Leaving behind bands like, Radio head, Sting, Tom Petty and Cure."

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From Eddie Shiels (000292) ".....heard Tony's new album yet? "The Great Unknown" - it's absolutely brilliant, first class, every track is a killer. I wish Tony every success with it and with his record company".

.....

From Michael Purdie (004141) "....Tony's solo album on his new label. I think it's fair to say that the album is pretty good in all aspects. The most noticeable thing in the LP is the quality of the songwriting and the arrangement. Quite simply, the album oozes class and is instantly likable. There are some really cool rockers and the lead to "Living Side By Side" is a huge, searing addition to an excellent song, probably the best track on the album. There are also some versatile alternatives which prove that a song can be subtle and rock at the same time."

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In Issue 39 I included a letter from Martin Hetherington (004090) about guitar chords and how he has managed to transcribe some songs with CD, headphones, a tab book etc. Since that time I have received an e-mail from Martin, who says ".... I've created a web site for some songs for which I have had Stuart's permission. The address is:-"

<http://freespace.virgin.net/martin.hetherington/mh.htm>.

or, for specific requests you can E-Mail: martin.hetherington@virgin.net

Martin says he would be happy to post them to fans. Therefore, if you have a request on this front then write to me here, clearly marked GUITAR TABS, and I will forward your address and request to Martin when, I'm sure, he will do all he can to help. Sorry, but I have to ask that you send postage - both for my costs to Martin and Martin's costs to you. Ta.

Songs that Martin has already transcribed are listed below and these should be despatched fairly quickly but others may take some time for Martin to work on - bear in mind that some, he says, he may not be able to crack at all. Please allow 28 days for delivery.

Available chords:

"The Crossing" album	"Peace In Our Time" album
"Alone"	"Look Away"
"What Are We Working For"	

Available TAB:

"In A Big Country"	"Inwards"
"Chance"	"1000 Stars"
"The Storm"	"Harvest Home"
"Lost Patrol"	"Look Away"

.....

Simo Neiglick (003377) translated and sent the following review of "Brighton Rock" which appeared in a Finnish newspaper "Kymen Sanomat":

BIG COUNTRY - BRIGHTON ROCK.

After a few years of success in the '80s Big Country faded into obscurity. The band has been gigging and recording regularly, however. This recording from the gig at Brighton Dome in November 1995 shows that the magic is still there. "Chance", "Look Away", "Wonderland" and other bravuras are given spirited renditions, without sounding forced. The jovially acoustic "Post Nuclear Talking Blues" is a refreshing surprise.

Simo says, "A good review, yes? Well, I haven't said anything BR yet so, briefly: I think "WTLF" was/is a great album, and BR shows that these songs are also excellent live, if not better. A shame "Inwards" wasn't included. Once again, where is all the banter?"

Please, somebody teach them how to mix a LIVE record!"

GLASTONBURY

From Marty Stephenson (003324)

Well, I went to Glastonbury and saw Big Country!! I don't know how much you know but, Mark and Tony came on after Ray Davies had played about five acoustic songs with an unknown guy. Ray announced that Stuart's flight had been delayed over Bristol (from Florida) and I was really disappointed as I love Stuart's guitar playing. Anyway, Ray was building up the fact that he had special guests before Mark and Tony came on and when the lads appeared I'd say, somehow, the crowd were a bit surprised that it was BC.

I'd call the crowd's applause as polite rather than enthusiastic at first but, gradually more and more people got into it and the sound was much better with Mark and Tony playing. Then, when I was thinking that Stuart wasn't coming I saw a yellow guitar placed on stage and I thought '*I'm sure that's Stuart's guitar*', low and behold, at the end of that song Ray announced he had never played on stage with an 'Alan Shearer lookalike' before and introduced Stuart on stage, some of the crowd were chanting 'Shearer, Shearer!!'

With Stuart on stage the sound was even better and he looked like he was really enjoying himself and told the crowd what a great guy Ray Davies was and Ray said how he hoped BC would become big again. With that he announced the last song 'Your Really Got Me', which went down a storm and just sounded great, the crowd were chanting for more as the guys left the stage but they'd over-ran their time slot so there was never any chance of them coming back on. At the end of it all I just felt proud to have seen the lads at such a big occasion."

*Ray and the members of BC really got on well - so well, in fact,
that there could well be some future involvement with
Ray Davies and Big Country.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

From Oliver Prange (001690)

Q Is there any chance of a Mark Brezicki solo album in the future much as Simon Phillips did last year? Afterall, Mark IS the best drummer in the universe!

A: Mark might do some solo project at some stage - Ian would certainly encourage it - but, his time will be taken up with BC and Arthur Brown over the next several months.

Q During the last few years there have been a whole lot of Big Country compilations CDs thrown onto the market. Do the band members always agree with this? Some companies obviously try to get money for nothing as there is a CD out called "The Greatest Hits Live" which is completely the same as "Without The Aid Of A Safety Net".

A: The band and Ian have taken issue with both Polygram and EMI over the release of compilations. Ian says, *"We should have more say in the future. I strongly object to any old compilation being put together and the band feel the same way."*

Q Many artists achieve great success with new versions of their old hits so, could you imagine entering the charts with "Fields of Fire '98" or something?

A: The only way an old song would be a hit again would be if, say, Mercury released a greatest hits package again and released and promoted a single from it or a remix, dance or otherwise was done. I don't envisage this occurring but you never know, do you?

Q My favourite folk acts are 'Capercaillie' and 'Wolfstone'. What are yours or don't you listen to folk music?

In case I was unable to get hold of the band members direct for their answers I asked Ian on their behalf as he knows the band members best, I guess. - *"... I know that Tony is not too keen and I don't think Mark listens to folk, Stuart would be the most enthusiastic on this subject, I think."*

Tony: I listen to my group, "Sacred Turf". They are punky folk and they're great.

Bruce: What? No, I don't listen to folk music.

Q It seems to me that each of you have a good sense of humour. Which comedy series do you prefer?

- a) Monty Python
- b) Fawlty Towers or new stuff like
- c) Men Behaving Badly

A: Again, knowing that one or more are uncontactable at present I asked Ian on their behalf. "... *The band have an individual and collective sense of humour. Bruce could have had a role in "The Young Ones" for instance. One of Stuart's favourites is Laurel and Hardy, Bruce laughs at most comedy...*"

Tony: I like Monty Python, Fawlty Towers, new stuff like Men Behaving Badly and Bruce!!

Bruce: Most, if not all, original comedy. I like some of the American comedy shows and watch things like "The Larry Sanders Show"

Q You always have very interesting support acts on tour with you, some of which have become favourites of mine. Do you choose them? If not you, then with whom does the decision lie?

Tony: Normally we choose them because I always take an active interest in the support groups.

Q If you decided to let somebody else produce one of your albums again in the future could you see yourselves working with Steve Lillywhite again?

Bruce: "Yep". Said in a very definite voice. "I like Steve, he's brilliant", says Bruce.

Tony: If Steve liked the new stuff and everybody thought it was a good idea then, yes - otherwise we'd find somebody else.

Q Do you think there is still a future for pure guitar-based rock bands (I think there is) or do you feel that you will have to do more compromises towards more modern trends like, for example, U2 to survive?

Bruce: There are loads of successful guitar bands - I don't think it will ever die.

Tony: In my opinion there will always be guitar based bands purely because it is such an accessible instrument. To compromise, to turn to modern trends in order to stay marketable is a bit unfortunate, don't you think?

Q The Electrifying world of computers! What are the members of the mailing list discussing these days? - "*What does Stuart say at the beginning of 'Tracks Of My Tears' on the B-side of 'Chance'?*" Oh dear, I guess it beats discussing the weather!?!:-Anyway, some schools of thought from subscribers to the list are:

i) Seein' as how it's party time, we'll be a party group and play Smokey Robinson, this is Tracks o' ma Tears.

ii) Seeing's how it's party time, we'll be party poopers and play Smokey Robinsons' Tracks Of My Tears.

iii) Seeing as how it's parting time, we're gonna play a parting song for you now. This is Tracks Of My Tears.

So, what does Stuart say at the begging of this track?

A: Ian thinks it is (i) and says that he doubts whether Stuart would remember without listening to it and he's in the States at the moment. So, let's go for (i).

Q Michael Purdie (004141) wrote to ask about Pure Records as shown on the King Biscuit sleeve notes - "*Who the hell are they*", he asks?

A: PURE Records was a label run by Arma Andon, a USA manager (World Party, Sinead O'Connor, Donna Lewis etc). It folded and Mr Andon went back to management. King Biscuit Flower Hour are a USA radio syndicate, who have been in existence for a long time, over two decades. There is info about them on the sleeve of the Big Country release.

Remember, Remember.....

Thank you to all who have sent a contribution and told us of your experiences, memories and what have you. It seems loads of you were busting a gut to share your special memories and I've been swamped - any received but not used this time will be kept on file.

Feel free to write in.

Nick Swann (004211) says he will never forget:

Some friends and I saw BC in Bristol in November 1995 and had a great time. The band were brilliant, as always, so good in fact that I felt compelled to sing as loud as I could the whole way through. The cost of going to this gig eventually came out at almost £1,100.00 - £12.00 for the ticket and £1075.00 for a throat operation to remove a polyp from one of my vocal chords caused by too much shouting! I would have waited for the NHS but, as I was a student and about to start teaching practice in a primary school, I had to go privately! It's a rather pathetic tale of woe but the moral of the story is that if you've had fifteen years enjoyment out of a band that never fails to entertain, £1,100 for one's own zealous participation in a fantastic concert is a price worth paying. Should BC tour again before I leave college next June I might just tone down the shouting a bit to avoid having to get another loan out!

Tony Allsop (004234)

23rd May 1993 when BC were playing York at the Barbican. It was my wife's birthday and we had walked into York for something to eat prior to the gig. We were returning to the venue when we ended up about 30 yards behind two men, one of them wearing skin-tight black leggings and knee high buckled boots. My wife then says, 'Look at this cool dude, he really loves himself!' To which I said 'Oi, pack it in, that's Tony and one the lads out of the band!!!' We were still looking and laughing when they turned their heads to cross a road. We stopped laughing very quickly - it was Tony and Mark!!

We both caught our breaths, charged down to them acting like complete prats. We had a few photos with them etc and they were both very pleasant

and friendly. Needless to say, this made my wife's birthday and, as always, the gig was terrific. Long may it last!

Adam Braun (004226)

In May I went to see Rush play at the Gorge - an outdoor theatre about three hours drive from Seattle, WA that hosts most big name acts coming thru the area every summer. It's quite beautiful, behind the mainstage the Columbia River flows and, as the sun sets, it creates a colourful show on the cliffwalls. As my friends and I relaxed on the lawn we read and played cards etc and didn't really pay much attention to the music coming over the PA system, it was a mix of everything from Black Sabbath and Scorpions to Cyndi Lauper to Country and even some old Big Band. I half recognised most of the music but my ears perked up when I heard a familiar guitar and drum intro. Eventually, when the singing started, I realised that it was BC - "Seven Waves". Over the next two hours there were three other songs from "Buffalo Skinners" - "Long Way Home", "We're Not In Kansas" and "Pink Marshmallow Moon". I thought that was cool, especially considering the lack of airplay that BC gets in the States or, at least in my neck of the woods.

My other story involves a conversation I had with one of the world's greatest drummers. I am the Sous chef in a jazz club. Every week we have a new group or act that plays for six nights (names like Annie Ross, Joshua Redman, Cleo Lane/John Dankworth). Being a saxophonist and a jazz player I spend as much time as I can talking with the players who always seem glad to help out "one of their own" so to speak. myself drawn to the drummers 'cos they can make the show. One such drummer was the great Elvin Jones (for those who don't recognise the name, he was the drummer with John Coltranes best quartet). I had to make dinner for him on the opening night and he came back between sets to thank me. We talked for a few minutes and one of the questions he asked me was who I would like to play with, for musical quality and not their name. Other than sax players none of the musicians I mentioned came from jazz, 'cos the music I like to play or write is outside the 'norm' of jazz. Some of those I mentioned he had heard of i.e. Greg Lake - I'd love to do some DeBussy with him on bass - hard not to have heard of ELP. I only mentioned two

drummers, both he'd heard of but the one who Elvin thought the most of was none other than Mark Brzezicki. A "thoughtful" player is what Elvin said. I thought it was nice that one of the drum legends of our time and a world class drummer (this guy can play louder with brushes than a lot of players can with sticks) seemed to respect the drummer of my favourite rock band.

Michael Purdie (004141)

My ultimate BC moment was at the Fleadh in 1995 when BC were wrongfully given a 3 in the afternoon slot! The band came on and shone as usual and then they sent me into my heaven by playing "Restless Natives". Now, as far as I could tell, I was the only genuine BC fan, except for my dad there. I just got such a kick out of moshing away on my own to BC brilliance and the rest of the audience not even knowing what I was doing. It was like it was the band and I knew all about something and the other 15-20,000 people around us were oblivious to it! Well, that was my moment, anyway.

Peter Hornberg (000046)

The trip to Glasgow, 29th December 1993. As I had never seen BC live in Scotland I decided this was a chance to see them. flight Amsterdam to Glasgow, everything was OK, I had a slight cold but when the plane came down my ears closed completely and I was stone deaf! Usually things get better as soon as you land but NOT IN THIS CASE - I remained deaf, felt sick, had to vomit.... went to a hospital, they told me that, because of my cold, the whole tube between my nose and ears was blocked. They gave me nosedrops and I had to lay down. I told them I was going to see BC that night, they strongly advised NOT to go as it could do damage to my ears!! I went back to the hotel and laid down until around 6pm. I woke and, unbelievably, could hear the cars driving outside, a very normal thing but in my case a very happy moment! I started feeling better and went to the Barrows with about 50% of my hearing capacity. On the first powerful chord Stuart hit on the guitar to check if all was OK my ears jumped open!! What a relief, needless to say that because of the circumstances this was, for me, the best and most memorable BC gig.

THE GREAT BIG NOISE



Tony Greco was there!! Sorry, Tony, but I have had to edit somewhat although the account of your travel and plans etc really is quite humorous. ".... it was confirmed, I would be embarking on another adventure, inspired by my obsession with BC - a trip to St Austell to see Tony Butler.

Normally, of course, there would have been no question in my mind about attending diary for that weekend showed why I had a problem. Friday - Cathy's birthday, Saturday - The Great Big Noise, Sunday AM - travel back from St Austell, PM - CFC v Man U @ Wembley (unmissable), Evening - begin holiday in Hayling Island." (I'll skip the ticket-buying and the tales of your travelling companions, the dog pissing on your leg and the lovely-sounding B&B owner and even your trip to the swimming pool plus children and Ulrika's son, Tony-Jan). ".....last leg of my mammoth journey, a gentle ten minute downhill stroll to the Cornwall Coliseum. On the way I met Oliver and Rita from "Action for ME". Rita invited me to the up-coming sponsored abseil event in Chepstow. Since I'm more likely to abPLUMMET than abseil I politely declined. With some relief on my part, the doors and access to the bar were finally opened. Buying my ticket at the door and collecting my aftershow pass (bloody name dropper) I set about trying to quench my almost insatiable thirst.

I can't really give you an accurate account of the concert. It has nothing to do with the copious amount of beer imbibed that evening, I just find I get immersed (metaphorically and physically) at a concert so, to put that experience into words is difficult for me. In any event, Oli has covered that but, it may come as a nasty shock to you, he bloody cheats! His memory is probably no better than mine. He was making notes all through the concert on little cards! Sorry, but it had to come out sooner or later. Anyway, I really enjoyed all of the bands, if I had to pick one it would be a close call between Syrup and Sacred Turf. Probably Syrup just edge it because of their manic lead singer. If I could sing, was 20 years younger, not bald, fat or ugly, that could have been me!

At last it was time for Tony Butler to appear and a chance for the Big Country fans in the audience to gather together and throw themselves around like lunatics which we duly did, especially to "Rockin' In The Free World". For me, the best moment was when Tony sang "One Day To The Next". I knew of the song but this was the first time I'd heard it and I got a bit emotional, soppy old git that I am. So, the concert ended but, the biggest thrill of the night for me was yet to come. Suddenly, from being just another fan (I acknowledge Tony and Jackie's kindness over the years in making me feel more than that), I was catapulted into the inner sanctum of the glamorous world of Rock 'n' roll! I offered to help Tony pack up his gear and he said yes!! My dreams of being a roadie for a famous rock 'n' roll star were fulfilled so, it was with much pride and a puffed-up chest that I carried out my duties. By the time we were finished it was definitely time for another pint. I managed to behave like a big drunken kid, rushing up to everyone I could telling them how brilliant they were. I think the worst moment was when I insisted that Steve of "Blind Panic" gave me his autograph. He got his own back by writing: 'To Tony, you sad Bastard'.

A few more drinks and it was 2am. Somehow I remembered that I'd told Mrs Thingy at the B & B that I'd be back by 2(ish) so, up I got and waddled out into the cool Cornish night. The hill I'd descended 7 hours earlier loomed menacingly in front of me. It seemed as though a mysterious force had tampered with the gradient, what was a gentle slope had transformed into the twin peaks of Mount Killamanjaro. Covering my left eye" (Sorry Tony, once again I have to leave out your humorous tales of your return journey, Wembley and arrival at Hayling Island but I'm glad you made it!)

Presumably, Oliver referred to by Tony is **Oliver Hunter** (000490) who keeps his account much more to the point: *"The evening was compered by Jane Friggins (from local radio) and Edward Halls from Granada and Sky who are both low-end celebrities which, quite frankly, I could have done without but I guess they might have appealed more to the 'younger' members of the audience (which, incidentally included all three of Tony and Jackie's kids) as they tried to hype everything up and get the audience to run back and forth. I just found them annoying.... The audience was not as large as it might have been, I estimate it at about 400, with about 100 of those having one or two of the various VIP/Guest list/Access All Areas tags flying around. Could have been a better turnout I suppose but those that were there had a great time. First up, starting off the evening were:*

JAM SAMBA (drumming) They were a drum band, playing what I suppose could be described as Caribbean carnival rhythms. They were lead by a guy with a medium timbale and whistle who 'conducted' the group with his whistle and with 'key' rhythm patterns to signify changes of rhythm and/or tempo. The players were of a mixture of ages and played three bass timbales, several high timbales a woodblock, a double-cowbell, a shaker and probably some others that I've forgotten! I thought they were excellent - the sound was incredible and they played together brilliantly, if they have a CD coming out I'll buy it. Mr Halls joked that they (Jam Samba) had held an audition for a drummer, 72 people turned up and they said "F&&k it, we'll take you all and call ourselves Jam Samba!" ... most amusing I'm sure ... On to:

PELT Sisters Bridgitte and Lana on guitars and vocals along with a bassist and a drummer (sounds like a winning combination) have, according to the programme, "captured the essence of contemporary British pop with songs that combine melody, harmony and some seriously solid and occasionally quirky rhythms, with lyrics straight from the vulnerable inner child" I guess that's a fair description but I think I would have just said "they're b****dy brilliant!" My favourite support band and one to watch, me thinks." (Tony is in the process of recording this band in his studio at the moment - Jan). "Next up

BLIND PANIC Pretty good but average AOR group. Nothing to get too excited about but some good, polished, entertaining (if short) numbers. Cool bassist in the form of "Funky J" complete with bleached spiky hair. On to:

CAROLINE BERRY I'm not really keen on country music but, if you are or have the slightest interest at all then you're likely to enjoy Caroline Berry. She had a lot of energy and put everything into her numbers. She had an extra band member on stage for one number, a harmonica player, aged 12(!) who was pretty good and added to the whole affair. Then, there was an 'intermission' featuring:

JAM SAMBA (more drumming) More of the same, very impressive, a huge noise ... perhaps this was the "Great Big Noise" ... sorry:- (= e-mail talk for grin) After them came:

SYRUP This group are mental. That's it. Hmm. OK they're pretty good and seem to already have a good local following of teenage boys and girls who 'dance', pogo and gyrate their bodies madly whilst singing and shouting at their idols. They're quite heavy and state their influences as: "Smashing Pumpkins", "Therapy", "Nirvana", "Red Hot Chilli Peppers", "Soundgarden" and "George

Michael"??). They were apparently special guests of Big Country at the Plymouth Pavillion in 1985. Next

SACRED TURF A five piece band including a seventeen year old electric fiddler and a diddgerido. I really enjoyed this band who are in a similar style to the Levellers who they list in their influences. I'd agree with their write-up which says that their "furious blend of punk, folk and rock appeals right across the board". They were great fun and I'd recommend a listen. They were so popular with the crowd that they were allowed an encore, before

THE GREAT UNKNOWN Tony appeared rather nervous to begin with and joked that he normally shared the stage "with two mad Scotsmen!" I hadn't really thought about it until he came on but he was playing lead guitar - not bass... Well, it surprised me anyway! The music is different from BC - rather more hard rock I would say in a style of his own and all very enjoyable. The track "One Day To The Next" is sad, moving and beautiful both musically and lyrically. M.E. is a terrible illness and I hope this awareness single will help raise funds for research (the last I heard this was probably to be released early 1998 - Jan) Tony said that he was prompted to write "The May Queen Leads Her Parade" when, not long after he moved to Cornwall, he was lazing around sitting on his ride-on mower in his front garden when a neighbour came by and asked him if the 'owner of the house' was around..... (tee hee).

Tony called back on stage the support acts one by one (which meant some band members had to be pulled back out of the audience) and finished the set with a titanic "Rockin' In The Free World". Each band sang a verse or part of a verse with everyone joining in on the chorus. It really was a sight - even better than the crowd of musicians at Dingwalls for the Eclectic recording! I had a bit of a rock with Tony Greco which finished the evening off nicely.

ALL IN ALL A GREAT NIGHT OUT!!



Notice Board

Simon Duckett (004067)

UK

FOR SALE: Singles - "Harvest Home" 12" P.S. UK, "F of F" 12" P.S. UK, "IABC" 12" P.S. UK, "Wonderland" 12" P.S. clear vinyl UK, "Look Away" 12" P.S., "Teacher" (mystery mix) 12" P.S., "One Great Thing" 12" P.S., "Hold The Heart" gatefold P.S. slight tear, "Wonderland" EP 12" P.S. Canada, mint condition. Albums - "The Crossing" (blue cover), "Steeltown" gatefold sleeve, "The Seer", "No Place Like Home" (original CD). Skids - "Fields" 12" P.S. Various albums - "Scared to Dance", Collection etc. Any reasonable offers considered.

Kit Curry (000412)

Ireland

WANTED: swap bootleg tapes/photos etc. Also looking for any bootlegs from the WTLF tour if possible.

Lewis Crow (003890)

USA

WANTED: "Long Way Home" live German CD. Willing to buy/sell/trade/whatever.

Ed Baptista (001728)

USA

WANTED: videos - "Heart of the World" and "Hold The Heart" and, if available "Harvest Home".

Peter Hornberg (000046)

Holland

WANTED: a copy of Town and Country gig London 1990 video and all video clips as from "Republican Party Reptile". In exchange Peter has copies of all German shows ever on TV!!

Sam Russo (004271)

USA

WANTED: Loads, including the following but the list is too long to print in its entirety. "Flag Of Nations" (swimming), "F of F" (alternate), "Chance" (extended), "Where The Rose..." (extended), "Just A Shadow" (extended), "Look Away" (outlaw), "Home Came The Angels", "The Teacher" (mystery). The lists goes on and on so, if you think you may be able to help please drop Sam a line.

Dave Schwartz

CA

davybass@deltanet.com

I mentioned in the last issue that a BIG COUNTRY TRIBUTE CASSETTE was being compiled by fans. Well, it is now available. Entirely performed and put together by fans. Strictly non-profit making, only 100 copies available from Dave at the above address, US\$5.35 plus US\$1.00 P & P for North America and US\$2.00 elsewhere.

A few more amusing “traveller’s tales”

as sent in by Mick Murphy

In a Czechoslovakian tourist agency:

Take one of our horse-driven city tours. We guarantee no miscarriages.

In the window of a Swedish furrier:

Fur coats made for ladies from their own skin.

Detour sign in Kyushi, Japan:

Stop. Drive sideways.

In a Bangkok temple:

It is forbidden to enter a woman even a foreigner dressed as a man.

In a Rhodes tailor shop:

Order your summer suit. Because is big rush, we will execute customers in strict rotation.

In an East African newspaper:

A new swimming pool is rapidly taking shape since the contractors have thrown in the bulk of their workers.

Pen Pals Declan Flannery (003794),
Ireland. Year of birth 1971. Hobbies - music,
socialising. Would love a penpal but particularly female and Irish - he
says female fans are hard to find in his neck of the woods.