

NOVA

Lepidoptera



The Journal of the International BJH Fan Club

BARCLAY JAMES HARVEST:

SUPERHEROES?



MEL

◉ TIN DRUM

JOHN

◉ MEAN LEAN
LEAD GUITAR

LES

◉ DOUBLE NECK:
"PLASTIC POP PACIFIER"

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All letters, contributions and artwork are welcomed, and should be directed to the address below. Please include an SAE or IRC if you would like a personal reply. This magazine is available only to members of IBJHFC and may not be reproduced without permission.

THE INTERNATIONAL BJH FAN CLUB

35 Wood End Green Road, Hayes, Middlesex, UB3 2SB, UK

ON THE ROAD

THE BJH AUTUMN TOUR 1990

SEPTEMBER	14	Manchester Apollo
	15	London Hammersmith Odeon
	20	Offenbach Stadthalle
	22	München Deutsches Museum
	25	Fürth Stadthalle
	26	St. Wendel Sporthalle
	27	Essen Grugahalle
	29	Ludwigshafen Eberthalle
	30	Freiburg Stadthalle
OCTOBER	1	Stuttgart Liederhalle
	3	Osnabrück Stadthalle
	4	Hannover Music Hall
	5	Berlin Tempodrom
	8	Paris-Bercy POPB
	14	Hamburg CCH
	15	Bremen Stadthalle
	19	Zürich Hallenstadion

More dates may well be added, as BJH are hoping to play concerts in Eastern Europe after the West German leg, as well as more shows in France, Germany and Holland. There is also a possibility of dates in some other European countries, plus a return to more venues in the UK, probably in November. Further details will appear in NL as soon as possible. Tickets for all gigs are on sale now - prices for the UK concerts are £9.50 and £8.50. For information on other shows, contact the venue. Please note that IBJHFC cannot obtain tickets or back-stage passes for club members.

IT'S A HIT!

"Welcome To The Show" has cracked the Top 10 in Germany, reached number 7 in Switzerland, and has also made number 24 in the Norwegian album charts. The album and "Cheap The Bullet" will be released in the U.S.A. any day now, their first record to gain a Stateside release for ten years. The response in Britain to the album and single was disappointing, but hardly surprising given the way in which TV and radio simply ignored them, and the vitriolic and unfair treatment meted out

by the 'music' press... In Germany BJH made five TV appearances in a week! BJH were also one of many artists scheduled to appear in a TV show broadcast live from East Berlin on May 6th on East and West German TV to an estimated audience of 25 million!

FOR NO ONE

The Connoisseur Collection BJH compilation album, "For Every One", has been shelved for the time being. Polydor didn't want

NOVA News NOVA News NOVA News

its appearance to interfere with the promotion for "Welcome To The Show", and such has been the success of the new LP that they are considering releasing their own compilation later in the year...

* * * * *

FOR THE COLLECTORS

As you probably know, the version of "Shadows On The Sky" on the album is quite different from that on the single, being a later mix with overdubs - but did you know that the CD sampler mentioned in the last NL also has an earlier version of "Halfway To Freedom", minus some of the backing vocals in the chorus? The difference is very small... Also, the live take of "Berlin" on the 12" single has a spoken introduction from Les which was not on the "Glasnost" album, although it is on the video.

LOCAL MEMBERS' GROUP

Club members in the West Yorkshire area now have their own local group to organise meetings and events. For more details, please send an SAE to: CARL BULLARD, 79 Prospect Road, Longwood, Huddersfield HD3 4UY.

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TRANSLATORS

With a large number of overseas members joining IBJHFC since the new album came out, there's an increasing need for volunteers to assist in translating letters, parts of NL etc. We'd be grateful to anyone who can offer their services in this way - if you'd like to help, please write to us at the usual address, specifying which language(s) you speak, and I'll print a full list in the next NL.

"WELCOME TO THE SHOW" POLL RESULTS

Many thanks to all of you who voted for their favourite tracks from the new album - the response was excellent, and the vote was so close that the eventual winner was not decided until the very last day of voting! Here is your chart:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. LADY MACBETH | 7. Halfway To Freedom |
| 2. If Love Is King | 8. Shadows On The Sky |
| 3. John Lennon's Guitar | 9. Origin Earth |
| 4. Cheap The Bullet | 10. African Nights |
| 5. Where Do We Go | 11. The Life You Lead |
| 6. Welcome To The Show | 12. Psychedelic Child |

PRIZE DRAW WINNERS: Henryk Bak, Chris Hurrell, Mark Thompson, Monika Brauckhoff and Steve Newlands won "Welcome To The Show" promo CD samplers; Mike Fowkes won a metal bullet-shaped 'BJH' pen in a presentation box, and Jan Upsahl and Paul Johnson won brass BJH bullet keyrings. Special thanks to Ian Grenfell at Polydor for donating the prizes.

LATE NEWS: New CDs from Germany at mid-price - "Once Again" (CDP 538 791 2 522), "Mocking Bird - The Early Years" (CDP 538 791 2 132) and "The Best Of, Vol.3" (CDP 538 791 2 432). Also in Germany, "Another Arable Parable" now on mid-price vinyl LP (EMI/Fame 038 157781-1).

Other Short Stories.....

...Some updates on earlier NL articles. Firstly, **promotional issues:** Polydor released a Various Artists promo-only 12-track CD, "In Future" (IF1), which came out in January and included "Cheap The Bullet". The same track also appeared on a cassette entitled "More Than Just A Number" (WRANG 1), issued for in-store advertising of Wrangler jeans...

...Following up last issue's "Sideshow" article, BJH also performed "Hymn For The Children" on "The Old Grey Whistle Test" in 1975, and a live clip of "Loving Is Easy" was shown on German TV's "Musik-Szene 1978" with Les singing lead!...

...Another **compilation album** appeared in Spain; "Investigacion De Mercado 2" (Polydor 28 12 034) included "Poor Man's Moody Blues"...

...**Cover versions:** Francoise Hardy recorded a French language version of "Waiting For The Right Time" which turned up as the title track of her 1988 album "Decalages" (CD Flarensch/WEA 728 690), and was also a minor hit single. We've also tracked down the legendary Australian version of "Early Morning"; it was the B-side of a single called "Hay Ride" by The Flying Circus (Columbia 8617), which was released in March 1969 and made No.5 in the Australian chart...

...**STOP PRESS:** "Halfway To Freedom" released as a single in Germany in early May, backed with "African" (live), plus "Shadows On The Sky" on the 12" & CD single and "He Said Love" (live) on the CD only...

[Special thanks to Stewart Renwick, Mike Melnyk, Trevor Seddon, Carsten Lauber, Sam Bogner, Ian Chennell for contributions to O.S.S.]

For No One

WHAT THE PAPERS SAID

Music Week, 17-3-90
BJH: Welcome To The Show. Polydor 841 751-1. No, not the fourth live offering from the previously named Barclay James Harvest, but yet another in a long line of studio albums that only reveals its subtle qualities after repeated plays. With Lady Macbeth they're fragile and delicate. In John Lennon's Guitar co-vocalist John Lees wistfully reminisces while on occasion they produce pure melodrama with their typically mid-tempo, inoffensive rock that perfectly satisfies its increasingly MOR market. **KB**

What Hi-Fi, April 1990
BJH: Welcome To The Show Polydor 
BJH is the new easily-digested, user-friendly moniker for Barclay James Harvest, accountants masquerading as a seventies dinosaur rock band. The name may have changed to fit the nineties, but the music hasn't. Hopelessly dated, unconvincing and given to sudden whimsy, this album may please their undeniably large following on the continent, but is unlikely to win friends in the UK. **★★★★★ Steve Greenham**

B.J.H.
Welcome To The Show
POLYDOR 841751 LP/Cass/CD
Along with other "underground" bands of the '70s, Barclay James Harvest (for it is they) fell foul of the anger of the new wave. Rather than curl up and die though, they just went further underground and proceeded to carve a useful new career in Europe—particularly in Germany—where their native '70s optimism finds much more of an echo than it does in Britain. Apart from the name, not much else has changed. The subjects are still all over the place—psychedelia, Lady Macbeth, mankind's future ("The streets are red with the blood of the innocent/Why? Why? Why?") and a particularly pointless reminiscence about playing John Lennon's guitar during the recording of BJH's '70s "classic" Galadriel. The performances, as usual, are fine, and John Lee, Les Holroyd and Mel Pritchard play in a kind of Starship-meets-Foreigner-style which suggests they should up sticks from Germany and try a few US stadiums. Open with caution. **★★**
Rob Beattie

"Q", April 1990

BJH
'Welcome To The Show'
Polydor 841 751-1
SO, YEAH they've been around since the Thames was a trickle. So what?! Does age have anything to do with an ability to make good music?
No, seriously. BJH may have a lengthy history, but they still deliver quality music. For the most part 'Welcome...' is typical BJH fare. Finely crafted, gently wafting songs displaying a sense of respect for the musicians and their audience. The likes of 'The Life You Lead', 'Welcome To The Show' and 'Lady Macbeth' are filled with tempered class and tightly-knitted arrangements. And 'John Lennon's Guitar' is certainly a sensitive paean to a fallen hero.
And then on occasion, BJH let rip with some rather more energetic stuff. 'Cheap The Bullet' leans heavily on John Lees' guitar sharpness and 'Psychedelic' is virtually ravenous!
BJH have long created Rock music on their own terms. To me, it's always been the sort of stuff that deserved more respect than has been allowed by the media. Well, if you like your Rock music cosseted with lushness, atmosphere and intelligence go for 'The Show'. BJH may be veterans of the rock world, but they're still young at heart!
MALCOLM DOME ★ ★ ★

"RAW", 7 to 21-3-90

FEEDBACK SPECIAL

For Everyone

WHAT THE FANS SAID

THE ALBUM

- "Classic BJH - beautiful vocals and harmonies, lots of interesting touches and a good atmosphere. It's great to hear a bit more of John's brilliant guitar work." HEATHER WENT
- "The best BJH have done, certainly as a threesome." JULIE DYSON
- "Probably the best since the mid-seventies" ALISTER HILL
- "It's their best!...better than 'Ring Of Changes', which was my favourite before" JAN UPSAHL
- "Why are the two extra songs only on the CD (and cassette)? There are people who don't have a CD player..." PETER PLATZ
- "The single was superb, yet it merely hinted at the breath-taking brilliance 'Welcome To The Show' was to shine with" KEV CROSSLEY
- "So great I hardly can cope with it!" BIRGIT HOCHREIN
- "The best album the band have done in the last ten years - there's not one weak track on it" BERND DÖRSAM
- "John said that they had all enjoyed recording it, and one thing's for sure is that it shows in their music" PAUL JOHNSON
- "Absolutely brilliant, the best yet, and if it doesn't chart then there is no justice" DENNIS WILKINSON
- "A bit like the curate's egg - good in parts" ANDREW BRINDLEY
- "Brilliant! Amazing! Fabulous! Without doubt their best recorded work since Woolly's departure" DEREK PATTERSON
- "The best work the band has produced since 'Gone To Earth'" KIM LUPTON
- "Brilliant - the best since 'Gone To Earth'" EMMA HUDSON
- "An album that will continue to grow on me" ROBIN STAPLEFORD
- "I like the return to using increased vocal harmonisation... makes this album feel more like a complete whole. Thank goodness the ridiculous keyboard heroics of Bias Boshell have been done away with. Let's hope a similar change of personnel will take place on stage" JON SCHICK
- "Les's voice is very clear and sharp, John is playing excellent guitar again and varying his voice style much more and, as always, Mel is doing a fine job" PETER BROOKS
- "A cracker and improves with listening" M.A. THOMPSON
- "The best they have ever made" CARSTEN LAUBER
- "Should be No.1" MONIKA BRAUCKHOFF
- "I really think they are on to a winner...I believe this is the album that will take them to the top" COLIN BARNETT
- "Although it strikes me as being a 'safe' album, with no major departures or experiments, the overall quality is such that I can't pick out a single track which I don't like" KEVIN STERRY
- "John's songs are the let down, having barely a likeable or memorable tune" STEVE NEWLANDS
- "The John Lees songs are among his strongest for some time, and John turns in some of his most impressive guitar work" RICHARD WASILEWSKI
- "Should be known as the album of the Nineties" STEVE PIDGEON
- "The album is very balanced, and now I know the songs, I have the melody in my ears, in my mind..." JURGEN LANGANKI
- "Once again BJH have shown that excellent music is alive and kicking. One of their best yet. P.S. When's the next album coming out - I'd like to order it right away?!" TONY PARSONS

INDIVIDUAL SONGS:

THE LIFE YOU LEAD

"Gets better the more you listen to it"

ALISTER HILL

"The best song Les has ever done"

JAN UPSAHL

"Les Holroyd meets The Bee Gees"

CLAIRE POWELL

LADY MACBETH

"I love the atmospheric, brooding feel...undoubtedly one of John's finest, and I've no doubt it will become one of the 'classic' songs (wouldn't it sound great played with an orchestra? Hint, hint!!"

JULIE DYSON

"Quietly macabre and positively chilling"

KEV CROSSLEY

"One of John's best songs in years"

DEREK PATTERSON

"My favourite - by miles!"

EMMA HUDSON

"Favourite track - excellent vocals, music and lyrics"

M.A. THOMPSON

"If love is king then 'Lady Macbeth' must be wearing the crown. She's certainly the best thing I've heard this year - a classic being born."

JANET WOOD

CHEAP THE BULLET

"Good lyrics, a good fast beat, great guitar - excellent!"

JULIE DYSON

"A good single, but my feeling is that the extra time spent in the studio has done more harm than good, and it does sound somewhat over-produced. Having said that, there's no doubting the quality of the lyrics"

ANDY FURNELL

"The power in John's voice is amazing"

KIM LUPTON

"A real rocker. I defy the critics to put it down...I could loan it to the heavy metal fan next door!"

CLAIRE POWELL

"Smashing! Could this please replace 'Child Of The Universe' on tour?"

MONIKA BRAUCKHOFF

"Goes straight to the feet"

JÖRG ZIMMER

WELCOME TO THE SHOW

"Superb songwriting and really shows what Les can do. It certainly refutes Paul Baker's criticisms (valid though they were) in NL of November 1988"

DAVID PHILLIPS

"Rather disappointing - lacking something."

HEATHER WENT

"A beautiful song"

JAN UPSAHL

"One of Les's better ones...the words are very good"

MONIKA BRAUCKHOFF

JOHN LENNON'S GUITAR

"I think this will be the most played on the radio"

JAN UPSAHL

"Easily the most catchy song on the album"

ROBIN STAPLEFORD

"Perhaps a trifle too indulgent and self-centred?"

ANDREW BRINDLEY

"One of the finest tributes to the great man that I've ever heard - I was really moved by the lyrics"

CHRIS SPEDDING

"A song with such a title must be really good to keep what it promises. This is one of the great hymns for the group...keeps the promise."

JÖRG ZIMMER

"I've been unable to get it out of my head..."

KEVIN STERRY

HALFWAY TO FREEDOM

"One of Les's superb anthems"

JULIE DYSON

"Beautiful!"

JAN UPSAHL

"As a Berliner, I'm particularly touched...the tune is haunting"

MONIKA BRAUCKHOFF

"Have care, BJH, your Prime Minister might forbid this song!"

PETER PLATZ

AFRICAN NIGHTS

"A bit of an oddball, though the drumming is good"

ALISTER HILL

"I love Mel's bit in the middle"

ROBIN STAPLEFORD

"Cracking drums"

CARSTEN LAUBER

PSYCHEDELIC CHILD

"A bit unsure - it has no anti-drugs message at all" ALISTER HILL
 "Sounds like Status Quo, but it's good" JAN UPSAHL
 "Takes me back to songs like 'Good Love Child'" PAUL JOHNSON
 "Is going to give the critics a field day" CHRIS SPEDDING

WHERE DO WE GO

"A beautiful ballad...it must be the next single" PAUL JOHNSON
 "It sounds like Chicago, but it's a very fine song" JAN UPSAHL
 "Moving and yearning" KEV CROSSLEY
 "Wonderful saxophone" CARSTEN LAUBER
 "Sounds too much like Chicago" CHRIS SPEDDING
 "This song is really beautiful" COLIN BARNETT

ORIGIN EARTH

"Pardon the pun, but this is ORIGINAL. Love it. Absolutely my fave track" CLAIRE POWELL
 "Was it made for 'Ring Of Changes' or a single B-side? It's a typical 'not released on any album' song" JAN UPSAHL
 "Very BJH-y, especially 'and mountains so high'...really good" MONIKA BRAUCKHOFF
 "Truly beautiful" CHRIS SPEDDING

IF LOVE IS KING

"A marvellous arrangement and really hypnotic" JULIE DYSON
 "Probably my favourite overall" ANDREW BRINDLEY
 "My favourite song" COLIN BARNETT
 "Should be the A-side of the (German) single" GABI BAUER

SHADOWS ON THE SKY

"The backwards guitar is totally brilliant" DEREK PATTERSON
 "The best Les song I've heard for quite some time" KEV CROSSLEY
 "A lovely tune...but must admit to feeling that the final tweaks in the studio, apart from wrecking the simple sound evident on the single, are twee, embarrassing and totally unnecessary. It says something for the basic song that it manages to survive this" JON SCHICK
 "Majestic, not just lyrically and musically, but also for the atmospheric effects the song generates" ANDY BANNON
 "Far too good to be wasted as a B-side. Why not release BJH singles as double A-sides?" STEVE PIDGEON

PRODUCTION

"The new production team has helped a great deal, giving the album a freshness and clarity of sound that we haven't heard for a while" JULIE DYSON
 "Very good. Much guitar, drums (real drums by Mel!) and superb harmony vocals" BERND DORSAM
 "Excellent, producing a very crisp, clean sound" ANDREW BRINDLEY
 "Very 'warm' and 'Barclay-like' production and sound...recreates the BJH magic" CARSTEN LAUBER

ARTWORK

"The cover is good, very striking indeed. I'm particularly impressed by the photography" ANDREW BRINDLEY
 "I love the new butterfly symbol - really good and very well designed" ALISTER HILL
 "Excellent cover photography" ROBIN STAPLEFORD
 "Very Pink Floyd-y, but very good and suitable" MONIKA BRAUCKHOFF
 "Why no mention of Mel on the cassette?" RICHARD WASILEWSKI

BJH

"Instead of 'BJH' it should have been the full name of the band"

"Is that the new name? I hope not!"

"Have Barclay James Harvest lost their name?"

"I miss the name of Barclay James Harvest"

"The full name gives the band a certain identity that 'BJH' fails to put across...as for updating their image, perhaps that's not the right thing to do. Barclay James Harvest are not and never have been a commercially orientated group, that's why they have survived for so long. I sincerely hope that this does not alter"

"Have we seen the end of Barclay James Harvest as we know it (the full-length version)?"

JAN UPSAHL

ANDREAS RASCHKE

PAUL JOHNSON

GREGOR LELLEK

ALISTER HILL

ROBIN STAPLEFORD

Finally, before we leave the new album, from the huge number of reviews I've received, here's one which I felt was, perhaps, the most balanced and objective; an object lesson, in fact, to many so-called journalists:

WELCOME TO THE SHOW

Well, the speculation and the waiting both are over, and to get straight to the point, neither has been in vain; if anything is going to gain BJH the wider UK audience that they've so richly deserved for so long now, then "Welcome To The Show" is it.

Musically, the album is in much the same genre as its predecessor, "Face To Face", and it moves on very much from where BJH's now-deleted 1987 work left off. "Welcome To The Show" has the advantage of being much sharper at the edges - indeed, there's a markedly tough underside not heard from BJH in recent times, an underside magnificently darkened by the sinister dimensions of Lees' superb "Lady Macbeth" and "If Love Is King", songs seething with an undercurrent of bleak threat, and displaying a fresh lyrical intelligence with it.

"Welcome To The Show" in fact witnesses two opposing forces offsetting one another: the sense of thinly-veiled menace conveyed by "Lady Macbeth", the angry despair of "Cheap The Bullet" plus the barren world of "If Love Is King" move side by side with the general optimism and sense of hope generated by Holroyd's contributions. Les and John have obviously been conscientious with lyrics, and the results are generally much more deeply and carefully wrought than was sometimes the case with "Face To Face".

Subtleties abound in single songs also - take "John Lennon's Guitar", for instance; deceptively simple and direct on the face of it, the song in fact possesses a variety of layers of meaning. Nothing about the song can be taken wholly at face value, and even the repetition of the word 'yesterday' is hardly coincidental. It really doesn't require too impressive a quota of grey matter to see all this, but obviously Rob Beattie of 'Q' magazine, who called the number "a particularly pointless reminiscence", is somewhat below average in this department.

BJH have certainly not suffered from handing over the controls to Jon Astley and Andy MacPherson. The stereo image is superb, imaginatively vital and very 'state of the art' in general sound and feel. There are some terrific showpieces such as Mel Pritchard's

dynamic precision drumming on the closing chorus of "African Nights" and the all-round sensation which the engineering lends it.

This is not to say that I don't have some reservations; I do feel that the album might have benefitted from a greater instrumental variety (orchestral strings a la "Ring Of Changes" and "Victims Of Circumstance", for example?), and the album flags ever so slightly in the middle. But, despite that, Les Holroyd has proved himself utterly incapable of a bad melody (who can resist the catchiness of the title track) and the by now customary Holroyd-penned love song is unmistakably present in the beautiful ballad "Where Do We Go" (if they don't include that one in the concert, I'll want to know why!). What a pity that 'Q', which purports to be a serious music magazine, can't live up to that status more properly by giving BJH something more than the frankly insulting two stars which they actually received - critics!

MARK GREGSON, KENT

QUESTIONS ARISING:

I've had numerous questions concerning "Welcome To The Show", so here are some answers for the trivia addicts!

1. Although the CD artwork says that the album is "AAD", it is in fact fully digital, and should be rated "DDD". (See the interview with Les)
2. The photos of the band were taken at the University Of London's observatory on the northern outskirts of the city.
3. The quote above the lyrics to "Cheap The Bullet" was written by John, and was the original line that he thought of and wrote down to use later for a song.
4. Credited as the inspiration for "Psychedelic Child", Blow Up are a local band who have recorded at John's Friarmere Studios. Their debut album, "In Watermelon Sugar", has just been released on the Cherry Red label. Josh is their manager, and the band's name was taken from a live recording by the excellent American 70s cult band, Television.
5. The guest musicians who played on the album weren't given specific credits, as some of their labours were difficult to describe! For the record, their main contributions were as follows: Ritchie Close (previously worked with BJH and Mandalaband) and Steve Pigott (Living In A Box) played additional keyboards, Ian Wilson (Sad Café) and Steve Butler sang backing vocals, Andy Hamilton played the sax solo on "Where Do We Go", Darrin Tidsey assisted Jon and Andy with programming and Mike Hehir (Sad Café and Corey Hart) provided some guitar sounds.
6. Finally, the front cover artwork has no symbolic significance, the 'BJH' lettering for the new band logo was designed by Les, and the omission of Mel from the credits on the cassette version was what's known technically in the trade as "a cock-up"!

FEEDBACK

SO YOU WANT TO BE A ROCK'N'ROLL STAR?

Once again with Barclay on the verge of releasing a new LP the critics are hard at work writing the reviews. As we are aware, people like this, depending on their interpretation of the band, can make or break a new release. It would be wise, therefore to make relatively sure the band's image is shown in a fresh manner.

Why is it then, that having read reviews of "Welcome To The Show", the majority of critics regard BJH as 'grand old men'? More worrying is the tendency to categorise the music as old rock and roll or middle of the road Radio 2 fodder.

Reflecting on this, it seems not so much BJH and their music which generates the image, more the manner in which it's presented. For example, it's great somebody as distinguished as Alan Freeman has recently repeated BJH BBC sessions, but it should be noted that if BJH wish for mega-success, air play would have to be on the stations aimed at the younger age bracket, i.e. 13 to 18 year olds.

Take another example: Chris de Burgh and Chris Rea, both receiving very little air play in this country in the mid/late seventies. It wasn't until both had their image altered and released singles given air play on Radio 1 that people took notice. Both have featured on chart programmes and, more importantly, reached the status of number one or featured in the top ten best selling singles/albums charts.

This does, however, create a dilemma; as an artist alters his/her image, so does the style of music. Indeed, Chris de Burgh's last LP, "Flying Colours", was abysmal compared to previous releases.

In conclusion, BJH have a choice: they either continue to write and record material they know how to best, or alter the image - music written not for themselves but for the market. To do this would gain popularity in the critical and public sector, losing to a dull, non-individual sound as well as losing dedicated fans. It would be worthwhile to ask the alarming question "is it wise for BJH to achieve major success in this country?". After all, they were discovered by the people, not the critics, who seem deeply offended by this, reviewing material with a sting in their tail.

I would like to see BJH hit major success, but care is needed in how this is achieved for the band, the dedicated die-hard fans and the potential buyers' sake.

KEITH MARSHALL, KENT

May I dare to appear on this page again? I'll just try...

I found Paul Johnson's discovery about landscape covers very interesting; I'd never realized that the difference between "Victims Of Circumstance" and the other albums extends to that. Why has it been outlawed? - well, if "Face To Face" tried to please everyone, then "VOC" was only aimed at the very young, short-lived, "plastic" audience

and neglected the established fans. The break afterwards lost, of course, the media-orientated kids, and a lot of established fans had been disappointed with "VOC" anyway. It was just too commercial, although the material itself wasn't bad, just produced the wrong way.

Over to Peter Brooks: my most memorable moment of the last decade was seeing "Berlin" in a completely different light when the Wall fell, seeing the "Martyrs" dead at last (I couldn't have stood walking behind the Reichstag and looking at the crosses of the unlucky escapists, while hearing that song, before 9th November!) and getting "Hymn" played at the Brandenburg Gate the night of 10th Nov., with all the people standing on the Wall. For me, all these events were connected with BJH very much. Close to that event was the year 1987 with "Face To Face" (steak at last after a long period with nothing but vanilla pudding!), "Medicine Man" back on the road, and meeting the lads.

...and last, but not least, Graham: where is the difference between the two polls in '84 and '87? They are both: 1) "Ring Of Changes", 2) Latest studio album and 3) "Gone To Earth". I think it is a weak point of both "VOC" and "Face" not to be the No.1 (as newest albums), and I wonder where "Face" will be next time. For the rest, I vehemently agree that "Hymn" doesn't have to be the finale of the next show, although it shouldn't be dropped. Also, at the risk of being killed, I personally don't have to hear "Child Of The Universe", "Rock'N'Roll Lady", "Love On The Line", "Mockingbird", "Life Is For Living" or "Poor Man's Moody Blues" again - I'd prefer "Crazy City", "Jonathan", "Medicine Man" again, "For No One" and other great forgotten oldies. Again, a compromise would be a medley of these six. Don't forget, lads, you've got 150 songs to choose from, not 20!

Finally, a big thank you to BJH for the dedication above "Halfway To Freedom". Since it was written before the very day, how did you know??! Thanks for all the great music, old and new!

MONIKA BRAUCKHOFF, BERLIN

I cannot and will never agree to Graham Wheelwright's proposal to skip "Hymn" at the end of the show. "Hymn" to most of us is more than just a song, it's more like when the National Anthem gets played at the end of any live performance.

DAGMAR MÜLLER, SCHRAMBERG-SULGEN

Re: Graham Wheelwright (NL8): BJH - take no notice of him and let's keep "Hymn"! There'll be fire and brimstone if "Hymn" isn't the last encore - some things are sacred, and too good to change.

Re: Peter Brooks, my favourite memory of the 1980s is probably the Easter Sunday opening concert of 1987 at The Apollo, with, of course, the unexpected bonus of "Medicine Man". Let's have a reinstatement of "For No One", "Rock'N'Roll Star", "Crazy City" or some really old stuff...

JANET WOOD, SHEFFIELD

* COMING SOON: In the next issue of NL, an exclusive interview with *
* Mel Pritchard, plus part one of our exhaustive list of BJH concerts *
* and live sets over the years. Last copy date for NL10 is July 10th *

THE NL INTERVIEW:

by Keith Domone and Kevin Goodman



Photograph:

Kevin Goodman

NL: First of all, congratulations on the new album. Now that the dust has settled, how do you feel about it?

LES: I'm still quite happy with it, in fact I played it this morning. I played "Halfway to Freedom" - you know that's going to be the next single? [in Germany] I've been trying to think of a way that we can boost it for a single, maybe do a different mix on it for a 12". What do you feel about it as a single?

NL: For Germany it's ideal, but I don't think it would do much here.

LES: No, I don't think it would, but having said that, who knows? We thought that "Cheap the Bullet" was going to do something - it hasn't done anything here or in France.

NL: Does there come a point in England, though, where whatever you release is not going to do anything?

LES: Sadly, I think yeah; I don't know if we've actually reached that point yet. It's hard to know, because we are aware that we've got people out there that are still very much into the band and want to see the band in concert and want to buy the band's material. On the other hand, we've got to look at it from a future point of view. We're not kidding ourselves because we are all past forty, so we're actually on borrowed time here to an extent! Having said that I'll go back on that and say it has changed a lot; certainly for bands like us and a lot of people like Clapton, for example, because rock has become established. It's not pop - there's a distinct difference and unfortunately most of the record companies can't see that. You've got to be promoted as a pop act; that's where the problem

LES HOLROYD

lies for us in England, because the only way to get across now is to do a single and a video.

NL: Which you did with "Cheap the Bullet", didn't you?

LES: Then they won't play it! "Top of the Pops" is the one, unfortunately. If you're not on there your record doesn't sell. The stupid system is that if you don't get in the top forty nobody puts it in the shops. They don't display it, and if they don't display it, it doesn't sell. There's absolutely nothing we can do.

NL: We're talking about the radio and TV media ignoring it - would you rather have that or would you rather have the press media who gave it some appalling reviews? What's your reaction to those?

LES: I don't take any notice of those, I honestly don't know anybody who does. The main one is TV/radio, that's what annoys me. It's your choice to actually pick up a newspaper or a magazine - you have to actually physically go in the shop and buy it. If you're driving along and you put the radio on, whatever is on goes into your head.

NL: What kind of thing inspires you to write a song?

LES: Everything, everything that you hear, every situation that you come across. We've done a lot of travelling throughout Europe, seeing Berlin and things like that. Everybody sees what's happening in the world. People that don't write songs, maybe they'll go out to a pub and talk about it with their mates; that's all we're doing, but we're just putting it down in a song because we don't have many mates!!

NL: Do you have a particular favourite song that you've written?

LES: I like "Berlin", and off the new album I like "African Nights", but that's just a personal thing. Whether it's on a musical level or a lyrical thing I couldn't really tell you.

NL: Can you remember the very first song that you wrote?

LES: The very very first one was a track called "I'm The One Who's Loving You". I wrote it on a cello, and that's probably why it wasn't recorded! No, it was all right, actually. It was a sort of McCartney-type ballad. It was a long time ago, that - it was about 1966, 1965 possibly.

NL: How long does it take you to write a song, and how do you go about it?

LES: Normally the idea comes and I put it down in some format on one of these little tape things, I always carry one of those around with me. I never used to - I used to get the most incredible ideas; you wake up and think "that's great, if I remember that's an E and that goes to F sharp, I won't forget it". You go to sleep, you wake up and you've forgotten it, so I always have one of those. From that I put it together with the drum machine and keyboards mostly and work from there. I might do it on the piano here, but it depends on

the song. I think "Kiev" was written in two hours complete, arrangement and everything, which was very unusual. I sat down, and just started with the idea for the music. I wrote the lyrics in about half an hour, which is incredible for me, because I always stumble a bit on lyrics. I tend to write the music first.

NL: Apart from your horses, what are your other interests?

LES: Cars, old cars. I've had a few classics: I've got an old Mercedes sports car that I'm doing up, I've just bought another one which is in much better condition, and I've got the old BMW there which is very rare - they only did five hundred.

NL: Have your musical tastes changed since you were last asked?

LES: Not really, no. To be honest I haven't listened to a lot of music recently, or other people's music. You tend to go back over favourite albums - Toto, Chicago; I was listening to Jon & Vangelis' "The Friends of Mr Cairo" in the studio to try and get a similar sort of echo on something. I used to play that all the time, it's a really good album, a beautiful album. That's the sort of thing I tend to listen to rather than anything that's current.

NL: I wanted to ask about a few specific songs. Somebody asked me whether "Shadows on the Sky" was written about Vietnam.

LES: No. That is a problem when you write things like that that tend to be a bit abstract in the lyrics. No, it's actually about the elephants and rhinos; it's hard to explain if people haven't been to Africa, but you can actually see for miles and miles, and if you see any animal it looks like a shadow on the horizon

NL: Staying on that one, why did you re-record it?

LES: Because it wasn't finished!

NL: Were you annoyed, then, that the unfinished version came out on the single?

LES: A little bit, yeah, but it tends to happen. That was an edited version. It was all right, but it wasn't musically correct; there was half a chorus missing on the second chorus where it went into the middle eight, there were odd vocals missing. There was nothing lyrically there that changed. It was a totally different mix, it was a softer vocal: I think on the original mix we put the oral exciter on it and tended to overdo it a little bit. We were pretty close to distortion on a couple of tracks on the original mix; that's certainly what happened to "Cheap The Bullet". We had to be very very careful bringing that up for a single, because it was very close to distortion, so you have to compensate, you roll off a little bit of bass to push the vocal out.

NL: When you first started doing the album John said it was going to be all digital, and it's come out with an AAD rating.

LES: Andy Mac is absolutely furious about that: it is totally digital. The only thing you can do when they do the rerun on it is change it then. The problem is there's so many formats.

NL: "Halfway To Freedom" was written before the events in Eastern Europe towards the end of last year. Was it prophetic?

LES: Quite probably! I've done that on several occasions. I think it was on the cards if people had looked; certainly after doing the East Berlin concert I was convinced that the Wall was definitely going to be down before Christmas. It wasn't specifically about Germany, I must confess that. I think what sparked it off was Romania, because I'd been following that for quite some time. I just couldn't believe what was happening out there, and I couldn't believe furthermore that no one knew about it in England - no one wanted to know. I think it was about the whole of that situation.

NL: Could you see the band doing another big Berlin gig?

LES: I can, yeah. This is probably a bit of a prophecy, too, but I can see us doing a concert at the Brandenburg Gate. I don't know how we'd do it, because to organise a gig that size you'd need so much sponsorship and everything, but I think it's on the cards to do something like that. It's a problem at the moment because everyone wants to do something in Berlin. I don't want to be seen as jumping on any bandwagon. We never have. I mean, if we wanted to do that we've had 20-odd years to do it - we've had plenty of opportunities!

NL: What's your feeling about the most recent developments in Germany, about reunification and the East German elections? Are they going the right way about it, do you think?

LES: That's a difficult one. I think they've moved with their hearts instead of their heads, and that's understandable. I think it needed to happen that fast, otherwise it wouldn't have happened, because they'd have got bogged down in so much red tape (if you'll pardon the pun!), so it's got to be a good thing.

NL: "Welcome To The Show" is in many ways the most interesting of your songs lyrically on the new album. It seems that you're using the metaphor of the entertainment business to attack the political use of entertainment methods; does that kind of cynical attitude also reflect what you think about the music business?

LES: Not really, no. I think it's just something that from my own personal point of view had to be said. It's interesting that you picked up on that, because nobody wanted that track to go on! They were all a bit sort of, "I don't really like the lyrics on that one"! It was just my own view of the whole media thing, and it was really saying that it's totally irrelevant to what we're doing. We're not Bananarama: we don't need Cyril Smith to sell our albums, thank you very much!

NL: What's the difference for you between recording songs and playing them live?

LES: Recording tends to get a bit boring. I like both of them, but recording you can only actually see it when you get to the finished thing, or the mixing stages. You might go over a song 500 times, probably more, I've never actually counted. It's difficult to get any enthusiasm. It's obviously better to do it live because you only have to do it once.

NL: Would you ever think about recording an album "live", actually playing as a band - one take and that's it?

LES: We have thought about it, yeah. We did get close to that on "Time Honoured Ghosts"; we actually did that fairly live, even to the point where John had to change from acoustic guitar to electric halfway through the number. He had to get out of his acoustic, tiptoe over, pick his guitar up and it was a Strat, so he had to get away from the amp and turn it on!

NL: Are you a perfectionist in the studio?

LES: I would think so, yeah, I think we all are. I think that the people we work with are as well. For example, I'll probably say "That's as good as we can get" and Andy Mac'll probably say "Well, let's just try for one more", and then you try for one more and you think "Well, that's not right", so you go for another one so that you're both happy. Hopefully it comes across on record. A live thing's totally different and it annoys me when people say you've overdubbed something on the record. Of course you have to do that sometimes, because in a live situation nobody is perfect.

NL: But should a live album be perfect?

LES: I don't think you'd do anyone a favour by putting, for example, a bass guitar passage on with some sort of distortion or a mains hum on it. So you replace things like that. It's not that you played it wrong, it's that the sound is wrong and is messing everything else up. The same thing with occasional vocals - if they're drastically flat, because in a big gig situation sometimes you can't hear it, or you're just singing badly - like I say nobody's perfect! - I really wouldn't like that to go down on disc to be played over and over and over again. Certain things like keyboards, if you play a bum note then fine, but vocals are very personal things. I'm not saying it's done all the time because it isn't, but on several occasions we have had to do that. On a live gig it's there and it's gone; ten seconds later you're into the next line and you'll never hear that again, but on disc the more you play it the worse it gets, particularly if it's on video as well. That's even worse - looking at yourself doing bum notes!

NL: What did you think of the "Victims of Circumstance" video?

LES: I didn't like it.

NL: Did you have any say in the non-live footage?

LES: Not a lot. We just let them get on with it, basically because we were too busy to do anything else. It is a problem that we've got round recently by saying that any videos of the band must be done in a semi-live or live context, because that's what we are.

NL: You didn't take exception to my comments in the last magazine, then, when I said it looked like an advert for Turkish Delight?

LES: Actually it did, didn't it - except the Turkish Delight one was better! The other side of it is that because we haven't had the major successes in Britain, a lot of these people go back to the roots of the band, and this is why we can never lose this image of being like boring old hippies. I don't think we are, in fact I know

we're not! They won't let us lose that image, and consequently when you get someone in like Mike Mansfield to do the video, it's back to the old image of peace and love and all that.

NL: Have there been any funny incidents on tour?

LES: One that springs to mind was a big Friday night concert at the Students' Union at Manchester University or UMIST, and the Moody Blues were supposed to be playing. The Moodies didn't turn up, so they asked us to play. It was a really big audience and we finished the gig with "Nights in White Satin", because at that point in time we did actually do that number, and we got an encore for it! The best thing of the lot was when we met the drummer, Graeme Edge, and John Lodge. It was the first time that we'd actually come face to face with them, at a Christmas party or something, and Graeme Edge was under the impression that we were just starting in the business. He was spouting on for about an hour about the dos and don'ts of the business; at that point Lindsay walked in and introduced us and the guy's face was incredible! He never lived it down...

NL: What's your earliest memory of Barclay James Harvest?

LES: As a four piece - because we were Barclay James Harvest a little before then, when we started with a singer, but I can't remember having gigged or done anything at that time - one of the earliest must have been the gigs in Belgium that we did. I can remember playing a gig in Londerzeel with the Nice, so that must be '68 or something like that. Our manager at the time had a Ferrari, and I remember driving from Ostend to Londerzeel in this Ferrari doing about 150 miles an hour - a Ferrari "Superfast" - and it was!

NL: When Woolly left, how did that affect your role within BJH?

LES: Not a lot, to be honest. We'd always all of us played guitars and keyboards, so even in the days when Woolly was there a lot of the keyboard stuff was done by myself and John. From that point of view getting our personal ideas across was much easier. In recording I could take my song in and play it rather than having to say to someone how I wanted it and having to compromise. Not replacing him, not getting a fourth member as such didn't limit us in any way. It didn't matter if it was one, two, three or ten people there so long as the band was still the three of us.

NL: At the time did you think that that was the end of the band?

LES: No, definitely not. It was the start of the real big concert circuit in Germany. I think that's one of the reasons why he left. We did the big venues after that and the Berlin gig, so we've never looked back. I think that's wrong to do that, because if you start analysing I don't think you'd ever go out on the road again. You've got to think forward - this is why I don't take any notice of what people write about us.

NL: Do you take any notice of what fans write about you?

LES: To an extent you've got to listen to the fans; the fans are more relevant than the press, aren't they? They're the ones that have actually stood there for hours waiting to see you and watched while we played, bought all the records. If they've spent that much

time and money then they want it to be good.

NL: Did you enjoy working with Jon Astley and Andy Mac?

LES: Jon did pre-production more than anything and he had a lot of ideas, but when it comes to the actual production of the album I think it should have been credited the other way round: Andy MacPherson and Jon Astley. Andy didn't really get the credit; I hope he does because he is a perfectionist.

NL: So you'd be happy to work with Andy again?

LES: Absolutely, absolutely. It's completely in the dark at the moment as to what we're going to do for the next album; the only definite, or rather 99.9% definite, is that we will be recording at Revo, and we will be using Andy Mac.

NL: Were the session musicians on this album your choice or Andy's?

LES: Andy's been around a long time, he's a musician himself, so he's obviously got a stable of session people that he uses, so it's partly Andy's friends and partly people that we know or knew of. Ritchie's worked with us before, we knew Ian Wilson through his work with Sad Café, and we'd heard of the Living In A Box keyboard player, Steve Pigott.

NL: Are there any songs by other people that you would like to interpret?

LES: I can't really think of any. I'm sure there are; it's difficult with rock songs, you can only do them one way, but ballads you can put your own interpretation on. I'll tell you what I would like to do - an album of carols. Just picking various carols and having various bands do them, and maybe trying it ourselves.

NL: Which one would you like to do?

LES: I think "Silent Night" is a good one, particularly if you did the German version as well, because it is a German carol.

NL: Who has been a particular influence on the way you write?

LES: I can't think of any one individual. I suppose the people that I have listened to most in the past have been the American bands; obviously a lot of influence from the early Crosby, Stills & Nash era, Chicago would be a big influence, I think, Toto... Individual singer/songwriters, I suppose currently, or going back just a few years, I like the Phil Collins/Steve Winwood type people. It's a difficult question: I think everyone that you hear that you like; it might even be classical music that you play.

NL: Are there any new bands around that you like?

LES: I can't really say that there are, because I don't listen to any. It's not by choice, it's just that I hate listening to the radio - the only time I listen to radio is when I'm on the road. Bands like Wet Wet Wet, who for me were one of the better bands of recent years, aren't new any more. Maybe I'm just getting old!

NL: Going back to playing live, you said that you like to look to

the future. How do you feel about playing your old songs live?

LES: It doesn't bother me - I'd play them all! The problem is that you're getting to a three or four hour concert; this is what you can't get over to people. When you actually get the stage act together, people say "You can't leave that out", but if you leave that out it means you can do one more new one, or conversely, if you put that in you've got to lose one more new one.

NL: Are there songs in the set that you think you can't leave out?

LES: "Hymn". John tried to drop it last time, and we said "There's no way you can drop that". If one of the new ones is a massive hit, then maybe we'll consider finishing with "Hymn" and then coming back and doing whatever it is, but it would have to be very strong to do that because "Hymn" is a real killer!

NL: People have suggested that you could drop things like "Child of the Universe" or "Poor Man's Moody Blues" and put in different old ones.

LES: Yeah, that's a possibility; we did put "Medicine Man" in - I really wouldn't mind. When I write songs for an album I'm thinking of the big gigs that we're going to be doing, and if I do a big ballad I always try and envisage myself in an open air situation, and think about how this sound comes across at night; you can judge that songs like, for example, "Halfway To Freedom" would go down well. Certain tracks can't really be done. They'd be nice to try, but you know that they'd sound a poor second best to some of the other ones that perhaps don't come across as well as they should do on record, but in a live situation they would. I'm thinking specifically about "African Nights"; that wouldn't be a good live number, because it's a singalong acoustic-type thing. From my point of view, my tracks, there are certainly three good ones that could be done. I think "Halfway To Freedom" definitely, "The Life You Lead" is another good live one, possibly "Shadows" would be a good live number. You never know until you get to rehearsal.

NL: It's interesting that a lot of the German venues are smaller this time than you've played before.

LES: Everyone's gone down a notch - even Prince has had problems this time. It's just the state of the market, and we're all hoping it's going to pick up again. We've had a problem in Germany this time, because the Olympiahalle is closed for a few months because they've got structural problems, and it just so happens that it's closed when we're touring, so instead of doing that which has a capacity of 7, 8 or 9,000, we're doing the Deutsches Museum for two nights which is the same capacity. It's a problem when you start looking at venue availability.

NL: Any chance of any summer open airs this year?

LES: I think so. I think it's inevitable if this record keeps selling for another two or three weeks as it is doing, and jumps back up the charts - if it gets to Top 5 there's a very strong chance. Another prophecy!

CLASSIC ALBUMS REVISITED

WOOLLY WOLSTENHOLME - "MAESTOSO"

Woolly Wolstenholme's songs with BJH got better and better with each new album, culminating with "In Search Of England", a musical swansong from the man behind the majesty of BJH music. "Maestoso" - the musical term for "with majesty" - is the long-lost chapter following on from Woolly's BJH career. For those who didn't snap it up at its 1980 release, please don't miss this golden opportunity to buy the re-issue*. Hearing it, you will be as mortified as me to think that it was deleted.

Co-produced by David Rohl ("Gone To Earth" and "Octoberon") and featuring Steve Broomhead on lead guitar and Kim Turner on drums - both of whom appeared with BJH on David Rohl's "The Eye Of Wendor" album - "Maestoso" is at once a consolidation and a progression of Woolly's skill as a songwriter and his genius as a musician. The Mellotron, which discerning fans have come to cherish, undergirds the style of the album, yet the nine songs disarm you with their originality and flair, from the dark and fraught "American Excess" to the primal pulsating of "Quiet Islands".

Woolly's lyrics have never been so vivid or so penetrating, from images of young soldiers of The Great War under sentence of death ("Gates Of Heaven") to faces of countless refugees, helpless before us ("Patriots"). Words and music are blended masterfully, washing over you like a wave of "broken diamonds", to quote one song.

The high-point of "Maestoso" is an exultant celebration, etched in classic symphonic-BJH style: "A Hymn In The Roof Of The World", which casts a breathtaking panorama, the meeting of a Russian and an American mountaineer at the summit of Everest. This song was recorded for "Everyone Is Everybody Else", but never saw the light of day, making the "Maestoso" version a dramatic comeback, victorious in its quality and power.

"Maestoso" is a rare musical treasure; the grooves of my copy have worn thin, but the pleasure brought with each playing only matures like a classic wine. "Yesterday his songs of glory shone", but they are far from dead and buried.

ROBIN STAPLEFORD

* "Maestoso" was reissued in April by S.P.M. in CD format only.

The next in our series of "Classic Albums Revisited" will be "Gone To Earth", reassessed by Mark Gregson and Sam Bogner.

REVIEWS

JUSTIN HAYWARD with Mike Batt and the LPO - "Classic Blue" (TRAX)

Swoon while Justin Hayward sings "God Only Knows", cry buckets as Mr Moody Blue evokes such sad images in "Bright Eyes", reach for the Kleenex when His Blondness plays havoc with your emotions during "MacArthur Park".

Seriously though, folks, Justin has made an album of cover versions of some all-time favourites and it's rather brilliant. He's teamed up with the Womble man himself, Mike Batt, who wrote some intelligent sleeve notes explaining that they agreed to have no synthesisers nor rhythm section. The result is stunning and stretches Justin's voice as never before. Quite rightly, he is proud of the last note in the afore-mentioned "MacArthur Park", which I think should have been the first single and not "Tracks Of My Tears", fine though it is. (By the way, did you know that on the Richard Harris original, he couldn't get that last note, so a girl was brought in to sing it?).

Yes, it's a melancholy album, a veritable collection of songs to commit suicide by, and JH brings out the sadness of "Vincent" and "Scarborough Fair".

The running order is interesting, starting softly, building up to one climax, calming down only to go via a re-work of "Forever Autumn" to a maximalist production work on Led Zeppelin's "Stairway To Heaven". BJH fans should like this album. If I have a minor niggle, it's if this is supposed to be a collection of "classic songs", as it claims, then isn't it a bit ingenuous of Mike Batt to get three writing credits? I can accept "Bright Eyes", and even "As Long As The Moon Can Shine", which Jus sang at a charity concert, taking Art Garfunkel's part from the studio production of "The Hunting Of The Snark", but "Railway Hotel" is a really obscure track!

I hope that in a year or two we get volume 2. Personally, I'd love to hear him who has set many a female heart a-flutter get his tonsils around "Bridge Over Troubled Water", "Both Sides Now" or "The Lady In Red".

CLAIRE POWELL

THE STRANGLERS - LIVE AT BRIXTON ACADEMY, 24-2-90

They may be a young band compared to BJH, but they're getting on compared with everybody else - The Stranglers have now reached the "ageing rocker" zone, in which they can only look forward to ever more mediocre reviews from the so-called music press.

This does the band a great disservice. Although they could hardly be argued to employ great musical finesse, this concert proved that they are, with the exception of Elvis Costello, perhaps the only relevant remainder from the UK punk rock era, and they're still turning out excellent pop which, if anything, improves with each new album.

The excellent rhythm section formed by Jet Black (drums) and J.J. Burnell (bass) was complemented by guitarist/lead vocalist Hugh Cornwell and the distinctive keyboards of Dave Greenfield in an energetic celebration of work which included (very) oldies such as "Down In The Sewer" and moved through classics such as "Golden Brown" and "Strange Little Girl" through to material from what sounds to be an excellent new album.

Perhaps most surprising was the excellent response given to

renditions from the previous, much underrated "DreampTime" LP. Songs such as "Shakin' Like A Leaf" and "Always The Sun" were received by the audience like the future classics that they are, no doubt helped along by the jazzy three-piece brass section which accompanied the band, plus the show's excellent sound and well-designed lighting.

The encores were well-deserved, including surprise cover versions such as "Walk On By" and, finally, "All Day And All Of The Night" - an excellent choice to round off a great evening's entertainment.

JON SCHICK

THE BONNY BUNCH OF OLD FOGEYS

Fairport Convention at the Cambridge Corn Exchange, Feb.1990

"Come on, don't be afraid, we're the friendly band!" So shouted Simon Nicol as he signed albums and programmes in the foyer after the show. I didn't even have to fight my way through hysterical teenagers to get my artefact immortalised. And Dave Mattacks was there, allowing his pet mongrel, Rover, to give paw prints to obsessive collectors, and the programme included a P.S. about Martin Allcock's recent addition of a baby boy. All very civilised. Mature Rock, that's what I'd call it. An evening perfectly suited to the seasoned, fine-music devotees in the 25 to 45 age bracket, of which the audience largely comprised.

But don't be misled, there were more than a few spells of utterly blistering rock from The Bonny Bunch Of Ageing Folk-Rockers. Some of the interplay between Mattacks' drums and Ric Sanders' lacerating violin...well, breathtaking. The slightly younger Sanders skipped merrily about the stage all night, revelling in his new cordless fiddle.

The successful new material matched the vitality given to old classics, showing that there's life in Fairport yet, and they exceeded my expectations for an evening of first class entertainment. "Mature Rock" should be a genre of its own; the likes of Fairport and BJH can show young commercial fly-by-nights a thing or two, with their hallmark of quality musicianship with integrity.

ROBIN STAPLEFORD

SIMPLY RED - LIVE IN PARIS

It was with some excitement that I journeyed to Paris by car, ferry and coach to see Simply Red live. Despite an inordinate delay before they took the stage, and a grossly ineffectual support act, my journey was not in vain.

Simply Red played a superb set lasting nearly two hours. Virtually all the songs from "A New Flame" were presented. The sound was excellent, being an almost faithful reproduction of the recorded versions. Mick Hucknall's rapport with the audience and his charisma are leading assets. His unique soulful voice sends a shiver down my spine.

The highlight of the evening was an acoustic version of "Holding Back The Tears" included as an encore (the band version having already been included in the set). Other highlights were "Come To My Aid", "It's Only Love" and "Turn It Up". The crowd loved it - every minute of it.

This was the first concert I had been to outside the U.K. Ticket holders were not allocated seats; therefore those who had arrived early had the choice of the best seats. This seems fair - why do U.K. venues not follow suit?

DAVID WATSON

Meet The Fans

ROBIN & BARBARA STAPLEFORD
by **ADAM JOHN STAPLEFORD**

Well, my Dad's a bit mad, really. Apart from swinging me round the room, he's always listening to weird music like GBH (or whatever they're called) and lots of others like, er..The Ingrid (whoops, Dad said I wasn't supposed to mention them).

Daddy said that getting that tape by Woolly Wotsit made his decade. What about me being born? Huh!

Dad's so mad about Barclee Thingy that he's even converted Mummy to them, and she's Irish!! They even had their first kiss to "The World Goes On". Yuk! Disgusting! Funny how that's quite a long song...

Anyway, bye for now. P.S. I'm the good-looking one in the photo.



MONIKA BRAUCKHOFF

Hi, my nickname is Knuffi, and if you want to know more about me, then read on...

I was born in the second song on "XII", two months after BJH had been founded (Nov.'66), and I study music at Berlin Art School (or should I say, College) to become a primary school teacher. Other hobbies of mine than BJH (and EVERYTHING connected with them) are consuming and writing all kinds of words and music, GREAT Britain and its language, and animals, particularly horses and rabbits (but I've only got two!).



I became a fan through "Gone To Earth" and "Eyes Of The Universe" in 1981, more extreme in '82, and hopeless in '87! My first ever concert was Berlin, February '82.

Address: Monika Brauckhoff, Ruthnerweg 37, 1000 Berlin 45, GERMANY.

P.S. The furry one in the photo is Dinah ("Pushkin") Domone, the official club mascot and long-suffering furry football when Keith is trying to put together the next issue of NL...

MARKETPLACE

FOR SALE - "Eyes Of The Universe" 12" promotional 4-track single, mint condition. Offers or bribes to:

FRASER SHIELDS, 10 South Glassford Street, Milngavie, Glasgow G64 6AT

WANTED - "Berlin - A Concert For The People" German Polystar issue; "Other Short Stories"; "Life Is For Living" one-sided 7"; "Sip Of Wine" and "Mocking Bird" 12" singles. Write to:

JAN ØYVIND HOLM, Drake&sv.21, 3200 Sandefjord, NORWAY

FOR SALE - BJH records: "Loving Is Easy"/"Polk Street Rag" single (blue vinyl), POSP 012 (in a plastic sleeve), £1.50; LPs "Everyone Is Everybody Else" 2383 286 Super, £4.00; "Eyes Of The Universe" POLD 5029, £3.50; "Turn Of The Tide" POLD 5040, £4.00. Other groups: Rick Wakeman- "The Six Wives Of Henry VII" AMLH 64361, £3.50; Emerson, Lake & Palmer- "Pictures At An Exhibition" HELP 1, £3.50. Contact:

RICHARD KIERTON, 43 Nunsfield Drive, Alvaston, Derby DE2 0GH

THANK YOU MESSAGE: My sincere and unreserved thanks to the following people... Mike Melnyk, Stewart Renwick, Gabi Bauer, Peter Brooks, Dagmar Müller, Ian Chennell, Andreas Raschke, Richard Kierton, Bernd Dörsam and, of course, good ol' K.Domone! Without all of your invaluable help, I wouldn't have such a record collection as I proudly now own. Remind me, should we meet, that I owe you all a pint. Thanks.

KEV CROSSLEY

BETTER DAYS: Vintage pop and rock papers and magazines. For a huge, detailed list of 2,000 or so different papers, books, magazines, programmes etc., please send SAE, dollar bill or 2 IRCs to:

BETTER DAYS, 20 Trembear Road, St.Austell, Cornwall, PL25 5NY

PENPALS WANTED from anywhere, preferably female, by 19 year old BJH/Jethro Tull/Yes/Pink Floyd/Queen/Deep Purple/Gary Moore fan. Also wanted: pre-1982 BJH albums on CD or cassette. Write to:

EAMONN McCLOREY, 38 Drumsesk Road, Rostrevor, Co.Down, N.Ireland, BT34 3EG

I SINCERELY WISH to be able to establish correspondence with other fans of BJH. I am aged 22, male, and a Hong Kong Chinese, and am now an undergraduate in the Hong Kong Polytechnic, studying accounting. Please write to:

JEFFREY AU YEUNG, Rm 1402, Lam Shek Hse, Ping Shek Est, Kwun Tong, HONG KONG.

To advertise free in NL, just send your advertisement to me at the address below, stating which issue you would like it to appear in and giving your membership number. Remember, the deadline for inclusion of adverts, artwork and articles in the next issue is July 10th, 1990.

The International BJH Fan Club
35 Wood End Green Road, Hayes, Middlesex UB3 2SB, UK

