

# Nova Lepidoptera

Exclusive Interview  
with  
Les Holroyd

*The Barclay James Harvest Magazine*

Number 38

September 1997







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## *Credits*

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**Next Issue:** Last copy date: October 10th. Available: end November

**Membership:** UK: £8.00 p.a.; Europe: £10.00 p.a.; Elsewhere: £12.00 p.a.

Members' letters and contributions are always welcome. Please don't forget to enclose a stamped addressed envelope or International Reply Coupon if you would like a personal reply.

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## On Tour in Germany and Switzerland

As German and Swiss members (or anyone else who sent in an SAE as requested in the last NL) will already know, BJH are playing eighteen concerts in Germany and Switzerland in September. Details are:-

**Germany:** (promoter Henning Töbel, Moderne Welt, Stuttgart)

06.09 ROTTWEIL, Ferienzauber, Zelt  
07.09 NÜRNBERG, Serenadenhof  
08.09 DRESDEN, Kulturpalast  
10.09 HAMELN, Rattenfängerhalle\*\*  
11.09 HAMBURG, Große Freiheit\*\*  
12.09 BERLIN, Huxleys Neue Welt  
14.09 NEU-ISENBURG, Hugenottenhalle\*  
15.09 ERFURT, Thüringenhalle  
16.09 STUTTGART, Liederhalle  
18.09 MÜNCHEN, Babylon  
19.09 RASTATT, Badener Halle  
20.09 NIEDERSTETTEN, Festzelt  
21.09 BONN, Museumsplatz\*\*

**Switzerland:**

23.09 ZÜRICH, Zürcher Volkshaus\*\*  
24.09 BASEL, Messe Basel  
25.09 GOSSAU, Fürstenlandsaal  
26.09 SEMPACH, Festhalle  
27.09 BERN, Theater im National

\* Near Frankfurt

\*\* Change of venue

We know of no plans at present for live shows in other countries. It seems likely that if a release is negotiated in the UK or France for *River Of Dreams* (see the special "Tell Me The Answer" on p.16), then a promoter could be found to underwrite some live shows, but until then the only way to see the band live is to travel to Germany or Switzerland.

## New Album Charts

The response to the release of *River Of Dreams* on May 26th has generally been very good. The title track received quite a lot of airplay in Germany, and the album spent three weeks in the German charts, peaking at #71. While this isn't spectacular by BJH's standards, *Caught In The Light* didn't chart at all, and it's quite an achievement after a gap of four years. Even better, in Switzerland the album reached #33.

Les, Mel, John and Martin Lawrence travelled out to Germany for three days from May 26th to 28th to promote the album, giving interviews to radio and cable TV stations and performing "unplugged" versions of "River Of Dreams" and "Life Is For Living" at four radio stations.

The band also appeared at a special TV show to mark 25 years of the Munich Olympiapark, and their playback of "River Of Dreams" was included in the TV broadcast of the event. The programme will be re-broadcast by Bayerisches Fernsehen (B3) at 1945 European time (1845 UK time) on September 19th.

## Promo CDs

Thanks to Sven Sturm at Polydor GmbH, we have some copies of the promo-only CD single of "River Of Dreams" to give away. Three lucky Hotline listeners have already won copies of the CD, which was not available in the shops, but we are holding open the prize draw mentioned in the last NL until October 10th in order to give everyone a chance. To enter, just tell us your top three songs from *River Of Dreams* and you will stand a chance of winning one of these rare CDs.

## Early Morning Onwards

The very first Barclay James Harvest compilation album is finally being released on CD in September, twenty-five years after the original LP hit the shops. The CD, the first release on new reissue specialist label Brimstone, comes with a fold-out insert with all the lyrics plus both versions of the LP sleeve (one black with a photo of the band, one white with orange lettering and logo), arranged in such a way that either can be shown at the front of the CD case.

Swallowtail is taking orders for the CD now, and prices are as shown on the order form stapled in the centre of the magazine. Unfortunately we're not able to offer the album at its original selling price of 99p, but then there's a quarter century's worth of inflation to consider!

Brimstone's next venture, a reissue of the quadraphonic mix of *Once Again*, should be out in the next few months, and will also be available through Swallowtail.

## e-mail Bulletins

Club members who have on-line access can now receive free e-mail news bulletins whenever there is any BJH news to hand. To be added to our list, please let us know your e-mail address or that of a friend if you can persuade them to accept mail on your behalf. If your address is already on our list, please let us know of any changes, as a number of messages have been bouncing back to us. If you're not on-line, you won't miss out, as we will still send out paper bulletins for important news such as tour dates.

## CDs Repackaged

The latest pressings of Mandalaband's *Eye Of Wendor* CD and Woolly Wolstenholme's *Songs From The Black Box* both feature slight changes to the packaging. The Mandalaband disc now has a six-way fold-out insert which includes larger colour reproductions of the original LP sleeves, and can be folded in such a way as to show the original *Eye Of Wendor* cover design at the front of the jewel case.

Woolly's CD has been reissued on the Blueprint label, the mid-price division of Voiceprint. The back of the CD now has a white background and the Blueprint logo, but is otherwise unchanged, and now carries the number BP174CD. Swallowtail has both new versions in stock, and, in the case of the *Black Box* CDs, is also able to pass on a slight reduction in price - see the enclosed Swallowtail order form for details. Woolly's CD has also been issued in Japan, with the number VJP 014.

## ..Other Short Stories..

...We now have another **poster** available, a full-colour design based on the *Caught In The Light* artwork, advertising a (cancelled!) concert in Düsseldorf on November 5th, 1993. We have also acquired further stocks of the *Victims Of Circumstance* **live video**; see the enclosed order forms for details...

...BJH were **featured artists** on German radio station Star\*Sat on May 19th, when no less than 15 of their songs were played...

...Finally, please note that we will be on our **holidays** and/or on tour for the first two weeks in September, so will not be able to deal with letters or orders until we return...

**NL is proud to present an exclusive interview with Les Holroyd, conducted in the morning of the band's show in Dortmund on July 5th**

**Congratulations on the new album - the response from the fans has been overwhelmingly favourable. Does this feel like a renaissance to you for Barclay James Harvest?**

Not yet, no – we're working on it! It's more enjoyable than it's been for a couple of years, but you obviously know why, all the pressures that we've had. Now all that's out of the way, it was a good album for us to do, it was fun to do. The songs were right, it was a good selection this time – not that it wasn't a good selection last time, but if anything it was a bit low key. I think this has a better variety on it. The new numbers were received brilliantly last night, so hopefully it will take off. It's been in the charts, but it's dipped down a bit, because we're not doing anything.

**It must already have sold better than the last album, I'd have thought.**

I don't know. I try not to ask about sales, because you either get disappointed or you start asking questions: "Why can't you do more?" and all that, so I leave it up to them.

**Do you have a favourite song from the album?**

No, I don't have a favourite at the moment, but then I never do, really. I suppose if any, "Yesterday's Heroes", only from a musical point of view. It's easy to play, but lends itself to all types of things. When I first

started writing that, I thought that that could possibly be a single, a radio-play thing. Having said that, it's a very long track. The problem that we're faced with now, even more than it used to be, is that the radio people don't play them - even if they're over three minutes you've got a problem. Three minutes is nothing for a track.

**Especially for the Barclays**

You find yourself compromising, don't you, which I don't think is a good idea.

**Either that or you have to have some edited version with the guts taken out.**

They edited "River Of Dreams" three times, then when we got to the TV station in Munich, we arrived for the initial run-through, and the guy said, "Oh, by the way, we've edited it again". What? Why?!

**Do you have a favourite amongst John's songs written for this album?**

I think, if any of them, "River Of Dreams". Now we've started playing it live, especially with Jeff (who, incidentally is brilliant, absolutely brilliant!), it has a different feel again to the initial thing that we did on stage, so there's actually three versions if you like, discounting the TV edits! We recorded it with Colin doing bits of keyboards and then Jeff came in and did the piano. Now we've taken it into the live version, to me, anyway, it's changed again, it's gone very American in feel, very Band-type thing, with the pianos especially. When we did the run-through, a lot of the American crew who were with Art Garfunkel were on-stage and were really getting off on "River Of Dreams". It's early days yet. We perhaps won't get a chance to play many more new numbers in the act - if we did then maybe they'd change and one of those would be a favourite.

**Talking of Jeff, why the change of guest musicians this time round?**

Kevin was busy doing something else. Martin suggested that we try Jeff out, because he'd worked with him, and he said that he was really good, a totally different keyboard player to Kevin and Colin. After using him in the studio, why not give it a try? We're not limited in what we can use, provided we don't go back down the road of BVs (*backing vocalists*) and things like that, which was a big mistake, as you know! It's great, because it's good fun as well, and we're picking up on his enthusiasm, and it's not like "Oh, the same old band again". It's good for Colin as well because he gets on really well with him musically.

**What contributions did Johnny and Jeff make to the album?**

Without looking at the tracks in front of me, without listening, I can't say, because we brought Jeff in and said "Try this and try that". "So Long", the really expensive, American, sophisticated piano sound - he was responsible for that. First take, that, by the way! He listened to the track and just played it, being very sympathetic to the songwriter, which a lot of people aren't, they just go ahead and do the wrong thing. He's worked on most of them, I think.

**Then Johnny Musgrove was guitar?**

No, keyboards again. Nobody played guitar - except John and I! I think John Musgrove only played on one track. I've forgotten the title - isn't that terrible, because you know we have working titles, and they change as you go along. "Children Of The Disappeared", that's what it was!

**How did you get the string sounds on the intro to the album? Is that all synthesised?**

Yeah, that's Jeff.

**It certainly fooled a few people - we had people asking which orchestra played the strings.**

That's good, isn't it? You can tell them it was the Berlin Philharmonic or something - they all crammed into John's studio!

**When you start recording a song now, in what order do you lay down the instruments and voices, etc.?**

On this particular one, as you've probably sussed out by now, a lot of it was acoustic guitars. We physically sat down with two guitars, two chairs and two mics and put a backing track down on most of them. I think that the exceptions to that were "Children Of The Disappeared" and "So Long", but the rest of them were basically acoustic tracks or piano tracks. When they were piano tracks it was the full band that sat there, so most of them are live - as live as you can get with three people or four people in a studio like John's!

**Some of your songs have a retrospective theme - is this a result of the problems that the band has had over the past couple of years?**

Yeah, I think it has to be. There's no secret, well certainly not to my songs. It's things that happen to you, places that you've been, people you meet, things you hear, whatever. It all goes in and it's in here, it's locked in here and it comes out when you come to write songs. Obviously we've had a big sort of influence of outside factors...

**At least something good came out of it.**

Yeah, exactly. You can't come through that without making reference to it, if you like.

**At times the sound is very reminiscent of the band's seventies sound, as well, the harmonies, the guitar. Is that deliberate?**

Yeah, absolutely. We were listening, and John in particular was listening to what bands like Oasis are doing and Blur and people like that, and if you listen to it it's what we were doing in the seventies, the type of thing which we would have done with songs. Not rough, but we hadn't sanded the edges off it, we'd just left it as it was, and lots of harmonies. We said, "well, why don't we do more of that? We're capable of doing it, so why don't we do it, try and write songs which have that feel to them?". "Back In The Game" was a reference – not a retrospective thing, but a positive thing, if you like, lyrically, so that's one track that it worked on, obviously "River Of Dreams". We just tried it wherever we could, putting in more harmonies than we'd ever done before, I think. I think the last time we did this many harmonies was *Time Honoured Ghosts*!

**That's an album title that's cropped up quite a lot in comparisons with this one.**

Well I enjoyed doing that album. I think it comes across - if you enjoy doing something then obviously it comes across, and that was a particularly good time, I think, in our career, where we had no immediate pressure in the business, no pressure of touring, no pressures from the record company. It just felt like maybe that's what's happening now, because as you know we've changed record company, or not record company but territory, for the better, I may add. There was no pressure from the English company telling us what to do, which was a problem in the past, because the majority of our work was in Germany and Switzerland, as you know. It seemed a bit odd, really, that England was telling them what to do with their product.

**Are there further albums due under the contract?**

No. This is a one-off, but they have the options, and I'm sure that they will take them up. We have got other territories now that we've wanted before, but we've always been overruled before by the record company saying, "No, you can't do that without doing this." I'm thinking particularly about Canada – we've now got a deal there, whereas before the English company always said "No, you can't do that without releasing in America", the old syndrome of "You can't tour Canada without doing America". Why? So we've got that, we've got Japan, we've got a few of the Far East territories, Italy are interested, Scandinavia...

**I have to ask the question, what about England?**

I really couldn't tell you what's happening there. I don't know, I really don't know.

**And the same thing for touring England, of course.**

Yeah, it's always a problem. I mean, if we wanted to, I suppose we could do a whole series of smaller gigs, but whether we'd want to do it or not, that's a different thing. We're obviously doing smaller gigs in Germany, but smaller gigs in Germany aren't so small, and they're quite respectable gigs. In Hamburg and Munich, I'd never heard of the gigs, to be honest, but I enquired about them, and the one in Hamburg is supposed to be the place to play, so I'm not unduly worried about coming down to do it. I quite prefer it - we were at the Olympiahalle doing this TV thing, and you walk out to the back and look at the stage, and you suddenly realise what a rip-off it is for the kids; they can't see you, and the sound in those places isn't very good. Most times you're there for the event



rather than watching the music, so it doesn't really bother me, doing two thousand, two and a half thousand seaters.

**Going back to the album again, another theme that seems to run through the whole album is dreams. Is that something you set out to do?**

No, it just happened. I don't know why. I guess John had "River Of Dreams" for a long time, but as you know, we don't confide in each other as to what we've got in the pipeline in terms of either melodies or lyrics! I had this idea of "Back In The Game" for quite a long time, the chorus line, "Living in a rock and roll dream". I played around with it at home as a kind of Byrds-type thing, with the. You sit there with the Rickenbacker and you start singing and it's an immediate thing, like "America, 1970s", and it sparked a whole sort of lyrical idea about what we were doing in those days. It's what we used to do - we were actually living in a rock and roll dream. All this is a rock and roll dream, in its way. It's something that the average person can't do, and they think that it's marvellous, and it's not! It is marvellous, of course it's marvellous, but for example last night we got off-stage about midnight-ish, and by the time we'd finished messing about backstage and everything and got in the bus and drove here, we arrived here at six o'clock this morning. Now to some people that might be romantic, on the road, but you wake up thinking, "Was it really a good idea to do that overnighter, or was it a good idea to sit up so long on the bus, talking and drinking beer and wine and eating schnitzel at two o'clock in the morning? Was that really a good idea?!" You look in the mirror when you get up and think, "Oh, God!"

**This sort of follows on! It's thirty years now since the birth of BJH, and looking into your crystal ball, how much longer do you see the band going on?**

I don't look that far, I never have done. I suppose it's a cliché which has been used many, many times, but it's a Peter Pan world, and everyone that's in it is a Peter Pan, they always think they're eighteen! It's like that Bryan Adams song, "Eighteen 'Till I Die - that's a brilliant song, it about sums it up, really. You look round, and you think you're where you were twenty years ago, and if you think that way, well why not, what's the problem? You're no different from one birthday to another, you don't suddenly go down a step. I don't say to myself, right, I've got another two years and that's it. We could have said that twenty years ago, and a lot of people probably did and probably ended it after two years by saying that. I don't think I'm that old, and I think that's the secret - don't think too far ahead. For example, talking about the record deal, now if the Germans pick up the next album that is something that could go on for another eighteen months, two years, in terms of promoting the album, doing festivals, doing another tour. If they pick up another album, it's another two years. We're ready to do something at the drop of a hat, like this thing, we've had a week's rehearsal. A week, after three years off the road, two and a half years off the road?! And we'll be touring in September, with another week's rehearsal - five days, actually, in August, and then what really, I suppose, is a major tour if it's extended.

**Could you retire if you wanted to?**

Me, personally? Yeah, I suppose I could.

**So you're doing it because you're enjoying doing it?**

Oh yeah. I mean you know how much money is made in this business, and how much is spent, and how much heartache there is and how much pressure, although I've got to say that there isn't a lot of

pressure on this particular band. It's something that I never think of, to be honest, because I am enjoying doing it. I'm doing it for all the right reasons, and I think everyone in the band is doing it for the right reasons, because we're now enjoying it again. We enjoyed doing the album, we enjoyed playing it in the studio. On stage you'll probably see the difference. OK, with the old numbers, there's not that much that you could do with them any more in terms of presentation. I suppose people could say that it's a bit boring, but if the fans like yourselves want those numbers, then we'll play them. You've not got to lose sight of what it's all about – it's about entertainment, it's not about doing what you want to do. Of course, if you enjoy doing it, that's a bonus, but you're not up there first and foremost to over-indulge and do what you want to do, and say to the fans, "Well you either like it or you don't, but this is what I'm doing." In terms of the older numbers, getting back to it, there's not a lot that more we can do with it except play it. But there's a little bit of a spark, an added spark gone in with Jeff again, because it's a bit of a challenge for him and it's something new for us. He's revitalised the numbers a little bit, and we've done it ourselves as well, because we've hopefully picked the best of the old material, but you can never satisfy everybody. We would have liked to have played more of the new stuff, but that can be a bit dangerous as well, you can overplay the new stuff.

#### **Maybe in September?**

It could be, it could be, but I mean we've got so much to draw on, so much material. We haven't even touched the last album, which to me was a great pity. There were some good tracks on there, some interesting tracks. I wanted to do, to attempt something like "Cold War" or whatever. Something a bit different, with different instrumentation, but you have to limit yourself.

#### **What's the most enjoyable thing about being in BJH?**

Being together on stage, for me, because that's when it comes together. Don't take this wrong, but you can manufacture anything else, even down to the TV things. I'm not giving anything away here, but we've just done a TV thing in Munich, and we had it set up for a five-piece band, and, unfortunately, Colin was on holiday, so Martin appeared on TV – one of those, like we've done in the past! You can do that, you can do it on record, you can bring people in and not tell anybody – not that we've done that, but people do. If we bring people in, we always credit them, but the only place that you can't do that is on stage, because once you get out there, from the word go you're on your own. For me that is the best part, because you're not kidding anybody, it's all there for everyone to see.

#### **The obvious corollary to that one – what's the least enjoyable thing about being in BJH?!**

Er, interviews! No, no, to be honest, I've quite enjoyed these interviews over this past week. We've done a lot, as you probably know, a load of Swiss things and a load of German things, but by the end of day I really enjoyed them because people were really getting off on the new album. The least enjoyable, really, is when you get the interviewers that don't know anything about the band, and are not geared to the music business at all, then it becomes a real pain in the arse! But you can cope with most things, because it's the job, isn't it – not the job, the profession!

**Thank you very much.**



For the next in our series spotlighting some of BJH's most notable live performances over the years we've taken the slightly unusual step of featuring the band's most recent live show, an open-air concert in Germany where BJH headlined over Welsh singer-songwriter Mal Pope, Emerson, Lake and Palmer and Art Garfunkel. The concert, together with the previous night's show in Halle, marked an important step in BJH's return to the limelight...



It wasn't Glastonbury - and thank goodness for that. We were well-behaved and so was the sun which came out for us. Thousands arrived at the Westfalenpark on Saturday July 5th for the Out In The Green concert.

The first act was a Welshman with an English accent (*Mal Pope*). Just a lone man and a guitar but he was good if derivative and I'd buy a CD of his if he's made one.

Then came Emerson, Lake and Palmer. I know that a lot of IBJHFC like them but personally I found that a little of them goes a long way. They were given to moments of musical pomposity, not to mention self-indulgence but their fans loved it.

Next was Art Garfunkel with four hand-picked musicians. What can one say about him? He sings like an angel - or at least the way I expect one to sing. He was humorous between songs and mentioned Paul Simon. I'll be buying his next CD.

After yet another taking away of one set and putting up of another the moment had come - BJH were to come on stage. With Colin and Jeff Leach instead of Kevin to back them, they started with the now traditional "Mockingbird". And what a set we got. There was "River of Dreams", "Yesterday's Heroes" and "Back in the Game" from the latest CD. Perhaps more will be added for the September tour? The guys looked happy and relaxed on stage and it must be rewarding to look out on the assembled masses loving the songs. From where I was standing (literally) the sound balance seemed marvellous.

Inevitably on an occasion like this the set had to be ever so slightly curtailed and "Child of the Universe" and "Rock 'n' Roll Lady" were victims in the race against the clock. John thanked us for being a superb(1) audience but all I can say is that it was a pleasure and a privilege to have been there. Roll on September!

**Claire Powell**

## **A small but representative selection of your comments about the River Of Dreams album:-**

### **Recording**

The classic BJH sound, but still innovative.  
LORNA PRICE

Artificial drumming, probably the same technology as on *Caught In The Light*. It's a pity!  
URS FREYTAG

Production and sound are excellent.  
STUART BERRY

Les's voice has too much reverb on it and therefore sounds unnatural, although normally he has such an enchanting voice.  
GERNOT WERKLE

The overall sound is great (digital?).  
NEIL BATY

### **Sleeve**

An excellent idea to create a butterfly from a water droplet.  
GERNOT WERKLE

A beautiful, consistent cover encompassing everything that the group stands for.  
JENS HEDEGAARD

I like the artwork very much. It's a shame that Polydor GmbH couldn't afford any lighting for the photo of the band!  
DAVID JEFFERY

Very impressed with the music, but what an awful case! It does look very cheap and nasty. Is Polydor GmbH a subsidiary of Pickwick?  
JOHN SMITH

An eye-catching and smart cover design. Fan club info restored, we are not forgotten!  
STUART BERRY

### **Back In The Game**

Capturing the essence of BJH circa *Everyone* and *Time Honoured Ghosts*, but with 90s production techniques. A fine song from Les.  
STUART BERRY

What makes this song for me is the retro-Rickenbacker guitar sound, what a master-stroke!  
IAN BOWDEN

Splendid opener. Key change comes unexpectedly, but works!  
MATTHIAS OESCHGER

Great lyrics, fantastic 70s guitars.  
RAINER & GABI SANDMAIER

### **River Of Dreams**

Reflective in the aftermath of a difficult period for BJH. You can imagine this may have been written around the time of John's interview printed in NL24.  
TERRY LUCK

I just can't get it out of my head!  
ULRIKE HÖSCH

It's quite sad that John feels so disillusioned. John needs to know that "the good seed" is the pleasure and enjoyment that his talent and skill in songwriting has brought to me and to other fans of the band. It's nice to hear Mel's fine drumming, very evident here.  
JANET & GEOFF ILES

A "Just A Day Away" for the 90s? Has good commercial potential.  
STUART BERRY

### **Yesterday's Heroes**

A serenely positive anthem and a rallying call. Already a live classic, this song epitomises the spirit of the album and the band.  
TERRY LUCK



Very powerful and prophetic words about BJH. A classic. JANET & GEOFF ILES

Les revisits his darker side. Defiant, moody and magnificent. DAVID JEFFERY

A song about BJH? Who are the ones "who keep the flame from burning?" MATTHIAS OESCHGER

Puts the icing onto the best song of the last album ("Cold War"), because a cleanly-played guitar solo adds variety. MIKE ZIMMERMANN

## Children Of The Disappeared

A classic lyric and refrain set against an ambitious arrangement, this must rank as one of John's best compositions yet (but I don't get the title...). TERRY LUCK

I get a real shiver down my back when the guitar solo kicks in, and the "My, my, look at that sky..." line is breathtaking. John at his best. JANET & GEOFF ILES

This song makes me feel like I did when I first heard BJH. I cannot praise it too highly. This song could only have been written by the man who wrote "Mockingbird". DAVID JEFFERY

Has "Classic" written all over it. The least predictable track. MATTHIAS OESCHGER

The highlight of the album - just perfect! URS FREYTAG

## Pool Of Tears

The insidious tune borrows from the chorus of "Pools Of Blue", and although the lyrics are drenched in the pain of rejection, the pacey tempo of the tune is quite uplifting in a perverse kind of way! TERRY LUCK

I love that easy, jazzy feel; a nice melody and some absolutely surprising chords in the end make it my number one song. ULRIKE HÖSCH

Parts I find reminiscent of "Pools Of Blue", and it has a "jazzy feel" that also reminds me of *A Major Fancy*. JANET & GEOFF ILES

A bit too mellow. MATTHIAS OESCHGER

## Do You Believe In Dreams (Same Chance For Everyone)

The chorus acknowledges the sentiments expressed in John's NL24 interview, but whilst recognising there was a problem, Les is clearly not ready to throw in the towel, and in this mood it's no surprise. TERRY LUCK

I love the harmonies here. Brilliant! JANET & GEOFF ILES

Failed to make much of an impression on me. STUART BERRY

Les is painting with every colour in the box on this album, and this is a wonderful example. DAVID JEFFERY

## (Took Me) So Long

Sophisticated and classy AOR which deserves a huge audience. Straight from the top drawer. TERRY LUCK

It's great to hear more of Les's classical guitar playing. An opportunity to see Les play live would be great. JANET & GEOFF ILES

Mel's drum pattern at the forefront (and why not!) with some excellent classical guitar to top the thing off. STUART BERRY

## Mr. E

Best song of the lot and must be played live!  
Brilliant. IAN BOWDEN

Another inventive song that works on a number of levels. An "Ecstasy" related interpretation is certainly persuasive; however, I think a more oblique view might place "Mr. Enid" Godfrey in the firing line.  
TERRY LUCK

Some rather real-sounding string-synthesiser or is it a real orchestra?  
CHRIS REITER & ELIS TIEFENTHALER

John isn't related to The Riddler from Batman, by any chance? DAVID JEFFERY

Really like this one, although I won't pretend to understand what it's about. John, please explain!  
STUART BERRY

## Three Weeks To Despair

Brilliant! I hope it has an impact on people who hear it, as it did for me.  
JANET & GEOFF ILES

Very, very scary. DAVID JEFFERY

It's not often that a songwriter speaks about that subject in that way - there's humility and respect. OLIVIER KINDERSTUTH

This is the most poetic, beautiful, brutal and profoundly sad depiction of humanity as you could ever hear in a contemporary song, gently exploring the real life issues without being judgemental or patronising. This is devastating social comment.  
TERRY LUCK

## The Time Of Our Lives

Les maintains his forward-looking stance ("Dream On") and I can't think of a more

fitting note on which to close the album.  
TERRY LUCK

This is a great "end song" and I hope it is the shape of things to come!  
JANET & GEOFF ILES

One of those clever Les album closers that leaves you on a high and makes you want to listen to the album once again.  
DAVID JEFFERY

## The Album Generally

BJH are back in the game and not just yesterday's heroes, and we the fans are having the time of our lives. IAN BOWDEN

I am over the moon with the new CD; the music still evokes the same feelings as when I first heard them. EVELYNE EBERT

The album still retains much of the band's knack with harmonisation and melody (and musicianship goes without saying), yet must be one of the most accessible they've produced in ages. I for one want to hear a good deal of it live. JON SCHICK

Better than the last album, not as good as *Welcome or Face To Face*. Not hard enough. URS FREYTAG

Absolutely superb! KATHY WYLLIE

This has to be BJH's best album to date! Superb songs (as always), excellent musicianship and the return of the "group" feeling to the music. NEIL BATY

This works as an "album" better than anything since *Gone To Earth*.  
DAVID JEFFERY

One of the most well-arranged collections of songs with outstanding melodic choruses heard from Barclay or anyone else for a long time. JENS HEDEGAARD

## **Finally, we've selected one review of River Of Dreams to print (almost) in full:-**

To a large extent I feel that the cover design signifies much of what the new BJH album's preoccupations are. The red title promises a romantic vision, a river of dreams, whilst underneath it, the illustration depicts a blue pool of tears. A limited pool, not an expansive river, tears, not dreams. Yet this album is not the melancholic sixty minutes these themes might lead one to fear. Notice that on the cover the BJH butterfly hovers transcendently above that pool; just as the band has triumphed over adversity and critical indifference to produce this marvellous album.

Despite lyrics that speak of world-weariness and loss of faith, the album's music is a reviving reminder of the catchy choruses and close harmonies, the searing guitar work and the complex musical texture that BJH fans were used to in the heady days of the mid-1970s. Some of John Lees' best writing in recent albums is discernible upon *River Of Dreams*. The title track with its refrain "All that dirty water in my dreams" embodies the album's mood of betrayed expectation yet in beautifully melodic terms. "Children Of The Disappeared" conjures up a world of tragically lost innocence in rich musical terms. In this song doors are locked, children's footsteps cannot be heard and heaven is in flames. "Pool Of Tears" reflects the cold moods of lost love after such initial optimism, yet this theme of loss and rejection, presented in evocative weather imagery, is conveyed in upbeat musical melodies. John's other two songs are tremendous; the enigmatic "Mr. E" where, I believe, John adopts the persona of a drug dealer to show how the lost, the lonely and the desperate are seduced by the promise of a better world - "every day you're searching hard/for something you can't find". John's social compassion surfaces in "Three Weeks To Despair" where the misery of broken lives and

thwarted dreams is rendered in sumptuous music that is deliberately counterpointed by the fractured voice of the homeless man. The song's title is a chilling reminder of how close we all are to the "shadows we've all passed".

Les Holroyd's songs frame the album and their titles reflect the band's new-found optimism in their survival after recent frights and their continued willingness to make music. BJH are "back in the game" and they are having the "time of our lives". Les's songs, too, seem to reflect on the band's past glories "living in a rock 'n' roll dream" although the darker mood of disillusionment is tangible in both "Back In The Game" and "Yesterday's Heroes". Experience has taught Les that:

"I can see the rain begin to fall  
Watch as the wind blows"

"Do You Believe In Dreams" explores the power of dreams and their inevitable dissipation and loss in music that is reminiscent of the mid-1970s classics that Les wrote, yet he urges us to "dream on" at the start of the album's final track. Experience might inevitable tarnish the dream but there is still fun to be had in riding that dream and there is the thrill of survival to be celebrated.

The key word on the new album is dreams. Eleven times it recurs in the various songs on the new album as well as being part of the album's title. Yet, maturely and soberly, the songs also show the despair and grief that inevitably accompany the destruction of our dreams and this theme provides the album with its rich, coherent vision in the ten superb songs that this album offers us.

For those of us who are fortunate enough to be Barclay James Harvest fans, the new album allows us the opportunity to dream on.

**Tony Johnson**

**Again, we concentrate on the new album with some questions which have been raised by a number of fans:-**

**What is the Irish man saying towards the end of "Three Weeks To Despair"?**

John and Martin Lawrence met the homeless man in Stockport and recorded his comments. The quotes used are:

"I start about half eight in the morning, right, I do a bit of begging, like, till about nine at night-time."

"There's only one problem with the police - they keep moving me on."

"It's hard to make friends these days, they tell me."

"I was in Stockport, once, right, begging, and I was kicked in the face."

"I know I look a bit dirty and scruffy and so on."

"I haven't had a bath now for two weeks - bad news, isn't it? I don't smell, do I?"

"All right, you've got to have a joke, sometimes."

"I haven't slept for two nights, now."

"The last two places where I stopped, the kids burned it down."

"They poured petrol on a homeless guy - they set him alight."

*Why can't he go out and get a job?*

**Who is Margarette Driscoll, credited after the lyrics of "Three Weeks To Despair"?**

Margarette Driscoll (the name is misspelt in the CD booklet) is a journalist who wrote an article entitled "Three Weeks To Despair", which appeared in *The Sunday Times* on December 1st, 1995. The piece was about the plight of the homeless in the run-up to Christmas, and inspired John to write the song of the same name. Margarette also

wrote a follow-up article which appeared exactly a year later on December 1st, 1996, which showed that little had changed.

**Who played the strings on the introduction to "Back In The Game"?**

The "orchestral" introduction is a synthesised arrangement written and performed by Jeff Leach.

**Why has the album not been released in Britain or France?**

We're into the thorny subject of record company politics now! It is normal practice for the division of a company to which the band is signed, in this case Polydor Germany, to offer the album to all the other branches of Polydor for release in their country, and many of them have taken up this option (see the interview with Les earlier in this issue). British fans may not be surprised to hear that, at the time of writing, Polydor UK had not even bothered to reply, and other territories such as France had not made a final decision, either.

We spoke to manager Lindsay Brown in Dortmund, who told us that the UK branch would be given a deadline by which to reply, after which the album would be offered to other companies for release. This could, of course, be good news for BJH, since a new company might well expend more time and effort in promoting the band at home. The downside is that the album is in limbo in the meantime so far as UK fans are concerned, which is why we decided to sell import copies through Swallowtail.

**Why are *Everyone Is Everybody Else* and *Glasnost* missing from the gallery of albums in the CD booklet?**

Nothing sinister, there - so far as I'm aware, they were omitted in error.



## ***In which club members share their recollections of how they first became fans of Barclay James Harvest...***

During the Christmas period, I was sorting through some memorabilia at Dad's, who had passed away six weeks earlier. I came across an index I had made for my cassette collection, way back in January 1975. In this, I'd listed my tapes, track by track, and rated them for entertainment value etc., followed by critical comments. I was fascinated by this personal archive, written at the tender age of eighteen, and especially my analysis of *Everyone Is Everybody Else*, which I'd recently purchased when it was Audio Club of Britain's Recording Of The Month. This was the first Barclays album I had heard (although I was actually introduced to their music by Alan Freeman's Saturday afternoon show on Radio One). I was obviously very impressed with the album, as my "review", reproduced here, shows:-

"Anyone doubting the potential of rock music should listen to BJH: here is rock at its greatest. plenty of slid rhythm is infused with brilliant melody, in paces given a classical touch by the use of Mellotron, used to underline the often poetic beauty of the varied lyrics. Percussion and acoustics are outstanding. Overall, BJH provide a sparkling freshness painfully lacking in the majority of modern groups. the whole album combines purpose with power, and remains brilliant from start to finish, a true work of art. Rating: A1"

I also reviewed *Once Again*, the second BJH album I had heard, with the comments: -

"*Once Again* shows Barclay James Harvest at their very best - once again. "She Said" and "Mockingbird" are classics of the highest degree. The bass is superb throughout. A1"

This was soon to be my favourite BJH album, closely followed by *Everyone*.

Shortly afterwards, I began a first-year course at Dundee University. At the end of the very first day I arranged to meet a lad on the same course in the Union bar that evening. I was delighted to discover that he too was a Barclays fan, and the following month we travelled to Edinburgh to see the band on the *Time Honoured Ghosts* Tour. This was the first time I'd seen them "live", and I was mesmerised by the beauty and power of their performance, and have been hooked ever since. The Barclays were probably at their peak during this era (although I'd have loved to have seen them with the orchestra). We returned next year for the *Octoberon* Tour.

By 1977 my mate had become disillusioned with the course and had left, but I went back with five others. One of the "novices" was overwhelmed by the experience, and described it as one of the best five concerts he'd ever seen. Indeed, it remains the best performance I have ever witnessed from the band; they were flawless, and "Medicine Man" was the icing on the cake, a blistering rendition. I wore the T-shirt until it practically disintegrated (and continue my sentimental search for a replacement!).

I'll never forgive myself for missing the *XII* Tour, the only one I've ever missed since 1975. By all accounts, they brought the house down, but, more importantly, it was the last major tour with Woolly. The chemistry between this magical foursome has never been quite the same since he left, to my mind, but nevertheless the Barclays have continued to give me immense pleasure, special highlights being Wembley on the *Victims* Tour, and their triumphant homecoming to Oldham on their 25th Anniversary Tour. I'm not just looking back, though: I'm hoping that the Barclays have still got a lot of magic up their sleeves!

**Graham P. Wheelwright**

**BUY OR SWAP:** I am looking for the following: LPs: German copies of *Baby James Harvest*, *The Best Of* vols. 2 & 3 and *Glasnost*. Singles: Brother Thrush/Poor Wages, Thank You/Medicine Man, He Said Love/On The Wings Of Love, Panic/All My Life. Maxis: Mockingbird/Vanessa Simmons **I can offer as swaps** - Maxi: Sip Of Wine/Hymn (1978 limited edition), LPs: *Octoberon*, *Berlin* 11-track. Promo CD "Who Do We Think We Are". Poster: *Welcome To The Show* (Double poster with *Welcome* design). Please contact:  
JÜRGEN FEGERS, Vorster Straße 457, 41169 Mönchengladbach, GERMANY

**AS I'M CHANGING** my BJH collection over to CD, I can offer the following LPs for sale: *Collection-BJH* (EMI 1C 228-07 5833) *Victims Of Circumstance* (Polyd. 817 950-1) *Early Morning Onwards* (048 CRY 50798) *Once Again* (Harvest 1A 038 1575181) *BJH Live* (2LPs, Polydor 2679 034) *XII* (Polydor 2460 282) *Octoberon* (Polydor 2383 407) *Eyes Of The Universe* (Polydor 2383 557) *Gone To Earth* (Polydor 2460 273) Cost: DM10,- per LP plus DM5,- for postage (in Europe) or the lot for DM100,- inclusive.  
THORSTEN SOMMER, Auenstraße 7, 80469 München, GERMANY

**I WANT TO SELL OR SWAP** some BJH albums from France, Germany and the UK. (Please see my "wants" ad in NL37). If you're interested, write to:-  
MR. OLIVIER GILLE, 22/2 Bd. Galliéni, 89000 Auxerre, FRANCE  
Tel. 03 86 46 74 29

**FOR SWAP:** few copies of the *Victims* live video and some French LPs and 7" singles. I'm interested in rarer items from BJH, Mike Oldfield, Alan Parsons, Marillion, Talk Talk, It Bites, Supertramp, Cutting Crew... Please send Want/swap lists to:  
PHILIPPE CLAERHOUT, 7 rue P.Picasso, Rés. Club bat. D3 apt 18, 33700 Merignac, FRANCE

**PLEASE CAN ANYONE HELP?** I am looking for albums or any information about the group The Ozark Mountain Daredevils or anything on Larry Lee, one of their vocalists. n.b. I already have 1st album and *Best Of* on CD as well as *The Car Over The Lake* album on vinyl. Contact:  
DAVID IRWIN, 45 Brakeside Gardens, Seacliffe, Whitehaven, Cumbria

**SALE OR SWAP:** BJH rarities, including recent issues. Please write to:  
GREG LELLEK, Theodor-Heuss-Str. 9, 38444 Wolfsburg, GERMANY

**WELCOME TO** our youngest new member, Anja Sandmaier, who will be seven months old by the time you read this...



## FREE SMALL ADS!

To advertise free in the next issue of Nova Lepidoptera, just send the wording of your advertisement to us at the usual club address, to arrive before the copy

## Coming Soon

The next NL will include reviews of the September concerts and a number of features held over from this issue because of all the space given over to the new album.

NL39 will be sent out at the end of November, and the last copy date for submissions, advertisements etc. is October 10th.

# RING OF CHANGES

Words and Music by LES HOLROYD

Steady 2

*f*

G

Talk of— to —  
sun when— it's

F/G

G

- mor - row — And— you talk of— the times that— have been.  
ris - ing — Paints— a sha - dow— on where it— has been.

F/G

G

The wheels keep— on turn - ing — Turn— ing  
And night is—sur - pris - ing — To— the

G7

G

F/G

cir - cles — we go round — a - gain  
 peo - ple — who stand in — be - tween

C/G

Nev - er end - ing, the time is bend - ing — These songs all — the  
 Fill - ing spa - ces — you see their face As — they wake from — their

C/G F/G C/G G

same dream And we will — stand list - 'ning —  
 And we will — stand look - ing —

G7 G

Look - ing back on — the ones that — re - main.  
 Tak - ing note of — the things we — have seen.

G7 G



And time ——— hur-ries on, ——— we are here,

C/G G

——— we are gone ——— And time ———

C/G G

—— pass-es on, ——— all the words, ——— of your song.—

C/G G C/G

——— Turn the pa - ges, Noth - ing

G F C

a - ges, That's what you will see. Turn the

G F

pa - ges, Ring of chan - ges Is what it will be.

C G

The

G

Repeat and fade

F/G







For the latest Barclay James Harvest news, call:-

# **The IBJHFC Hotline**

## **0891 299 736**

(Calls charged at 50p per minute at all times.)

- ① **Hear the latest news first**
- ① **recording update every three weeks**
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- ① **excerpts from CDs**
- ① **reissues update**
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Designed & Printed by BJH Communications Ltd T/A B J Graphics  
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