

# BLAST OFF!

## The Chills Make Plans for the Great Escape

The day after they've Dropped the Big One and Auckland is a large, flat demolition site glowing with the weird incandescence of ongoing particle breakdown, the White Lady will be serving burgers.

The staff will be treated to hellish tales from those who have dragged themselves through the rubble in search of a cheese and onion toasted — the talk of sex, violence, drugs, music of any Saturday night in Auckland will give way to the language of fire, destruction and death for The Last Saturday Night In Auckland. A group of petrolheads, the seared skin already beginning to peel and slide from their faces, will chatter excitedly of the ultimate rumble ...

But this chill Sunday night the stars still twinkle above and the footpath is still dirty. The guy who makes the burgers grins recognition, takes the money, chats about this and that ... See that band the Chills at the Windsor? They're supposed to be great aren't they? I was talking to this guy who says they're going to England. That's good ...

Terry Chill wanders past.

The Big One blasts out of existence the Chase Corporation and the people with the anti-gay law reform petitions along with the rest of the human race, but there are survivors ... four hardy minstrels, "used to Dunedin winters", who crawl out of their subterranean practice room and take off for an epic journey of intergalactic busking. Such is the premise of *The Chills In Space*, a colourful musical fantasy (it is obviously fantasy rather than speculation, because few, if any, burgers are eaten) that has appeared as a BFM live-in-the-studio radio special and will soon return as a live presentation at the Windsor Castle, June 28 and 29. Evidence of a desire to do things a little differently ...

And the Chills will be a little

different, even though they have become sufficiently popular to attract the attention of Those Who Are In It For The Money. T.W.A.I.I.F.T.M. join actual music fans in their anticipation of the next Chills record, *The Lost EP*, which will be out on Flying Nun early next month.

The EP's a strange case — it was begun over a year ago, shelved, exhumed, had bits remixed and re-recorded and has ended up showcasing within its six tracks the variety of which the Chills are capable; from the wistful simplicity of 'This Is the Way', through the noisy pop bustle and nails-on-blackboard slide gat of 'Never Never Go', closing with the strange four-part 'Dream By Dream', mit Gregorian chanting and all.

'Dream By Dream' also quite frankly deals with the circumstances leading

to the record's other curious aspect — the fact that the Chills which will tour in support of it, with Terry Moore playing bass, are not the Chills which made the record, with Martin Kean playing bass. Quite a different band, in fact.

The current Chills won't have a chance to record before leaving for their six weeks in England (and, hopefully, Europe). 'Oncoming Day' is the projected next single and one version has been recorded, but it doesn't come near the ferocity of the song itself. It's obvious that it's a song that should be accorded the best treatment possible.

The Chills begin their farewell tour with the *Chills In Space* performances and end it with a big goodbye in the last weekend of July, playing Sammy's in Dunedin on the Friday and Saturday before flying to Auckland for a stellar Sunday gig which will hopefully also feature the likes of Birds Nest Roys, Able Tasmans, Look Blue Go Purple, Goblin Mix and the Fold. All being well, of course.

The Chills' English visit is important for the band, for Flying Nun Records

and for New Zealand music in general. It comes in the wake of a PR trip earlier this year by three F Nun people and has been foreshadowed by music press reviews of existing records that have ranged from warm (*NME*) to over-the-top (*Zig Zag*), as well as at least one "look out for this band" type story (again, in the *NME*). And since they found out that the Clean broke up some time ago, the hipper *NME* scribes have been name-dropping the Chills instead.

Praise for the Chills and Flying Nun in general has also come from English radio guru John Peel (who reportedly described Nun as "the only real record company in the world") and, on the other side of the Atlantic, grownup fanzine man Bomp Records' Greg Shaw. The Chills records (and other Nun releases) will go out through the Rough Trade network on Creation Records, an indie already creating a stir in Britain with the Jesus and Mary Chain.

The Chills as a band is still something in the process of reaching its full potential — but even at this stage a few good performances before the right audiences could be enough to cause ripples in an English music scene that is less than exciting at present. The essential qualities of the Chills and other NZ bands like them fit in nicely alongside a small but growing resurgence of some degree of honesty in popular music (otherwise most notable in Australia and bits of America). Indeed, as Martin Phillipps points out in the accompanying interview, bands from this country are in a position to show the way. No kidding.

This venture has meant sacrifices for the Chills; putting back still further the recording of a debut album, touring and playing more than is probably good for them ... They recently found out that the cost of air tickets had risen 20 per cent on what they'd calculated a couple of months ago and it's money that they don't even have as yet. So don't baulk if they ask you to pay a little more than usual to see them on tour. I mean, it's not as if they're not well worth it ...

Russell Brown



The Chills: (L-R) Alan Haig, Peter Allison, Terry Moore, Martin Phillipps.

PHOTO BY TERRY MOORE

## An Interview with Martin Phillipps

You're in the situation of presenting and promoting a record which, with Martin Kean, is essentially by a different band. That must be a little strange.

"Yeah, definitely. Because there's so much interest in this record it's unbelievable. I'm a bit worried about it really. And for a while we didn't think it was good enough to release, but I think it's okay now. I think it'll do what it's meant to."

How different do you think things would have been now if you'd been able to hold lineup sta-

bility over the past four years or so?

"Well much as it really wears me down every time we have a change — it virtually means at least four months out, then another three months for the band to come together — no way could any of the lineups ... no, that's not right, there have been some good bands, but I think it's been worth carrying on ... I'm glad things have happened the way they have really. It has been rough though."

You seem to have been quite conscious of holding back songs from recording until you can do justice to them — have there been many songs like that?

"There were a lot of songs like that, which because the lineup at the time wasn't doing them quite well, have been put off and put off. Like we should have done 'Ghosts' of 'Night Of Chill Blue' or 'I Saw Your Silhouette' a long time ago. And

this lineup could probably do all those now. But we've never recorded anything that wasn't ready to be recorded."

Is there a "sound in your head" for each song you go in with?

"Quite often. But it never comes out quite like that. It's good to have an idea, but it's good to let things go too. Like 'Dream By Dream', we left that as a bare skeleton, we didn't want to think about it — and that paid off."

Overall, how close to the mark do you think you got with this EP?

"Pretty close, I think. I think we got all the songs, apart from 'Whole Weird World' and that's still pretty good. In fact a couple of people still reckon that's the best song on the record."

Probably because it is the best song.

"Yeah, I think so too actually. But my favourite soundwise on the EP is 'This Is the Way'."

'Dream By Dream' is unusually frank — what were the circumstances that led to it being written?

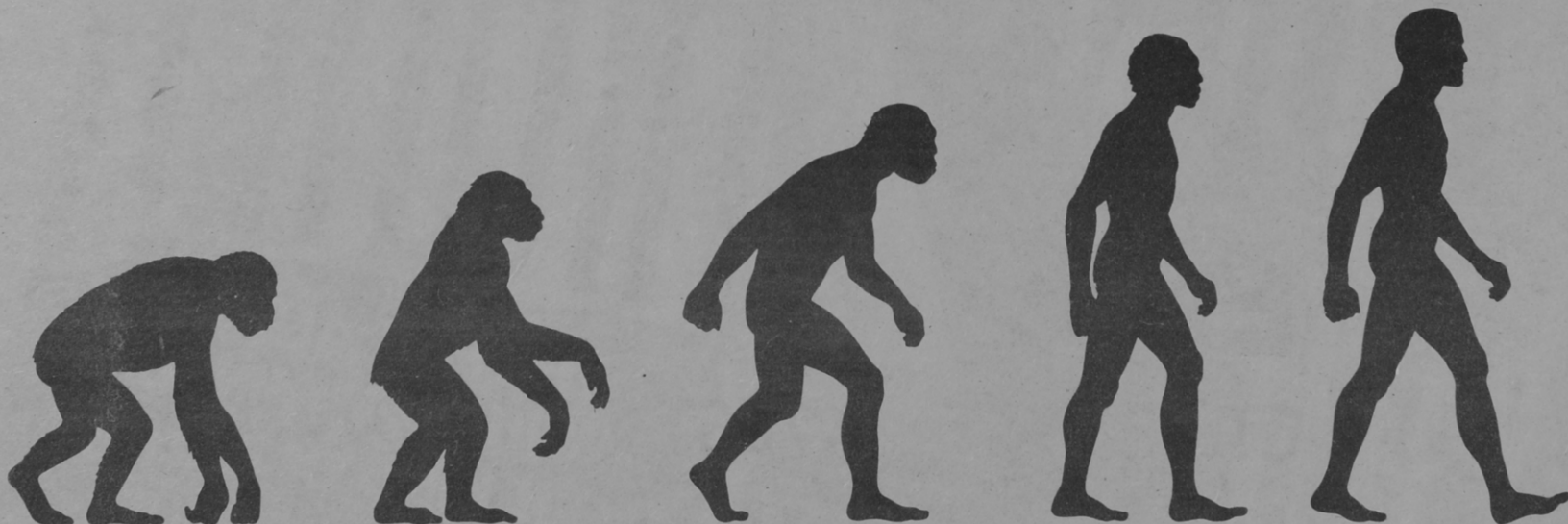
"I suggested to Martin Kean that we write a song and rather than write airy-fairy lyrics we'd try and do something about him leaving the band. I did it from the point of view of it being me and Martin tried various points of view that he wasn't happy with but in the end he just basically says what he says. It's good, I like it. I wanted people to understand."

Do you find it hard that as well as concentrating on the music you tend to have to handle the politics?

"Yeah, it's tricky. I've had to force myself to face the fact of how much of the band's development is due to me. And basically, Martin leaving the band did come down to me. I mean, it wasn't go-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20

# SUPERTRAMP NEW ALBUM



## 'BROTHER WHERE YOU BOUND' DUE SOON

INCLUDES THE HIT SINGLE 'CANNONBALL'  
AVAILABLE NOW ON 7" OR LIMITED EDITION 12"