

THIS IS.... PAUL LUKER

In late 1984, Paul Luker came up to the *RIU* office to tell about a new cassette label he was starting, called Industrial Tapes. He had just quit his job as a photo-engraver because it was screwing up his sight, and anyway he wanted to concentrate on things that were important to him. He'd already done a low-key national tour reading his own poetry and he was a member of Phantom Forth and it was things such as these he wanted to devote his time to and damn the money.

Industrial Tapes became the biggest factor in last year's cassette release boom — in fact it was rather too successful. Inevitably most of

the work fell on Paul — that included not only organising and distributing the tapes, but often designing covers for other peoples' cassettes and even recording them on the



four-track Portastudio he got from Internal Affairs. Phantom Forth had become This Is Heaven (essentially Paul and Lorraine Steele) and released two tapes, but all the administration was squeezing him out of time for his own projects, so he gradually wound down the label — which he'd intended to do from the outset anyway.

After something of a delay, the first This Is Heaven record, *200 Variations* has come out in time for Christmas. As the name suggests, there are 200 33rpm 7" records, each with a package including a screenprinted cover, a small book, a piece of home-made reconstituted paper (lemon-scented!) and other odd bits of paper, each one unique. The music itself is lovely, gently distorted in the recording and rather mysterious. It can be had for \$15 from 265 Papamoa Beach Rd, RD 7, Te Puke, where he now lives.

In between a beekeeping course and a correspondence course in tree cropping, Paul has also been preparing for an exhibition at RKS Gallery in March/April next year, where he will present 10 handmade one-off books for sale. Subjects include Pukehina, Rotorua, islands of the Bay of Plenty and the Ureweras. Further afield is a bigger and better 12" record-book package, again in a run of 200.

The guiding principle, he says, is to develop and use all his skills — photo-engraving, recording, paper making, screenprinting and whatever else he can pick up. And what else does this chappie who decided his job was to get off the treadmill and start nurturing his creativity?

"I want to make paper that grows," he grins. "I'll put seeds in suspension in it — you'll be able to rip out the page, add water — and hey presto, plants!"
Russell Brown



Laurie Bell (centre) with roadies Foote (left) and Scruff.

Laurie Bell

The music industry is mourning the tragic loss of Laurie Bell, killed in a motor accident on the outskirts of Palmerston North on November 23, just two days before his 31st birthday. John Rowles was among those at the funeral, and messages of sympathy were also received from the likes of U2, Victor Borge and Richard Clayderman.

What these widely different entertainers had in common was a deep respect for a fine organiser, a man who set up tours, making sure things worked, so the people in the spotlight could get on with their jobs.

"He was the person we relied upon the most to get the show up and running," says promoter Mike Corliss. "It got to the stage where we could produce a tour schedule and leave the rest to him — PA, lights, backstage, anything wanted at the gig, whatever the performers needed, he could produce it. He was irreplaceable."

Long-time friend and business associate Greg Peacock, who was injured in the same accident, has similar memories of a very efficient operator.

"He could organise anything, from cut flowers to a 40-foot semi-trailer. He was stage manager for all the Sweetwaters festivals, which was an unprecedented operation for New Zealand. I don't think they could do another Sweetwaters without Laurie, it just wouldn't be the same."

Roger King, manager of DD Smash, used Laurie Bell to organise several tours.

"I knew I could relax if we had Laurie. You'd never hear about the problems, he'd just deal with them quietly and efficiently."

Laurie Bell started out working in Beggs' music store, but his early jobs included a spell as a fireman, working in a takeaway bar, some time with WEA, warehouse manager for Direction Records and manager of the acoustic band Waves.

In 1978, he went to Los Angeles, where he worked for Studio Instrument Rentals, the largest instrument and equipment hire service in the US. He returned to New Zealand

late in 1980, when he became involved in both the Sweetwaters and Nambassa festivals. It was here that Laurie Bell established New Zealand's international reputation as being a good place to perform, free of so many of the hassles that tend to dog concert tours in other countries.

While his no-nonsense approach was widely respected, he also had a reputation as a joker. King recalls Bell's fondness for squirting people with a water pistol at unexpected moments, and more than one answerphone has fallen victim to his bizarre messages.

At the time of his death, Laurie Bell was returning to Auckland, having organised the Commodores' tour. A working man who died with his boots on, *Rip It Up* extends its deepest sympathy to his family and many friends.

A trust fund has been set up for Laurie's five-year-old son, Matthew. Inquiries and contributions should be sent to PO Box 39-281, Auckland.


Duncan Campbell

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got very hypocritical — all of a sudden they didn't want any of the blood they had collected. They are more image conscious than concerned with saving lives. They wondered what kinda blood they woulda got from the kids — well heck, it can'ta been any worse than what they were siphoning offa the winos down on skid row!"

Wasp describe their acts as "electric vaudeville." It's almost surrealistic, as in did he or didn't he ... was that really ... and that's what makes it work. As Blackie says: "How can a grown man walk around with a 12" saw blade strapped between his legs and take that seriously?"

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