

# Feeling Sentimental

## Dunedin Mon Amour

It was bad timing. The absence of the Dunedin's student population and a clash with the Jean-Paul Sartre Experience playing at Chippendale House meant that Sneaky Feelings didn't get the numbers through the door that they'd hoped for at their recent Oriental two-nighter.

Disappointing for a band who've just spent \$10,000 on a new album, *Sentimental Education*, and are moving to Auckland in the new year.



PHOTO BY FRANK SHEPHERD

Sneaky Feelings (L-R): Martin Durrant, Matthew Bannister, David Pine, John Kelcher.

"Going to Auckland is no big deal," says drummer Martin Durrant, "but we'll be near the studios and so we'll be able to work there more often."

### Southern Comfort

The move north is necessary if the band's ability in the studio is to catch and capture their ideas and songs. All four members — David Pine (guitar, vocals), Martin Durrant (drums, vocals), Matthew Bannister (guitar, vocals) and John Kelcher (bass, vocals) — have developed as songwriters and need the facilities to enhance their songs.

"Our biggest strength is our diversity and all four people work and nobody dominates and everybody's influence reaches to every instrument," says Dave Pine. "And we've managed to have various influences without being eclectic — it still sounds like us."

"Most of the bands in New Zealand started because of punk," says Matthew Bannister. "Although we started in the aftermath we were all interested in music before

that and so it wasn't a motivating force and that reflects in our music."

This move to Auckland and the band's increasing sophistication, as evidenced from 'Husband House' to *Sentimental Education*, means that they could be leaving some hard-core fans behind.

"That's the crunch," says Martin Durrant. "We'll lose our hard-core garage fans, but they've never really taken us to their hearts. There'll always be another group like the Clean which they'll like more. What we need is a wider audience. We're in the ludicrous situation that because the words 'Flying Nun' appear on our records we haven't a hope of being played on radio."

Do you want to be played on radio?

The answer's unanimous. "You bet."

Pine: "We've never regarded the Flying Nun audience as superior, that's just the one we've had. Our music's aimed at anyone who wants to listen to it, and every single we released we hoped it would go up the charts. It pisses me off that it doesn't happen."

Has the band met any resistance from other bands in Dunedin who've felt that you're straying away from the garage ideology?

"No, except for one band who'll remain nameless," says Pine. "But bands like the Verlaines and the Chills have been interested and genuine in their criticisms."

"Audiences are a step behind," adds Bannister. "They expect a certain sound when they go to the pub. And when we don't play open chords with a stomping beat, that's when we've struck the most

resistance."

Durrant takes up the point. "When we started we sounded like a garage band because we couldn't play very well, but we haven't any ideological commitment to a primitive sound. There's a lot of sentimentality about pure, primitive garage sounds being closer to the real thing."

That sentimentality, coupled with journalistic laziness, have been responsible for coining and creating the "Dunedin Sound" myth:

Pine: "People have gone overboard on Dunedin. It's not New Orleans and it's not a musical centre of the world. Two or three good bands happened at once, but it's nothing to lose your head over. But living in Dunedin has made me play harder and a little less effete than I might've been."

"I've got the Clean records at home but they're certainly not what motivated me to play music, and although I've got a lot of time for Chris Knox's music, I was never a Toy Love fan. None of us were — it's not where our hearts lie. We all have a certain respect for them but we don't feel kindred to them in a musical sense."

"Because they're all puritans," adds Durrant, "and they're keeping this sort of flame alive."

### Primary Education

It's been three years since *Send You*, the band's first album, which anticipated (by accident) the whole guitar resurgence of the last few years that used the Byrds as a reference point.

"That was a coincidence," says Durrant. "That music seems timeless to me, and we felt a sort of inspiration

at the time, especially in contrast to what other bands were being influenced by, things like Joy Division and general English droopiness. We're romantics in a sense; we like rock and roll for its generousness."

*Send You* was carried by Pine's songs and Bannister's guitar. 'Throwing Stones' remains as a 6/8 masterstroke, manipulating classic Dylan/Byrds clichés; Durrant's 'Strangers Again' was nicely clipped and understated, while Kat Tyrie's keyboards added class to Pine's breakneck 'Won't Change,' a compensation for the sluggishness of the previous 'P.I.T.' song and an ideal intro to the fine traditional echoes of 'Everything I Want.' Energy compensated for experience:

"It was the sound of us all playing together and not sticking on much afterwards," says Bannister. "Whereas on the new album we thought about every song and built them up from a basic backing track. So every song had the sound that suited it, whereas *Send You* was very continuous."

Pine: "*Send You* was done very much as live recording, we had no idea how it would turn out. The bulk of the backing tracks were recorded on the first day."

The album had songs that big budgets couldn't have saved. 'Waiting for Touchdown,' 'Not to Take Sides' and the over-long 'P.I.T. Song' still don't sound too hot, but 'Throwing Stones' forgave a lot.

Pine: "I don't like the lyric and I don't like that 6/8 thing. Just about every Flying Nun band puts out a 6/8 song. But it came out well on the album."

Why were there so many  
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# NETHERWORLD DANCING TOYS

## SUMMER TOUR '86-87

### DECEMBER 1986

10 Timaru Old Mill

11 Dunedin Sammy's

12,13 Christchurch McKenzies (Aranui)

15,16 Wellington Cricketers Arms

17 Wanganui Fosters Tavern

18 Palmerston North Zeds

19,20 New Plymouth Bellblock

22 Hamilton Hillcrest Tavern

23,24 Auckland Mon Desir

26,27 Whangamata Whangamata Hotel

28 Whakatane Commercial Hotel

29 Waihi Beach Waihi Beach Hotel

30,31 Tauranga Greerton

### JANUARY 1987

1 Rotorua Tudor Towers

2,3 Taupo De Brett Thermal Hotel

5,6 Nelson Exchequer Nightclub

7 Takaka Globe Tavern

8 Blenheim Woodbourne Tavern

9 Picton Oxley Tavern

10 Ashburton Hotel Ashburton

12 Hawea Hotel Hawea

13 Wanaka Wanaka Hall

14 Arrowtown Arrowtown Hall

15,16,17 Queenstown Alberts