

RIP IT UP • 10 YEARS ON

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19
Hello Sailor probably started it ... going to the pub means more than showing off your new jeans and halter top."

As with any music mag, *RIU* has had its series of great Kiwi hopes: Split Enz, Sailor, Citizen Band, Toy Love, Swingers, Screaming Meemees, Newmatics, through to Dave Dobbyn, the Chills and Ardijah, as well as overseas favourites: Elvis Costello, Springsteen, and especially Graham Parker — and sounded bitter when radio stations or record companies didn't show the same enthusiasm. "In Christchurch, 3ZB played a 'live' Graham Parker show at the same time as the concert, advertised as 'If you can't afford the real thing.' So you can see what we're up against with radio in this part of the woods" ... "Did you hear about Polygram flying 80 people around in a DC10 to promote the new Bee Gees album? What's wrong with recording a local band instead and let the Bee Gees sell themselves?"

The local band scene got off the ground so quickly that, in a



Frenzy: Noel & Tim.

pivotal issue (No 21), five new bands were featured on the cover ("Name the band members and WIN a night at home with yourself!"): Toy Love, Johnny and the Hookers ("They dislodge fillings at 20 paces, toupees at 50" — Terence Hogan), the

Terrorways, Gary Havoc and the Hurricanes, and Sheerlux.

RIU sponsored a "Meet the Boys" night in which the bandmembers discussed the scene. It was like a mutual admiration society, though Sheerlux, absent from the meeting, received some flak: "Bands like Sheerlux don't have magic," said Chris Knox. "They can do conjuring tricks, but it's all to a formula. Mixes are an even better example. Steve Gilpin has even admitted that he just looked around for what was happening and then did it. If it had been jazz-rock then he'd be into that now."

From his earliest gig with the Enemy (whose first gig was reviewed in No 7) Knox was an identity. In the same issue as Toy Love's first review appeared ("Furious promise") was a curious letter by "Mrs McLean" of Otahuhu: "How can you promote this obscene rubbish [the Enemy] when your pages could be devoted to all the wonderful talent we have in this lovely country like Toy Love and John Hore." Very soon, Knox wouldn't have to write letters to gain

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THE FASTEST SINGLE OF THE MONTH

"Saturday Night Stay at Home" — Suburban Reptiles (2.26). Auckland's New Wave has lived and since died; the Suburban Reptiles were there to present both its worst and its best moments on record. Not a 12-inch single this time but, in losing five inches, the Repts have gained a million miles on "Megaton".

Indeed, this may signify the end of the Suburban Reptiles (as we know them). Former Split Enz Phil Judd is the lead guitarist, arranger and producer for "Saturday Night" and its flip, "45 Single", and his presence is no doubt the reason for the band's improvement. Buster

Stiggs wrote "Saturday Night", providing five-star accommodation for Judd's fast-moving guitar riffs. And vocalist Zero can at last be heard. Aural stimulation is the key here; from metal machine to lounge lizards in one easy lesson.

"Are You Old Enough?" — Dragon (3.57) Dragon's worst songs are both simple and bland but this song is appealingly simple with enough good hooks to trip all but the deaf. One thing, however, still worries me: can Dragon become Americans as easily as they become Australians? **Jeremy Templer**

OCT '78

Live

Sure-footed Frenzy

Split Enz

Regent Theatre, Dunedin.

"They get better everytime" would be a fair comment on Split Enz's unerring rapid fire concert in Dunedin at the end of March.

Finn led the men in the funny suits through most of *Frenzy* and *Dizyrythmia* but it was what they didn't play that was the most revealing. Gone are the epics, Split Enz as *Frenzy* testifies, have moved with the times and are now closer to being classified as a mainstream rock band than at anytime in the past. They still have that on-stage loonery and Crombie on spoons and percussion, but it was the almost offhand confidence of the band as they ripped through their two part show that had the crowd on their feet in the second half.

Two encores and the band left it at that. They may look like they believe in the art school tag landed on them by the media two or three years ago, but *Frenzy* and the all-out, danceable, live Split Enz spells the beginning of a new era for the band. I think it's their best yet. **George Kay**

APRIL '79

Hello Sailor Main Street

So this is what happens when your local guitar band goes to LA, plays a few gigs, and returns. They get a new manager. They get lean. They get tight.

Main Street on a Sunday night is loaded with musicians, business faces, elegant ladies in elegant clothes, all sorts of pretty boys, and for good measure, the waitresses in (their usual?) tiny-skirts-and-cleavage rigs. Oh my. All a person can do is hold on to the table and order another drink.

Ricky Ball plays like a steamhammer, solid. Harry and Dave, in addition to their gapless guitar, hit the backup vocals hard and right on the note. You can hear them too. Lyle Kinney doesn't put a foot wrong. And Graham Brazier, well, the boy's lost weight. His act has got slicker, but he doesn't look any happier. They do "Boys From Brazil", and his puppetlike movements are so convincing I start to wonder. His voice is in great shape.

They no different, but they better than ever. **John Malloy**

APRIL '79



CB's Brent Eccles & Geoff Chunn.

Toy Love - a furious promise.

TOY LOVE
The Windsor

Since they made their curiously impressive debut in Auckland four months ago The Enemy, from Dunedin, have experienced mixed fortunes. Currently attempting a comeback after personnel changes they were playing at The Windsor under the unlikely new name of Toy Love. From the start it was obvious that the name is the only thing that has changed. Despite the addition of keyboards and a new bass player neither the music nor the performance has noticeably altered. But no one was complaining about that.

Aided perhaps by recent television exposure, the band's selection from its own hard rock repertoire went down well with the Saturday afternoon crowd. Once again displaying the rough-hewn power and off-beat style which are their greatest assets (they seem) to be returning to form after recent faltering. Alec Bathgate's impeccably tough guitar and the jack-hammer rhythm work of Mike Dooley on drums and Paul Keen on bass kept up the furious pace at which this band works best. Though not at his overwhelming best, vocalist Chris Knox was flaunting his numerous obsessions with nasty vigour. The only regrettable feature was that Jane Walkers were often drowned out. Still, enough was heard to promise interesting developments for the future.

Toy Love's formula is potent but limited. Their strengths — Chris Knox's outright weirdness and their uncompromisingly hard-edged sound — are also their greatest limitations. No one can doubt that the band has got something. How far they can go with it is still an open question. **Dominic Free.**

FEB '79



Sailor at Sweetwaters, 1980.

SINGLES

On their entry into recorded music, Toy Love map out a wonderful Kinks "Well Respected Man" scenario and tie it to a yearning rock melody line. A local masterpiece stealing from the British sixties with so much flair and one-step-back-two-steps-forward déjà vu. "Rebel" deserves to be NZ forty-five of the seventies. Simply essential. Flip over and "Squeeze" nails you, sneering, snakey, each verse gradually builds up to a hand-clapping chorus lead by Bathgate's winding guitar riff.

GEORGE KAY

SEPT '79



Opportunity Knox.

45s

Pop Mechanix, "Jumping Out A Window" (XSF) Pop Mechanix surpass themselves on their third single. Eddie Rayner has produced a joyously full sound that includes a brass section. If there's any justice, it will be number one. Flip is the bright "Way I Dance", and an uncredited acoustic version of the lyrically majestic "Private Military". Great stuff.

Swingers, "Counting The Beat" (Ripper)

First Australian single for the Swingers, and it's gone straight to number one. Thunderous piece of swing, instantly memorable, and there is no reason for it not to repeat the success here. The B side is a re-mix of the classic "One Good Reason". A real bonus. **Mark Phillips**

MARCH '81

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