

Rooftop
Shore City
Takapuna

498-142
Open until
3:00am

KICKS

FOR THE BEST IN ROCK

14, 15 & 16 FEB
THE PUSH
THE CROCODILES
21, 22 & 23 FEB
PICTURE THIS
SHEERLUX
FEB 28 & 29, MARCH 1
FURYS
TOY LOVE
6, 7 & 8 MARCH
TAXI
CROCODILES

FULLY LICENSED

TROOPER

FEBRUARY 12-16
20-23
MARCH 3

5-8
12-15
17-22

ALBERT, PALMERSTON NORTH
LADY HAMILTON
WELLINGTON, UNIVERSITY
CONCERT
HILLCREST, TAVERN HAMILTON
TE MATA, HAVELOCK NORTH
CABANA, NAPIER

BOOKINGS: CCP, PO BOX 1540, HAMILTON. PH 80431

HILLSBOROUGH TAVERN

CHRISTCHURCH'S NO.1 ROCK VENUE

FEB 6

FEB 7, 8, 9

FEB 13-16

FEB 20-23

FEB 27
—MARCH 1

THIS MONTH
ANDROIDSS
BREATHLESS
TH'DUDES
VAUXHALLS
POP MECHANIX
VAUXHALLS
TOY LOVE
& VARIOUS GUESTS
FROM AUSTRALIA
PHIL MANNING BAND
CRUZE

STICK FAT, BOX 2021, CHRISTCHURCH.



Swingers

1979 saw the emergence of the Boot Boys in Auckland. Toy Love made their move for popular acceptance. CB shot through. Split Enz came (and went). Mi-sex made money. And in the middle of the whole charade, the Swingers got started.

What is a Swinger? A Swinger is Phil Judd, guitarist. Or Buster Stiggs, drummer. Or Bones Hillman, bassist. Together they put out a bunch of great songs with real tunes, energetic three-piece playing, surf harmonies, and interesting lyrics. A person has been known to stagger out of Liberty Stage with the hooks of "Good Clean Fun", "One Good Reason", or "It's All Over", buzzing round the brain. And that's naming but a few.

The Swingers don't numb you with a pastiche of Sex Pistols, Ramones, or Buzzcocks tunes. Nor are they Police cadets. Phil's guitar playing is complex and bizarre, with more than the odd discord thrown in. Buster and Bones play solid and fairly midpaced, relying on feel rather than speed. Add in the aforementioned hooks and you have a band that rocks.

It was only after five months of practising and working at day jobs that the band played its first gig, opening for the Enz on their second '79 tour. For the Swingers, it was not a great experience.

"It was terrible," recalls Judd. "We got the bullshit treatment from the crew, most of whom I'd worked with when I was in Split Enz. We didn't even know who was mixing us. We were lucky to get a sound check. No-one seemed to know what was going on with regards to us."

Despite the hassles, the Swingers went down a treat. Good Reports were received. After an initial smattering of gigs, the band gathered momentum, and has been gigging solidly ever since. There's been talk of adding a fourth member, but as Buster says, that's mainly when the band has had an off night.

LATE EXTRA

Ex-Sheerlux bassist, Roland Kileen may replace Mike Chunn in Citizen Band. CB are auditioning several players. The band returns to Oz, first week in March ... the big homegrown gig this month, is Street Talk, Crocodiles, Neville Purvis at Auckland Town Hall, Feb 18. It's only three bucks ... Kim Fowley may not be producing the second Street Talk album, but he will still visit NZ in March if he receives some tapes that interest him. Airmail your music direct to Kim at 6000 Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood, California 90028, USA ... performing in NZ again are Red Mole - Allan Bruton, Sally Rodwell, Martin Edmond, Jan Preston, Deborah Hunt, John Davies and Neil Hannan. Since leaving NZ late '78 Red Mole have performed in USA and Europe. Tour dates are on page three ... Sheerlux are looking for a new name. Meanwhile Paul Robinson is rehearsing four-fifths of a new band - interested guitarists phone 606-792, (will the band be called The Valentinos?) ... Flight X-7 have a recording deal with Phonogram Records ... new Split Enz album 'True Colours' has three different covers - green/red, blue/orange and purple/yellow. All the vinyl's black ... after holidaying in NZ, guitarist Kevin Borich has returned to Aussie with a broken arm ... ex-Lip Service bassist Peter Future and drummer Stephan Morris are looking for a guitarist (phone 499-618 if interested) ... Hunt, Mesmer, Kilgour and Lowery are called the Sobs (does not stand for Sons of a Butch Slag) ... Crocodiles new album and single are both called 'Tears' and due for release late Feb. The Crocs intend to base themselves in Europe and leave for

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SIMPLICITY

"With the new songs we're going for a really strong vocal sound, and keeping the music very simple. That's why the Beatles were so good. The vocals carried the whole thing. When we first started practising we were lucky if there was even a drumkit. We would be sharing with the Enemy or someone like that. There were no extra vocal mikes. Phil would sing through Bones' amp. Now whenever we practise there's a good monitor system, and all the backing vocals just come from practices instinctively. There's no-one person who says sing this or that."

HISTORY

Buster's musical career prior to the Swingers was short. He spent six months practising with Geoff Chunn and Neil Finn in a band called After Hours, but they played only two gigs before splitting.

"The reason why the band didn't get off the ground was that we couldn't find a drummer. At the time, I was singing, playing piano, and mucking about."

The Reptiles were formed in 1977 and rapidly acquired an underground following at a time when the word 'punk' was taking on a new meaning. Buster attributes his drum style to playing first with the Reptiles. "It probably comes from starting out with them. We never miked up the drums, so you had to play hard to be heard. I still play really hard."

"I was a little heartbroken when the Repts folded because I put so much work into it on the publicity side, getting the name around and then getting a record contract. Once Billy Planet and I fell out, that was it."

"Bones was the second to last bass player. He came along after we'd been going for a while. He played on 'Megaton'. We sort of guided him out of a group he was in. We said, 'We've got a record contract, and we're gonna go places.'"

Before joining the Rooftiles, Bones had played in the Masochists, another early punk band. He later played in the Assassins and the Rednecks. Like the other Swingers he held down a day job while practising almost every night, until the band was working regularly.

ENEMY

Phil Judd joined the band after a musical hiatus that began with his final departure from Split Enz.

"When I first came back, I had no intention of doing anything at all, musically. But I eventually ventured out and saw some bands, and I thought Chris Knox was great. I still think he is. I was totally prepared to be just part of what he was doing."

"The only reason, apart from liking Chris, was that they had good songs. It wasn't really until I started practising with them that I realised that they were mostly Mick Dawson (ex-Enemy bassist) songs. And those are still their best songs."

Phil did not find it difficult to work with relatively inexperienced musicians.

"I loved it. The whole Swingers thing has been far more stimulating than Enz. A lot of it for that reason. You'd be surprised how frustrating it was, working with Enz. We were all paranoid. Practises would be devastating. We'd end practises nervous wrecks and not talk to each other for days. Working as a three piece is plain sailing."

COVERS

The Swingers have an impressive tally of thirty original songs, and they are now at the stage where they can drop the less successful tunes for newer ones. Phil is not keen on covers.

"I've never played a cover version. I just couldn't do it. Not for moral reasons, though. It would take me two hours to just work one out. The only covers I'd like to do are on old 78's. There are Twenties or Thirties songs we'd like to beef up. We'll probably do that fairly shortly."

Their own songs are an amalgam of ideas from all three members. Previously, Buster had written about half the Reptiles material, including the words for "Saturday Night Stay At Home".

"Obviously, Phil writes most of the lyrics, because he has to sing them. Initially, I had songs, Phil had songs already, and we worked from those ideas. Now it just comes out of practice."

RECORDS

The Swingers have been spending sometime at Hugh Lynn's Mascot Studios, of late, and they have three songs of single quality in the can. According to Buster, they have not been released yet as they're "tossing up whether to do it with a major record company, or a private label which Hugh's going to form. I'm personally right behind the latter. I think it can be done."

"With regard to a producer, Buster says, 'I think at this stage we need someone who's got the ability to capture our onstage sound live in the studio, instead of doing overdubs.'"

It's a curious fact that the Swingers are bigger outside of Auckland than they are in their home town. I asked Buster why this happens. "We're very aware that we're not mainstream, especially in Auckland. To a lot of people here, we're very uncool, very untrendy."

"The thing is, you don't have to play fast to be energetic. You have to play strong, and precisely. People say we come on too professional, but we've only rehearsed to the extent that we don't want to go out and make fools of ourselves."

"Punk now is just as boring as what punks were fighting against when it first started. The whole point of the punk thing was that it was new and refreshing and original, but now people have got the arse end of it and are trying to emulate still. It's a typical New Zealand thing to just copy everybody else. It's the inferiority complex."

John Malloy