

better than any other keyboard yet invented).

HIT PICKING

Enz went into the studios for *Frenzy* with around 30 songs. Finn said at the time he was happy with perhaps four or five — "Give It A Whirl", "Stuff And Nonsense", "Betty", "Mind Over Matter" and "Marooned". For *True Colours* they had nearly 50.

"We got it down to 20, and then 15. We're getting very good at eliminating things" says Finn.

Some bands like to try their new songs out on audiences and lick them into recordable shape on the road. Enz do it the other way. "I Got You" was performed for about a month before *True Colours* was begun, but most of the material was written two weeks before going into the studio.

"When the song are fresh it's easy to do them over and over again in the studio" says Finn.

Everyone in the band agrees *True Colours* has the best production of any Enz album. In Dunedin last year, Finn had intimated they would do the next album themselves — "we're not the sort of band that needs a heavyweight producer" — but a stab at that on the late 1979 Australian single "Things" convinced Enz they did in fact need, at least, a welterweight.

"We've a long way to go before we produce ourselves" says Rayner. "Things" didn't work. We have too many opinions — and too many strong opinions — when we're doing it ourselves."

The B side of that single was "Semi-Detached", a concert standout last year. Enz had been carrying round a stunning demo of that song for some time, and it's the demo that's on the B side (get it).

Finn says he hopes to put similar tracks on the bottom sides of the next two singles, which he is confident will come off *True Colours*. Two tracks to the side even. Favourites for singles at time of writing incidentally were "I Hope I Never" and "What's The Matter With You".

Personally I would have thought "I Wouldn't Dream Of It" or "Nobody Takes Me Seriously" or "Poor Boy" (especially) were in line as well, but ...

NEIL & EDDIE

The continuing emergence of Neil Finn is another factor helping to strengthen Enz for the 1980s. Neil wrote the music for the magnificent "Give It A Whirl", and three more tracks on *True Colours*, including "I Got You". How does Tim feel as the older brother of such obvious singles genius?

"I've always encouraged Neil, right from when I was banging balls at him against the garage wall" says Tim, smiling. "But yes, it is great to have two writing styles in the band."

And as a guitarist, is Neil being held in check, or is he still growing?

"I've a long way to go, but I'm happy with the guitar that's on the album" says Neil.

"I think he's a great rhythm player at the moment" says Tim "and there aren't many of those. Besides, Eddie dominates everything anyway."

Rip It Up readers somehow contrived to keep Eddie Rayner out of the instrumentalists list in the 1979 poll, a fact which amused Finn at the time. Did anyone try and steal Rayner while Enz were in England?

"No. He had a couple of offers to do session work as well as playing on Phil Manzanera's album, but we kept pretty secluded over there. If he'd been around a bit more maybe a few more would have been interested."

NEW DEAL

When Citizen Band last played in Dunedin, Mike Chunn spoke somewhat incredulously on how Enz could fill concert halls right through the country but only sell seven thousand copies of an album. He lay the blame firmly at the feet of Festival Records, and Enz don't disagree with him.

"The whole thing with Festival speaks for itself" says Tim Finn diplomatically.

"It's obvious they've held us back, and with the cover for the re-released *Mental Notes*, I think they've insulted the public. It looks like a

photo of the painting."

And Polygram?

"They have a good rapport with radio, which is important" says Finn. "They know the industry and they have a lot of energy."

"And we've just given them our best album by far" says Rayner.

"But our albums haven't been weak" says Finn.

"*Frenzy* could have done better" says Crombie.

"Yeah, we play to thousands and can't get a gold album" says Finn.

More talk ensues on Enz albums, and a kind of sloppy agreement is reached that yes the albums have been good, and *True Colours* is the best of them — though Finn understands the strong feelings people still have for *Mental Notes*.

"A lot of our old fans were around 18 to 22 when that came out, and that's a period you always remember well" he says.

On the *Frenzy* tour I asked Finn to assemble an Enz 'Greatest Hits' — not including the *Frenzy* album itself. Confronted with all six members this time, I was loathe to try and update it — most of Finn's original choices probably would have been tossed out the door.

But for those interested, as I intensely was, Tim Finn's Best Of Split Enz album as at late 1979 was — "So Long For Now", "Titus", the *Mental Notes* version of "Under The Wheel", "Stranger Than Fiction" and "Time For A Change" from *Second Thoughts*, "Sweet Dreams", "My Mistake", "Charley", "Without A Doubt" and "Another Great Divide."

LIVE ISSUES

Split Enz were excellently received at Sweetwaters, and the band seem pretty happy with the way they played (one not always following from the other).

"I thought *Rip It Up* was a bit unpatronising towards us" says Tim Finn wryly.

"We've always done new material. That's the thing about Split Enz — we're never the same. We loved Sweetwaters."

"There wasn't a very good sound on stage, but the audience was amazing" says Rayner.

"There was a certain joy about the whole thing" says Neil Finn. "And it was very well-run."

Finn is incidentally delighted to see *Rip It Up* is still going.

"It's great that it's survived. I know how hard it is to keep such a magazine going — I don't think the masses give a stuff about rock music, and there really aren't that many hardcore rock fans. It's important to have these things, they're our voices to the world. I remember when we started out, we were jubilant when we got into print."

Last year Finn was thinking of putting together a live Enz EP with 5 tracks — he wasn't too happy with the early Australian live tracks which had already come out. In 1980, plans are really no further on. If the band go overseas, there will obviously be a gap, and a live album would fill that gap, but there really isn't a whole album of good live material available at present.

"Ideally a live album should be one magic night, but bands only have one of those every 100 gigs" says Finn. "And I wonder about the facilities here for recording concerts well."

And will the band go overseas?

"There are nibbles at the moment. We know it's going to happen — we believe it's going to happen" says Finn. "When we went over the first time we made a lot of mistakes, but it's timing too. We had a great band, but it was the wrong band at the wrong time. Now we've got a good producer and we're really strong. For a while we were just holding our own with the old fans, but we're getting across to so many more people now."

"Suddenly everything is coming together" concludes Green.

In 1980, Tim Finn's burning ambitions seem as vital and as unshakeably strong as ever. It has never been doubted in Australasia that Enz are 'good enough'. Now they 'fit in' as well, the next overseas trip should be the one. Here's hoping.

Roy Colbert

FROM THE BIG LITTLE RECORD COMPANY



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THE TOURISTS

Reality Effect

Like an event looking for a place to happen, The Tourists roared on to the British music scene in 1979, scoring high on the charts, with hit singles and their highly acclaimed debut, 'The Tourists'. In 1980, they've already had two top 10 singles both featured on their new album 'Reality Effect'.

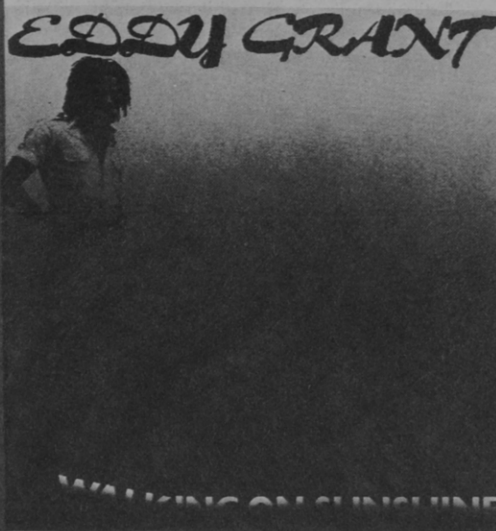


STEAL 5

MICHAEL CHAPMAN

Life On The Ceiling

Highly acclaimed by the rock press, this captivating album is Chapman's first studio LP in two years. Probably one of England's foremost but sadly underrated recording artists.



ICE 4

EDDY GRANT

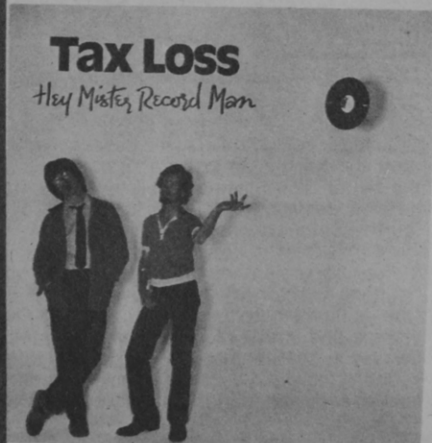
Walking On The Frontline

Founder and leader of the highly successful but now defunct group, The Equals, Grant possesses an amazing voice that's heard to its best in the lush but pulsating setting of this album. Don't ignore it

TAX LOSS

Hey Mister Record Man

First album from Tax Loss alias Paul Phillips alias Driver 67; who scored recently with the hit single "Car 67" — featured on this album.



LOGO 1015

ACT 5

ACT 6

ROGER CHAPMAN

LIVE IN HAMBURG

SPEEDOMETERS

Day In The Lights

Brand new British group, the Speedo's deliver their debut album — a tasty package of rock music in both the old and new wave categories.

ROGER CHAPMAN

Live In Hamburg

One of rock's classic vocalists, Chappo (ex Family, Streetwalkers) and his new band, The Shortlist deliver rhythm and blues, raw and hungry ... never letting up.

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