



Capt Beefheart



Nina Hagen



James Freud

## RECORDS

and her junkie Dutch boyfriend, Herman Brood. The point of the film has so far escaped most who have seen it. The soundtrack is saved by the inclusion of Lene's "Home". Brood seems to fancy himself as another Springsteen, and the rest is contributed by various second-rate Dutch bands who, in the words of Milligan, leave an indelible blank on the memory.

**Duncan Campbell**

### Australian Crawl The Boys Light Up EMI

On stage, Australian Crawl follow Oz tradition and belt out their repertoire in headbanging fashion. It is surprising, therefore, that producer David Briggs has opted for a more mellow approach, mixing back the rhythm section and taking the edge off the guitars, allowing the strong melodies to come to the fore. Fortunately, Little River Band guitarist Briggs hasn't allowed the result to degenerate into the saccharine pap that has become his group's trademark. Instead we are left with an album, in all its clarity, which shows off Australian Crawl's greatest asset, singer and main lyricist James Reyne.

Reyne possesses a fine set of lungs. There's power, poetry and potency here. Australian all the way, his lyrics and delivery don't resort to the Strine of Dave Warner but, if a comparison is sought, more to the early Skyhooks. *Boys Light Up* doesn't let any aspect of Australian life off the hook.

The trendy middle-class fall under Reyne astute observations in 'Hootchie Gucci Fiorucci Mama' (great title) and then there's the controversial title track:

*Later at the party, all the MPs rave  
'Bout the 'hummas' she's been giving  
And the money that they save ...*

All three Australian singles are included on this, their debut album and, I guess, that's what their target is — the singles charts. If you have an interest in Australian pop, grab this one.

**John Dix**

### Steve Forbert Little Stevie Orbit Epic

The sleeve note (Marcus Tybalt on the Seeds' cover was always my favourite) seems to be coming back. First there was that Grade A rubble on the second Knack album, and now we see seasoned hack Paul Gambuccini offering a strong contender in the is-this-man-serious stakes for his piece on the back of the third Forbert album.

It's the people around Forbert telling us how he shatters worlds an' stuff who are probably doing the man's career the most harm. Them, and the bozo who designed the cover for this record and then decided Little Stevie Orbit was a good title.

Forbert's first album had some good lines and a definite New York folkie charm, but his limitations were laid bare on album two. Pete Solley has been brought in for this one, and the aim appears to have been to present Forbert as a man of more wide-ranging writing styles. As a cover-up job for a guy who says and does it all on one acoustic guitar, this is reasonably successful. Both the wimp and the limp are still out in the open, but 'One More Glass Of Beer' and 'Lonely Girl' have substance, and the lighter 'Cellophane Girl' and 'Song For Katrina' are viable pieces of precious pop for the singles market.

Steve Forbert isn't the Dylan of the 80s or the Springsteen of the 90s or whatever. Rather he is about two-thirds as talented as, ummm,

Elliot Murphy. It would be nice if the promo machine gave him a break.

**Roy Colbert**

### Captain Beefheart and The Magic Band Doc At The Radar Station Virgin

1980 is going to be remembered for a lot of things, too numerous to go into here, but the return of Captain Beefheart is sure to be one of them.

After a few years silence (with the exception of the America-only *Shiny Beast*) Beefheart has come back with two albums this year, the varied and evocative re-hashed *Shiny Beast* (Bat Chain Puller) and now *Doc At The Radar Station*.

The Magic Band has changed a little since *SBBCP* with the departure of guitarist Richard Redus and the re-introduction of original sixties' member, John French, who has switched from drums to mainly slide guitar. This change has resulted in the emphasis being placed on the shoulders of French fellow guitarist, Jeff Tepper. It's their aggressive and fractured inter-play that provides the scenario for Beefheart's on-form dementia. Bruce Fowler's trombone which added so much colour and feeling to *SBBCP* is kept in the background as French and Tepper mesh on songs like 'Hot Head' and 'Dirty Blue Gene' or play around with Beefheart's irregular riffs on 'Sheriff of Hong Kong'.

The band is developing nicely, although I preferred the greater musical diversity and subtlety of *SBBCP*, and Beefheart's material is again strong with his humanitarianism and compassion shining through his obvious surrealism and weird metaphors. Songs like 'Ashtray Heart', 'Best Batch Yet' and 'Telephone', together with those mentioned above, show the purpose of vintage Van Vliet. Like I said, a welcome return.

**George Kay**

### James Freud Breaking Silence Mushroom The Reels Mercury

Two debut albums from two types of Australian on different outings.

James Freud was adopted by Gary Numan and he accompanied the latter on a UK tour, but Freud, wisely, chose to undertake this album without Numan's guiding hand. Actually Freud and his band lean towards the crafted pop end of the spectrum rather than to the empty synthesiser forays that Numan revels in. He has a handful of songs here that distinguish him as a gent with an ear for a pertinent tune and 'Enemy Lines', 'Star to Star' and 'No More Telephone' rise above most of Numan's output.

Promising but he could live without the plastic posturing that covers the inner sleeve.

The Reels emerged from the outback two years ago and although they didn't exactly take Sydney by storm they have managed to draft the critics on their side. Small mercies.

Their acknowledged influences are Devo, which accounts for their occasional clockwork eccentricities, and XTC who have made an impact on singer/songwriter Dave Mason's vocalizations and the band's lively approach. But like Zep these influences are merely springboards to their own music, and, often using reggae rhythms, they reel off a welter of intelligent pop songs, 'Love Will Find A Way', 'Plastic Pop', 'Prefab Hearts' and 'The Meeting' leading the field.

Both Freud and the Reels have made passable opening shots. Judgement reserved.

**George Kay**

## BRIEFS

### Minnie Ripperton, Love Lives Forever (Capitol)

Minnie Ripperton's vocals on this album were recorded in 1978, but the rest of the music was recorded early this year, after her tragic death from cancer. As a tribute, the work of Roberta Flack, Stevie Wonder, Michael Jackson and George Benson is impeccable and enjoyable. The music is low-keyed, but lovely, and admirers of tasteful soft soul should be well pleased.

PG

### Kate Bush, Never For Ever (EMI)

Bush maintains the standard set on her previous two albums with this quirky release. Most things work effectively — the strange koto sounds on 'All We Ever Look For', the lingering exoticism on 'Egypt' or the rather plastic little waltz of 'Army Dreamers'. The song to Delius sounds a little wilful and doesn't quite come off although the real rocker of the album is 'Violin' and has the most unlikely subject matter for its style.

Not everyone can take Kate Bush's idiosyncratic vocals and constantly shifting rhythmic textures, but if you can there is a good deal of first-class music here.

WD

### Average White Band, Shine (RCA)

AWB hit a peak with their first American album, produced by Arif Mardin, six years ago, and have been scrambling to reach their own standard ever since. Producer David Foster, who has worked a lot with Boz Scaggs, gives *Shine* a punchy mix, but there just aren't enough really strong songs to lift the album much out of the recent AWB rut.

PG

### Chicken Shack, In the Can (CBS)

A time machine drop-back into the late sixties when the British blues boom consisting of Peter Green's Fleetwood Mac, Savoy Brown, Mayall's Bluesbreakers and Stan Webb's Chicken Shack were more than holding their own.

Chicken Shack, with Christine McVie present in the band's early days, carved their name with her interpretation of 'I'd Rather Go Blind'. They also made workmanlike blues that avoided the pits of indolence and indulgence. Sometimes nostalgia ain't so bad.

GK

### Waylon Jennings, Music Man (RCA)

Feminists will caw at the spelling of women ('wimmin') but Waylon doesn't make his music for feminists. A good album of tall-in-the-saddle country, Side One alternately rocking, chugging and pumping most effectively — until an awkward cover of Steely Dan's 'Do It Again' at the end — and Side Two slowing things down just as well. On the latter, 'He Went To Paris' is a real accomplishment.

RC

### Sex Pistols, The Great Rock'n'Roll Swindle (Virgin)

An abbreviated single album version of the most aptly titled record of our time. A lesson on how the best laid plans can go awry when placed in the hands of some business men and some record companies.

The Sex Pistols as heavy metal cinerama is a long way from the McLaren-Rotten vision of 1976, but it's now 1980 and punk pastiches make money. One used band for sale, enquire within.

GK

### Pacific Eardrum (CBS)

Two pleasant singles do not an album necessarily make. 'Placebo Junction' and 'Oceania Roll' are really quite catchy in a middle-of-the-road way. Why then foul up a potentially nice little album with feeble disco and Maori slogans of 'Listen' or the mindless late 60s optimism of 'Rainbathing'? The two more pop-styled tracks point the direction Pacific Eardrum should take unless they are able to produce more invigorating and exciting jazz than this particular album.

WD

### The Industrials, Clones of Radioland (Epic)

You gotta hand it to Kim Fowley, when it comes to manufacturing contemporary styles he knows exactly which sources to draw from.

With a name like the Industrials the band should be harsh and unrelenting but instead they're fashionably distant and remote controlled. Their feather-weight songs are cushioned in synthesiser lines and catch-phrase sentiments. File under P for Product.

-GK

### Eddie Money, Playing For Keeps (Epic)

It's glib to say Money peaked on his very first single 'One Ticket To Paradise', but I'll say it anyway. The man rocks reasonably, but there's a pervading air of desperation here that one inevitably gets from music made with an eye for the main charts. At times he even sounds like Bad Company (sheeeesshhh). The opener 'Trinidad' is the one to try.

RC

### Frankie Miller, Easy Money (Chrysalis)

Glaswegian Frankie Miller sure has a voice that sounds as though it's been steeped in rough whiskey, neat, but for too long his songs have been shandies.

Maudlin, boozy ballads and boogie may sound like authentic rock'n'roll but for Miller these styles are the easy way out. Only his version of Jo Jo Zep's 'So Young' and a genuinely tender 'No Chance', where he's learned something from Rod Stewart, relieve the album's formula.

GK

### Scott Wilk & The Walls (WEA)

Will these guys be the Jules & The Polar Bears of their year? Actually this is pretty well put together, but its utterly undisguised cloning of Elvis Costello sets real limits for the listener. And, I daresay, Wilk's own career. The best moments sound like what many expected Costello to come up with as his follow-up to *Armed Forces*, and the drummer works hard throughout. Ability here, originality yet to surface.

RC

### Live Wire, No Fright (A&M)

Live Wire are Dire Straits clones, that, at least, was evident on their first album. This state of affairs hasn't changed much but leading figure Mike Edwards has improved his songwriting and brushed up on his arrangements particularly for 'Castle in Every Swiss Cottage'.

But this album is still mainly taste without content.

GK

### Ian Matthews, Spot of Interference (RTC)

An old-timer who feels chuffed because he's survived the seventies, ('I Survived the 70's') and in fact he almost does sound rejuvenated on this new outing. With virtually nowt but guitar, bass and drums, and only very occasional keyboards, Matthews steps out, particularly on the second side, with a series of lean, sparse songs that belie his advancing years. Not an important album by any means but one which proves the spark's still there. GK

### Girls School, Demolition (Bronze)

It would be supercilious to snigger at every new heavy metal band that came along but, in 1980, it's bloody hard not to. This all-female band add nothing to the genre but, then, neither did Foreigner so maybe there's an audience for them after all.

JD



### The Only Ones, 'Special View' (CBS)

A special New Zealand-only twelve inch EP featuring the direct punch of 'Lovers of Today', the triumphant, classic rock of 'Another Girl, Another Planet' and two B sides hitherto unavailable in this country, 'Peter and the Pets' and 'This Ain't All (It's made Out To Be)', both early examples of the band's potency. A good view.

### Joe "King" Carrasco and the Crowns, 'Buena' (Stiff)

American Stiff people who, for starters, make tequila love sounds that would shuffle you around any cantina. It has that slouchy relaxed feel that Nick Lowe and the Brinsleys were so good at portraying. Its singalong potential is endless. The flip, 'Tuff Enuff', is a good fun chair smashing exercise. Bend those knees.

### Dead Kennedys, 'Holiday In Cambodia' (RTC)

One of the few American punk outfits with the topicality and sheer dynamism to take on the likes of Sham 69 and the Subs on their home turf and lick them hands down. 'Holiday in Cambodia' is a lesson in the politics of power, fire and purpose as applied to the punk ethic. Flip side 'Police Truck' is more pedestrian.

### Citizen Band, 'Home Tonight' (CBS)

CB have come up with a few attractive tunes in their time but overall their music has tended to be too squeaky clean and often too prissy for my money. 'Home Tonight' is an appealing song, jangling guitars, pert melody line and all, but like 'Pyjamas' and 'I Wanted To Be Happy' on the flip, it fails to make any impact or impression on the listener. Insubstantial.

### John Lennon, 'Just Like (Starting Over)' (Warner Bros)

Lennon is one of the legends who has suffered in the seventies for his brilliance in the sixties. He has consistently put his neck on the line and he's made mistakes, but he'd be the first to admit them, and now he's back after a long absence looking after his son while Yoko earned the money.

'Just Like' is domestic boogie, untouched by excellence but a sound enough re-entry as is Yoko's sharp disco flip, 'Kiss Kiss Kiss'. Both will be on the album.

### The Mockers, 'The Good Old Days' (Mocker Music)

### The Steroids, 'Mr. Average' (White Light Records)

The DIY spirit is certainly picking up in Wellington and, although neither of these singles would change the course of rock'n'roll, you've got to admire the inherent commitment of both bands.

The Mockers have an unruffled, almost tranquil, commerciality at their fingertips with 'The Good Old Days' and it echoes Human League influences whilst 'Murder in Manners St.' on the flip uses more conventional rock noises. Undemanding.

The Steroids sound as though they are still firmly entrenched in the generation of '77 with 'Mr. Average' b/w 'Out of Control', two songs built around bull-nosed garage punk clichés. Innocence almost redeems them.

### Dave McCartney, 'Infatuation' (Polydor)

'Virginia' should've hooked more than it did, but never mind McCartney's back with a better shot, 'Infatuation'. Auckland reggae with a sharply defined and very marketable chorus. The B side, 'I'm Outside' is of similar commercial potential as it bounces around a bright piano tune and looping bass line. Bruce Lynch produced with customary professionalism.

### The Knobz, 'Culture' (Bunk)

One of Kevin Fogarty's topical songs and one which EMI felt they could live without. Subversive it isn't, in fact its 1977 pace and passion render the song as merely impertinent in 1980. 'Chipping Away' on the flip is a tribute/attempted emulation of the Mi-Sex style and reveals the band's musical expertise, and their total lack of communication with the kids, the people Fogarty and co. have never really reached. Christchurch likes the Knobz.

### Flowers, 'Can't Help Myself' (Regular Records)

A new Australian four piece who know the value of commerciality. This single is available in ten inch picture sleeve form with two versions of the song, one being shorter for radio play. Like our own Tears' effort 'Was It Something That I Said' it picks its spot and scores first time with a neat bass fronted arrangement and instant chorus hook. Classy is the word.

