

LIVE

number of old songs dropped. Bones sings 'More', and far from being a throw-away party piece, it opens up a new direction for the band. Bones' voice is strong, leaving Phil to extract amazing sounds from his white Rickenbacker. The best of the new songs is 'Wild Life' — catchy without being trite, the guitar snarling under a foot-tapping beat that's as danceable as 'Shona', and as solid as 'Jinx'. The band like the song, and will possibly record it as their third single. 'One Good Reason' will appear on the flip of 'Counting the Beats' which is out in both Australia and New Zealand in January. *Bryan Staff*

George Benson  
Mt Smart Stadium, December 7.

Another new venue for Auckland, and it looks like being a popular one. The precious greyhound track is carefully covered, the stage is set in the shadow of the main stadium, and 20 thousand gather on a warm Sunday afternoon. Benson's mellow fusion of jazz and soul couldn't have had a better setting. He has his detractors, mainly jazz purists who remember his younger days, but there's no denying the man's abilities. What's more, he can still play up a storm. Backed by his own superb eight-piece band, plus a 30-strong local string session, Benson was as soothing as a summer breeze, while still getting funky enough on occasions to drag people to their feet. Thumb picking is no easy skill to master, especially for a jazz man. The only other person to make any real success of it was the late Wes Montgomery, whom Benson obviously learned much from. His soaring fretboard runs on the faster numbers were dazzling, more than making up for such slop as 'The Greatest Love Of All'. Not a rage, just a happy Sunday cruise. And a nice opening for a very pleasant venue. *Duncan Campbell*

**Billy and the Blue Flames**  
Station Hotel, December 3.

For the uninitiated, Billy and the Blue Flames are a rockabilly band. They are purists, and play only material from fifties' greats like Elvis, Gene Vincent and Carl Perkins. Tonight, a Wednesday, they have competition from major bands at all the pubs, and Kiss at Western Springs. By eight o'clock there were eight people in the bar. Guitarists Mike Cooney (ex-Furys, Snipes) and Peter Mesmer (ex-Terrorways) put on their best 'we don't

mind' air, and take to the stage. Looking magnificent (lurex shirts, boot lace ties, quiffed hair), they leap into action with 'If I Had Me A Woman'. The Blue Flames have borrowed the Furys' PA tonight, and this adds body to their sound. Bassist Struan Knuckley decides there isn't enough room for him and vocalist Bill Hood, so he shifts his pink double bass onto the dance floor. Songs like 'Twenty Flight Rock', 'Lonesome Train' and 'All By Myself' get the treatment from Kerry Buchanan's slap drumming. The feel is irresistably toe-tapping, and the crowd, now numbering fifty or so, are up on their feet. In the past few years, Tom Sharplin has been making a lot of money playing early rock and roll. The Blue Flames, although more raw, have a sound that makes Sharplin seem a pale imitation of the real thing. *Mark Phillips*

Cheap Trick, Angels  
Hammersmith Odeon

Cheap Trick arrive at the Hammersmith Odeon in two black limousines, the Angels in a small bus. Check out the modus operandi. Cheap Trick travel in style and stay in the best hotels. They don't move into a venue, they occupy it. For the Angels, who have been touring overseas for just one year now, it's a far more personal operation, with both managers, John Woodruffe and Ray Hearn currently on the road, plus a small but dedicated road crew who are not only long time employees of the band, but friends. A late sound check means there's no time to get back to the hotel. After a half hour wait, The Angels go on stage with the 3000 capacity venue already filling up. Everyone in the place is what Neilson calls a 'hard core Cheap Trick fan'. Besides shirts and sweaters purchased in the foyer this evening, Cheap Trick buttons and hats — residue from past tours — are also in evidence. The small logo is stamped on everything. For the almost unknown Angels this performance is a gift. "England reminds me of when we first went to Melbourne," reminisces Neeson later. "They stand there and look at the band with their arms folded and analyse the thing — decided on whether it's art or farce, until they realised it was okay to enjoy themselves. I think it was when we turned the bass drum up..." The present set is hard and fast, pared down to the gutsy essentials of their blitzkreig rock. The songs are a collection of old and new beginning with 'Straight Jacket' and 'Take A Long Line'.

Our Jimmy, shouts a young roughneck, erupting into laughter as he watches Doc clambering over the speaker box. As the band move quickly into gear, he becomes quieter and like everyone else in the filled venue, has eyes glued to the frenetic front men. Doc has a badly hurt ankle, but the pain doesn't slow him for a moment. The band leap into 'Marseilles', and Doc begins his spoken serenade, 'Voulez vous promenade avec moi ce soir' to two unlikely mademoiselles wrapped in scarves and cigarette smoke. After 'Shadow Boxer' the band leave the stage, returning to perform 'Can't Shake it' as an encore. Strong applause from the most difficult to please audience in the world. Then it's Cheap Trick's turn. The crowd roars as they leap onstage. Pretty Robin Zander is dressed tonight in an immaculate pink suit; last night it was immaculate baby blue. Neilson's in his perpetual black and white to match the chequered speaker boxes and back drop and on the other side of the stage is new bass player, Pete Comita looking nervous on his first major performance with the band. It's the first time Cheap Trick have had a line up change in their six-year career, and Comita, a West Coast trained guitarist, just changed to bass, has had little time to fit in. There's also a new album to introduce, the George Martin-produced, *All Shook Up*. Like The Angels, Cheap Trick are opting for impact. "It sounds Like London" yells Zander after the band have whizzed through openers, 'Hello' and 'Clock Strikes Ten'. Although the sound is not perfect, it's loud and the audience love this crazy, naughty rock and roll. They are already familiar with some of the newbies like, 'My Baby Loves To Rock' and 'I Love You Honey — But I Hate Your Friends', and enjoy the covers, the Moves' 'California Man' and the Beatles' 'Daytripper', for which Neilson drags out his Fab Four guitar. The show builds towards the hits, 'Surrender' and 'Dream Police' for the inevitable encore. With the audience screaming for more, Neilson discovers English rocker, Alex Harvey next to the bar — where he's obviously been for some time and gets him onstage for a pretty version of an old rock standard. It's an uncomfortable ending to a good show, but England is not Cheap Trick's most comfortable market. They tread very carefully through this land. *Miranda Brown*

**Visitors, The Clips, Hit and Run**  
Kicks, December 6

At the door of Kicks I was met by a bouncer who informed me, "Rip It Up" aren't playing here tonight. "No, no, *Rip It Up* is a magazine." The cashier just looked blank, but someone, somewhere at Kicks has heard of us and I made it into the tiny nine o'clock crowd. First up were Visitors, who turn out to be Tramp with a new front man. Guitarists Paul Gilbert and Mark Manning, bassist Tony Dugan and drummer Mike Faris began with the aptly-titled instrumental, 'Sound Check'. Carey Peterson joins in for the second number and

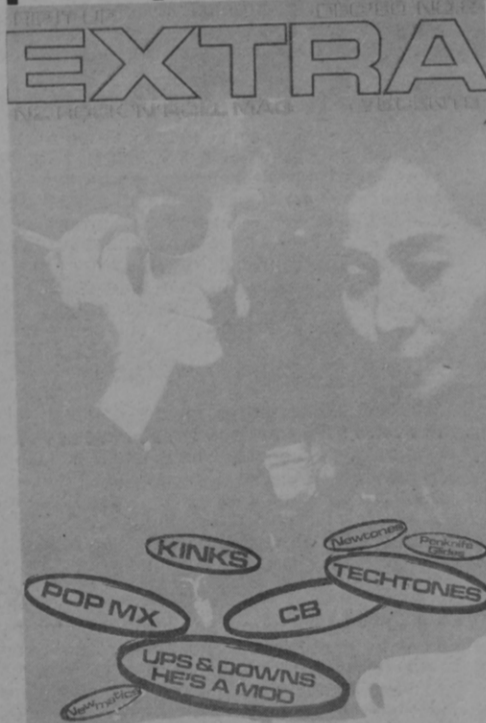
the band sets about demonstrating how far they are on the way to achieving their stated aim of a totally original sound with a largely original set. Formed last weekend for the 'Battle of the Bands', the Clips are two thirds Lix and one third Golden Harvest. Bassist John Catmill, guitarist Dave Wilkinson and drummer Mervyn Kaukau look like another Swingers in their co-ordinated black and white shirts, sewn by respective mums. The Clips already have a smattering of originals, including 'Public Servants', with a great hookline. My only criticism is that the vocals sound strained and almost nervous. Their ambition is to still be playing next week. If they are this good after one week, next week they'll be brilliant. 'Battle of the Bands' finalists Hit and Run were headlining. Vocalist Paul Andrews (ex-Hookers and Furys), guitarists Wayne Ferris (ex-Electrabeat), Keith Moyle (Picture This), bassist Kim Fordham and drummer Tony van der Patten (P'zazz, Torpedo), all good musicians, played two sets of tight, bluesy rock, but with something missing. Having their own sound and lighting crew should be an advantage, but instead it turned into something of a competition with the lighting coming out on top. Their list of covers was all-too-predictable, including the Clash, Tom Petty and Australian Crawl. A third of their material was original, but none really stood out, although 'What Does It Take' has been chosen for Hauraki's Homegrown. *Karen Stevens*

**Willie Dasent Blues Band**  
Globe Tavern, November 17.

Wakefield Street's Globe Tavern has undergone a few dramatic changes recently, not so much in decor as in the type of entertainment offered. What with poetry and dramatic presentations throughout the week, and live music of a specialist nature on Saturday nights, and now, every Monday, 'Monday Blues Night'. For this first dose, most people seem to have come through "word of mouth" advertising, which says much for the reputation of the Willie Dasent Blues Band. Led by English-born guitar player Willie Dasent, this is one of the few blues bands I've seen that actually live up to its Chicago '50's roots. From the opening 'How Many More Years', with its extended intro and (deliberate?) key changes, to the closing 'Feel So Good', it's conviction and white-hot playing all the way. The double-edged attack of Dasent's guitar and Brian Glamuzina's vocals/harmonica breathes fresh life into old standards like Jimmy Reed's 'Baby, What You Want Me To Do', and the old Elmore James' staple, 'Dr. Brown'. The sound is raw, the equipment so minimal it wouldn't power Hammond Gamble's monitors, but it's great! Monday night looks like being fun in Auckland again, with footstompin', *real* blues being the prime catalyst. *Dave McLean*

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