

RUMOURS

Auckland

Following the shock demise of the Newmatics – drummer Ben will replace Chris in Prime Movers, vocalist Mark Clare will manage Movers, Jeff may move south, Syd is forming another band and the horns are up to something. Their final gig, as a 13 piece, featured Blams, a Meemee, a Bongo, original saxist Simon, a Freud, Ham (from Green Eggs and) and others ... the night before, Michael Meemee collapsed on the Mainstreet stage and needed reviving. (A severe asthma attack.)

New drummer Steve Duffels has left Penknife Glides. In April Glides will do several gigs before going off the road indefinitely. Session dresser Stefan Morris will return for the April gigs ... Gurlz are now five with Shelly on synth. ... during a hot Star & Garter show, Nigel of Danse Macabre while cabaretting in the crowd, got doused in a jug of beer by a Christchurch hairdresser. Though not one to shun a new look, Nigel returned to the stage prior to completing treatment ... though not a fall fan, dancing Instigators bassist Tarewai disappeared through the stage three times at the Nile River Festival. No timber down there, eh?

Meanwhile on the shores of the Waitemata: new Screaming Meemees LP is titled *If This Is Paradise I'll Take The Bag*. Expect the Meemees vinyl mid-May. Blam Blam LP *Luxury Length* will be out two weeks prior ... in Metro proof new Auckland indie is XTC ... Smelly Feet has released a C60 tape *Left Odours* ... Bongos have recorded three tracks. Two for a 45 and one for the overdue Furtive *Three Piece Pack* ... *Battle Of The Bands* is on April 22-24 and April 29-2 May ... the slogan for the Billstick Bros. is, "Where there's a wall there's a way."

There is an Underage Rage at Mainstreet on Easter Monday from 1pm. Bands are Screaming Meemees, Danse Macabre, Blond Comedy, Prime Movers and Gorilla Biscuits. Four bucks to get in.

Zak Harper has left Mirrors.

Others will take over vocal chores ... Royales have recorded at Stebbings ... will Iran Iran release 'Spunky'? The Corporation

Christchurch

First they were Bill Direen and the Builders, then Bilder Bergers now AM Express. As well as gigging they're putting on a production of *King Ubu*, one of the first fringe plays of modern theatre – an 1890s piss-take play ... and Dance Exponents are planning an opera version of *Hamlet* but not at the Aranui.

Party Games are now Ten Foot Five with vocalist and bassist from Direct Descendents newly joined ... Trick Cyclists have a new drummer, Bob Ogilvie, ex Narcs ... the Playthings have evaporated, but it was amicable. Their *Bird's Eye View* single will be released posthumously.

Desperate Measures are now appearing on a double bill with *Rock & Roll Swindle* as *Clockwork Orange* was not available ... Wrong Way Corrigan Band reshuffle with ex Strand bassist joining before they head north in May.

Flying Nun news is Mainly Spaniards' new single is a three track called *That's What Friends Are For*. 25cents' new single is 'Don't Deceive Me'.

Spiders' new band is called the Phenols. They are a five piece ... Alan Park will attempt to move Lyttelton into town when his new band Louie and the Hot Sticks commence a 4 week Gladstone residency in April. Will the Glad turn into a health food den? Buttons, stickers and posters in the best Cheap Trick style will be on sale at the door.

Dick Driver marries soon, but not before the Dance Band go to Dunedin and Invercargill ... Dave Merritt of vegetarian fame and Laura Mitchell will write a hand book on the wrongs and rights of the NZ rock and roll scene ... Gordons are still looking for a sponsor for the tour and single. They may meantime do a benefit concert for Harry Sparkle who has recently been released.

Peter Waller & Jim Wilson

UK & USA

David Bowie will star in Tony Scott's film *The Hunger*. He will



Playthings

play an alien who has been on earth for 500 years. Co-star will be Susan Sarandon, who has been nominated for an Oscar for her part in *Atlantic City* ... with the new Blondie vinyl ready for release, young Deb has decided to continue her acting career. She is currently filming *Videodrome*, in which she has all her clothes removed by a whip wielding giant ... Graham Parker has returned to

the live circuit after a three year absence. Apart from Brinsley Schwarz it's a new band ... Coroner's verdict on the death of John Belushi was an overdose of heroin and cocaine ... Jaz Coleman, vocalist with Killing Joke has disappeared, speculation is that it's linked to his fascination with the occult ... Neville 'Fun Boy' Staples was recently fined \$300 for

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Gurlz:
Debbie (bass),
Carol (drums),
Greig (guitar),
Kim (vocals).
Absent is
Shelly (keyboards).



Prime Movers'
new line-up:
Ben, Nick,
Kevin.

hynde in sight but Martin chats

"Aw c'mon, we're not that good," said Chrissie Hynde, as an ecstatic audience screamed for another encore. Trouble was, she couldn't stop grinning as she said it. She knew damn well the Pretenders had been exceptional.

Chrissie looks much better in the flesh than she photographs. Not sulky or bitchy, but smiling, laughing, bumping and grinding. Also a voice that owes nothing to studio artifice. 'English Roses', 'Talk Of The Town', 'I Go To Sleep', 'Kid' and 'Stop Your Sobbing' were lump-in-the-throat perfect.

A raunchy lady, too. 'Bad Boys Get Spanked', taped whipping noises added, was Heavy, with the capital. By the time they crashed into the Troggs' 'Wild Thing', everyone had surrendered.

A mean wee band, this. James Honeyman-Scott rides the thin line between flashpoint and smoulder, a guitarist with lots of presence, but just as much control. Pete Farndon, into Samurai chic, is a visual foil and a superbassman. Martin Chambers is a drummer who wants to be seen as well as heard, thrashing the day-

lights from his kit, loose drumsticks flying around like broken teeth.

The god of Television still takes precedence in this country, and we were kept waiting far too long for an interview, while Chrissie and Martin were forced to answer inane questions for some children's programme. God, this country does embarrassing things to visiting celebrities, treating them as though they're lions who jump through hoops.

The Pretenders have been touring since last July. Their only break from gigs was for six weeks last year, when Martin badly injured his right hand. It still bears a jagged scar right across the knuckles. The story given at the time was a 'freak accident'. Martin confesses he 'got a bit mad' one night, and smashed a large vase, which bit back. Too much pressure.

But Martin still prefers playing live to anything else. The one problem has been getting anything new together.

"We've been on the road pretty constantly since the recording of the second album," says Martin.

"Material doesn't come to us particularly well on the road. Chrissie is getting better at it, and there are a few ideas going on at present. We'll take a break soon, get some demos together, probably about the end of May. Things usually come together pretty quickly once we've started them."

The second LP was much closer to the Pretenders' live sound than the first, which was a little tentative in places.

"Practically all of the first album was Chrissie's stuff that she'd had for years. The second album, of course, was written in the time the band had been together, so obviously it sounded more like the Pretenders. The third will be even more so, by the time we get around to it."

"During that period of those two albums, the band changed so much, because of being on the road pretty continually."

I remark about the changes to some of the older material, such as 'Brass In Pocket', which had a completely new instrumental section in the middle.

"It does change, because you want to keep it interesting for yourself, so you get little ideas as you go along. Some of them are very subtle, others are obvious. It adds interest, I think, and a challenge, because it's never quite as good as you'd like it."

Chrissie apologised on stage, for having to do "boring old songs" like 'Brass in Pocket'.

"Actually, we never liked it particularly, because it had been around for a long time, and we had a problem getting a good bassline for it," says Martin. "When we eventually finished it, somebody said it would make a good single. We'd had it around for so long, we'd lost any thoughts of it at all. It just happened that that was the one that really took off in most areas of the world."

So were you surprised when that happened?

"It was a bit of a pleasant surprise, really. It happened over Christmas when they freeze the British charts for a fortnight. It crept slowly up the charts, got to number 10, and the charts froze. I had an advance phone call on Christmas Day that it had gone to number three, then the first week of 1980 it went straight in at number one, coinciding with the release of the first album."

"And the best thing was that it knocked a really good single out of the top spot, too. That was Pink Floyd's 'Brick In The Wall', which is better than knocking off some rubbishy disco song."

"We'll have to write a few more like that, I think."

"Let's hope I can."
Duncan Campbell

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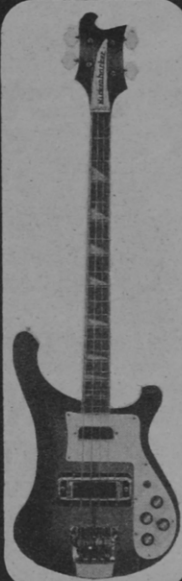
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