

Letters

Post to 'RIU', PO Box 5689, Auckland 1.

Letter from Peter?

I feel there is one important item that your intrepid reporter Russell baby missed when he did the top-class Christchurch thingy for your wonderfully North Island magazine. Perhaps the most important personality of all was missed. Himself, of course.

Now Russy went to Burnside High School in Christchurch when he was still young and pimply. It was essentially a very middle class school and Russy fitted in very well. He hated everything bar rugby and the school tie, in short, he was a model pupil.

Upon leaving school, much to his parents' horror, he discovered "Punk Rock" as early as 1980 and set his sights upon convincing the whole world. Thus he entered the noble profession of journalism with the *Christchurch Star* and became an entertainment reporter's assistant. It wasn't too long before the *Star* realised the quality of this young man's reporting skills and he was transferred to Timaru.

The young man was kept busy writing a paragraph or two a day about the bustling megalopolis until a great thing happened. *Rip It Up's* editor came down to Christchurch (God knows why, he's never before shown any interest in the city) and asked Jim Wilson what he thought of Russy. Jim said "fine" and Christchurch became proud of its latest success. Russy moved to Auckland, where he remains to this day, reporting for *RIU*.

The only bone I've got that I think is really worth picking with him is his article titled "Jim'll Fix It". Certainly there are a few people who don't appreciate the tremendous work Jim has done for Christchurch. They discovered "Punk Rock" about the same time you did, Russy, most have a great deal of respect for what he has done for the city. Without him Christchurch would be the cultural Sahara that Auckland has become and Wellington has always been.

He was responsible for giving us the Androids by giving them a chance to play the Hillsborough in a late week against the manager's wishes and supporting them when no one else did. He gave us the Narcs, Hip Singles and Dance Exponents. Christchurch bands, note Russy, Jim, I'm afraid, has a thankless job to do thanks to people like you. Don't forget there is always the pub manager to answer to because he controls this game in NZ and it's not reporters or bands that have to do the answering in Christchurch.

Certainly Russy, Jim changes his mind every six months. I bet he's changed his mind about what he said to the *RIU* editor about you. It's a changing world, I'm afraid my boy and it changes nowhere faster than in this game.

You've changed your mind twice in the last three years, Russy ol' son, from rugby to the Sex Pistols to the Clean. Give Jim a bit of recognition for what he's done and maybe if you're lucky he won't throw in the towel and you will still be able to see the best bands in the country when they come to prop up Auckland's dying rag trade.

In Touch Wellington
(PS: No relation to that dreadful

magazine, just for laughs)

Russell Brown replies:

This Jim-Wilson-got-me-my-job business is not true — ask the man who hired me. I'd already been writing for *RIU* for some time and had two years of music writing behind me. Jim Wilson may be central to the Christchurch music scene but he is not yet such an oracle that editors travel south to seek his advice. I presume the bit about my "discovering" Punk on leaving school in 1980 is meant to be a slur, it's not true either. I was a regular attendee at the Strand and Wayne Manor. Admittedly the dropping of a conclusion in the layout stages gave my story a slightly more negative slant than I'd intended, but that was just garnishing. At least I signed my name, jocko.

Android Speaks

Jim, Jim, where ya bin?

It's really wonderful to see somebody has the interests of the managerial class at heart! Too bad about the patrons and the bands — but then they're used to fending for themselves.

The poor old manager only gets 33 per cent or whatever off the top and, if not lucky enough to have you look after his interests, he'll have to pay someone else to rub the scribbles off the toilet walls.

The story in last month's *Rip It Up* invited comment and got my hackles up. You're a wimp, Jim. After ripping off the Gladstone from Laura and Rose you have pontificated your way from bad to worse. You're always going for breaks and the only interests you have at heart are your own! 'Jim'll Fix It' all right. If you start running seminars on the rock'n'roll biz we're off to another planet.

Eric Android and Baine Huggett
Auckland

Not Peter Again?

Turning a page in the March edition of *RIU* to a small article coyly entitled 'Meet the Wastrels', I was permeated by a rather bilious sensation of déjà vu. There has been a series of these little pieces — a couple in the *Christchurch Star* and a substantial one in the *Timaru Herald*.

Invariably, these meet-the-boys snippets are accompanied by a snapshot of an appropriately grimy urban wasteland, providing a suitably sleazy foil for the solemn cupid features of Hlavac, Brinson's peroxided puckishness, the luxuriant forelock and modelish pout of Cooke is inevitable and Jenner crouched awkwardly on the cold concrete like a desolate tuatara. It struck me that in the belaboured optimism that touts them as next season's success story, there is a (re-echoing) chord of pathos. For the Wastrels are last year's goods — though they are barely 20, they are old, old boys. Christchurch's cupboard must be bare.

You can almost smell the stale dregs of 45 South and roll-your-owns. That same sickly atmosphere hung about when Graham Brazier's Legionnaires played the Hillsborough last year. The man himself cavorted sleepily, nodding like a sated python, the mesmeric reptilian eyes hooded — the music proficient but somehow lifeless. And Cooke wants nothing better than to turn out like that.

Why are our old idols and our new hopes all so jaded — and why do we pretend they're not — writing article upon article about the latest blooms in the weedy NZ garden — shovelling on the compost? Do we love the tawdry
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