

# DAVE MCARTNEY DANCES ON

About eight years ago, in the early days of Hello Sailor, Dave McCartney was on stage at Shantytown (now Aladdin's, one of Auckland's better-known nightspots), preparing for the night's performance.

"There was a faulty junction box on stage. I was holding on to the microphone and my guitar touched the mike stand. The electricity found earth through me. I was thrown about six feet in the air, the lights were out on stage at the time, so no one saw me. Luckily I managed to kick the mike stand away. But five minutes later I went into delayed shock, and my heart stopped."

Graham Brazier had to give McCartney heart massage to revive him, and he spent the rest of the night in hospital. A similar accident killed gifted Scottish guitarist Les Harvey a few years ago. McCartney has been extra careful ever since and has had no repeats. The incident, and the feeling of dying, is recalled in a song on the new Pink Flamingos' album, *The Catch*:

*One night I fell into a ring of fire  
I had this feeling my engine run dry  
Ooh watcha gonna do  
When it's all over....* (I'm In Heaven')

The rest of the album is on a similarly reflective note, with McCartney taking stock of what was and what might have been. He's an unabashed romantic and a sentimentalist, and *The Catch* is a graphic dissection of his attitudes and emotions. In talking about these songs, McCartney, normally shy and withdrawn at interviews, is at his most illuminating.

'Wretched Youth' is a sometimes-painful recollection of a younger man, in that gloriously hedonistic suburb referred to by McCartney and his youthful mates as 'British West Ponsonby':

*Salad days, I knew they had to end  
My crime was messing up my life...*

"I tried to recapture the actual atmosphere of my life in the early 70s. I believe life goes in



seven to 10-year cycles, things repeat themselves and, despite the changes that are meant to happen minute-by-minute, day-by-day, year-by-year, I still believe people remain the same. I tried to recreate through word imagery the feeling that pervaded at that time among my friends, and particularly the people who were involved with Hello Sailor. It's like looking back on all the things that have happened between then and now. For us, it's been a fairly ratshit trail, but I don't want to convey the feeling that it's negative. If anything, it's just the opposite."

The title track is a broad observation on the ironies of life, where something comes along to lift you up, and something else makes an equally strong effort to knock you down.

"It's about the duality of human nature, I suppose, or the difficulty of coming to terms with the fact that things don't lock in the way they should. Whenever you're faced with something positive, it means that something negative presents itself, especially in relationships."

'Beauty and the Bottle' admonishes excessive users of alcohol, the message being that the two don't mix. Not that McCartney is on a clean living kick.

"As you approach your thirties, you realise the need to put the brakes on, so to speak. I'm not concerned about my own alcohol intake, that's totally out of control (laughter). I'm not a moralist, but I'm concerned with the fact that society does revolve around alcohol, and what sort of society is it, if it needs artificial stimulant to help its members get on, and stop tension? But that's OK, I'm not making a moral judgement, I'm just making fun of it. In a lot of my songs I just toy with words. I've done it here with different brands of alcohol."

'Little Angels' needs no explanation, being a song for the Kings Cross hookers, like Richard Clapton's 'Girls On The Avenue'. For people who are classified as the dregs of society, the streetwalkers have attracted more romantic imagery than any other nefarious profession. McCartney's reaction is that of the typically

goggle-eyed Kiwi. Otorohanga was never like this.

'Japan Affair' is an exotic arrangement for McCartney, recalling a time about four years ago when he and his girlfriend were trying the macrobiotic diet.

"I had a lot of difficulty trying to reconcile this with the lifestyle that I was leading (giz a Big Mac), and at the same time, I used it as an allegory for our relationship."

*The Shogun's daughter was to be my girl  
But it burned inside  
Just a taste of doubt  
Her in a pagoda, I a rock n' roll grave...*

Footwear has been a consistent rock image throughout its history. Everyone can rattle off at least a few titles that have used boots or shoes. McCartney's 'Red Boots' is a tribute to perhaps New Zealand's most famous pair of rock n' roll shoes.

"In those particular red boots I felt I had confidence, I had a certain amount of grace and firmness, and whenever I wore those red boots, everything was great. I'm certain that everyone has a feeling about certain types of footwear, it's what you walk on the planet with. I wore these boots just about every night for about 10 years, and then after the last gig that the old Flamingos did last year at Mainstreet, I hung them up in this motel, and that was it."

The boots in question, which will be recalled by anyone who saw the Flamingos gig in the old days, are now in the possession of Dick Driver. He hasn't yet had the nerve to wear them in public.

'Dance On', the current single, is the oldest song on the album, dating back about 10 years, when McCartney first started writing.

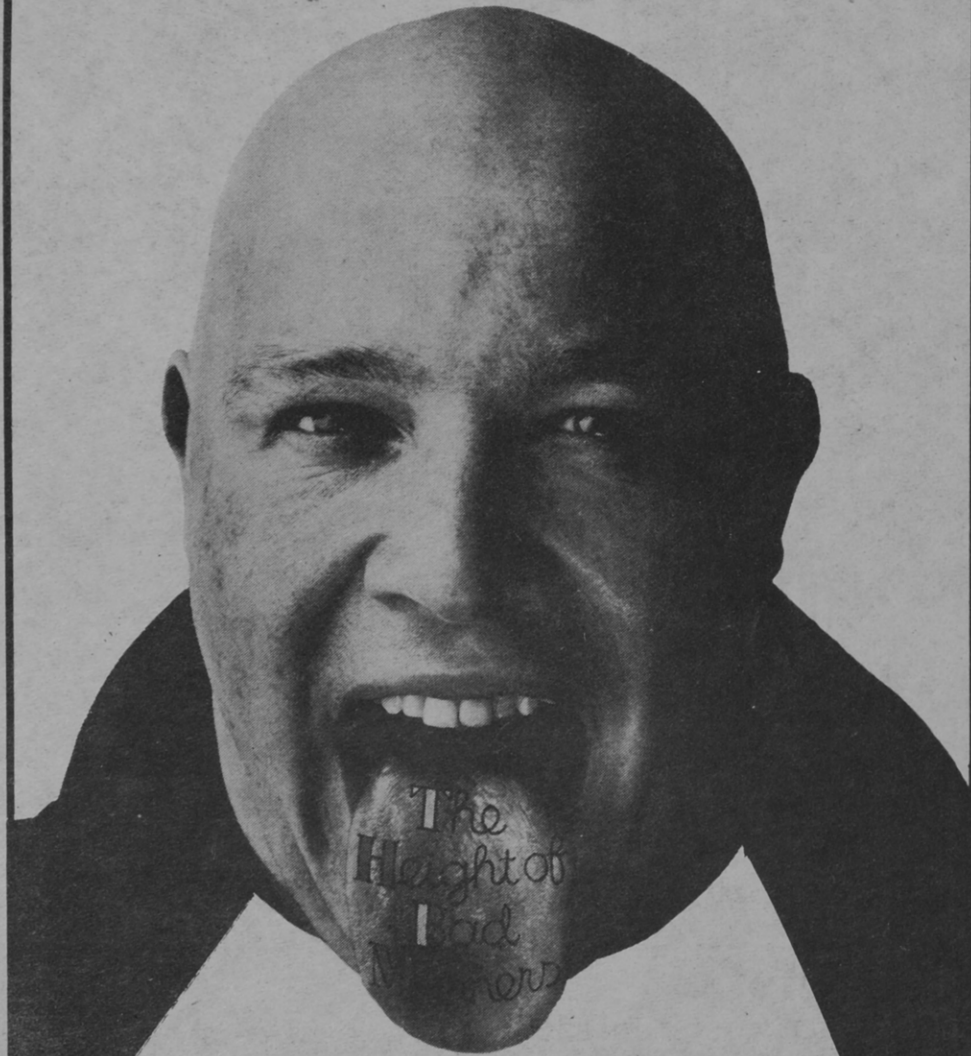
"I've always looked upon it as a sort of a defiant song, taking a second look at lovers' games, that sort of thing. Every record I do, I like to go back to the early days when I first started writing, take a song and treat it the way I'm playing it at the time, and see how it compares with the rest. I still have quite a few numbers sitting around that I haven't used. Graham (Brazier) does the same."

'Beaches' was co-written with Harry Lyon and Paul Woolright, originally with the Legionnaires in mind.

"That was a song which started off with a title, as opposed to either a lyric or a chorus. The band was just jamming, Paul started off with the bass riff and Harry continued with the bridge, and I just followed it through with the chord structure, the arrangement and the lyrics. I think it has a South Pacific mystique, using the idea of the early sailors, having an undeveloped knowledge of natives and things

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## THE HEIGHT OF BAD MANNERS



### A BUMPER BEST-OF COLLECTION

SPECIAL BREW  
NE-NE-NA-NA-NA-NU-NU  
LIP UP FATTY  
WOOLLY BULLY  
LORRAINE  
JUST A FEELING  
INNER LONDON VIOLENCE  
BUONA SERA

WALKING IN THE SUNSHINE  
CAN CAN  
SAMSON AND DELILAH  
MY GIRL LOLLIPOP  
GOT NO BRAINS  
HERE COMES THE MAJOR  
FALLING OUT OF LOVE  
THAT'LL DO NICELY

ON ALBUM AND TAPES AND OUT NOW



## THE COMSAT ANGELS LAND



NEW ALBUM & TAPE OUT NOW  
FEATURING THE SINGLE  
'WILL YOU STAY TONIGHT'

