

MENACE



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EniMa
Ill On Speed
Pistol Grip
4 Past Midnight
Howard's Alias
Suspicious Stains
Dave Sharp
Adequate 7

**PARENTAL
ADVISORY**
EXPLICIT LANGUAGE

Issue No.7
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pogo 'til die!

lutch



Dumb-Down



pogo'til I die!

12441 P

It's taken an eternity to put together. No excuses its here now and the first 50 copies of issue 7 should include some FREE punk rock courtesy of Blackburn based Noize Anoize Promotions who've kindly donated copies of their sampler CD Noize Anoize 08. It has tracks from Boredom, The Bobby Dazzlers, Riot To Us, Hope, The Runs (who I now believe have split) and The Icemen. Thanks again to Andy and Julie from Noize Anoize for supplying the CD's. If you've missed the freebie then check out the website www.noizeanoize.fsnet.co.uk - all the available Noize Anoize releases can be found there. These guys via the North Bar Blackburn along with Paul and Carl's efforts at the Royal Oak in Poulton near Blackpool continue to stage the best live punk nights in Lancashire. Long may this continue and your support is always much appreciated. Check out www.punkoiuk.co.uk for forthcoming gigs at these two venues. Regards the fanzine there are still a few back issues available. They are No. 5 with Sick 56, Pike, Pink Torpedoes, Rezillos, 999, Glen Matlock, Heavy Metal Kids, Blyth Power, Justin Sullivan and No. 6 with Hyperjax, Picture Frame Seduction, Crashed Out, Beki Bondage, John Foxx, Dangerfields, Mike Peters, Peacocks, Crucified Venus, Kid Conspiracy, Kinesis. Check the www.onefinfulwood.co.uk site for details and be quick as once they've gone they're history. A big thank you to all the bands featured in this issue for their time and contributions. Especially Menace who went out their way to do an interview on a cold night in Blackburn and were all round good blokes to boot. I've just got in the house from seeing the UK Subs in Blackburn, Charlie Harper is now 60 which is pretty amazing and I'm sure he'll continue to front the busiest punk band in the world for a good while yet. Nice one Charlie. A mention to Preston band Pike who've let me see the view from the other side of the fence by letting me in on the Bass for a few gigs. One minute I'm sharing stage with Broken Bones, Anti-Nowhere League and Menace then I'm back on the typewriter. There's a riches to rags story. Cheers guys but you drink too much! Probably the biggest exclusive in this issue are the "Academy In The UK" Fest photos taken in Birmingham in May. Strictly no pictures. Don't ask me how the camera got in the venue I wasn't fuckin there! Enjoy the read. Roy H.

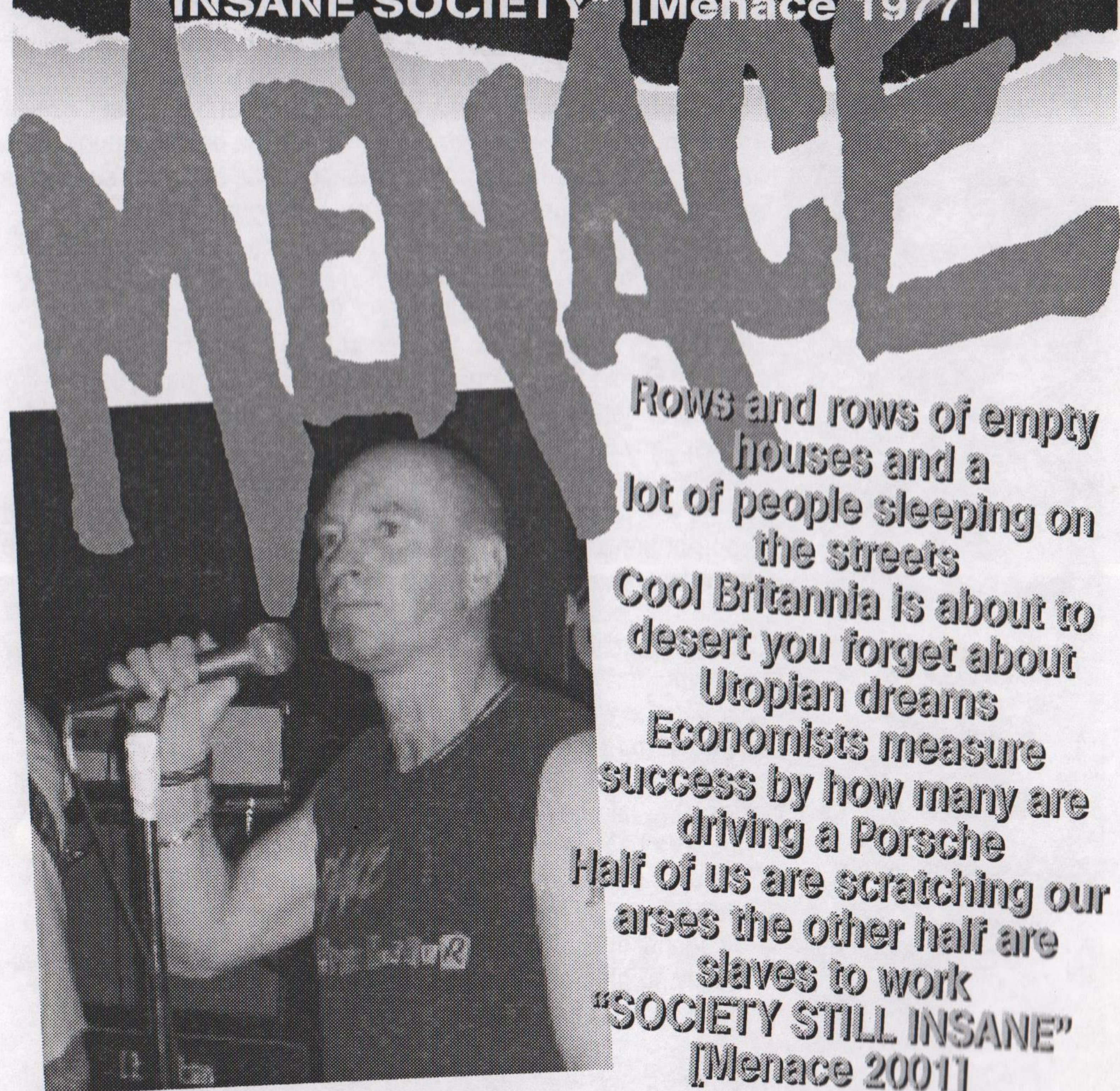
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Compiled by Roy Hesketh and John Winstanley, brought to life by Clarke Design

Cheers to Lee for the pics, Andy & Julie@Noize Anoize, Paul & Carl@Royal Oak Poulton, Ronnie & Jo@North Bar Blackburn, Menace, One Man Stand, Pistol Grip, Suspicious Stains, Arturo and Lurkers, 4 Past Midnight, Levellers, Dave Sharp, EniMa, Howard's Alias, Adequate 7.

Views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the bands/artists featured

**Insane Society let them eat cake, the poor
keep giving and the rich just take
Insane Society get it while you can, pretty
soon there will be nothing left man
"INSANE SOCIETY" [Menace 1977]**



**Rows and rows of empty
houses and a
lot of people sleeping on
the streets
Cool Britannia is about to
desert you forget about
Utopian dreams
Economists measure
success by how many are
driving a Porsche
Half of us are scratching our
arses the other half are
slaves to work
"SOCIETY STILL INSANE"
[Menace 2001]**

**I was lucky enough to be in
Blackburn on Friday, 27th
February, 2004 to see Menace
play the North Bar. First time
they'd ever played Blackburn.
Like the rest of the punters**

**[Geoff, Ange and crew apart
who've seen em' loads of
times!] I just wanted to hear
all those early 45's again.**

They've been etched in my brain for 26
years or more. I'd only seen Menace

once before, at last year's HITS Festival. The prospect of seeing them play a small venue like North with the band up close in your face has far more appeal as far as I'm concerned. In the short space of time Menace were originally around, 1976 to 1979 they released some catchy, tuneful classic punk rock records. That original Menace line-up of Noel Martin [drums], Steve Tannett [guitar], Charlie Casey [bass] and the late Morgan Webster [vocals] had their first single "Screwed Up" b/w "Insane Society" released in August 1977. It came out on Illegal Records, a label started by Miles Copeland to release his brothers record "Fall Out". His brother being Stewart Copeland who drummed with The Police. The second Menace 45 and arguably their most well known song "GLC" was released in 1978 on Small Wonder Records. Again, like the first single almost a double A side affair with "I'm Civilised" on the flip. By mid-79 the band had split and released a farewell single "Last Years Youth" b/w "Carry No Banners", again on Small Wonder. Somewhere in between time came a John Cale produced single "I Need Nothing" b/w "Electrocutioner" and somewhere along the line Fresh Records released another 45 "The Young Ones" / "Tomorrows World" / "Live For Today". That was then and this is now but founder members Noel Martin and Charlie Casey still remain true to the cause. The newest recruits are Oddy on vocals and Paul Albert on Guitar, they joined after the departure of John Lacey and Andrew Tweedie. John and Andrew were part of Menace when the comeback album "Crisis" was released by Captain Oi in 2001. Back to tonight and Menace stormed the North Bar....they were superb and they won the hearts of everyone in the building. There's talk of a return to Blackburn already. After the gig I got to chat to the four band members round the corner in the Sir

Charles Napier pub. I started by asking bassist Charlie Casey his thoughts on tonight's gig? Great...we really couldn't believe it...it makes it all worthwhile when you go down that well...I travel four hours up the motorway from London to the Midlands to rehearse for four hours...so yes it's great to get that sort of reception.

How did that compare to all the early London gigs down the Roxy and Vortex?

It was no different . . . it was just the same . . . our stage has always been our fans stage too...the Roxy was really a mixture of trendy people and punks.



How long have you known Noel?

We're both Irish and we lived quite near each other back in Ireland . . . although we didn't know it at the time. Noel is from Galway and I'm from Oranmore. Then we were at School together in London . . . that's where we met.

What were you listening too before punk?

Basically rock . . . Deep Purple, Thin Lizzy . . . playing rock too...then the Hot Rods came along...used to go and see them.

Would Punk have happened without the pub rock?

Yes I do believe it would have happened anyway . . . the one thing about punk it allowed you to put your personal ideas

into the music . . . it also opened up music for the next 20 years.

Menace gained a reputation as a great live band in the early days, you did a lot of gigs with Sham 69 if I remember rightly?

We did and gathered up a good following . . . playing gigs with Sham 69 gave us a lot of exposure . . . there were a lot of good places to play in London at that time...we signed to Miles Copeland's Illegal Records and released our first single "Screwed Up". John Cale of the Velvet Underground produced for us.



Do you think there is renewed interest in the older punk bands?

Respect is there for the older bands, but it's the energy in the music that gets the respect. Younger people are getting into it perhaps due to the new American bands. This old cunt was listening to Desert Island Discs the other day and Cale was on. Yeah . . . did he mention Menace! I never heard him if he did . . . what bass players influenced you? John Entwistle . . . Jean Jacques Burnel. Do you have a favourite Menace song? From the early Menace songs . . . "I'm Civilised" and of the newer songs... "Rocks and Dust". Charlie had lots to say but as I didn't have the Dictaphone I was unfortunately unable to get it all down, but what did come across was how genuinely passionate this guy was about Menace. I soon discovered the other three guys were equally as passionate about the band.

How did you see tonight Noel?

When you get a good audience like that its fuckin great. Cos we don't do much you see...it's not like a full time job for us. We're not playing all the time. We don't do that many gigs.

Are you surprised at the feeling still out there for the band?

Yeah...all our contemporaries had hit singles and record deals...we had nothing back in the early days. No big record company! No chart hits! Funny thing we hardly ever played outside of London. Wolverhampton was perhaps the furthest.

When did you start to put the band together?

It was back in that long hot summer of 1976 . . . Charlie and I were mates at School...we went to the same school as Johnny Rotten . . . St. William of York in Kings Cross. We started writing songs and brought in Morgan and Steve. Then we wrote "Screwed Up" which was released on Illegal Records. There were a lot of bands in 1977 and lots of people going to gigs.

How does playing today compare to back then?

I'm enjoying it more so than 1977. The lads in the band are a great bunch.

What about the new punk bands of today?

The bands themselves have links with the older stuff but the kids who watch are going for the newer bands. It's a bit different in the USA the kids will search out the older bands just to see what they were like. As for the older bands most of them are glad they are still alive!

Any of the older bands you still admire?

The UK Subs. Charlie Harper is an old mate of mine from way back. When the first Menace single came out "Insane

Society" / "Screwed Up" I bumped into Charlie on the corner of Oxford Circus. I had some singles with me and Charlie bought the first copy of the first ever Menace single. Just like Charlie Casey, Noel Martin is Menace through and through and is as enthusiastic about the band as ever.

Moving on to vocalist Oddy who's been with Menace for around 2 years. Did you enjoy tonight's gig?

Tonight just blew me away . . . a great crowd. There are three Menace gigs that stick in my mind so far . . . that's the one we did in Prague . . . Corona in the USA back in November and tonight's gig. Tonight in Blackburn, it was like being back in the USA again. We didn't expect to go down that well.

How did you come to join Menace?

Well I always liked the old songs but around two years ago Resistance 77 supported Menace and when I saw them they just blew me away. A month later I got a call and joined them.

How does it feel to be singing with a band you were/are a fan of?

It's a privilege to be playing with Menace. I've tried to bring back the Morgan Webster feel to the band. He inspired me.

You all seem so passionate about the band?

Well we rehearse in Derby which is a four hour trip for Noel and Charlie. How many people would do that...it's a love of Menace and punk.

When's the new Menace studio album?

We'll start recording it in London soon and it will be released on Captain Oi . . . around July time? The working title is "Better Days". The new stuff is hard edged and tuneful with lyrics from the heart. There's also a live DVD of the Corona USA gig to be released too.

What bands have influenced you?

Stiff Little Fingers . . . I'll still be down the front when they play . . . jumping away like a cunt! The Clash and Charlie Harper are big influences too.

What are your favourite Menace songs?

"Screwed Up" and "Rocks and Dust". Paul Albert is a London boy and one time Stains, Only Alternative and Emergency guitarist . . . now he's very much a part of Menace. Like the other three guys he was really pleased with tonight's gig. My chat with Paul was cut short as the pub called time. I'd first met him at the 100 Club in 2001 when he was playing with Only Alternative at Punk Aid. I'd actually gone to see Menace that night but they were unable to play the gig, it was the same week as 9/11 if I remember rightly. I never sounded like Johnny Thunders at all . . . unlike what you said!

What's this about one of the Pistols moonlighting with Menace???

There's a flyer up at The Dublin Castle in London for our next gig and it reads Menacel . . . "with Steve Jones on guitar"! . . . it should have been Bob Andrews! . . . [Generation X]. You'd have to see Paul's lip curl's to understand this one but it explains his influences and he's as enthusiastic about the music as anyone I've ever met in punk. He's also impressed when I tell him I once saw The Heartbreakers play. There's never enough time! . . . we all leave the pub and head off into the night and back to the North Bar. Walking along with Oddy and again I was impressed at how much Menace meant to him. He went over some lyrics of a new Menace song with me even calling Noel over just to check he had them right! . . . straight away Noel rhymed them off. Meeting Menace finished off a great night for me and a more genuine set of blokes you couldn't wish to meet! . . . cheers guy's. www.menace77.co.uk

Roy H.

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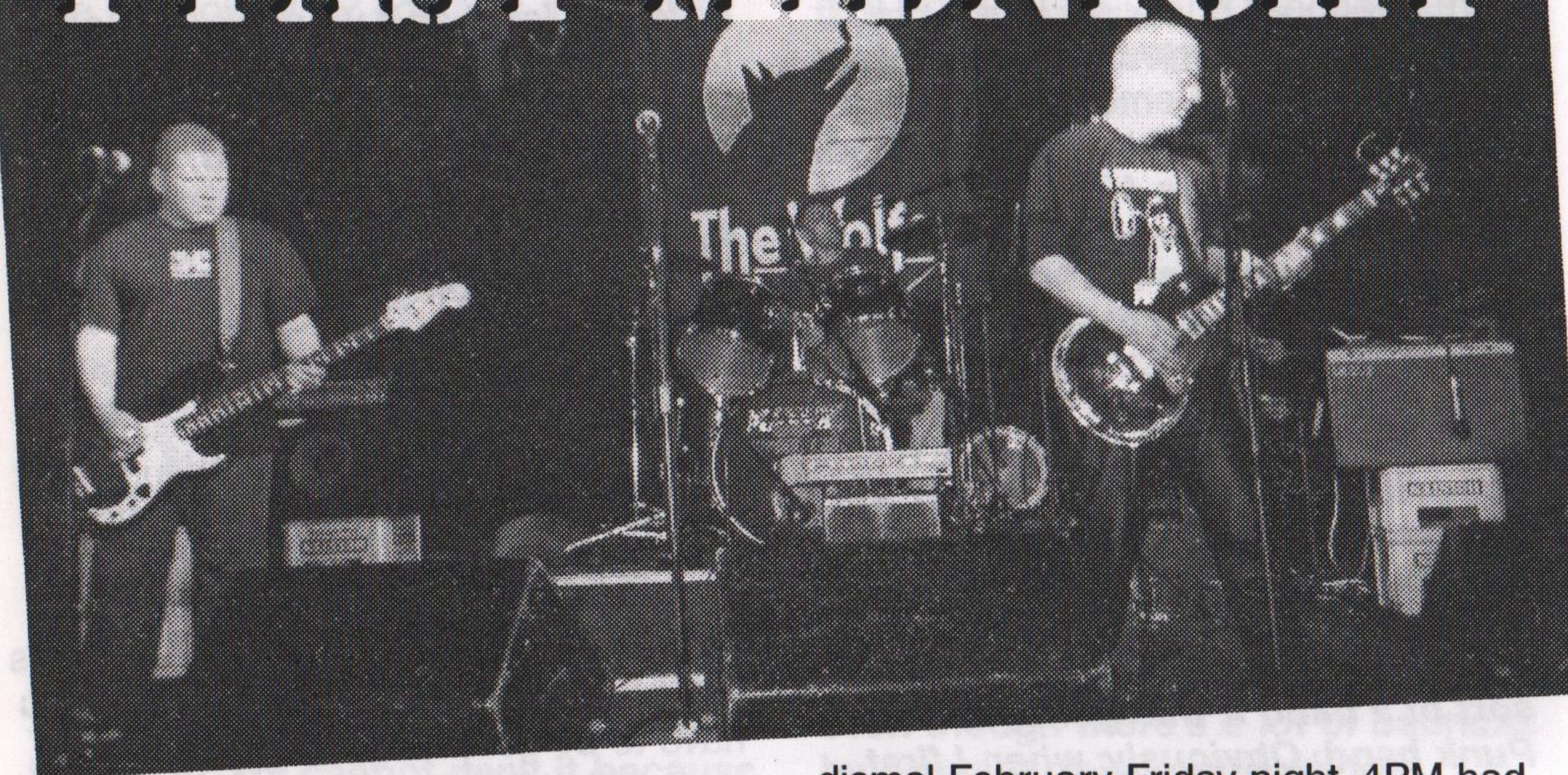
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4 PAST MIDNIGHT



The Thatched House in Stockport is perched on the corner of a hill on Church Gate which is off to the left of the main road heading south and if you get to the Student Union block and petrol station you've gone too far!

Some would say a pub is a pub and this place is a pub with a raised "stage" area on the far right. The bar is opposite to left; adjacent to it and through a narrow doorway is a poolroom where I did the interviews with Ill On Speed and 4PM. The place does create the ideal atmosphere for a Punk night- no frills, dark and dirty with plenty of beer. The crowd peaked for locals Spitting Dummies at around 100 and with the X-Rippers from Bradford completing the line up of 4 with for no entrance fee- this was a bloody good night on a wet and

dismal February Friday night. 4PM had been introduced to me by Punk Promoter Stu Taylor [www.taylopromotions.co.uk] by way of a biog and CD sometime round the Spring of last year after the release of the "Mental Ward" EP and the fantastic value for money 28 track "Punkology" LP. Rather than regurgitate all of Stu's biog I get the band to put the past in their own words as Pete [Drums/Vocals] chewed on a kebab -

We've been going for 14 years and had various changes through one reason or another - Nine Bass players- Wullie being the most recent one. All have come and gone but hopefully [with Fred completing this trio tonight] the current line up will stay together for many years to come!

For the anal amongst their first 10 track demo "Start of The Liberation" was recorded in Sept 1990, followed by "Smash The Front", "Pain Greed and Death" and a 15 track cassette "Midnight Escapades" brought them into 1994 when they released "Get a Life" on French label One By One. But after the

following year's - "The Fears We Hide" on Weird records failed to get a response they took a break. 1998 saw them re-appear briefly as TRICKSHOT but they soon reverted back to 4PM to put out "The Ruff Demo" and "The Best & The Worst of 4PM" before their debut CD "Jesus Christ It's 4PM Again" on Smokin Troll records which brought them some attention in 1999 but not enough as they closed down again until early 2003 which is where we find them today.

So what got Pete started and how does he manage to keep going?

All I ever wanted to do was to start a band and if it was going to be any sort of a band it was going to be a Punk band. Obviously, when I first got into music I started off with Gary Glitter, The Sweet, Rubettes and Marc Bolan – all back in the early '70s . . .

Good rocking guitar bands! . . .

Yeah! Then one day when I was about 9 or 10 I got given The Ramones album and that totally blew me away. I was hooked and that was all I wanted to do. In 1986 I started a band called F1-11's – they were rubbish, we weren't very good but it was a start and a few years later in April 1989 4PM was formed.

The love of the music has kept me going. I've hundreds of CD's, albums and there are a lot of bands out there that are crap and now a days you've got to be good. If you're not no one's going pay any attention to you. Too many bands want to be American and the American bands want to be British and nobody's wanting to try a bit of originality. I'm not saying 4PM are original because we are far from it, but we play stuff that we consider to be real Punk Rock – there are a lot of Punk Rock bands that call themselves Punk bands but they're

not Punk Rock- well, not in my eyes anyway. Your Green Days and Off Spring- they are taking it to a whole different level and you ask kids of today and they will say Off Spring is a Punk band. But it's not a Punk band in my book. Exploited, Sex Pistols, The Clash, Ramones – that's Punk Rock . . . and that's why the band is still going today- for the love of the music!

We compare the English Punk scene to the Scottish one and they conclude that in places like Glasgow it can be hard due to cliques that you're either in or not. Whereas in England there is more interest and also more choice Pete sees this as more healthy competition so you have to be good to get noticed. Wullie agrees that the standard is higher adding that in Scotland there's more "pop-punk-metal" but his particular favourites are The Exploited and to-nights headliners ***Spitting Dummies***. He goes on to move the debate –

"Some people might say the American influence has kept the Punk emblem in people's minds. The likes of Green Day are responsible for keep some sort of punk recognition in the main stream. So all that comes from America isn't bad!

I voice my concern that some American bands that are looking to play one particular type of Punk do English Punk – while the vast majority of American bands are pure American. This compares with what I see in that young English bands are trying to sound American. We nod in thoughtful agreement and Fred takes up the conversation –

I like a lot of American bands but you still can not beat British Punk for its rawness, power, energy and statements...with American bands

it's all my girl this/my girl that...it pisses people off and me.

The Punkology LP contains a reaction to many controversial subjects so I wondered what does 4PM stand for and what political banner would they pin their colours to?

Pause [Pete] – considering I write most of the songs . . . I write about things we should sing about such as child abuse...coz there is no excuse! A new song called "So Fragile" will go on the new LP as there's a lot of it going on right in front of you, over the internet – various sad people through and through! Other subjects are about the state of the world today – the way us humans have polluted the Earth. We cannot deny it because we have petrol fumes, aerosols and whatever else, it all contributes. The government in "Party Political Bullshit" – that's exactly how they talk-bullshit, bullshit . . . they're to blame for 90% of what goes wrong – they're out to fill there own pockets, they're full of greed – they just want power, greed and money! Like Bush- this war is a smoke screen . . . and Tony Blair made a mistake . . . you don't go to war without knowing all the facts! They went to war on assumptions . . . there's a backlash and next time he stands for government he's going to get licked out on his arse and we'll end up with the Tories and I don't know if that's good or bad!

I open the debate on Punk by contending there was an irony when it started in that there was massive unemployment and people had loads of grievances to voice – especially in Ireland and yet most of the bands who were successful – like The Undertones and Buzzcocks didn't have any obvious political agenda. SLF did but in essence the initial Punks were non political but

were later seen as A political in that they were regarded as a reaction to the Prog Rock and music excesses of the time by giving music in it's simplest form back to the kids. With the success of The Darkness and un-originality about these days why isn't Punk more relevant today?

[Fred] It's the Americans who sing about nothing political . . . NOFX maybe but there's no messages other than meeting this girl or that . . . it's all sanitized.

[Pete] People slag off a band like Conflict . . . but let's face it they're still putting the message across and I'd rather watch bands like that . . . even though there's a lot of badness between certain bands without knowing all the facts.

He goes on to tell me that this fighting inward anger manifests itself on Internet guest books with vitriol aimed at them for raising subjects like paedophilia. Is there a lack of common focus in Punk? Pete says he can sit and watch any band and even if what they play were not his thing he'd still appreciate them doing something. He asks why Punk has to be political anyway and given the humour of Sham 69, Cockney Rejects and even in many Sex Pistols' lyrics I have to remind myself that the rebellion was in the presentation not necessarily the substance. We could blame the Americans for sanitising Punk and the deeper integrity has been lost or is regarded as a bad smell in the corner but what else is responsible for it not being at the forefront anymore?

[Fred] The record companies who saturate the market with complete crap. These manufactured pop band that get rammed down kids throats. Before I joined the band I thought Punk was The Damned and Sex Pistols until Pete gave me an

Exploited CD and I thought what the fuck! This is great and turned me onto something my mates had never heard of ... it's underground!

So what will it take to bring it over ground and into the public domain?

Record companies! Punk's not a mainstream thing anymore. All record companies are interested in is making money and the money comes from the kids listening to the rubbish they're putting out right now. So they're not interested in signing bands like us – rather Busted who think they are a Punk band when they are complete pop crap. It's just money plain and simple!

Punk was also about moving forward- so what's it going to take for 4PM to move forward and where are you going to go?

[Pete] Us as a band has got 14 years of passion, pushing and pushing and it has got us nowhere, But over the last year and a half we're playing more gigs because of a man in there called Stu Taylor- if it wasn't for that guy picking us up and saying you're a good band you should be out there we'd still be doing 2 or 3 gigs a year in Aberdeen and Glasgow where nobody gives a toss.

We start to conclude our chat and I reflect on the fact that here doesn't seem to be the labels around today like Stiff records and Two Tone who set a trend in developing new bands that had a sound

and a talent which couldn't help but be pushed to the forefront. Scratch the surface and you will find the likes of Deck Cheese, Household Names, Kung Fu, Fat Wreck, BYO and many more who all have their interpretation of Punk spewing out a stream of new hopefuls. However, the failure of most of their bands lies in their lack of writing songs that *appeals* to the mainstream. The reason why they all sound the same is they generally are in the banality of their tunes. They put energy into their hair gel, jeans that fall around their arses to reveal their designer boxers and ensure their leaps and fistings are timed to perfection but they do not pay attention to crafting a catchy tune that you'll be trying to get out of your head the following day, that will make you seek out a copy of it to make sure it sounded that good as it did at the gig. But with the likes of 4PM somewhere in their set you'll come away humming the chorus to *Little Sid* or *Victim* or admire the harmony change in *Majors On The Street* or just smirk at the simplicity of *Get A Life* or *Fuck Off*. We either take Punk too seriously, yearning for a return to what we think are the misguided values of '76/77 when there was a lot of crap in the charts [there always will be!] or the bands don't take the music seriously enough to deliver a CD's worth of memorable material. 4PM do not disappoint as they have the experience and treasure chest of songs for the old and the young, traditionalist or modernist – you'll have to catch them to decide which category you fit into.

John Winstanley



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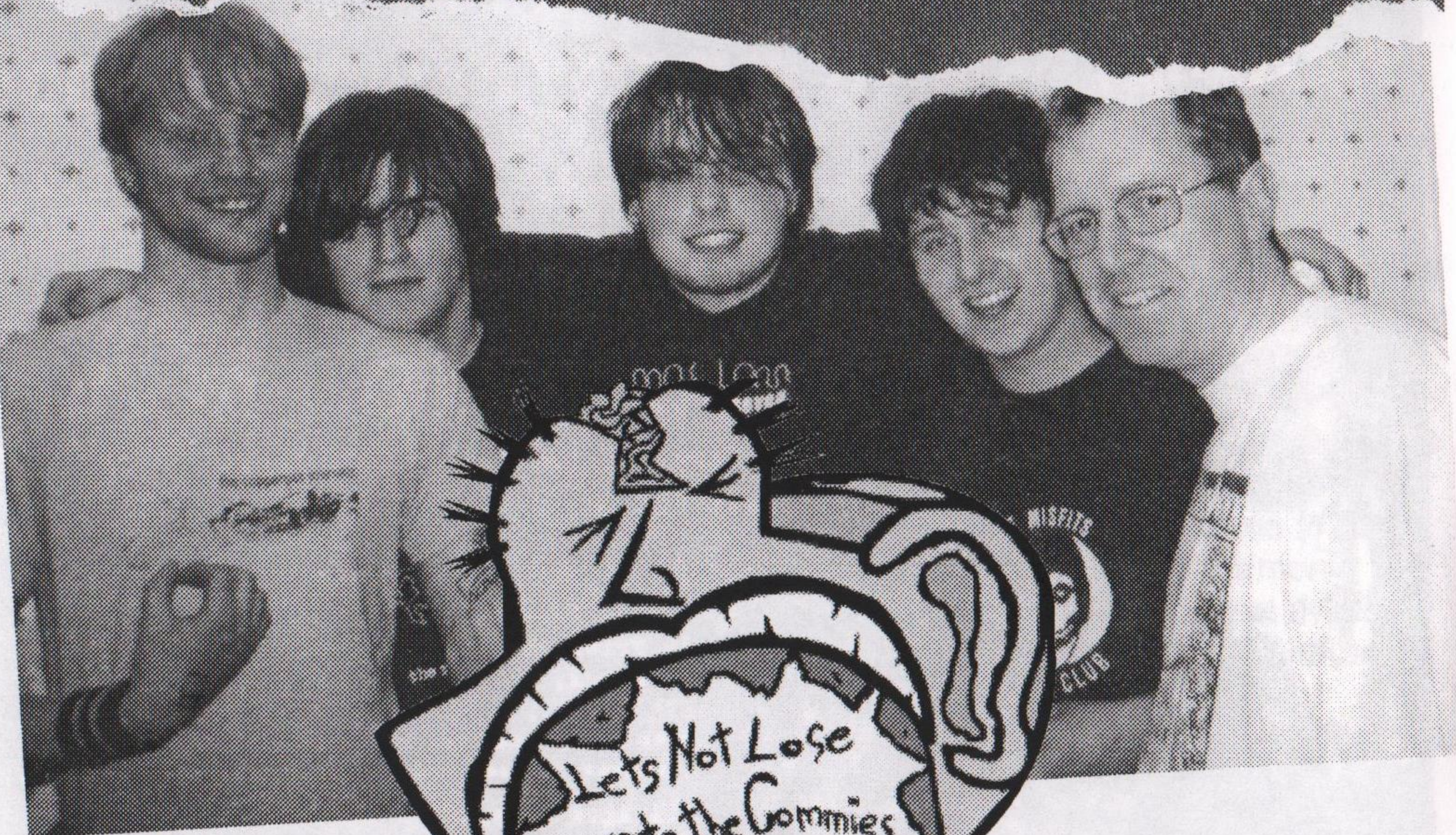
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A year in the life of managing a band

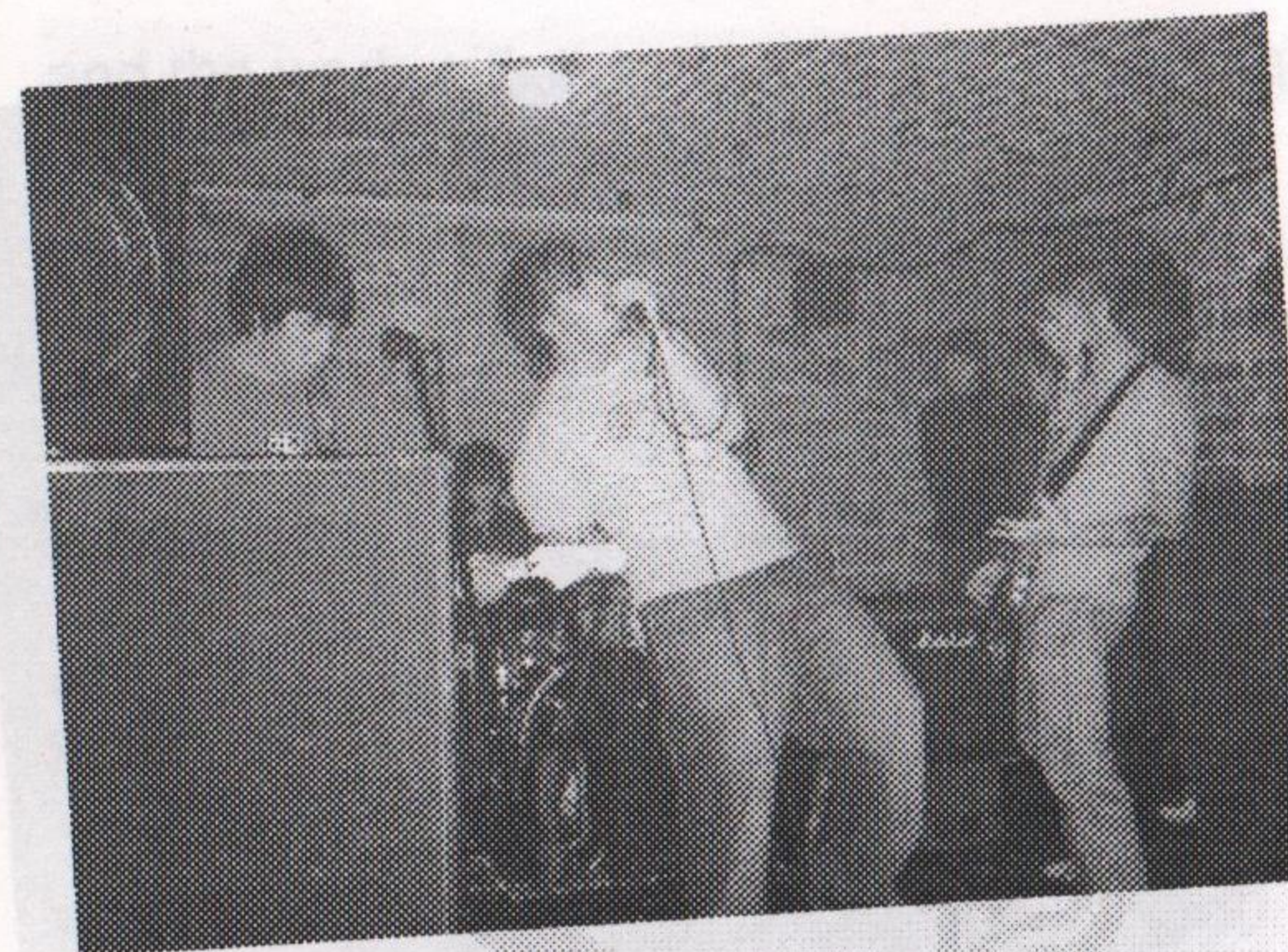


My story may be typical of anyone who has ever tried their hand at band management. The high is watching the performance and soaking up the adulation the audience feels for a band you've worked with to bring to their attention.

The low is to accept that the band's demise is inevitable and there is no more you can do. I went from one extreme to the other and back again. But along the way we covered over some 40 gigs together from Glasgow to Leicester, Barrow to Newcastle, pictures in

Kerrang, a tour with Farse, as well as radio and press everywhere. The band cut 5 EP's and had its own range of T Shirts- we even had a promotional DVD. But all that's history and filed under "another one that got away"-time won't tell you anymore than that. It is fitting this article should appear in a zine that recalls the past while pointing to the current and future. How often do we look back with nostalgia or regret when we think of bands we saw or never had the chance to. But this is not about me but about "Let's Not Lose Mars to The Commies" who came from Chorley in the late '90's to dominate the local underground teenage scene before their last show on 20th December 2003 to a full house in their home town Community Centre.

Their start was typical [Bonfire night 1999]



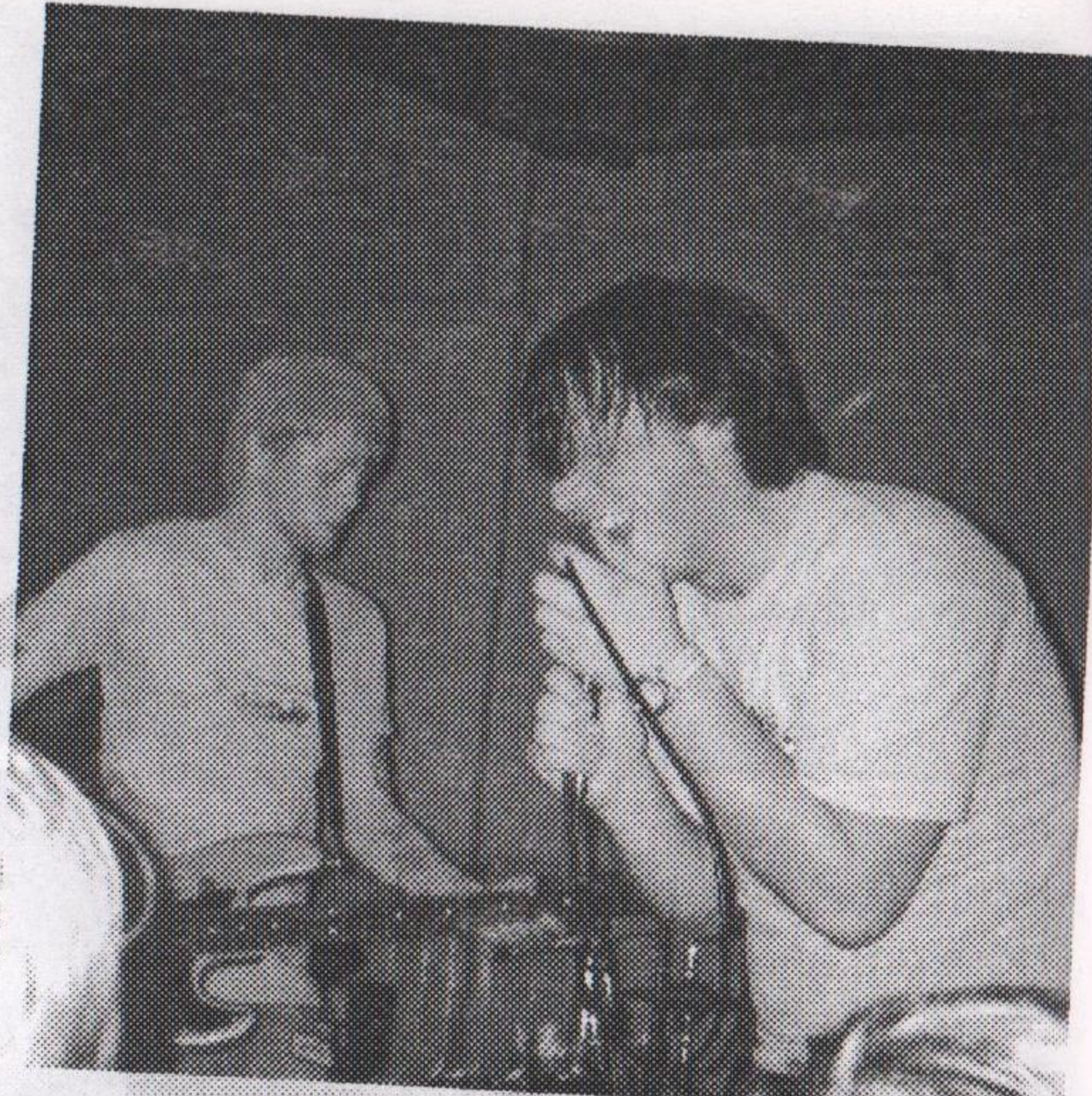
as friends talking jokingly about forming a band. This was how Liam Wright, Steve Hodson, and Bruno Booth came to pull an "A" tribute band idea together and with a Tim, Tom and Jennie in a changing line up which eventually played their one and only gig as **Blind Inside** in March 2000 in Chorley. The next event was the writing of *Forget It* in the early part of 2001. The turning point happened when Steve's other band, Starkey's Walk, played a gig with Matthew Cogley doing an acoustic support slot. Matt's singing impressed Steve and Bruno enough to get him invited to rehearsals and on to their first gig at The Cellar Bar, Blackburn in May. From that point they became regulars at The Labour club, Chorley All Ages nights in 2002 during which they cut "...are shaved apes"-featuring the endearing *Whys, Lies 'n' Pies*". Wider recognition was gained after coming runners up [to Modus] in the Lancashire Evening Post's 2002 Battle of The Bands. Being second place had left a bitter place so after free recording time at Berlin studios on 23rd June they titled their next 4 track CD "*2nd Rate Music*". They built a tight professional sound by regular gigging and were invited to play the Golden Jubilee Festival in Chorley. However, it was their entry on the Chorley Battle of the Bands hand bill I came across one day that brought the band in contact with me. While buying a copy of *2nd Rate* at Townsend Records [Chorley] I made enquiries about the band and left my details. I began my association with the Chorley Community Music Consortium where I met

and interviewed Matt and Liam on 20th July. It was Matt who did most of the talking and for an 18 year old, he had more idea of where he wanted the band to go, focus on and what they were about than I expected. At this stage the band was playing as a three piece being as Bruno was travelling the world. So I got my first glimpse of the trio -Matt [G & V], Steve [B] and Liam [D] in the final at Chorley Community Centre on 17th August. They played well and were in the kiddie Punk phase melting the crowd with as much ease as the sweat which poured out of all there on that balmy late Summer's evening. The event marked a change in both our directions as we later discovered. For the record they came runners up, again! Ben Greenaway, Russ Carlton and Phil Baker were co-founders of the CCMC and it was Ben who put my name forward to do the Local Bands sessions for Chorley FM who were to run a Restricted Service Licence for three weeks at the end of November and into early December. I knew I had to have The Commies on the show along with Matt's side project, at the time, Duckhunt - for whom he played trumpet and occasional backing vocals.

Anyway, back to the radio show. I interviewed both bands but it was on the last night when Steve and Matt came in for their interview and I was showing them down the stairs that they turned and asked if I wanted to manage them. I spluttered something along the lines that I had to get back to the broadcast and said I'd call them in a few days. Bear in mind I knew nothing of the local scene six months previously and was now being asked to take on the management of one of the most admired locals. This was a huge boost to my confidence and gave me a fresh challenge. Having said that I wasn't sure *what* I could do to help, *how* to manage and did I really *like* them or *believe* in them enough to make the commitment at the expense of other projects I wanted to pursue! So I reverted to what I knew as a Business Bank Manager [my day job] and called a meeting for the following weekend. I thought of what I was

trained to do i.e. sales and marketing and my feel for what I considered quality music. The meeting was a "what I can do for you and what do you expect of me" type affair – I spoke a lot which I leaned to do less of and listen more from there on. We did agree on a strategy of using January to play Blackburn every Friday in a lead up to Glen Matlock's gig as Ronnie Brown had closed The North Bar for live music just before Christmas. This was also to help build up an older fan base and one outside Chorley. It also gave the band an opportunity to invite others on an exchange gig basis. The third CD "...the long and the winding" appeared and we put its final track- *Better Days* on a Sampler CD along with *Why's, Lies & Pies* and *Enough Confrontations* to highlight the band's output to date. I dispatched these to the media, other bands and anyone I could think of to try and get publicity and, more vitally, gigs. About three weeks into all this Matt and Steve came round to my house with the news that Liam wanted to quit the band. Great start to my career in band management with my first band splitting within a month! Furthermore, Matt expressed the opinion that he wanted to just be a singer and was attracted to what Rob Catlow was doing as **Days End's** front man. Steve thought they should ditch the band name and come out as another sort of prospect. I

stressed that the name was worth keeping as it had taken some 3 years to build and the band would still have a problem of finding a drummer. Steve could play drums – so we need a bass player – broad as its long! Anyway, we called a meeting and it boiled down to Liam wanting to get a job and save for a year travelling the world – which he felt was a lack of commitment to the band and it would be better if they got someone else now. I thought this incredibly brave and mature – rather than drift on and go through that series of turning up late for rehearsals, not wanting to hang about before or after gigs and becoming less involved in the song writing – yeah, that down ward decent that leads to the band sacking you. It seemed



that once we'd acknowledged his direction it was like a weight being lifted and we all got down to business.

January was very cold and the gigs were sparsely attended but a hard core of fans did turn up. During this and my pre-occupation with getting the Glen Matlock gig promoted, Bruce McKenzie at Townsend records, asked me if I thought The Commies had what it took. As soon as I paused to think he immediately said he took my hesitation as an indication that they hadn't. Did they have a killer song or a swagger that said Star all over them?....No quite definitely no. This was a bitter pill to take as I was their manager and as such should have total belief otherwise how would I inspire them and lead them onwards. This occupied my mind as I struggled to make those contacts to get gigs during late January and early part of February. I considered jacking it in when the Liam issue came up. After all, who could blame me as I was not associated in a big way at this stage so I wouldn't damage my fledgling reputation and I had not invested much time or money by then. So while I wrestled with this I came down on The Commies side as their energy and sheer impact on stage was dynamite. Furthermore, I knew their roots were a throw back to the Punk forefathers I was familiar with and I could get them on that circuit as the descendants of '76/77. I had contacts

and the work with the zine would bring mean I'd get to hear what was available by way of support slots. I took the view that they were serving an apprenticeship and in describing themselves, as Punk, must follow the Old Skool Punk gig route. Hence they got the support slot with 999 in March. Other gigs started to slot in and I balanced my focus on them with work on the zine as this was aimed at the hard core Punks who'd attend Holidays In The Sun festivals at Morecambe and I was convinced if The Commies could get on that then they would be discovered. As if to re-affirm my confidence in the band and belief that I could do it the sampler CD got reviewed by Conrad Murray – a respected journalist who's critique in *The Big Issue in the North* appeared at the end of January.

This gave us all a boost as the weekly magazine, sold by the homeless, has an independence from the record industry that most of the others of any note don't. Their writers are respected for this fact and the featured editor I had got to know-Ally Fogg-had shown a genuine interest in the band and what was going on in Chorley at the time. I told the band as soon as it came out and bought a copy. It read:

LET'S NOT LOSE MARS TO THE COMMIES****

Life Café, Manchester – Jan 28: the Castle, Oldham Jan 30.

With the finest band name to arrive on the planet Earth in the few years, Let's Not Lose Commies [or simply "The Commies" to their more familiar fans] come crashing down to earth with some dark and



heavy punk songs that should shake your system. They are four lads hailing from Chorley, ready to show us their hometown is capable of producing more than just cakes and Phil Cool. The Commies do more than a feasible impression of a band ready to break through onto the next level with head vibrating tunes like Whys, Lies and Pies and Better Days. Displaying a rougher and more credible underground edge than a lot of nouveau punk bands currently dancing like it's 1977, these boys mean business. Enjoy a close encounter.

It was February and the band were in the final stages of The LEP's latest Battle of the Bands when Matt got a call from Farse's management company saying their copy of 2nd Rate he had sent into a Kerrang sponsored competition had been pick –so we were to support them on 6 dates of the north leg of their tour. Matt was bursting with excitement when he phoned me and all I could think of was "who the hell are Farse?". We convened another meeting- we did have them almost monthly as we measured our understanding of each other's likes and preferences and gauge what we thought was or was not working. None of them were going to sign a management contract, which I had aired early on as everyone I spoke to said I should get the band to sign one otherwise they will up and leave me behind. So our agreement was a verbal one- in that I was the 5th member of the band and should they be offered a deal then that's the time, if by mutual agreement, I would get bought out. I even drew up a band constitution so we could be seen as a collective or co-op. It was one of my Crass inspired moments and I'd go through these bursts of ideas for promoting the band. They'd come at all hours of the day as I was starting to eat live and breath The Commies. One of my "stunts" was to send Tony Wilson, the Granada TV hero of mine, half of a £10 note I'd ripped up with a note saying how we'd give the other half providing he showed up to watch one of our the gigs in Manchester.

John Winstanley

THE RUNS

The Runs are a three piece from the Northwest, Burnley. Consisting of Greg Holland on drums, Adam Pounder on bass and vocals, and Sean Watson on guitar vocals. They all knew each other from local gigs and through college. They got together in a local practice room where they wrote their first song in summer 2003, this marked the beginning of a new band. They continued to write songs over that summer and record as soon as they could, with free recording time in the college studios. With knowledge they had from college lessons using the studio equipment, they went in and recorded all of the nine songs they had written. They spent five

afternoons putting everything down and then the band, with a little help from a tutor, produced, mixed and mastered the tracks.

The Runs were asked to perform for a charity gig in their home town of Burnley. From then on they were asked to play out of town in some cities. They have also been asked to go on a short tour with a local band.

The bands style descends from their musical influences, which ranges from 70's punk to hardcore punk and punk rock.
www.theruns.cjb.net

Contact The Runs on: 07811682465

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THE LURKERS



The Lurkers are on heat again and their recent gigs in Poulton and Blackburn gave me the chance to chat with Arturo Bassick about all things Lurkers present and past. The band, consisting Dave Kemp [guitar], Nelly [Drums] and Arturo [Bass/vocals] is as busy as ever with tours of the USA, Brazil and Europe already confirmed for 2004. A new recently released studio album- '26 Years' has turned in some tidy reveiws and it's pleasing to see there's no let up in sight for this first wave Brit punk outfit.

Your still pleasing the fan's up and down the country, I've recently seen you go down a storm at The Oak in Poulton and the Sir Charles Napier in Blackburn. Your still enjoying it as much as ever then?

Yes of course, it definitely ain't for the money which is by the way the same as it's been for 15 years, so anyone ever accusing us smaller first wave bands of being rip offs can go and fuck themselves the ignorant cunts!

What's the response been to the latest album "26 Years"?

Good reviews all round really, but the sales are never huge, I think people picked their favourite punk bands years ago and if they didn't like say, The Lurkers back then they won't give anything new by us a listen, there's a

lot of very closed minds in punk rock these days.

You've got Dave Kemp back on guitar, are you happy with the latest Lurkers line-up?

The latest line up is the best for years. Nelly would be the first to admit he's not the greatest drummer in the world but he's reliable and lives in Haltwhistle and can get plenty of free time to play. Dave is fantastic and only had a break from the band due to hepatitis, so I'm really glad he's ok again.

What's on the agenda this year regards touring for the band?

Were off to Brazil again in April for 2 weeks doing ten gigs this time, then Wasted Festival up in Morecambe and the USA in September and a Euro tour in October and other odds and sods around the country.

Are you ever surprised how popular The Lurkers are in other Countries?

Not really a lot of younger people are really interested in old bands like ourselves, I think they can't believe it that we were doing it before they were born, it's like lets see what the originals are like before they peg it!

Do you prefer playing the Festivals or the smaller pub/club type gigs?

Small club gigs every time, I'd hate to play in Arenas which I've done supporting bigger bands it's shit in general.

Who were the very first band's you saw play live?

John Mayall and the Bluesbreakers at the Albert Hall London in 1969 I was a little 13 year old skinhead at the time,

I loved it, then went on to see loads of bands at the Fulham Greyhound and the Hobbits Garden in Wimbledon through the early 70s, such as Caravan, Roxy Music, Genesis, Chicken Shack, Cockney Rebel, and bigger gigs like The Who at the Oval cricket ground with the Faces and Mott the Hoople - it was brilliant.

I've just been watching the 'Punk in London' video, were the early Lurkers London gigs all as wild as the Hammersmith Red Cow one?

In general yes, our London following were a great mental bunch and usually there was loads of mayhem!

You pay a lot of respect to the Ramones and the New York Dolls, when did you first discover these delights and did you ever see the Doll's play?

I never saw the Dolls but the other guys from the 1st line up did, but the Ramones from album 1 were a great influence on us, but we couldn't play as good as them, so our version of their style came out very individualistic. The other guys saw the Dolls at the legendry Biba gig when McLaren was managing them.

Was there a point in 70's pre-punk London when you sensed things were changing or was it suddenly - bang here's the Sex Pistols?

I was going to see the Hot Rods and the Feelgoods and the 101ers this tougher music was coming in before the Pistols and was definitely a catalyst for what came next, but I still believe without the Ramones and Richard Hell punk as we know it wouldn't have come about in this country.

If you were appointed Minister of Popular Culture and assigned the task of putting

some bollocks back into music what pop wankers would you send to Camp X Ray and what bands would you have on Top Of The Pops to replace them all?

All that fake soul shit, which is laughingly called R 'n'B these days. For real R 'n'B check out Little Milton, J B Lenoir, and Freddie King etc for some real soul power. Also anything to do with pop idol shit, or plastic punk crap like Busted, Blink 182 etc should be nuked. Now my tastes are broad and I know there's always been manufactured bands, like Phil Spector's stable of artists and even the Pistols and Clash to a great degree where put together by businessmen from the rag trade for what they looked like, and to turn a buck, but there was great music along with it. I just find like our society in general, the popular music scene is really sterile and homogenised, but maybe its age and 16, 17 year olds going crazy over whatever they're going crazy over is just what us old fuckers used to do, I digress somewhat, but I'd replace them with Jackie Leven, Dick Gaughen - two great Celtic singers from Scotland, Sonny Condell and Leo o Kelly - 2 geniuses from Ireland, The Crack from Cheltenham, The Guitar Gangsters, and the truly psychotic Hazel Adkins from USA, the list could go on and on.

If you could put your own Punk Festival together consisting only of band's who've never reformed who would you have on?

The Fly's, The Members, The Ruts, West 12 Spots, Swank, The Form, The Anoracks, Pinpoint, Auntie Pus, The Worst, Pol Pot Pourie, a pretend transvestite nazi band called the High Heeled Hitler's, The Vigilantes, The Satellites, The Hammersmith Gorillas, Kid Gladlove, Boys Wonder, Ivy Green,

BGK, Stunde X, Fire Exit, Rudi, The Starjets.

Where do you see punk rock in 10 years? Will the passion die with the older bands or is it in safe hands with the newer bands?

The passion will go on if we live that long, but there's always gonna be somebody playing a loud fast guitar with a vision and heart to live the life and try to change the world even if it's only their own they change.

What interests you outside the band?

Dogs, I love em I've got 5 Whippets and Greyhounds at the moment, and I drive my massive Shire horse too. I see a lot of gigs of all types of music, and I love charity shop crawling and car booting, and pub quizzing, and reading non fiction, and onanism.

If you'd have been told in 1976/77 you'd still be playing punk rock in 2004 would you have taken a stiff drink or would you have been happy with that?

I always take a stiff drink, but I had no idea I'd still be playing after 27 years, but it's all gone in an alcohol fuelled flash anyway!

Do you have a favourite Lurkers song?

"Don't Seem Right To Me" - by Pete Stride on the deleted album from 1985 called Ripped and Torn - this song sums Pete up perfectly.

Cheers for that and look forward to seeing you with 999 next week at the Royal Oak in Poulton - it's about 26 years since I bought 'Shadow' and 'I'm Alive' at the same time from a record shop not too far away from this venue. For all the news on what The Lurkers are up to see www.thelurkers.co.uk

Roy H.



Alan Campbell

Brian Barnes

Marky Ramone Band

The Mill, Preston

Marky Ramone



THE LEVELLERS



I had been invited to do an interview with the band in Buxton by David Kay of Red Brick Productions who had filmed, edited and produced their "Waking The World" concert at the Guildhall, Preston in 2003. This was limited to distribution amongst their fan club and David wasn't sure if the interview would be used for an "official" DVD of their concert he was recording here that evening but it had been agreed I could use the transcript for the fanzine.

The Levellers I remember for their early chart success with *One Way* in 1991 and *This Garden* two years later. Collectively, they have had as many a top 50 chart placing for every year since but without denting the top 10. Not that you ever felt that they were a band that were fussed by that sort of crap anyway. Their trademark was a keen eye for words that were in tune with the squatters, tree people and the bands of traveller communities that populated everywhere – even Blackburn when the M65 was being built. They gave a whole movement a highly articulate voice that echoed the Punk/Anarchic DIY spirit. I sat watching their fans gather in this town – which is south of Manchester nestling amongst the Derbyshire hills on the border of Macclesfield. What struck me was that families were congregating in groups near this old music hall of a theatre, and wondering around on a chilly

afternoon, I realised that the parents wore the "hippyish" cloths as proudly as their kids. This was a band that attracted all generations – a rare commodity but one that has sustained them well into two decades. Ironic now, given their birth in the underpass and the "... heartless concrete streets..." , that they are doing a gig in a town with so much affluence judging by the cars, shops and clothes on display- you sort of smelt the quiet contentment and money that the property prices command in this town. The Levellers' longevity had come at the expense of acceptance into the "civilised" world just as they had foretold when the noise they thought would never stop "...died a death when the punks grew up".

Anyway I had no axe to grind with these guys who had the guts to still keep everything they do under their own control and not get corrupted by the music business. We were in an upstairs room of the pub to the side of the Theatre and having sipped a couple of drinks I was soon facing Jeremy [Bass] and Mark [Guitar & vocals].

What made you start out and do what you do?

J No one else was doing it and we had something to say...didn't really think about it!

Do you think you have now achieved the ambitions you set out with?

M Probably that and a lot more. The amount of time we've been going and the number of different things we have achieved over the years is good. We never set out to have goals as such we just rolled on to see what happened. I think we've done pretty well for ourselves.

J The ambitions have always changed. I remember when we started out and thought – wouldn't it be great to fill the Richmond which is 150 capacity and then you do that and

think wouldn't it be great to fill out the next one. But you take it so much in your stride and we are thinking about what's ahead rather than what we've done. It wasn't until that book came out "Dance Before The Storm" that I looked at all the things we had done, all put together in a list [nods and pauses] -a lot.

Would you say there was any one instance that made a big difference in the band's career?

M [Pauses]...I don't know...don't think so.... I don't remember.... it's a long time ago!

J I think it was a steady build up. Probably the one-year when we had done all the colleges and college circuit at the same time as the squat parties and traveller sites- that summer we went out and did some unofficial festivals and our own gigs. All those people came to see us so we had this double audience of students who had left college and traveller/squatter types – all people who normally wouldn't bother to go and see a gig all turned out over that summer to see us and that's when we made the step up out of being a pub/club band to doing bigger shows. Would you say there has been one person or part of the industry that has helped more than most?

M No...the industry has hindered us...completely. It doesn't help any bands to be honest. We've done it pretty much ourselves.

What's been the biggest down side then?

J Working in the music business! At this point the tone lightens, as we understand the irony of the subject matter- implicit in the structure of our conversation – the Interview with the band- a format that can be twisted both ways in a band's media development. J continues the train of thought- It's rotten! The more you work in it the

more you find out about it. We just stay out of it as much as we possibly can. Because we control ourselves we have to get in there a bit to make sure we're not stitched up and it is grimy-more now than it ever use to be even – it's always been bad!

M It's quite desperate now!

I stumble over my next question about the last video and how during the interview they were asked about the commercial bands and the manufactured side of sanitized music in the mainstream. Looking at J I ask you said it didn't have any relevance to your life....

J ...Well I said someone asked me if it bothered me and I was like "No!" it doesn't mean anything to me – it doesn't bother me, I think there is room for everything. It doesn't offend me anything or me. I just think it is rubbish!

I pursue this, as I wanted to know what was important to them today, the values they had and how relevant what they were doing was after so long. The particular line you used was that it wasn't relevant to your life and I was wondering what is relevant in your lives both inside and outside the band as individuals?

M What? Musically?

On any sphere...

J The same as a lot of people. These days we live in normal places the same as everybody else does so the things that are relevant to us –our family, our friends and the usual everyday bills that people have to pay and stuff like that. It's just that we don't write songs about paying bills because it's boring...

M interjects some humour with Actually I've got a surprise for you.... J senses the vibe and takes up the thread with Yeah! Let's write a Council Tax song! And a round of laughter ensues.

You also said you are one of the best-

kept secrets in the UK at the moment! M I don't know....! [Looking at J] Did you say that – you egotistical...[more laughter.]?

But it is testament the fact that you are here 15/16 years later – what would you say is the common bond amongst fans?

M I think they really like what we say and we say it very directly. We stood by it- what we do and they see it as something to believe in.

J I think we've always been an underground band and although we've had the commercial success and stuck our heads up a bit we've always maintained that sort of position. That the success we've had has always been on our own terms. So I think a lot of people really appreciate that. The music, the lyrics- how well does that translate abroad?

M Fine...it does very well. As a live act that's where most of the work is. We don't spend that much time abroad constantly gigging as much as probably we should do.

During the last couple of years people who I have interviewed say the reception English bands received abroad is a lot better than at home in their own back yard.

M It depends on which musician you are- we do Okay.

J With us it is a reciprocal thing between band and audience. People get off on that so they don't have to understand every single lyric we're singing about...although most of them do.

M They do understand the lyrics more in places like Holland, Belgium and Germany. They study the words that little bit more...little bit seriously and have some strange ideas about them but that's fine!

Are you treated differently as musicians?

J I think we get treated better as musicians in mainland Europe –

especially when you are on the lower level than you do over here. Definitely! As an artiste of any description you're treated with more respect than you are over here, That's certainly true.

The last video was done just before you went to America I was wondering what was the reception like?

M We had a gap of 5 years without playing so we didn't know what to expect-it was great, it was good. It was a lot of driving though!

They also mentioned in the video that they had helped set up a web site campaigning for a stop to the war in Iraq and I detected a tone in J's voice a slight apprehension about how you'd be received?

J I met some good people. I was surprised...the people we met were more intelligent than I was expecting. You'd think that people who elected fucking Bush wouldn't be that clever, but, then you remember that he was elected by stealth anyway. The people who came to see us were interesting people...and, like the Europeans, they studied the lyrics and they get them a bit wrong and come up with weird conspiratorial theories. It's all entertaining for us being on the road for a month or so- they like a good time.

Did you notice any particular difference in different parts of the country you were playing?

J It's all completely different! M Every State is a different country!

With the vast catalogue that you've produced what one album would you select as individuals if you had to take one onto a desert island somewhere?

M What of our own? I wouldn't bother! J I would! I'd take the first one because that's still my favourite one just because of the memories with it-it was all new and exciting!

M I'd take the last one just to be different from you!

Is there any song that all the band are

proud of?

J We all have different ones. We don't sit around and think "brilliant!" [M mouths Genius! Genius!] for writing this particular song we all think we have another brilliant one there to come out which, as a band, is something which drives you on. [Reflectively] I'm pleased with 99% of what we've done.

Finally, can you tell me more about the acoustic album you're recording at the moment?

M It's an ongoing project that could take a few years... we are working with lots of various other artistes who keep coming in working on our raw material as well as theirs...it's impossible to say how long.... it's hard to get hold of all these people.

J And, although it started off as an acoustic album, it's sort of changing a bit- some of it's electric. It's just different interpretations of our stuff. We haven't put any restrictions on it. We're asking people to make our songs their own-if their up for it. Some of the results are quite [M "Fantastic"] -surprising-really good.

They leave to sound check and I cannot stay for the show but I know his film of the gig will be the next best thing to being there as Red Brick

Productions capture the live feel of a gig so well. They have a brilliant eye to shoot from a line of view that anyone in the audience could be at. No fancy lifts or over head shots that in their technical wizardry lose the aesthetics of what watching a band is all about. It's like the action adventures where heroes lose all credibility when they do stunts that, even with years of practice, no human being could ever do. David's films are honest because they are shot from the fan's perspective and my only hope is that if the interview makes the DVD I have asked some questions on their behalf.

John Winstanley

III = SPEED

Being first the first of 4 bands on tonight's bill and in a strange town didn't seem to faze this trio from Gloucester. But I was half way through an interview with 4 Past Midnight at The Thatched House, Stockport 6/2/04 before I could fully appreciate the last quarter of their set. When I did go back into the main area of this ideal small pub venue I liked what I saw.

Nat - a nymph like Bass player with yellow/blonde spiked up hair in skin-tight black velvet all in one jump suite with short pants and latticed back. She looks damn hot and my urged to photograph her was instant. Sod it I'd left my camera at home! I spent most of the X-Rippers set trudging round Stockport in the drizzle searching for a disposable one, which I eventually got thanks to an all night petrol station and a tenner for Stu Taylor. Back to the interview which was in the crowded poolroom off to the left of the main area. Neil [D] told me they had got together as Nat's previous band disintegrated. She ended up on Bass with Monster providing lead guitar.

What's the scene like in Gloucester?

Neil- There's a lot of punks but not a lot turn up to gigs unfortunately...there's a couple of pubs and nightclubs willing to put on gigs. We've got the Guildhall that do bigger gigs- Vice Squad played there but there's not a lot going on because the kids can't get in. It was Andy Kanonik from Demob who had

put them in touch with Stu Taylor to get the gig.

Why did you want to play music together?
Nat - To have a laugh, enjoy playing and relax!

Neil- Play what we want to play the way we want to play it. To me that's the spirit of Punk- not political, just to do what you want to do with not too many compromises.

Nat- To have FUN!

There is a lot of American influence on Punk these days and some people say the true meaning of it has been sanitized or disappeared from the '76/77 era- so where do you see yourselves fitting in to it now?

Nat- Somewhere in the middle. The new punks seem to like us and the old ones as well. We've got slotted in the middle and cross the gap.

Have you any particular influences on your style?

Nat - [gleefully] Rancid!

Neil - SLF, Rancid, No-FX - all sorts of different things but no one particular band - it's whatever I listening to at anytime.

You mentioned fun but behind it all is there any serious messages?

Monster - Not really!

Nat - [shyly] We've one serious song [with a mischievous smile] "Send In The Clowns"! There's a momentary lapse into laughter and I lose my train of thought wondering if the tape is picking up any of this interview as the sound from the others in the room raucous and some woman keeps prodding my arse with a snooker cue.

Was there any irony intended in doing a cover of Buck Fizz's "Making Your Mind Up"?

Monster – No Irony! When I went round to do a jam one night I said how about doing a silly '80's cover and started playing- it snowballed from there.

I was reminded of a Dickies version of punking up old classics to shake up those who consider them sacred. But Monster goes on to explain that there was non of that although I pushed this line with - **I couldn't help think it was a swipe at the current pop scene as Bucks Fizz were an put together band and there are so many of them around today?**

Monster – Nahh! It was a case of "I can do these three chords so let's do it!" {Laughs all round}.

I get another prod from someone else and wonder where my glass has gone. I try and see if there is any meat under their nails with my observations on **Punk, like Folk's been marginalized and any serious messages or under tones to change things has lost its relevance in music these days?**

Neil – I duuno . . . probably the youth of today aren't necessarily interested in serious things that maybe twenty years ago they were. They don't want to hear about what's going on in the world.

This is more like it . . . **There again if you'd have asked The Buzzcocks or Undertones they'd have probably said there wasn't a deeper message at the time it was the style and ability to just get up and play- now it seems the market is saturated with that and dismissed as relevant, why is that?**

Neil – I don't think people take music in general seriously anymore- hence classic example why bands sing about Pop Idol [referring to a song the X-Rippers performed]- that's how band the state of the music industry is now! How can you take it seriously when you've got all that going on!

Reminds me of all the Glam and Prog Rock pre Punk. Seems kids have got plenty to react against but aren't. What's

it gonna take to rock it over- all this manufactured crap that's out there?

Nat- DEATH!

Neil- Probably to all the people who are making too much money and not letting everyone have a fair share to get heard- who'd rather than push it under the bed and let all the rubbish float on top of it!

Joolz Holland who was in a pretty credible band in his day has the ability to put on Jazz, Blues and Soul but Hard Core Punk and Folk music doesn't get a look in.

Monster- have you never heard of The Bleeding Hearts? - They're hard-core with elements of The Levellers!

I missed that one and no wonder with so many acts from countries I've never heard of let alone names of their bands as well. Anyway I look to wrap it up and let the players totally dominate the Poolroom.

What do you hope to get out of 2004?

Monster - Lots of gigs out of Gloucester – work our way about.

Why should people come out to see you?

Neil – Because we enjoy it and they will too!
Monster – I grew up in a lot of metal bands, Heavy Rock'n Glam bands, though to look at me now [with shaved head save for a rouge coloured thinning strip of placid hair] you wouldn't think so- lots of phases but its basically the spirit of Punk. We're a reaction to a lot of the manufactured stuff/techno- all that! [Then with a wry smile he leans towards me and declares] Let's get rebellious!

III On Speed will be touring extensively as possible and Northern gigs will no doubt be courtesy of Stu Taylor and his growing stable of top punk bands of which this lot are a credible act. Too early to predict what sort of sir they will create – more of a sedate ripple based on what little I saw of their performance. I was impressed with their demo - which I listen to on the drive home.

John Winstanley



The Suspicious Stains are from Rochdale and they've been on the bill at quite a few gigs I've been at recently notably supporting Penetration back end of last year at The Witchwood, Ashton-Under-Lyne. They were over here in Preston in January 04 so it's about time Pogo 'til I Die! spilt the beans and spread the word on these hard working Northern punks.

Give a brief history of the band and tell us who plays what?

Suspicious Stains started out in March 2000, with our old singer Gwen. In 2002 after playing many gigs and recording our first demo, Gwen decided to quit

due to some confidence issues. We then spent about 8 months looking for a new singer, and in July 2003 whilst working on a music project we met Anne. She listened to our demo and she decided to give it a go. The band now is Anne [Vocals/Guitar], Nat [Bass/Vocals/Kazoo/Whipper], Jim [Guitar/Gimp] and Eddie [Drums/Elvis-sometimes!].

What do you all do outside the band?

Anne is a Professional Music Project Leader (No I won't teach you how to play Guitar!!), Nat's an Electrician (No I won't put a light up for you!!), Jim's a Mechanic (No I won't fix your car!!) and Eddie makes Glue and Ink (No I won't nick you any Evo Stick, and no it doesn't work in printers).

I saw you at the 12 Bar in Preston back in January, was that the first time you'd played in Preston?

Yep! Nat & Eddie have played as Shotgun Solution there before in the

Fighting Cock and some other pub but we can't remember its name.

Does Eddie always go on stage as Elvis and has he plans to introduce any new characters to his repertoire? Jordan maybe?

Well Elvis is ready to die I'm afraid!!! But there are many characters to follow but we like to keep them a secret until we unleash him on the night (that might be a clue!).

Why did you decide to call time on Shotgun Solution?

Hmmmmmm! Well I'm sure many bands have been through the same problems like, someone can't make the practise all the time, and you struggle to get gigs, and you've past 3 years and you haven't still recorded the album. Dickheads making rumours up about the band which aren't true! - you know the crack. But our main reason well Nat & Eddie's was the fact that we weren't having any fun!! As you can see in Suspicious Stains there's a hint of madness and we really enjoy it!

Any bands you've seen or heard recently and thought fuck me they are good?

The Hyperjax, A.P.B, Albert's Ginger Wig and Sick 56. I'm trying to plug the bands I've never seen before up until recently . . . I mean there's loads of bands about that are good like The Dead Pets, Lowlife, Spitting Dummies, 3CR, Deadline and W.O.R.M. There's a young band here in Rochdale to watch out for they're a 6 Piece Ska band called The Fractions, they have an average age of 15, and they are really talented!

I get to a fair few gigs myself and sometimes think the turnouts could be better, I'm talking about small club and pub venues here, how do you see that?

Nat: Hmmm yeah I know what you mean. I think it's down to the promoters really, you've got to get the word about, I put the odd gig on here in Rochdale and it's a 300 venue, and I've had anything from

150 to over 300 in, it differs who I put on and how I advertise it. But the trick is really is not to put the same band on more than twice in a year because people get bored with the same support bands always being on the bill. Like they might go and see say The Dead Pets twice in the same year in the same place, but would they go twice if the same band supporting them last time was on again? People like to see someone new.

Have the big punk festivals had an effect on people turning out? I mean why pay a fiver to see 2 bands when you can see 150 bands for fifty quid?

Nat: Well I look at the line up for these events and I have to ask myself, who haven't I seen? and in the list there might be say 10 bands I haven't seen and 5 of them I really want to see, out of the other 140 I might like to watch 10 of them again so then it costs me £50 to watch 20 bands, and out of those 20 I might miss 5 of them because they clash with one of the others I wanted to see! Do you get my point? I think people go to the punk festivals to socialise really, and they watch the bands in between, that's not everyone mind you, I'm sure there's plenty of people that just band hop all day! Gigs are different you go to see the main band and hopefully you'll like the support bands, if not it only costs you a Fiver!!

Any Suspicious Stains gigs you've really enjoyed playing and if you could be on the same bill as any punk band who would it be?

Nat: Yeah we played at The Band on the Wall in Manchester at a weekend punk/emo/whatever gig, and we turned up and the guy said your on 4th, so we watched three Emo bands one after another, and they were all blending in to one band, by the time it was our go I said to the others "These bands are all technically brilliant why don't they move

around and enjoy themselves". Every band was just playing the music like they didn't care so we decided then to just go on and have a laugh, and they loved it, we sold all the CD's we had with us and it was the starting point to adding some humour to our set really. I think we are all gunning for playing with Vice Squad at the moment, so calling all promoters "We want that gig!"

What is the band going to be doing this year, any recording or particular gigs your going to be doing?

We have tons of gigs booked for some unknown reason, it's been a bit mad lately but we are not complaining! Check out www.suspiciousstains.com for the gigs!! And we are starting recording the album in March!

Do you think the UK Punk scene is healthy enough or is there anything you'd like to see change?

Nat: I think it's very healthy really. If you go on www.punkoiuk.co.uk every day there's plenty of gigs to choose from. Punk's always growing, Ska and Oi are suffering a little I'd say, which is a damn shame really because I like Ska and Oi! As for changes, well there's no rules in Punk really is there so there could be changes at any time!

Individually who are you favourite bands and can you remember the first records you all bought? Excuse me using the word records but I come from a generation that used to sit round the radio on a Monday lunch waiting to hear if Slade or T.Rex had gone straight in at Number 1.

Anne: Lindisfarne. Nat: Cock Sparrer would be my favourite, I'm into The Slackers, The Splitters, APB and Skoidats. I bought "Midnight Dynamos" by "Matchbox" I chipped in for it with my brother and I still have it, and I've seen them play! and I'm proud of that fact. Jim: Metallica would be my

favourite, and AC/DC, "Whole Lotta Rosie" was my first single. Eddie: Cock Sparrer, then The Slackers, Sublime, Sore Throat, Morbid Angel and I bought Spitting Images "Chicken song" (ooorrrrrr how cute!).

What were the last record's you all bought?

Anne: Test Card songs on CD. Nat: The Minions of Jeffries new demo. Jim: System of a Down - System of a Down. Eddie: The Dead Pets "Revenge of the Village Idiots".

Do you read any of the current fanzines or regularly visit any webzines? If so any favourites?

Fanzines are the thing we all buy at gigs, and they are usually all quite good! As for the websites well try www.punkoiuk.co.uk www.punktastic.com, www.worldwidepunk.com www.theska.co.uk and www.girlpunk.net

Any Suspicious Stains Cd's or Merchandise available and how can people get hold of this stuff?

Yeah visit our website you can contact us through there too, we have our Demo for sale at the moment and other bits of crap too like Stickers, Key Rings, Fridge Magnets etc. T-shirts available soon and the album as soon as it's done!

And finally define The Suspicious Stains - purely fun punk or a bit more than that?

Yeah we're all into fun! We don't want to be boring and we are going to try and keep up with changing the humour as we go, we might bring back old characters as we mature. But its Sex, Humour, Fancy Dress, Bondage (mild), Sperm Shooting Pistols, Silly Songs, and a few serious ones to prove we can do it!

Cheers to Nat for sorting it all out - Roy H.

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Classic British Fashions



Chris P [bass], Henry [guitar], Chris W [drums]

If you've been to the Oak Punk Nights in Poulton or the North Bar gigs in Blackburn you'll be aware of the young local band's that are knocking around at the moment. Promoters are rightly giving these bands a chance to jump around on the same bill as name acts which is good for the kids and the scene in general. EniMa hail from the Fylde and have already had support slots with Sick 56, Pistol Grip, and The Vibrators. Add on these three- The Runs [Burnley], Gunpowder Plot [Wigan] and Duckhunt [Preston] and you'd have a mini tour that would piss all over anything touring the UK in 2004. Will they all last? Fuck knows! I first met EniMa's Henry at the Oak in Poulton. The Pistol Grip gig. He'd plenty of enthusiasm for his band and was more than happy to do an interview. He's also a fan of Hendrix so that clinched the deal!

Here's the story . . . Right well Chris W, the drummer is from Lytham St. Anne's, Chris P, the bass player is from Freckleton and I hail from Poulton-Le-Fylde. EniMa was formed in 2001, and we (like any other band starting out) played covers for a while until we realised that we didn't wanna just be a little garage band thinking we rock playing other peoples songs (it took us till about the Summer of 2002 to realise this) so we decided to start writing some songs. Chris our bass player hadn't joined at this time. We had our first proper show in November of 2002 at the Preston Battle of the Bands at Aqualenium. our old bass player dropped out two days before this (thanx a lot)! so we got Chris to come play, who learned all 6 songs we were to play in about 2 or 3 hours, which was lucky....and since then we've been playing any shows we can lay our hands on. We've recorded 2 full albums, our first ("Tired But Restless") was made in the Fall of 2003 and I think we sold outta that in a few months!? And then in winter 2003 we recorded an album that we are all very proud of, as opposed to the other one that was compiled of demos! The album covers have just gotten back from the printers and its

now just available to buy and its called "So Much For Happiness"

How does it feel playing in EniMa on the same bill as the older punk bands?

CP: Well it's good because we look up to older bands and we can learn from them and it's interesting to see how we compare and how we can improve... H: Yeah it's cool they're kind of like our father figures of rock, its good fun! CP: Yeah, they can teach us stuff. H: and it's good to get their outlook on music and stuff CW: Its great! They've been at it for years so it's a good experience because you know they must be good to survive that long... CP: We get to play to their crowds and see what they think of us H: Yeah CW: and if the crowd likes you, its a buzz because you know you must be doing something right! H: Its good to play to older punk fans because again we get their outlook! CP: Yea and they are cool and not trendier pretending to like you CW: Trendies? But yeah they tell you straight H: Yeah laying the hammer down . . .

Does it surprise you that many of the older bands are still playing?

H: No not at all, I mean in most cases bands that we've been around will keep on playing until there's nothing left to write about. CP: Not at all because in most cases they helped to shape punk they have been around and got fan bases that will come and see them if they still enjoy it they wont stop. H: They have a love of the music and still have good following. CW: No, well kind of in a way! It does surprise me personally that they've not all fallen out or anything and stayed together all this time, shows they're damn good mates CP: It's like a marriage CW: Yeah.....No CP: Lol gayest thing I have ever said... H: Yeah and that they're musical beliefs are strong enough to get through the bad times that they probably will have been through!

How do you think the younger new wave punk bands are doing in comparison to the older ones?

CP: I don't know, it's hard to compare to the ones that have been around since punk began H: I think they/we are doing really well in the society we live in at the moment CW: I don't think you can really compare them, it's totally different.... H: One reason new wave punk bands are doing well is because there is a much bigger market now, so there are A LOT of new bands starting out, which is cool but yeah it is hard to compare what we now call punk is different to what it was back in the day CW: Yeah exactly CP: Good answer!!

Where do you guys get you're influences from?

H: Loads of places. We listen to a lot of different music so it kind of all blends in to create what we play. CP: Obviously the fathers of new wave punk such as Green Day, NOFX, but many older rock n roll legends such as Jimi Hendrix... H: But I get my influences mainly from bands like Green Day, and NOFX and yeah... I'll listen to a Hendrix chord change and be like "Ah that sounds cool", and it'll be the basis of a punk rock song! CP: When listening to bands like Green Day, you then look to their influences to see what inspired them and then you get to bands like The Ramones and they help to inspire you H: and The Clash CP: Exactly CW: Well I get a lot of my influence for my drumming from Travis Barker from Blink 182, The Transplants and Boxcar Racer. I like his style, he uses some pretty advanced stuff so it's good to learn from as well! Music wise I like a bit of everything, every kind of music as long as its good music... and of course Led Zeppelin, ELP, Dire Straights and Jimi Hendrix... obviously H: Also a lot of the newer bands like Brand New, The Movielife, Allister, Home Grown, provide a good source for influences! But yeah I get influences from everything I listen to, whether it is AFI or bloody Britney Spears! CP: Yeah, you can get an influence from anything. CW: Sugababes... I get influenced by that birds thighs from

Sugababes H: Yeah CP: Me too H: Me three CP: But that's called a boner not an influence. . .

You've done battle of the bands gigs, how hard is it to move on from that and get the right exposure?

CW: It's not really hard to get exposure, we just play wherever we can and people hopefully come see us yeah. H: not very, I guess it was the kinda way we needed to be going and it's also better because I don't like competing!

CP: It was good doing it as a first gig it put us in at the deep end.

CW: Yeh I prefer just gigging with no pressure or competition.

CP: It's screwed the way it's judged as well. H: we learned faster, not to make mistakes, or your ass is grass! n stuff like that!

CP: prefer getting cheered by a crowd than getting criticized by judges

H: mean u shouldn't have to compete to see who's better at music than you, you play to get a message across, or to have fun, go play sport if you wanna compete!

CP: Hell yeh. CW: yeh.

Who are the songwriters in the band and what fires you up to sing about?

CP: The Vonster (Henry) writes em! CW: Henry writes guitar ideas and then we just contribute, I write the drum parts and Chris writes the bass bits like most bands and Henry writes all the lyrics. CP: Henry comes up with the ideas and we shape the song around them, we all have our input and argue like babies until we got it sounding how we all like it. CW: If one of us doesn't like something we usually change it so we all like it. H: I write about if people that piss me off, and if there's a situation going on that I feel the need to sing about like people looking down on us, and thinking cause we dress different that were worse people or that there's something up with us which is so pathetic! CW: He wrote a song about our ex bassist

coz he pissed him off, just stuff like that. H: and all my many girl related problems, but I mean when were 16 what else do we have to write about other than going out, girls (who treat u like shit) and people that look down on us! CW: my girl doesn't treat me like shit, you're just unlucky! H: yeh but your girls a cool girl, I seem to be good at picking depressed bitchy girls! but moving on !!!!!!!

What u got planned for the next year? any good gigs, more recording?

CP: Planning a UK tour for summer. H: I don't think we'll be doing anymore recording for release, might do some demos etc, but our new cds only just come out! But we might do some in the fall. CP: Gonna play loads of gigs and stuff get our name around the country Scotland, Plymouth, Bristol, Cardiff, Manchester, Stoke. I think those are the dates so far! H: Hopefully we can get to play at the Wasted Festival in Morecambe this summer, our managers been talking with festival organizers and stuff so it'll be cool! CP: We're trying to get on the bill of Wake Stock which is a wake boarding festival in Wales which would be cool!

For any promoters reading this, define EniMa, tell them why they should be booking you?

H: because we'll go on stage, play fast n hard and leave knackered.

CW: Coz Henry will strip and give the ladies the time of their lives

CP: EniMa is three guys playing the music they love. H: We like to have as much fun as we can on stage! CW: yup. CP: yup. H: Coz playing live is the best thing ever, it's such a high!

Where can promoters contact u?

email management@enima.co.uk, Or go on our website www.enima.co.uk, or call Phil our manager on 07771537042!

Cheers guys Roy H.

ADEQUATE

"Sound, Substance and Fury"

**The Attic
Leicester 22/1/04**

Found myself at this gig out of curiosity while in town to watch Simmy from Pretendgirlfriend do a solo acoustic set at the near by Shed. Apart from two other members of the band, myself and other bands on the bill – The Riptons, Unchosen and A is for Ape with a couple of groupies there was no one from Leicester there. Spotting an Attic flyer I headed over to the tiniest venue I have ever been to. It was packed –i.e. there were some 40 teenagers and entourage from Adequate 7's in T shirts from their record label Household Name. I caught a couple of songs from their set and spoke to Gavin [trumpet], Kazz [guitar] and Jonny [Bass] upstairs in the kitchen.

Kazz told me the band started while in their second year at Uni *like I guess any band starts just jamming in front of your mates.* Jonny adds that things started to happen when they did their first self booked tour which was most of Yorkshire . . . and a few shows for old school punk promoters *which was fun . . . then we got interest from Deck Cheese, Household Name and Big Scary Monster.* He moves onto being hooked up with Household Name casually mentions going on support with Hundred Reasons just as they were going on MTV . . . *our first real REAL tour with monitors and a monitor and a sound engineer.* This quantum leap from being an unknown to signed band on a major underground label is a wet dream to most hopeful bands so I push as to how that was made. Kazz and Jonny – *we knew and played with a whole bunch of bands on the label and they said good things about us to Household Name and did loads more gigging . . . But when we got signed we only had about 8 or 9 songs . . . and some shows we'd turn up and they'd say "you've only got 20 minutes is that OK?" an we'd think, well we're not going to play any longer than that anyway!*

What did being signed mean financially?

Jonny – *They pay for your recording- which is the most important thing- it's a dream for a musician to have an album out* Gavin – *It's about reputation to be with Capdown, Light Year, Five Knuckle and Hundred Reasons – it's wicked to be on a label who has released those kind of bands!*

But what do you think the label saw in you?

Jonny – *Maybe it was because we did the self booked tour . . . off our own backs . . .*

Kazz – *The thing is that you can be a competent band and write good songs but you have to be prepared to go out on tour month after month...you have to be prepared to drive a long way and play to ten people!*

Jonny – *but even now when we are head lining our tour and you'd think being on Household Name being fairly well known on the Punk circuit... we still have to play empty venues to nobody as promotion is the key issue and promotion is not good for a lot of Punk DIY.*

There is a general debate about places where there is or isn't a scene and Gavin describes Cardiff [their base] as a city where people go to gigs rather than to see bands. This is true of my experience at the Community Centre in Chorley on a Saturday nights amongst the 150 or so it attracts now and it is often said to me out of frustration by members of local bands there that to a majority the local scene is more of a social thing than about being into the music on the stage. We move on to inspiration and Kazz tells me that one of the first shows he went to was a UK Subs gig and I wondered what it was about punk that excited them?

Kazz – *It's hard to put your finger on it*

it's the passion and the energy-the songs . . . it's not fake like a lot of other music . . . and you can relate to what it's all about . . .

Jonny – *. . . and proud to be different . . . it's real . . .*

For those who have not come across Adequate 7's work and being linked to aforementioned bands you could make the mistake of assuming that they would be out of the usual ska, skate/emo, punk mould so I ask them to describe their sound. Jonny starts by acknowledging that they are associated with the Ska-punk scene which he likes bits of but also hates a lot of the bad generic ska-punk around . . .

Gavin is more direct and says he rejects the Ska tag saying that they have none of the characteristics – *just because we have brass people pigeon whole us straight away and that isn't what Punk is all about!*

Why is it still an underground scene?

Jonny – *. . . because of the amount of young kids – it's the only forum they have to do it . . . and that is good coz you get a lot of raw ideas and talent. The passion of a young person is a lot different from a middle age Rocker who's been on a major label for decades!*

We debate the change from the Ska punk at the turn of this century to more emo/rock as a sign of maturity or development?

Jonny – *It seems that Emo is the Big thing for major Labels to pick up and push with Hundred Reasons and Funeral For A Friend...and Saves The Day....for them to be hip and understand what the "scene" is all about . . . a trend . . .*

It seems to me that, as with the original Punks, being signed to a major label was a sign of selling out and noticeable in them starting to clean up their act and no longer playing the three chord thrash and the legacy speaks for itself . .

Jonny – *Ah! But bands like The Clash would always be forward thinking and progressive and were one of the first to put Reggae and the punk- even hip hop influences-all in the same melting pot . . .*

Gavin uses the criticism directed at Capdown's popularity and the trapping of releasing more singles, more radio play and media attention as good for the cause as more people are hearing the messages. Jonny draws attention to the Punk elitists who go out of their way to say what Punk is or isn't – the hypocrisy! Gavin makes the point that maybe Punk is underground as people don't want to hear home truths and how things really are. So what messages Adequate 7 giving out?

Jonny [pause] – *Knowing the World around you- knowing the issues facing you – critical thinking! That's what I think Punk has always been about –challenging the existing order and inherent corruptions within that order . . .* Kazz – *. . . don't take things for granted- think things through and educate yourself rather than react to things and jump on the band wagon- I can't encapsulate it in a sound bite...you can't assume you know more than the crowd . . .*

Jonny says that to do so is elitism in itself and, with Gavin, says that they strike a balance of fun with messages in their lyrics without trying to ram it down people's throats. So are there any political messages to their songs?

Jonny – *We are broadly left wing liberal people.* Kazz adds that they aren't always explicit and that it is hard for a writer to always put across what they mean in the lyric but hopes that the issues they are interested in are there to be picked up on. Jonny sums it up as

them being broadly socially consciousness. Gavin sites *No Space as in your face about McDonalds* before we drift into what is next on the horizon – two week European tour with Suicide Machines, writing more and being more critical of themselves and redefining what they want to sound like- giving themselves more room to work in. They go back to the Punk ethos and suggest bands starting out should listen to as many forms as possible and not try to sound like someone else. Jonny says that the best Punk were/are always open to invention and is annoyed by the generic punk bands who are satisfied to work to a formula. He adds that if Punks are challenging on a political scale then it ought to be on a musical one as well.

I am impressed with these guys and recommend them to anyone who terms him/herself as a Punk in the 21st Century. If you are stuck in the '76/'77 grooves then get out more to the younger end of the age scale and understand what the kids are about. It is true that some are totally happily clueless and would fall over if you spat at them [Milk and Two Sugars] - that there are those on the band wagon [most USA bands for that matter!] or are all sound and no substance [Grebo]. But Adequate 7 are a fine Punk band in the modern era – the best I have come across in fact. Their album *Songs Of Innocence and of Experience* released in 2003 is a landmark UK Punk CD as was Douglas' on Gravity Records in 2000 but how many of you have listened to them or have any idea what I am talking about – go out more and open your minds and ears! Adequate 7 are the natural descendants for today's youth from the original UK Punk lineage in sound, substance and fury.

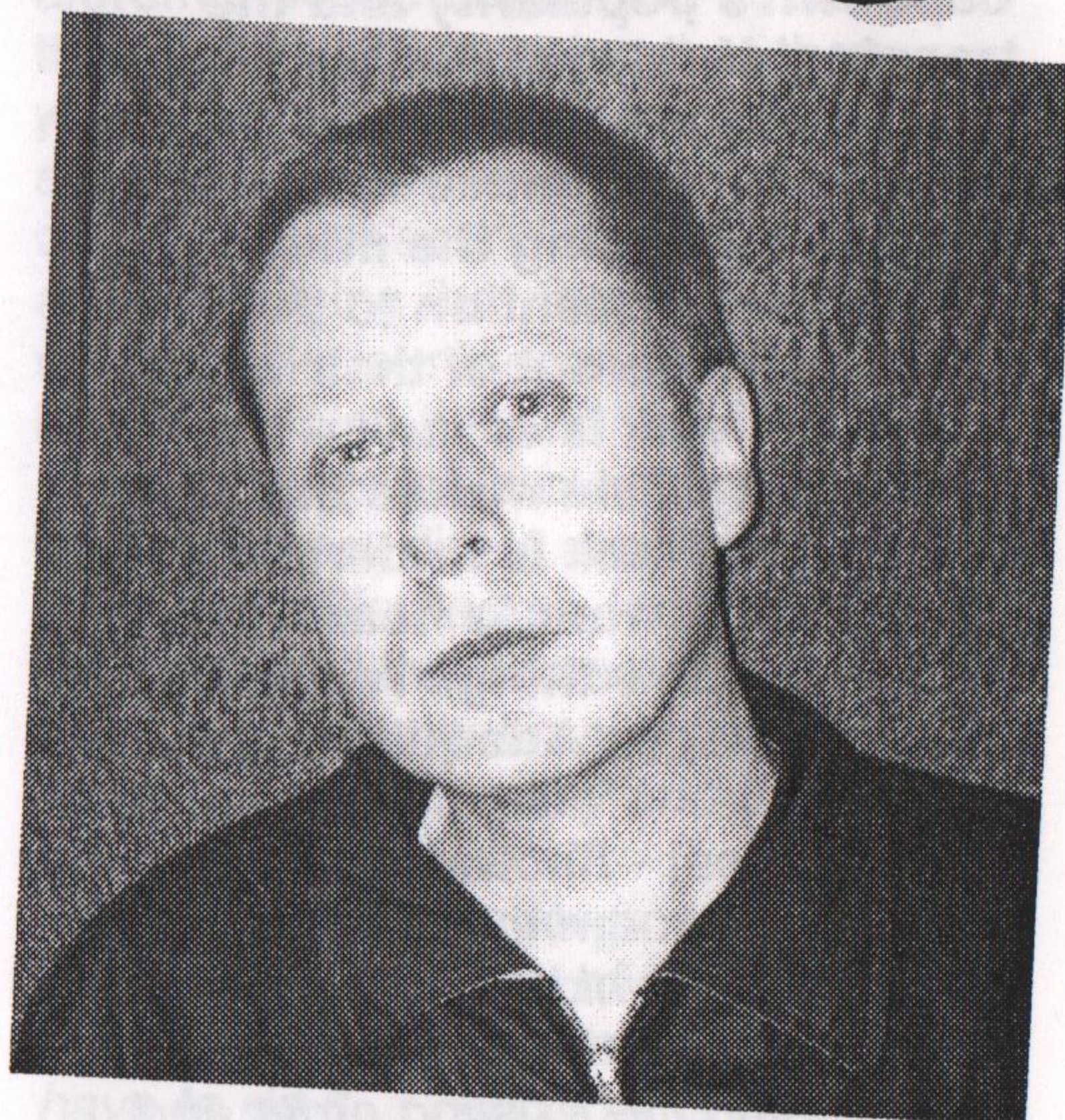
John Winstanley

***"Say I know a lot of people just like you,
plenty to live for and nothing to loose"***

Dave Sharp

**Interview with Dave Sharp
[Ex Alarm] Roadhouse,
Manchester 17/1/04. In the
last issue I interviewed The
Alarm's lead singer, Mike
Peters - who is still touring
as The Alarm but more
recently with Dead Men
Walking. He gave me his
version of events as the
band "split up" and, being
an ardent fan, I seized the
invitation to meet Dave
Sharp and hear what his
perspective was.**

Sharp wrote the definitive early Alarm song "One Step Closer"* and it was Sharp who forged the Alarm's distinctive guitar sound which moulded everything they did after the first LP. In his day Sharp was the guitar rock star. He set himself at an angle to the rest of the foursome resting his 6 string in his hips like a machine gun rasping off riffs over the heads of the fans who'd crowd onto his side he was magnet for the fans who know a performer when they see one. The epitome of cool, the way he dressed, walked, talked and on stage he was the man- with complete mastery of his instrument. He didn't need to leap about or shout but you'd be transfixed by the brilliance of his playing and the sheer stage presence. For those who went to the classic Alarm gigs between '84-'87 you'll



know what I'm on about! Anyway after the gig I got to talk with the man some 20 years later and we looked back on the inspirations behind the start of his career -

Yeah! You were talking about full circle and I grew up in this town. The first gig was The Who at Belle Vue, The King's Hall and that place could hold a few thousand people. Brilliant sound and quite impressionable on a 14 year old skiving off school to get the tickets. When Woodstock and the Isle Of Wight was happening I was still too young to get involved but I knew what was going on and there was this incredible feeling of togetherness right across the young people of the world....Then there was Punk Rock, which was great but, slowly since the end of the '70's, I've seen everything just get swallowed up by corporate

giants who are treating Rock'n'Roll like some kinda freaking MacDonald's, which is not where I started out and certainly not what I experienced when Punk was happening - that was big for us as it changed my mind . . . and a lot of other people's - sure it did! Like Nirvana and the Grunge thing! But, since the record companies sold out to entities that have got nothing to do with music - the music doesn't matter anymore- its just the bottom line, which really sucks, and is having a bad effect on the musicians that are coming up. They're selling stuff, putting it out too soon and not developing it and allowing them to grow!

Hearing the bands on tonight here is the first thing I've heard that sounds like music to me . . . I know I wanted to put something serious together that was getting back to basics with a fresh attitude. I was exposed to that in New Orleans. People there have turned away from the Corporate scene in droves. Cold Play do great

. . . and others, with the college kids but a lot of them I came into contact with when I asked them what they were listening to said Cold Play and Oasis are good but were getting bored with it all - its just a hard sell and we can see what's happening. I'm not saying anything negative about those bands they do a great job selling millions of records! [we nod at the irony in his tone]. But, I think there is a hunger out there for something that is real... take the Festival in Nashville in the South - its all word of mouth, no corporate involvement and last year there was a million people there. A million desperate, disenfranchised young people looking for something real that really touches your soul. Crikey! A lot of people are still listening to the old stuff like Crosby, Stills & Nash, Led Zeppelin, The Who, Deep Purple, Free and Humble Pie!-

You know the Blue collar workers who are under the hoods on Monday morning with the ratchet trying to get the engine fixed- they've got speakers blasting out needing something serious to listen to. The UK use to be the biggest exporter of music to the USA and what's happening now! Its not being felt by the Blue Collar people of America . . . it may be touching very impressionable college students but what are they gonna be left with when the vibe evaporates! I just think if Britain wants to get back on its feet then its got to take a long hard look at itself and figure out why are we working for these anonymous corporate entities that couldn't care less about you or me . . .

***But do you not think that has
always been the case anyway -
when you think about when Punk
exploded the music industry was
just that- an industry- that was
controlled and manipulative?***

Yeah! Sure but it was still very creative and the companies weren't all owned by someone else- you had independent companies like A&M, Chryslis and, even though it was a giant, EMI! - which is now owned by some Water Authority some place?...You had some creative people like Stiff Records - independent- made by the people - it wasn't OWNED! These were real records sold by real record shops to people who really wanted to buy the shit!

I get the gist of what he's letting out and move the conversation back to him and ask what touches him in music only to have him turn it around on me asking when I first got into music. I mention Elvis and the Beatles [well I'm being honest] and he asks when I last listened to a Beatles

record what happens/what did I feel and I say nothing but nostalgia. A little disappointed he asks whether it wakes me up with anything fresh in my mind and I say no but then add- "... but a Sex Pistols' tune does!" We have a meeting of minds and he extols the virtues of The Pistols...

There are certain things that, all through your time on this little planet, are gonna get to your soul and are always going to inspire you. There's other stuff that is there which you know you think is good and it sort of drifts away... you know what the real thing is when you hear it!

When it comes to The Pistols and putting a line under that period and sound- that just about sums it up for me. So we moved back to what Mike Peter's had said about getting in The Alarm, for Sharp, wasn't planned and that he was looking to get together with Karl Wallinger ... ?

Ah!, Well – there was a lot going on at the time – Mike was in one band and we were in another and it was a small town when we got started. I was playing with Twist when I was 13 and a bunch of guys in Manchester. Then he moved to Wales and where you going to find a decent drummer when you're 13...and hopefully with a kit!

But there must have been something that inspired you to stay with the Alarm at that time?

Oh, Yes! There was a massive feel that anything was possible. We had four people who came from different back grounds it was a collaboration but there was room for things to happen. We all knew what we were capable of – Mike writes brilliant songs – I play great guitar – wrote few good tunes![laughs]..we

found a voice and people wanted to listen to it... We had something to say when we started out which evolved but the power of music kept us going...We got into America and our eyes were opened a little bit... you can be boxed in here in the UK. There are some tremendous Blues players who have never been outside Essex... so we started to expand as soon as I got my feet into America I was right at home... being a UK musician was a massive thing as the soul in this country is great. I'm really pissed off at the Corporate seeds in the media have got everybody hypnotised! And yet we don't seem to sell records in the same quantity as in the past-why is that!

I think it goes in cycles...we're due some sort of eruption that's gonna [his semi America accent is getting to me now] change it...

My days of changing the world are over...I've still got a few good years left in me but I'm certainly not on some soap box. I'm trying to write great songs that reach people's heart. I want to play good, express myself just like anybody else and I've spent years and years getting my head round it applying myself and believing in the spirit of Rock'n'Roll and being involved in that world. Without getting arty this is how I choose to express myself!

What was it like then when the Alarm decided to split – was it a struggle or a relief?

It wasn't a decision- it was like an earthquake of a shock. You know we were standing on stage one night in Brixton [June 1991] and getting to the end of the gig when Mike suddenly announced that he was leaving the band-that was that! So we were all sitting in the dressing room going "

... did that actually happen -do we think what happened, happened?" And where's Mike!- He'd just left and I didn't see him again for ten years... he said at the time "I think the Alarm has gone as far as its gonna go and I want to do summat different!" He had some family stuff during the Raw album and agreed to take a break from recording and touring so I'd spoken to my folks and said this sounds like a good opportunity to get some creative stuff out of me that I'm not able to do with The Alarm- so we went ahead and cut an album with Rob Johnson and the lads from New Jersey and began to get my feet wet in America.

I ask what it was like starting out again and he explains that The Alarm did have more credibility in the States than he felt in England – especially the later songs like "Sold Me Down The River". He said their appeal was to the majority of working class people there who could see beyond hype and recognise a band working its arses off playing Rock'n'Roll with integrity, passion and self belief. Sharp admits to having to start at rock bottom in New York almost as an apprentice both as a performer and a writer. He worked his way across America and eventually to New Orleans in '92/93. He tells me that there it is a completely different culture from the rest of America none of this corporate bullshit! They couldn't care less about the charts down there...it's the birthplace of Rock'n 'Roll. He got a regular gig on Dekota Street and started to build a reputation working with the constant stream of brilliant musicians who flood through the place all the time. He worked on his craft and this brought him to the attention of Ricky Costello [Dreamland] who

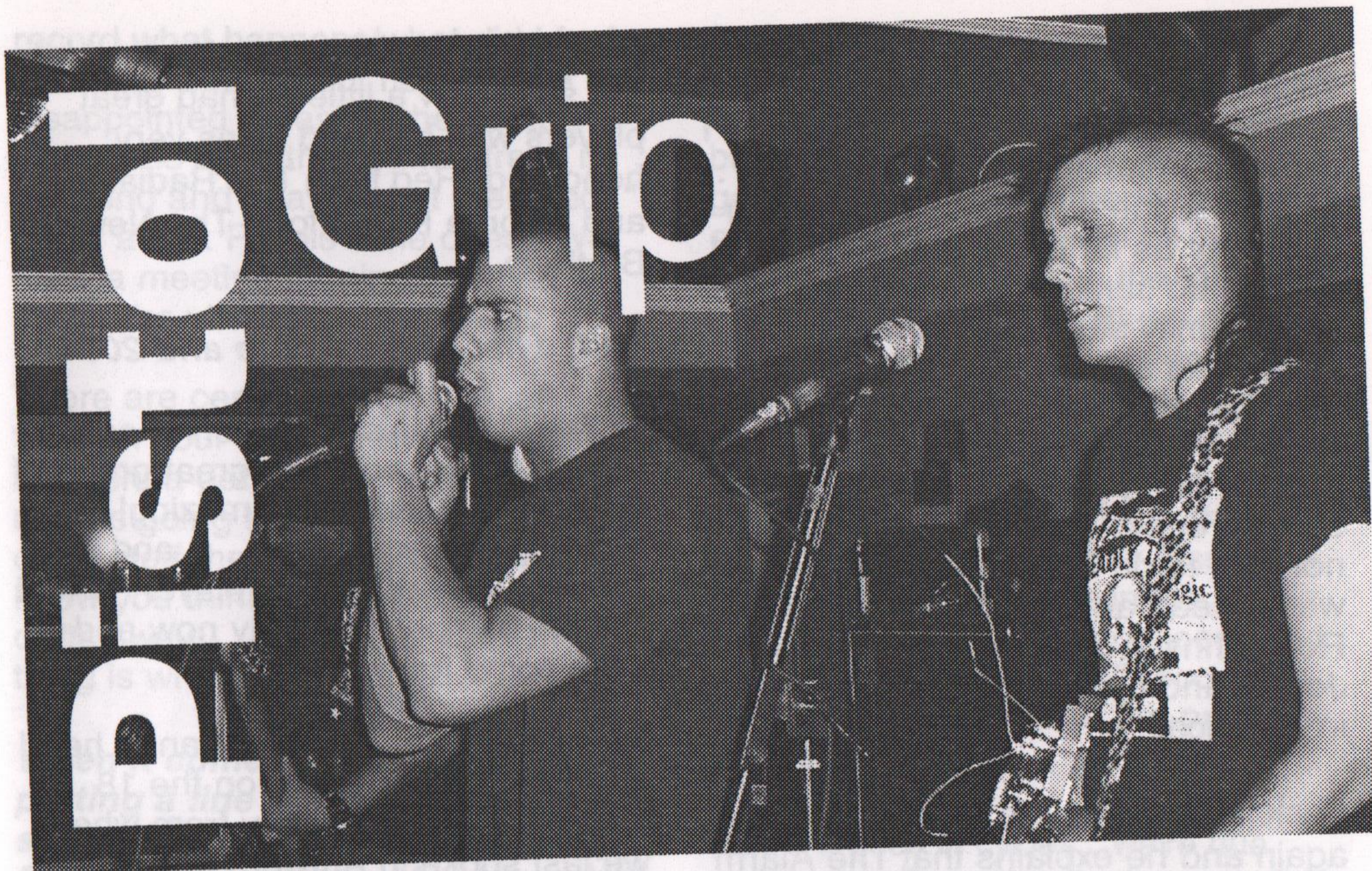
he says taught him to relax and let the spirit flow a little-he had great players with him and I was very honoured- Reg from The Radiators and George Porter from The Neville Brothers...

Well what of the future and 2004?

I'd like to get this collection of songs out... to play with this great group of musicians- absolutely amazing! I'm enjoying the experience... and I am looking to growing as a player – I feel like I'm beginning to play now and have some fun with it.

He's other people to meet and I head off to the bar reflecting on the 18 years that have flown by from when we last spoke in Antwerp and Amsterdam during after show parties. We are both older and for Sharpie it is measured in the lines on his face and in the depth of his eyes. He's done the whole lot – tasted all kinds of highs and lows - been all over the UK, Europe and the USA following his dreams and pursuit of ***the Rock'n'Roll spirit***. I doubt he will regain the fame he had in The Alarm – like any of the other three either- but he will always excite a crowd with his talent and passion there's no doubt. His dozen or songs in tonight's set for the 60/70 or so who hung round 'til midnight went down well with the faithful and curious. His songs are a mixture of deep Rhythm & Blues and soul with "Sugarland" being the best example of where he's at with classic Sharp solo picking and the forceful chorus of "take me to the river". But perhaps the best summary is in his own words "... I've got no need for device, disguise or for compromise, said that's all right the harder it fights I'm one step closer to home"*.

John Winstanley



Interview with Grant at The Royal Oak, Poulton 13/1/04. This band form in 1997 and got signed to BYO in 2000/2001 releasing two albums of speed hip-hop punk rock. The first album appeals to me as it is English sounding which I find ironic considering that most other forms of 21st century Pop Punk'n Rock seems immersed in the sceptic tank. Unfamiliar with Pistol Grip's work I find my self with Roy amongst a packed crowd on my first time venture to this ideal Punk pub. The interview was in the only place sound proof enough –the other end of the building in the kitchen- just as locals Sick 56 blasted into their set. It's testament to the venue and promoter that they have secured the band on this short tour [some three gigs-arriving with Drop Kick]. Having said that could it be because a band is crap that they cannot command more gigs? On the young Punk circuit a band from nowhere USA pops up in England and kids flock in droves to wet their pants while good English bands scratch out a living in toilets or prostitute

themselves on a demeaning support slot somehow humbled by it all. It breaks my heart when the like of Lightyear, Douglas and King Prawn call it a day against this backdrop. I didn't go to H.I.T.S where Pistol Grip made an appearance but I chatted to some people who did and had turned up on the strength of that. So I made my play not knowing what to expect. But hell I'd just had a great holiday and was in the mood to take on all comers- even the Yanks!

Grant or Stax as he's listed on the LP is a shaven headed pleasant early 20 yr old who I spent some ten minutes with. He gave me the background to the band but wasn't sure if this was their third or fourth time in the UK. The main band members went to school and grew up together but Grant, Chase and Hollywood adopted the ethos of *fuck it! This is what we really want to do . . . and have been committed right from the beginning.*

So what was the deciding factor in getting signed?

The main thing is just keep putting demos

out! The first and second demo we did were just shit . . . maybe some one heard the potential in us . . . we finally cut a demo that sounded of decent quality-you get what you pay for . . . we had a couple of songs that sounded good . . . and cut a deal with a studio of a friend of a friend . . . it's who you know not what you know. He admits that it was an intern at BYO who brought in the demo to the label's attention -we got our foot in the door that way so we got lucky!

On the American circuit how does touring work and how d'you chose where to play?

We're lucky in the fact that we're from LA...which is fuckin huge . . . with 20 venues to play a . . . it's not the same in every state, you've got your labels like Epitaph and Hell Cat so it helps to play in the state they are based in for sure.

What does Pistol grip stand for and what message are you trying to convey, if any?

We get that question a lot and I don't like to be too preachy like some bands-and I'm not gonna name any names, coz I all ready built a lot of enemies that way. I don't like to get on stage a preach for half and hour . . . we have a quasi political and religious view and stuff like that – we just write about shit that we see and how I feel. I'm not a one to tell people how to live and see certain things but we have certain issues with certain things and you read it and you take away what you can...it's pretty much social views.

I ask what's the relationship like with BYO given that in the UK labels seem to be flicking off bands like something smelly they stepped in - and what's the next stage for the band? Grant meanders around the support people give in and outside the label – like old LA punks Youth Brigade - and it seems if you are prepared to work on tour and not be too choosy then you get the gigs and build

up a net work of friends who treat us like friends and not a product of the business.

I wonder how the UK appeals compared to Europe and Germany in particular where he says they play a lot. He lights up recalling the crazy reception they got in Belgium where he got lifted and crowd surfed- selling large quantities of material, which he feels is the test of a responsive audience so I counter with- "maybe English audiences are more discerning?"

. . . [Pause] . . . it's hard to tell because the barometer is weird. You look at San Francisco -it reminds me of England a lot because the whole place shut up and god damn we're thinking we fuckin sucked and we must have really done bad because no one was moving or reacting and it seemed everyone was bored . . . but afterwards over a beer people would say "great fuckin show you did really good!" and we'd sell loads of CD's or shirts and think "what the hell! I don't understand!" So I kinda relate England to the same way as that. I don't think they have the same mentality as just going ape shit when the band plays but they appreciate when bands do play well I guess.

I start to wonder myself and broaden the state of Punk debate by asking where Pistol Grip fit in on the World stage?

"It's a difficult one . . . ahhh . . . for the most part we kinda blend in with a lot of different groups. Some say '70s/80's UK/ LA punk kinda blended all together . . . to others it's Oi! . . . We're not trying to be any label at all . . . a little bit of everything.

The interview draws to a close and he says they will continue to tour we never give up- we're road warriors hoping to come back in the Fall [September/October] with their third album. Not in it

for the money but fun he describes himself as the pessimist in the band keeping his expectations low. Later he gives me a copy of the first LP in a damaged case and I ask for a copy of the second one and he tells me to see if I like the first and he will send me the second. I won't do, as it's like the gig and the interview all mouth and little substance. It is full of clichés and a rip off of every SLF riff they put on vinyl. So I won't waste our ink on it and suggest you make your own mind up.

The Yanks have nothing to teach us and we should stand proud of the fact that Punk Rock was born in England and the UK. They envy this fact and will never forgive us for not taking the Dead Kennedy's to our hearts as the Sex Pistols heirs.

They send over their ambassador relics who claim The Ramones and New York Dolls gave US Punk Rock. Bollocks mate! Our leaders maybe seduced by your stories and quest for World domination of your so-called culture but the mass majority aren't and don't that suck! It is like a lot of things the Yanks will never have - a history of Democracy that wasn't at the expense of their native culture, a monarchy with our rich tapestry of Kings & Queens, an appreciation of irony and how big is not always beautiful.

I am told that this is the largest turn out here tonight - so don't tell me it is coincidence that a Yank band is headlining. For the record I was there for Sick 56 and kick my self for letting the interview miss the start of their set. I am saddened that if it is a fact that the majority of those who came did so because a Yank band was in town and those who were there are of my generation then shame on you! Punk is about being independent and moving forward-to think for yourselves and not to be taken in by the hype. I see it in the youth in Chorley, Blackburn and

Preston who wear the Hoodies and T Shirts of designer USA which is as repugnant as the clowns who run our industry churning out Busted who have the insolence and hypocrisy to manipulate a Punk anthem like *Teenage Kicks* to number one but denied the founders of Punk Rock their Number One in 1977.

I have asked bands about their politics and no one I have interviewed at the youth end seems to have a clue what I am getting at. Where are your balls and if you are Punk then stand for something even if it's to say *we are a band from Leyland and we sound like a band from Leyland*. I have been fortunate enough to interview bands with bottle that have something to say but recently I have found fewer and fewer as the quality of this issue may reflect. Punk happened because the music Industry forgot the simple fact that music is not a product but an art form and should not be manipulated like a Barbie Doll or Hamburger. The Sex Pistols, Clash and The Damned came from Garageland and gave us the DIY ethos to have fun with a sense of purpose - that's politics with real power. For the man in the street or the kid in the bedroom dreaming and making those dreams happen because they could see it happening. Then the music industry had to react to save it's self and just when they had a strangle hold it imploded as it was meant to. It is time for another reaction. The Music Industry has made a retro band of glam/pomp rockers like The Darkness award winners in 2004. This is evidence that originality on its knees. Do not get sucked into the corporate hype and especially the majority of crap we take from America. Please make your own minds up and support local music- in the words Jimmy Pursey "... stick America up your arse".

John Winstanley

Howard's Alias



Interview with Matt [G/V] & Steve[B]

**at 12 Bar, Preston
19/12/03**

A brief potted history for the readers who are not sure of the background to Howard's Alias . . .

M-Started 4 years ago playing third wave Ska Punk - since then we've released an album and 2 EP's...and we sound quite different now from then. S-Yeah, the Howard's Alias of today has changed a lot from the Howard's Alias

from a year ago . . . the sound . . . is more sort of a Ska punky with a dark edge...but I think the sound now is more Rocky which I think is a definitely a good progression - we're kind of a less Ska driven. We haven't changed as a band - it's still us- but it's kind of more defined - OUR sound!

Some critics would say the Ska Punk thing is over with bands like Capdown and [Sponge] being less popular now than perhaps they were 2/3 yrs ago? S- I don't think it's less popular. I think . . . there's only so far it can be taken as it is . . . there's only the RX Bandits in America who are trying to do something

different...*The Blue Meanies* were a few years ago but they split up. He mentions the UK and name checks No Comply [from Plymouth] and Adequate 7 [Bristol/Wales] who he says are punk rock based but trying to avoid the format becoming stagnant by making it more Rock orientated and with, what Steve describes as, a darker edge. They acknowledge Capdown as the first English band who tried to push Ska based music and who have inspired a whole generation by continually touring and developing their sound. I draw the development comparison with The Specials who started out as a Ska band and by the time Ghost Town came had moved more to the Reggae side. Steve points out that the Ska scene that exploded with Southern Californian happy go lucky sound of The Mad Caddies and Real Big Fish have been replaced with bands like his own who draw on more traditional ska like Two Tone and what my parents grew up listening to. He jabs back at those who say it's dead believing that it has developed from a fad.

I am curious about the darker edge and sensing it may be political- which was always the under current of the scene in the early 1980's for those who remember the racial tensions and riots back then. I ask if there is any political edge to today's scene or their own music?

Matt puts the view that bands do not necessarily put their politics into their lyrics and admits that Howard's Alias is a case in point. I switch the observation to the politics in relationships being more popular than Politics with a capital P?

M - I write all the lyrics in the band...all those people who say "oh, you're not Punk!" if you don't deal with Politics and stuff- that's not true. If you stand for a certain belief...is as much as talking about it...I don't really know all that much about politics- the in depth politics

- but I know what I feel about things so I am happy to stand up and say what I really believe in...but for a lot of the time it's not appropriate in the songs....people would not want to listen to me, they just want to hear music, its about the music and our political beliefs are accompanying that but are secondary to that - it's always about music for us! I think most bands feel that . . . and it's the fans who put this thing that it's got to be political . . . and as a person I don't think it's totally important all the time lyrically, if you know what I mean.

S - Personal politics are definitely as important as politics on a grander scale...for us it's a more natural thing to write about because we are all quite socially aware and we are not politically active but we are aware of the state of the world. But for us it's more natural to write music about things which are closer to us and been involved in our own personal experiences....bands like Capdown and the Anti-Maniacs choose to tackle politics on a grander scale...and there are a lot of bands who relate to that because they are politically active and want to make a difference. But there is also a lot of people, who-it's not so much that they don't care about it as much, but they kind of can relate to us more because we deal with things that are a bit more personal and issues that have effected them in their lives like they have for us that aren't just on the big scale of politics.

So what song would you say you are particularly proud of then?

Matt explains they have written 20 songs and out of them Bury It he chooses as his favourite for no other reason than it's really fun... Later they tell me that they are looking to issue as a split release with Desser [ex members of a USA band called Link 80]- which will be three tracks - round January. An album of their own in late June will depend on where and when they record

it. Touring it with the RX Bandits in the Spring. How important is a record deal in the band's development I wonder support do they get? *We haven't actually signed anything, we are not under any contract to anyone, we put our CD on Good Clean Fun records- who are some guys from Wales who offered to help us out money-wise and with distribution . . . we don't care what label we're on its about MUSIC!* Steve explains the Big Cheese compilation entry and that there was an interview done but did not get printed. The choice of track appears to have been left to the magazine so there was little control and an almost chance element at work that many unsigned bands would bleed for.

So what of the DIY punk spirit

amongst bands - how did tonight's gig come about? Matt tells me that they have a booking agent called Ian who got a call from Duckhunt & as they were on tour slotted the gig in. Simple as tha t- and they didn't know what Duckhunt sounded like either and had not met any of the band or even played Preston before. Steve says that seems to be the norm - *going to places you wouldn't normally go to and meeting people you wouldn't normally meet . . . making little pockets of friends.* Matt adds that this happens more and more and he feels that it is better for being DIY as *there's no bullshit- real people doing it because they love music.*

John Winstanley

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out & about



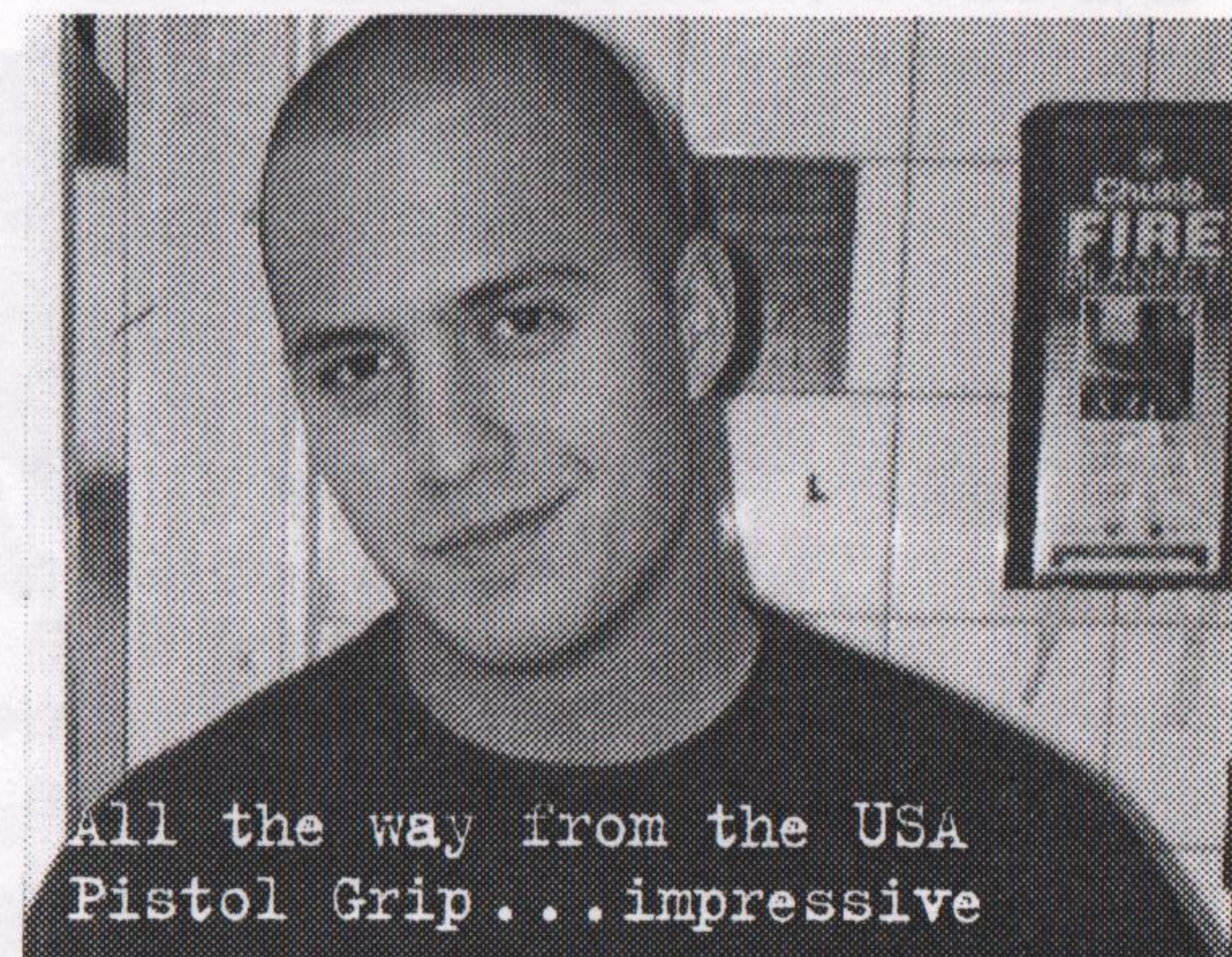
The Lurkers, Slutch, Turgid

**Tuesday, 6th January 2004,
Sir Charles Napier,
Blackburn**

Arrived at North Bar to find gig had been moved to the Charles Napier pub. Turgid were just finishing their set so apologies to them for no review or pictures. Last time I saw Slutch they were supporting the UK Subs at North Bar, now a 3 piece the latest line-up featuring none other than Tommy Couch of One Way System and ex of The Pink Torpedoes on drums. Slutch must be a bit of a legend round these parts going by the amount of good natured banter between crowd and band. Slutch turn in a sterling performance fronted as ever by multi-talented Brian Barnes [guitar/vocals] along with Chris on bass guitar and vocals. If you didn't know Brian also plays bass with the UK Subs, drums with his own band Celebrity Bikini Waxer and is also gonna be playing with the Marky Ramone band on forthcoming

UK dates. I like Slutch and they've some good material especially "Jackie", "Power Mad Bitch" and "Love is Dead in The World". We are not exactly short of gigs in this part of the world these days but it's good to see people prepared to turn out twice in a couple of weeks to see the same band. The Lurkers were really up for it tonight and had a good size crowd going ape shit down the front for most of their set. Much the same set as Poulton but who cares when it's this good, "Red Light Girl", "Rubber Room", "KKK Took My Baby Away" and "Go Ahead Punk" did it for me tonight. Plenty more songs for the encore and everyone goes away happy. Special mention to Arturo who spends most of his post gig time chatting to the punters and obligingly agreeing to do an interview with me for the fanzine. Cheers mate.

Roy H.



Pistol Grip, Sick56, Enima

**Tuesday, 13th January
2004, Royal Oak, Poulton-
le-Fylde**

All the way from the USA Pistol Grip...impressive

First gig of New Year, North Records Punk night moves to Tuesday instead of usual

Wednesday for this gig. Didn't seem to affect the attendance though as good as any I've seen at this venue, pleasing to see people prepared to get in their cars and travel for the punk on a Tuesday night. Enima kicked off the proceedings in fine style, they're tight and energetic and it's great to see these youngsters mixing it with the old hands. I'm sure they'll benefit from that greatly. See the interview with them for their take on punk. Sick 56 are well into their game now and the interest they have generated not just in themselves but for punk rock in general is commendable. Three new songs in the set "Violence", "Tonight" and "Crash & Burn", all will feature on the new album when it surfaces sometime this year. Andy Higgins of Erase Today jumping up once more for a run through of "Gotta Reveloution". Tonight's gig was one of only three UK dates for Pistol Grip. New to me but I liked them. A good American band and for once plenty of Brit punk influences in there. Loads of good tunes and bags of attitude. Their latest album "Another Round" is well worth a listen. They played a decent length set and looked like they could have gone on all night despite spending the previous night on the ale. Enjoyable.

Roy H.

Suspicious Stains, The Hyperjax, Razordog

**Friday, 23rd January 2004,
The 12 Bar, Preston**

Friday night Charity do and the combination of the two made for a bumper crowd. Last time I was in here was for a

50th birthday party- not mine I might add. It's a good little venue this even if the stage is down the long side of the room. I didn't see all the bands but the Richard King fronted Razordog are worth catching. If you liked the Zanti's, Turnpike's or Phantom Creeps well this lot will be your thing too. The Hyperjax are getting their name round nicely now and winning fans over who perhaps wouldn't normally listen to rockabilly orientated stuff. I've sung their praises for a good while and personally believe this band could be massive if they get the right gigs and exposure. We'll see. Rochdale's Suspicious Stains were last up and their fun approach works well, loads of variety, plenty swapping of instruments and general lunacy. High point was a cracking version of the Bangles "Walk Like An Egyptian". A good night and around £400 raised for Preston Women's Refuge.

Roy H.



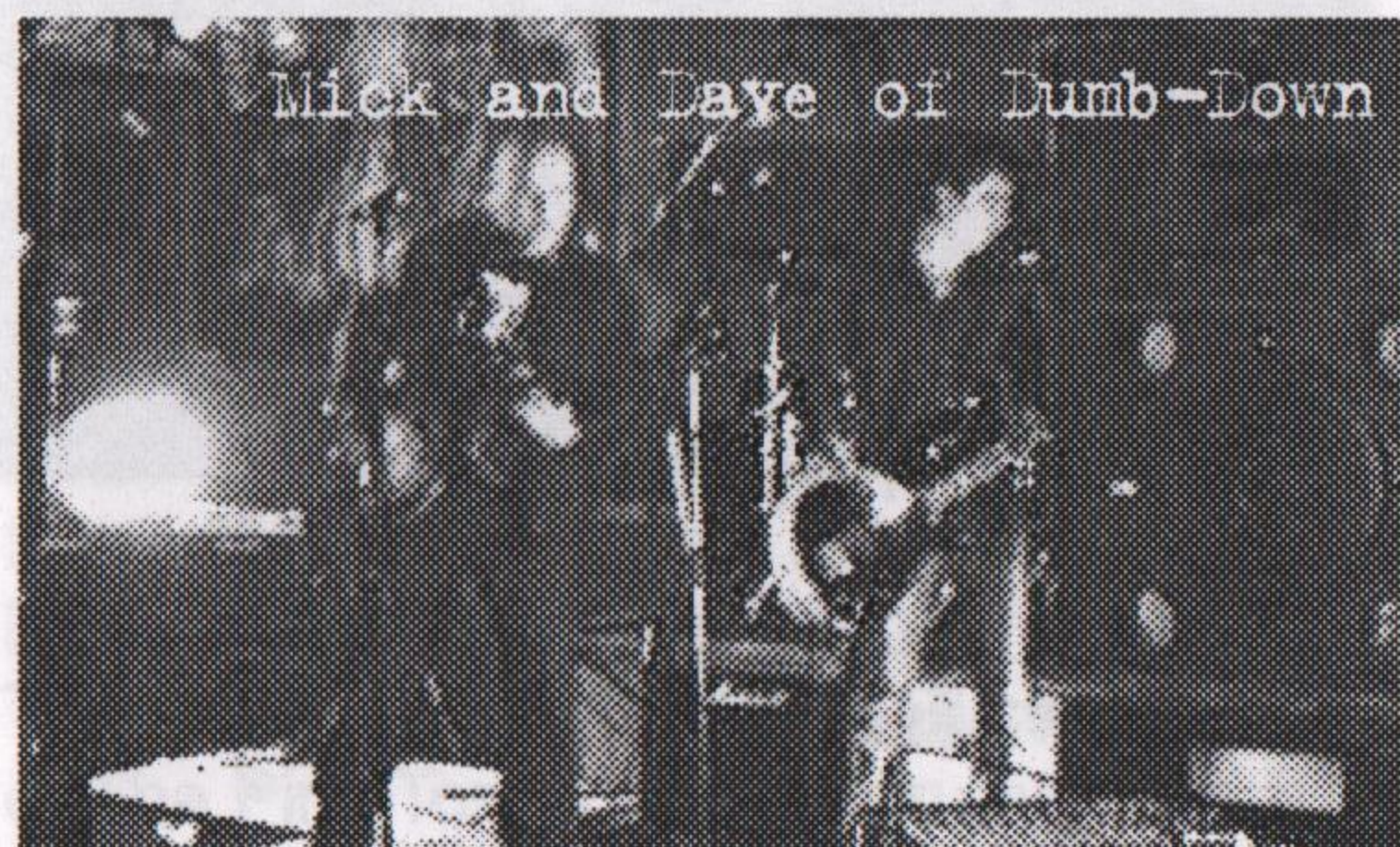
The Lurkers, Instant Agony

**Wednesday, 28th January
2004, Royal Oak, Poulton-
le-Fylde**

This was a night for die-hards. Fucking cold outside and after spending ten minutes trying to get my frozen car door open at work I was debating whether to

go or not. Took two minutes to convince myself and after all Arturo Bassicks Lurkers are a sure fire cert to warm up a cold January night. Surprise tonight was Instant Agony. The 80's Birkenhead band led by Hocky played a cracking set blitzing through "Ripped Off", "No Pain No Gain", "My Religion", "One Man Army" and "Think Of England". A few years since I last saw them but impressive they were tonight. Lurkers fans in for a treat as this was the first of two local gigs. Mixing in material from the new album with the old favourites and as usual giving it 110%. Dave Kemp has now taken over guitar from Billy Gilbert although I believe he's been in the band before. Nelly is on the drums and your man Arturo needs no intro. As usual The Lurkers are tight as ever and willing to give the crowd exactly what they want from the impressive back catalogue. All my faves were here, "Freak Show", "Wolverine", "Pills", "Take Me Back" and the very first single "Shadow". Could you imagine these bands not doing an encore? It aint gonna happen! They finished off with "Little Ol' Wine Drinker" and "Jenny". On to Blackburn then.

Roy H.

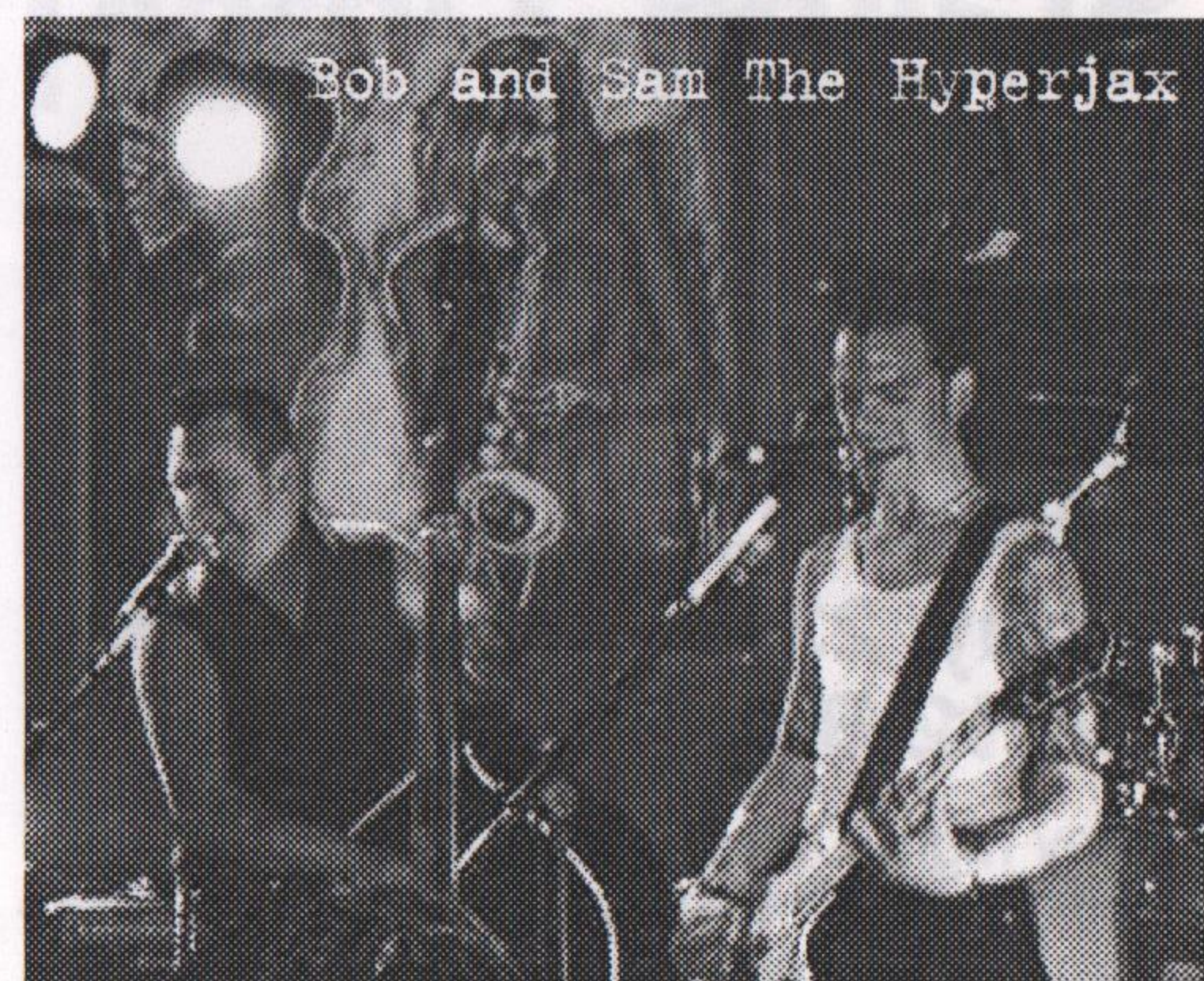


"It's Not Cricket Festival 2"

**Sunday, 22nd February
2004, Strettles Bar,
Preston**

Another chance for a variety of bands to put themselves on show at the second of these all-dayers set up by John Winstanley of A3H Promotions. Most of the bands are local although a couple have come down from Scotland, In Car Stereo being one of them. All festivals are long days for punters and bands alike but there's always a band or three worth waiting for. Mine were The Hyperjax, Dumb-Down and The Runs. Dumb-Down are Mick on guitar/vocals and Rob on drums both from Pike, with Daev Dog one time Pike guitarist chipping in with the bass duties. They were very impressive indeed seen as they had not rehearsed much. The whole set was driven along by Daev's bass guitar and this is one band I'd definitely see again. The Runs are a young punk band from over Burnley way and Andy from Noize Anoze Promotions has been raving about them. The burning question with the young punk bands is can they get the right breaks required to push them forward and away from constant local pub/club type gigs which to my mind does them no good at all? A good example of a band who have pushed forward are The Hyperjax. Local gigs will become few and far between as they branch out and go on to bigger things. USA dates already confirmed for this year. They rightly headlined today and went down a storm, they want appeal to all and seem to be doing just that.

Roy H.



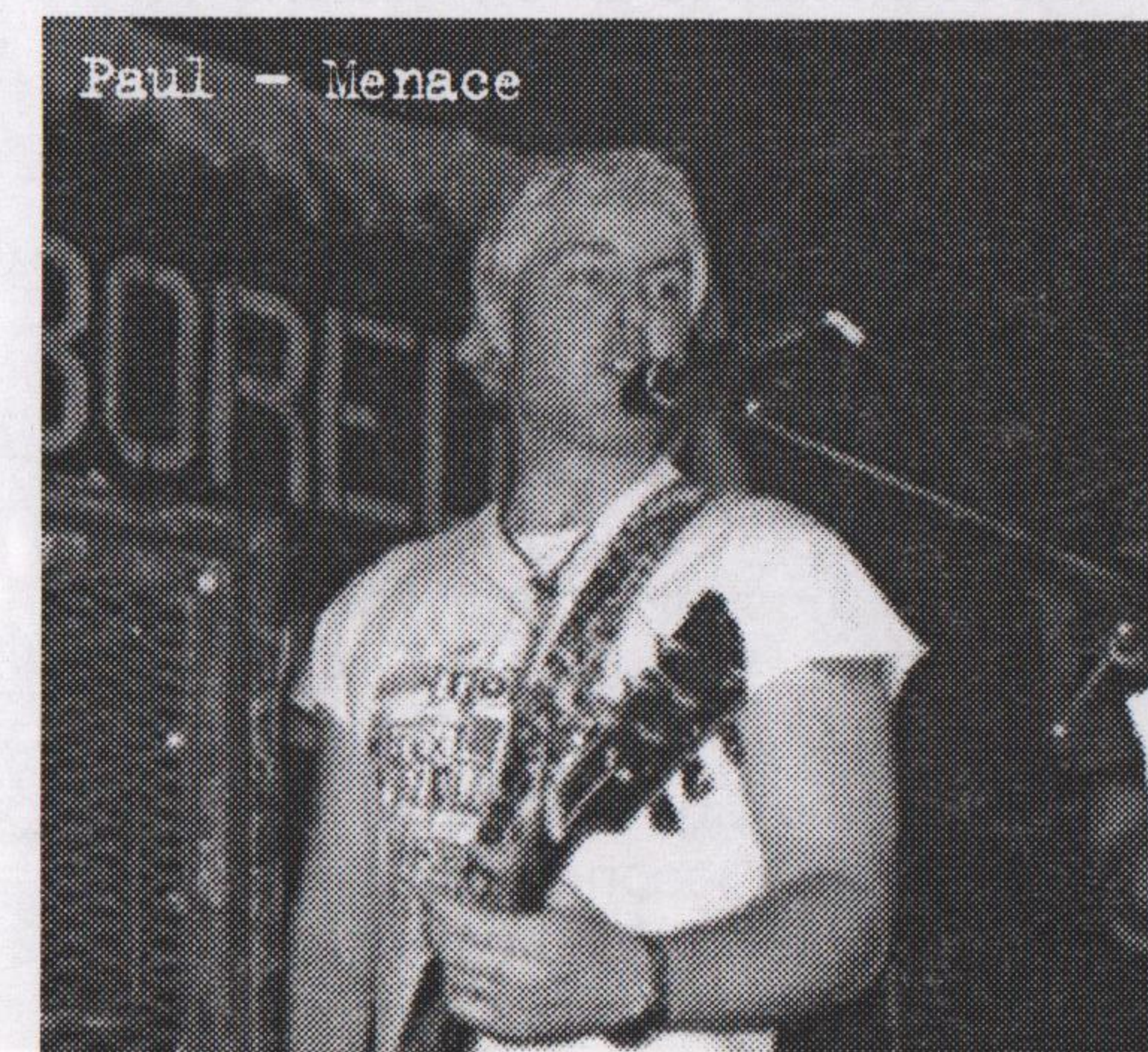
Menace, Boredom, The Runs

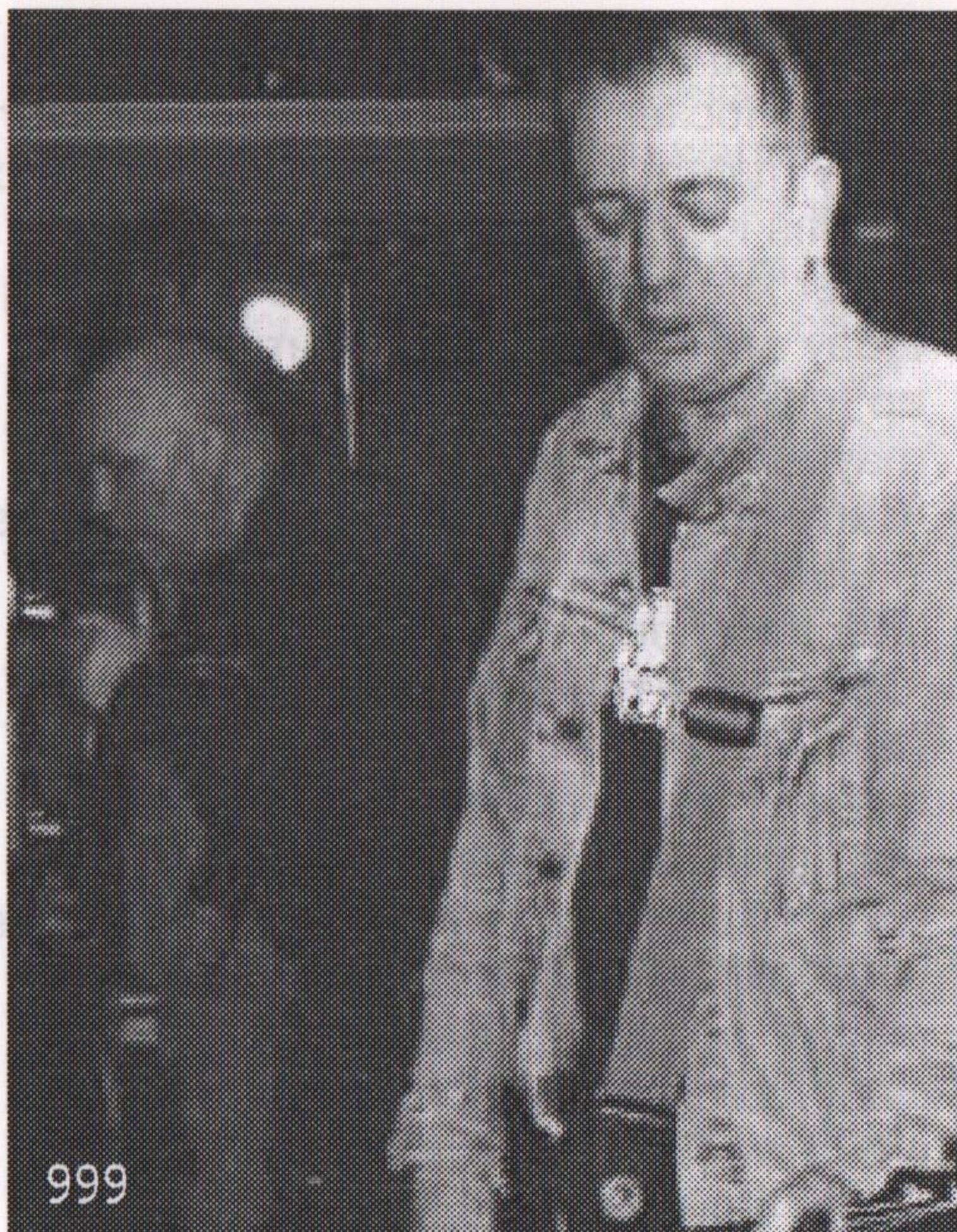
**Friday, 27th February
2004, North Bar, Blackburn**

One night when everything clicked. Friday North Bar punk night and Menace stole the show. All credit to Boredom and The Runs who both played well but this really was Menace's night and I bet even they were totally gob smacked at the reception they received. Menace lifted the roof off on their Blackburn debut and I can't recall a band going down this well at here. Band and audience in perfect harmony at this size of venue takes some beating. Menace's set tonight, in the main made up of the 70's crowd pleasers we'd all come to hear was played to perfection and taken literally into the heart of the crowd by vocalist Oddy- a better front man you'd struggle to find. Of all the first wave punk bands I remember Menace most for coming up with equally good A and B sides on their singles. Noel Martin [drums] and Charlie Casey [bass] are Menace- but let that take nothing away from the new guys Oddy and Paul [guitar] this is most definitely a team effort. They

kicked off with 'I Need Nothing' then into 'Punk Rocker' and 'Screwed Up'. All their early material stands the test of time and weighs in well against anything perhaps better known contemporary's still playing today are churning out. There was no let up tonight and it was pleasing to see mayhem restored on a punk dance floor. 'Carry No Banners', 'Two Fingers', 'Rocks & Dust', 'Insane Society', 'Electrocutioner', 'Tomorrows World', 'C&A', 'Last Year's Youth' and personal favourite of mine 'I'm Civilised'. For reasons like making sure the PA system got home safely 'GLC' was saved till last and yes it got the mad shirts off response you'd expect. This audience earned the encore tonight as Oddy and the boys closed proceedings on a mental night with 'Live For Today' and 'The Young Ones'. Superb performance! Special mention to The Runs who I've seen twice this week and look to be one young bunch of punks who could go on to do good things. They played and went down well tonight as did Boredom whose vocalist voiced up during their set "how refreshing to see a young punk band who don't sound like fuckin Green Day"- referring to The Runs. Great gig all round and credit to Andy and Julie at 'Noize Anoze Promotions' and North Bar for putting these Punk Nights together.

Roy H.





999, The Hyperjax

Wednesday, 3rd March 2004, North Bar, Blackburn

First visit to Poulton for The Hyperjax and although the lads were probably not a 100% happy with the sound they still went down well to a new audience. If I remember they should have supported 999 about 12 months back in Blackburn but due to unforeseen problems that gig never came off. They won over the Royal Oak crowd with their big tunes. Songs such as "Panic Button", "Happy Pillz", "Where Egos Dare", "Spider On The Wall", and "New World Order" would be new to most of tonight's punters who showed their appreciation after every song. They finished with the old Eddy Grant penned Equals number "Police On My Back". Second time at the Oak for 77 punksters 999. Last time here a couple of the band were under the

weather with the flu. No such problems tonight as Cash, Days, Labritain and Arturo give it some bollocks. It's a sure fire greatest hits set, after all its what the punters want so why deviate from that. It would be good to have a new 999 studio album though would it not? Arturo says we have to keep going on to Nick Cash about that one! Its "Black Flowers for the Bride" to kick off with followed by "Inside Out". If you'd come for "Biggest Prize in Sport" or "Feelin Alright With The Crew" or "Homicide" or "Little Red Riding Hood" well they were all here. The energy this band still generates has to be seen to be believed. The very first single "I'm Alive" is saved for the encore and everyone goes home happy.

Roy H.



Broken Bones, Pike, Stuntface, One Man Stand

Sunday, 14th March 2004, Retro Bar, Manchester

Bit of a bummer when you have to review your own gig! I'm playing bass

with Pike tonight so makes a change to be on the other side of the fence. I'm standing in for Jez Catlow, he lost part of a finger in a work accident recently. It's a NJ Hindley promotion at the Retro in Manchester. All in the van as we set off from Lostock Hall at 5pm. We find the venue easy enough and make our way down to the basement where Broken Bones are in various stages of setting up their gear. We go through the usual whose using what routine and eventually get round to setting up our sound. It's only a small room and everything sounds ok so to the pub upstairs for a lounge about and drinks. We can hear the first band One Man Stand kicking off the night and I head back down to have a look. The time fly's when your waiting to go on and Stuntface are now up doing their thing. After a quick couple of photos for the promoter its time for Pike. Nine o'clock and were on. I'd be lying if I said I wasn't a bit nervous. The stage is small but I can hear everything even the drums which aren't mic'd up. After the first couple of songs "Greedy" and "Bleed" I'm enjoying it. I downed two cans of Red Bull before I

went on and it seems to have done the trick as I ain't dropped a pick yet. The small crowd seem to like what we're doing so that's good. By the time Sean is into his third solo on the fifth song Iggy's "Dirt" I'm feeling the heat then I remember vocalist Mick telling me to take a breather when the songs allow. The songs come in quick succession, "Enima-M", "Jacknife", [whoops] "Murder" and finally "Bloodsports". We bung in another song "Beast" as the audience are still applauding, I hope they stop clapping after this song as it's the only other one I know. Gig over and time to have a beer as I've stayed off the ale pre-gig it's a bit of light relief. Broken Bones are headlining and they are one of the loudest bands I've seen in a while. It's sign language only at the bar if you want a drink. Tez Bones from Discharge on guitar leading a total onslaught of hardcore mayhem. We couldn't believe there were no mics on the drums and they were still this loud. I enjoyed them anyways. A good night and cheers to NJ Hindley for the well organised gig.

Roy H.



product

DVD's:



"Penetration" Re-Animated

[Polestar]

"Celebrating 25 years out of the music business". For anyone who missed Penetration live on last years UK dates this DVD is still available to buy from the bands site www.loversofoutrage.co.uk for around £15 quid. It's just over an hour long but don't let that detract as the sound and picture quality are excellent and it's a must have for fans of the band. The gig itself was filmed at the University of Northumbria, Newcastle in December 2002 and features 16 songs. Original members Pauline Murray, Robert Blamire and Gary Smallman are joined by new guitarists Paul Harvey and Steve Wallace. There are a few additional features including the band on the M55 heading for Blackpool HITS 2002 Festival. We see the band checking into their Hotel, the build up to the gig and performing 'Don't Dictate' to a packed Blackpool Winter Gardens audience. Have fun while you can! In the words of the late Ian Drury: Penetration Rule OK!

Roy H.

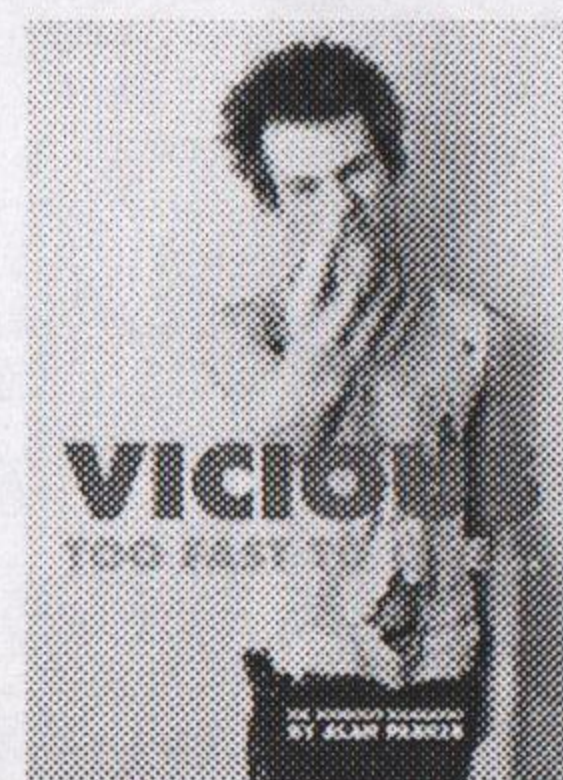
"Buzzcocks" Live at Shepherds Bush Empire 2003

[Secret Films]

This is excellent and well worth the £14.99 I paid for it. Near on three and half hours running time. It's on Secret Films who issued shed loads of DVD's last year by the likes of Sham 69, Johnny Thunders, Nine Below Zero (yeah I loves my R'n'B) and SLF. As the title says The Buzzcocks in concert last year at Shepherds Bush Empire. The gig itself is 32 tunes long, a mix of old favourites and tracks from the latest album. Lost count on the number of encores in the live set so for anyone who's forgotten how good the Buzzers are live heres your wake up call. Also included a meaty interview with Steve Diggle and Pete Shelley plus some on the road footage of the band down under in Oz.

Roy H.

Books:



"Vicious too Fast to Live" Alan Parker

[Creation Books]

The first of two Alan Parker books. The definitive biography of Sid Vicious. "Sex Pistol. Punks Holy Icon. A global cult phenomenon. Accused of murder. Dead by Heroin aged 21". Where do you start with something like this? The book is packed with pictures of Sid, the Pistols and many of Sid's American heroes. There's even one photo showing Sid putting a Sharp in his arm. A sad celebration. Inevitably Jerry Nolan, Johnny Thunders and Dee Dee have all since joined Sid in the rock 'n'roll graveyard. All the famous newspaper cuttings are here along with photo's of Vicious's Charge and Bail sheets and his eventual Death Certificate. Alan has set out to put a few things straight and it's a book you can pick up and read straight through. He's obviously put in a lot of work even living with the late Anne Beverley (Sid's Mum and also an addict) for a while but you have to pinch yourself to believe all this was actually allowed to happen. What the fuck was going on! If you've seen the Julian Temple film 'Filth and The Fury' where John Lydon is in tears talking about his old mate you'll know where I'm coming from. Heroin stifles creativity whether a rock star or just a normal Joe. Normal Joe's passing is more often than not forgotten instantly and rock star becomes a legend. "The difference between Heaven and Hell is in the thinking" Shakespeare in a zine now there's a first.

Roy H.



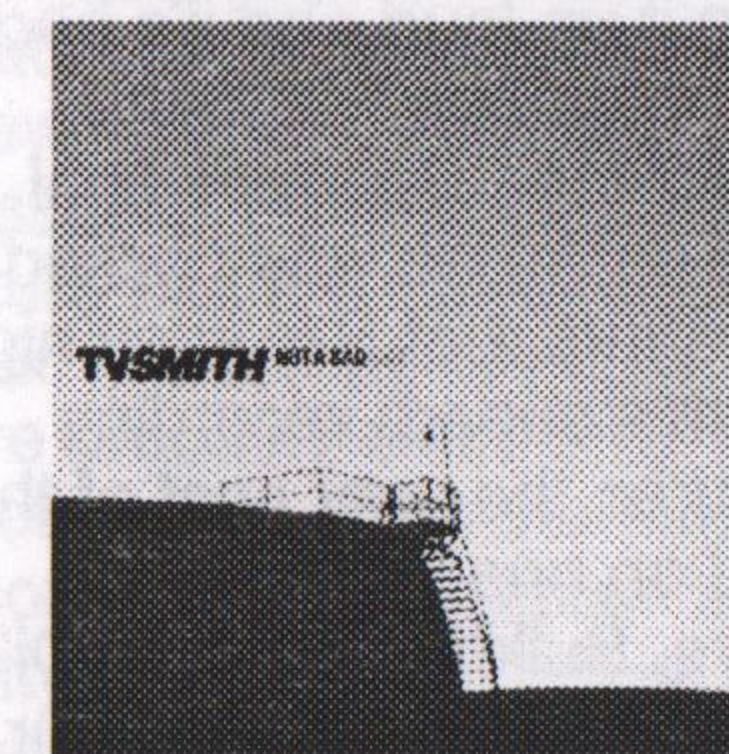
"Rat Patrol from Fort Bragg" Alan Parker

[Abstract Sounds Publishing] Never the world's biggest Clash fan it's reassuring to pick up a book by someone who is. Alan was featured in issue 6 of this zine while reviewing his involvement with SLF. "Rat Patrol..." [the working title of the Combat Rock LP] allows us to share his labour of love in comments like "I first saw The Clash play live in the early eighties at King Georges Hall in Blackburn and it's fair to say they single handily changed everything about how I saw the rest of my life" - I had a similar experience at the same venue in the late seventies watching The Jam. This is presented as a scrapbook at just over 100 pages being in easy flick magazine format. While I would take issue with the description of The Clash being "Potentially the greatest Rock n'Roll band in the world ever" I do acknowledge his care and attention to detail that does reveal itself as borderline fanaticism. For example, he issues the challenge to hunt down recordings of London SS, which featured Tony James, Mick Jones and Brian James. He says that Tony James [later of Generation X] told him "...at least half a dozen rehearsals were taped". This mirrors the obsessions Northern Soul enthusiasts crave and display while seeking out vinyl copies from cellars and attics of dusty USA recording studios in an

attempt to unearth and present lost treasures like they are more vital than the were ever intended to be. For the passing curious it charts all aspects of the band's career. Discography, UK gig listings [1976-1984], bootleg CD's with marks out of ten for sound quality and the expected UK and USA chart positions of the commercial releases. The studio pictures are mixed with press cuttings and there are some 16 in colour. On stand out photo is a black & white one of the band taken in Belfast in '77. Looking like they just got out of a car, Strummer seems to be talking to Jones who, along with Simonon, is staring at the camera while Headon stares to the right. A Church in the background and, just to the left flanks strummer, you catch sight of a soldier and his rifle. I juxtapose this picture, the sectarianism and politics of the day in Ireland with the books final quote from Sniffin' Glue's Mark P- "Punk died the day The Clash signed to CBS". For the ignorant the book will make you want to buy a copy of the first LP. For the fans it deserves a pat on Parker's back for making this band's career so perfectly accessible.

John Winstanley

CD's



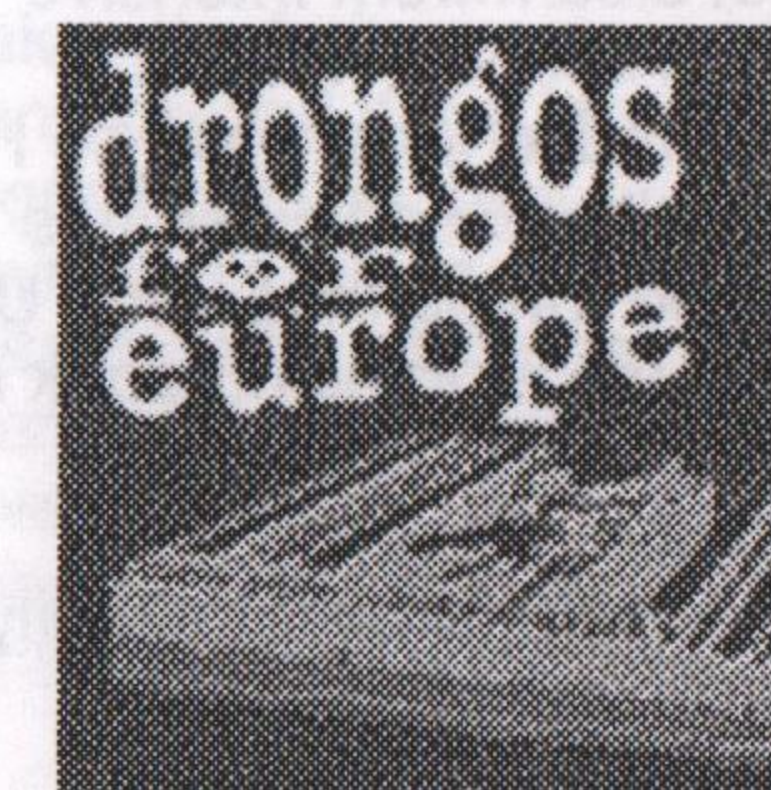
"TV Smith" Not A Bad Day

[ITVS 001]

TV Smith is a thinker with an ability to turn his thoughts into fine songs. Check out title

track 'Not A Bad Day', you'll find eleven more examples of that here too. TV's latest solo offering is an album you can loose yourself in. Try 'Swimming in The Flood' or my favourite track 'Soon As I Found It I Lost It'. One man with guitar, various sound effects and drum machine works brilliantly on this album if not always everybody's cup of char live. These twelve songs fit together so well it could almost be a concept album. Fucking hell that's a bit hippish! Smith becomes a story teller which makes his work very listenable indeed. Its good to see this 1977 survivor can still turn in a decent lyric and couple them to his observations 'The Future Used To Be Better', 'The Revolutions The Same' and 'For Every Hit There's A Miss' prime examples. Buy this album and surprise yourself. Oh yeah he used to be in The Adverts and he sometimes sings with an electric backing band. TV Smith our likeliest ticket out of here!

Roy H.



"Drongos for Europe" Barcode Generation

[Dislocate]

This is a corker of an album from Dislocate Records www.dislocate.co.uk and guaranteed to get you charging round the house like a mad cunt especially 'May

Day' and 'Spirit Bomb'. Title track 'Barcode Generation' and 'Freakazoid' do the business too. Fact is there's not a bad track here from the Brum Punks who've been about since the early 80's. I don't think they ever split up they just had periods where they didn't do a lot. Anyways there back with 14 hard and heavy bullshit cutters. Never seen the band live but wouldn't pass up the opportunity after hearing this effort so big cheers to Dislocate for bunging me this one.

Roy H.



"Intensive Care" North London's Finest

[Dislocate]

I think this may even be the debut album from Intensive Care? A band I've been interested in for a while so I was well pleased when this dropped through the door. Up and at em' sing-along-punk in a Cockney Rejects vein. Fronted by loudmouth Brendan the totally politically incorrect up yer' bum approach works well and heres 12 songs to prove the theory. There's some class lyrics check out 'Dalby' I'm assuming it's dedicated to an ex-band member "Your much too fat you ain't getting thinner, you were only in it for your dinner". Fuck me this is poetry. There's plenty to smile about whether it be the length of female genitalia hair 'Don

King', the band anthem 'Intensive Care' - "we've been chuckin' bricks since 86", or the ode to May Day rioting 'J18'. Great stuff.

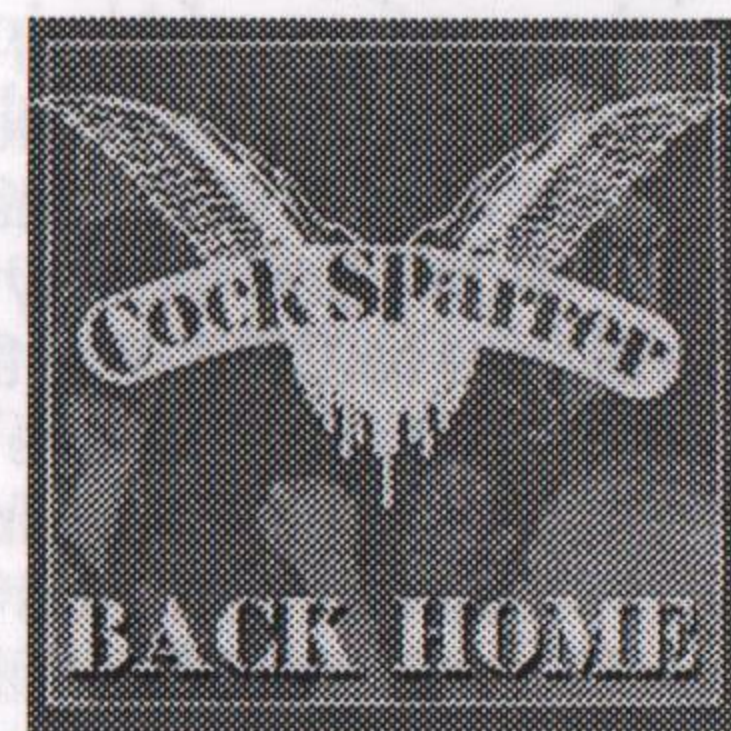
Roy H.

"Ill On Speed"

[Demo]

No listing but you can assume the titles from the Chorus'. Fast with plenty of words squeezed into little to threaten the three minute barrier. It makes me want to listen and that's how I like my Punk - served sharp with simple structures, dirty production and catchy Oi! Oi! Oi's and witty observations thrown in for good measure. "We're supposed to be shite so heckle all you like coz it's our job to make the other bands look good" being the best example.

John Winstanley



"Cock Sparrer" Back Home

[Captain Oi!]

Bang it up loud and it's back to Morecambe 2003 and possibly the Sparrer's final gig. The Arena was packed to the rafters that Saturday night and this superb recording captures the very best of the band on one live album. Punks, Builders band or Oi's first supergroup? Take your pick but sure as hell you'll never see the like again. In the early days Cock Sparrer were always football lads playing rock. Not quite arty enough to fit the Kings Road 77 but they did hang around

long enough eventually finding their niche when Oi hit the fan 3 years later. I saw them play a long time ago when they were support band on the Small Faces re-union tour. The late Steve Marriott complimented their performance that night and I'm sure he'd give this the thumbs up to this if he were still around. I did like the early stuff and I remember them playing 'What's It Like To Be Old', 'Running Riot' and 'Chip On My Shoulder' at that particular gig and all three feature on this album. Plenty of highlights 'Don't Blame Us', 'Working', 'Riot Squad' and 'White Riot'. This is the last time I'll ever say this exclaims Colin McFaul and introduces 'England Belongs To Me. But never say never eh! I'll stick my neck out and say the best Captain Oi release to date!

Roy H.

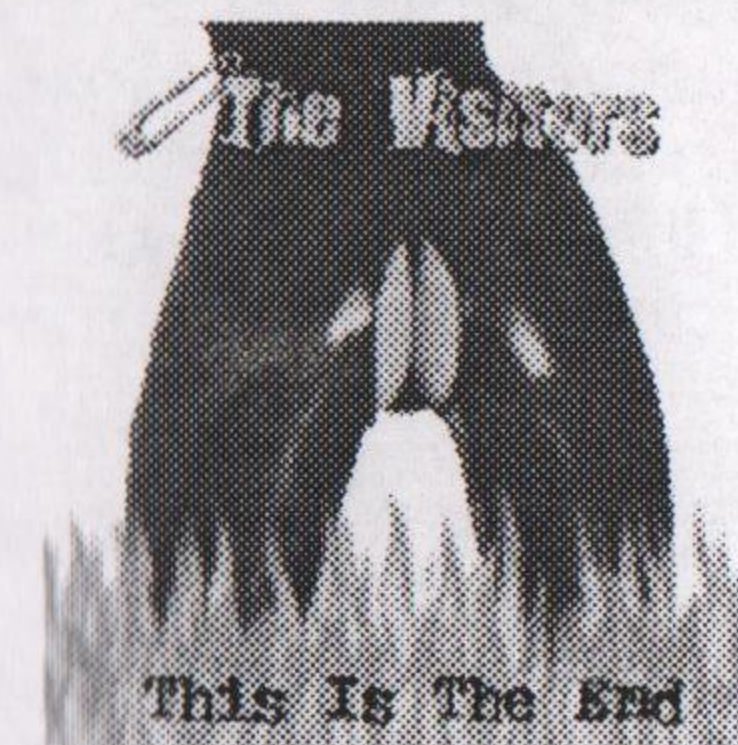
"Purgatory State" I Feel/My Lust for You

[Quiet Version]

What a way to start the new year when first out of the mail bag I get this clever Punk offering. Track one is 2.50 minutes of hard core punk at the grunge/speed metal end. Vocals are close to Pail's Seb Koehurst's www.lmc-web.net but the riffs are from the late seventies three chord catalogue. Track 2 vocals are an exact copy of Pauline Murray's circa "Coming Up For Air" with opening rhythm guitar dipped in Magazine's "Shot From Both Sides". 1.20 minutes in and it's a completely different experience like a Cornerstone's middle eight in "Sickly Sweet". Yes, I like it for all this but more importantly as a demo its exactly what I look for -simplicity. Black and white plastic slip with the

minimum of information on it. Two songs in under three minutes each with sufficient variety that they leave me gagging for more. Production is at the poor end, which I expect as a freebee and with no picture or biog on it I have no preconceptions of age or geography. Classic Punk Rock.

John Winstanley



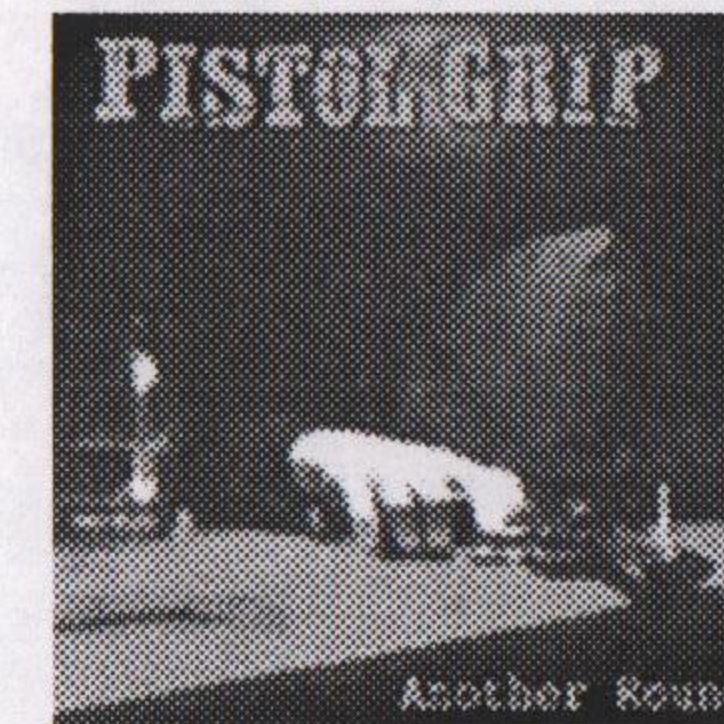
"The Visitors" This Is the End

[Noise Noise Noise]

Here it is then, the final release from The Visitors. The best album The Visitors have released. Great cover too. It contains 16 brand new tracks from the band that went from political hardcore in 1988 to 1977 style pogo punk rock'n'roll in 2003, their music has become more refined over the years. You will also find reggae with Fatty Dread guesting, and even some Adam & The Ants or even Siouxsie & The Banshees style post punk pop. With songs like 'No Rest For The Lazy' & 'Bored Again Punk Rockers' this is the album Visitors fans have been waiting for. Benjie even returns to his UK Subs drumming roots taking over on drums on their cover of the Subs 'In The Wild'. The Visitors have decided to call it a day with this release. It has been five years of chaos. Chris Piss has started a project called Matsuko, Wade Creepy is starting a gothic rock band, John Beach has

joined The Kickz and Benjie Bollox is heading back to London to continue his musical career. For more info on the band's 5 year history go to www.21stcenturypunk.com

Roy H.



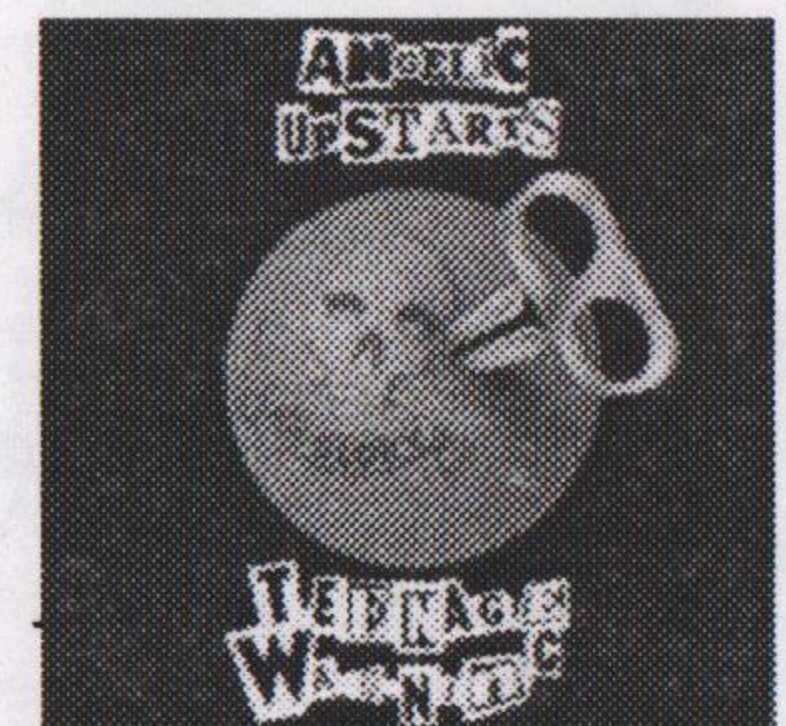
"Pistol Grip" Another Round

[BYO Records]

Born in 1997, Pistol Grip arose from the depths of the Los Angeles underground scene, as an answer to all the Ska and Pop bands that were saturating the underground and calling themselves "punk". Influenced by the likes of The Clash, Stiff Little Fingers, Sham 69, Bad Religion and The Ramones, Pistol Grip are a mixture of the U.K. and L.A. styles of punk fused with anti-religious and quasi-political lyrics. Nothing preachy or politically correct, just raw, in your face street poetry. www.pistolgrip.net They are steadily building a strong following while showing the masses of our deluded pop-culture that the roots of "Punk Rock" started before they were probably even born. 'Another Round' is the bands second full length album and pretty impressive it is too. It sounds really fresh and its good to hear the influence has come from the right places ie in the main UK punk. If you like catchy sing along punk rock anthems then '1997', 'A Murder Of Crows', 'Empty Shells' and 'The Unwanted

Children' will do for you. My favourite track is 'Broken Radio' how good would it be to hear this song blasting out on daytime radio instead of all that fuckin hairdresser music. Pistol Grip are a breathe of fresh air in a scene full of posers and wannabes.

Roy H.



"Angelic Upstarts" Teenage Warning

[Captain Oi!]

Decided to revisit the Upstarts debut and what a classic album this. It gets the full Captain Oi! treatment via sleeve notes and lyrics and they've also bunged on two extra tracks for good measure, that be the 45 version of 'Little Towers' and its flipside 'Police Oppression'. Has to be one of my all time great punk albums. 'I'm An Upstart' still makes the hairs on my neck stand up and if the Mensi roar doesn't get you then Raymond Cowies razor guitaring will. Nothings changed, only the students have now taken over! Congratulations go to Captain Oi! for re-issuing this one.

Roy H.

Fanzines

"Anarchol #7" Teenage Warning

No price on this so not sure of cost but it's available from James Gemmell, 3 Hazel Grove, Kilwinning, Ayrshire, KA13 7JH, Scotland. There are 28 A4 glossy black and

white pages, inside quality interviews with Arturo from The Lurkers, Brum's Drongos For Europe, The Disrupters and Abusive Youth plus bags of reviews. Easy to read big letters and too much of that small type which often requires the eyesight of a shit house rat to read it. Also bunged in is a review of this rag which was nice of them. Cheers James.

Roy H.

"Barble's Dead #12"

A real DIY zine this sporting a cover pic of The Clash from 1976 100 Club Punk Festival. Jeez 28 years ago where's time gone! Half typewritten half hand written A4 black and white packed with shouts for fellow Fanzines, CD and Gig reviews and an interview with Active Slaughter. James Gemmell from Anarchoi zine has his say too and the whole thing will cost you 50p. Can't say fairer than that. Get it from Alex, The Woodhouse, Gunnislake, Cornwall, PL18 9BW.

Roy H.



"Runnin' Feart #10"

Layout is great and it's all readable with my crap eyesight. Top black and white glossy cover too. Inside you get interviews a plenty with Beki Bondage (class photo on the front cover), Conflict, Amphetamines, two North West bands 3CR and Manchester ska punks Sonic Boom Six, Poundaflesh, My Own Religion, Dirtbox, Junkman's Choir and Dead In

A Ditch. On the subject of Vice Squad ex-band member Shane Baldwin gives an in-depth run down on the band in the centre pages. Loads of zine and record reviews too. Scotland's Premier Punk zine? Premier anywhere in my book! Get it from Callum Masson, 12 Crusader Crescent, Stewarton, Ayrshire, Scotland, KA3 3BL.

Roy H.

"Do The Dog #32"

The Bible of the Global Ska Scene! Sixteen pages of Ska packed with information on bands old and new. It's the first time I've seen this but essential reading for Ska fans everywhere. Plenty of news snippets although I was saddened to read about one of Ska's original Godfathers Laurel Aitken who has recently become seriously ill. I saw him play 20 years ago and he wasn't a young man then. Hope he pulls through. There's a UK gig guide and 'Do The Dog' comes out quarterly. You can subscribe for four issues by contacting Kevin Flowerdew, 26a Craven Road, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 5NE.

Roy H.

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Roy H.

"Punk N Disorderly"

[Captain Oi!]

Nine track sampler here from Captain Oi!. www.captainoi.com It's well up to the standard of their past freebies and is probably the best one they've chucked out. Love the Deadline track 'Last Night' taken from 'Back For More' and the Goldblade track 'Strictly Hardcore' which will be on the Blades next studio album for release on Captain Oi! sometime in 2004. One to look out for! All the other tracks are taken from recent Captain Oi! releases by Cockney Rejects 'Out Of The Gutter', Angelic Upstarts 'Tally Ho Ginger', Argy Bargy 'What About Me', Guitar Gangsters 'Tarantino's Son', The Lurkers 'Ready And Loaded', UK Subs 'Devolution' and Cock Sparrer's 'Whats It Like To Be Old'.

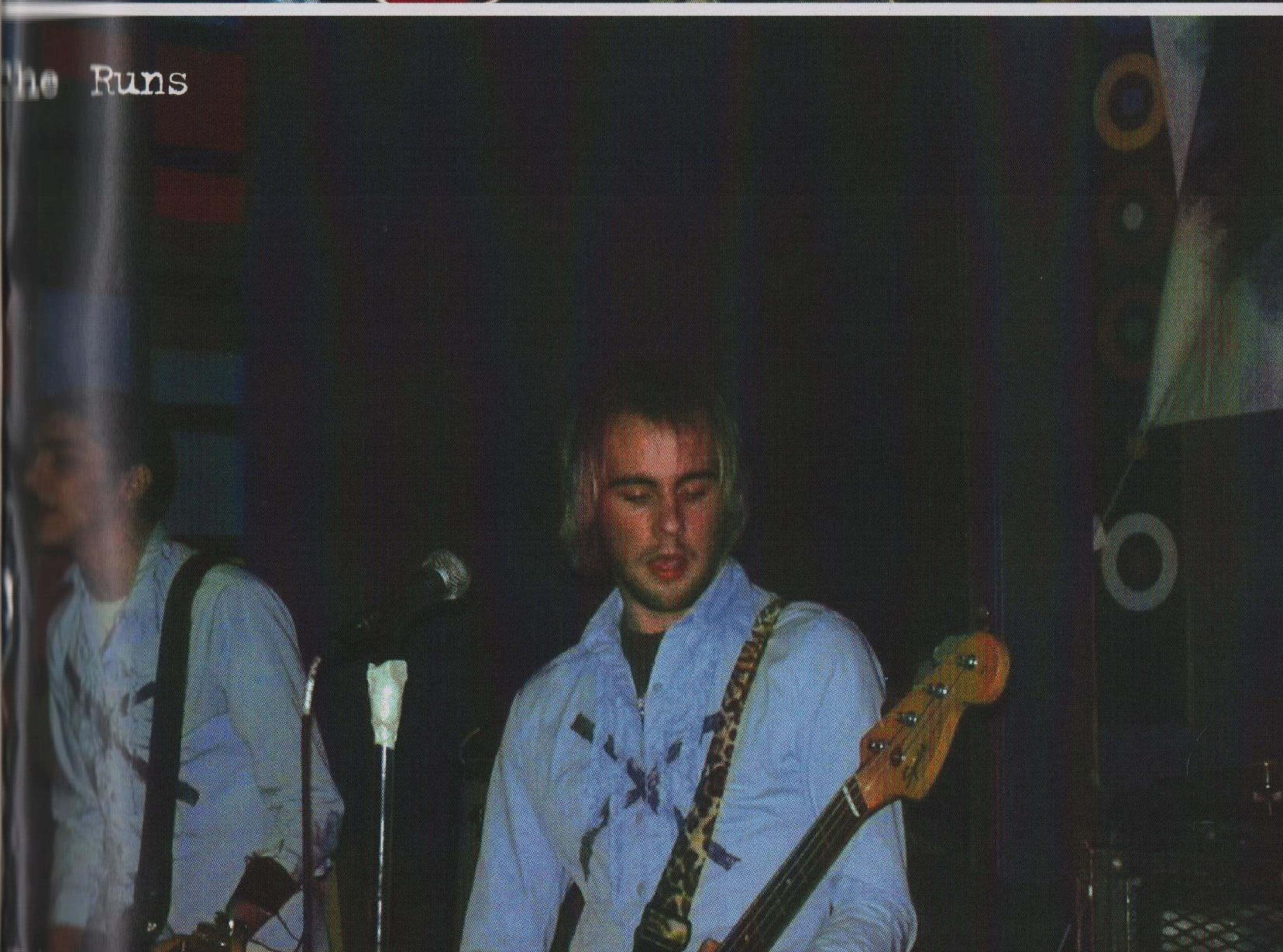
Roy H.

"Defective Objective #2"

Not seen this before, its out of Darwen near Blackburn and it costs only 30p. A true DIY zine in a hand written style! Eight pages of what's happening around the Blackburn area although the aim is for the zine to get fatter- "Your scene your zine"- fair comment. There's reviews on the 'Noize Anoize Punk Night' which featured Turgid, Slutch, Lurkers and another gig review with Reserved, Dedmole Cricket, Hope and Faded Soul. There's a form to fill in on the back of zine for what you'd like to see in it. To get hold of a copy write to Defective Objective, 54 Earnsdale Road, Darwen, Lancs, BB3 1HS or email defectiveobjective@lycos.co.uk



The Hyperjax



The Runs