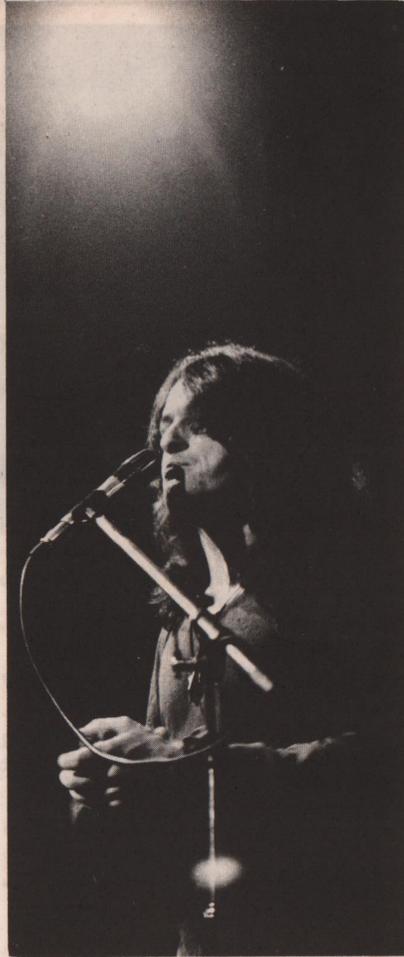


YES continued

year ago I would have said no, but now I say yes. There is an incredible difference, because musically it is very much harder. I must be honest, because looking back at Straws I had a fantastic time with them. Terrific band, great fun. We used to go on stage and I used to do the solos. With having a classical training, you're used to playing your own instrument and that being predominant. You may be doing a concerto and always the piano is dominant. It was the same with Straws, if ever there was a solo to be taken it would be organ or the mellotron or the piano. If there was a line to be played it would be organ, mello, or piano, never anything else, and I was very happy. At the time I was almost the focal point. Then I joined 'Yes' and suddenly I wasn't the focal point, the whole band was the focal point. I had to play parts, which I found very hard for a long time. It's a totally different thing, you're suddenly part of a band where you have a specific part to play the same as

Jon Anderson



everybody else, and everybody goes absolutely twenty per cent. I found this very hard at first but now I've settled in. It's taken me a year but now I'm absolutely happy and confident that everything will grow.

Q. Why does the album cost so much? (£2.59)

Manager. It's with the escalating costs of recording major talent, and the sleeves are so expensive. It's a six colour job.

R.W. But why does the average album cost £2.29 and ours £2.59?

Manager. This isn't an average album. **DAVE BRETT**

NEXT ISSUE: ROXY MUSIC

FOLK continued

comic pony, Tommy, who circles the audience looking for culprits and victims.

If you fancy attending any folk events in the vicinity, the most notable event is the annual Horn Dance at Abbots Bromley, near Burton-on-Trent, held in early September - try it: if it's lasted three thousand years it must have something. **AL ATKINSON**

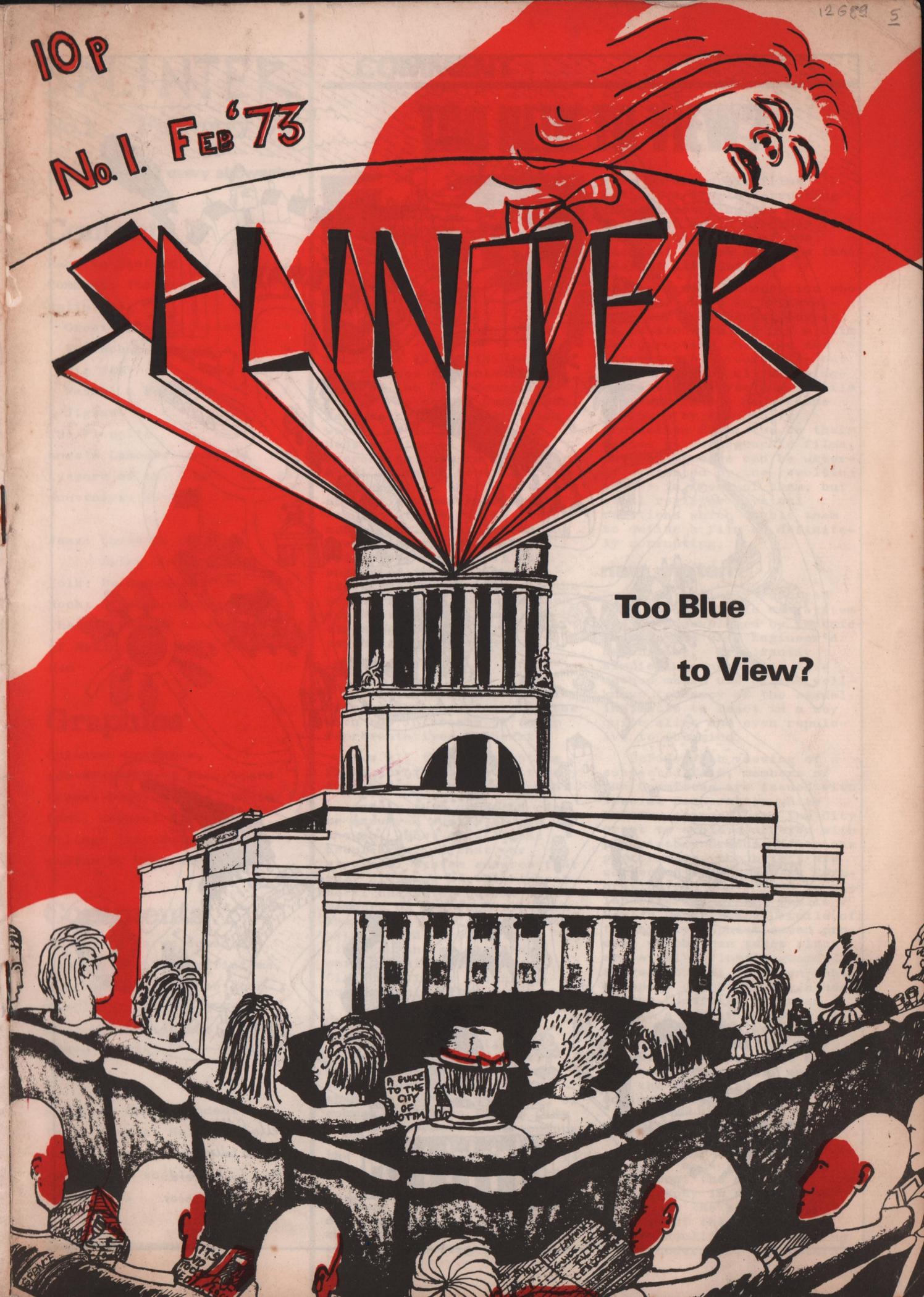
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No. 1. FEB '73

WINTER

Too Blue to View?

THE INCREDIBLE ADVENTURES OF **ROBIN HOOD** AND HIS MERRIE MEN IN SHIPPO'S AFFAIR * No. 1





Hello folks!
Here's a jolly game -
A Race to Basford.
See you at Shippoe's.

SPLINTER

No.1 February '73

Approximately every six weeks

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complaints should be
addressed.

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COMMENT

TOO BLUE TO VIEW?



over pornographic films without a single corrupting thought entering his mind. You and I would probably rush out in the middle of the National Anthem and rape the nearest Girl Guide.

There will be sceptics who find this hard to believe - some may even wonder how it is possible to know if a film is corrupting when you are incorruptible yourself - but we can silence all doubting-Thomases by revealing details of a remarkable new scheme employed by the Public Protection Committee on their visits to pornographic films, whereby members can be utterly disgusted by the revolting scenes in front of them, but still register physical reactions which enable them to define a film as definitely corrupting.

new system

It is reliably reported that an infallible new system has been developed by technicians in the City Engineer's Department. Brilliantly simple in conception, this method makes use of the well-known tendency of the sexual instincts to react in a way quite alien and even repulsive to the mind.

dirty old men?

One question in particular seems to be worrying citizens with the interests of their representatives at heart.

Are all those corrupting films turning the Committee into a lot of dirty old men?

Surely this question can be answered easily enough, though. Most intelligent people realise that our electoral system ensures that only citizens of the highest moral character become members of the Council. Thus there is a simple difference between ordinary citizens like you and me watching pornographic films, and a City Councillor watching pornographic films. You and I will be corrupted, the City Councillor will not.

Cynics may scoff, and it must be admitted that, at first sight, most City Councillors seem no better than the rest of us. But, of course, election to the City Council produces a miraculous transformation in character, the chief feature of which is total immunity to the effects of pornography.

Thus a City Councillor may don his dirty old raincoat and sit in the darkness of a cinema slobbering lecherously

Before each viewing of a suspected film, members of the Committee are issued with special Corporation white briefs, stamped with the City crest to avoid confusion with proprietary brands. After the performance, the briefs are collected by an express Corporation van and rushed to the laboratories of the Public Health Department. Details of the highly sophisticated process which then takes place are still a closely guarded secret, but it is known that a report can be in the hands of the Committee Chairman within a matter of hours. In cases of a negative response (known technically as "dry knicks"), a result can be achieved within half an hour and the suspected film cleared immediately.

clean underwear

On the evidence of the analysis a decision can be made about the degree of pornography in a suspected film. At the same time, members of the Committee, minds unsullied, and wearing clean underwear, can return

GREAT CINEMA SCENES: SAMSON



COMMENT continued

safely to their families, secure in the knowledge that they are unlikely to rape unsuspecting schoolgirls, accost innocent little boy scouts, or expose themselves on the way.

THE ROBIN HOOD FILE
extracts from the press

STATUE MYSTERY

CITY POLICE ARE COMPLETELY baffled by the disappearance of the seven-foot bronze statue of Robin Hood from its flower-bed outside Nottingham Castle.

"I suppose it had to happen," commented a spokesman. "They've already had his string and arrow. They probably wanted to complete the set."

Investigations have been hampered by confusion over when the statue actually disappeared.

"Nobody bothers with him much at this time of year," admitted a Corporation official. "Quite frankly, he could have gone at any time during the last three months."

No specific line of investigation was being pursued at present: "Just a few routine inquiries - junk shops, scrap-metal merchants, vendors of garden ornaments, Sneinton Market, Rugby clubs, that sort of thing."

A full description has been circulated to antique-dealers and second-hand shops, and Customs officials have been alerted in case the thief tries to smuggle the statue

out of the country.

A house-to-house inquiry has revealed nothing, but police are convinced the statue has not yet left the Nottingham area.

ATTACKED BY DWARVES NEAR CITY CENTRE

AFTER DRINKING TEN PINTS of Guinness and three double scotches, 53-year-old Irish labourer Shamus O'Really was found lying in the gutter on Castle Road waving his fists in the air and shouting obscenities about the little people, Nottingham Guildhall Magistrates heard today.

Mr W. 'Fingers' Sikes, prosecuting, said that when approached by police officers, O'Really (61), of no fixed address, Radford, violently assaulted the knees of a police constable and shouted that no pint-sized b-- of a pixie was going to stick one on him.

Defending, Father Moses O'Shea, S.J., said that O'Really did not normally drink, and finding the climb up Castle Road a little steep for him, had decided to rest for a moment in the gutter.

"At this point," said Father O'Shea, "he is convinced that he was set upon by five dwarves who emerged from the bushes by the Castle wall and took advantage of his recumbent posture and temporary indisposition to relieve him of his wallet, containing £4 and a National Insurance Card, and of six bottles of India Pale Ale which he had concealed about his person.

"He claims that one of his assailants, a corpulent personage, who appeared from his dress and shaven head to be a member of a religious order, delivered a sharp blow to his left ear, and ordered him to hold his tongue, expressing the opinion that a good Catholic like himself should not be taking the Lord's Name in vain and blaspheming against the Holy Mother of God.

"The band of diminutive thugs then left the scene, and shortly afterwards two police officers arrived to find my client lying in the gutter still attempting to defend himself from his attackers.

"Like all Irishmen," said Father O'Shea, "my client considers he has a right to

defend himself when attacked, and apologises for his error, quite natural in the darkness, in thinking that the police constable's knees were two of his assailants who had returned to continue their assault."

Chairman of the Magistrates Mrs Edna Greenfinch said she found it difficult to believe that a gang of marauding midgets was loose in the City Centre, and told O'Really that being Irish and drunk on ten pints of Guinness was no excuse for confusing a police constable's knees with a pair of leprechauns.

O'Really was fined £5 with £5 costs.

MERRIE MEN MISSING

FOLLOWING THE THEFT OF FIVE small statues of Robin Hood's Merrie Men from outside Nottingham Castle, police fear the City may be on the verge of a crime wave. They are working on the theory that there may be a connection with the disappearance of Robin Hood from the same spot last week.

"Obviously someone is collecting these things," said a police spokesman. "We shall be keeping a sharp eye on people's front gardens from now on."

Asked which of the Merrie Men were involved, the spokesman said there seemed to be some confusion over this, but the outlaws had been positioned among clumps of bushes in two groups of

reclining figures, one group of three believed to include Friar Tuck, and a second group of two believed to include Little John.

Identi-kit pictures will be issued of the missing outlaws, most of whom are about four feet in height, though Little John is thought to be somewhat taller, and Friar Tuck is known to be short and fat.

Also missing is a plaque from the Castle wall representing the marriage by Richard Coeur de Lion of Robin Hood to Maid Marian.

VICARS ARE VICTIMS

POLICE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT the increasing frequency of attacks on fat clergymen in the Nottingham area.

"A pattern is beginning to emerge," said a police spokesman. "All the victims are over fifty inches round the waist and were carrying the proceeds of Church Bazaars. Most of the attacks have occurred late at night soon after the victim had left the sort of place customarily frequented by clergymen in the evenings, such as Women's Institutes, Girl Guide Huts, Public Houses and Night Clubs."

The assailants are commonly described as being teenage youths of small stature, between three and five in number, and concealing their features behind anorak-type hoods pulled over their faces. The usual method of attack consists of pushing the victim over a member of the gang

crouched behind him, although the Reverend Nelson Armlock, a former professional wrestler, claims that, after spirited resistance, he was pinned from behind by a person of considerable strength and size, at least seven feet tall in his estimation.

The motive is presumed to be robbery, though the largest sum stolen so far has been 94 pence.

To be continued...



BIG JIM

by Red Sayles

GRITTING HIS TEETH, big Jim pushed open the swing doors of Yates's Wine Lodge. Peering through the smoke, he placed a well-aimed greenie in the brass spittoon and sauntered up to the bar.

"Small white, please."

Gripping the glass in his mighty hand, he threw the three fingers of gut-rot down his leathery gullet, and turned to face the crowd.

"Hullo, James!"

He turned sharply and, dropping his empty glass, ripped his .34 special from its holster, and splattered the stomach of the speaker all over the nearby wall.

"Evening, Jack!" he said.

"Long time no see, James! I hear you've been working at Pork Farms?"

Big Jim ran his tongue over his teeth and his mind ran loosely over the past few years.

Derby Playhouse
Outburst
march 1 & 2
10.30 to 11.40
Late bar
Jazz and Rhythm

EAT AT ANNES
MEIN CHOW
Illustration of a man in a cap eating a bowl of food.

BIG JIM continued

"I was..."

"Oh! Jacked it in then 'ave yer?"

Jim smiled as he thought of the posse that was probably searching for him at that very moment!

"Sort of."

Big Jake ordered more drinks and Jim sipped steadily. The conversation rattled on, and Jim eyed the big clock on the wall. "I've got to do it," he thought. "Tonight's the night!"...



"...It's getting crowded in here," drawled Jake. Big Jim said nothing. That last barley wine had turned his guts to water. The room had receded down a long tunnel and he felt decidedly weak.

"This is it. Do or die," he thought, and heaved himself onto his quivering legs. Jake caught him by the arm.

"It's your round James," he croaked. Big Jim seized him roughly by the throat and rammed his iron fist into his intestines, heaved upwards and brought his fist up inside the rib-cage. Nothing would stop him now.

"It's O.K. Jack, I've just got to see someone," he mumbled, and launched himself into the sea of bodies. His heart was pounding like a steam-hammer and sweat ran down the inside of his legs.

For years he had wanted to do this, but he had never been able to summon the iron nerve required. He pushed through the afghan-coated cowboys and slipped through a gang of fairies wearing drag. Another few feet. He pressed on. In the distance he could hear a glass break and a girl laugh hysterically, and then he was THERE. His eyes fixed in a steely gaze. He clenched his knuckles and pressed his face up to the man in the black suit and said in a hoarse voice:

"Do you think you could play the 'Blue Danube'?"

WARHOL & PEACE

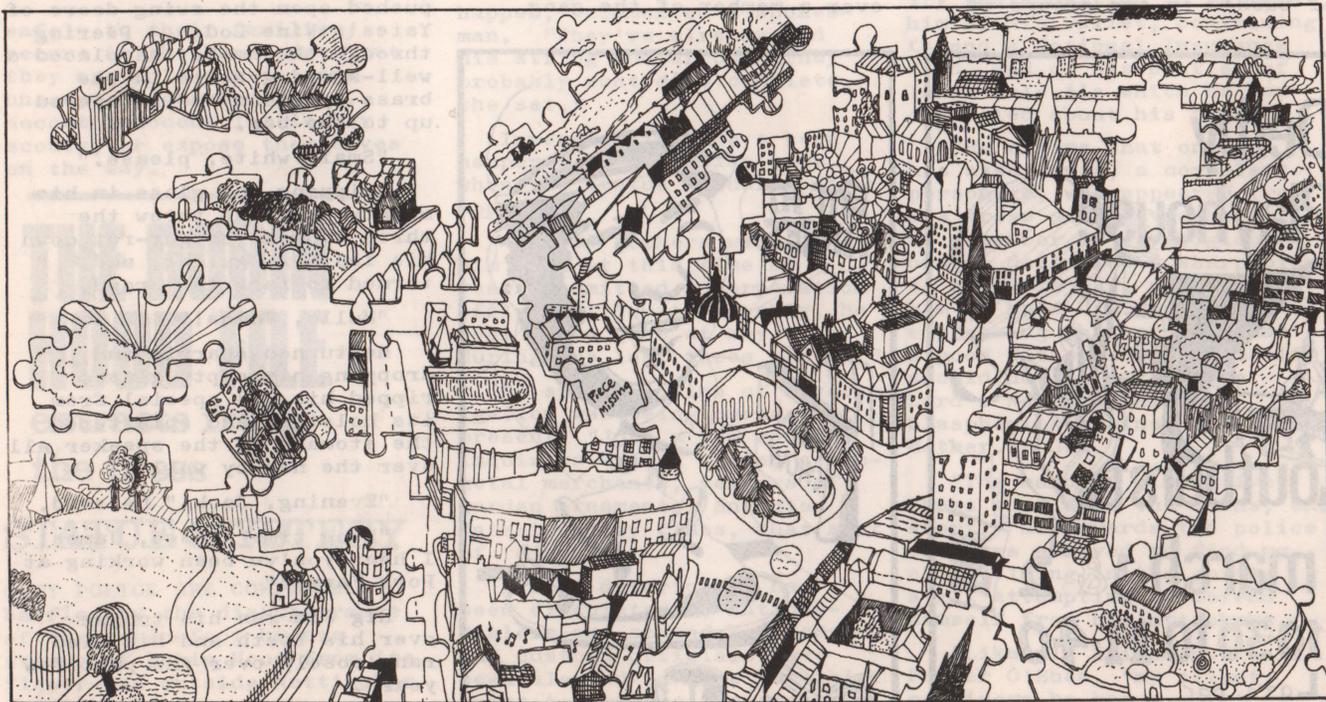
I CANNOT UNDERSTAND why so many people kicked up a 'rucus' about the Warhol ban. If the film is shown, I guarantee that next day all over the country people will be expressing their disgust, not at the obscenity but at the fact that they couldn't understand it.

No-one complains when a scientist produces a theory that they cannot understand, but if an artist produces a painting that is seemingly as unintelligible then the howls of complaint can be heard from here to the Sistine Chapel. Why does the public think it has a prerogative to criticise art? I have spent years studying art, but I am subjected to the slings and arrows of any idiot who wishes to confront me with the big question in the bar of the local:

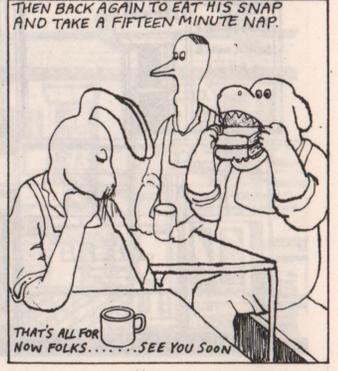
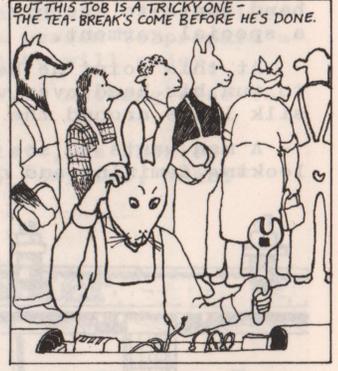
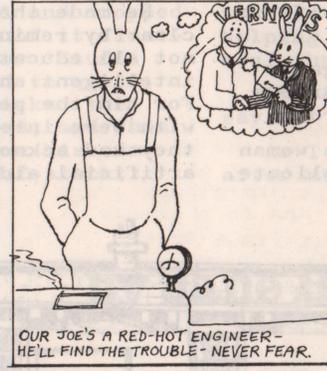
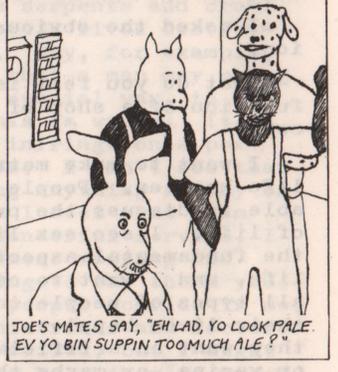
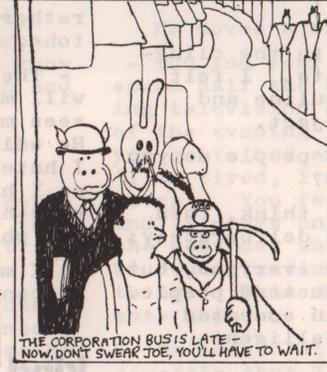
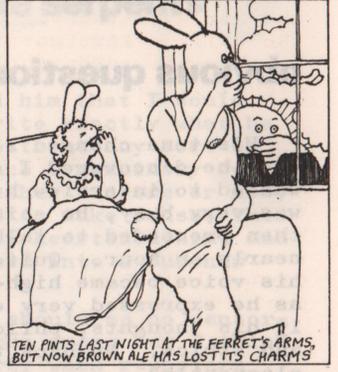
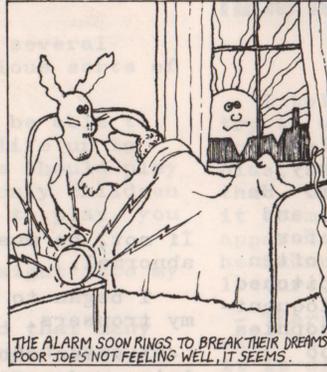
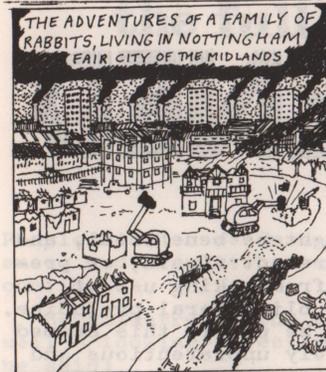
"Yer don't like this modern stuff do yer?" It is adamantly put forward by people who wouldn't know the difference between Toulouse Lautrec and Tretchikoff in a most blatant and aggressive manner. It's usually only the fact that they are a friend of a friend that prevents me from putting a fluke's gob on them. If they just took the trouble to look into what they "can't understand" then maybe they would at least have a basis on which to found their argument.

So next time you want to shoot your mouth off about Picasso look out - there's a mad artist about!

LOUIS



THE FLOPPITS



IT WAS SOFT AND WARM, and intimate inside. The lights were a caressing ultra-violet. I found myself amid silk night-gowns, vibrators, black lace G-strings, and intimate feminine sprays (strawberry flavour). A small West Indian, teeth and bright eyes flashing, advanced towards me and placed his arm gently round my shoulders. In a voice matching the surroundings, he crooned softly, "Dear, what can I do for you?"

LOVE'S LABOURS LESSENERED

obvious question

His tone changed slightly when he discovered I only wanted to interview him. He was very busy, he said, and then proceeded to talk for nearly an hour. Quite often his voice became high-pitched as he expressed very eloquently his thoughts, philosophies and ethics. Perhaps too eloquently?

I asked the obvious question.

- What do you feel is the function of a shop of this sort?

- I want to make matrimonial life happier. People must be able to discuss the problems of life. I see sex life as the fundamental aspect of all life, and I want to cater for all types of people to make their lives happier. Maybe they want an artificial penis or vagina, or maybe the husband wants to see his wife in a special garment.

At this point he began to run his hand over various silk items around the room.

- A man wants to see a woman looking feminine and delicate.

If not, he must be sexually abnormal.

I began to feel ashamed of my trousers.

- A woman should have feminine underwear, and dress to look feminine.

He gestured to the clinging silk garments. I felt positively masculine and changed the subject.

- What type of people do you get in the shop?

He paused to think, then said slowly and deliberately:

- We cater for everyone, but particularly educated people. No, I don't mean educated people, but intelligent people.

He made the distinction clear by reminding me that not all educated people were intelligent and vice versa. For him the people he dealt with were intelligent because they had acknowledged that artificial aids to their sex

life might be beneficial, and they were not afraid, or prevented from making use of them by blind moral prejudice. The way he put it this seemed completely unpretentious and convincing, and adopting a rather informed and serious tone, he went on:

- The main fear is 'What will my neighbour think if he sees me coming to this shop? He will think I am "kinky". I hate the word 'kinky', just as I hate the words 'coloured person'. 'Black person' is the phrase for me.

I made a mental note, and he continued:

kind of doctor

- The problem is to get the confidence of people and keep it. I want people to come in freely as they come to a doctor. I like to think of myself as a kind of doctor.

"we stock everything except the full size dummy"

People come to me in confidence, and I don't betray that confidence.

He illustrated the point well - looking directly at me, he said:

- You are Pauline, right, and you live across the road with Jane. Jane doesn't know it, but you are a lesbian and come in for a dildo.

He pushed me towards the large pink rubber penis.

- If Jane comes in and says, 'Have you seen Pauline?' then I say, 'No. No, I haven't seen Pauline.' You see?

He grinned, and the scene was over. A girl came into the shop, and I relaxed as he busied himself selling her some black lace briefs (open crutch). I picked up a leaflet for 'STUD - a Spray to Prolong the Erection'. Thinking I might be able to quote from it, I hid it in my notebook. The customer satisfied, he returned to me.

- Do you have any trouble with the police? - I asked with renewed confidence.

- No. I admire the law, I respect the law.

- Well, aren't there any problems with pornography?

- What is pornography? Pornography is filth, and I have never seen filth, unless maybe people with animals. But it is not filth if people want to buy those.

He pointed at several sheaths with various sorts of tip.

- People should be able to build their sex life up to enjoy it. People should play about. It isn't only children who are entitled to play, you know.

He looked straight into my eyes.

- I am convinced that many accidents are caused through sexual frustration.

He moved a step closer.

- You and your boyfriend spend half the evening watching television and a quarter of the evening talking, then you go to bed and he says, 'I am tired, I want to go to sleep'. You feel frustrated and it preys on your mind all the next day when you should be concentrating on other things. That is when accidents happen.

He looked at me so directly that I lost my journalist's cool and dropped my notebook. Out of it floated the leaflet for 'Stud' which I had hoped to quote. I blushed. He picked the leaflet up, smiled, and then offered to show me his complete catalogue of stock.

- We stock everything except the full size dummy, complete with hairy crutch, and if this is particularly wanted we will order it.

I thought it was about time to leave. He smiled benevolently.

- Now what are you going to use this information for?

hide like serpents

I told him that I would try to write exactly what he told me without any sort of bias, since I genuinely felt that, whether sincere or not, it seemed to make sense. This apparently heartened him, and he launched into a further lecture.

- There should be no censorship on the press but I think it is dirty when reporters hide like serpents and crawl into people's lives destroying them. Say, for example, you know that a man may enjoy sex in a special way, to expose this is wrong. It is wrong to infringe on a person's life. I can't see that I am doing anything filthy or obscene. I feel that I am doing a wonderful service. I get customers writing and telephoning to say thank you. You see, people confide in me. The psychiatrists and doctors may have failed, but I might be able to help them to enjoy what is natural. It is like helping a person to prepare a meal that he will enjoy.

There was nothing else to say.

As I left, he shouted after me, "Anytime, dear!"

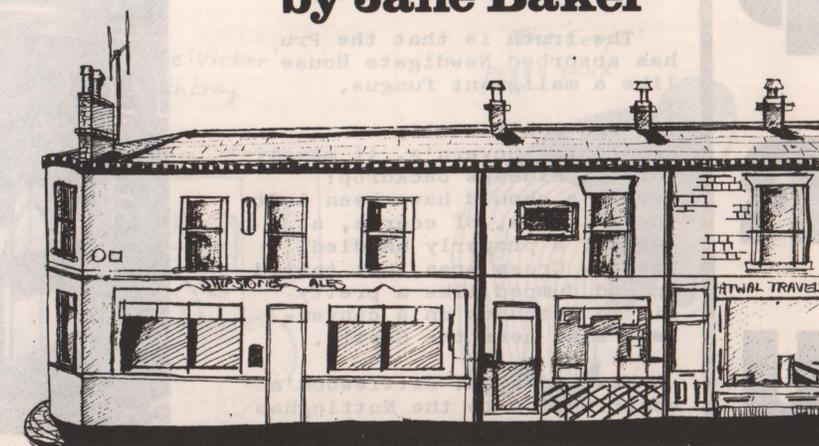


first of three looks

at Nottingham's

King's Road

by Jane Baker



The first of these coveted awards goes to the Prudential Assurance Building, seen here hovering benevolently over Newdigate House (top) and Severn's (below). One of a number of picturesque slabs adjoining Maid Marian Way, the Prudential Building wins an award for the following reasons:

A. It's ugly. It looks worse because of what it does to other buildings, but stick it in the middle of the Sahara and you'd still prefer the sand.

B. It's too big. Like most tower blocks, it tells human beings they're insignificant (so do cathedrals, but in the eyes of eternity, not commerce). Like other commercial heaps in Nottingham it thinks it's more important than the Castle and the Council House for a start (when you think what's happening to Nottingham, it probably is), and like other commercial heaps it's replacing with huge, shapeless lumps the distinctive and interesting flow of the old low-level skyline.

C. It's in the wrong place (though anywhere would be the wrong place). As it happens, Newdigate House was there first, Severn's wasn't (it was elbowed out of Middle Pavement by the creeping Broad Marsh Centre). Both of them make the Pru look tasteless.

Incredibly, what happened to Newdigate House has been offered as an example of how lovingly Nottingham preserves its old buildings - but the colour photo in the official Tourist Guide gives the game away: the elegant brick wall on the right of the house is neatly trimmed out of the picture, blue sky gleams over the gables, and in a garden on the left grows a tree, (recently overshadowed by yet another faceless nonentity).

The truth is that the Pru has absorbed Newdigate House like a malignant fungus.

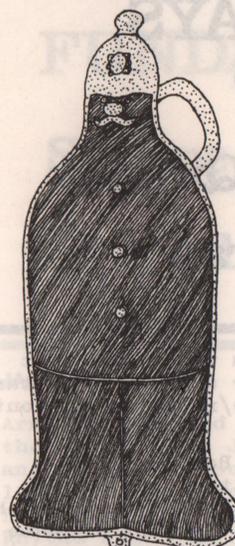
The Pru can't really be blamed for Severn's, it merely forms a hideous backdrop: Severn's should have been left where it was, of course, as part of a properly handled Weekday Cross area, not tartered up and dumped like a pretty little matchbox on a convenient site near the Castle.

Next edition: Littlewood's contribution to the Nottingham townscape.



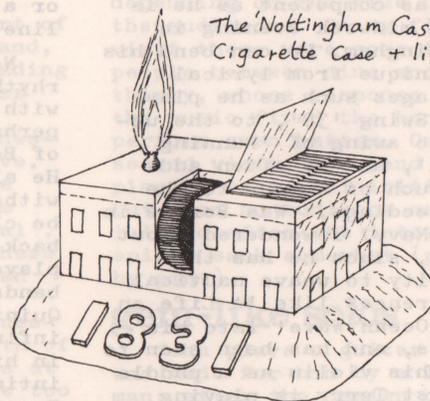
why stop at Robin Hood?

Forest/County weather house

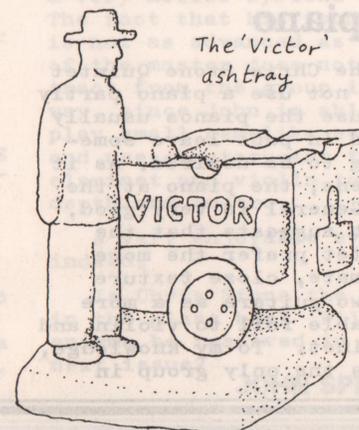


The 'Big Geoffrey' hot water bottle

'Blood and Fire' Calendar



The 'Nottingham Castle' Cigarette Case + lighter



The 'Victor' ashtray

ROBIN HOOD mementoes may soon be used to persuade people on the continent to come to Nottingham for their holidays.

Mr. John Hartland, the city's publicity and information officer, is considering this as the latest way to build up our tourist trade.

The suggestion for the mementoes came from Mr. A. Banks, of Annesley Woodhouse, after he read my story on January 4 which said Robin Hood was still Nottingham's main claim to fame.

Mr. Banks, who has travelled extensively all over Europe, wrote to Mr. Hartland supporting this point.

"We can vouch that Nottingham is synonymous with Robin Hood," he said.

"We could fill a book with accounts of meeting foreigners with whom we established contact simply by saying we were from the Robin Hood country."

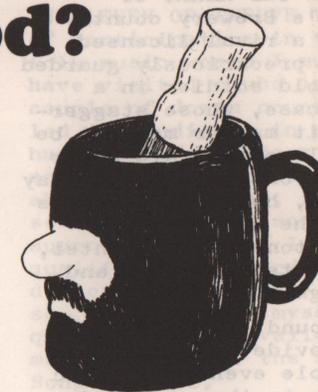
Mr. Banks thought travellers from Nottingham should distribute Robin Hood souvenirs abroad, inviting people to visit the city in the future.

Mr. Hartland has written back saying such a scheme would be invaluable, and he is considering putting it into action.

"It is rather difficult to make our local citizens aware just how widespread the fame of Robin Hood really is," he says.

"It is true to say no city has a more natural peg upon which to hang its publicity coat."

In the summer a series of budget-priced cassette tapes will be published, with the legends of Robin Hood recorded by Michael Aspel.



The 'D.H.' Shaving Mug

The 'Council House' Cruet



The 'Byron' writing set



The 'Corpo' piggy bank



DEEP IN THE HEART of Shippo's Brewery country stands a rival licensed house, precariously guarded by an old soldier in a glass case, whose staggering gait may or may not be a result of the ale under his patronage. On a Tuesday evening, however, he falls under the spell of the Chris Stone Swing Quintet, and sports Gauloises and champagne.

I found that the Quintet provide an extremely enjoyable evening's music well up to the standard available in London. The resemblance to the Django Reinhardt group of the 30's and 40's is more than a passing one: the line-up is John Smith (lead guitar), Bernie Cooper (violin), Terry Shaw (clarinet), Norman Barnacle (rhythm guitar), Tom Draper (string bass).

intimate sound

The Quintet has omitted a drummer, which makes for an intimate sound, utilising the possibilities of rhythmic and melodic counterpoint between clarinet and violin, whilst John Smith is able to complement Norman's rhythm guitar with double figures and melodic breaks on his solo instrument.

On my first visit to the Tuesday session, the audience was a bit thin at first, but filled up after half time, and from the rapport that existed between them and the group, who played such numbers as 'Running Wild', 'Honeysuckle Rose', 'Daphne', 'Lady Be Good', 'Sweet Georgia Brown', and 'Minor Swing', they had an enjoyable evening.

The approach is basically casual, although each musician has a particular place allocated on stage. At the rear is Tom Draper, who bought his splendid string bass back in 1938, and whose thirty years of varied small group playing allows him to lay down a firm and accurate pulse to make the band flow smoothly.

Bernie tells me that some ten years ago he answered an advert in the 'Post' which was placed by John Smith more or less as a joke, and has been with the group ever since. It is



**...AND ON FRIDAYS
IT'S STRIP**

**Chris Stone's Swing Quintet
at the Old General**

an unusual and pleasant surprise to find a violinist as competent as he is on a midweek evening in Nottingham. He can bend his technique from lyrical passages such as he plays in 'Swing '39', to the up-tempo swing of 'Running Wild', and he often adds a touch of humour to the proceedings. Was Bernie in the Navy? I wondered about this, since he has the ability to weave nautical references like 'A Life on the Ocean Wave' into his solos, and has been seen to use his violin as a paddle whilst Terry is playing solo.

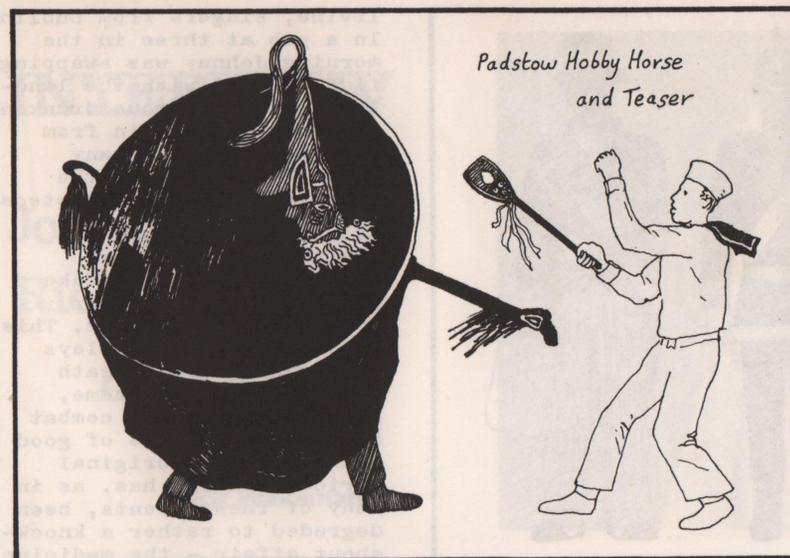
no piano

The Chris Stone Quintet does not use a piano partly because the pianos usually found in pubs leave something to be desired. As it happens, the piano at the Old General is very good, which suggests that the Quintet prefer the more intimate, close texture of two guitars as a more suitable foil to violin and clarinet. To my knowledge, it is the only group in

Nottingham which does not use either amplified guitar or a piano/reed/brass front line.

Norman Barnacle on rhythm guitar is blessed with a splendid name (which perhaps gives rise to some of Bernie's sea fantasies). He also owns a guitar which, without amplification, can be clearly heard from the back of the room. He has played with most local bands, but prefers the Quintet. His range of influences can be heard in his playing, which has intimations of Freddie Green, besides the more obvious Reinhardt influence. Norman flushed with pleasure on telling me that Alexis Korner once told him after a session that he was England's (or was it Nottingham's?) Freddie Green!

Standing opposite Bernie is Terry Shaw, who doubles on clarinet, and doing the introductions and passing round the liquid refreshment that members of the audience buy as a token of appreciation. Terry and Norman can be seen on Friday evenings at the Warren



*Padstow Hobby Horse
and Teaser*

FUNDAMENTAL FOLK

**See one 3,000 year old pagan
survival, you've seen them all**

JAZZ continued

Arms, Stapleford as part of the New Orleans Jazz Band, and Terry is also a leading light in the Mercia Jazz Band at the Nottingham Rhythm Club, which he describes as his first love. For Tuesday evenings he leaves Friday's uniform behind and 'comes casual'. It is a healthy sign these days that a musician can switch from Trad on a Friday to Swing on a Tuesday and have the breadth of feeling and taste to be at home in both. There are too many cramped outlooks in music; jazz is more than the line-up, it is saying something, and I am all for variety of approach. The necessary conditions for good music are a venue, an appreciative audience, and musicians who enjoy playing together and have a reasonable technical competence, catalysed by underground supplies of the (amber) fluid.

Having been bumping into John Smith for some ten years, I know him to have a taste for a glass or three. His best solos usually

occur between one and ten, depending on the size of the audience. On my first visit there were some fifty people between nine and ten thirty, whose response to the music fired the band to perform even better. On the second visit, the band were playing very well initially, but when no audience materialized after the interval, spirit sank somewhat (pint by pint).

gem-like solos

John plays a guitar that was made for him by a local man, after the design of Reinhardt's, and which has a very mellow lyrical tone. The fact that his technique is not as advanced as that of the master does not detract from the group in any way, since John is able to play small gem-like solos, and use counterpoint from clarinet and violin to give depth and lustre.

A very enjoyable evening indeed.

Is Chris Stone the man in the glass box? Will the enigma be resolved in the next issue?

JOHN SPENCE

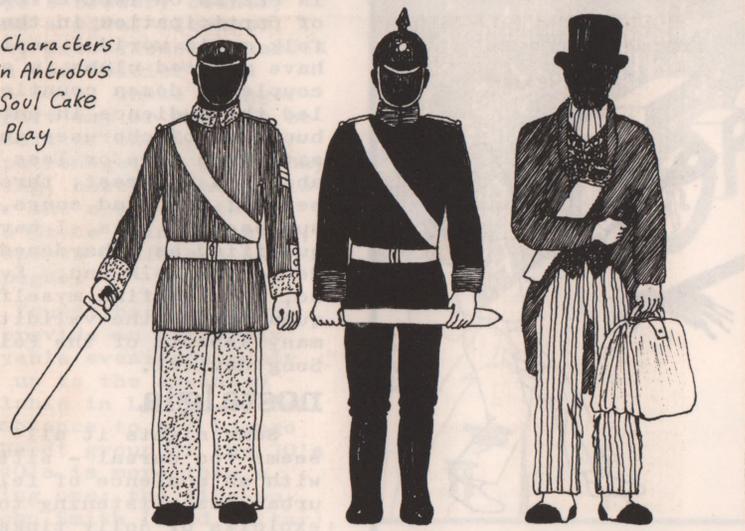
IN ELEVEN OR TWELVE YEARS of participation in the folk music world I must have visited clubs in a couple of dozen counties, led the audience in untold hundreds of choruses and sat, with more or less absorbed interest, through several thousand songs. I suppose, by this, I have qualified as a hardened and dedicated folk fan. Even so, I often find myself questioning the validity of many aspects of the Folk Song Revival.

nostalgia

Some nights it all seems too unreal - sitting with an audience of fellow urbanites, listening to the exploits of jolly tinkers and rambling sailors, buxom servant wenches and rustic beauties from a distant and ill-defined past, the whole affair can seem to be some bucolic branch of the nostalgia industry. And yet there comes, from time to time, a singer, a song, a tune or maybe just a fragment of intense poetry that redeems all. To have heard the magnificent Joe Heaney in full flight singing 'The trees they do grow high' is a supreme example, especially when finding out afterwards that the song's theme of bereavement had especial personal significance to the singer.

Of course the Folk Club situation is an artificial one from the start. The best way to get in tune with the vast reservoir of traditional lore that sustains the Folk Revival is to visit one of the traditional dances, rituals, ceremonies, call it what you will, that still survive around the British Isles. To start the 'Folk Year' in traditional style (that is to 'bring the summer in'), you would have to travel down to Padstow in Cornwall for the Hobby Horse Dance, held every May 1st since God was a lad. The festival unfortunately has become one of the prime social functions of the Folk Calendar - there's something of a pilgrimage in hitching down to Padstow from Manchester or Leeds, but organizing club bus trips seems to be out of keeping with the event. I think the folk clubs of the Home Counties must be deserted during Padstow week - the pubs around the

Characters
in Antrobus
Soul Cake
Play



harbour are full of the accents of Blackheath and Islington and - another unfortunate manifestation of the Folk Revival - the indigenous singers are usually drowned out by mass ceilidh sing-ups perpetrated by visiting singers who should know better. This annual invasion has led to resentment on the part of some of the locals and the Festival has accrued some ugly side events such as Duffing-Up the T.V. Crew, and Tipping the Hot Dog Van in the Harbour.

swirling tune

But nothing can diminish the impact of the Dance itself. To follow the bucking, leaping 'horse' through streets of rainbow garlands and streamers, in a dense jostling crowd with the crash of drums and the swirling 'Day' tune - that brings the whole weary trip to a thrilling and joyful culmination. And hitching back over Bodmin Moor, the whole drama of the day comes back to you - the sinuous, winding tune, that is so perfectly matched by Padstow's twisting alleys, and the rhythmic pounding of the drums all being reiterated in the roaring of the lorry engine.

Puck Fair, held in mid-summer at Killorglin, County Kerry, is a fine example of an old-time trading fair, an event that has all but died out over in England. There are three days to the meeting - 'The Gathering', 'The Day' and 'The Scattering' - and much hard animal trading goes

on the while, in streets, squares and riverside pubs. After a couple of days trading, the whole town is about three inches deep in assorted animal excrement - I remember seeing a drunk measure his length on a pavement, having lost his footing by the pub door. He should have stayed where he was happy - there's no need to stop boozing, as the drinking houses (most of them literally people's private houses, opened up for the duration) keep open almost continuously for three days and nights. It's quite a horrific experience to be pub-crawling from house to house at four in the morning, in a mad town lit by every kind of electric, gas, neon, and oil lamp.

I've never seen anything like Killorglin Market Square on 'The Day'. There are tinkers dancing while their wives beg and their kids hawk mass cards and Kennedy poems around the crowd. There are traditional dancers on the stage and a full-scale fair going on with the Sporting Wheel of Fortune with the four and twenty quarters, presided over by a man wearing a top hat with a live rabbit crouching on top. There are fights brewing, music all around, and grand sights like the farmer with two pigs, all asleep in the snug of a little pub, and the two drunks wheeling the same bicycle and both attempting to mount it at the same time.

I was down there with Johnny Moynihan and Andy

Irvine, singers from Dublin. In a pub at three in the morning Johnny was swapping fiddle tunes with the landlord while enormous drunken Kerry men lurched in from the night like so many Victor McLaglens on the last lap to the altar steps.

And finally back to England for an autumn ceremony - the Soul Cake Play at Antrobus, near Northwich in Cheshire. This is one of the many plays and dances with a death and resurrection theme, featuring a ritual combat between the forces of good and evil. The original serious content has, as in many of these events, been degraded to rather a knock-about affair - the medicine man figure is now a comic doctor with a case full of saws, brace and bit, and mallets and so on, but as a whole, the ceremony still has tremendous integrity.

hero figure

The performance I saw was staged up in a barn at the back of the village pub. The band of players assembled outside to sing the Soul Cake song, and then introduced themselves into the company, boasting of their travels, their courage and accomplishments. St George (or King George), the hero figure, is dressed in a sort of Victorian infantry uniform with what looks like a bus conductor's hat while his opponent, known as The Black Prince of Paradise, wears a similar style of costume in black with a First World War German helmet. They both have blackened faces and carry wooden swords, which they soon employ in a very animated combat. The format of the play is the death of King George, his resuscitation by the Quack Doctor and his ultimate triumph over the Black Knight, all this symbolising the triumph of summer over winter, etc. As the night wears on and the players grow more lubricated, an element of ad-libbing creeps in, and it is not unknown for the Black Prince to refuse to lie down and to end up vanquishing King George. There are supplementary characters - an Old Woman (as usual in these plays, a man dressed up), the Doctor, and the

continued on page 16

INTERVIEW

Jon Anderson & Rick Wakeman of 'YES'

Rick Wakeman



Q. People often say your music is too advanced and difficult to listen to. Would you agree with this?

Jon Anderson. If you listen to Stravinsky you can't just turn round and make an opinion by just listening. You've got to listen to it so much and then you find out what he's at. He's a great musician. Like Zappa I've been pretty involved with his music and I've said, ' - ing hell, that's beautiful.' I'm not saying our music's advanced, but there's some things that you've really got to listen to and think about. Music can't always be naturally there, people were laughing at Stravinsky about forty years ago. Now he's acclaimed as an absolute genius.

Q. It's been said that after a group produces their third L.P. they start to go down a bit. What's your opinion about this?

J.A. Well, we're not sitting on our arses thinking about it. The only thing I can claim for the band is that we're honest and we're not trying to prove ourselves. If we prove ourselves and put out a load of rubbish, we may as well get up on stage and play music. We are musicians and we feel it's very important to learn new tricks. Sometimes they're tricks, sometimes they're emotions in the song or whatever. It all is down to what an audience will enjoy, that's what we always think about. I've always remembered looking at bands and wishing they'd played this or that, and now I often do

this. I'm still part of the audience, and I relate to the audience and I enjoy anything that's pushing on new horizons in rock music, that means breaking down all the barriers between Jazz, R & B, Pop, Classical and all these barriers that have been put up by stupid people. It's all music - you can't relate to 'What is better than this?' or 'This is better than that'.

Q. Is there any chance of you doing a live album?

J.A. Yeah, we've done some tapes for it and we're doing some more for it in America. It'll come out probably in January if it goes together O.K.

Q. Do you consider that 'Close to the Edge' is the best thing you've done yet?

J.A. Yeah, I'm completely satisfied with it.

words excite

Q. I find your lyrics very hard to understand. Are they very personal to you?

J.A. So do I. It's very difficult to express opinions in words for me, so I choose a lot of different words that excite me to be able to sing them, and they give a good picture to what I'm trying to get at. I'm no Bob Dylan. What Dylan does is amazing, I can't really hope to write like that.

Q. Is there any chance of you coming to Nottingham?

J.A. Yes, we're going to do an extensive tour when we've got some ideas worked out. We want to make the

next tour of England very extensive with a lot of new ideas. We may be touring in February actually.

Q. I understand that you're releasing a solo album. Does it provide a release for your own personal opinions?

frustrations

Rick Wakeman. I don't know. When you're part of a band you have to make compromises. There's five members in the band. It's 'Yes' music and we're all putting a lot of ourselves into it and making compromises with each of us saying, 'Well I don't like that, let's change it', so we vote on it and decide whether to include it or omit it. This album is almost made up of the compromises of my frustrations over the past three years, of ideas and things I wanted to try, wanted to do. It's cost a fortune in time and money and even if it sold thirty million copies it wouldn't make any money.

Q. I get the idea that when you're with 'Yes' you're not completely happy. I feel you should be in a more classical field.

R.W. What can I say? I'm very happy within the band, I'm really happy. That's a strange question. I can't answer that, I really can't. I'm not a classicist, well, I am, but I'm not!

Q. Did you find it very difficult to change over from what you were doing with the Strawbs to what you are doing with 'Yes'?

R.W. Oh, Christ, yes. A