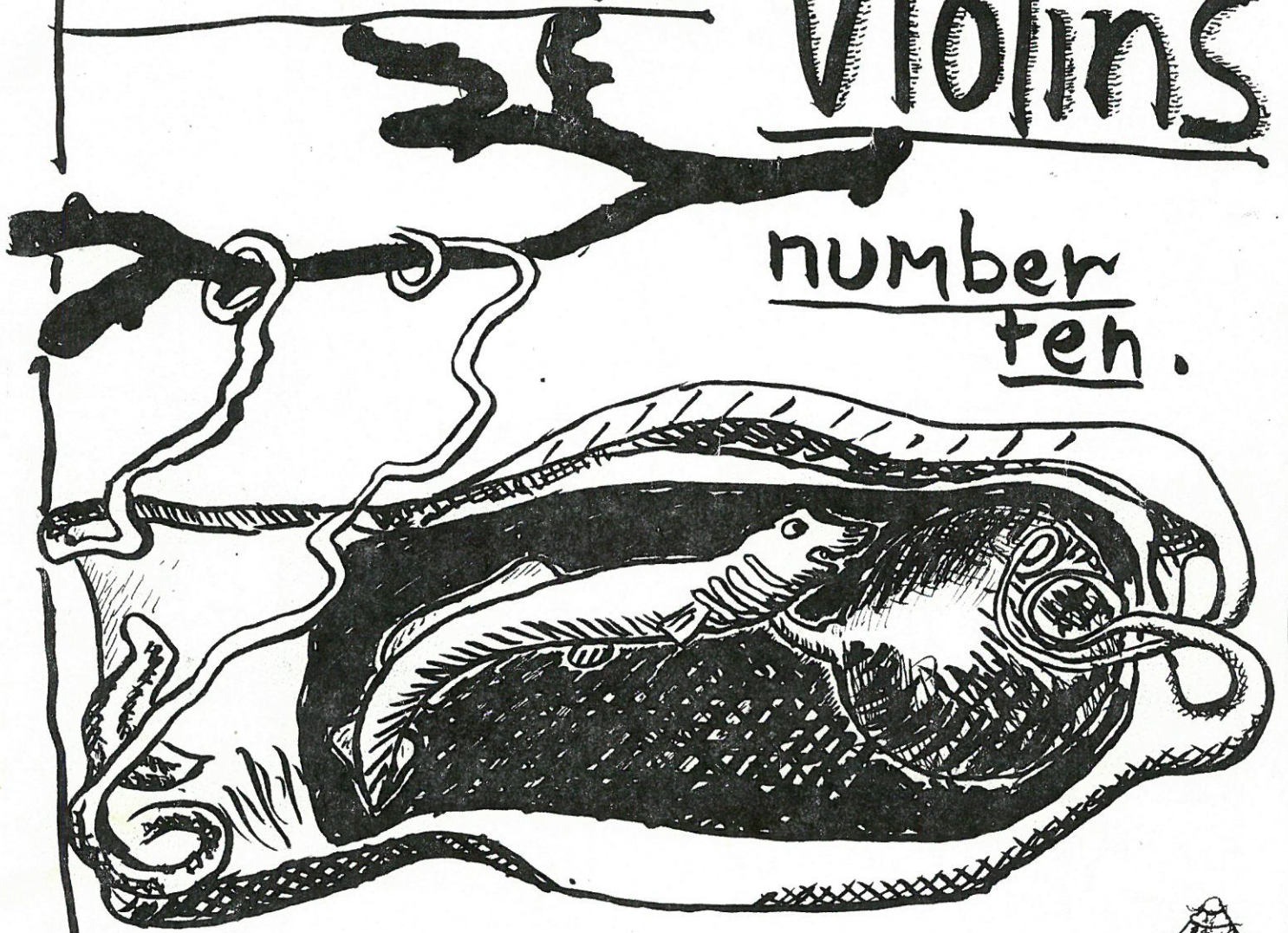


CHEAPISHLY

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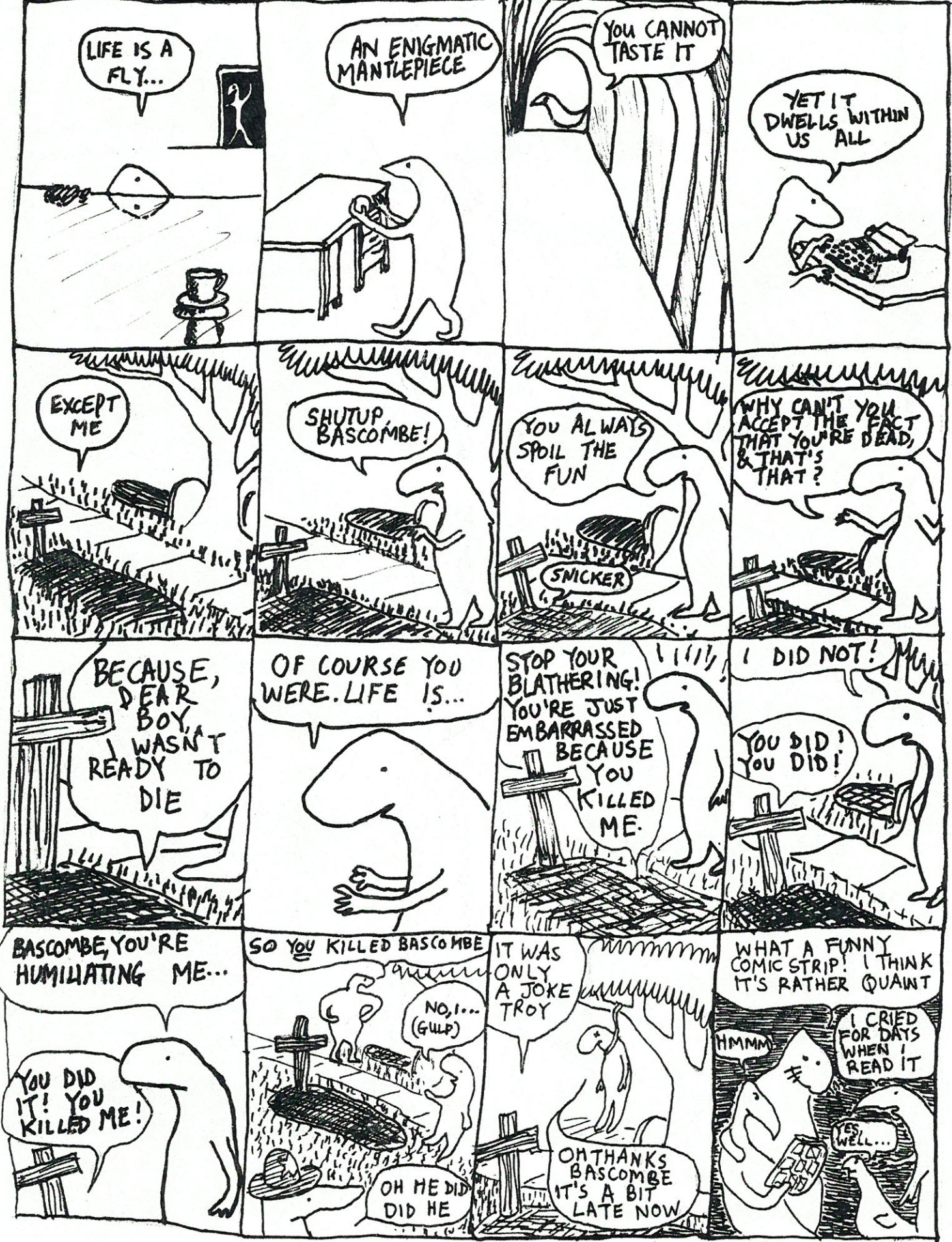


Violent Femmes
Wet Taxis
Lighthouse Keepers



Reviews, comics etc... buy it immediately!

VOICE FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE by DAVID NICHOLS ©1984



WET TAXIS

Interviewed by Gavan Purdy
2/2/84.

soon to
return
to
Melb
(with Caliber Rifles)



* So, you've been together for about 4 years, have you?
 L: Yeah. We started playing over 4 years ago. We started off as a four piece, went to a three piece, then two piece, and all sorts of things. (There was) the bass player, the guitarist & myself and another guy who did tapes and drum machine, and we used to play just experimental noise.
 B: But, um, in it's present form the band's been going for approximately 18 months doing the sort of material that's going on at the moment.
 * And this where you've earned the reputation?
 L: ...With a whole lot of sixties covers that we were doing. we'd been playing the old style for quite a while. We did a couple of tapes and were on an EP which were released by Terse Music, but we finally got this regular spot to play in Sydney in a tiny little pub that had never had bands on before. And, um, we had to come up with something that was a little bit more approachable than the stuff we were playing before. A friend of ours has long been a fan of the sort of sixties psychedelic music so we learnt a whole lot of covers and started off with that. And since then we've been incorporating the old noise sound into the sixties psychedelic covers.
 * This is your first tour of Melbourne. is this part of some larger tour?
 L: Well, not really. It's starting off what will be a larger tour. At the moment we're recording an album at a place called honey farm. That'll be released on Hot Records and... I'm not sure... that should be released in a couple of months, hopefully, at the latest. So what were doing is just coming down to Melbourne to let people know we exist and once the record is out we'll be playing Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane.
 * So, what sort of things have you been doing up in Sydney to lead up to this tour?
 L: Well, we've always been an inner city band because that's where we live, and it's easiest to play in the area you know. But, just recently we've been spreading out around Sydney a fair bit. There's so many places in Sydney to play that it takes forever to cover them all.
 B: Also, there's so many different types of markets that you've got to appeal to. Like, for example, if your playing up around the northern beaches, you've got an entirely different sort of audience that you get either in the inner city or the western suburbs, or something like that. But it's the suburbs where the biggest market is anyway, so you've got to go & play there.
 * Tell me how a young band in Sydney gets going? I know Hot Records...
 L: They're doing wonderfully at the moment. what they do is a distribution deal with a lot of bands. A band comes up with a tape and then they pay

for the pressing of the record, and they do all the advertising for it... which you have to have contacts and all that sort of thing to be able to do. So, Hot Records, at the moment are running around signing up most of the new bands that are putting out a single - well, providing they like the band to certain extent.
 * What about the gig side of it.. the live scene. what's it like for young bands?
 L: Oh, it's dreadful really because all the main venues in Sydney all closed down because of licensing laws, and the police and the public generally don't like venues. And it's quite hard... You've got a whole lot of small pubs in Sydney that are just ripping off the small bands. They have the proverbial band competition where they'll have five bands that'll play for....
 B: ...for absolutely nothing whatsoever.
 L: And they'll keep that band competition going for 3 months, and then at the end they'll pay the winning band \$300
 B: Yeah, some sort of token fee, so that they get about 30 bands for about \$300 altogether.
 L: So it's not very good. what we did was we were playing all this, um, originally this anti social music that normally people play to bring out some sort of emotion, this was to bring out negative emotion, but now..
 B: Now it's sort of completely different.
 L: We just went to a pub that didn't have bands on at all and said we'll play for free drinks. And they said



and by having a residency's good because people know where to find you, and all that sort of thing
 B: At least, initially anyway. I think a residency is very important. It's very difficult to get a suitable residency if you're starting out. Like, the Wet Taxis sort of made the Britannia Hotel. You know, it was totally unestablished.
 L: Just a scungy little pub in the backwaters of Chippendale.
 B: But, ah, Wet Taxis went through about two or three managers at that hotel who just gave up and fled in horror. I think because it was getting too big for them.
 * I'm really interested in the way the licensing laws have come down on the venues.
 B: Well, there's some new law where you've got to have sort of X number of square feet to each person in the pub...
 L: Well, that hasn't come in yet, but the worst one that stops them is that the pub is not only responsible for what goes on in the hotel but outside afterwards. So if you get a whole lot of people... you know, the pub closes at 12pm and they're all drunk and don't know what to do, so they just hang around outside 'til they work it out...
 B: The pub's also responsible for that, and the law sort of cracks down on that.
 L: So they can think of any one of a number of excuses to stop them.
 * And there are pubs closing down because of this?
 B: Oh yeah. All the time.
 B: The pubs are getting a harder time than the clubs generally because licensing laws are a lot tougher on pubs. By clubs I mean, like, established places, you know. You get a lot of venues that open up for a little while and, um, they won't sort of pay protection or anything like that. So you know, they go down the tubes.
 * So overall, how has this effected the scene in Sydney?
 L: Well, it just means that pubs are just coming and going.. as far as them being venues... at a rapid rate of knots, and there's the old standard ones that seem to run a bit of a monopoly. And people that don't know how to, you know, get their first place to play just go to the standard ones and just get hopelessly ripped off.
 B: Well, the agencies have got the whole thing sewn up there as far as the standard venues go.
 L: In Sydney there's two agencies, one called Dirty Pool and one called Harbour, and they run about 60% of the main venues all over Sydney & through the suburbs... They do a lot of big name commercial bands. And it they want you to join their agency they use their particular little mafia tactics, like they'll ring up a whole lot of dates that you've got lined up and then they'll cancel them and say "No, the band will not be playing tonight" ... and you'll turn up to play and they'll say "But you've cancelled".... and then you get a bad name for being unreliable... and so you can't get anywhere to play. And so the agencies say "Well, you'll have to join us to be able to get somewhere to play... And that's sort of they're tactics. The whole situation is just completely rotten.

* And you're response to that was to find your own pub to play in?

L: Yeah, well, actually that was more the way we just go about things,

B: It was just some sort of response to that... you get to deal with that later on when you've been through it....

L: The main thing is just to avoid the big trend that all bands follow because that's all very tightly wrapped up, and they play the tune and you sort of have to dance to it. So the thing is to go totally against it and just think of your own way of getting places to play.

* Early in '83, talk had floated down to Melbourne that Sydney was really healthy for live bands, and '83 was a bad year for Melbourne bands. Perhaps you could tell us what it was all about.

B: Well, '83 was when you get a number of bands coming out of Melbourne going up to Sydney. For example Do Re Mi, Deck Chairs Overboard & so on. But, I don't know... like I'm sure a lot of people in Sydney thought it's all on down Melbourne.

L: Yeah. That's the main thing. It just depends where you take your terms of reference.

B: Yeah. Like 'the grass is always greener on the other side' etc.

L: It's bad everywhere, really.

* It seems to me that there's about 5 small labels that are fairly active up in Sydney, and there's only Au go-go records really doing anything for bands in Melbourne.

L: Yeah. Well that's the main thing. I don't sort of follow much about record companies and all that sort of thing; but the only organisation we've had anything to do with is Hot Records and they seem to be doing a really good job of getting bands on vinyl, and also promoting the singles.

* What about radio in Sydney. Do they give support to the young bands at all?

L: It depends. Like, the 3 stations in Sydney that look at non-commercial bands are JJJ, which is the ABC station, and there's 2MBS....

B: They've compromised. JJJ are just doing, more or less, the same as any other station. They started off with a good concept and they're just doing exactly the same as everyone else now.

* Playing the ratings game?

L: That's right. Because they're subject to all sorts of cost control that come out the government, so the government says "You haven't got high enough ratings so you've got to boost them up otherwise we'll have to get rid of you" So they have to play the game, and they're really not much better than a commercial station. And the other ones are 2MBS and 2SCR. They're independent stations. One's a university station and another one's totally independent. 2MBS is a classical station.

B: Essentially classical but it's...

L: Yeah. About 95% but they still give a slot, normally late at night, to the independents... no matter how obscure a band is they can still get on 2MBS.

* That sounds good.

B: Yeah. 2MBS is really fairly progressive even though it's basically classical. It's got an open mind to it, anyway.

* Ok. Well, apart from those songs you had out a couple of years ago on Terse Tapes, is there any other material available of the Wet Taxis?

L: Well, there's dozens of bootlegs that people have got that they've recorded. That's mostly because we've never got round to recording anything ourselves. Everything that we've heard we've normally been disappointed with. It doesn't seem to come out all that well on tape because, with our live performances, it's atmosphere rather than direct sound. So we've had a lot of trouble trying to get the atmosphere & a good sound... and mix the two together.

B: It seems to be working quite well now with the latest series of recordings... absolutely masterful producer...

* Who's that guy?

L: David Connor... and he works with a group called Slightly Nervous Prods. and we do all the recording with him up at a place called Honey Farm, which is a really good studio.

* Did he do the Celibate Rifles records?

L: He did, yep. But they mostly produced it themselves.

* I've heard all kinds of stories about that cassette, like the Celibate Rifles were removed from it after it was pressed

L: Well, um, that cassette came out of... well it's more or less like a bootleg. The guy who did it did it virtually without any written permission from any of the bands. The bands received no royalties, neither did the writers.

B: It's particularly difficult, you know, like your doing cover songs and everything and all of a sudden somebody's making money out of it. If anyone of the writers gets to hear of it your in all sorts of trouble.



L: So it's really quite illegal. The whole Sedition thing was good & bad for the bands. Good because it gave a lot of bands a chance to be heard... a lot of music critics & radio stations & record companies came along because there was all these bands at the one area at the one time. So it was an advantage in playing it... but a disadvantage in that it's just a couple of people who have got hold of the tapes &... you know... just turned the thing into a big money making scheme for themselves... which is always inevitable, but it's a shame because it totally defeats the whole purpose of an independent music festival. The whole idea of independence is to get away from all that sort of business of record companies trying to rip you off & make a whole lot of money out of bands, and then just throw them away at the end of it all.

* What sort of response did you get from the other side of the music industry, like, the major companies & that. Was there positive feedback from them about was happening with the independent scene?

L: Well, there is & there isn't. The major record companies like the independents to do all the dirty work, and take all the risks and the gambles. Cause if you can grind your way through all the independent circuit... Someone like maybe the Hoodu Gurus, who've been through that for quite a while, and then have been picked up by a major record company... and then away they go. But the big disadvantage in becoming involved with major record companies is that they dictate the music you play and what songs go on your records, and when & where you play. Whereas independents aren't like that at all.

B: No. And another risk about working through independents is, of course, that the independents usually go to established companies anyway to get the material cut onto vinyl. And they just don't take the care that they would if they were doing it all through their own channels. They don't take enough care with the material... like they put scratches on the master tape & just totally bugged up the cutting.

L: Like for example, on that Sedition tape, the song that we've got on it Cry Cry Cry... it's not a very good version of the song. The sound is not particularly good. There are other songs on Sedition that we played much better but for some reason they decided to pick on that one.

B: Oh, it's a good song.

L: Yeah, but it's just a bad version of it. And so a lot of people would listen to it and say "Well Christ, if that's what the band sounds like, we won't have much to do with them in the future"

* I think Hot Records are giving the majors a bit of a shake up at the moment They've shown that with their distribution they can get a record into the charts.

B: They sort of relied on him for a bit of assistance.

L: That's right. The Celibate Rifles like the rough, sort of raw sound... and they insist upon that... and that's what they got and that's what he gave them. But he's capable of virtually any type of sound you want.

B: The basic difference, I think, between the Rifles & Wet Taxis is that the Rifles like to really thrash along... and that's been one of the biggest problems as far as the Wet Taxis go... as far as mixers & producers... they've all got a totally wrong conception of the sound. Like, Wet Taxis ought to sound more mid range. You know, a lot more emphasis on...

L: The head banging sort of bass sound.

B: Yeah. The Wet Taxis don't want the head banging bass sound that you normally associate with, like, the Celibate Rifles for example.

L: There's been a lot of people compare us to the Celibate Rifles saying that the two bands are very closely knit. They're not at all.

B: There's a great personal sort of bond between the two bands but that's as far as it goes really.

* Yeah. I suppose things like that are inevitable though when the guitarist from your band played on a couple of songs for the Celibate Rifles...

L: That's right. And I played some keyboards on the new album which is coming out.. And that's not due to any great musical empathy between the 2 bands... but it's just personal. We all get along very well and they've done a lot to help us get under way. So that's where our allegiance or bond is.

* Now, you played at the Sedition festival last year, right?

L: That's right.

* And a cassette has come out of that... and a cover that you do of the song Cry Cry Cry is on that.

L: That's right.



Wet Taxis cont.

really starting to boom is that they've got phenomenal contacts overseas, and one of the main people used to work with Elektra Records back in the sixties. You know, they did a lot of famous bands like Jimi Hendrix and The Doors. And he's got so many contacts in America and, in fact, they're overseas at the moment. Two of the people ... one's doing about 4 or 5 countries in Europe and ones doing America. And they're taking a whole selection of all their bands and trying to get distribution in all those countries. Which is very good because, once again, being independent, if your only still selling 500 copies of a record, you can sell 500 in Australia, then you might be able to sell 500 or 1000 in America, 500 in Germany, 500 in England.. and it spreads the whole market.

* Most independent bands that have had a bit of success in Australia have found eventually that they have to move on overseas because you can only take it so far in this country.

L: That's right. The big hope is that Hot Records will be able to make enough independent bands commercially viable or economically viable so that they can keep going instead of running till they burn themselves out of money, enthusiasm &...
 B: Life.
 L: Yeah, life... and then sort of give it up.
 * So, we've got an album to look forward to, and when is that coming out?
 L: In about 2 months. About half of the album is recorded already... which hasn't been mixed. There will be another 5 or 6 songs to be recorded & mixed which will be done in about 2 or 3 weeks when we get back to Sydney. And then that'll be pressed and...
 B: It'll have a good glossy cover too...
 L: What we're working on at the moment is a couple more originals we want to put on it because mostly what we've been playing in the later life of the band is cover versions... all very obscure

versions... but they're really great songs... but still people like to hear what the band can come up with themselves.
 B: Like, a lot of them will be virtually as good as the originals anyway, and that's a real shame... I mean bands are essentially musicians & performers... yet a lot of people think... the whole hierarchy of the thing dictates that bands have got to be composers as well.
 L: Which is not true. You can be a musician and a performer, and even though you can write songs... like, well, the first 3 years we played all original material & suddenly when we started doing covers they say "You can't do originals.. You're no good" which is absolutely wrong. I mean, you just take people like, um, Elvis Presley and Diana Ross. They've never written a song of their own in their entire life. But people wouldn't say that they're useless because they haven't written they're own songs,

BULK REVIEWS

there's been a pretty enormous buildup in things

FIRST OF ALL let's try the Learning Home for The Party on The Roof cassette (101 Sky Time Drive, Seven Hills, Qld. 4170) which is highly enjoyable (esp. the last thing on side 2 - someone doing a version of 'No Fun' until his dad(?) bursts in and tells him off... of course that's just a novelty... the material on this tape, a Queensland compilation, is varied and in some cases wonderful (in some cases a bit politically naive too, I noticed). I would advise you to purchase this... preferably in conjunction with the other Qld. comp. "Qld. in Quarantine". A more mainstream cassette as far as approach is concerned (packaging etc.) but really good especially when it comes to the spoken word snippets in-between the music. A good way of comparing the music and the politics of Qld, and well worth a listen. A 4222 thing - Compiler L. Wallace says "seems weird to me now I'm not resident in Brisbane - it's such a strange location - have hoped the tape would place + time specific the music via the cuts + voice bits + pieces "well it doesn't quite make sense but never mind. A good tape. Next on the list - more tapes - try out

End Results' farewell debut on No Master's Voice tapes... a great quality punch tape with a really beautiful, clever booklet accompanying. This stuff really goes on you even the backwards tracks sound great. E.R. seem to have broken up but never mind. So have Charred Remains and they leave behind a 4-track tape featuring 'Rid Melbourne', 'No Chance', 'Live, Laugh + Play' and 'Spade Exploration'. I don't know, I like this + have listened to it a few times, but there's something about it which just isn't my style - something which I think no sane person would care about. It is a good piece of work though I like the trumpet here though this might be just because I like trumpet (apparently the trumpet person had not played with them before they recorded this.) I'm not being really critical am I. Well. I ought to write down all the witty conceives of as soon as they appear but I think my laziness is such that I wouldn't think witty things any more to save myself

the trouble of writing them down. Often when I see a band I compose a sort of critique/verview in my head and it seems to go. but of course I always forget. Another tape is Murder Murder Suicide's one - I only got it today + have heard it once, but it's highly recommended. What else... I know I'm going to forget a ton of things... there's a Tiny Town single out now, featuring "Drop By Drop / Know Better." D by D is just amazingly good + right, quite exhilarating too in a way... a breath of fresh air maybe? I recently got a good NME review so let's hope a lot of people buy this. They won't be disappointed. Seek this out because it's a very good song. Also what about The Farmers Boys new record "Appar-ently". Some may think that bringing up the F.B.s is in poor taste but I like this a lot, though their music is bordering... Um... Skirting a rut. The b-side's a good country instrumental. Have a listen to this record. Then there's always The Hoodists' colossal new release. No point in listening to this in the shop or anything.

you know it's a mood-ists record, + therefore beyond question. Yeah I know that's not really true, but in this case it may as well be. "Runaway" is an old-ish song and this band is proving itself to be one of the greatest Australia's ever produced. Maybe they are arrogant: but how many bands do you know of that are arrogant + don't have any justification for it? The Hoodists are perfect and divine. This has local release on Virgin! I'm trying to think what I've forgotten. I s'pose by now you've heard the Laughing Clowns' newest records - I think 'Eternally Yours' must be a classic single... if such things really exist... and when The Triffids put out 'Embedded', that'll be one too. Anyway I'm sure I've forgotten some things but I've run out of space David

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 etc. welcome (S.A.E?)
 Criticism needed...

Since their arrival in Australia the Violent Femmes have become the band to see & listen to. Fortunately, I recently had the opportunity to talk to the band and their manager/producer, Mark Van Hecke, about their forthcoming L.P., touring, e.t.c., while they waited to appear on "After Dark".

VIOLENT FEMMES

*: There's not really much known about your background, except for the infamous discovery while busking & that the band originates from Milwaukee, how long has the band been formed?
 Brian: We've been together for 3 years more or less.

*: Was the uniqueness of your sound initially a drawback when it came to progressing from busking to playing pubs & clubs?
 B: Yeah, originally it was a drawback because none of the clubs wanted to hire us but once we got beyond that crucial step of actually getting the job & our ability to draw large amounts of people to the performances made the weirdness of the sound irrelevant because club owners don't care what it sounds like, they just care if people come.

*: Since then you've been frequently touring o/s, is your Aust. tour a result of the success of your records on the independent charts, or was it to become successful?
 B: At the time that we booked the tour we weren't selling very many records. So it was a gamble on our part & Big Times. We came because we wanted to turn into success here.
 Gordon: None of us knew about the success maybe somebody did but we didn't.

*: Is the audience reaction better than you expected, considering you didn't think you were that well known?
 B: Well we didn't really know what to expect but the audiences here are pretty much similar to those we have all over the world, which is enthusiastic.
 G: Both men & women?

*: Was the European visit last year, strictly for touring & was it successful?
 Victor: We were there twice. We went for the first 2 weeks of September, for a quick visit including 2 dates in England, one in Holland & one in Belgium. We returned for a month in Feb. and played in Germany, Holland, Austria & Brussels. It was very successful, real good shows, especially in Germany because throughout Germany we were regarded as a band to see with people filling the club to see us & we were playing 3 to 4 encores a night.

G: This is the first time that we've ever played in a city two consecutive nights at the same club, which is of some size and not just a little cafe, and have sold out both nights.
 V: We heard that advanced sales for the seaview ballroom are sold out.

G: This is the first time that we've ever played in a city two consecutive nights at the same club, which is of some size and not just a little cafe, and have sold out both nights.
 V: We heard that advanced sales for the seaview ballroom are sold out.



Mark: I don't think they can criticise it for being too similar or too different, its fine.
 G: They could just pan it.
 B: Or say that its too much of a radical change & go to us what they did to the Clash.
 *: So is the current music situation in America that the independent & more innovative bands are heavily segregated from the more established & commercial acts?
 B: Thats true, in fact, out of all the real underground bands in America, we're probably the most commercially successful, for which we're thankful. But, most of the great bands in America are either unheard of, put their records on their own label, or are on independent labels that sell maybe 2000 copies for an album & they seem to be doomed by playing small clubs. The record industry & the radio, especially F.M, are completely corrupt, except for the college radio which has some freedom, but even that is usually 90% restricted to white oriented programming, & Black music is the most important music in America. So its a pretty pitiful situation.
 *: Do the Violent Femmes have any specific goal?
 B: Our goal is to be commercially & artistically successful, even though thats a very rare commodity these days, we don't feel that its unobtainable. We really look up to bands like the rolling stones, the beatles and the doors which made vital and incredible music but were also extremely popular with the masses. Thats what we would like to be ideally. But at the moment we're a cult band, like the velvet underground or somebody like that but that doesn't mean that its our ambition to always be cult or that we feel that if we do reach mass success that we'll think that we've sold out. We don't give a fuck. We just want to sell the most records possible. And hopefully the masses will be able to learn from what we're doing, cause we're doing something unusual. We feel that its also got potential to touch any body on an emotional level. Thats what we're striving for. We'd be happy if we sold 10 million albums.

B: Two other shows are sold out, & also in Perth.
 V: So I guess our reputation is spreading like herpes.

*: With your live performances the emphasis tends to be on fun, despite the rather depressing situations illustrated in the lyrics. Is this unintentional or is it because you want to distinguish your live work with that of the studio?
 G: I think the interpretation depends on the individual because certain individuals hear the music on the record one way whereas someone will hear it differently. I think there's a whole lot more irony involved in our live shows than we come across in our studio work. (at this point Victor produces an iron & states that he's got some irony) But there's something relating to our live shows, the depressing lyrics and how it connected is that we have a real love of the blues even though we don't really play blues, but there is a lot of that feeling in our music. So I can be singing a song which is very depressing but you're singing in order to feel better. I think this comes across in the live show like the lyrics are depressing but when we're playing we're having fun. I think there's a real connection with the blues. Also, I think the idea of rock 'n' roll shows and the act of performing is something very ironic and humorous. We're not playing & singing to get real serious, we have a different attitude to other bands, but I think our lyrics, because of this, are more important than other bands.

*: Is the lyrical & musical content of the 2nd L.P., "Hallowed Ground", in the same vein as that of the debut?
 G: The lyrics encompass a greater variety of songs rather than the boy/girl type of thing, there is more of a variety to the lyrics & musically of much greater style. We've got guest musicians, so the instrumentation is more varied.
 *: Are the lyrics all written by you, or have Victor & Brian contributed?
 G: The lyrics are just mine.

B: Except for the ones you got from the bible.
 G: There's a quote from the scripture. Some of the songs are older & weren't written at the time of the album but thats always the case. We've got a great backlog of material.

*: When will Hallowed Ground be released in Australia?
 B: In a couple of months & it'll be released earlier here than in America.
 *: Considering your debut album was received pretty well, how do you expect the 2nd to go down since it isn't as similar a style to the debut?

Unfortunately the interview ended here, the violent femmes will be returning to America directly after australia. And several weeks break will start touring again with former Stoooge sax player, Steve Mackay, to promote Hallowed Ground, which should be released by then.

ANNABEL.



The Lighthouse Keepers

In late Feb. of this year, The Particles and The Lighthouse Keepers came to Melbourne to play two shows on their way back to Sydney from Perth. Gavan Purdy recorded an interview of the Lighthouse Keepers by Astrid.

A=Astrid, G=Greg Appel, J=Juliet Ward.

A: This is Astrid from The Particles interviewing the Lighthouse Keepers, and in the bedroom of the hotel we're in, is Ap and Juliet. Tell me what you thought of Perth seeing as you've just been there visiting. How did the band go down?

G: It went well. The Triffids spread the good word, 'cos they're keen Lighthouse Keepers fans, and they sent back letters and we sent records and so we gathered a few fans. In fact...

J: Two

G: And they wrote back to us, one, Karen Bayly, my future bride, and another one, who likes racing car driving.

A: Tell us about Karen Bayly

G: Oh she's wonderful. She's about 5 ft, and she looks like a schoolgirl or something, and yet she's 19.

A: & she was a really avid fan.

G: She wrote to us many, many times.

A: & didn't she make badges for you or something?

G: Yep. She cut out little Lighthouse Keepers off the record and sent them to Sydney and then gave us badges.

A: That's really nice. No-one's done that to The Particles!

G: It's only one person. They seem to make them like that in Perth.

A: What, make fans in Perth?

J: Just make very nice people.

G: Innocent, but still worldly. Still clever.

A: You were saying how you were going to release some new music this year. How are you going to record it?

G: We're planning to do it at Alpha House actually, where you live, and you know that very well (laughter)

A: Explain what Alpha House is, and that would give people an idea of what it'll sound like on record.

J: It's a warehouse, where about- I'm not sure how many people live there actually.

A: The area that you're going to record it in is a very wide space, & it's very echoey.

A: The Particles were talking before about how they have a fairly consistent change of line-up. How do you feel about the line-up that you've got at the moment? Do you see any changes?

G: No I think it's very good. And I'd like it to just stay like that.

J: I think that if anybody left, it wouldn't be the Lighthouse Keepers any more, we'd have to change the name.

G: Especially since this tour- we've become a lot closer and I think a lot better. And the sound's becoming less separate instruments & more a whole thing.

A: Tight's the word I'd use.

G: See you can't get tight like that without... without a drummer.

A: You reckon?

J: Astrid's got an insult filter on her brain.

A: So you don't like the sound of the drum machine.

G: Oh no no no, you misconstrue me there. I like the way you use it, but I'd like to hear you without the drum machine... I think the songs are really good. But what I would like to do is (have) me play 12-string, and our Steven just doing a bit of brushes or something.

J: And I'll sing...

A: I'll sing for the Lighthouse Keepers then.

A: You do a lot of covers in your set,

G: Some people mistake us for doing all covers, because... we wouldn't do more than a third. A quarter.

A: How do you go about choosing the songs that you want to cover?

G: Oh well we started off doing a fair few covers, just because we didn't have that much good original material, and gradually dropped them out. They're just songs we like.

A: They seem to be really cynical songs.

J: I think most of the members of the Lighthouse Keepers like the really old stuff, records made in the 30's & stuff... blues, really old blues... and I like the old country & western and Greg likes the old rock 'n' roll, so a lot of the covers come from favourites of a century ago.

G: When we first started I hadn't heard much music from the earlier part of this century, but... I don't know why we just went further and further back, it seems to me to get better, really, and the way they recorded it has intrigued me, that's why I want to do this one live. Some of the stuff from 20 Golden Oldies volume 2 & 3, I don't know how they recorded it but it's just really clear. Perfect.

A: Well they just used to stick a mike in the middle of the room didn't they.

G: I think they just were really good. Really good players and they got to that stage and they just put it straight down.

J: I've got an old recording of a bloke singing "Tavern in the Town" and he starts chuckling $\frac{1}{2}$ way through, and it ends up him just laughing. And they just left it like that. They'd never do that nowadays.

...or it would be art.

G: I think there's a growing dissatisfaction with modern recording methods and really heavily produced stuff. Stuff like ABC, I like stuff like that; but I think there's a lot of potential for...

J: We've got one microphone, we ought to do some barber-shop singing.

A: My mother told me about seeing that in California it's really kitsch... let me see, next question... I think that's about it. Can you think of anything else?

G: No...

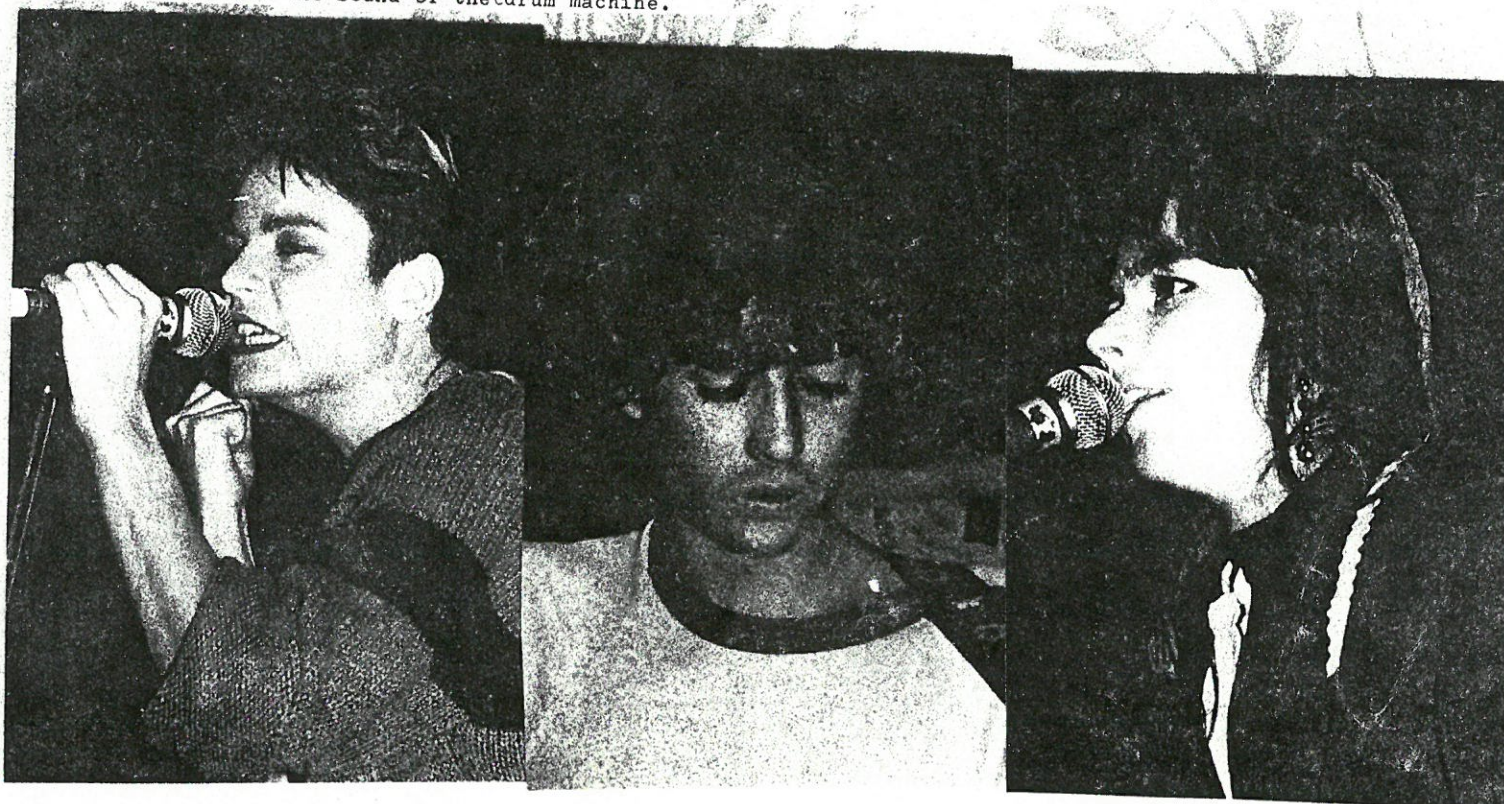
A: God they're really functioning at peak. (laughter) You should see them when they do a bad interview!

Right, thanks Juliet & Ap

G: Thank you Astrid

J: Thank you Astrid

A: see you after this interview.



"Things just aren't what they used to be." I thought to myself, as I sat quietly in the Bugler Hotel, in the darkest corner, as far as possible away from everyone else.

Just one careless drift of the eyes, that was noticed by someone who didn't want to be looked at, and I would get flattened again. For the seventh time that day.

So I just sat there carefully watching the bubbles in my Snake Ale, trying to look inconspicuous, and trying to make plans to lessen my misery.

The trouble was, no one liked me. Very few people had taken a liking to me in my life, in fact. Even my dog Blackie had run away, when I forgot to feed him on just one night.

My parents never particularly took to me either, and I sensed they were glad when I made the big move out of home.

In fact the last thing my father said to me was, "Good luck, Slim."

He was a horrible man. He was always hitting people; me, my mother (who was also a bit of a fighter), sister, anything that got within three feet of him.

He had a good layer of fat on his horrible body, so nothing could hurt him. I used to have nightmares about him; my fists going into him like jelly, wading about in him, trying to cause him some sort of pain.

"Good luck, Slim," he said, and then he gave me the hardest punch he had ever given me in my life.

My mother wasn't very nice about it either, and threw a large can of beans at me. Perhaps they were for father, but they hit me and they hurt. But I still grabbed the can and scuttled off into the wet winter night.

"Kierf!" screamed my unbearable sister Maxi. She was horrible. A disgusting overbearing girl, who ground me into dust on sight, because of her superior physical construction.

She was always taking the few friends I ever had the chance of making, into her room for evil, then turning them against me; by telling them lies about me; that I had four testicles and a thin curly penis, and that I wore a wig.

She was a horror. Whenever I tried to lure her acquaintances away, they'd laugh at me. There was always something they could laugh at, and they loved to tell me what was wrong with me. They said that I was too thin, and that I had an enormous nose and a long neck.

They used to torture me by tying me up and putting chips down my underpants and making Blackie eat them. They used to tie me up everywhere.

They tied me to a tree in the middle of winter, and then hosed me down. They tied me to the backs of their motorbikes, so I had to run along behind them. They tied me to telegraph poles in the middle of town, so that people could laugh at me.

They showed every conceivable thing down my throat; bottles of tomato sauce, bags of flour, sand, live skinks, anything they could think of.

But then, that was the trouble with the world. No one really liked anyone else.

"What are you staring at." It was a large hairy man, with a huge moustache, glaring at me.

"Pardon sir?" "You heard me." There was only one thing to do, sprint.

Crunch. Right in the side of my head. The chair collapsed under me, and I sprawled onto the floor. I instinctively started wailing, like I used to when mother hit me with the crowbar, so as to stop her as fast as possible

I was screaming at the top of my voice at such volume, that I didn't notice that he'd gone over to the bar. Out of the corner of my eye I could see the people scattered around the bar were looking at me in a bored sort of way, that could turn to mob violence at any moment. So I ceased the wild groans.

"A Snakes." He said rather loudly to the barmaid. She timidly got him one, and placed it on the bar in front of him.

He slammed her in the face, and she flew into the row of bottles behind her. Then he walked over and put the glass on my table, and gave me an enormous kick in the back.

After a minute or so of agony, while I waited for my wind to come back, I looked around. He was at the other end of the room poking someone with glasses in the ribs, and calling them professor.

So I raised myself onto the stool, and started into my Snake Ale.

Snake Ale was a big seller in these dark times, mainly because of its medicinal value. There was some sort of anaesthetic in the brew that revived you after a day's beating. The drug in it probably wasn't really legal, and its healing properties, or rather soothing properties, were only hinted at in the ads. But everyone knew and nobody cared, and everybody enjoyed a good S.A. at the end of the day.

After I finished my Snake, I felt a bit sore and sick still. What I really wanted was another one, but I had no money, as I had just spent the last of my invalids cheque.

My scheming mind went through a number of plans, but it settled on helping. People often rewarded you with a Snake Ale, if you helped them into a bar or something, when they were lying in a crumpled heap on the side of the road, after a belting.

So I went over to the bar to see what I could do. "Are you alright?" I said.

She was still lying on the floor, with blood coagulating in various places. So I climbed over the bar and mopped up the blood with the sponge she had for wiping down the bar. After making sure no-one was watching, I quietly poured myself another Snake Ale. She seemed to be still alive, but unconscious, so I emptied a bucket of water over her like they do on television.

"Ahhhh..." she yelled, and sprang to life. But it was too late. I was innocently involved in Snake Ale consumption in my corner.

It was dusk now, and everyone was either leaving, or had left the bar for the night's entertainment.

At dusk a certain mood spread through the air, and people began to get restless. They poured out into the streets, and tension built till it had to be released. People walked around, glaring at each other in the haze.

You could hear, "What are you staring at?" repeated infinitely times, echoing all over the city.

"What are you staring at?" "Rhp?" "You heard me." "What are YOU staring at?"

Interpersed with the sound of flowing urine, as they staked out their territories.

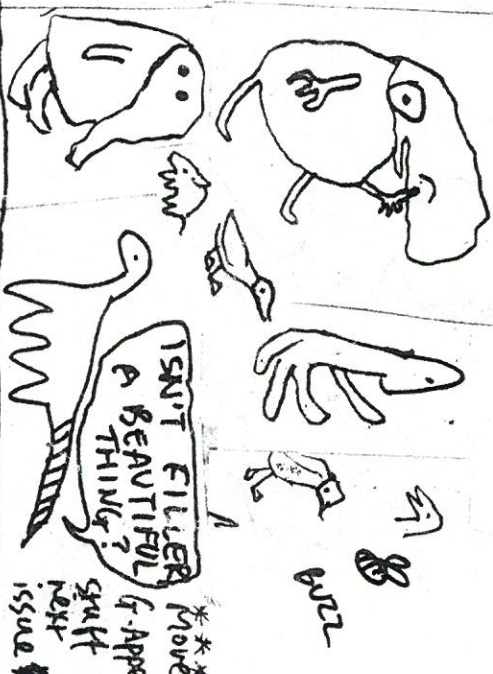
This sort of thing went on for an hour or so, until scuffles broke out, and then violence erupted, and to punctuate the violence various forms of rape of every conceivable description occurred.

It was a rude sight indeed, and I tried to avoid the evening as much as possible, as I would always come out the worst. Covered in all sorts of fluids, of varying degrees of viscosity, and vast amounts of pain.

I shed a tear for my sad predicament, as I sat alone in the Bugler Hotel.

The girl was putting chairs upside down, and clanging things. I could hear the noise beginning in the streets outside in the darkness. The wind was beginning to howl around the Hotel. I felt cold and alone, and I began to shiver and sob a little louder.

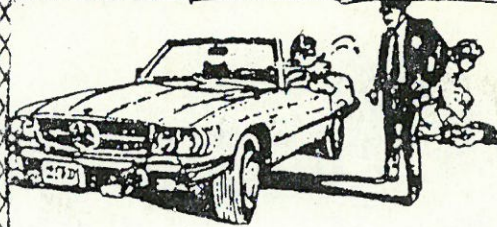
"Last drinks!" she yelled at the top of her voice, as if there was anyone in the Bugler Hotel but me.



STAR LETTER (only letter)

Dear Editor, I'm curious as to your reason for including the Pseudo Echo piece in Distant Violins. Secondly, is it possible to love The Fall and Pseudo Echo? Not criticizing, just wondering. Regards, Bruce Milne

I didn't write the PE piece. Still, I'd say it is possible to like a band such as The Fall, and a really commercial group - say ABC or The Style Council - if you're arrogant enough to think you have a real overview of the music scene - like a real connoisseur... that's what I'm like. I guess featuring PE could've undermined DV's street cred., except it never had any and I'm not interested in that anyway. P.N.



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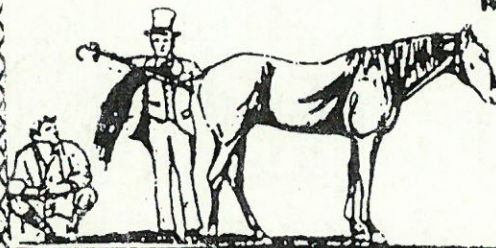
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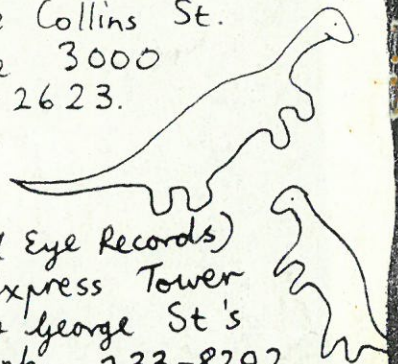
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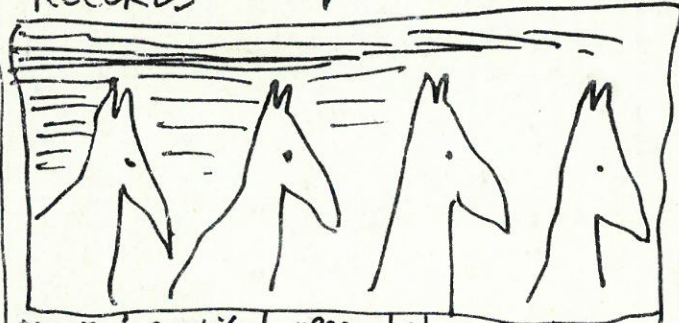
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EDITORIAL

Hi there. ~~Hi~~ A few weeks ago I wrote a 1000-word editorial but decided it was stuffed. However I went + saw the Lighthouse Keepers the other night + they played 3 sets - the last one out in the street acoustically. Bet you wish you were there. Anyway please buy many DV'S - bye - David Nichols

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Thanks to contributors especially. Then: advertisers. Then: H. Butler S. Butcher M. Kneebone ~~Triffid's~~ Paula Lynne Angie Lighthouse Keepers who have I for-gotten? Mark Loutrir- Linda Wallace - people who've ordered back issues - also Frank - also those at Gaumont - also Nikki, R. Certel, Gavan, Janine who is probably the most important person involved (+ took most of the photos) I know there are more but I just can't remember blubber it.

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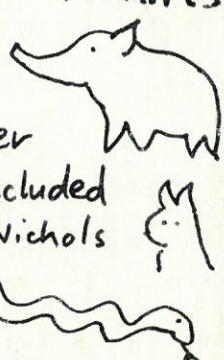
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the end business was more anyway hope you enjoyed it see you soon (23)

Violent Femmes/The Trifids/Painters & Dockers/Crystal Set *****Trade Union Club 24 March 1984

Apparently the night before the room was packed 30 mins after starting time so we got there an hour early to get tickets. To fill in time we went up to the 2nd floor and watched the Lighthouse Keepers soundcheck. They played Wildest and something else and Juliet told Greg to shut up but it's ok, all's well and at 9 o'clock we go upstairs to stake out a spot.

First band was Crystal Set. Annabel says they were Churchish but I think they're harder than that. I think I'll really like them next time there's a lot to absorb you see, they're not immediate. Aside from all that the slides were excellent and the singers shirt wasn't bad either.

Painters & Dockers are pathetic. The lead singer made some weak jokes about 'The Violent Underground'. What a card. What a wanker... And there goes that idiot with the bugle again. God I hate this band. Know Your Product was good I must admit, but only because it sounds exactly the same as the original.

Well now my beloved Trifids played a pretty pre-dictable set songwise though there were 3 new ones- Embedded, Jack Frost and Calhoun Surf. I wanted to hear Reverse but I felt calling for this would undermine my credibility with the audience, and probably earn me an irate look from David McComb too. Most of the other songs were 'freelance Plain I think...um... there was both sides of the new single but really I can't be sure about all this someone got to the song list before me and ripped it to shreds. Anyway the main problem was there wasn't very much personality in it all- they were a bit flat I'm sorry to say anyway they were enjoyable enough.

now it's going to be difficult to explain about the Violent Femmes- every review I've read this week has been rapturous it seems they've changed everyone's lives... I don't know, they were fabulous but as for all the emotional involvement and identification they inspire, well I think it's worn off a bit now God I sound so blasé Anyway I think it's more effective to listen to it lying on your bed in the dark or really loud when your mum goes out rather than in a hot squashy club with several hundred people all screaming along to the lyrics- you see all the 'touching' and 'heart-wrenching' stuff didn't translate well live... I expected it to, I expected to get totally carried away in Add It Up and Good Feeling but I didn't particularly... really I found I forgot about angst and just enjoyed the fast songs and the jokes and mucking around. I could explain about prize wheels and balloons and beer cans but you would've had to be there. They played almost all of the album plus the newer single and there were some covers and "We're In Fashion" (I think it's called) about all the hype, and there was "Girl Troubles" - I can't think of any others. So they were wonderful and entertaining and funny and so on. It's strange, despite all that's been said about frustration and depression they made me feel really happy. Mischa

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who did them.

to CANCEL AT ARMADALE

It's a sort of musical schizophrenia that makes me play my Farmers' Boys records after my Birthday Party records, or The Pop Group and then The Trifids. The same sort of thing that allows me to write about the Church while listening to The Scientists: and enjoy the comparisons.

The Church at the Armadale were not as good, apparently, as when they played at The Venetian Room about 4 days later. They were still pretty fine. Craig Hooper, having just put The Reels to rest, seemed surprisingly at home. Someone said he was singing along but not actually singing what everyone else was. An enigma.

The Armadale is a pretty rank place really. It's usually just the place where all the over-30's drift to see some crap like Peter Cupples, you know the sort of thing. What occasionally possesses them to put on a band like the Church (they used to have The Reels some -times too) I don't know but I'm certainly not complaining because it's not far from my house and I can almost always be assured of getting the last tram home. A nice easy night out.

This Friday night we were treated to a hearty dose of Pink Floyd's "The Wall" beforehand which was just right for helping along the state of nausea that no air and being packed in with a lot of Eastcoast trendies tends to bring. The Church came on and managed reasonably well to dispell this horrible atmosphere: playing a lot of stuff from "Remote Luxury" the highlight of which must surely be Marty Willson-Piper's "10,000 Miles".

Steve Kilbey didn't look incredibly worried about this threat to his position in the band, though he did at times look pretty desperate, with his guitar-nerd facial expressions. You know, kind of looking manically at his fingers on the strings, while he mouths "fucken'fuck fuckyoufucken" etc to himself.

Kilbey is a good writer: unfortunately he can't see clear to writing a few jokes for his audience- all we got was a couple of curt acknowledgements. I guess that's not important. What is? Enjoyment? I would've felt better if I thought I was doing something adventurous, but I guess I did enjoy myself. Of course I'd rather have been seeing The Moodists or The Trifids or The Go-Betweens but I'm sorry, I like The Church. I just can't help it.



S. Kilbey by Kim Lignon.

Frozen Concentrate: Girls/Arabic Harem

I want to like this but for some reason I don't -you see it is of very worthy sentiment and I don't like to pan it I think the problem is that I don't like her voice. Hang on I'll just get 'Cut' and see if they do sound like The Slits as the press release suggests.

Hmm I suppose they're slightly slitty- they like to rattle & bang things too, but Frozen Conc. are faster & more flowing... however I should refrain from writing things like that because we all know that comparison is the lowest form of criticism and I tend to do it too often and still David, the so-called editor of this magazine doesn't do anything about it. He's not discerning enough you see, he continues to print facile and irrelevant reviews like this that I write. But what for? no-one will hear this record in Australia and I doubt if this will inspire them to send away for it so why has it been published? because it gives the magazine a cosmopolitan feel? because it takes up space? because he doesn't want to be rude and tell me it's crap? Who knows. I don't. I know he'll probably still publish it though and that is very stupid.

Mischa.