

*Not rival piss take zines or even complete electronic annihilation, can stop it. Its back again, bigger and more frightening than ever . Its.....*

## **MOTORWAY DREAMER**



Motorway Dreamer is is " edited" and published by John Nielsen Hall  
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### **In This Issue:**

World In The Bar Day	Rich Coad, Rob Jackson & a cast of thousands	Page 1
Music & Me	Ted White	Page 9
A Musical Evolution	John Nielsen-Hall	Page 17
Tod Bold: A Stand Up Life	Melanie Studd-Walls ( probably Graham Charnock in a dress)	Page 21
Obligatory Poetry Section	Johnny is nothing if not persistent	Page 31
Back Seat Drivers	A letter column of sorts	Page 32

### **Art & Picture Credits**

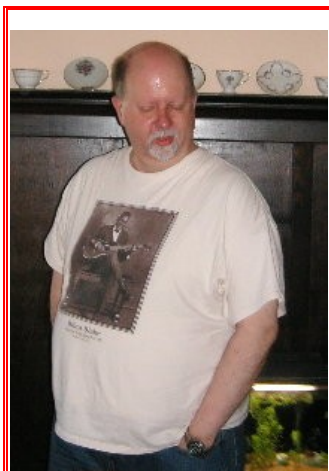
Harry Bell	Cover
Rich Coad	Pic on Page 1 of Bruce Townley,Pic on Page 4 of Jay Kinney & Robert Lichtman
Robert Lichtman	Pic on Page 2 of Rich Coad & Jack Calvert
Ian Maule	Group photo on Page 5, Group by the pond Page 8
Rob Jackson	Pic of Pat Charnock on Page 6, Group on Page 7,interior group and exterior of the garden on Page 8
Johnny	Pic's on page 8 of Graham Charnock & the cat
Graham Charnock	Art on Page 21
Everything else	Is clip art, images shamelessly obtained by googling, scans and so on.

**Wiltshire calling California- There's a party going on...**



It was August 12<sup>th</sup> 2006- in Wiltshire the day dawned overcast and windy- indeed the wind got stronger as the day went on; too strong, despite the later sunshine, to sit and drink and stuff Pizza down your neck in the open air. Coachman's Cottage is on the top of a hill and a bit open to the elements. In Point Richmond, California we don't know what the weather was like, because basically by the time folks were in the vertical and moving around out there, we in Wiltshire were too pissed to ask. You see, we were attempting a fannish first - an electronic hook up between two locations thousands of miles apart where regular habitués of the InTheBar e-list would be doing what they do, only in reality as well as in the virtual world.

What follows is a sort of digest of the occasion. Rich Coad gives a kind of con-rep, while Robert Jackson weaves together posts from the e-list on the day and interpolates as necessary. For those readers perhaps unfamiliar with the *Dramatis Personae* I provide a side bar with some details of the fans involved. But first, let's call up our West Coast correspondent, **Rich Coad**.....



*Bruce Townley-  
resplendent in delta  
bluesman T Shirt,  
disdains his British  
public*

In the end, it all worked out.

Despite John's last minute panic that the incompatibility of Ian's Webcam and his own Mac would mean a complete and utter failure of this perhaps first ever attempt to link two fannish parties separated by a good- sized ocean, at least one very big river, several mountain ranges, and a desert or two, in the end the innate technical abilities of the cosmic-minded came through and ageing fans in Wiltshire were able to chat and wave to ageing fans in California.

As Allen Baum, super-technologist and near-godfather of the PC industry, put it, "I work in the computer field and I'm still amazed that this can be done!" Of course west coast attendee Doug Faunt, near- godfather of the internet, may have been less amazed.

It all started with John Nielsen-Hall's announcement of a garden party for all those willing to make the trek to his rural estate in remotest Wiltshire. Explicit directions to his cunningly hidden Coachman's Cottage were provided and included such arcana as NOT turning at particular intersections, where to find cut-outs when

confronted with oncoming traffic, how to avoid having the hedge scratching both sides of the car, and what to do if a sudden thunderstorm had turned the "road" into four-foot deep ruts of mud. Oh yes, there is a reason that John sings the praises of Subaru and its all-wheel drive vehicles. Along with the announcement was the suggestion that any US members of the e-list might consider having a shindig of their own on the same day, thus creating a World InTheBar Day party. Why, it was even possible that a Webcam could be rigged up to provide pictures of something more interesting than Ian Maule's suburban driveway.

Wotthehell, Archie, I thought, it's been a while since we've had a party and August is a good time for a barbecue. And so World InTheBar Day became a reality with UK and California contingents.

The preparation was intense. John frantically combed eBay for Airport cards to use in connecting his Mac to a wireless router. Rich calmly went to the Apple on-line store and ordered an iCam for his G4 Cube. Ian Maule established an AOL IM account and found that he needed XP in order for video messages to work. Rich airily suggested an upgrade and relaxed waiting for a message from Ian which showed up just before England took on Portugal in a World Cup match that proved Graham Charnock psychic when he eerily predicted a nil-nil draw that England would lose on penalty kicks because, you know, they're crap at them.

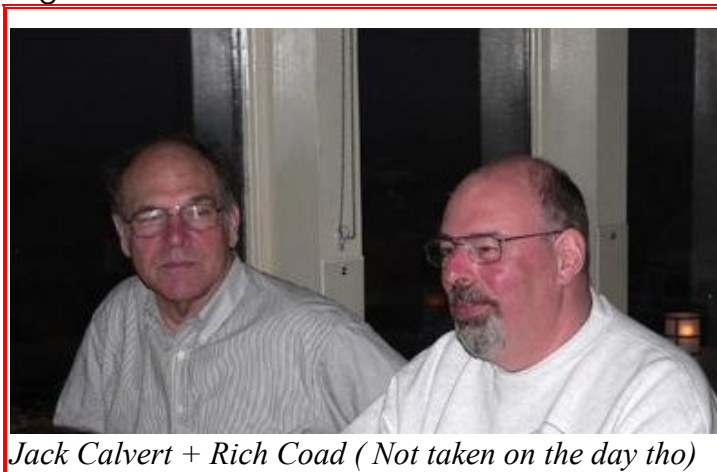
So there was Ian in his nice suburban home in London and here was I in my old, but nice, suburban house in California and there we were, as fans usually are, desperately looking at one another's bookshelves in the background to see if either one of us had something especially cool we'd like to borrow. Unfortunately Webcam resolution leaves a lot to be desired and I'm still not sure what books Ian has. There were a lot of them, though. We chatted amiably for the half hour before the match started and, content that we had proved the technology usable, signed off to watch England go down to defeat once again.

A few weeks later I received a message from John Nielsen-Hall. Airport cards have arrived, now what do I do? With skills learned from years spent in the technological vortex that is Silicon Valley, where even the taco vendors have advanced degrees and a business plan on Powerpoint to show to hungry venture capitalists, I quickly accessed Google and typed in "Airport cards Mac G3." Before I could say, "I wonder if an airport card will work on a G3?" I had my answer and forwarded the URL to John.

"Bloody hell!" came the anguished reply from darkest Wiltshire. "Now what am I supposed to do with these useless Airport cards?"

Perseverance is its own virtue, as John soon found out. Repeated googling led him to more technically adventurous sites and he was soon able to report that "I've prised the keyboard off my clamshell Mac G3 and installed the Airport card underneath it. The connection to the network works but the display has gone all wobbly." And later, "Fixed the wobbly display. I am magnificent! Who needs Maule?" And, later still, "Sorry, an attack of hubris. I am all round useless and need all the help I can get." Meanwhile Rich picked up a PC Webcam for his laptop, hooked up the wireless router, and ran a quick test the night before the Big Event. Everything looked A-OK.

The day itself dawned. First in England then, eight hours later, in California. The last instructions, desperate pleas really, had been sent from Wiltshire: "Whatever you do, for the love of God, don't go in to Pewsey!" Inspection of the



*Jack Calvert + Rich Coad ( Not taken on the day tho)*



Pewsey website soon revealed why that name struck such horror in our Buddhist friend. Large swathes of the town were given over to people dressed as animals: a hare, a stag, a pig. Doubtless stray travellers were lured by these masquers into graveyards where young people would copulate with abandon until overcome with disgust at the paganistic revelry surrounding them the travellers suddenly found themselves before a giant wicker man with the heathen of the town surrounding them. Yes, indeed, for Christ's sake, don't go in to Pewsey!

Not long after I started up my computer the message arrived. Cartledge1x was trying to start a video chat—would I accept the invite? Of course I would and within seconds a hue and cry from Wiltshire could be heard and a bunch of ageing fans staring anxiously at something—something that was presumably a computer with a Webcam attached—could be seen. Almost immediately the chanting began.

"We want Bruce! We want Bruce! We want Bruce!"

"It's only 9:00 am. here," I told the assembled images. "Nobody will be here until 1:00."

The images looked confused and dismayed. It's true, folks! The cosmic minds of fans worldwide, the slans with tendrils under their hair, those who can intuitively grasp at what fraction of  $c$  the time dilation effect becomes noticeable, the people who have no difficulty conceiving that quantum entanglement should be exploited for commercial teleportation, or accepting that nanobots injected in the bloodstream will continuously repair cells in a much more intelligent manner than millions of years of blind evolution has managed for the immune system, the guys that can explain how all reality is based on the harmonic vibrations of superstrings within a single brane of the multiverse—yes, it's all too true that these same folks are completely bowled over by the concept of time zones.

"Oh," said Graham, looking dismally sad, "I guess we'll try again in about four hours."

Two hours later they were online again. "Oh," said Charnock, "we hoped that the time dilation effect might have been of some use."

"What is real," thought Jay Kinney. "Is it reality that I am in Point Richmond, California, staring at a small window on a laptop computer or is it reality that I am enjoying a party in Wiltshire with a bunch of British fans I know only from e-lists who are complaining that they can't hear what I am saying. Can both be simultaneously real? Is there an underlying reality where I am in Rome circa 70 A.D. or have I just read too much Philip K. Dick?" The author of *The Masonic Enigma* (forthcoming 2007 and well worth obtaining) put such thoughts aside and squinted at the tiny window on the small laptop screen.

Robert Lichtman, rapidly recalling the names of each fanzine that had been published by the images on the screen, the years of publication, size and colour of paper used, and which issues were missing from his five filing cabinets of alphabetically arranged fanzines (by editor except in some cases which were by title), spoke up saying, "Thank you for those back issues of *Phile*, Graham. They are in the third file cabinet from the left, second drawer, about two-thirds of the way back. When is *Bye Bye Johnny 2* coming out?"

In the tiny window on the small laptop screen could be seen (if one had adequately powerful vision correction) Graham Charnock, Pat Charnock, Ian Maule, Pam Wells, Dave Langford, Rob Jackson, and host John Hall. Audrey, John's significant other, crossed into view occasionally while Janice Maule maintained a discreet distance from the camera.

Much of the chat from Britain was of the type "What did he say?" and "Why is it breaking up like that?" After a time Windows decided to present the blue screen of death and, after swearing that they wouldn't look at the porn, Jay and Robert were reconnected with Wiltshire on the Mac. Things worked much better after that (because, you know, it's a Mac).

The clamour for Bruce Townley to make an appearance kept up long enough to force Bruce to drop his disdain for modern technology and wave to the crowd. Tumultuous applause followed.

Doug Faunt, godfather of the internet, and Allen Baum, godfather of the PC, joined in the conversation from the East Bay. Allen mentioned that he had lived in Cambridge for a time, causing a frantic casting about in Wiltshire for any Cambridge graduates. But there were none. Dave Langford (who had already left) and Rob Jackson were both Oxford men.

Between stints of cooking Tandoori chicken and playing the role of genial host, Rich managed to get a hello or two in. For about two hours the transatlantic parties coalesced about the computers and fans from each culture swapped anecdotes and trivialities. It wasn't quite a convention but it was more than a party. It was all great fun.

On another e-list the following day, Jay Kinney wondered if this was the first time such a link up had been done within SF fandom. No, replied Ted White, but it's the first time it's been done by \*fannish fans\*.

OFFICIAL!

## The World in Wiltshire (or, The Glorious Twelfth) – the World InTheBar Day party report

by Rob Jackson from posts InTheBar during and after the gathering in August 2006. My contributions are in plain type. *Contributions from others in italics.*

**Rob Jackson,**

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*Pam said to me, only the other day, that she might not be able to make it. But she did.*

*And Ian complained that someone ran into the back of his Jazz. But it didn't stop him coming.*

*Rob just complained.*

*So did Graham - he wanted to change the venue at the last minute - silly man.*

*Because it's lovely here, deep in the wilds of Wiltshire.*

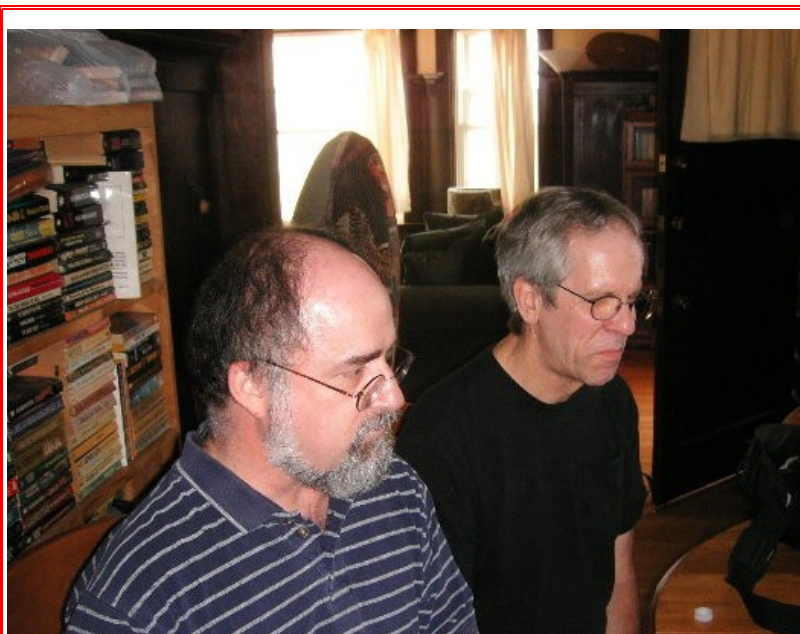
**Pat C**

What did I complain about, Pat? I didn't hear me complaining. For me, the journey was lovely too. After stopping at a big out-of-town M&S near Southampton to buy Mediterranean foodie contributions, I turned off onto the quiet A4, through the little town of Hungerford then up through Chilton Foliat. I thought I was having a great time. And still think so - it really was excellent, thanks to all concerned, especially Johnny & Audrey. (Also I am sure those on the West Coast will be saying thanks to Rich and Stacy.)

\*\*\*\*\*

*Here is official news from Johnny and Audrey's gaff as World InTheBar day kicks off. Johnny's gazebo blew down meaning drinking and eating started off promptly indoors. Ian thinks he has installed a webcam successfully on my laptop, which we will test out in due course. Johnny has given us a guided tour of his mouldering heap and shown us round his house and estate as well. The winter ballroom is magnificent as are the stately gardens and the carp pools and the swimming pool and tennis courts. Full pix to follow soon. I have yet to put my tent up, am busy getting drunk first, probably not the best order in which to do things.*

**Graham C.**



Jay Kinney + Robert Lichtman stare in horror and disbelief at what the little window shows going on in Wiltshire

# WHOS WHO

*Pat C.* is Pat Charnock, long suffering wife of Graham Charnock. Famous fan-ed in her own right back in the day - see WRINKLED SHREW

*Graham C.* is Graham Charnock. Claims to edit something called BYE BYE JOHNNY

*Dave* is Dave Langford a.k.a Captain Ansible, multi-hugo bedecked fan-ed. Aurally challenged. Hazel is his partner who didnt come to the party.

*Mary R* is Mary Reed, posting from Pennsylvania, though actually a Brit and long time fixture of fandom.

*Ian a.k.a Doctor Technical* is Ian Maule, like Rob Jackson a one time editor of legendary Brit fanzine MAYA and member of the Gannets and Surrey Limpwrist. Now in quiet retirement practising falling off ladders into his shrubbery.

*Harry* is Harry Bell, noted artist, Bodhisattva and great fannish institution who needs no entry in Who Who such as this, but gets one anyway since if it were not for him, InTheBar would not exist.

UNCLE JOHNNY -Wot? You don't know who I am? Send your brain in for a service!

This is Rob J typing on Johnny's Mac. Not surprisingly there is more food and drink than we are ever going to be able to manage. Burp. Pizzas, cans of beer and friendly conversation everywhere.

There are two webcams here now, both brought by Ian. One is now installed on Graham's laptop and the other on Johnny's main desktop. God knows which of them will work, as both had to have new drivers downloaded. But you might even have two pictures together if you are really unlucky. There is also an unscripted Old Man video.....

We have also had a guided tour of the amazing glass ballroom/conservatory and the massive fish ponds joined by a little stream. There may be as many as 40,000 baby fish in there.

Great time so far. See you soon (hopefully literally).

*I clicked, I went, I saw. Bit too many fat Old Boodists in it, I thought.*

**UNCLE JOHNNY**

Also an embarrassing number of overweight bearded psychiatrists with hip bags making them look fatter.

The araucaria tree gets a supporting role in the Old Man video which Graham shot (almost unscripted) in front of the stately home part of the estate. As well as the tree, there were various humans in other supporting roles. Though Graham was possibly a bit disappointed in it, I thought the video was pretty good at the time.

You can see the cottage in Ian's photo, no. 0485. The front door is to the right, behind Graham & Pat in the photo.

*Thanks for another good batch of photos, Rob. I liked the tree.*  
**Bruce T.**

You're welcome.

Dave, I'll copy those photos of the Hall abode, including the ones of the /e/n/g/i/n/e/ s/h/e/d/ ballroom, onto CD as promised.

*Thanks a lot! I was kicking myself for not having brought my own camera.... Hazel gaped and boggled most satisfyingly when Pam downloaded those two pics here, and is agog for more. Well done, that Cartledge.*

**Dave**

*That glass ballroom is pretty amazing, isn't it? I've seen a jpeg of it elsewhere...what a marvellous sight it must have been in its heyday with the band playing and the dancers swirling and all that.*

**Mary R**

*who joined Harry in lifting a mug at 7 pm UK time*

*Mary, you weren't the only one who couldn't hear. We had Ian and Dave cupping their ears at us. Mind you, Ian's hearing did seem to be quite selective. Every time I tried to insult him, his ears seemed to have miraculously cleared.*



Ian's Picture 0485 - see above L-R Rob J, Pam Wells, Dave Langford ( hidden) Janice Maule, Audrey Nielsen Hall, Johnny, Pat C, Cartledge



*And it was really nice to see Dave Langford. It's the first time I've had a conversation with him since the old days. He was at Brosnan's bash but he pretended not to be able to hear me and we didn't do more than exchange shy smiles.*

*I think Johnny posted a photo of the glass ballroom some months ago, and I'd been looking forward to seeing more of it. It's a beautiful cast-iron and glass structure, but in such poor condition, it makes you want to weep! Johnny explained that it's Grade 1 listed, but it's difficult to find a use for it if they do restore it, and access is by very narrow country lanes so it wouldn't be very accessible.*

**Pat C**

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*About the transatlantic link later. It wasn't perfect, but still good fun. (Pam and Dave had to leave midway through the transatlantic link-up.)*

*I spotted: Graham Charnock, Pat Charnock, Rob Jackson, Uncle Johnny, Dave Langford, Ian Maule.*

**Bruce T.**

*All of them were there along with Pam Wells and Audrey (we had an Audrey here too) and who am I forgetting?*

**Rich**

*Janice Maule, that's who. Many thanks to Uncle Johnny & Audrey for spiffy hospitality....*

**Dave**

*I was feeling a bit nervous and shy about this whole webcam thing, and chatting to people across the great divide. So I kind of tried to avoid the camera when we started for real, but they wouldn't let me. But it was OK - it was nice to talk to Robert and Jay and some other people. But we missed talking to Rich - presumably he was too busy being a host once he'd spent all that time sorting out the gremlins - and Bruce, who just flitted in and out of shot without stopping to chat, and Jack, who wasn't there yet.*



*Pat aligns herself with the old Monkey puzzle tree for the purposes of comparison*

*By that time we'd been partying for 10 hours, and were really pooped, but you Yanks were just starting. Hope y'all had a great time.*

**Pat C**

*Indeed we did. The party-lag was unavoidable.*

*Rich was busy manning the barbecue pit, and ably so – as per Bruce's and my compliments on the tandoori chicken. Like you, I felt some initial nervousness about the link but it dissipated almost immediately once it began. As noted earlier, the contact was vastly improved when we moved from the failed laptop to the magnificent Mac.*

**Robert Lichtman**

*On Rich's Mac, the images from the US side were very sharp- much clearer than when the image was switched to what we at the UK end were broadcasting.*

*I think Doctor Technical may be considering investing in a more up-to-date webcam for future events. Ian?*

*The other lesson we should learn in future is not to have the crowd of us sitting or standing in \*front\* of the only significant light in that part of the room! I am sure we must all have looked spooky to you folk over there.*

\*\*\*\*\*

*Thanks to Uncle Johnny, Audrey and Baristas for making World ITB day such a memorable occasion. Over the link I got to talk to Jay, Robert and a young girl called Carol but failed miserably to see Mr. Townley or the drink he was*



*holding. My only regret is that because of my current hearing difficulties I didn't catch parts of the conversations.*

*Thanks also have to go to Rich for arranging all the technical stuff at his end.*

**Ian**

*I think you should be thanked yourself Doctor Technical. We could not have done it without you. And thanks for showing up and all. I hope you passed a peaceful night in The Crown.*

**UNCLE JOHNNY**

*I was laying in my tent at mid-night on Saturday night, under an apple tree in the orchard just outside Johnny's stately home, having just spent twenty minutes getting into my sleeping bag and trying to find a less hard spot of ground to park my butt in, with the rain splashing down on the canvas, or plastic, six inches above my head, when I remembered the Perseids and thought to myself shall I bother to get up and look at them, and then thought fuck no, it's fucking raining.*

**Graham C.**

*You can tell your friends and neighbours that the Crown is an eminently acceptable Inn. The room was a little small and the floor slightly uneven (well, what do you expect from a 200 year old (?) Inn) but it was clean and the bed was comfortable. Janice thought the English breakfast was cooked to perfection.*

**Ian**

Can I echo what Ian said, but in relation to your neighbours who run the B&B? The room was marvellous, with a separate bathroom and another separate loo, and a very clean yet Georgian feel to the whole place. I asked about the portrait in the dining-room; it is of Mr Davies's four-greats grandfather, who was with Nelson at Trafalgar, commanding one of the other ships.

Judy put out an amazing spread of fruits, cereals, yoghurt etc. just for me as I was the only guest! She was so welcoming despite the fact that she & her husband were leaving at 9 am for a family event (in Sussex, as it happened) - things like a little transistor radio on the dining-room table in case I wanted to listen to it; though the radio was irrelevant as we got chatting extensively about working in the NHS; her daughter is a doctor.

*Was that great, or was that great? But we must have made right old prats of ourselves on that video link. I have seen that photo that Rich has posted of Jay and Robert looking at a screen in mute disbelief at what they were seeing. Its no wonder Bruce was so shy of appearing in front of that camera. Once he saw the likes of this, he must have wanted to run back to the BART station. Well, I have no excuse and nor has Pam, but the rest were fairly far gone by then. Audrey and I and the Charnox got to bed around midnight. I expected that Old Man would be chattering into the web cam or hammering away at posts out in his tent, fortified by cans of beer and plates of munchies, but apparently when he got warm and comfortable he just went to sleep. I mean, is this the behaviour we expect?*

*It's been raining, and something approaching a gale is now blowing. I have rescued the Gazebo, but a few of the poles are bent. I've hammered them and maybe it will rise again, maybe it won't. I've offloaded the majority of the unconsumed booze on Rob and the Charnox. Got to go out shopping soon. Back to reality. Here's to next year!*

**UNCLE JOHNNY**

*I'm delighted it all went off so well. Just sorry I couldn't be with you.*

**Harry**



*Johnny does his guide thing in the old ballroom*





*Graham and Fish Cuddle Up for the night*



*But someone's watching-that fish is in trouble*



*l-r Audrey,Dave, Cartiledge, Ian Maule*



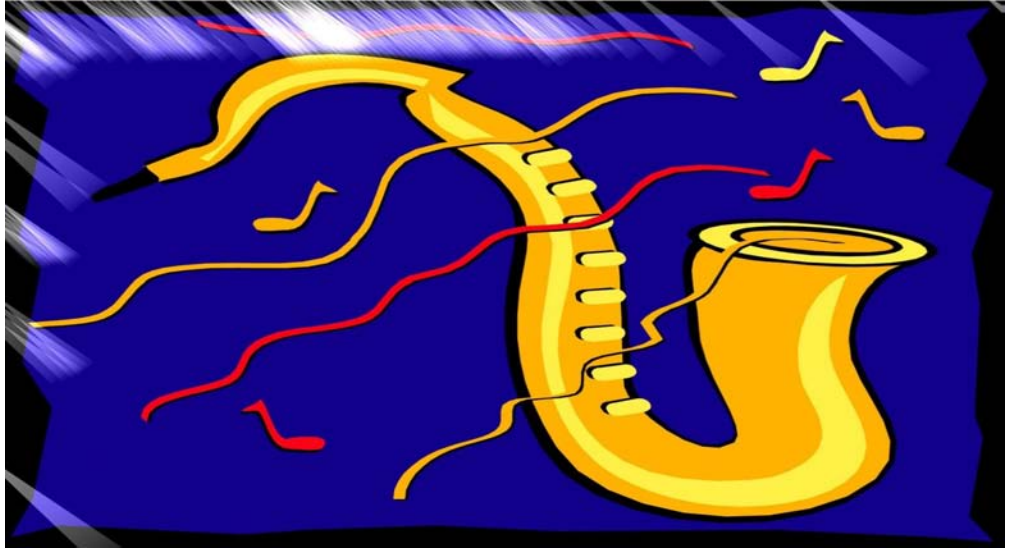
*"Somethings in the water!" l-r Rob,Dave, Cartiledge,Johnny, Pam, Audrey*



*The garden where we would have been but for the inclemency of the weather- note the collapsed gazebo. The big building behind the apple tree is the ballroom. This moody shot by Rob Jackson*



For as long as I've been a fan I've also been into music. Music has been running through my head, a perpetual soundtrack to my life, for as long as I can remember. I learned to whistle as a kid and I've been whistling, humming, and sub-vocalizing music ever since.



My father was into 19th century romantic classical music. He had record albums (12-inch 78s, in big albums), but most often he listened to the radio. He had built his own radios in the '20s and '30s, but the earliest radio I can remember in our house was a big console job - a hunk of furniture - with a circular dial that I liked to play with when I was little, to his annoyance. It received AM and short wave, and during World War Two we listened occasionally to British broadcasts on short wave. Soon after the war was over my father replaced that radio with a fancy Stromberg-Carlson console unit (in "bleached mahogany") which had an FM radio. This way he could hear live broadcasts from New York City of classical concerts.

It also had a record player-changer. And it would play these newfangled "long-player" records, too. But mostly I used it to play my 78-rpm singles.

I can't say I "hated" my father's choice in music. Rather, it bored me. Inculcated in the war-horses of classical music from a very early age, and hearing the same music over and over (albeit in perhaps different performances), I more or less had that music programmed into me to the point that if you played me a few bars of any of those pieces, I would hear the next several bars in my head.

Every once in a while the station my father was listening to would slip up and play something from the twentieth century - usually by a Russian, most likely Prokofiev - and my ears would perk up, and I'd be interested. Here was music which *didn't* bore me. But usually my father would turn off the radio or switch stations when something "modern" came on, making those pieces even rarer treats for me.

So at an early age I was primed for music which sounded *different* from 19th century classical music. That included everything from blues and jazz to 12-tone ("atonal") music. The very first 78 single I ever bought (when I was ten, in 1948) was "Jazz Pizzicato," played by the Boston Pops Symphony. It was, if anything, a "novelty" piece, but I liked it. A year or two later I started buying the singles by Les Paul and his wife, Mary Ford.



Les Paul when recording for Capitol in the 1940's

Les Paul *invented* multi-tracking and the use of speeded-up tapes (actually tapes recorded at slower speeds, which, played back at normal speed, *sounded*



speeded up), which allowed him to turn his electric guitar (another of his inventions) into what amounted to a full orchestra. Similarly, he could turn his wife's voice into a rich choral sound, allowing her to back up her own lead vocals. Between the two of them they turned out dozens of hit records in the '50s. I bought them all.

From Les Paul it was an easy step to jazz - Les had played jazz on occasion - and the Sauter-Finegan orchestra. Sauter and Finegan were arrangers from the big band era of jazz, and together they created a "hi-fi" orchestra (which played instruments that covered the entire sonic spectrum) and highly original arrangements. Their first album, a 10-inch LP, *New Directions In Music*, was one I played constantly, over and over. (By now I had my own record player in my own room and I played that sucker as loud as it would go -- which wasn't very, since it had only a little three-inch speaker.)

From Sauter-Finegan I went to Duke Ellington and Stan Kenton, and then the dam broke and I was into jazz over my head. With each album I liked, I'd look for more albums by those musicians, whom I found playing on different albums in different combinations. Each album I liked opened me up to dozens more.

That led me to *Down Beat*, and reading about jazz. I hunted down the few extant books on jazz at my library. And, on more distant news stands, I found *Metronome* and *Jazz Journal* (the latter a British import). Little did I realize that within a few years I'd be *writing* for *Metronome*.

In the '50s the hippest fans were into Jazz and Sports Cars. That made sense to me, because so was I. I didn't buy my first sports car (a Jaguar XK-120 coupe) until 1958, but I was reading *Road & Track* every issue, starting with its first, and I understood what sports cars were then about.

Boyd Raeburn (who coincidentally shared his name with a '40s band leader) was a BNF of the '50s who was into Jazz and Sports Cars. He put out *A Bas* ("down with"), one of the best fanzines of the '50s. It was a great thrill for me when I finally cracked its pages with a jazz piece in the late '50s.

Harry Warner was not into jazz. He played oboe with the Hagerstown Symphony Orchestra, and played piano well enough to play classical music in his own home, rather than listen to it on records (although he did that, too). In my naiveté I was convinced that if Harry only heard the more challenging and orchestral forms of jazz, he'd be won over by it. So I used to make reel-to-reel tapes for him of my favourite pieces, like John Lewis's compositions for The Modern Jazz Society. Harry politely heard them out, but they didn't change his mind at all.

I was a jazz fan throughout high school, but I listened to others kinds of music too - mostly on my radio. I'd always followed the pop hits, via shows which played the week's top ten hits (sometimes the actual record, sometimes recreations performed live), and when rock and roll happened I was aware of it. I bought Bill Haley's "Shake, Rattle and Roll" as a 78 single, and I bought his subsequent singles, including "Rock Around The Clock" (almost a year before it became a hit when it was used in the movie, *Blackboard Jungle*).

A fellow named Willis Conover did a local show, an hour a night, week nights, on a local "hillbilly" station, WEAM. He called it *The House of Sounds*, and he played jazz. At the time I don't think I knew that Conover was a former fan (from the late '30s), but I did meet him at an Open ESFA Meeting (in Newark, New Jersey) in 1961, a very convivial meeting, since by then he knew me as a published jazz critic. Willis gave up his local show to do a jazz show for Voice of America, and I

taped his final *House of Sounds*, mostly for his between-the-songs talk. In the early 1970s I found that tape and gave a copy of it to him, for which he was quite grateful.

I was grateful to Conover for the jazz he exposed me to in the mid-'50s. Each night he played music from albums which I immediately purchased, and I never regretted any of those purchases. And I was grateful to WEAM for immediately following *The House of Sounds* with a gospel music program, which I usually listened to as well. Black gospel music has a lot in common with jazz, and, thanks to Ray Charles, a lot in common with rhythm and blues. (But primo gospel singer Mahalia Jackson would never sing secular music, and it was hard work for Duke Ellington to talk her into singing a gospel piece from his "Black, Brown and Beige Suite.")

As I got more and more into jazz in the '50s, listening to it, reading about it, even dreaming about it (I dreamed I had a chance to play piano with Thelonious Monk), I started to write about it. And I wrote about it, of course, for fanzines. Initially my own fanzines - primarily *Gambit* - but, as I mentioned earlier, eventually for other fanzines like *A Bas*.

I approached jazz criticism exactly as I had science fiction criticism - which of course I'd learned from people like Damon Knight and James Blish (writing as "William Atheling, Jr."). And I'd started writing SF criticism around 1956 or '57, also for fanzines.

In 1959 my first wife, Sylvia, and I moved to New York City. I moved there to find and follow a professional career in jazz writing. Actually, I was more interested in editing than writing, but I knew that any editorial position I sought would require writing, so I prepared a sample set of pieces. Some were record reviews I'd published in *Gambit*, and some were club-date reviews I'd written after moving to New York City. One was a piece about Paul Quinichette, a tenor sax player who had performed an impromptu concert at Bill Donaho's loft, "The Nunnery."

I quickly learned that *Down Beat's* New York "office" was a rented desk in a room of other rented desks. George Hoeffler, the guy at that desk, was friendly and he sent copies of my work to the main office in Chicago, but Gene Lees, then the Chicago editor, took me in strong dislike and I was never published in *Down Beat*. (I reciprocated his dislike; he was a smarmy fool.)

But over at *Metronome* editor Bill Coss was not only friendly and welcoming, he took me onto the magazine's staff as a "contributing editor" and in short order I was writing a column, book reviews, record reviews and club-date reviews for that magazine. My first column was devoted to Ornette Coleman, then the newest and least understood major figure in jazz. Ornette subsequently said in print that mine was the most perceptive piece yet written about him, which annoyed some of the Big Names among jazz critics, primarily Martin Williams, who thought they had the inside skinny on Coleman.

I was always trying to get more of my record reviews published, since I was paid five bucks a review. I'd turn in a half dozen reviews, and only three would be published. If I turned in a dozen, still only half that number were used. It was not only frustrating, my unpublished reviews (I kept carbons)



were piling up.

I mentioned this to a 14-year-old New Jersey fan named Lenny Kaye, and he asked me if he could publish my unused reviews in his SAPSzine. I said sure, and assembled the reviews into three columns, with some introductory and explanatory material added, which Lenny ran in his SAPSzine.



Lenny Kaye -back in the day, obviously

Almost twenty years later Lenny told me that he had modelled his own career on mine, but in rock rather than jazz. By then he'd been Patty Smith's guitarist and would be Suzanne Vega's producer, etc., etc., and I told him I thought he'd easily surpassed me. But it's odd how one's actions can have those kinds of repercussions.

Lenny told me that in the "green room" of a Georgetown club, The Cellar Door, after introducing me to Patty Smith and John Cale (who had produced their first album and played bass with them on the encore that night). I was there as "Dr. Progresso," a well-known FM radio deejay in the Washington, D.C. area, and a columnist for *The Unicorn Times*, a local entertainment monthly.

*Metronome* had folded in 1962, to be replaced by *Jazz* (later *Jazz & Pop*), initially edited by *Metronome's* final editor, Dan Morgenstern. I wrote some for *Jazz* (my reviews of Charles Mingus's legendary 1962 Town Hall concert and the album released from it, originally published in *Jazz*, have been reprinted and quoted - most recently in the notes for the Blue Note CD of that concert - more extensively than anything else I ever wrote about jazz), but I was burning out.

It comes down to Sturgeon's Law. "90% of everything is crap." This is as true of jazz as it is of SF. As a jazz fan I'd happily skimmed off the cream - the top 10%. As a working jazz critic I was constantly confronted with the other 90%. I got mediocre records to review. I went to club dates where the musicians were just going through the motions for a pay check. And I was all but submerged in this crap: it dominated my time. I listened to crap records too much of the time, and spent too many evenings in jazz clubs listening to tired, repetitious solos. Jazz was losing its thrill for me. Oh, individual musicians (like Mingus, or Coleman) were still making thrilling music, but the field as a whole?

One day I got a Sonny Stitt record to review for *Jazz*. I liked Sonny Stitt. He was a brilliant saxophonist who had abandoned the alto after hearing Charlie Parker. He stayed on tenor until after Parker's mid-'50s death, only then returning to his first love, the alto. But for this record, on *Roulette*, if memory serves (*Roulette*, for which I once did the liner notes for John Handy's second album, was a mob-owned company, whose boss was gunned down in the bar at Birdland) Stitt played tenor, in an organ trio. It was a tired lounge act. It was crap. I returned the record unreviewed. And I stopped being a jazz critic.

I spent much of 1963 reacquainting myself with twentieth century classical music, often with the enthusiastic encouragement of Les Gerber (with whom I was doing *MINAC*, one of the first "ensmalled" fanzines). Ah, Poulenc, Bax, the French wind quintets -- !

And I started listening to AM radio in New York City. The jocks of the day, like Murray The K, Cousin Brucie, and all the other mad screamers who were starting to play the British Invasion bands



along with the Beach Boys. I went out and bought the (45) single of the Beach Boys' "I Get Around" (backed by "Don't Worry Baby," which Boyd Raeburn told me he thought was even better). I started playing rock records at Fanoclast meetings, after years of playing only jazz, initially shocking (or at least surprising) my friends.

In 1962 my wife, Sylvia, had left me for a good friend of ours, Larry McCombs. They moved to Chicago, where they lived together for maybe a year, and then she left him to move to Los Angeles to live with one of Larry's best friends, Fred Langley, whom she married in 1966 (after I'd gotten a Mexican divorce from her). McCombs moved from Chicago to Boston - or, more precisely, Cambridge - where he started publishing a sorta fanzine aimed at local news stand sales, called *Folkin' Around*.

I started a rock column for that publication, and it contains my first writing as a rock critic. (There was also a blues column, written by a young Paul Williams -- who spent much of his column space on The Rolling Stones.) By the mid-'60s I was excited about rock music and the way it was growing and developing. (One of my columns was devoted to a musical analysis of "I Get Around," after Les Gerber and I had listened intently to it and worked out its odd structure. Another contrasted ABC's *Shindig* with NBC's *Hullabaloo*. I preferred the former.)

My fellow jazz critics, with whom I was still somewhat in contact, looked askance at my new enthusiasm for rock music, but over the decade many of them changed their minds. Only Gene Lees stayed in the Dark Ages. By then he was a columnist for *Stereo Review*, thundering out his opposition to any music developed after 1952.

Professionally, of course, I'd made the shift around 1963 from writing about music to writing science fiction. I'd sold stories to *If* and *Amazing*, and then I started selling books, averaging two a year for most of that decade. And in 1963 I'd joined the editorial staff at *F&SF*, and in 1968 I became the editor of my own prozines, *Amazing* and *Fantastic*. So where rock was concerned, I could be a fan and just skim off the cream - that top 10% - and not immerse myself in the other 90% that was crap. I'm proud of the fact that I was one of the first published rock critics (I also contributed a little to Paul Williams' *Crawdaddy*, and more to the post-Williams version of that magazine), but it was as a hobbyist, not as a working professional. Indeed, no money was involved.

In 1970 I moved with my second wife, Robin, and our daughter back to Virginia. Hunting around the radio dial, I found a couple of decent rock stations (and Murray The K was on one of them, to my amazement), but in 1972 I discovered the Georgetown University FM station, WGTB. This station was so much better than any other that I quickly became a regular listener. The volunteer staff of deejays played music from their own collections, and followed no standard playlists. They played progressive rock and they played obscure '50s singles, and they played everything in between. And after I started doing a column on imported rock for *The Unicorn Times* in 1976, I was asked to join the station staff (as "Dr. Progresso," the name of my column). I applied for and obtained my FCC license, and in 1977 I began my own Friday afternoon, 3:00 to 6:00 show.

Between the column and the radio show I received free tickets (and often backstage passes) to every show I wanted to see, and I started interviewing musicians. (My first interview, conducted with Dan Steffan, was of Ian McDonald, the man who wrote most of King Crimson's original album. Subsequently I interviewed most of my heroes; I regret that I never had the chance to meet Brian Eno or any of the ex-Beatles.)

From the age of 8, through the age of 10, I took piano lessons. I worked my way up to Third Year piano, in the Thompson's red books for piano. What a shame I was never exposed to Bartok's "Mikrocosmos" - a far superior set of exercises for learning the piano. Because I quit at 10. The music in the Thompson books was boring - more of the kind of music my father listened to. And within a few years I'd lost not only my ability to "sight-read" and play music, but my ten-finger dexterity. At the age of 13 I taught myself to type on my mother's ancient L. C. Smith by the laborious method of hunt-and-peck - one-finger typing. To this day I remain a one-finger typist (but I'm reasonably fast at it).

In the early mid-'60s I took up alto saxophone. Les Gerber's younger brother, Kenny, had an alto sax and never played it, because he was into drums. (This distressed his parents, who were half of an accomplished string quartet.) So he loaned the sax to me. Later he traded it to me for a Spanish revolver I had with a broken firing pin (making it useless as a gun). Kenny's father found the revolver (which I'd had as a souvenir since my childhood), freaked (New York City had repressive gun laws), and did two things. First he took the revolver apart and dropped its pieces into storm drains all over Brooklyn. Then he demanded the alto sax back from me. Lose-lose.

So I went up to Brooklyn's Fifth Avenue (I lived between Fourth and Third), to a local pawn shop, and bought an alto sax. I still have it.

It's an easy instrument to pick up, but not so easy to master. I cannot claim to have mastered it in the ensuing forty years, but I have learned my way around it. (Along the way I also got a tenor sax, and I've played sopranos and C-melodies.) I started out playing along with Charles Mingus's Atlantic album, *Oh Yeah*. That's the one with Roland Kirk playing brilliant sax. It was awfully frustrating at first.

At some point in the early '70s I decided that before I was 40 I would take piano lessons and regain my keyboard technique. This became a goal for several years, but I never actually did it. Instead, by the time I was 40 I was playing sax with other musicians, before paying audiences. My first such gig was New Year's Eve, 1978-79, at Georgetown's Key Theatre. At least five bands played that night. I played with synthesizer wizard Rupert Chappelle, improvising sax bits to blend with his keyboards. I apparently made a good impression on the audience, and one of the other bands, Better Living, asked me to jam with them, which I did on several (recorded) occasions.

Then I joined another band, Standard Appliance, as a guest musician, for a concert at the Washington Project for the Arts, with poetess Deirdre Baldwin. This is something we actually rehearsed for (and subsequently did a studio recording of).

A friend had a basement 8-track recording studio, and I started recording there, working with musicians who were friends of mine. I recorded my first studio composition, "The Slow Mingus Shuffle/Goodbye" in the spring of 1979, laying down two tenor sax lines and an alto sax lead over bass and drums. It was an elegy for my recently-deceased hero.



Rupert Chappelle, at the Art Farm, Maryland

In the early fall of 1980 (back from my year in New York at *Heavy Metal* magazine) I led Dr. Progresso & The Hired Assassins in an outdoor gig at Glen Echo Park. That was a good band, with the best drummer in D.C., and two very hot guitarists, who switched off on guitar and bass. My friend and fellow fan Dan Joy played keyboards.

At this point I stopped playing for a while and started producing records and concerts by other bands. My friend Matthew Moore and I started up New Decade Productions Inc., produced several concerts (the best known musician we presented was Daevid Allen, of Gong), and a series of money-losing singles. (The bands we recorded tended to break up almost immediately upon release of their single.)

When the money ran out (after we'd released a single by Dan Joy's band, Cats for Dinner, which then broke up) Matthew and I ended up forming a jamming band with transplanted Los Angelenos, Jan and Howie Moss. Sherri Gottlieb had introduced me to Jan at the 1978 Westercon, and suggested I visit her and her new husband after they moved to the D.C. area. I did, and I took Matthew along. It turned out Jan played keys and Howie played guitar. I brought my sax, and Matthew started messing with a drum machine.

Back in the late '60s I'd been in an almost-band, which met in my Brooklyn basement. In that band, lacking a sax, I'd "played" Mike McInerney's clarinet, kinda. The only member of the band with valid musical credentials was our vocalist and front-person, guitarist-singer Barbara Main, then Andy Main's wife. She went on to subsequent solo fame in Toronto, sans Andy. But we'd had a great name: Barbara & The Bohemians.

So at some point the jam band with the Mosses became Barbara & The Bohemians. We met weekly and recorded everything we did on cassettes. But after only a year or so (and after Steve Brown, of *SF Eye*, had joined us on bass), Howie was transferred to the Pittsburgh area, and we lost the Mosses.

But the band persisted. After several fluctuations in personnel, we ended up a trio, with Matthew, myself, and "Data Dave" Chandler on bass, percussion, sax, and other things. By then Matthew was playing keyboards and our drum machine (by then a sophisticated one) was supplemented by a live drum and cymbal. And I no longer played just saxes (now Barcus-Berried through digital delays, loops, and effects), but had many keyboards as well. I had a Roland String Machine, two Roland analog synthesizers (no presets), a PolyKorg, and a number of Casios, including both a digital synth and a tunable sampler. I also had three Ibanez rack-mounted digital delays, and a bunch of pedals for flanging, phasing, etc.

The net result was that we created a dense, multi layered music which sounded like a lot more than three people.

And in late 1985 Matthew and I bought a digital recording system. To the untrained eye it was a Beta video recorder, with a thin box sitting on top of it. The thin box was a PCM unit which converted analog to digital and vice-versa, and the signal was recorded on Betamax tapes. Each tape would hold up to three hours of music. We recorded ourselves for three years digitally, and I have hundreds of hours recorded. Thus far I have extracted two CD's from those tapes. Many more are possible.



My marriage to Lynda in 1987, and the birth of our son, Aaron, at the very end of that year, put an end to Barbara & The Bohemians. We played our last in 1988. We had never played publicly (too hard to move all that equipment), but we'd played for a couple of hours every week for three or four years -- all improvised music. The music we made was ten to twenty years ahead of its time. We called it "macrominimalism."

A few years ago Dan Joy returned to my area. He'd been living in Los Angeles (hanging out with Tim Leary in his last days), and in San Francisco, but now was back in northern Virginia. We got together to digitize some of his cassettes of his music, and then started talking about playing together again. I had not touched my saxes for fifteen years. Then another friend whom I'd met through music, JD Mack, suggested he join us on bass, and we decided to actually do it.

The Saturday night we got together to play was the day my mother died. I did not tell either of them; I wanted to forget that right then and lose myself in music. My equipment was largely packed away, disassembled, but Dan brought over two superior keyboards - ghod, they'd evolved in twenty years - and JD his bass. I took out my alto sax, but didn't try to play it much. Mostly I played keys.

It was an experiment, to see how we'd sound together. Dan and I had played together before, but JD was the unknown quality. To no one's surprise, we sounded good. We recorded ourselves and we liked what we heard on playback.

By our second session we had a name for our little band, Conduit. As a total-improvisation band, we felt we were a "conduit," channelling the music. We were very compatible, both musically and in general, as friends. After only a few (roughly monthly) sessions, we decided we needed a drummer, and fortunately we had another friend, Bob Crain, who played drums (among other things - he also plays bass, keyboard and sax). Bob lives just outside Falls Church, and has his own house, with a nice big basement in which we set up our equipment.

Bob was a perfect addition to the band. Not only do the drums provide a better anchor for the beat, but Bob has a C-melody sax and plays my tenor. In the course of a session, Bob and JD may switch instruments, and JD can also play drums and keys.

Naturally, adding drums added to the complexity of recording. We're using a number of mics, and thus tracks, just for the drums. Recording in stereo (mixed down) was becoming too limiting. So we bought a sixteen-track mixing board with a hard drive, on eBay. A total of \$600 has given us the equivalent of a \$30,000 analog recording studio board and tape machines. Right now we're using only twelve tracks to record.

This means that the mix down has a lot more potential. When we listen to the playback of the first mix (in a separate session), we critique it and if necessary subsequently remix to remove embarrassing clunkers (usually mine, on sax). Although we strive for a "natural" mix that accurately portrays what we played, it's nice to know that we can fix errors more easily.

Thus far we've had eleven sessions, which have produced about fifteen CD's (some sessions result in two). We've given copies to various people on the local music scene, with the result that we've been played on the radio and we've been offered bookings. We'll be playing Baltimore's Orion Studios this November.

Toward that end, and because JD had never performed in public, we decided to invite friends to come be an audience for our July 1 session. Fans like Steve and Elaine Stiles showed up, as did Walter Miles and his toddler daughter. Conduit 11, *Live July 1, 2006* is the resulting two-CD set. Some applause can be heard between tracks.

So I'm back in a band again, back playing saxes and keys in an improvisatory setting. What kind of music do we play? By turns, it's melodic, atonal, spacey or jazzy. Loosely described, it's "progressive" or art-rock. But recently we've started playing what we call "post-modern rock and roll" -- our take on '50s rock'n'roll. It makes a nice change of pace.

So that's a brief overview on Music & Me. As you can see, my involvement in music has paralleled my involvement with fandom, with a lot of cross-pollination taking place, and I've been everything from a listener, to a critic, to a deejay, to a musician. Music has been an integral part of my life. I'm now in my late 60s, but when I'm playing music I'm timeless, ageless, and still (in my own mind) "the kid."



*Dr Progresso at the wheels of steel*



## A MUSICAL EVOLUTION



## John Nielsen Hall

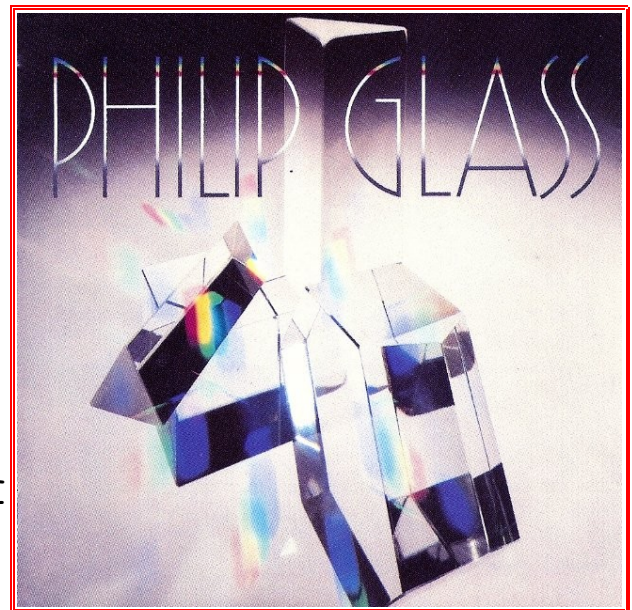
It was January 1990, and I was jogging, or at least, I was energetically walking, on a very frosty morning in Dumfriesshire. The white frost rimed the pine trees, and hung delicate drops of ice from the bare twigs on the bushes. I had a walkman concealed in my layers of clothing, and headphones clamped over my ears. I was listening to **Glassworks** by Philip Glass. The sound of the icy piano rippling through the repetitive figures of the music, the white icy landscape around me, transfixed me. I thought I had never heard or experienced anything like this music before.

In fact, I had heard Philip Glass before. I had heard Mike Oldfield play part of **North Star** sometime in the late seventies, but then it made no impression. The piece, the arrangement - who knows? More likely it was that back then I was still fixated on Rock and songwriting. If you like, back then I rated words AND music, and one of Oldfield's gigs, (he being a primarily instrumental artiste), would not be a place that I would be receptive, I suppose, to anything radically new. To be sure, I had been brought up in a home where the great nineteenth century and even some twentieth century masters of the classical tradition were regularly played on my fathers high-fidelity audio equipment. I loved the dramatic brass cascades of Sibelius and the long string ecstasies of Mahler. But Les Paul and Chuck Berry blew all that away. I knew it, but I didn't really respond to it any more.

And during the inflated self indulgences of the Progressive rock era I had found much to admire in Emerson Lake & Palmer and the "fusions" of Jazz and Rock evident in Chicago and Blood Sweat & Tears, more adventurously in Tubes and Nucleus. ( I was the proud possessor of the first CCS album), but contrarily I also was often heard to bang on about the purity of straight rock'n'roll. I owned albums by the J.Giels Band, Doctor Feelgood, and I lauded the mystic lyrics and pristine guitar and pedal steel of Michael Nesmith. There were a lot of contradictions in all of that. In 1990 I was aware, in a way I had not been before, of a lot of the contradictions of my life.

In 1989, my wife had died. That frosty morning I was on a Buddhist retreat, and by then I had been admitting to Buddhism for about five years and had been deep into comparative religion, eastern mysticism and the head-banging paradoxes of koans for a long while. Really, the time for me and Philip Glass was now right. And not only Glass, but also Steve Reich and Brian Eno and John Adams.

All this music appeared on " classical" record labels. I thought of it as classical music. Some years before I had rediscovered Ravel, particularly the piano works. At times, I though I was " coming home". But that just some more crap my mind scribbled on my mental wallpaper.



I was sitting in my car in traffic one day and the most hideous god awful noise assaulted my ears. I thought the local FM station must have been so hard up it couldn't afford decent engineers as the CD they were playing kept sticking - I thought. What I thought I was hearing was **Love Sensation** by Loleatta Holloway, but what I was actually hearing was **Ride on Time** by Black Box, who I later learned were Italian. The CD wasn't sticking, the artistes had cut up one or two vocal phrases from **Love Sensation** and digitally looped them- and any one who has ever heard Black Box knows what else is there. I suffered an extreme reaction to this record. I hated it and loved it at the same time. Trying to find out more about it, I went to a record shop in Oxford where they still played you records , usually on 12" vinyl, if you asked to hear a particular tune.

The guy in there explained how there was a whole European scene of clubs and electronic dance music. In the UK, we called most of it Techno, but there were lots of fine lines sub-dividing the genre into other bits. I didn't follow it all, and I still don't. But I came out of his shop with three 12"s all of which I liked a whole lot better than **Ride on Time**. They were **Little Fluffy Clouds** by

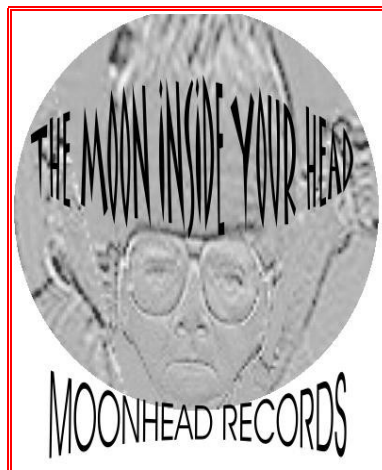


The Orb, **Nightstalker** by Altitude and a remix of **Crazy** by Seal.

Back at the Buddhist community I was living in at the time, these purchases were not popular. I pointed out the subtle use of **Electric Counterpoint** by Steve Reich in The Orb track, the minimalist layers of just four notes in the Altitude, the remixed organ parts in the Seal, reminding one strongly of the lengthy organ solo in **Wont Get Fooled Again** by The Who. But all my skilful analysis went for nought - my enthusiasm was my own. But that didn't stop me buying more endlessly looping beats and sounds and I'm still doing it.

There's something about the simplicity of the music. Okay, it doesn't sound that simple when it's so loud and the beat is so relentless, but it is. There are some organ pieces by Glass which I have noted provoke much the same reaction in some of my listeners. Whereas the soft calm subtly changing piano pieces relax, the vast volume of the organ (a Rogers on the CD's of these, but they are sometimes performed in Cathedrals.) changes perception, and tenses people. Dance music is never about relaxing (although by the early naughties, the Chill had set in and various blue and calm pieces had started to appear) and it's probably only by being very happy on drugs that you can stand hour after hour of that fascist beat, relieved by the orgasms of compressed and de-compressed signal. But in my view, that's a good reason for sitting down and listening to it, according to the respect you might give a piece of classical music or even jazz.

There is a lot in this music that is antithetical to jazz and rock. While it's possible to argue that the music is an improvisation, its performance cannot be. The pieces only fit one way, there is no room for solo's or down or up tempo changes. In Techno the beat dominates everything and it comes from a machine playing a pre-programmed sequence. If you are looking for songwriting in the mature Indy/rock tradition, this music will not satisfy you either. Lyrics, where they appear at all, are inane and naïve in the extreme. Very often, looped phrases from another record or bits of speech suffice. I consider all this a merciful release. As the nineties went on I was not solely devoted to this new music. I bought a lot of Rock too, particularly the Brit pop bands such as Oasis and more especially Radiohead. But I was no longer able to empathise with the introspection of the lyrics. I enjoy songs like **Champagne Supernova** or **Karma Police**, but I can't take them that seriously. I love the big clanging guitar in Coldplay but the miserablism of the words leaves me unmoved, I wonder if it's a coincidence that the popularity of techno dance craze Acid House came when the biggest acts in British rock were bands like My Bloody Valentine? And American music? Don't get me started. Never in the field of artistic endeavour have so few musical furrows been ploughed by so many.



I have taken up messing about with recorded musics myself. There's only so much you can do when you don't have access to original masters, but simple software enables you to split a lot of electronic music down to its digital parts, and then you can reassemble them a little differently. Recently I've been playing with someone else's mix of some Steve Reich pieces, and I have once again been overwhelmed by the mystical simplicity of this apparently complex music. Reich's work in the seventies with looped and phased speaking voices



Steve Reich -authentic genius

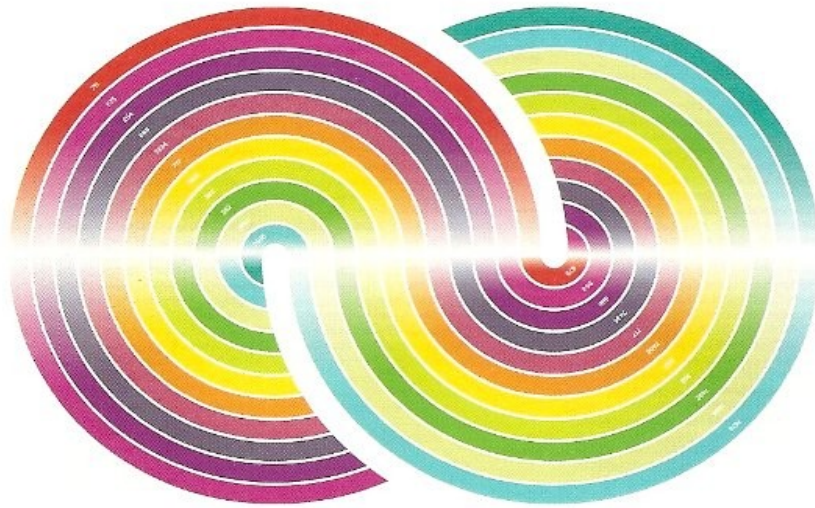
could be, and was, seen as boringly trite. But when I hear those same voices dubbed onto beats, I've got so many goose bumps, I look like a plucked turkey sitting in a cold oven.

As many reading this will know , I put out compilations of my own and other peoples mixes of these musics on my own Moonhead label. My loyal public is surely going to be hearing some more Steve Reich soon. Sort of interpolated. I do much more of this sort of thing now than sitting and listening to Michael Nesmith et al. I have all my old J.Giels albums on CD - I don't know when I last listened to them. I am the despair of my wife and many of my friends, and I listen patiently to such artists as Bob Dylan and Lucinda Williams, but with little or no expectation of hearing anything that speaks to me - not like that frosty morning in Dumfriesshire.

*pssst....There's some good stuff on here*

### **Tales Of The Unexpected.**

Mixed by Art Of Trance. Featuring exclusive mixes & tracks by  
Röyksopp Ferry Corsten John Digweed James Holden Slam Luke Chable.



*The Orb in Copenhagen*



*An old picture of Diana Dors - more interesting to actually look at than The Orb*

# TOD BOLD: A STAND UP LIFE

By Melanie Studd-Walls



## *Introduction*

**I never saw Tod Bold perform live, but some dyke friends of mine did. Nancy Morales and Judith Sludge used to hang out at Kent State University. They were not officially enrolled but just sitting in on occasional lectures, if they fancied the lecturer. Tod performed there for a term as guest comedian in conjunction with the Stand Up Comedy module. They said when Tod was not stoned, he was very funny, but when he was stoned, which was most of the time, he took comedy into an entirely new dimension, unfortunately not always one recognized by anyone watching him.**

**I decided to write this biography after a lesbian sleepover, where along with some very drowsy and satiated girls I watched a pirate tape of his very last performance at Caesar's Palace where he supported Ralph and Malcolm Berlinski ('Two magicians, two dolphins and a whole lot of water'). At this time he was in the very last throes of a cancer which had spread to his brain, lung, skin, and prostate. He was also suffering from Desert War Syndrome which he had contracted from close intimate contact with several returning troops, and from the trauma of having his big toe amputated due to gangrene, after wandering into a bear-trap whilst shovelling snow from his neighbour's driveway, and spending three days immobilized, and undiscovered (it was holiday season), It wasn't exactly the one-on-one lesbian action I'd been expecting but it gripped my imagination.**

**Tod nevertheless put in a ten minute set with consummate professionalism, managing to tell two whole jokes (although some observers hold it is only one joke and an aside), whilst**



only lapsing into incoherent gibberish five or six times. This won him three standing ovations, two sitting ovations, and one lying down ovation, because the audience were growing quite weary by this time.

Researching this book necessitated several trips to the Vera Twomlett Centenary Memorial Public Library, in downtown Hades, which is a town in a minor county in Nebraska, and frankly overshadowed by the library, which even now Wal-mart is trying to purchase to redevelop, not as a Wal-mart, because they're not that mad, but as a general purpose public amenities centre. And good luck to them.

God knows how I got there. I must have nodded off at the wheel, whilst bedazzled by the neighbourhood neon signs. Like 'Dyke Cabaret 24 Hours Per Day' and 'Last Dyke Motel for 5,000 miles. Spa & Jacuzzi. All rooms equipped with Firewire & Bluetooth.'

At the library I met my current partner, Marilyn Meades (thanks for proof-reading and organizing my notes, Marilyn, as well as for the back-rub, and direct clitoral stimulation).

It also brought me into contact with many helpful people. One of these was not Sylvester Clout of the Oregon Comic Book Store, who wanted to charge me \$3,000 for a copy of Tod's only published work, the epic poem, "Bury My Heart Where the Snows of the High Sierra Meet the Creeping Waste from the Nuclear Re-processing Plant". However, I would like to express my thanks to the others, who include Denver Trout, Missy Julie Podger (thanks for keeping that collection of Tod's used cum rags and, furthermore, allowing me access to them), Aideen Normal, Tina Bobble, Beryl Milf of the Asperger's Syndrome Helpline, for their useful advice about my Cousin Vinnie, David Letterman, Bob Lipsync, Lloyd Kitchen (manager of Kitchen's Wholesale Grout Supplies, who once repointed Tod's bathroom), Dexter Alien, Wilf Watters, Gabriel Dreck, Joshua Stanchion, Doc Severenson, Luigi Capaldi, Basil Herb, Arkhan Ghoklan, and Nick Lera (for his remarkable film, 'Steam Across Shap', which has nothing to do with Tod Bold but is nevertheless remarkable).

It has been a long journey and along the way I have accumulated a lot of Tod Bold archive material. There are the poems and recipes from his abandoned collection, 'Nazi Nachos'(see addenda 1). This may in fact have been an attempt to find a googlehack but in fact it came up with 5,140 hits, and neither word was officially recognized anyway, The book did nevertheless contain recipes which might be of interest to Nazis who like Nachos, and indeed other Mexican food. I particularly like his Third Reich Tamales and his Jamaican Jerk Chicken Fajitas, a cross-cultural recipe if ever there was one.) All of this stuff may be accessed on the website, [www.todbold.com](http://www.todbold.com).

Meanwhile I would like to exhort anyone who lives in Hebden Bridge to quit their homes immediately and run for the hills, which are fortunately quite close by, because the long-sealed box of Joanna Southcott has finally been opened, and it's bad news for you. Don't blame me. I told them not to open it, but this loony claiming to be from the local council turned up with a chainsaw, and a letter from the Lord Mayor. It turned out he'd forged the letter but it's too late to worry about details like that now, isn't it? This is exactly the way manifestations of untold evil gets released upon an unsuspecting world.

By the way if you live in nearby Todmorden it's already too late.

## ONE

Tod's paternal great-grandfather was born Elijah Hupp Stoke Todney Bold in Spoke, Missouri, which at that time was little more than rail hub, where the local hard-drinking plainsmen brought their pork to market. It had a horse trough, a livery stable and of course a brothel called Aunt Peg's, which was pretty much mandatory at that time.

This was of course a long way from Longville, Illinois, where Colonel Saunders opened his first franchise, in this case for Fried Bats, which in fact neither Elijah or any of his decendants ever visited, although they could but dream.

Tod's paternal great-grandmother was also born Elijah Hupp Stoke Todney Bold, but in a



**totally different part of the country (Mekon, in Langford County, Arkansas), which for a long time, tended to confuse family historians, as well as those attempting to serve notices for parking violations, as well as armed robbery.**

**They both featured in the 1850 Guinness Book of Records as the most unlikely conjunction of identically named individuals ever to be born within 1,000 miles of each other, and go on to marry, because of course the world is full of John Smiths**

**In 1864 Elijah Etc. (well, one of them) patented rope, despite the fact that it had been around for centuries, and thus made his (or her) fortune. They moved to Widget, hoping for a life of retirement luxury on America's sunshine west Californian coast, but found they had moved to Widget Mississippi, by mistake, after misreading a realtor's publicity material. Stuck with a 100% mortgage on a tin shack which had cost them \$500,000 but had a collateral value of four pence, they were forced to invent things to keep their heads afloat. They came up with a series of inflatable collars for ship-wrecked sailors, but found, as usual, Mae West was one step ahead of them.**

**Desolated, and nearly bankrupt, they invested in a scheme to keep themselves alive after death by cryogenically freezing their bodies. Fortunately Elijah (one of them) had the foresight to donate some sperm to the East Banjo Sperm Bank, whilst the other donated eggs (you work it out). Thus, even though they both died, clinically speaking, in 1901 after a nationwide power cut, their donations were kept alive due to back up electricity generators, and Tod's father eventually came to be conceived and later born. Obviously through the kind offices of a third party surrogate.**

## **TWO**

**The winter of 1923 was the worst the inhabitants of the small town of Inane, Nebraska had ever experienced; even since the year their founding fathers had chosen to give their town such a stupid name.**

**Millions of hectares of wheat lay under frozen slurry, due to an accidental discharge from the local Beverly Watts Slurry Plant. On the neighbouring plains 40,000 bison collapsed from hypothermia and by the following spring were nothing more than desiccated husks.**

**The result was widespread famine and even emergency measures limiting each individual to a daily intake of .2 calories could not prevent food queues stretching back as far as the Himalayas.**

**Tod's father Eric Maverley Bold was born into this grim environment one year later (i.e. 1924). There had been little improvement in the overriding circumstances, except that President Abel Gonzales Trubb's Regeneration Programme had already promised each surviving family a pet gerbil, so Eric at least had a pet gerbil, except, being a creature with a short life-span, it died long before he could really establish any bond with it.**

**Eric's adopted family, the Renege-Wildersons was deceptively upper class in that it was in fact working class. Arthur Renege-Wilderson worked as a rat-catcher and mouse-taunter in the local Brewery ("Knob Beers - Nebraska's Finest") whilst his wife Edna's only claim to notoriety or distinction was that she had won the Largest Moustache Competition at the 1920 State Fair.**

**When he was nineteen Eric was caught stealing donuts and given 60 years community service, mostly shovelling frozen slurry. He absconded and pursued by state troopers crossed the state line to find refuge in Cobstock, Wyoming, and, ironically, got a job in the local Dunkin' Donuts, the manager of which was not very hot on taking up references. It was here he met Tod's Mother, Denise Blair Sandwich Project who was six years his junior, but looked older for her age, and considerably more masculine than her gender. Denise was born in Transient, Milwaukee, about 140 miles north of Cockmadoo, and raised in Benchmark, Illinois, 20 miles south of Glutteny, one of forty two children, all born at home. As a child, even younger than she was when she met Eric, she had trained Ferrets to tap-**

dance for Jasper Conran's Travelling Circus. When Tod asked her why ferrets, she explained 'Honey, we just couldn't get the weasels in those days.'



Eric and Denise had already had sixteen children, but had sold them for shares in a local truffle farm, when they welcomed Tod into the world in the early hours of 19<sup>th</sup> December 1961 at the Sandy Posey Hospital in Pasadena, where they had been attending the Fifth Annual Convention of Floridian Muleteers (Muleteering being a passing interest of theirs). Tod weighed either 8lb 4 ounces or 42 pounds 6 ounces depending on who had his finger on the scales, and apparently greeted the world with a sardonic smile instead of the usual bleating cry.

Shortly after Tod was born his parents moved to Gorange, Pennsylvania, for reasons which will become obvious later.

His parents were strict Baptists, which coloured Tod's sense of history to the degree that he really did believe that Absoth begat Ruth who begat Nahob who begat Shirley who begat Shemloth who begat Nokia who begat Nike who begat Picasso who begat Naomi Campbell who begat Shadrach (but not that Shadrach).

Tod grew up largely unaware of the turmoil that beset the American Nation during his developmental years, mostly because his parents didn't have a television or even a radio and refused to allow newspapers into the house. One day Tod saw a man on the street bearing a placard saying 'Bring our boys home from Vietnam'. When he asked his parents what it meant they explained that a coach hired by the local football team had broken down and become stranded in flash floods in Vietnam, North Texas.

For years Tod believed Martin Luther King had founded the King Chicken franchise chain.

When the Klu Klutz Klan (a particularly moronic off-shoot of the famous organisation) advertised in his copy of Young Marvelman Comic, he eagerly sent off his fee for membership, convinced they were a mythical organisation of superheroes. This would explain why he was later unable to tour in any states south of the Mason Dixon line.

### THREE

In 1968, at a Bris party for his neighbour Eli Cohen, Tod made a deal with Eli's parents and agreed to tap-dance to Hava Nagila, provided he could make his first public joke: 'Nothing rhymes with orange unless you live in Gorange, Pennsylvania.' (Ed: That's why). It was greeted with a silence with for which the term stony would be an overstatement. Tod later told his friend, Merv Weston, 'Never make jokes about oranges in front of a Jewish audience.' He had learnt his first lesson in the Hard-knock School of Humour\*, whatever that is.

(\*Actually a comedy franchise ran by an early incarnation of Mel Brooks in conjunction with Carl Reiner.)

Paradoxically, for someone with such entrenched liberal and pacifist ideals, Tod showed an early interest in both golf and blood sports. Saving the money from his paper round, he was able to buy his first air rifle when he was ten. He wrote in a letter to his maternal grandmother: 'Gramma, I just love killing God's small creatures. The birds are too fast, and the field mice and voles too small, but the squirrels are so trusting so I love killing them most of all. I love the way they squeal with pain, and spin through the air. I love the way they lie twisted and twitching while waiting for me to despatch them with one blow from the stock of my trusty rifle.'

His grandmother was so disturbed by this letter she took it to the police, who reassured her that killing squirrels wasn't illegal and that, in fact, quite a lot of cops liked killing squirrels too. They advised her to urge Tod to join a gun club, when he would be able to get his hands on real weapons, and move up the scale of killing to deer, elk, moose and caribou,

and perhaps even humans, but only the no-hoper's who contributed nothing to the economy, or perhaps had incensed you with their bad driving.

As for golf, imagine Tod's joy when driving from the fairway in the Missouri Under-twelve Open, Tod's ball scored a direct hit on a gopher killing it stone dead. Although it left him with a bad lie for a draw to the green, and he ended up one under par.

## FOUR

American small towns are notorious for the fact that everyone believes they were brought up in one, but probably can't prove it, because the town has most likely been bulldozed.

Tod always maintained his home town was Cleat, Texas, if only because that was where the local border bordello was situated in which he had his first sexual experience. But we have to get there through a very devious route.

Mitchum, as well as being a range of deodorants, is a small County in West Texas. Denzil is a small offshoot of Mitchum with autonomous control as far as gun laws are concerned. Just down the road from Denzil is the gay enclave of PerkyButt, which has three parking lots owned by a local developer and two owned by a local under-developer. At least that is what they will tell you when you sidle up to the patrons of the Leather Rancher Disco, down on Louis Primera Street. Down a small alley to one side of the Leather Rancher Disco, you can find Spunk City, which, although often mistaken for a bordello, is in fact a Texmex takeaway, and also the seat of the autonomous governing body of Cleat. There you go.

For many years Tod was haunted by the belief that he had a doppelgänger, a look-alike, although appearing slightly older, whose life intersected with his own in mysterious ways. There was in fact a simple explanation for this, since in 1953 his grandparent's genetic legacy had been earlier reactivated, and an exact twin who also, coincidentally took the name Tod Bold had been born in Cleat specifically in a small lock-up garage.

1953 was a bad year for growing up in Cleat, but a good year for Chuck Yeager who broke several world aeroplane speed records by moving very quickly with rocket engines. That same year Tod<sup>2</sup> bought a copy of Scientific American which chronicled Chuck's speeding successes. He filed it in a small, immaculately labelled box-file, manufactured by Eason & Sons, next to his copy of National Geographic which chronicled the mating rituals of the feuding Upanizi tribes of East L.A., with frankly rather speculative maps purporting to identify where their various cribs were located. Years later he or his children would return to this rich archive in an attempt to give meaning to their lives. But fail miserably.

Later Tod<sup>2</sup> would become obsessed with the belief he possessed a younger brother, but we need not concern ourselves with that here.

## FIVE

In 1968 disaster overtook Tod's happy home life when his parents broke up after an argument in a seafood restaurant about who had had the most crab-cakes. Eric took Tod's comic collection, whilst Denise took his baseball cards.

His ubiquitous neighbours, the Cohen's took him in, and with characteristic generosity allowed him to live in their tree-house for only \$400 a month (plus \$100 extra for laundry services). It was perhaps the lowest point of Tod's life, unless you count when he was discovered masturbating into a Michigan State track-top by a chamber maid in a hotel in Detroit. Tod later said of this period, "It was weird man. My family were like strangers to me."

In 1969, Malt Grisby the local newsagent employed him on a paper round. Malt was short-sighted and accidentally signed a contract promising to pay Tod \$1000 a week. So for a long

time Tod got drunk in the Cohen's tree house and delivered very few papers.

In 1970, after been thrown out of high school for water bombing female co-eds from the tenth floor of the dormitory block, Tod decided he had to make his own way in life. Using some more of his savings from his paper round, he bought into Mr Sharp a travelling knife-sharpening franchise. It was during this period, he recalled, listening to the stories of passing customers, and exchanging quips with passers by, that he honed his act.

It was the bleakest moment of Tod's life so far, even including when a Pot Noodle had exploded in his face when he was fourteen.

## SIX

In 1972, following the example of many of his fellow-Americans, such as science fiction writers, and other creative exemplars, and even possibly Norman Spinrad and Tom Disch, Tod moved to England to avoid the draft. Strange how no stevedores, truck-drivers, or workers in meat-packing plants in Chicago made it over here isn't it? But maybe they did, and I wasn't moving in the correct social circles. Maybe Hampstead Heath was heaving, even then.

Tod, as always made a joke of it, and claimed he was willing to serve his country, but only with Chicken McNuggets.

He rented a room in Notting Hill, because that was where the taxi-driver from Heathrow airport dropped him, and waited for the world to beat a path to his doorstep. Since it was a room on the second floor, he waited a long time, before realizing the irrepressible futility of a life without doorsteps. He made a joke of this too, but only wrote it on the wall of his toilet, which was later destroyed by a developer, so none of us will ever know what that joke was.

Nevertheless his move proved fortuitous, because he fell in with a transvestite performer, who lived in the room above him and frequently threw his/her panties off the balcony so they fluttered down onto Tod's windowsill.

Fanny Burny\*, for it was he/she, introduced him to the gay performance circuit, and secured a three day residence for him at the Black Cap in Camden Town. But at what a cost? Reader, you should not ask.

(\*Fanny Burny was the stage name of Donald Knowles, born in Doncaster, who served as an artificer in the Army for three years, and then as a bar-tender in the Admiral Nelson for seventeen. When he died, only recently, he was buried at sea, by a lot of seamen. Oh, stop it!).

It was at The Black Cap that Tod made his first gay joke, but not really, because he simply recited a verse from 'The Good Ship Venus':

*The cabin boy, the cabin boy  
Was a dirty little nipper  
He filled his arse with broken glass  
And circumcised the skipper*



Nevertheless it went down a storm, and immediately brought him to the attention of rigorously straight artiste/comedians, such as Alan Bennett, Danny La Rue, and Peter Cook (sorry, that should be 'Cook')

Later Peter Cook would found the Establishment Club, where Tod was offered the opportunity to rub shoulders, not only with the cream of British comedy performers (Like, yeah) but audience celebrities such as Jimi Hendrix, Jimmy Page, and Jeff Beck, who in fact once all met on stage for a battle of the axe giants, which resulted in Jeff breaking his G-string.

Tod spent many years rubbing shoulders to no real effect, apart from getting threadbare shoulders, but he picked up a lot of material from other performers. Fortunately, most of this could be removed with assiduous dry-cleaning. And so he eked put a living for several years by eking out a living, although he was probably only the only person who can tell us how that was done. He had several trials for British TV, and was in fact a man just out of shot



to the left when Del in Only Fools & Horses, did his famous leaning on the bar and falling over routine.

One night in the Cockaleekie Disco in St James Street, however, he did meet the famous débutante Amanda Cumworthy-Smiley, a deformed woman whose legs actually did reach up to her tits, and who recognized an American with a sizeable penis when she saw one. She moved in with him, then he moved in with her, then they both moved out and went to live in the infamous squat in Piccadilly that resulted in the Great Cultural Explosion of 1974. In the same year he was introduced to The Two Ronnies, but was confused because there was only One Ronnie at the time, and he was never sure which one it was, the funny one or the not so funny one. Nevertheless he managed to sell him the 'four cunts' joke for 5/6d, which the funny Ronnie later reworked as the 'four candles' joke. Thankfully, during this period, he never met Bob Monkhouse, or Ken Dodd or else his career would have been doomed forever.

After going through a series of BBC producers, which was fairly mandatory in those days, he vowed to give up all comedy aspirations and go to work on a Kibbutz in Cheltenham. It was while raking through the cabbages that fate cast a cruel blow, which resulted in his scrotum being pierced in several places by a garden fork. As it happened, it was the best thing that ever happened to him (hard to believe, I know, I personally think being felled by a tall bronzed Brazilian hooker might have ranked considerably higher, but there you go) for it was during his prolonged stay in the Milton Keynes General Hospital and Cat Sanctuary, where famed radical surgeon Basil Spencer Davis had set up a special clinic to deal with fork induced disfigurements, that he was introduced to the wonderful world of Hospital Radio. As is usual in these cases, his opportunity came at the cost to another: Rodney Bowels, a long-term out of work actor who has been resident DJ for many years, took a wrong turn after wandering off in search of truffles one night, and walked out of a second-storey window. His wife filed a negligence suite against the hospital but this was thrown out by the Judge who ruled that Rodney had always been a notorious attention seeker. He cited the years that Rodney had spent as hospital DJ as evidence of this. Sometimes, and especially if you're named Rodney Bowels, you just can't win.

This serious portent didn't upset Tod, who took up Rodney's mantel at the drop of a hat. He later wrote: "I wanted to take people out of the hospital, but only in their own minds, because I couldn't do it in real life, because I couldn't drive, let alone lead people in a single file. I know I could have organized coaches, but this didn't occur to me until much later when my girlfriend, Edith Dagny, said:

You could have organized coaches'. I said to her: "Edith you weren't around at the time, or even at my bar mitzvah", and this led to a big argument which in turn led to her throwing my ironing board out in the snow, and my snow shoes, which meant I wasn't able to go out into the snow to reclaim my ironing board. Eventually the snows thawed and I was able to retrieve my ironing board, and also a Scrabble set, and a dead kipper, but that didn't make it any better".

Despite this setback Tod soon became a hospital favourite, and also on the radio, which saved him a fortune on cleaning bills. One of the keys to his success was his idea of theming every day's output. Monday would be Progressive Rock. Tuesday, a frankly idiosyncratic mix of Krautrock and lesbian country and western, but which nevertheless perfectly pinpointed its audience; Wednesday would feature heavy metal, with a strong preponderance of Motorhead, which -paradoxically proved to be the only music which could bring certain long term coma-suffers back into consciousness, and yet reduce other to a vegetative state. Thursday was devoted to Christian music of every denomination, but especially those concerned with devil-worship. This was subsidized by a number of American families who had patients in care and who would willingly write cheques for big bucks. On Friday Tod played cool classical jazz on an endless tape which enabled him to nod off on dope for most of the day. Saturday was the big day in Tod's calendar. Knowing that most of the patients



were sedated fairly early, after tiring visits from their relations, he would unleash his off-the-wall spontaneous comic gibbering in a series of monologues which could last hours at a time. Frequently the only person listening late into the night was the government appointed monitor, Claud Schlotzler, who had nothing better to do with his life, since his wife had left him.

Tod was eventually expelled from the hospital when the authorities found an unauthorized wombat in his room, and also because Claud Schlotzler needed a good night's sleep.

## SEVEN

Tod returned to the USA as soon as the Vietnam war was over, and met Merv Shrimlock, an itinerant beggar, and part-time ladyman prostitute who regularly worked East Shylock Street, South Des Moines. After Tod had paid him several hundred dollars, Merv agreed to become his agent.

"Tod was the funniest guy I ever met, said Merv, except for Rudie Lieberman who ran a hot dog stall outside Cleveland Central Station. Boy, he was funny. He only had to ask 'Do you want extra horseradish on that?' and we'd all crack up. 'That'll be one dollar 99 cents,' he used to say, and that would reduce us to tears. 'Tell us another, Rudi,' we'd chorus, and he'd look puzzled for a moment and then say, 'You putting me on?,' and we would just collapse in the street. I often wonder what happened to Rudi. Well, no I don't, because I know he's no got a candy floss concession down on Coney Island. Next time you're down that way, just tell him 'You want 50cent for that crap,' and believe me you'll be in stitches for months.

Merv got Tod his first paid professional gig at a local gay biker disco. Little is known of how Tod handled this gig, or what material he used, except that three weeks later, after suffering a ruptured spleen, Tod was released from the local hospital.

## EIGHT

In 1984 Tod Bold played a benefit gig for the Passaic County Chamber of Commerce to celebrate their team placing second in the National Consumer Awareness competition.

He was driving home through Weasel Brook Park when he was rear-ended, by a Buick driven by another Tod, this one being Tod Deckstater. Deckstater accepted full responsibility for the accident, claiming he was pissed out of his mind, which was certainly something Bold could relate to.

Deckstater had dedicated his life, such as it was, to the repair and renovation of ancient valve radios. When he was six his parents bought him an old Uher tape recorder and he set out to transcribe the random heterodyning noises that swamped the airwaves when they were not correctly tuned.

Eventually his heterodyning empire grew and spread. Deckstater inherited his parents' eight-bedroom house on Columbine Avenue in Passaic, but thanks to strategic realting also owned the freehold to thirty-one wooden shacks scattered throughout the immediate neighbourhood, in which his growing collection of radios and recording equipment was stored.

In Weasel Brook Park both Tods seemed to immediately recognize in each other a kindred spirit. Deckstater invited Bold, who was willing to overlook the damage to his fender, back to his house and after talking through the night over several rum Martinis they agreed to work together on a series of projects which would involve Tod reciting some of his more obscure poems, plus the occasional joke, over a soundtrack provided by Deckstater's valve radios.

The first album resulting from this collaboration was ‘Some Beans Sprout Some Bean Sprouts Sprout Some Beans Don’t Sprout Although Their Sprouts Sprout.’ (a reference to Tod’s early experiences sprouting beans on a face-flannel on the kitchen window ledge in his family home). It was released on Deckstater’s own *Crud* label, with each disc being laboriously hand-produced on an old Muttley and Dingledoff hand-cranked master disc-cutter. Bold & Deckstater managed to dispose of all nine copies that were produced, by offering them at the State Fair, free with every one of Deckstater’s Aunt Annie-Marie Phefferstaff’s home made cottage vanilla and mosquito cheesecake pies (always a runaway best seller).

(Hi, Barry Cross here asking if you’ve got problems with grime and ground in dirt? Well no, Barry, I haven’t, so just think twice before interrupting me in mid flow in future, in case I come looking for you and your silly bottle of Cilit-Bang.)

Where were we? Tar, asbestos, cancers? Let’s move on rapidly, and certainly without mentioning Bez from Happy Mondays, who I give six months at the most. Oh, too late.

## NINE

Tod decided he might have more success on the West Coast and signed on with the famous Hollywood agent Eugenie Twats, who at seven feet six was the biggest agent around. She got him a job writing for Carl Reiner, who unfortunately had just retired from all aspects of show-business except the ones which paid royalties. Nevertheless Tod managed to pen several letters to Carl’s insurance company, to negotiate a good deal on his new car, and to Carl’s mother in law complaining that the wood proofing treatment which she had promised to undertake on Carl’s porch had not yet been completed. Later Carl would remember him in his will. Yes, it’s the old joke I’m afraid. Hello, Tod.

Absence of work can be demoralizing, but absence of work in Hollywood, where anyone with a super sized dong can earn thousands of dollars every five minutes, could be especially so. Especially since Tod’s was only eight inches, and the industry standard at that time was ten.

Tod considered suicide but then read Emile Durkheim’s seminal work on the subject, and actually slashed his wrists afterwards, but was fortuitously found by a paramedic who had studied in nipping and tying off bleeding veins and arteries, (a skill which I believe should be taught in primary schools, since you never when you might encounter someone with a severed limb or blown off limb, which seems all too likely these days, especially if you live in Iraq, or even travel on London’s Underground, But, Hell, this is an authorial interjection, and possibly out of place in this context. If you feel it to be, please exercise your override facilities, unless you haven’t got any, then you are truly sad.)

”I thought killing myself would be a solution,” Tod later wrote, “but then realized it would mean I would actually be dead. I might have exercised my free will in choosing to die, but then it occurred to me that if I was dead I wouldn’t be able to exercise anything, let alone my pec’s or deltoid muscles, areas of my body with which I was becoming increasingly concerned, ever since my Aunt Miniscule had sent me a subscription to Male Physique Pictorial as a birthday present. Thanks Aunt Mini. If only suicide bombers would learn from my example the world would be a better place.”

It was to be was of his rare cogent moments for the next twenty years.

## TEN

The circumstances of Tod’s eventual death have been well-chronicled, if by that one means extensively chronicled but not necessarily ‘well’ chronicled, in terms of the quality of

**their chronicling. Devotees of Tom Stoppard's 'Professional Foul', a play about journalists accompanying the England team visiting an Eastern Bloc country to report a soccer international will recognize the mind-boringly allusion to his majestic work here.**

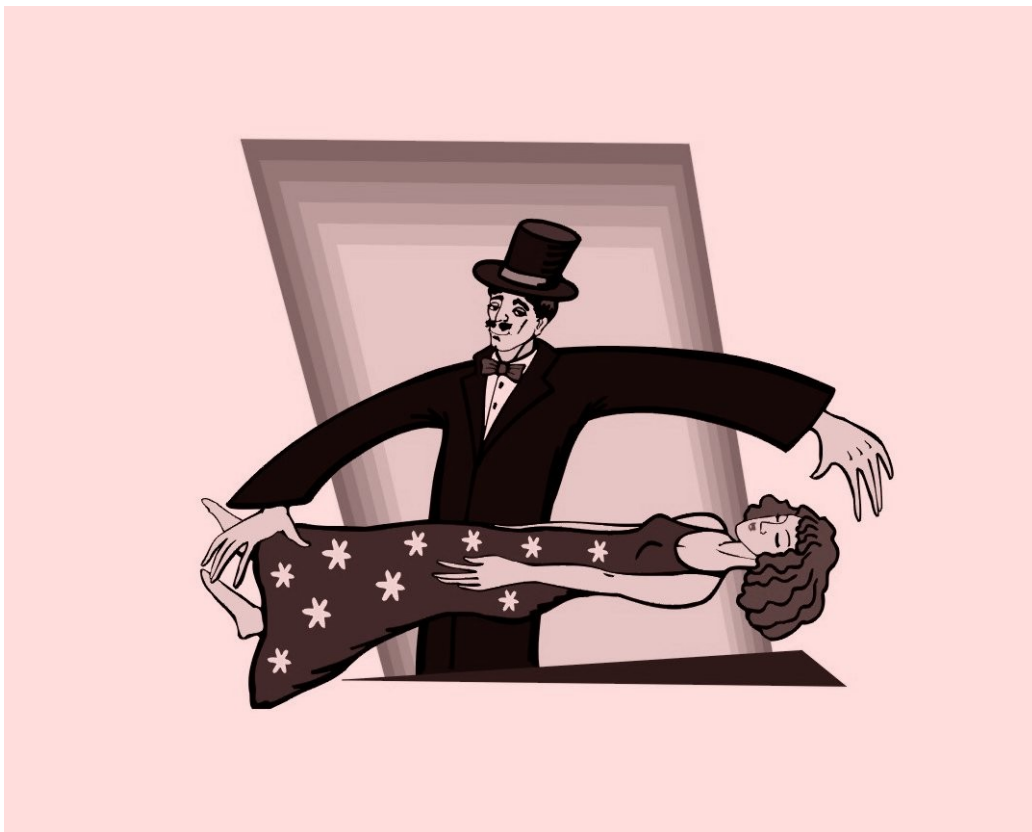
**Tod Bold, and not his horse, which he had purchased a year earlier and named after himself, partly as a tax evasion scam and partly because he didn't want to die, except possibly as a horse, and then not even possibly, died on 18<sup>th</sup> November 1995. Unfortunately he had lived just long enough to experiences the excesses of Halloween, Divali and Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder plot, and was thus deaf when he died, but very appreciative of Jamie Curtis' buttocks, and had skittish cats who could never again be allowed out of doors, not that Tod ever had any out of doors experiences ever in his life.. Maybe this was part of his problem.**

**The coroner's report would cite arteriosclerosis of the soul as the main contributing factor, but I guess it could equally have been nicotine, alcohol, nitrous oxide. Tamiflu, or that evil sparkle dust coke derivative which was outlawed just about then, but possibly not just about then in time.**

**His wife at the time was Cindy, a pole dancer who has now gone on to run a themed British fish and chip shop in Puerto La Verdás (a resort I believe they are still building, somewhere in Spain or Portugal.).**

**As Tod would have said, with his memorable punch-line with which he always left his audience: "Keep on laughing, folks. But, remember, the joke might be on you."**

**Oh, how we laughed.**







# **You might not like it, but you have to have it. Now open wide and say: OBLIGATORY POETRY SECTION**

## **Bad Colours**

In my colour therapy reds not cool  
Red says "See me after school"  
Red is "Bad idea - you can do better"  
Red is a legal action coming letter  
Red is deficits and losses  
Red is a sunset line of crosses

In my colour therapy green is beady eyed  
Green is envy and green is pride  
Green has oppressive, moralising notions  
Green fears the weather and the oceans  
Green says the end of the world is nigh  
Green thinks you should change or die

In my colour therapy black is hard-on's  
Black is corsetry, leather and nylons  
Black is women with hard faces  
Black is shiny shoes with laces  
Black is surplus, profits, winning  
Black is a skull in the dirt grinning

In my colour therapy I prefer blue  
Blue is "Fine, thanks - how are you?"  
Blue is honest, blue is true  
Blue is open, it does not mask  
Blue is what I am, since you ask.

Now this is where the letter column comes. Regular readers will know that in MD1, the letters were made up. In MD2, the letters were real, but I presented them in such a way that either no one realised they were letters, or they thought my layout discourteous to the folk who had taken the trouble to write. During the course of assembling this issue, there was a hard disk crash at La Maison Johnny and I lost the Locs I did have on MD2. I have appealed for copies, but largely these entreaties fell on stony ground. Nevertheless, welcome to the new Lettercol. Its called:



## BACK SEAT DRIVERS

Now I have to start with Robert Lichtman, because I have wronged him mightily. First he writes a LOC on MD1 and I lose it. Then , in responding to Chris Garcia in MD2, I suggest that he takes a Very Long Time to actually produce an ish. Which he doesn't. Or not as long as the guy Chris was talking about. Despite this, he is still good enough write. First the missing Loc on MD1:

<b>Robert Lichtman</b> <b>rlwh001@yahoo.com</b>	<p>Got two copies of your fanzine (one to this e-mail address, the other to <a href="#">(****censored by johnny****)</a> and printed out in full color. I don't know if it was <b>*really*</b> "better than being sat on by three large naked women" but I enjoyed the story. The poem was interesting and with some noteworthy rhyming stretches (especially "oppressive" and "permissive") – and quite a counterpoint to the story.</p> <p>Hope to see future issues.</p>
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**To think that you were nice about my poetry, and I didn't print your Loc. That will weigh heavy on my karma, Robert. Now the one on MD2:**

<b>Robert Lichtman</b> <b>rlwh001@yahoo.com</b>	<p>The long-awaited letter of comment on <i>Motorway Dreamer</i> No. 2 starting with egoboo to Bruce Townley for that cover, which of course I saw first as I popped it on my scanner. Bruce does a nice job with varying levels of shading which, happily, my scanner picked up and handled well. Get more artwork from this guy—he shows considerable promise!</p> <p>My favorite line in “Things Yet To Come” was, “To the old, everything new appears a backward step, a farther departure from the old standards that had never actually been standards at all.” In the context of fanzine production, that’s <b>*so*</b> true. Leaving aside the earliest days of fanzines when they were mostly all done on a printing press, there were decades when there was a discussion about which means of reproduction was “most fannish”: mimeo, ditto, hekto. Everyone agreed back then that photo offset (and/or multilith) was, well, a little posh for a mere fanzine. And when photocopying came in as a <b>*new*</b> method, it was widely derided as “unfannish” since one hired it done. This of course ignored the</p>
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inconvenient fact that, for instance, one of the most popular fanzines of the '60s—Richard Bergeron's *Warhoon*—was mimeographed by a repro service in New York City. Speaking personally, if inexpensive photocopying hadn't been available to me when I came back into fandom and began publishing *Trap Door* in 1983, there would have been no fanzine from me. I'd used both mimeo and ditto back in the '50s and '60s, and each had their strengths and weaknesses in terms of sheer work. But what they had in common was being slow and messy. Okay, the first issue of *TD* was mimeo, but after that it's been photocopy all the way.

This is certainly a long aside from any point your story may have had, and the ending—"Unfortunately, the old editor had not saved his work"—is one that's happened to all (or most) of us without even having to die.

While reading this story there were echoes for me of Terry Carr's "Forever and Fandom," about a fan who's part of an experiment in immortality. While eventually all his fellows in the experiment figure out ways to kill themselves off, he goes on because he's a \*fan\*. His financial arrangements serve him well: "Yes, I am rich. I deposited my twenty dollars way back in 1968, my records testify, and in two centuries withdrew it with compound interest, redeposited some of that—and in such a manner have built up a fortune." And he has a reason to keep on: "I cannot afford to die—I must live till the end of fandom, and complete my fanzine collection."

I enjoyed Bruce Townley's "Polk Gulch Hauntings" and the various anecdotes he relates, and he's right that the San Francisco Muni "dates back to shortly after the earthquake and fire of 1906." Here's a little detail on that:

"Muni has its origins in the period following the great San Francisco earthquake. Up until then the city had been served by a number of commercial horse car, cable car and electric streetcar operators. Many of these had been amalgamated into the United Railroads of San Francisco (URR) company. However the city acquired the still independent cable car operator Geary Street, Park & Ocean Railway, and in 1912 converted its line into an electric streetcar line. The Muni soon started on a large building program. By 1914, a new Stockton Street Tunnel under Nob Hill carried the streetcars from Downtown through North Beach and to the new Marina District. By 1918, the Twin Peaks Tunnel opened, making the southwestern quarter of the city available for development. This plunged the Muni into direct competition with the URR the entire length of Market Street. The two operators each operated their own pair of rail tracks down that thoroughfare, which came to be known as the 'roar of the four'. By World War 2, the Market Street Railway Company, successor to the URR, was in financial difficulties, and in 1944 the Muni acquired its commercial competitor." (from the Wikipedia, natch!)

No doubt there were vast political machinations behind all of these moves, but this is after all only a letter of comment. I seek to illuminate, not to do a "rich brown" and bore you to tears with unnecessary detail. I imagine a history of, say, London's public transport system would have many (or at least some) parallels with San Francisco's.

Enjoyed Graham's "Hobbies" but can't think of a thing to say about it. Well, did laugh at the part about the smashing of his cellphone, enabling him to get a fancier model via insurance. Probably that little stream of events



	<p>caused the premiums for everyone in the British Isles to go up a few more pennies, but what the hell....</p> <p>And, unfortunately, I'm all too familiar with Ted's story—having held onto it for over a decade, as you know -- to have any comment on it, either, except that I'm glad it's finally seeing the light of day after being passed over by two fanzine editors before reaching you.</p> <p>I enjoyed "Buddhists," and especially these lines: "And sitting in deep analysis that lasted oh, at least to Royal Oak / I realise that though Buddhists can easily mock and laugh and scoff / At the rest of the world, they are at least as daft." It suggests a universality to religion that does, in fact, exist but which is seldom acknowledged.</p> <p>Regarding your query to Chris Garcia—"Might this be a certain Mr. Lichtman of California, I ask in a spirit of honest inquiry?"—the answer is no. I have no projects dating back as far as 1989 unless one considers my minimally drafted but never completed—and probably never to be completed—TAFF report from my trip of that year.</p>
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**Robert, If I had got Bruce to do more art, and you would have scanned it ( I should explain to those not in the know that Bruce and technology are not happy together), I would have lost it in the great Hard Disk Disaster. I suspect a little poke in the ribs on the subject of religion there, but anyhow I promise I will try not to lose or erase your well crafted words again, and hope to be favoured with a further epistle in the fullness of time.**

**Right, next up the sage of Point Richmond, Richard Trevithick Coad:**

<p>Richard Coad richcoad@comcast.net&gt;</p>	<p>Once again, the highlight of the issue is your own excellent writing that buries a few truths in a bathetic tale. Is bathetic really what I mean? I'm not even sure that I know what it means but it sounds good. I hope we'll see several more issues of MD before the power gets cut permanently to remotest Wiltshire.</p> <p>It's great to see artwork from Bruce and Harry again. Bruce's alien driven roadster looks like something that might be encountered in weird, wild, wonderful Wiltshire, even if the steering wheel is on the left. Ever seen any? Aliens driving around Wiltshire, I mean. According to several web sites I've checked about your part of the world, such sightings must be as common as muck, which is probably why you no longer even notice that much of the countryside is being overrun by aliens in roadsters with left hand drive.</p> <p>Harry's cartoons evidently come from either the distant past or the far future. I hope it was the latter as that adds an appropriate science-fictional atmosphere to MD and it's comforting to know that the 140 year old Bell will still be up in Newcastle turning out cartoons while the USA celebrates its tri-centennial with even more Elvis impersonators than were there in 1976.</p> <p>Bruce is quite correct in noting that San Francisco is a good place for observing crazy people. When I lived on Hayes Street we had a neighborhood drunk who never bathed. Never used a toilet, either, apparently. He became known as just the "Stinky Guy" and, man, did he reek. If there was even a slight breeze it was literally possible to</p>
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smell this guy from half a block away. Sometimes he would come into the local laundromat while I was doing the laundry early in the morning to beat the crowd and even though he stayed at the opposite end of the building from me the foetid rank odor would make its way like a malevolent star-spawned horror past the ranks of dryers and washers until it reached my own nostrils leaving me a retching, trembling husk of humanity. Truly there are some things man was not meant to smell.

I seem to be reading a lot about amphibian sex lately. First there was Paul diFillippo's brilliant story "Victoria" and now Graham Charnock confesses that he, too, has sex with amphibians. And then there's Lovecraft, of course, whom I re-read regularly and enjoy the man-amphibian offspring of strange Innsmouthian trysts. There was also the Ray Garton book, THE FOLKS, where the narrator has sex with something, something that \*might\* have been amphibious and was certainly surprising as various, well, other appendages came into play. Apparently this is a growing phenomenon.

The name George Scithers sounds familiar so I suppose he is a master of the universe. I enjoyed Ted's piece and can't see why Robert kept it on ice for so many years, but I can't think of much more to say about it than that.

As for the obligatory poetry section, if you're really unlucky you might see a poem or two from me of the type that makes all readers realize that MacGonagall really wasn't that bad.

I look forward to MD3.

**I could indeed tell you a couple of X-files type stories of my own experiences around these parts. Ill even write them up for your fanzine if you want. Will I ever, in fact, get any contributions for The Obligatory Poetry Section from you? Or must I add your name to the list that already includes such luminaries as Roy Kettle and Linda Krawecke, of those who really are writing something, and will be sending it Real Soon Now?**

**Now the man whose coming has already been unreasonably delayed, in more senses than one. Its Chris" Tornado" Garcia:**

"Chris Garcia"  
<garcia@comput  
erhistory.org>

First off, let me say that I love the art and it's one of the first time I'm consciously aware of Harry Bell art. That's not to say that I haven't seen a lot of it before, but I've not paid much attention to Harry's work so I wasn't looking for it. Good to see him in your well-crafted pages.

Opening with post-apocalyptic faan fiction was a bold step and one that I loved. The idea of going to the Great ConSuite in the sky while writing an eZine is one of the better ways to go, though it does speak to the need to save often. Arnie Katz is the only guy I see doing regular faan fiction, so I'd love to see more of this!

Ley Lines and MUNI: a deadly combination. I've been on the 19 Polk line a few times over the years and it's a bit strange. Still, nothing like some of the Berkley bus lines. I was on a bus in SF (I think over by Noe Valley) where I found myself sitting next to a woman in a bikini and a pair of work boots. It was December and the fog was heavy, but there she was. Bruce's experiences would make a nice add to the collection of posts that I found

from the old Community Memory computer bulletin board project where there was a section dedicated to Bus and BART stories.

Earl Kemp working with Ron Jeremy and Traci Lords? I'd have pictured him with Seka and John Holmes, but that's just era differentialization. I've never met Rich Coad, sadly. I mean, we live less than 50 miles away from each other and we've never met. Still, I enjoy his work when I've had the chance to see it. Gotta say, Graham is an amazing writer, one of my fave's.

You know, the further I get into Motorway Dreamer, the more I realize that this is an absolutely beautiful zine. The layout, the ease of reading, the art, it's all wonderfully put together.

Ted White talks of George Scithers! I laughed at the description of the scene alone because I've seen it in person! Change around the people and I've totally seen this exact same scene played over and over at Silicon and BayCon and any other number of conventions.

Well, if there's going to be a poetry section, at least you reward us with a huge set of breasts in the art.

Nope, Johnny Regular wasn't Robert Lichtman, but a dude whose real name I don't know. I haven't talked to him in years, but he was a guy who loved zines and had a huge collection (mostly non-SF zines) and we'd spend hours working on the zine and never get anywhere. Maybe someday we'll see it.

Chris, you are a silver tongued devil of flattery and foolery, you surely are. I just throw this zine together. Well, issues 1 & 2 have been slung together, I'm kind of hoping that someone may notice I've taken slightly more trouble over this one. But I'm an alumni of the Pickersgill school of fanzine layout whose motto was ever "Type it up, and crank it out". I may actually put some page numbers on this one. Only some, though. Glad you were appreciative of the art on the OPS. From my own "Gentlemen Only" collection, dontcher know.

And that's it. We Also Heard From, Graham Charnock who couldn't remember what it was he had said after the HD crash (It was hard enough to even get him to remember that he had sent a contribution) Roy Kettle enquiring as to when he might expect the next issue which struck me as a bit of a cheek seeing as he was supposed to be writing something for it, and a few other people whose missives are now one with Nineveh and Tyre and who have not sent copies and I have no backups of my brain, so I cant even tell who they were. Whoever you were, folks, I hope you enjoy this issue and will be inspired to write to me once more.



Motorway Dreamer is © 2006 in respect of the editorial content ( whatever that is) and the contributors work. I cant remember and cant be bothered with all that British Library bollocks.

Motorway Dreamer is a Big Woman Press production. Might even be the Big Woman on the left. Farewell, farewell, I hope to pass this way again, and if I do then we shall be merry, and if I do not then think on me kindly.



