

BELIX

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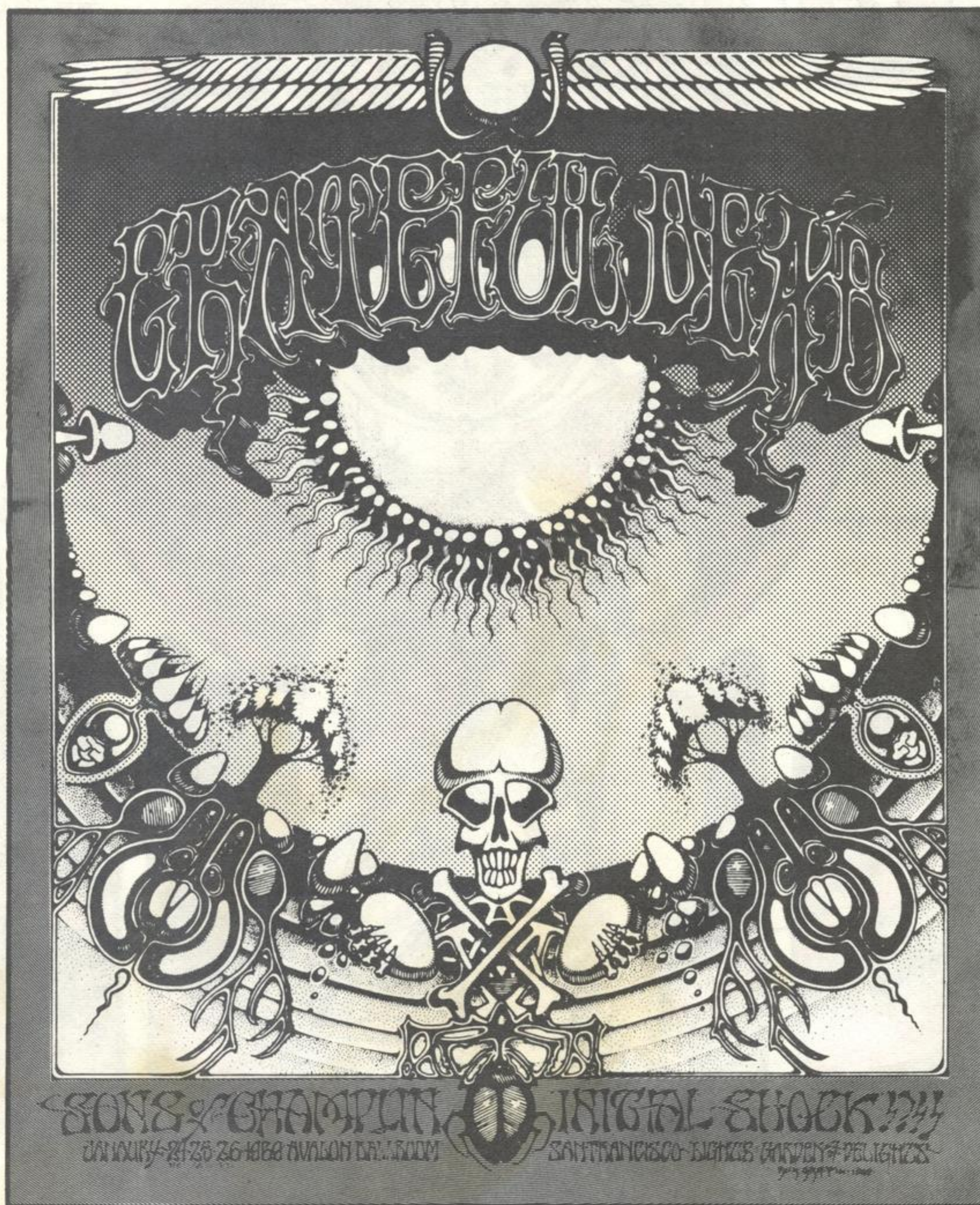
New Year's Eve
at The Gow
Palace

Jethro Tall
Commander
Gody

& much
Moore!

HOT TUBS

J. Moore '76



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Letters to the Editors

Dear Dead Relix:

I just finished reading the Nov.-Dec. issue of the magazine, and I couldn't help but laugh. I've known Terry Tolkin (from the letter about the Dead being played) for almost 10 years and I know for a fact that he has never been in Dusseldorf, Germany, and he didn't even know of the group until about 4 years ago (a far cry from 7 years). You are just another victim of what we have properly termed the best bullshit artist around.

Now, about his letter... Bullshit!!! The Dead are a far cry from being played and anyone who claims to be a Dead Head would never insinuate such a ridiculous thing.

Truthfully,

M.H.

Dear Editor:

I think Terry Tolkin who wrote to you in Vol. #3, No. 6 is a plain and simple 'shithead'.

I love the Old Dead with Pig Pen, but the new stuffs great too. I'm sorry some Dead Heads don't like "Blues for Allah", "Mars Hotel", and "Wake of the Flood." And, plus me and my Dead Head friends think Donna G is aces and adds a lot to the group.

I hope the Dead live as long as I do.

Sincerely,

Butch Borst
Notorious Leader
of the
Pig Pen Fan Club

Dear Les and Jerry:

This letter is in response to Arona Myakka's comments to Terry Tolkin and hopefully end both arguments.

The question as to whether the Dead are finished as innovators is as old as the Dead themselves. People thought the Dead were over-the-hill when they started to do acoustic sets back in 1970. Same when they added Keith and Donna. When Pigpen passed away lots of people were putting the Dead down. Why should it be any different today?

Then again the music does change. Some people get out of it, some people discover it, some re-discover the music.

The idea of "holding on" to old music as something wrong is bad. All of the great music the world has ever produced would be erased. It doesn't matter who, Charlie Parker, the Dead or Beethoven.

It is my opinion that Terry Tolkin is 100% right. I'm glad his letter was printed. I'd much rather

listen to an Old Dead tape than see the new disco Dead and possibly get hit with a cherry bomb or wine bottle - all in the name of "feeling the Dead music with emotions rather than our heads."

Thank you for printing my letter. -

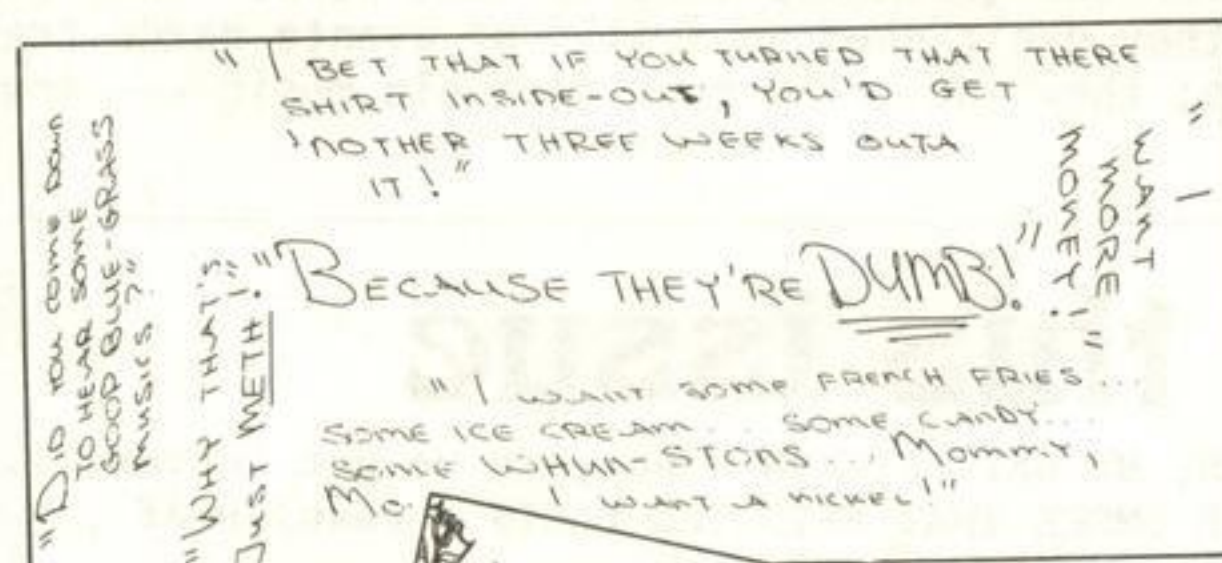
Harvey Lubar

Dear Dead People,

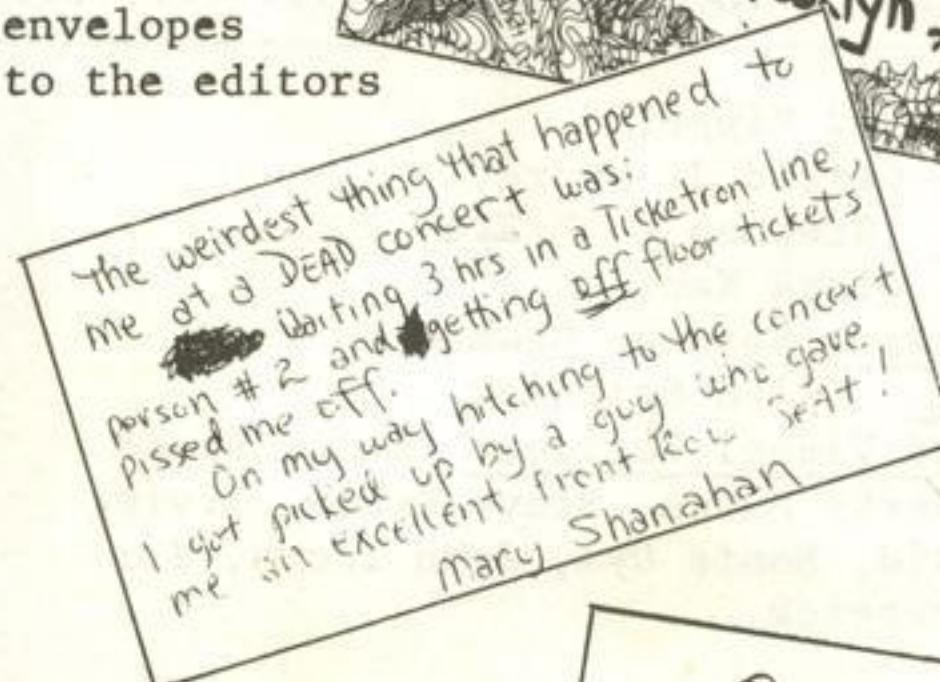
Is Dave Nelson really Ricky's brother?

Henry Klamp

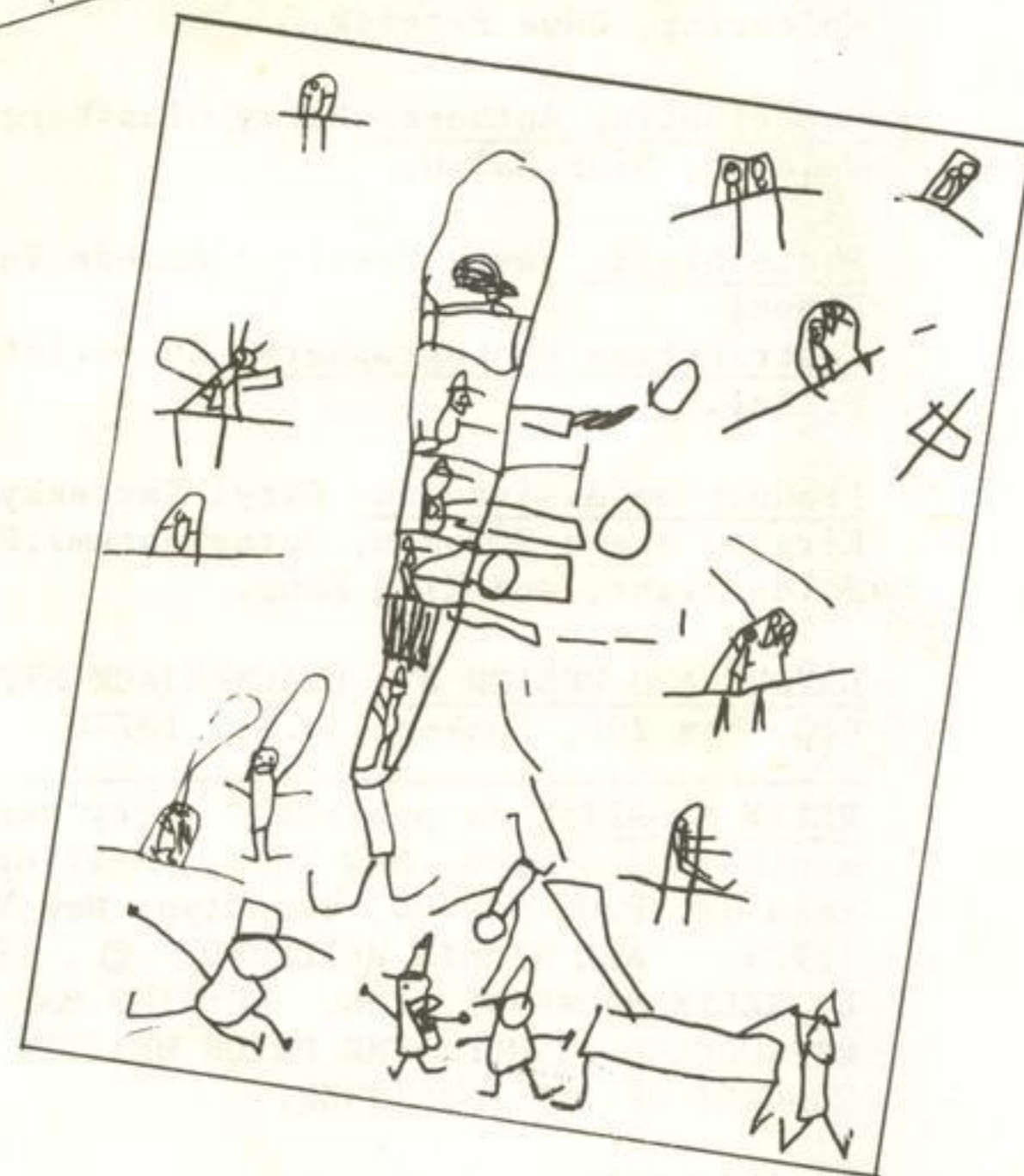
Les answers-The last time I saw someone ask Dave Nelson that question, the person who asked was welcomed with close to physical harm. Dave insists that he is not Ricky's brother, and would have preferred it if Rolling Stone magazine did not print that rumor a few years ago.



some
envelopes
to the editors



& The Letter
of The Month



Hello:

Just wrote to tell you what an excellent job you people are doing on 'RELIX'. I believe 'RELIX' stands for a superior quality of music. Right now I think you are too locked in on the Frisco scene, but I have confidence that you will expand your correspondence to music all across this country. I feel that we have far superior music here than in any other country. A lot of people have a shit eating orgasm over British music but I think our homeland bands put them to shame. I hope you stay in the American music scene, for we need one in this world, that doesn't waste print and space on all these glitter bands.

A lot of people complain about this country, but I for one am glad that I'm here. Do realize that a band with the Dead's background, probably couldn't exist in any other country; they would either be driven underground or exterminated (Jamaican Government shooting down a few of the Wailers). I think that the Dead realize this and are appreciative for it. I think that they stand for the greatness that we have here. They are real, they don't need no frills or avante garde trans-actions; they just play that good old music --- that is

the 'Dead'. They have a certain hidden intensity that is not apparent to everyone (which explains why some of us are Deadheads and some of us aren't). They are so real and down to earth, well, almost anyway, they are a little off the ground. They are just people a "Working man's Dead" for us normal folks, the working class waste.

With Mr. Carter in the White House maybe the Dead and other American bands will reach more people. He has already brought the Allman Brothers, and Marshall Tucker Band to political events. Why not the Dead.

Couldn't you just see Garcia askin' President Carter if he wants to smoke a jaybird! Jerry Garcia for the new Secretary of HEW (Highs, Entertainment & Wildness). Also whats happened to the Deadheads.... I haven't heard from them in ages. Do you know anything I don't?

Keep the Love of God, Country and Dead in your Hearts.

Expand yourself slowly

Jos Cuzzardo,
McHenry, Ill.

In this issue

LETTERS, WE GET LETTERS - boy, do we get letters....	3
ALL THE SMOKE THAT FITS THE FACTS - results of the reader survey.....	5
NOTES ON A JOURNEY WEST - Jerry takes on the state of California.....	7
FROM DYLAN TO DISCO - one man's opinion.....	11
HOT TUNA RIP OFF & SAVE SECTION - the centerfold smells like fish, oh baby!.....	13
CONCERT REVIEWS - Jethro Tull, Good Ol' Boys, Charlie Mingus, & The Commander.....	23

BOOK REVIEW - Star Making Machinery at work.....	27
RECORD RAP - cross my turntable with vinyl by the big sleeze himself.....	28
WANT PAGES & CLASSIFIED.....	29

PLUS-
BITS & PIECES - everything you wanted to know but forgot to ask.....
AROUND
SOMEWHERE

Happy April fools day, and Ides of March, and Happy Spring. And may the blue bird of hashish visit you often.

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All the Smoke that Fits the Facts

by Them & Us

In our Volume 3, Number 6 issue, we included a questionnaire for 'RELIX' readers. This was to serve 2 purposes: to find out what you all think of our publication, and also to discover your likes, dislikes, and wants.

A lot of the answers we might have guessed beforehand. We found out, not really to our surprise, that we almost all hate disco and glitter music. Some answers were interesting, and some even a little shocking. Above all, though, the responses we got indicate who you are, and what you want out of 'RELIX'.

Besides the cold statistical results, the bare facts, the questionnaires came back with many written comments. These opinions are just as important as the statistics, maybe more so.

We've pulled a few comments from the surveys, which are, we feel, good representations of our readers' opinions. We'd like to present them back to you. They follow, with our responses.

"A very enjoyable publication to read. I only hope you never turn into an impersonal magazine like Rolling Stone. The way your magazine comes across, it's like a letter from a close friend."

*This comment, and more like it, did our egos good. We're trying to develop along our current lines without losing touch.

"I really got off on the last issue of Dead Relix; but I am disturbed by the fact that the mag is now called 'RELIX' and the bubble-gum king, Paul McCartney is on the cover. I know you're trying to broaden your subscription rate, but what makes this mag so unique is what the Grateful Dead is all about. The fact that a Deadhead has his own magazine is a great thought."

*The picture on the cover of Vol.3 #6 is Grace Slick, not Paul McCartney. We must admit there is a

certain resemblance. We changed name of this magazine because we felt calling it "Dead Relix" was limiting us a little in what we could do.

Our new name means that, whenever we have the impulse to throw in something radically different, we can do so. We also think it sounds better. This doesn't change our orientation towards the Dead.

"You should get away from the tape trading stuff. I can appreciate having a great concert preserved on tape, but I hate to go to a concert and be standing next to some guy with a recorder and mike. He not only disturbs others, but probably doesn't enjoy the concert himself or even hear what's happening until he plays it back. It's just generally a bad scene."

"I hope to see in the near future some organized form of tape trading sponsored/run by Relix. I also hope that, if possible, Relix could notify subscribers about concert happenings a substantial amount of time before the concerts, so that it would be possible to get good seats."

The last two comments represent two views on tape recordings. We can't say we agree with the first comment. While recording a show means work, which does tend to cut down the enjoyment of the show, it is well worth it. A good recording can be enjoyed forever, by the one who recorded it, and by others scattered all over the globe. Without a tape, a concert is a one-time experience. Soon over, possibly soon forgotten. The only people really bothered by tape recordings are those who like to yell and scream a lot. People like that should restrict themselves to Blue Oyster Cult.

While we agree with the sentiments of the second comment, we haven't got the resources to run any organized form of tape trading. You folks are just going to have to keep it on an individual basis. Besides, there are copyright laws

covering mass duplication of tapes you don't have title to, and we never do anything illegal (heh-heh).

We'd love to be able to tell you about shows long in advance. However, our lead time is such that, by the time we find out about a show and get the information into print, the concert is ancient history. Shows usually only become definite a month or so before they happen, and we publish at two month intervals.

"I enjoy reading Relix especially because of the groups you write about, but I really get mad seeing articles about Paul McCartney. I don't think your concert reviews are as good as they should be (although there are many that are excellent). They sound too much like you're just reciting the songs played in each set. Oh, on second thought, the previous statement only applies to the issue I just got. Please disregard it. Do I make any sense?"

*You make lots of sense. We're trying to improve our reviews. Also, we're giving up on McCartney. Win some, lose some.

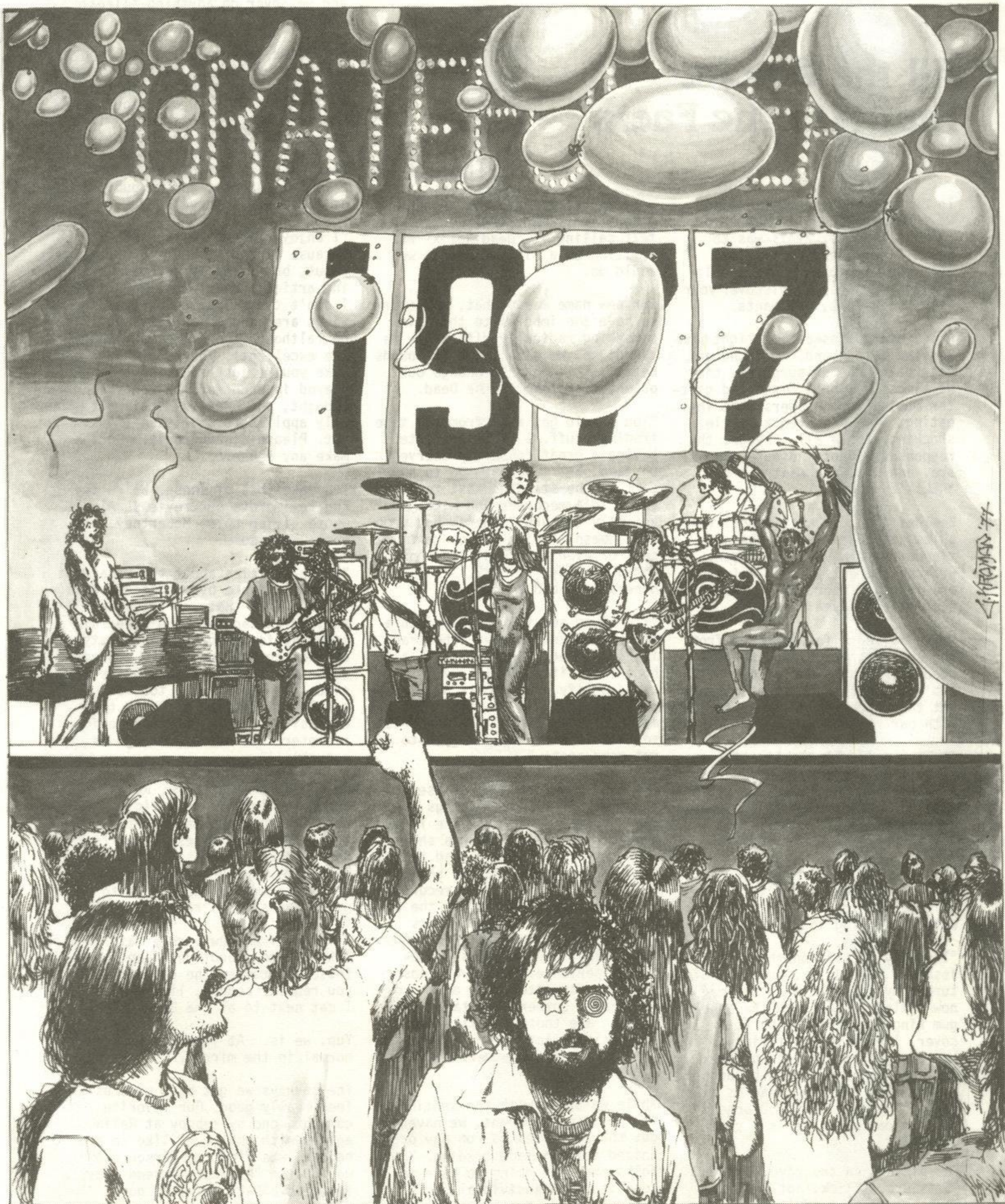
"Write articles about the treatment of the audience by promoters. With the audience that your magazine has, Relix can become a powerful lobbying force for the interests of the concert goers. The concert scene has evolved into a sad state since its beginning - too many hassles in getting tickets, too expensive. I've been ripped off by promoters too often - enough is enough!!!!"

*We couldn't agree more. Relix will print any letters or articles concerning promoters and how they treat their audiences, if we feel the charges can be substantiated. We have always been concerned with this problem, and we'd love to print any stories relating to it.

A survey from New Jersey said "I'd like to know about you people and those who review the concerts. Are you regular people, like the guy I sat next to at the Beacon?"

Yup, we is. At least we look normal in the mirror.

The surveys we got back made us feel really good. Our favorite comment, one everybody at Relix agrees with and would like to see happen, was from the person who would like "a place to send away for good LSD-25 and some good coke."



NOTES ON A JOURNEY WEST

by Jerry Moore

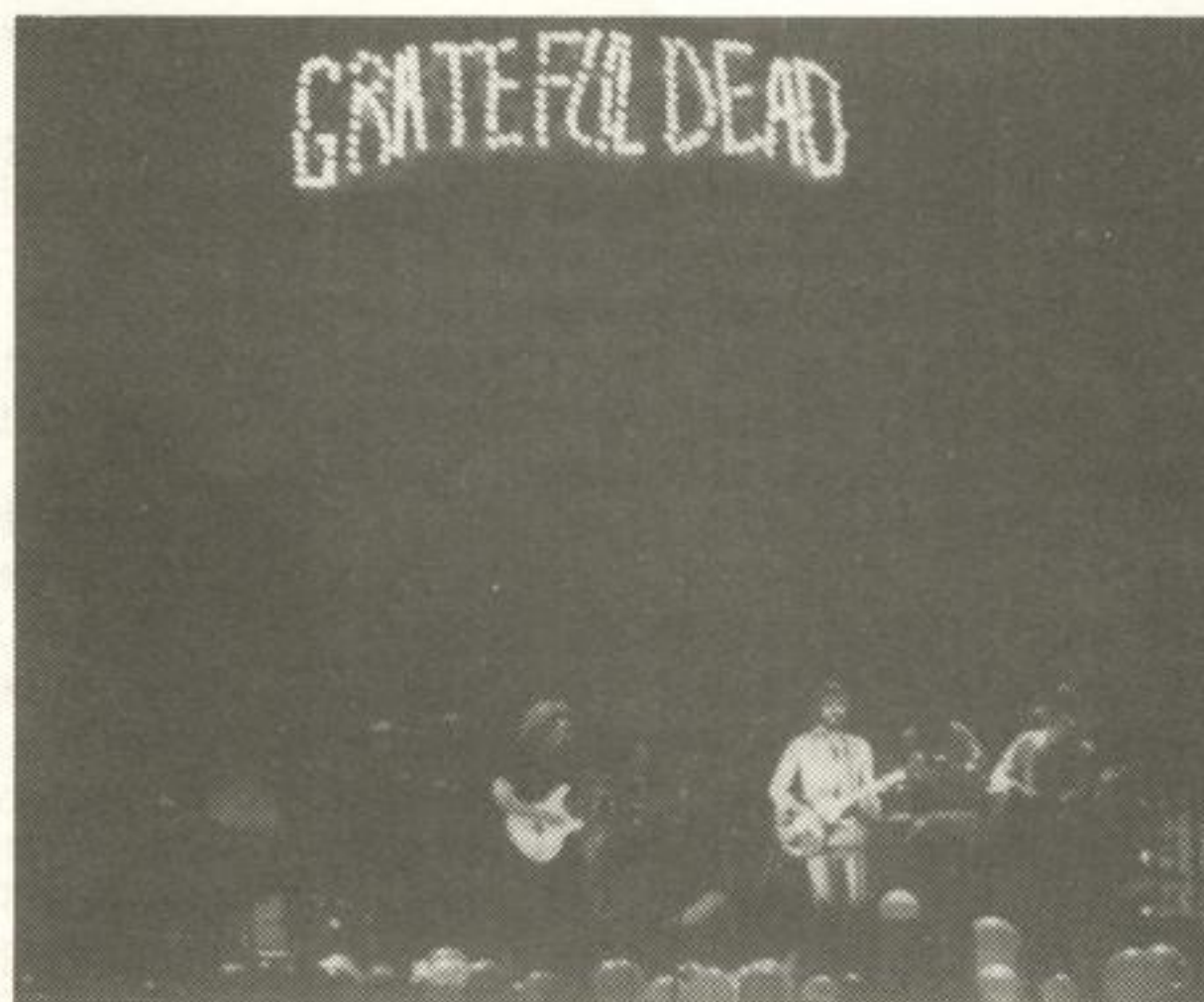


photo: Ed Perlstien

As 1976 crawled through its last few dying hours to meet 1977, I was exactly where I wanted to be. As I sit here in New York on a snowbound city Sunday, I wish I was still there. Somewhere, buried at the back of my brain under a pile of neurons, is a part of me that refuses to admit New Year's Eve is over. It is still back at the Cow Palace, in heaven as the Grateful Dead glide through their second encore. 1977 must surely be a great year, for the Dead and consequently for Deadheads, as it began with such a peak.

Half the thrill of any remote Dead concert lies in getting there. Here I'm strongly tempted to digress at length on the subject of travel, but I'll restrain myself. I can simply say that my trip across the U.S.A. was a trip in every sense of the word. I went by car with some friends, leaving the city early in the evening of the Thursday before Christmas, and dragging ass into California some 66 hrs. later.

One incident deserves mention. In Salt Lake City there is a hill which shook my faith in the law of gravity. It is in the nature of things that cars, when put into neutral gear on a hillside, roll to the bottom. On this particular hill, our car rolled upwards. It works every time. Either this hill is an amazingly good optical illusion, or there's something cockeyed about the way the world is glued together there. That hill had me mumbling to myself for a few hundred miles.

After Nevada, the 42nd Street of the Nation, California really looks like the promised land. Nevada is drab and washed out all the way through, brightened only by the neon most buildings in the state

are festooned with. Right by the "Welcome to California" sign, the mountains sprout pine trees, and suddenly everything is green.

I grew to love California quickly, though it took me a few days to adjust.

The State is a bit strange. The Bay area seems slightly adrift from time. The Transamerica pyramid tells you it is 1977, but everywhere you turn you bump into reminders of 1966, and even 1849. People move through life slowly. There, nobody ever seems to be in much of a hurry with anything. Time passes smoothly, and haste seems needless. One gets the sense that if Armageddon ever rears its ugly head, it will be ignored in California. They may all sleep through The Earthquake.

On my first day there, I must have been wearing a sign saying "tourist." I was hit upon, at one point, by a hippie panhandler, a member of a breed that died out ages ago in New York. Our exchange went something like this:

Panhandler: Hey brother.....
Myself: Sorry man,
can't help you.....
Panhandler: You ain't no brother

Maybe I ain't no brother, but I soaked up the atmosphere rapidly. By my 2nd day in San Francisco, I was spending most of my time hanging in a hammock, thinking empty thoughts and watching the smoke rise.

Though slowing down was the only quick thing I did, I made it to the Cow Palace with time to spare on New Year's Eve. I was there before the line was admitted, so I was treated to something I haven't seen since the Nassau Coliseum; a Bill Graham comedy routine. As I came to the line, there was old Bill hassling some hapless freak

in his usual inimitable fashion, saying, "I just want you to tell me what you just said." His victim was shamed into mumbling something about "the community." Having defeated one challenger, Graham moved to confront the crowd. "Just once," quoth he, "I'd like somebody to tell me to my face what you think of me," No takers appeared. Then, says Bill: "Where are the two guys who said 'fuck you'?"

Since they wouldn't show their faces, Graham got on the line to look for them. Several of his guards, being alarmed at the chances their boss was apparently taking with his life, came running to watch. Bill was able to take care of himself. The two rascals made their getaway, alas, but Graham got a rousing ovation from the crowd for his part. Bill Graham, that master of the art of confrontation, missed his true vocation. He is a top promoter, but he really should have been a stand-up comic of the Don Rickles variety.

This show was a labor of love on his part. Stepping through the door, you were greeted by a Graham employee handing out noise-makers, and a table loaded with party hats, free for the taking. Some people seemed to have difficulty accepting the fact that they weren't expected to pay for these. I heard one passing stranger who, after inquiring about how much the party hats cost, and being informed they were on the house, went: "No, shit, man, you mean they are FREE?" The arena was decked out for a party, like a good many of the concert-goers.

At the back of the hall was a huge thing hidden under black curtains, which I spent 6 hours wondering about. More on that later. The ceiling was hung with nets full of

balloons, and the P.A. system was garlanded with flowers (when the Dead eventually came on, Donna was wearing a wreath of roses). When enough people had been admitted to make the place look respectfully full, a W.C. Fields short feature and "Reefer Madness" were shown on the screen above the stage, up by the "1976" sign.

The music began at 6:30, with "Soundhole," once Van Morrison's backup band. This group, while not all that memorable, features John Cippolina's brother. After a competent but uninspiring set, they left the stage.

Though there was no noticeable demand for an encore, an encore there was.

It seems it had been worked out in advance that Cippolina himself would play with Soundhole on their encore, so there had to be one. Said encore, "Night after Night," was loud, and rather like Quicksilver in its stinging guitar leads. Soundhole finished their encore at 7:35, and Santana came on at about 8.

The "sound of the street" does nothing for me, so I won't mention them except to say that they ran through the hits, from "Jingo" to "Black Magic Woman." I spent a lot of their set outside, contemplating the scene in the lobby.

Santana left the stage at 9:30, to

the evident relief of many. The Dead were due on shortly. Thus far things were running like clockwork, but that was where the schedule fell apart. The break before the Dead came on stretched into an hour, letting anticipation build into fever.

I don't have it in me to adequately describe what ensued, but I'll try anyway. How does one relate pure joy? The Dead came on shining at 10:30, holding nothing in reserve. Bill Graham introduced them for the listeners in the Cow Palace, and for the many more at home, listening via KSAN. He stumbled a little over his words. Magic followed. The first note of "The Promised Land" sliced through the smokey air like a scalpel, letting everyone know that, New Year or not, this was a Dead concert. Immediately after "Promised Land," their most frequent show opener, they played "Bertha," their second most frequent opener. "Mama Tried," "They Love Each Other," and "Looks Like Rain" followed in their turn, each flawless.

The last 2 songs of the set, "Dead" and "Playing in the Band," were hot: they rocked and rolled. The first Dead set was short and to the point, since it had to end enough before midnight to allow time for the big production.

All though the show, the sound quality delivered by the p.a. was

moderately awful, at least partly because the Cow Palace is the granddaddy of all barns. The poor sound quality was compensated for by the astounding visuals. On the screen dominating the air over the stage, the support crew was exploring the universe. The dominant element in the screen display was space: gloriously detailed starscapes. Over a field of stars traipsed a variety of spaceships, abstract designs, artwork, and Lord knows what else. Behind the screen was mounted an impressive battery of lasers. They spent their time tracing incredible glowing designs on the starfields, from spiraling lines of light to miniature novae. The display was constantly in transition, through both Dead sets and their two encores. Standing in the blacked out Cow Palace as all this was going on above the stage, I could imagine myself in the doorway to the cosmos, gazing out on infinity.

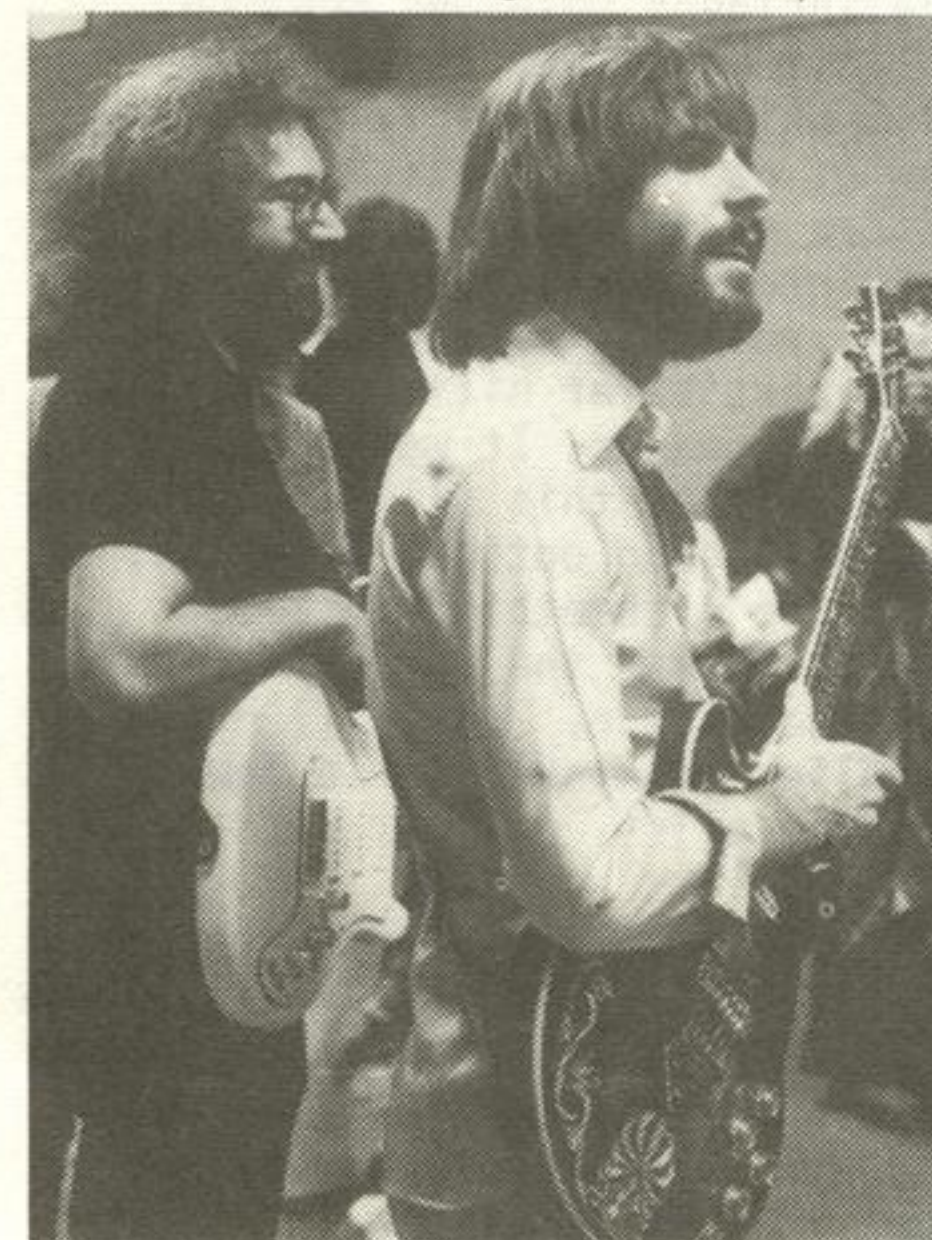
The break between the two Dead sets was 20 minutes of total confusion. We went looking for a bathroom, water fountain and such, only to be stricken with a terrible fear: what if midnight comes, and you're standing in the bathroom taking a piss, and miss it all; what will you do then, dummy?

We fought our way back into the hall, through several thousand others stricken with the same fear.

Midnight was total insanity, and the set that followed was a miracle. At a couple of minutes to the hour, all the hall lights went on, and the enigma in the rear of the hall was unveiled. It turned out to be, as nearly as I can figure it, a tower on wheels, girt with spiral-



BACKSTAGE: 1 to r: JOHN BARLOW, BOB WEIR, CARLOS' WIFE, CARLOS SANTANA, & BILL GRAHAM



ing plastic vines, and topped with a huge, gaudy, plastic tulip. Around the base some strange character was dancing in white robes, acting, I imagine, the part of 1976.

Then, the tulip on top opened, to reveal a couple of nuts in diapers dancing around inside the flower. As this happened, the nets by the roof opened, deluging the hall with balloons and a snowstorm of pink confetti, I swallowed a lot of the latter.

The tower then started rolling toward the stage, shedding people like drops of foam to right and left. The dancers were tossing things out into the crowd, possibly flowers, possibly last month's garbage. I'm not sure, none of it came flying my way. The big rig hit the stage with a minute or so to spare, and all its riders decamped on to the stage, some to spray champagne in all directions, some to rip at the coverings of the now lowered "1976" sign, some to continue dancing. The countdown began.

At midnight a number of things happened; the last shred was ripped from the sign, so that it now read "1977;" the sign was yanked up over the stage; another sign, reading "Grateful Dead" in lightbulbs, started flashing and swinging back and forth; the champagne spraying continued indiscriminately, but the dancers dropped their diapers; and the Grateful Dead, in the middle of total chaos, cut loose with "Sugar Magnolia."

The second set was sublime, unquestionably the best I've ever seen the Dead do. Amazingly, they stood up through "Sugar Magnolia," playing music with all the hall

lights on, the confetti still flying, the stage covered with balloons, and the dancers, still nude, still at it. From this chaos, they built order through the course of their set.

At the end of the first song, the circus came to a halt and the Dead concert resumed. The lights went out, and "Sguar Magnolia," with a barely perceptible pause, gave way to "Eyes of the World." Interstellar exploration began again in the void above the Dead. "Eyes of the World" rolled into an incredibly sweet "Wharf Rat," which in turn fell into "Good Lovin'," a blast from the past, with grease and everything. Weir was more at ease with the vocals this time, and Lesh, Hart, and Kreutzmann were all pouncing on the bass line together. That plowed along until it became "If I Had My Way," which rocked the first jam to an end. "Scarlet Begonias" was great, though in the context of the rest of the set, it was just the filler between two periods of extended improvisation.

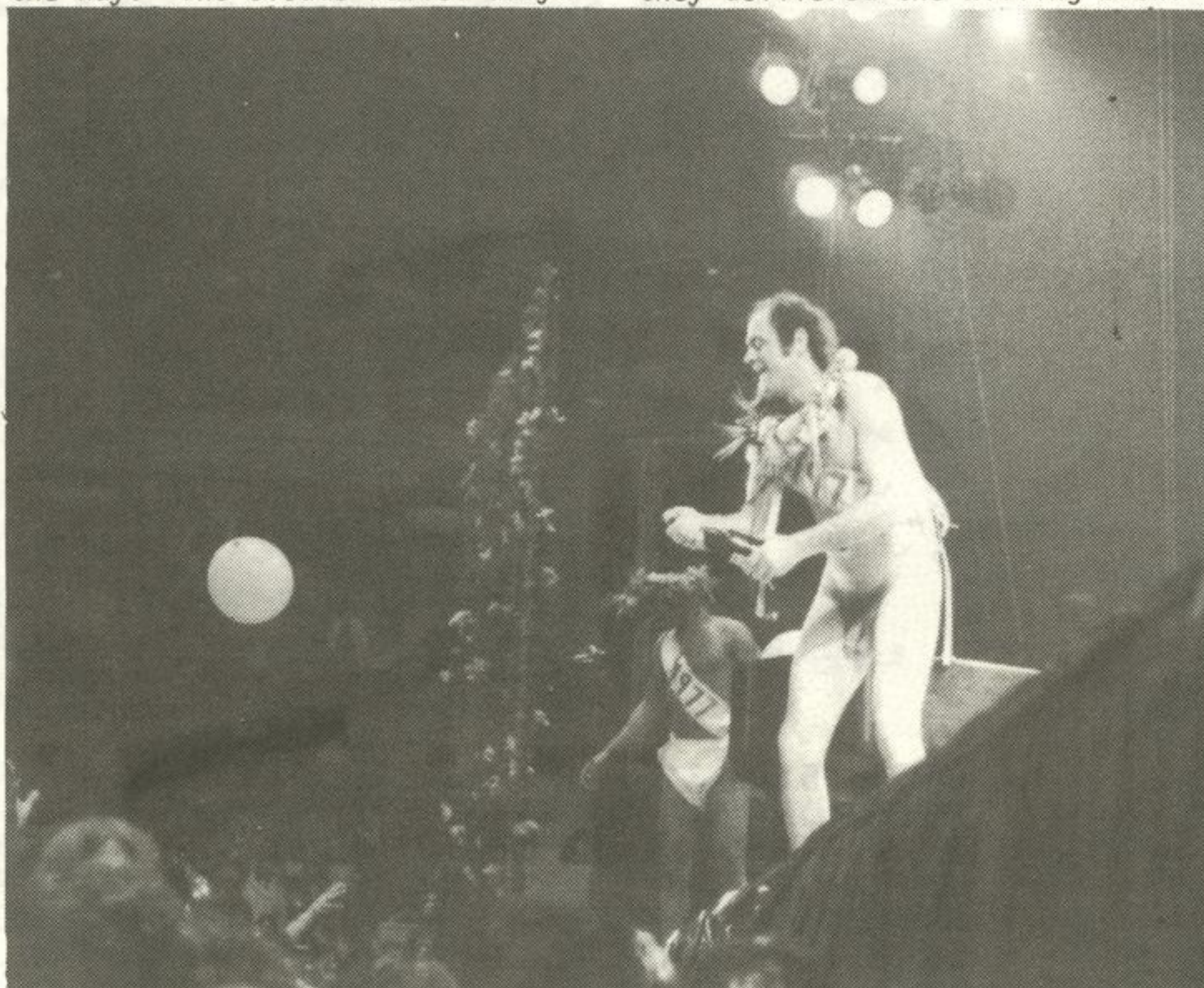
The next number had me worried. "Around and Around" often closes Dead shows, and it was already late enough to end this one. Dark clouds were closing in, as it seemed the show was ending. Things became more promising. A new ending was grafted to "Around and Around," and rock and roll was eclipsed by the music of the spheres. As Chuck Berry's tune ended, the Dead struck the first overpowering chords of "Help on the Way." The clouds rolled away.

"Help on the Way," instead of moving into "Slipknot" as usual, went into "Not Fade Away." That was great - it also sported a new finale. "This is really the end" thought I, but no; - As Weir's showcase piece for the evening wound down, Garcia opened things up with the first silken riffs of "Morning Dew." I achieved nirvana. My Old Pal - god and I were having a fine time, and Garcia was singing more sweetly than ever before. The thing was transcendent. At one point the song got incredibly quiet, and Garcia could be heard perfectly, crooning "I guess it doesn't matter anyway" to 14,000 silent listeners.

That really was the end - the first end. The Dead came back in fairly short order to deliver "One More Saturday Night" for the radio audience, but that wasn't the proper encore.

Some 15 or 20 minutes later, they returned again, to strike up "Uncle John's Band" for the first time in better than 2 years. Phil didn't sing a note, concentrating, back to the audience, on his bass. Still the harmonies were perfect. The Dead dug from its grave a trick they used long ago on this song. In the middle, all the instruments but the drums dropped out, leaving only percussion to accompany a chorus.

This oldie, so faithfully rendered, would have been enough. It would have been much more than enough. But, as it ended, they delivered the killing blow.



photos: Ed Perlstein

As "Uncle John's Band" ended and Garcia began singing alone, I reached my highest peak. Totally without instrumental support, he was singing, "We Bid You Goodnight," and it seemed all the years intervening between 1969 and 1977 had dropped away with the guitars. Garcia was wrapping his tongue perfectly around the convoluted lyrics—all the lyrics. The song was a perfect lullaby for a hall full of totally drained minds. Nobody could have asked for more.

It was 2:30 a.m. on the first day of a brand new year. The Dead were gone, leaving serenity in their wake.

All that was left was to pick my way through a crowd of human wreckage, wrecked myself, but elated and at peace, to join with my scattered companions, and with them to express wonderment over what had just happened. Wonder was tinged with disbelief since nobody fully believed what they had been through.

Comparing our fantasies, we decided they were real. New Year's Eve was a truly marvelous, magnificent, miraculous evening. It set me up for the year.

PHOTO CONTEST WINNER: ORPHEUM THEATRE, S.F. 6/1/76



photo: Ed Perlstein

There is always an aftermath. I flew back to New York the next day. I spent most of the following week putting myself back together and readjusting to New York.

There's one little problem, though, I still seem to be running on California time.....

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Interview with Jorma

by Nick Ralph

NR: What were you and Jack doing in the early 60's?

JK: I was playing coffee houses. I did that for about 8 years before I got in the Airplane; folk clubs, coffee houses, bars, and teaching guitar. That was in California. Jack was back in our old home town, Washington, D.C., and he was teaching music in a music store and taking classes at some college.

NR: What were the Triumphs?

JK: That was just a little band we had.

NR: Did you do any original material with that band?

JK: No, we wanted to get jobs!

NR: When and where was the "typewriter tape" recorded?
(this question refers to a recording of Jorma with Janis Joplin, with a typewriter providing the percussion).

JK: It was recorded in San Jose, in late '64 or early '65.

NR: Who was typing?

JK: That was Margareta.

NR: Three of those tracks were broadcast on the radio. Can you remember any other titles?

JK: No, I can't, and I'm really pissed. We did around 14 songs. Janis and I were old friends, and just before we came to England in '68, Janis and this guy came by, and she said she'd really like to borrow the tape. I said "sure", and gave them the original copy of the tape. For some reason she only liked the

three cuts that came out. I remember I thought they were all really good. I don't remember what's on it, I never got the original back. I keep trying. I know who has it, and I'd really like to get it back. There's some really good playing on it. It was taped when I was at my peak of that kind of guitar playing, and I think Janis was singing better than she ever did with Big Brother.

NR: Are any of your songs on it?

JK: It was all old blues songs. I didn't really start writing until I was in the Airplane. The first thing I wrote was "Embryonic Journey" in '64, but I wasn't writing lyrics in those days.

JR: Was Jefferson Airplane Takes Off your first recording?

JK: It was, yeah.

NR: So all those rumors of an album with David Reef are unfounded?

JK: I'm afraid so.

NR: How early did Hot Tuna start playing gigs?

JK: Right around the time the acoustic record came out, Grace didn't wanna work, and Jack and I got bored. So, we made an acoustic record and started getting some ideas together for a band.

NR: That was around the time of Crown of Creation. Was "Lather" written about Jack?

JK: That was about Spencer. Grace was going with Spencer at the

time and he had a birthday or something. There might be a little of all of us in there somewhere, but I think it was specifically for him.

NR: Is it true that he left the Airplane because the way you and Jack play wore him out?

JK: Basically yes. That's pretty close to the truth.

NR: What are your views on Grace and Paul's political trip?

JK: I don't really know what it is right now, but Jack and I are pretty non-political.

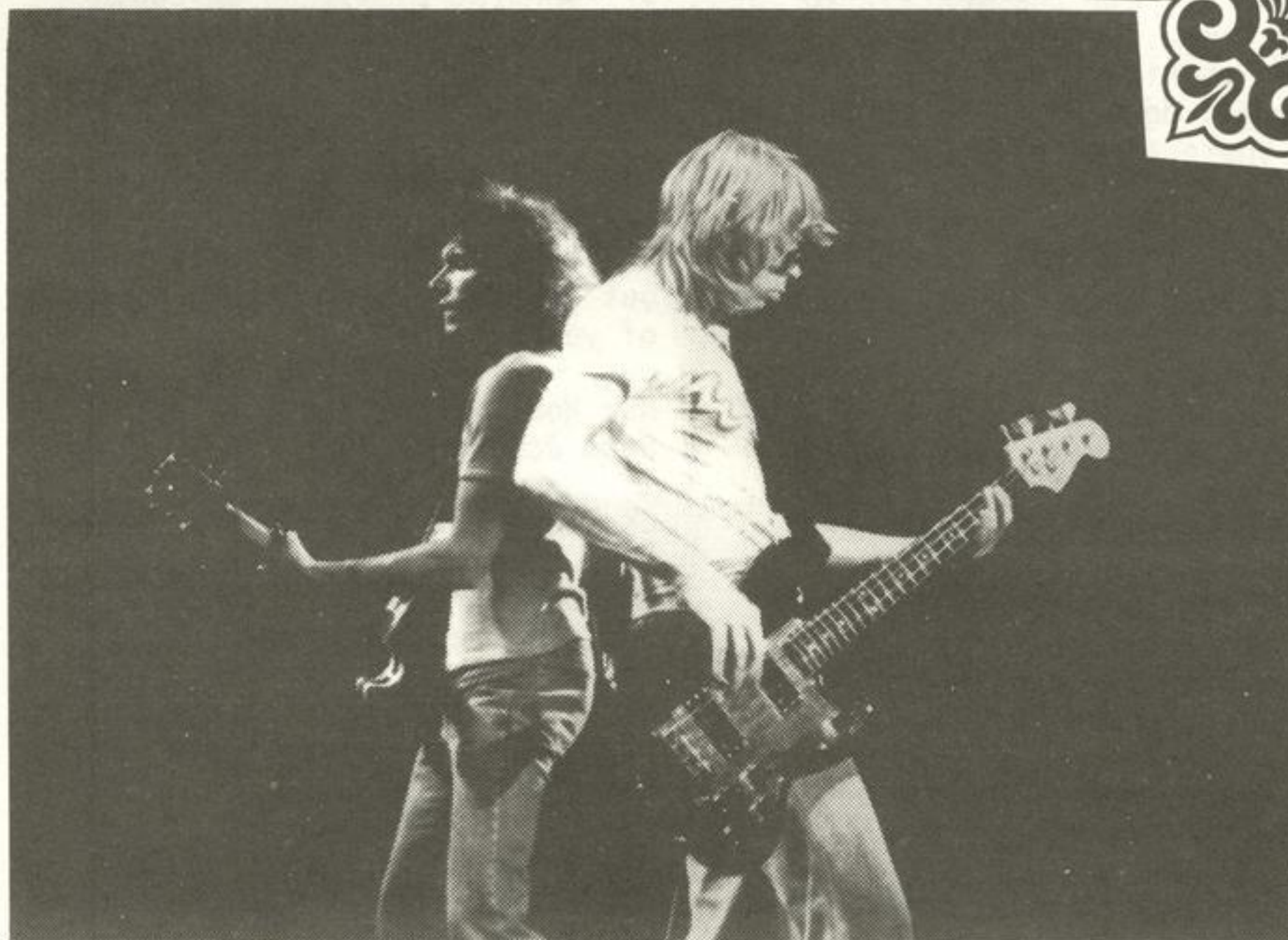
NR: Was that a major reason the Airplane drifted apart?

JK: Not really. I'd been with the band a long time; I got bored. We had a formula, a way we did things. The last two records were, to my mind, very much the same - even the last three.

NR: Songs like "Good Shepherd" and "Third Week in the Chelsea" were very different from other Airplane material, weren't they?

JK: They're just the music I was familiar with. "Good Shepherd" was a song I'd known for about 8 or 9 years, an old song that I really liked a lot.

NR: Do you know anything about the quadriphone version of Volunteers?



JK: It was just an experiment. We were wondering whether it might be nice to have a rhythm guitar player so I could play lead all the time, but it didn't work out. You probably want to know why! It didn't work out because it turned out that I was playing more solid rhythm for our music than Greg was, so he wound up playing more lead than me!

NR: What's he doing now?

JK: He's still around, just playing with different people. I don't think he has a band right now.

NR: What was all that about giving guitar lessons to Bob Weir?

JK: He never really took lessons. He used to bring a tape recorder to jobs and steal licks. The bastard!

NR: As you like playing a lot, how come you aren't on more artist's albums?

JK: No one ever asks me.

NR: Really? I'd have thought you'd always be playing with somebody or other.

JK: I haven't seen many people around for years, believe it or not. Whenever anyone comes home to San Francisco these days, they just keep to themselves.

NR: Do you ever see the Starship people?

JK: Now and then.

NR: What do you think of their music?

JK: It's okay, if you like it. I'm not particularly into that kind of music, but I think they play good. If you are talking about technique, it's good.

NR: How do you feel about Marty Balin saying he'd like to see you in the Starship playing alongside Craig Chaquico?

JK: Might be fine to do jamming, but I really like Hot Tuna. I can't imagine it.

NR: Hot Tuna is reknowned for really long concerts. Do you still play long sets?

JK: Sometimes, though we're not always allowed to. Also, it doesn't always work. Sometimes a shorter one works better. But, every time we play we have a good time, and, we are looking forward to every next good time.

This interview was conducted by Nick Ralph, while Hot Tuna was touring Europe. We thank 'Dark Star' magazine in England for use of the material used in this interview.

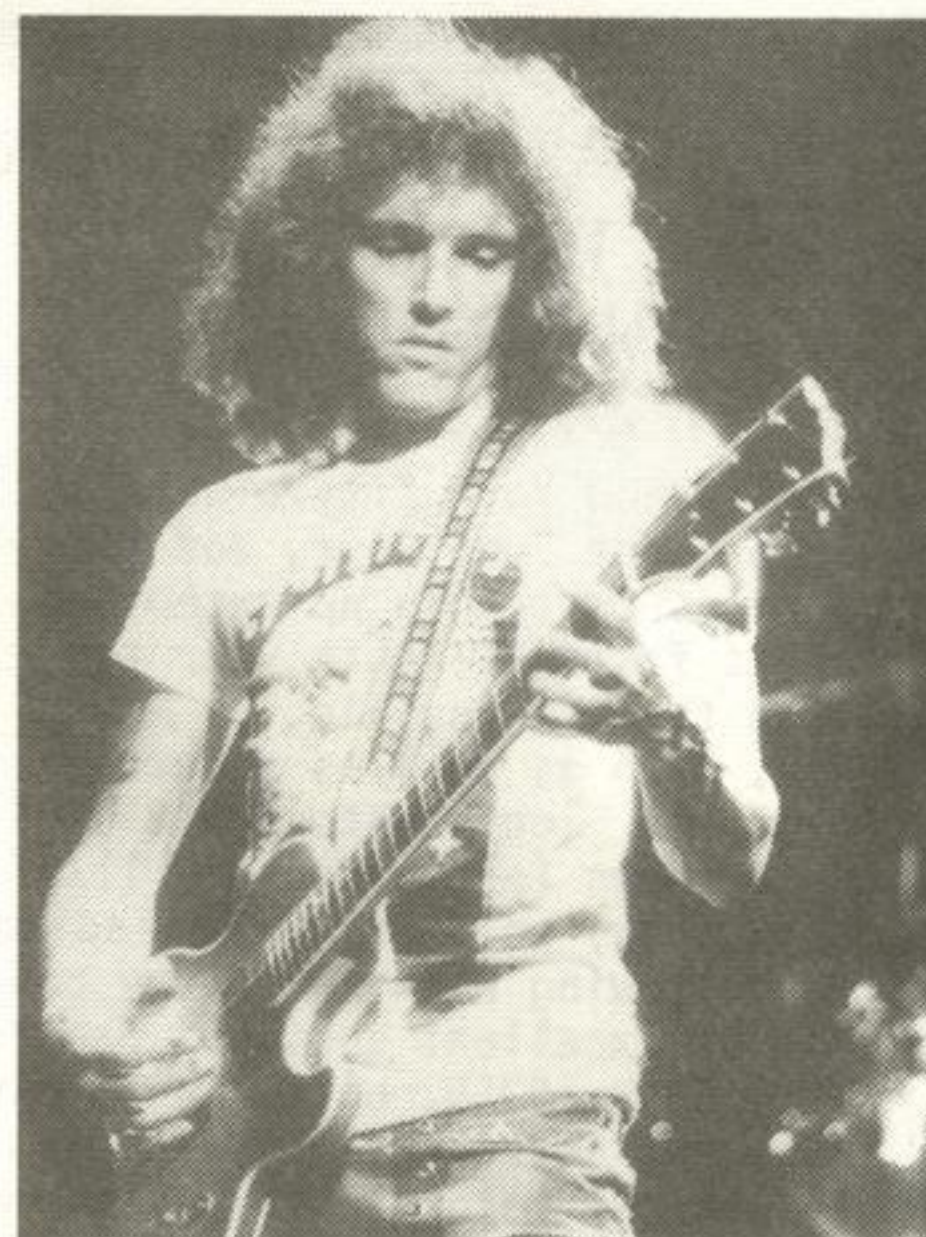


photo: Amanda Vaskas

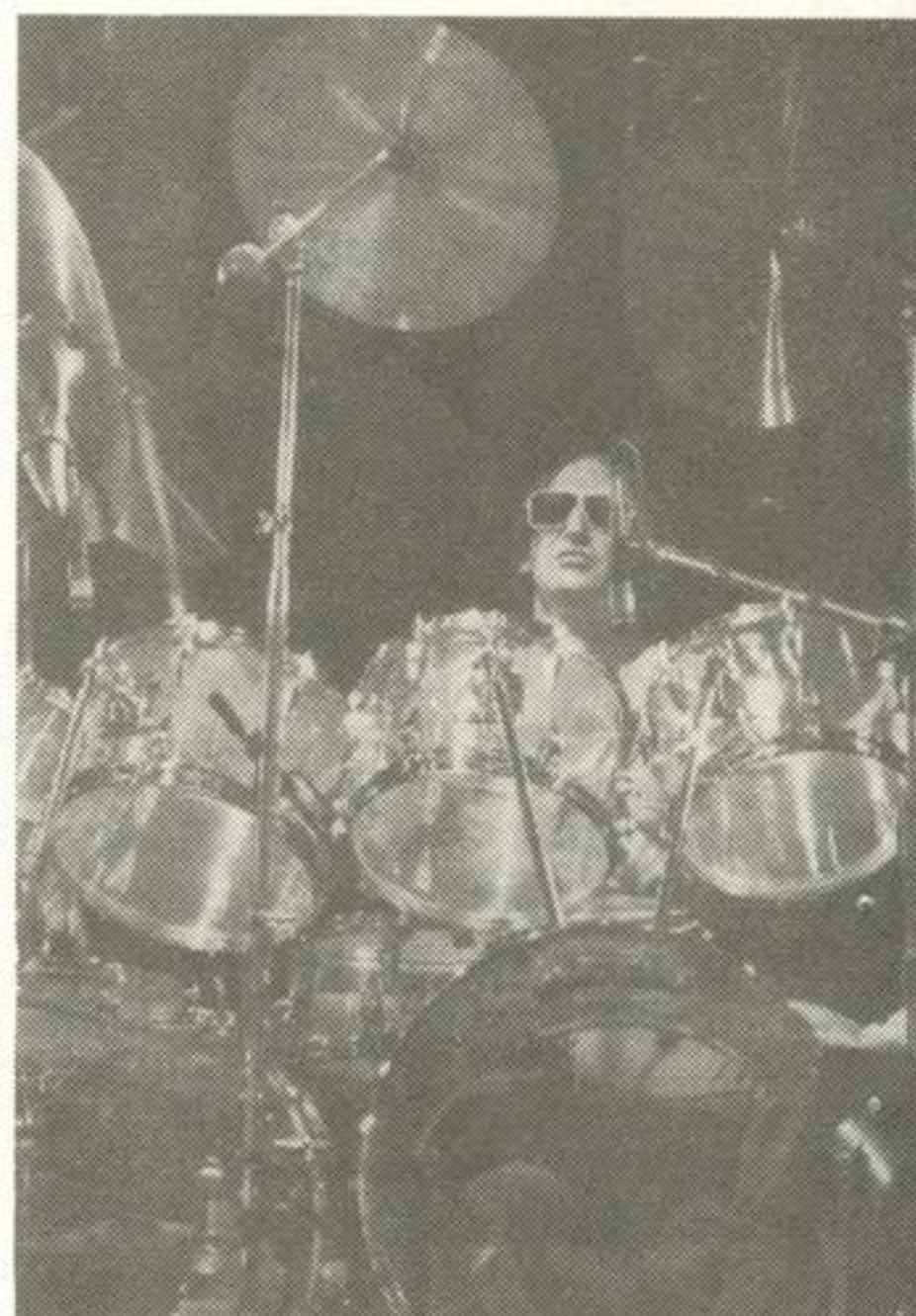
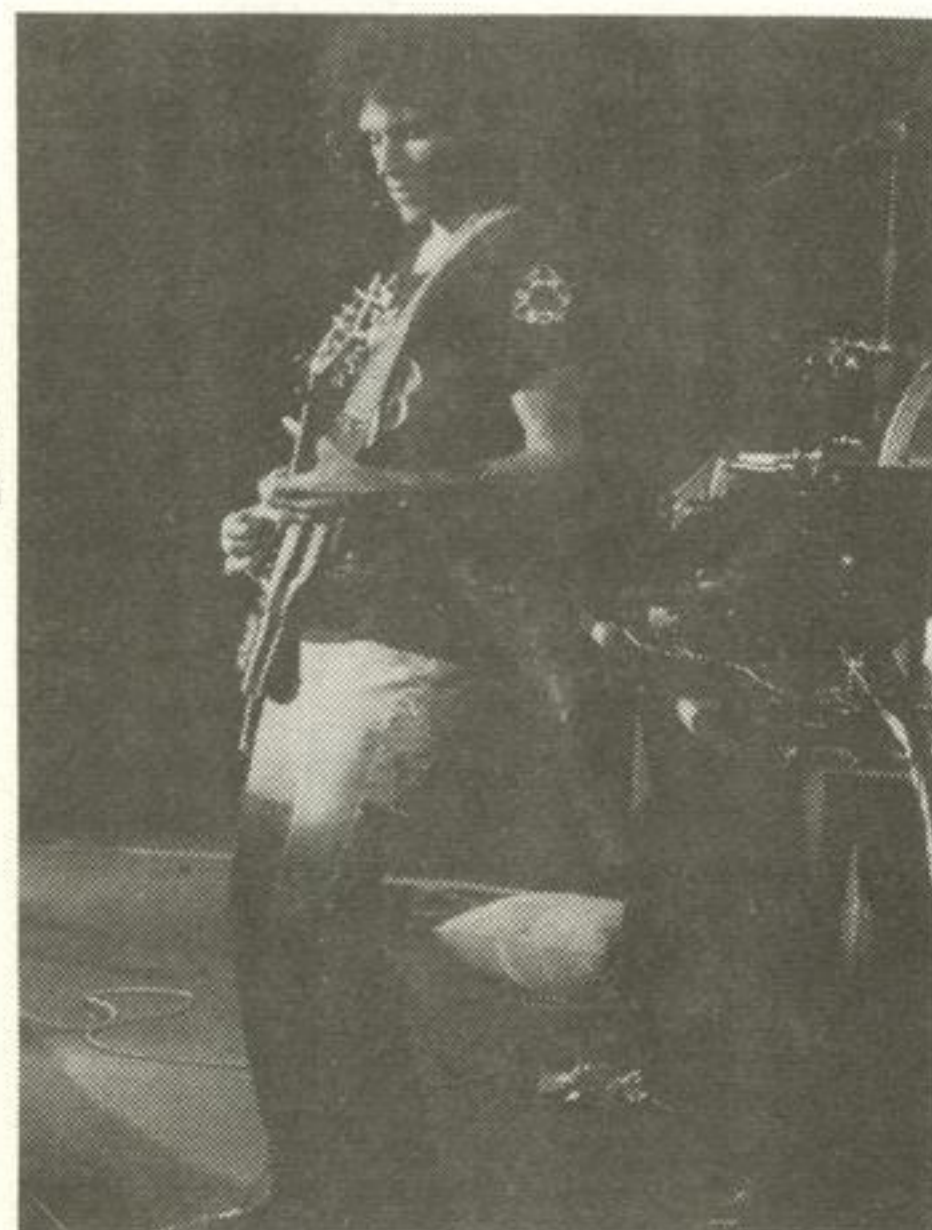


photo: L.D. Kippel

photo: John Paster





bits by Les

The info keeps pouring in. The past few days have found me taking so many notes that I return home to find my pockets crammed with pieces of paper. My notes, when I manage to decipher them, wind up in this column.

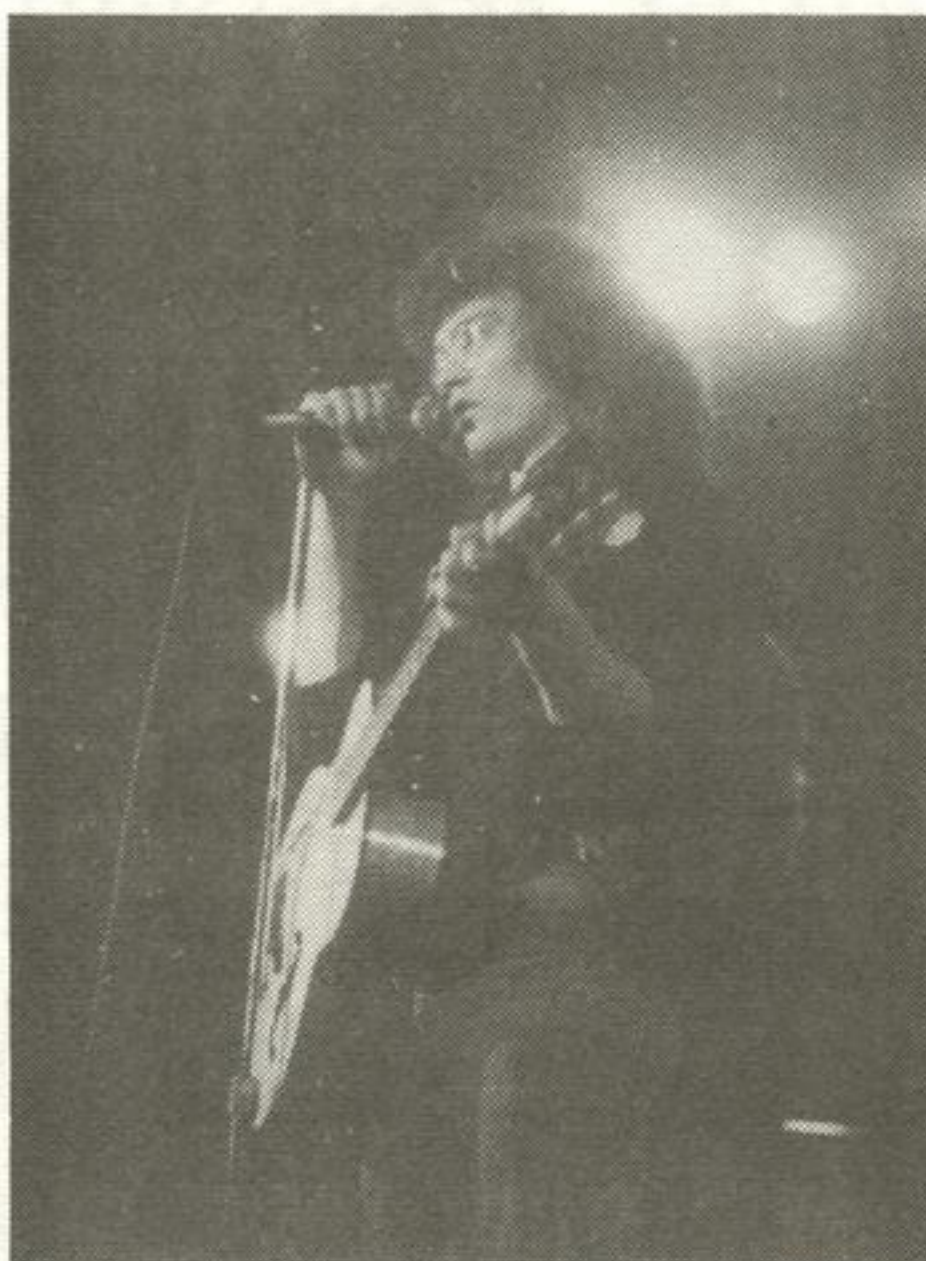
photo: L.D. Kippel



The latest New Riders album is out, and with it comes another piece of news. The Riders are going through a change in management. Their new manager? Spencer Dryden. Their new drummer? The position is open for bidding. The change will not be a sudden one, and will not be effective 'till later this year.

According to BAM, the Bay Area Music Magazine, Billy C. Farlow is under consideration for the lead part in a movie about the life of Buddy Holly. They suggest that, if you feel Billy C. is the man for the job, you should write to the film-makers and tell them. The producer's address is: Mr. Fred

Kuehnert, c/o Charter Financial Group, Inc., 2700 South Post Oak Road, Transco Tower, Suite 1870, Houston, Texas, 77027.



Rumor of the month: The Dead will be doing a Saturday Night Live T.V. show to be shown this spring.

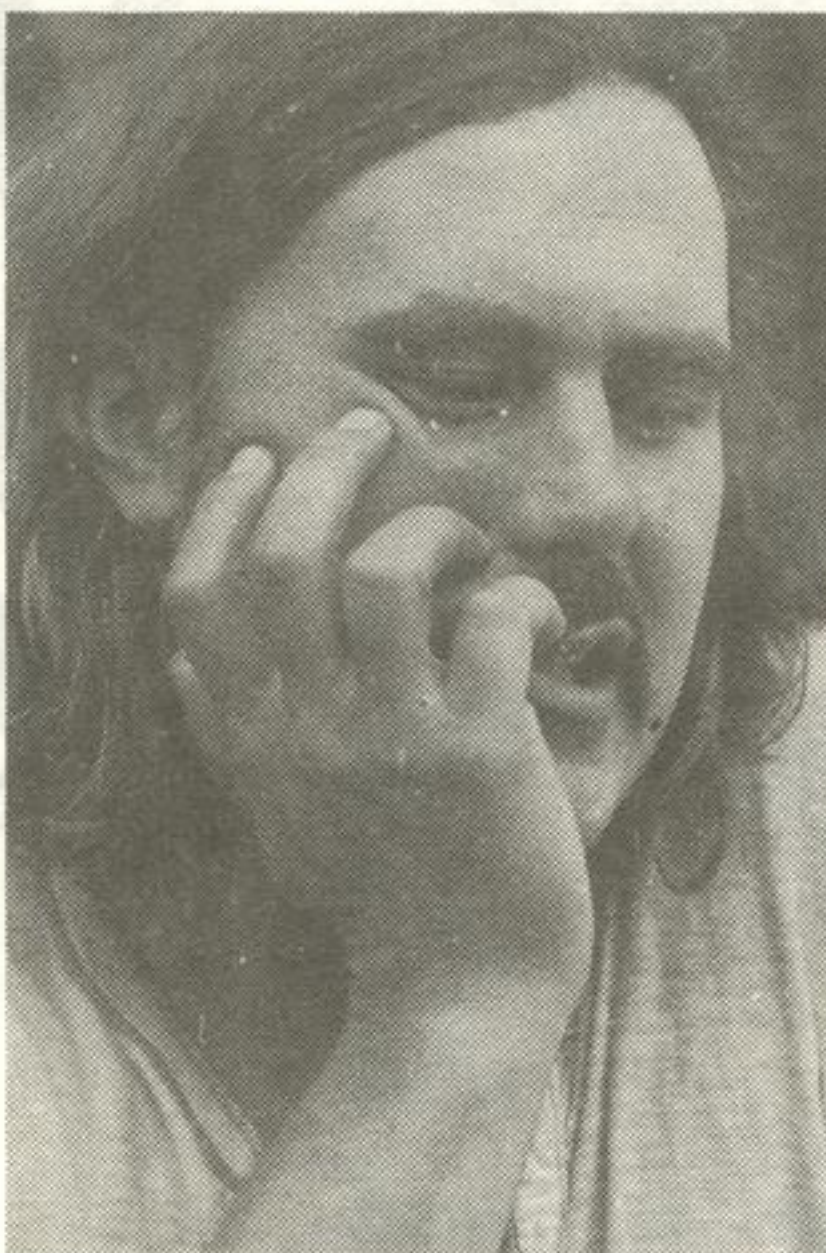


photo: Dave Patrick

Commander Cody, aka George Frayne, that beer drinking, dope smoking, long haired commie mother-fucker, went and got himself married. Legal and everything. So did Billy C. Farlow.

Those of you from the New York/New Jersey Area might be interested in this item: our own John Scher has been looking at a possible home for his summer concert series. Do you really want to know? The New Jersey MEADOWLANDS. Sorry you asked, huh? John is reported to be the unwritten exclusive booker for the Grateful Dead, aside from a few Bill Graham dates.



photos: L.D. Kippel

We have some news for those of you who loved the Cream and their offspring. RSO records has issued what it refers to as a "Collector's Series" of records by the Cream, Blind Faith, and Eric Clapton. The original jacket designs have been retained, even the Blind Faith album cover, which featured a barely nubile teenybopper in the buff. That cover created a considerable deal of controversy when originally released in 1969, and it was swiftly replaced with a more straight laced design.

The April leg of David Bromberg's endless tour will include a stop at Avery Fisher Hall in New York City.

I heard a report last night that the Dead will be playing at the Pauley Pavilion at UCLA on March 13.

Another rumor has the Dead going on tour with the Who this summer. Don't expect the Who to open the shows.

If you want to know just what your local narcotics agent can and can't do to you, write to:

DEA

1405 I Street N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20537

and ask for their "Domestic Operations Guidelines." This is the new rulebook by which the federal cops have to play, and, if you're going to play the game, you ought to know the rules.

Other news of interest includes a new club in Potter Square in Cambridge. The new club, being put together by the people from "My Fathers Place" in Long Island, N.Y., are planning a 600 capacity club. The site is currently an abandoned garage.



The Great International Armadillo Network presents...

The Chicago Experience

remembering last year's Dead tour

by John Idoux

It came in the mail. There it was. The letter with all the info on how the select Dead Heads were to purchase tickets for the return of the Dead. Utterly Fantastic!!! Dead Heads Only. Small Theaters!! Finally!! What an environment in which to relive the Dead!!!

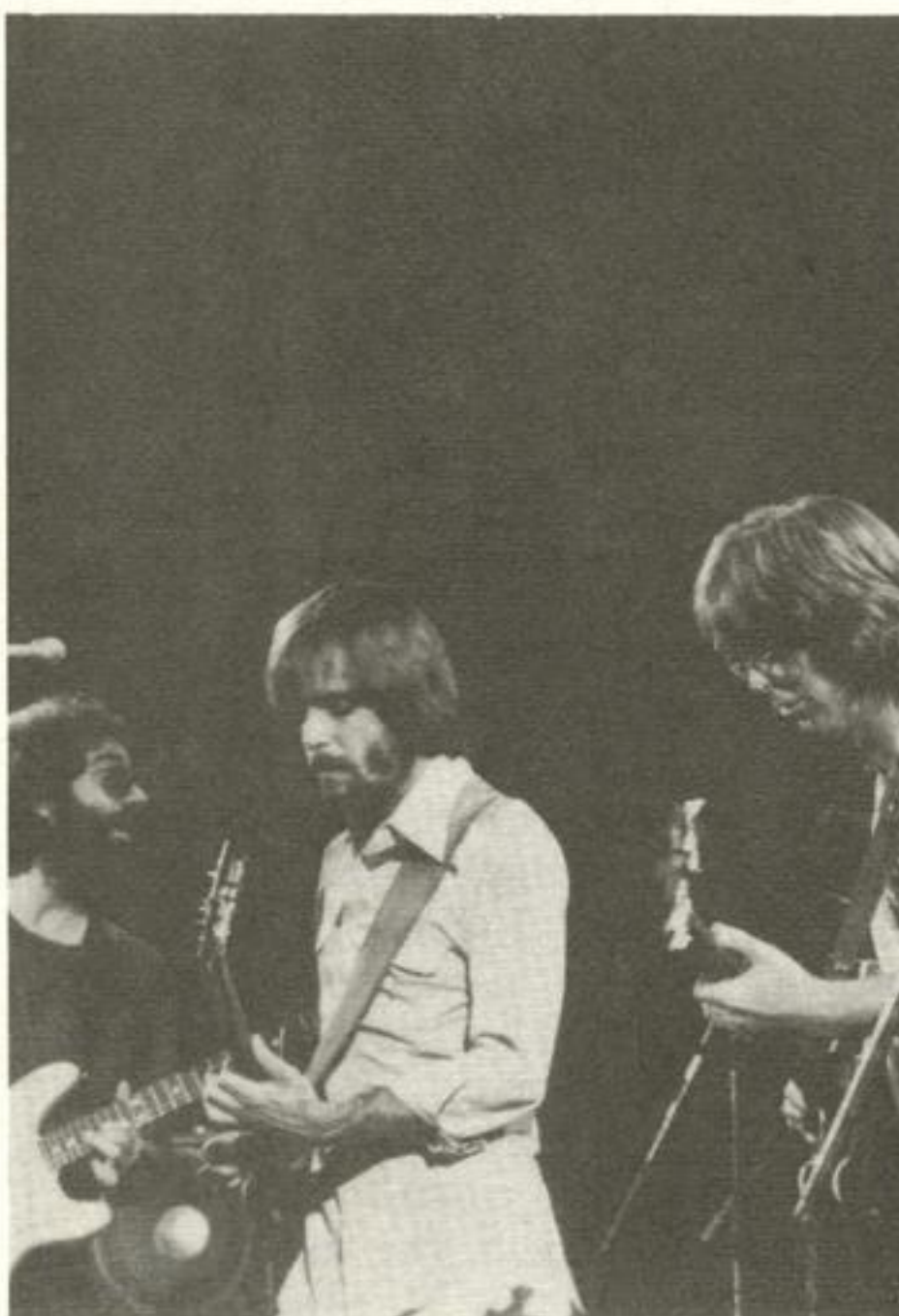
I wanted to write a review of the Chicago concerts for DEAD RELIX, and experience the Dead again. But ... I was the person to get screwed in the practical realities of implementing the Dead's ticket system.

WHAT WENT WRONG ???

I received my invitation to buy tickets for the concerts late, far past the deadline. Where can the blame be placed for that? The Post Office? The distribution before the Post Office?? Where??

So, I immediately had a problem—the deadline was past, what do I do? I call the Auditorium Theatre in Chicago (about 300 miles away, as that is the closest the Dead were to perform, as I live near St. Louis.) I asked them what to do about the tickets. Their reply was to mail away for tickets anyway, as many people had received the mailing late. Then, I attempted to phone the New Jersey ticket location, but the operators are unable to give me a number to call. Being a midwesterner, well, maybe that hindered me, as I wasn't able to recognize who the promoter was, and call them direct. All I had was a P.O. Box in New Jersey to call. Not enough.

So, I took a chance and sent for tickets to New Jersey. Two weeks later... the envelope is returned "POSTMARKED LATE." Well, of course it was! I first received the mailing a week past the last



photos: Ed Friedman



deadline. Again, I called the Auditorium Theatre. No mail order from them. Too bad about the tickets. A few remaining tickets would go on sale sometime, call back later to find out when. So, I called again, and again, and again... Same response from the Theatre. That I was attempting to do a review for DEAD RELIX made no difference. The management was of no help. No tickets for me.

Finally, early one Monday morning the theatre says that tickets would go on sale that afternoon. WOW!!! HOPE!!! I drop work, grab money and head for Chicago --- 300 miles away. All day across the Illinois Flatlands, at speeds well above the limit of law. Only 3 cars passed my little car on that trip. One State Police speed trap just smiled as I shot past, doing 85. Two nice officers there. Across Illinois in a desperate, musical rush for tickets. A Holy Pilgrimage to see the Sacred Band, the Band that plays music so sweet, music that brings the Dead to life. Pipe dreams aplenty, the Dead on the tape player. I realized this was probably my last chance for this ultimate religious psychedelic experience. Anticipation heightened my senses to a frenzy by the time I neared Chicago.

The return of the Dead. At Last.

As I reached a point about 30 miles from the theatre, I called to find out which route to follow to get those precious Dead tickets. And, what words did I hear? What shattered my illusions? NO TICKETS ON SALE 'TIL FRIDAY.

I explained to them, that morning I was told to drive there and get tickets, that sure, they would be on sale. Their response: "Too Bad, we shouldn't have told you that...come back Friday, and

we might have tickets then, and there might be another concert by then." I ask ... how am I gonna review a concert from 300 miles away? The response: I don't know, come back Friday. "Call us"... "Write us"... "Bye"....

AUUUGGGHHHH!!!!!!!!!!

So, what am I to do? Wait 4 days until Friday? I had other commitments that prohibited that. I then drove back home that same day. Another 300 miles. Very upset, very burned out and disillusioned. Oh, the pain to be a Dead Addict, when you can't get your Dead Fix.

This last opportunity to see the Dead is blown. I'd never get into the theatre just by hanging around on concert nights. Never.

I have one last chance. The next day I started this last effort. I called the booking agency in Chicago. I tell a dozen different people that I was trying to do a review, that I would pay(anything) for a ticket. I slowly made my way up & up: still, no tickets for sale or for the press. The concert dates draw closer. More calls. No luck. Until.... Until.....

The night of one of the concerts, about an hour before it was to start, from 300 miles away in Chicago, the person with the authority to get me into the concert returns my phone call (about a week and a half late). And he says

I can come that night.

Great ... An hour before the concert. I'm eating supper, and he says I can come. As if it was only 6 miles away. That night I can come. After all the hassle, the expense, the disappointments. I can have a ticket. Fantastic. Great.

I turn him down. I couldn't possibly get there in such short notice, even via plane. He could care less. "Thanks", I say to him, I hang up the phone and finish supper. Nice meal. That's it for me and the Chicago concerts.

In retrospect, maybe that I did not go was best. I feel that person who went in my place was not a Dead Head at the start of the concert, but maybe, perhaps, would become such by the end. I hope that person who went instead of me was able to see and experience and live the Dead, and would gain from the opportunity.

Perhaps that person will find in the Dead what I have. And, that would be a gain.

Perhaps it is good. And, there will be another Dead Head, Perhaps. I can only hope so. I sit that concert night, and listen to the Dead on record and tape, and dream.

Maybe, someday, I'll again see the Dead. Live.

But not this time. Maybe it was inevitable. Predestined. Pre-ordained. But, I know I'll see the Dead again. Somewhere, sometime. And I will live for that time, and die for it. But I know I'll see them again. Maybe not in this life span. Or on this planet. Maybe far away, near a Dark Star. They'll always be with me. In me. Ingrained upon my mind, body and soul.

But I've seen them, and I know. I've experienced them before. And I will again. And the Universe knows.

And we'll meet again someday, the Dead and I. Where I'll see and hear and be. Where all the water tastes like wine.

Someday, perhaps far away. Somewhere. In that Promised Land.

PRESS RELEASE FROM ARISTA RECORDS

January 26, 1977

ARISTA RECORDS SIGNS THE GRATEFUL DEAD--THE JERRY GARCIA BAND AND THE BOB WEIR BAND ALSO PACTED.

Clive Davis, President of Arista Records, has announced the signing of the Grateful Dead to an exclusive long term worldwide agreement. The announcement ended months of speculation throughout the industry as to the group's new label affiliation. The San Francisco-based band, which has literally become a musical institution, is expected to release its first album on the Arista label sometime this spring.

The record, which is being produced by Keith Olson is to be recorded in Los Angeles.

In making the announcement, Davis said, "I began talking to the Grateful Dead six years ago. It actually became an annual event and although all my attempts at recruitment always failed, we got so used to talking together that we decided to change the occasional live in relationship to a more permanent marriage. I'm delighted because in the hierarchy of the music business, no band is better known or more loyally supported than the Grateful Dead. Their contribution to music culture has already been enormous, and I know from our current talks that it's just beginning."

The contractual agreement also extends to both the Jerry Garcia Band and the new Bob Weir band. Both of these groups will be recording for Arista and will tour individually in support of their albums.

The Jerry Garcia Band is comprised of Garcia, John Kohn, Ron Tutt, and Keith and Donna Godchaux. The new Bob Weir band, which has nothing to do with his previous group, KINGFISH, will be announced shortly.

Reached for a comment in Los Angeles, where the Dead are currently rehearsing, Jerry Garcia said, "The band and I are very enthusiastic about our relationship with Clive and the people at Arista."

The Grateful Dead will commence a major market tour in the beginning of April which will cover most of the Eastern portion of the United States and parts of the South. The band plans to tour during the summer as well.

photo: Ed Perlstein



MICKEY HART, NOVATO, CA.





Every last magazine has one final piece of info that must go in 30 seconds before press time. Well, we got a couple.

We received a letter from DEAD HEADS, telling us that things over there are real busy, and they are trying to get things together for another mailing.

The movie has been finished in Burbank, and a release date should be forthcoming soon.

A new Dead album will be out at the same time as the tour.

New Riders tour dates: Reading, PA 3/18. Capitol Theater, N.J., 3/19. Rider College in N.J., 3/24. The Palladium in N.Y., 3/25.

Another Dead date: March 18 +19 at Winterland.

David Bromberg dates: Mar. 3, Rutgers Univ, N.J. Mar. 4 at York, PA (Memorial Aud.). Mar. 11 at Fairfield Univ. (Ct.). Mar. 13 at State Univ at Brockport, N.Y. Mar. 14 at Stone Ballon, Newark, Del. Mar. 16 at Sienna Col. in Loudenville, N.Y. Mar. 18 at Horseshoe, Toronto. Mar. 25, Avery Fisher Hall in N.Y.C. Mar. 26 at Alexander Hall, Princeton, N.J. April 5, 6 at My Father's Place in Roslyn, N.Y. April 8 at Denison Univ, Granville, OH. and April 12-13 at Ivanhoe, Chicago.

Info seeping to us says that Country Joe will be making an album with the original Country Joe and the Fish. Country Joe will also be touring Australia and Japan.

The Bands last album, which was recorded right after their

"Last Waltz," completes their record company commitments.

Starship should be taking off in the fall for a national tour. Along with the tour will be a new album. Craig Chaquico has been playing with Commander Cody.

And of course, the New Riders album is out. It doesn't sound like then at all. Steve Love has taken over the musical direction of the group, and things are changing. After we see the Riders we will tell you all. Meanwhile, they are trying to put together a 150 city tour.....

Skip Battin has left the Burrito brothers. Also rumored is a new name for the band.

The line-up is now Bobby Cochran, Gib Gilbeau, Sneaky Pete, plus new additions Thad Maxwell (bass & vocal) & Mickey McGee (drums & vocal).

At an Allen Ginsberg poetry reading, Feb. 22, at the YMCA in Manhattan, the audience was treated to a surprise performance by Bob Dylan & The Rolling Thunder Revue.

Kingfish without Bob Weir has just signed a long-term contract with Jet Records.

Oh, and speaking of surprise performances, 300 people at the EL MACOMBO in Toronto got to celebrate Keith Richard's jail release with a surprise bar gig by The Stones on March 4 & 5. Mme Trudeau was there both nights. The Stones are free to tour now.

It seems that the rock fest in the skating rink in Central Park, N.Y.C. will not happen this summer; but, 3 free concerts are being planned in the park. The Starship, The Blue Oyster Cult & a third act. Rumor has it that the B.O.C. complete with their laser light show are planning to rent the Goodyear Blimp as part of the show and that they plan to try to blow up the blimp as a finale, We'll have to wait & see.

OFFICIAL DEAD TOUR DATES

- APRIL 15 - Lakeland Civic Arena, Lakeland, FLA.
- APRIL 16- Sportatorium, Hollywood, FLA.
- APRIL 17 - Univ. of Tuscaloosa ALABAMA
- APRIL 19&20 - Fox Theatre Atlanta, GA
- APRIL 22- Spectrum, Phila, PA.
- APRIL 23- Civic Center Springfield, MASS
- APRIL 25-27 Capitol Theater Passaic, N.J.
- APRIL 29, 30 & MAY 1, 3&4- Palladium N.Y.C.
- MAY 5 - New Haven Colisium CONN.
- MAY 7 - Boston Gardens MASS.
- MAY 8 - Barton Hall Cornell, N.Y.
- MAY 9 - Pittsburg Civic Arena PA.
- MAY 11, 12, 13 - Auditorium Theater Chicago, Ill.
- MAY 15-16 - Fox Theater St. Louis

Concert Reviews

HOT TUNA

ST. JOSEPH'S COLL., PHILA.
11/13/76

When Hot Tuna plays Philly, the freaks come out of the woodwork. After all, when the Dead show up the city turns into a psychedelic playground. Even though Tuna seems to be on a permanent tour (do these guys ever vacation?) they barely stop here. Maybe it was the Tower Theater fiasco that kept St. Joe's from being packed.

The line started at about 2 p.m. that afternoon. The early arrivals were equipped with blankets, games, cards, and plenty of Gateful Dead tapes. Apparently nobody wanted to be burnt out before Tuna performed the ultimate act of music on them. As usual there was an opening act, Jan Hammer. The Tuna freaks acted normally and booed and "Tuned" them off. Happens every time.

Jack, Jorma and Bob hit the stage

by Michael Waldman

a little before 10 and started warming up, letting the amazing riffs of Cream-influenced rock bounce off the gym's walls. They opened with a real shocker, "Search my Heart," done real slow and bluesy. The evening was evenly packed, divided between old favorite blues like "I Know You Rider" and "Death Don't Have No Mercy" and more cosmic stuff from their recent albums. The shorter show meant passing by much of America's Choice, but they did play most of Hoppkory (which is, supposedly, "Hot Dog").

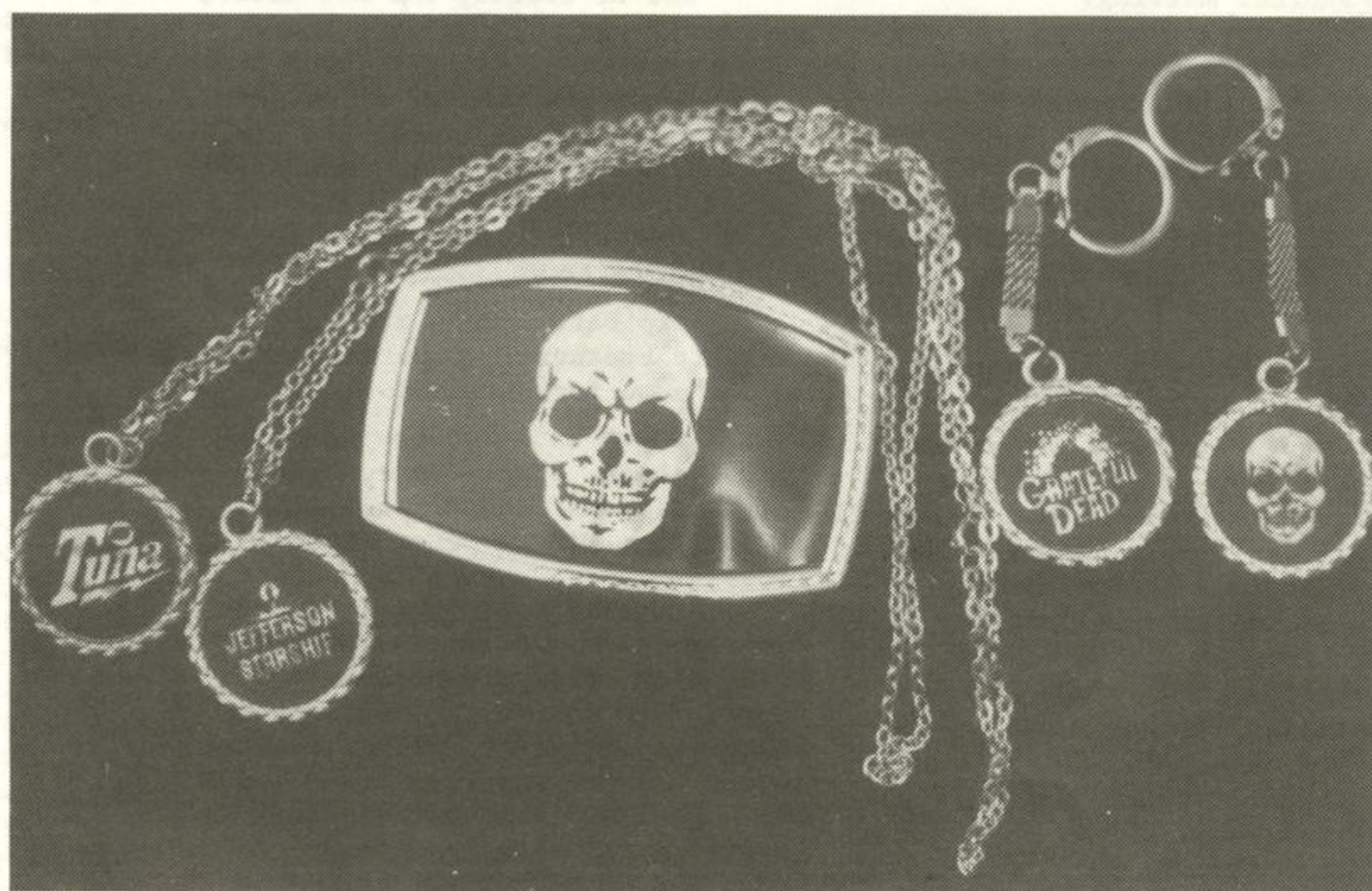
In the year and a half since they have dropped all extraneous musicians, Hot Tuna has been trying to reach a new musical level, on the order of that attained only by certain jazz musicians, such as pianist Cecil Taylor, or reed player John Coltrane prior to his death. (P.S. The Dead Too.)

Their goal seems to be to break down musical cliches and sidestep limitations, to transform their music into a type of morse code aimed directly at brain waves. Although Kaukonen's tunes are pretty basic rock and roll, he has broken free of the Merle Travis influence found on his first few albums. Now Hot Tuna in live performance is attempting a more sophisticated form of music. Kaukonen's lead work in jams somehow no longer seems melodic, but leans more to pure sonic communication, as seen in his increasing use of high pitched feedback. Through these newer guitar techniques Tuna has broken through to ground that once only the Dead had the talent to occupy. They are a rock band that also plays jazz. I don't mean the jazz-rock fusion that has popularized the efforts of Chick Corea et al., which only affects a jazzy sound, but is truly bound to the structures of rock; Hot Tuna is on the way to reaching a point in music which Ornette Coleman has termed Free Jazz.

As a final note, I am moving to Grand Rapids, Michigan. Jack, Jorma, if you can hear me PLEASE COME THERE.

(P.S. The Dead Too.)

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JETHRO TULL

RADIO CITY 1/22/77

by Bob Grappone

It's not often that one gets the opportunity to see a band that has matured to full potential playing in an environment perfectly suited to its talents. Especially when the band has the commercial popularity of Jethro Tull. However, here was Ian Anderson and company playing a well rehearsed program of greatest hits, to an

DAN HICKS

by Jerry

They don't call him Dangerous Dan for nothing. Dan Hicks has a reputation for being slightly, shall we say, "eccentric." Actually Dan's best known groups, the Charlatans and Dan Hicks and his Hot Licks, made their marks more as comedians than as musicians. Old Dan himself goes gonzo at fairly regular intervals.

Danny boy was booked into a Long Island club called "My Father's Place" for a 2 night stand beginning January 7th, when his reputation got the better of him once again.

He was well prepared. His backup was a cassette tape, and he was drunk, as usual, when he staggered to the stage for his first show. The first thing he had to say on taking possession of the stage was "O.K. I'm going to play my 45 minutes, collect my \$1,000.00 and leave." He only made it to about the half hour mark.

After a lively exchange of insults, he left the stage, leaving a genuine, knock 'em down bar-room brawl behind him. It was great-like something out of a sloppy John Wayne movie, chair swinging and all.

The rest of Dan's stay was cancelled, but the whole thing was so much fun that the club wants him back again. We can't wait to see what he does next time.

Maybe he'll shoot himself on stage.

intimate crowd of 6,000, in the acoustically perfect Radio City Music Hall. What prompted the move to the smaller venue may have been the un-availability of Madison Square Garden (Tull's last New York City gig was at Shea Stadium for 50,000), or hopefully a desire to play in surroundings which helped, rather than hurt the music. Whatever the reason, the evening proved to be a joy for both audience and performers.

In the past ten years of its existence, the band known as Jethro Tull has gone through periods of critical depreciation, but always remained high in audiences' estimations. Like The Who, they have attempted to synthesize the concept format of their albums with their stage presentations. However, unlike The Kinks, they have never gone full force into Rock Theater, and this middle of the genre approach has not met with the critical adulation that Ian Anderson seems to need. For instance, after the Passion Play tour was poorly received in 1974, Ian cancelled the remainder of the tour and went home sulking.

Unlike other bands, such as The Who, whose members have all assumed an identifiable musical style, Jethro Tull rests firmly on the shoulders of leader Anderson. So, further concepts and stagings continued, almost as though thumbing his nose at critics. The last time I saw the band was in early 1975 at Madison Square Garden during the War Child tour. It was embarrassing to see this once fine band going through the motions of playing, and clowning on stage like schoolboys.

But time and changes in personnel seem to have worked a magic effect on the band, and this performance proved that the best is probably yet to come.

The set opened with 3 acoustic numbers: "Wonderin' Aloud", "Skating Away" (complete with xylophone, marimbas and various pipe organs), and a new tune. Anderson, nattily attired in a red vest and matching bowler, then led the band into a tune he said the critics had described as

a substantial part of their repertoire. It turned out to be an extended portion of "Thick As A Brick" and the evenings first appearance of Ian's flute, and a long solo piece. The band seemed to bounce along and truly get off on just how good the Music Hall's sound quality really was.

This was followed by 2 more new unreleased tracks and then the band members got into their own musical jam, which seemed to incorporate passages from various Tull classics, and then all sailed into a medley of "To Cry You A Song", "Bouree" and "New Day Yesterday". The crowd's enthusiasm was running high when Anderson asked the music to stop while he allowed the audience to go to the bathroom, but for no more than 15 minutes.

True to his word, the band was back onstage performing a beautiful new acoustic song that led into "Never Too Old to Rock and Roll". Another new tune, "The Hunter's Song" (complete with riding crop), and then "Minstrel in the Gallery", which provided another chance for the band to stretch out a bit. The show drew to a close with 4 songs from Aqualung and a word on some "Back Door Angels", with Ian promising to "see you at my place".

To some it could be considered a disappointing show due to length (2 hours), the noticeable change in style, and some songs which were not performed. But for me, it seemed an assertion of just how talented this present unit really is. Long time members Martin Barre, John Evans and Barriemore Barlow were ably assisted by new bassist John Glascock, and an unnamed keyboard player. Their sound seemed fuller, more precise and fluid. All in all, it was a fine performance by one of rock's premier bands, who seem to have much more up their sleeves than most critics give them credit for.

Above all, though, it is still Ian Anderson's show; whether strutting, laughing or simply making an entrance or exit, he still seems the true Pied Piper of music. It is still a great pleasure to see him playing his one-footed flute runs, and then just as quickly, change the instrument into a baton, and lead his troupe into bursts of energy.

It remains to be seen how well this new Tull is to be received; but if tonight's audience is a gauge, there should be no problem.

CHARLES MINGUS (+12)

& SONNY FORTUNE (+4)

BOTTOM LINE 1/19/77

by Irving W. Stone

Charles Mingus well deserves his reputation as the Dan Hicks and/or Frank Zappa of jazz. Despite that, his set at the Bottom Line was most serene, magnificently conceived, exciting music. For the first 2/3 of his set, Mr. Mingus augmented his regular working quintet with 4 additional reed players, 1 trombonist, and 3 latin percussionists. The assembled group played a half written, half improvised score the maestro had conceived for "an action film which takes place half in South America, and half in New York City." The score was excellent throughout, highly original and distinctive, well worthy of one of the truest of Duke Ellington's disciples.

The use of the five reeds and two plunger brassy made it particularly memorable, though Dan Pullen's piano solo was also astounding. On finishing the score, Mr. Mingus excused his 8 added starters. "If you want more of this music, get me another movie gig," the Ming said to those assembled.

The quintet then played 2 of their latest pieces with considerably more brio than they did on the Atlantic record. Again, Pullen shone. Ricky Ford (tenor) and Jack Wabath (trumpet) were quite fine too. As for Mingus and his drummer, Donnie Richmond, they have been together for so damn long (like 20 or 25 years), they have practically redefined the word "togetherness." Very, very worthwhile!!

Sonny Fortune and his updated hard bop quintet opened the show. The leader, a very hard swinger on alto sax with superior chops, wasted some time doing bravura quasi-classical flute bits, but for the greater part it was swinging like mad. Not heavy, but hard and honest!!!!!!



photo: L.D. Kippel

GOOD OL' BOYS THE OTHER END, N.Y.C.

Xmas time in the city-snow, festive lights, family dinners, and lots of live music. At the Other End, Paul Colby made New York City a 3 day present of Frank Wakefield (such a gift!) and the Good Ol' Boys.

I'd heard some strange rumors about Frank and the Boys since the anniversary party (see Issue 4-1). When the band hit the stage, the truth was plain. Gone were Rick Lindner, Jon Glick, and Tom Stern.... in their places were four young men with lean and hungry looks. The new Good Ol' Boys are Mike Collins, Tim Maloney, Jon Wurtmann, and Doug McKelway. These four are students, and residents of Frank's neighborhood in Saratoga Springs. While I was somewhat skeptical, I sat back to check out the music.

The band opened with a familiar instrumental called "Bluegrass Break-down," a lively tune which set the tone for the performance. The new edition did well with this standard, and the electric bass line and harmonica were refreshing. Frank introduced the next song, "Deep Elem Blues," as "a tune Les Kippel wrote while he's in Alcatraz Priazun" (Ridiculous-we all know Les can't write!) Frank led on vocals, and Tim (acoustic guitar) and Doug (banjo) provided harmony. Jack Bonus' "The Hobo song" followed. Tim took care of the lead vocals on this one. He's got a nice voice, and the tune came off well. He performed enthusiastically, so enthusiastically in fact, that he broke a string.

The evening gained a somewhat religious aura as Frank treated us to "Jesus Loves His Mandolin Player

by Steve Kraye

#1. This was, as Frank told us, "the one I did with the Big Symph in Saratoga." It's somewhat slower than later additions to the series.

Nice, really nice. A logical follow-up was "Jesus loves his bluegrass band #1. All musicians joined on this one, and while not brilliant, the tune was clean and entertaining.

"Love, oh Love, Please Come Home" followed, Tim on lead once more. This was the first time I'd heard this song. Unfortunately, the words did not come through too clearly, but the tune was quite enjoyable. The next number was one written by Doug McKelway, entitled "Devil's Dream."* He told us that Frank renamed the song "The Devil Had a Wet Dream." This too was an instrumental, with good melody lines for all players. Tim Maloney came back to the microphone to lead the band in "Midnight Moonlight," the evening's finale, a fine ending to a well balanced and well performed set.

While the latest edition of the Good Ol' Boys lacks polish, they have what it takes. Under Frank Wakefield's watchful eye, they should progress nicely. Frank is probably the best in the business when it comes to playing bluegrass music on the mandolin, and he knows how to train a band.

*Editor's note: The author's credit for "Devil's Dream" was given to Doug McKelway by one Frank Wakefield. Hence this should be taken with a sizeable grain of salt.



THE COMMANDER

by Allen Tarwell

I caught the new Commander Cody band's Friday (January 28, 1977) late show at the Palomino Club in North Hollywood, Calif., and was definitely impressed.

The Commander has himself a very tight band, Bobby is still his pedal steel player but the rest of his band is new, has 2 girl back-up vocalists who are extremely talented and a guitar player who doubles on clarinet. They all blend in to give him a Dan Hicks and his Hot Licks sound, which I dug.

His show was an hour and 15 minutes long. He did a lot of material from his new album (coming), and of his new material. "I Can't Dance" was a great rocker and saw the Commander dancing at center stage, calling for more drinks, and acting as crazy as he always has.

He did some of his standards—"Hot Rod Lincoln", "Rock That Boogie", "Eight to the Bar", "Smoke that Cigarette", and "Seeds and Stems" which was finely done by one of the girl singers.

The band was tight and the Palomino looked like home to the Commander—a cowboy bar and a drunk, rowdy audience which saw him come to the stage to the theme from "Bonanza" and didn't let him leave until he did "Lost in the Ozone Again".

The show left me really high and glad that the Commander is back doing small gigs. His reviews may have been poor but I think the critics are comparing him to the Lost Planet Airmen and his new band is not in that vein. I feel they are more talented musicians and seem to take their music more seriously than the old band (which I liked too!).

The Commander is back - see him if you get a chance!

Book Review

STAR MAKING MACHINERY

Author: Geoffrey Stokes

Publisher: Bobbs-Merrill

by Jerry

Commander Cody and his Lost Planet Airmen are now sharing a room in heaven with the Dodo bird, but in their time they were the finest (and, not incidentally, the raunchiest) of the "country rock" bands. They came from Detroit by way of San Francisco, and they must have been warped a little by their motor city background. They had a tendency to lapse into vintage rock & roll at the least provocation, and they were a lot sloppier than polished acts like the Eagles. Doubtless that's a big part of why they were so fascinating. They were down to earth and consequently believable. The group is gone now. They didn't leave much behind them; just a collection of interesting but uneven albums and one fascinating book.

The book is called Star Making Machinery (Publisher: Bobbs Merrill), and it was written by one of the best of the Village Voice's stable of music critics, Geoffrey Stokes. It traces the history of a Cody record, their first on Warner Brothers, from its inception right through the recording process, through litigation and into its sale to Warner Brothers, through distribution and advertising, up to its ultimate lack of significant commercial success. It brings in all the peripheral elements, performance included. While the book is about Cody, its intent was to shed some light on the music biz. As a pocket course on the record industry, it's great. I first read this book on the way to a country music festival in the wilds of Pennsylvania, and found it so spellbinding that I literally was unable to put it down. I became so absorbed in it that I managed to ignore the spectacle of a complete blue-grass band holding an impromptu rehearsal in the same vehicle. The banjo player was about 3 inches from my ear, but I managed to tune him out. Star Making



Machinery was well written and makes such easy reading that the miles swept past far too quickly.

Stokes takes each aspect of making this record, and uses it to make a more general point about the industry. It is nothing very heavy handed, but by the time you put the volume down, you have a clear conception of what lies behind any record you put on your turntable. A record is a finished product, but it doesn't exist in a vacuum. A lot of work goes into making one, and a lot of wheeling and dealing. Some of it is funny, some of it is faintly sordid, and all of it is tied up in legalities.

Along the way you come across some amusing tidbits, such as the fact that the Airmen had to bring in a studio musician, Roger Kellaway, to play the left hand piano part to "House of Blue Lights," because George Frayne couldn't seem to play it. They had to sneak him in behind the Commander's back to avert a tantrum, and finally let him play the right hand part to pacify him.

Also, rather interesting is the continuing interplay between John Boylan, the smooth gent brought in from L. A. to produce the album, and the Airmen, a fairly loose crew. Boylan produced the record on credit, because the band hadn't a cent when

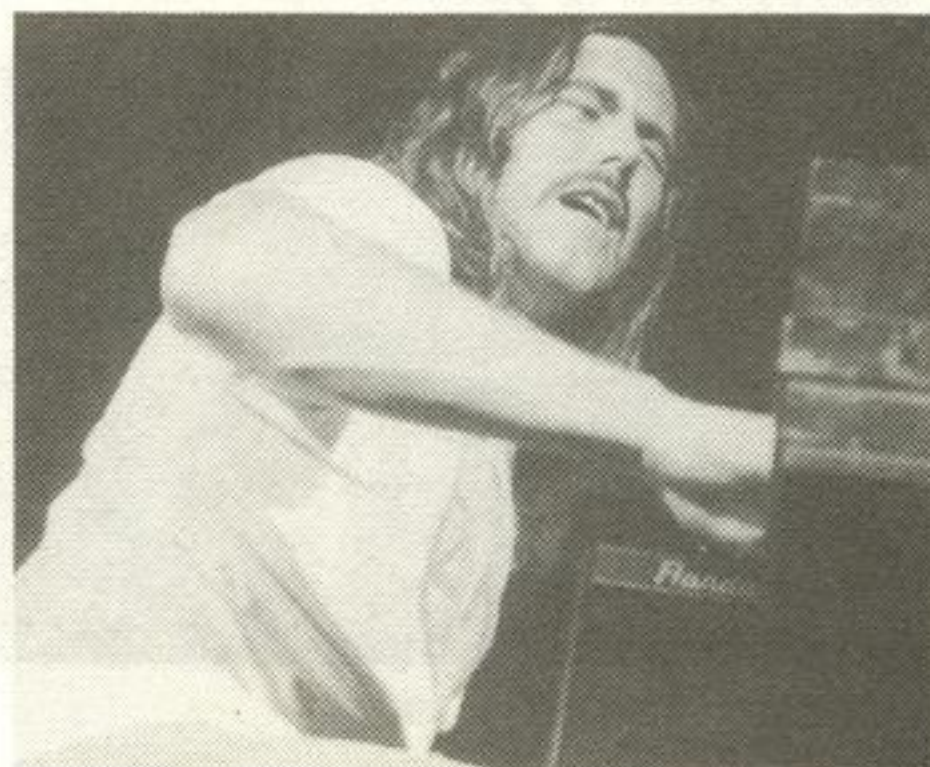


photo: L.D. Kippel

they were doing it. The recording studio was also initially paid in promises. The most interesting plot line of all involves how the record was sold. The Airmen were originally on Paramount Records, which was a subsidiary of Famous Music, which in turn was owned by Gulf & Western. G&W decided to get out of the music field, and ABC bought Famous, and naturally thought they owned the Airmen as well.

Cody and Company didn't care for that, and managed to get out of their contract after a struggle involving a number of technicalities. You can pick up a number of useful pieces of general information as this scenario unfolds, such as how a band can remain broke, while a record company makes money off a disc that, on paper, was a loss. One cute bit of gossip is that one reason Howard Stein (once one of the biggest promoters in New York) doesn't particularly care for the Grateful Dead is that a rider to one of their contracts called for fifty dinners; 49 steaks and 1 lobster.

All this is incidental to an examination of the record industry, but it serves to keep you riveted to the pages. Finishing this book, you not only know a great deal about Commander Cody and their first Warner Brothers album; you also know much more than you ever wanted to know about corporations and the ugly underbelly of the industry. In the end, ABC emerges battered, Warner Brothers comes out spotless, the band gets through alive, and the much contested record nearly takes a nosedive.

Score one for Warners.

They were behind Cody, but the Airmen must have lost a little piece of their soul in their fight with the devil, since they are no longer with us. If a better book has ever been written about music, I have yet to read it.

photo: Dave Patrick



OAKLAND COLISIUM-1975

Record Rap

by Les Kippel



The past two months have seen some fine albums come to market. The first beauty is an album from the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, a three record set called Dirt, Silver and Gold. This is a "best of" set, a retrospective of most of their best music, a must for anyone who doesn't have all their other discs.

Gordon Lightfoot's Summertime Dream has been out for a while, but missed mentioning it last issue. It contains his recent hit, "The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald," and the album is worth it for that alone. The rest of the music is also quite fine.

The Allman Brothers have released what, considering the current state of their family relations, is surely their last album. The album is a two record live set, consisting of ten songs excerpted from performances at Winterland, November 26, 1973, the Warehouse, December 31, 1972, and the biggest thing they ever did, Watkind Glen, July 28, 1973. The album, called Wipe the Windows, Check the Oil-Dollar Gas, is worth getting as the final touch to your Allmans collection.

Bob Marley's friends, the Inner Circle, have a new album out, and, even though I love reggae, I am none too happy with this disc. Sorry guys, but prime reggae this isn't.

How Late'll Ya Play 'Til? is David Bromberg's latest effort, his first for Fantasy Records. This is a two record set, one disc recorded in the studio, one disc recorded live at the Great American Music Hall in San Francisco. A fine album, well worth its limited price. You should give "Bullfrog Blues" a listen first, to set you up for the rest of the album.

Arlo Guthrie has put together a rather superior album called Amigos. This is his best work to date, well laced with low key humor. Quite fine stuff, actually.

George Harrison's latest is called 33&1/3. Typical recycled Beatles. Nothing special, unless you're hung up on soybeans and gurus.

Beach Boys '69-The Beach Boys in London is exactly what it says—a live album recorded at the London

Palladium in 1969. This one has been available as an import for years, but this is its first U.S. release. The record is a bit dusty with age. This was recorded when the Beach Boys were at their lowest ebb popularity wise, and were simply making a living off their oldies. The versions of their old tunes included here suffer from a notable lack of enthusiasm, but it is still the Beach Boys. Even at their worst (around this time) they still had a little magic. This one is for Beach Boys fanatics only. If you really want it, search out an import copy. The sound quality of the American pressing leaves a lot to be desired.

Paul McCartney's latest, Wings Over America, I won't say a thing about. See elsewhere in this issue for the reason why.

Flying Fish is a record company located in Chicago that deals in traditional American music, especially bluegrass. This is a label for aficionados. It releases carefully crafted records, which would never sell enough copies to interest a major record label. They just sent us a batch of their latest releases. Space precludes our mentioning them all, but we have room for the three most interesting. The first is an LP of country and laid-back rock compositions, and a few original tunes by Mike Auldridge. Guest performers on this one include Emmylou Harris, David Bromberg, and Vassar Clements. Very fine indeed.

The second is a very eclectic collection from fiddler and mandolin picker John Hartford, titled Nobody Knows What You Do. Quite interesting.

The third, the real gem in this bunch, is a classic bluegrass album from the Country Gazette, called Out to Lunch. This is a great record from one of the finest bluegrass bands of recent memory.

You can probably obtain a catalog from this company by writing to:

Flying Fish
3320 North Halsted
Chicago, Ill. 60657

Many of their releases are well worth checking out, and they are difficult to find in the stores.

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